



Amá Sani dóó Achei Baahane'



The Office of Diné Culture, Language, and Community Services
Window Rock, Arizona



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Preface

Amá Sání dóó Achei Baa Hane' are collections of *Hane'* which Diné elders used and taught in traditional circular hooghan, to instill, entertain, and model mental emotional strengths in clan children before the invasion of western culture. The stories were orally told in the early winter nights as children, adolescence and adults clustered round the fire hearth, while mother made *dahistin* of yellow or blue cornmeal using her traditional cooking tools in *ídístsiin*, *tsé bee náłzhóóh* and *ts'aa'*. Elders believe *hane'* is a powerful mind molding instrument that teaches children to be inquisitive, creative, determined and persistence; to dream, to strive, and have courage; to believe and have faith; and to live a life in balance and harmony. The powers of *hane'* are instilled in the many legends and myths that exist in *Diné* Life and History, as many of them reflect mystic, survival and heroism.

The powerful influence and impact of the twins in *Naayéé' Neizghání* and *Tó Bájishchíní*, as they journeyed to overcome oppositional force and survived to save *Diné* mankind, is a reflection of a desire to live, survive, to have courage, strength, confidence and self-esteem. The spiritual birth and life of *Yoolgail Asdzáá / Asdzáę Nádleehé* simplifies the intricacies of spirituality and traits, that have become traditional values in living a complete life and the attainment of *Sa'ah Naayéi Bik'eh Hózhóón* and *As'ah Na'adá*.

While the traditional values in *Amá Sání dóó Achei Baa Hane'* brings about informative heritage culture, It also nurtures the spiritual nature of language as an indigenous form of communicate, where children hear the authenticity and the power of language through story telling. They develop and gain positive attitude and behavior through language as modeled by parents and grandparents. Whereby, the basic fundamentals of *Diné* language attainment is acquired through transitional oratory communiqué by means of conceptual learning through; auditory, oratory and perceptual comprehension, as well as maintained attention span by children. Language articulation therefore serves as a mental perception and an organization, an instilling of articulated communication and the capacity to store and relate information upon necessity or opportunity. Whereby, well informed children whom can articulate, communicate, relate stories, humor, etc. within families exude positive forms of hope and expectations, faith, good thoughts, happiness and healthy environments within the homes.

Introduction

Amá Sání dóó Achei Baa Hane' will serve as an educational reference to mentors of *Diné* People within the educational environment, in the Federal and Tribal offices, and the many service programs that work with the *Diné* children. The document is devised and written with a purpose to rekindle and revitalize an appreciation for the beauty of *Diné* cultural heritage and its language, one in which many have degraded and deprived themselves of for a second language and a western culture.

As a Navajo child growing up in the arid terrain within the regions of Star Mountain and Finger Point Butte in and around the Teestoh, Arizona area, I learned I had many grandfathers and grandmothers whom had vast knowledge of *Diné* origin stories, as I can recall the many nights that my siblings and I listened to the many stories told around the fire hearth. We listened and heard stories of the Trickster, the Coyote, the *Yé'itsoh* and the Horned Toad, our grandfather (*nihicheii*), as each encountered and struggle with his interpersonal and interdependence life with and amongst other animals of its time. Each time a story was told, it reflected a personal version of the storyteller. We didn't mind listening to it more than one time. The stories included in the booklet are meant to include interest, excitement, suspense, and an artful attribute to *Diné* ways of story telling, which generally brings about a trait and meaning for children. Depending on how interesting a story is told and/or conveyed, many forms of curiosity and questions arises from children just as we did in our time. Story telling by our grandparents brought upon platforms and stages of many players, from insects, reptiles, animals to holy beings and nature. With commitment and effort, I made it a goal to revitalize the power of *hane'* into the educational environment, to promote, enhance cultural learning and educating the young minds of our children.

It is through heritage culture and language that we need to instill the sense of self, self-respect, the appreciation for origin, and descendant of being the *Diné* People in our children, so that they too can become aware of their history and place in society as people of character; as lifelong thinkers (*binitsáhá'kees nineez doo*), lifelong planners (*binahat'á'nineez doo*) with great minds, wealth of knowledge, wisdom, and teachings of language and heritage culture.

Acknowledgement

I want to first acknowledge the people that made this document possible for their support, encouragement, and assistance. *A'he'hee* to the people I work with daily, Roger Begay, Senior Education Specialist who consistently reviewed my document and gave his suggestion. Carole Thomas, Administrative Assistant, who helped with the print layout and Eddie Tso, Program Manager for the Office of Diné Culture, Language, and Community Services for inspiring and encouraging to complete the booklet for Navajo students.

Without the priorities of the Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., and Vice President Frank Dayish Jr., and the Navajo Nation Education Committee and Leland Leonard, Executive Director of Division of Diné Education, the publication of *Amá Sání dóó Achei Baahane'* for classroom use would not have been possible. The Navajo Nation's educational expectation was demonstrated by its endorsement of the Navajo Education Policy Title X addressing the need to incorporate, utilize, and emphasize the use of Navajo language and culture materials in the academic setting by educational institution educating Navajo children on and off the Navajoland by the Tribal Council 1984. Past and more recent Navajo Education Committee continued to emphasize culture relevancy in school curriculum by creating the Office of Dine Culture, Language, and Community Services 1994. Current Education Committee members are: Leonard Chee, Chairperson, Wallace Charley; Vice Chairperson, and Members: Andy R. Ayze, Katherine Benally, Lee Jack, Sr., Edison D. Jones, Ida M. Nelson, and David L. Tom.

I am appreciative to my late parents: Miller and Marie Attakai of Teetsoh who shared many *Hane'* with my siblings and I while growing up in the one room *hooghan* in the Star Mountain Teetsoh area. My upbringing is a priceless experience that I hold dear and cherish it in my heart. I am deeply indebted to the elders who believe in passing on to the next generation of Diné children the Diné Culture. My clan mothers are Jane Yazzie and Mary Kanuho. I further expanded my cultural knowledge, working alongside a warm, compassionate and wonderful person, *Shizhé'é*, my clan father, Mr. Irvin K. James. Mr. James, a traditional educator, worked for the Diné Culture, Language and Community Services for seven years, sharing his stories, songs and his artistic abilities with very young children up to high school, the parents and school staff. Irvin journeyed into the spiritual world, February 27, 2003.

RT Computer Graphics Santa Fe Collection was a very resourceful in providing graphic arts to make the stories complete with simple illustration.

Acknowledgement and Dedication

By Contributing Sponsor

It is a great honor and privilege to help sponsor the publication of the "Diné Grandma and Grandpa Stories for Children." We are especially grateful to Mr. Edward P. Tso, Program Director for the Office of Diné Culture, Language and Community Services, for making it possible for us to participate in this project. In addition, we acknowledge the help of Michelle Singer, Legislative Assistant with the Office of Senator Thomas A. Daschle and Mr. Darren Pete, Legislative Associate for the Navajo Nation Washington Office; for their referrals that resulted in our communication.

**This sponsorship is to honor the memory of
Mr. and Mrs. Byron Beekly Hoff.**

My mother Flossie Bronson Hoff was my most valuable teacher and my protector. My father Byron Hoff who provided endless encouragement to me and gave us security through his many years of honest and loyal work.

I am deeply grateful to them for the foundation they provided through the love and honor they gave to family and forebears; and the appreciation and respect they had for this wonderful earth on which we all live.

May these stories help carry forward, for generations to come, the language, culture, history, government and values of the Navajo Nation.



Bill and Velma (Hunter-Hoff) Murray
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Da'hadiiniisá / The Beginning



Háííinéíi hané begins with the understanding that *Ni'naakits'áadah Honíká* is where the *Nítch'í Diyin Dine'é*, Spirit People, come from. The First World, *Ni'hodithit*, the Black World is told the beginning. *Ni'hodithit*, as perceived by carrier and guardian of medicine bundles, means there was not a world yet, only endless darkness existed. There were, yet, no light, water, air, or surface. Traditional storytellers tell of a mist like substance (a gaseous foggy substance) formed in the atmosphere and in the heaven and was the beginning.

Within the center of the atmosphere, *Ni'hodithit*, dark mist, moisture and light gathered and formed clouds. This became the Divine *Nítch'í Diyinii*, *Yah'ałnii'neeyání*, the mysterious power. This Holy One, *Nítch'í Diyinii* *Yah'ałnii'neeyání* is characterized to be of Crystal Spirit and the Holy Wind (air). The Holy One possessing a female and male character strength (power) and is referred to as *Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhóón*. With this power, surface formed. White shell, turquoise, abalone shell and obsidian formed the surface, land (earth substance). Next, words were heard and languages were identified. It is believed that various gems formed the languages, words, sounds uttered by the *Yah'ałnii'neeyání*.

Nihodithit / Black World

Within the Black World, *Yah'ałnii'neeyání* was very much alone and lonely, so he used the intelligence that he possessed to bring forth four elements. He spoke with the spirit of the white shell language and brought forth light and placed it within the eastern direction. He spoke with the spirit of the turquoise language and brought forth moisture and placed it within the southern direction. He spoke with the spirit of the abalone shell language and brought forth four types of air (wind) and he placed them within the western direction. Later, he placed wind within the four directions; to the east he placed the white wind; to the south the blue wind; to the west the yellow wind; and to the north the black wind. *Yah'ałnii'neeyání* spoke the language of the obsidian and pollen formed which became the dirt substance and he placed it within the northern direction.

It is said, *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* brought forth Dawn and place life and light into it and placed it within the eastern direction. Spirits of Dawn, *Hayooł káál At'ééd dóó Hayooł káál Ashkii* were identified and placed within the eastern direction. Their purposes were to provide direction to the lives of the earth surface living beings and means by which they will travel, *gáál*. Within the House of Dawn, *Hayooł káál Beehooghan*. *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* placed the Crystal Light. By the aid of Crystal Light the earth surface beings will be capable of developing the ability to process thinking, forming ideas, to be inquisitive and a need to know. *Nitsáhákees*. *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* brought forth Blue Twilight, *Nihodeet'iizh At'ééd dóó Nihodeet'iizh Ashkii* and he placed them within the southern direction in the House of Blue Twilight, *Nihodeet'iizh Beehooghan*. It was part of the great plan for earth surface people to develop knowledge by which to construct plans for living from one generation to the next. This is referred to as *Nahat'á álya'*. *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* brought forth Yellow Evening Twilight, *Nihootsooi At'ééd dóó Nihootsooi Ashkii* for the western direction and placed *áhó'ní* for social development and family unity in the House of Yellow Evening Twilight, *Nihootsooi Beehooghan*. *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* brought forth Folding Darkness, *Cha'hałtheet At'ééd dóó Cha'hałtheet Ashkii* for the northern direction and placed life, home and rest within the House of Darkness, *Cha'hałtheet Beehooghan*. *Yah'ałníí'neeyán*, also, placed development of awareness and protection within the House of Darkness. With all the elements and the power of the four directions in place, *Yah'ałíí'neeyání* brought forth four types of moist substances, *Nítch'í ligai*, *Nítch'í dootizh*, *Nítch'í litso*, and *Nítch'í dítłit* and placed them within the four directional clouds. It is told by the elder the four types of moisture impacts the four seasons, *Dąągo*, *Shíłgo*, *A'ak'éédgo*, *dóó Haigo*.

Yah'ałníí'neeyání still very much alone and lonely, created four Spiritual Ones from the same power from which he, himself, had come. One Formed at the Center of Heavens, *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* brought forth, *Haashch'ééyááłti'í*, First Talking God, and was assigned to oversee the activities to the eastern direction. *Haashch'ééwaan*, the Spirit for Home, was brought forth and assigned to oversee activities in the western direction. *Bee'ohchíídí*, the Spirit for Growth, was brought forth and assigned to oversee activities to the southern direction. *Haashch'ééhzhíní*, the Spirit of Darkness, was brought forth and assigned to oversee activities to the northern direction.

Yah'alnii'neeyání, his helpers (*Haashch'ée Dine'ée*, the four elements and the four winds gathered and constructed a plan for creation. They used their powers to create *Ya'Bii'astiin*, Within Upper Creation Spirit, which became known as Father Sky. He was assigned to oversee all activities and control the functions of the upper creation. The Spiritual Ones gathered again and decided to create a counterpart for the upper creation, *Nahasdzáán Bii'astíín*, Within the Lower Creation Spirit. They created Mother Earth to control and oversee all activities in the lower creation. *Yábii'astíín* and *Nahasdzáán Bii'astíín* are known to breathe, think, talk and all knowing as they control the balance of the creation. They constantly coordinate, cooperate, collaborate, and communicate through the elements of their being.



Atsé Hastiin dóó Atsé Asdzáá

First Man and First Woman

Told By Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed By Sylvia Jackson

It is told by the elders, with the powers of *Yah'ałníí'neeyání*, his helpers, *Haashch'ée Dine'é*, the four elements: light, water, earth, and wind, the first pair of spirits in the upright erect appearance were made, the *Atsé Hastiin dóó Atsé Asdzáá* representing parents, a mother and a father, for all earth surface life capable of reproducing self. They were to reign among the first Spiritual Ones. *Yah'ałníí'neeyání*, the gathered force of energy at the center of cosmic, the First Great One, a deity was alone and lonely and created the living world. The creation reflects the power of *Yah'ałníí'neeyání*, enthusiasm and the enjoyment of seeing life replenish over and over through time.

At a place called *Háyoolkááł Bee Hooghan*, House of Dawn, First Man was created. Crystal light, air, water and pollen placed within the Dawn and the Darkness rose, met, mixed and First Man came into existence. He was bare and naked similarly to the perfect ear of white corn. The First Spiritual Ones dressed him with white covering. Dawn and Darkness were placed on his feet representing his socks and moccasins. Dark clouds and rain made his hair. Sunrays made his hair string to tie his hair at the nape of his neck representing bring his thoughts together to focus. He used the hair tie and tied his hair in a ponytail and later tied it in a bun, *tsiiyéél*, when he emerged into the White World. He realized a need to gather his thoughts, plans and be more focused to be able to resolve the issues of the white world and brought his hair together in a *tsiiyéél*. White shells made his fingernails and toenails white. The Holy Ones gave him his language, name, shadow and an identity. A bow guard placed on his left wrist identifies him as a leader, protector, provider, nurturer, and a father. His necklace, earrings, and bracelets represented his connection to the Mother Earth. Medicine pouch given him provides him with spiritual and emotional strengths. For guidance and protection, the Holy Ones placed a zigzag lightening, straight lightening, sunrays, and rainbow beam in his pouch. He was identified as the caretaker of the sacred crystal fire, *Tséghádi'nídíní ligai kq' Hastiin doo Tsé ghádi'nídíní ligai kq' Asdzáá*. Crystal fire is believed to provide and strengthen clear and positive thinking, *Nitsáhákees*, within the early morning Dawn. Directional concept promotes self-awareness, an awaking of the mind, body, soul, and spirit for

earth surface children.

With the western horizon, at a place called *Nihootsoii Bee Hooghan*, House of Evening Twilight, is a home for *Atsé Asdzáá*, First Woman. Light, air, water and pollen placed within the Blue Twilight and Yellow Twilight rose, met, mixed and First Woman came into existence. She came into the living world bare and naked similar to First Man. The Holy Ones dressed her with blue and yellow coverings similar to a perfect ear of yellow corn. Blue and Yellow Twilight made her moccasins. Black storm clouds and female rain made her hair. She, too, was given the sunrays to tie her hair at the nape of her neck that she tied in a ponytail. When she emerged into the White World, she tied her hair in a bun, *tsiiyééł*. White World offered many challenges and required possession of strong self-control mentally, physically and spiritually. Therefore, she gathered her hair that represented her thoughts, attitudes and perceptions and tied it in a bun. An abalone shell sash belt made in resemblance of the sunbeam and sunrise wrapped round her waist. White shells made her fingernails and toenails. Her language, name, clan, shadow and an identity were given to her by the Holy Ones. Her necklace, earrings, and bracelets represented her connection to Mother Earth. She is identified as the caretaker of the turquoise fire, *Dootł'izhii Kq'Hastiin dóó Dootł'izhii Kq'Asdzáá*. Fire provides security and warmth for her home and family. Turquoise fire represents knowledge to plan and to be developed as part of all growing process. Roles and responsibilities of *Atsé Asdzáá* depict everlasting life, growth, unity, strength and love for earth surface people. She displays leadership in the home, clan society, and community for all females and children. She is assigned to control all activities in the western direction.

Within the Black World, *Ni'hodithił*, First Man and First Woman found each other by the power of their fires and the four directions. It is told that for a length of time, First Man saw a strange blue light in the western region and wondered what to make of it. First Woman, also, saw and wondered of the bright white light in the eastern region from where she existed. One night, First Man decided to search out the blue light in the western horizon. He marked it out by placing the blue light above the cross section of two sticks stuck into the ground. He marked out the location of the light in the morning and set out to find the blue light. First Woman did likewise with the light in the eastern horizon. The two searched and failed to find one another for three attempts. On the fourth and finally try, they

found one another. They understood instinctively it was met for them to be together and brought their fires together and lived as a couple in the eastern region. They understood their actions to be the wishes of the *Diyin Dine'ée*. They figured if it weren't so, they would not have found one another. Together, they attended the creation planning meetings held by the Holy Ones, but, were observed to display minimal participation. Others observed their behavior as unhealthy and strange, however, left them alone. They planned together in whispers and consulted with no one. Their first plan was to create First Boy and Girl.

The living arrangement between First Man and First Woman became the understanding for common law marriage practiced by the *Diné* people in the earlier days. More elders coupled in this fashion in the contemporary time as well as in the earlier days than young people. They seem to understand and hold sacred to upholding strong commitments involved in coupling: providing for and safeguarding one another's concerns for health physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Older age couple display strong bondage between them than young couple in the contemporary society. A need for companionship and trust seems to be the fundamental bases for common law marriages that are successful.

In earlier days, keeping your words true was considered honorable and a display of positive strong character. A simple handshake was an act of contracting between two people doing business. Anyone failing to uphold an agreement earned a reputation of dishonest, deceitful, unworthy and not to be trusted. Everyone heard of the dishonest person and he/she would lose credibility. Few people would deal with the individual. Today, there are a few people that still consider a simple "handshake" a contract. They protect and honor it with a reputation.



Atsé Ashkii dóó Atsé At'ééd First Boy and First Girl

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



Atsé Ashkii, First Boy, was brought forth at the center of Dawn and Heaven, *Hayoolkááł dóó Yá'álnii bit'ági*. First Man and First Woman placed a white covering on the ground and placed a piece of turquoise, an ear of white corn and the sacred elements with an eagle tail on it. They covered it with black mist. *Nítch'í Diyin Dine'é* from the four directions hopped over the covering from all direction singing *gáál sin* and praying to bring forth the first male youth erected on two legs with earth surfaced human appearance. First Boy appeared when they removed the upper covering. He was given everything to identify himself with similarly to First Man. It is said that he would represent youthful learning, inquisitive mind, physical strength and emotional discipline for all male species.

Atsé At'ééd, First Girl, was brought forth at the center of Evening Twilight and Heaven, *Ni'hotsooi dóó Yá'álnii bit'ági*. First Man and First Woman, again, placed a yellow covering on the ground and placed a white shell, a perfect ear of yellow corn and the four sacred elements on it. They covered it with blue mist. *Nítch'í Diyin Dine'é* from the four directions hopped over the covered elements uttering *gáál sin* and prayers. First Girl appeared when the covering was removed. Spiritual Ones clothed her and gave her all things to identify herself with similarly to First Woman. It is understood that she represents youthful learning, creative mind and social emotional discipline for all female species.



Ma'íí / First Scolders

Told by Miller Allakai, 1956

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Through ideas, discussion and planning, the Holy Ones included others to be created. There are First Scolders, one for each direction representing the four-legged creatures on the earth surface. Their powerful and sensitive noses, eyes and ears stimulate curiosity and quickness to explore unexpected occurrences.

Traditional *hané* conveys the constant contributions of animals to the understanding of the living world for the earth surface people. Their characteristic and habits observed stimulate the power of the human mind. Elders believe they are massagers. They simulate curiosity to unexpected occurrence and spontaneous reaction for the earth surface people. The Holy Ones designed the living world to be imperfect and full of challenges to adjust to the ever-changing world. First Scolder is best known as coyote in the contemporary time and is a spiritual guardian / massager for the People. Depending on in which direction, the coyote crosses a person's path, a massage maybe positive, negative or urgent. Understanding the massage depends on the characteristic and behavior of the coyote observed. There are also other massagers such as *Dq'tsoh*, the spiritual guardian and massager for the Holy Ones. White light, transparent, clear and radiant characterize *Dq'tsoh* and is considered to be all-knowing.

There are many stories of the First Scolder, the inquisitive one, Coyote. One story tells how First Scolder took fire from the First Man and First Woman and bargained for it to all the living beings. Soon, everyone had fire. They were happy with it as they used fire to cook their food and keep their homes warmed. First Scolder advised everyone to take good care of the fire and not abuse it. However, he became careless and abused it. Sparks from the burning juniper fascinated him so he tied long stem of grass to his own tail and lit fire to his tail and watched it burn. He ran around leaving a trail of smoke behind him. He ran around the community shouting, laughing and encouraging everyone to do the same. They did. They became confused, lost their sense of directions, committed adultery, killed and did not listen to each other.

Haasch'ééshzhiin and *Dq'tsoh* became angry and destroyed the First World with fire. First Man, in his effort to rescue some living beings from fire, brought the Spirit Dawn to the center of the Black World. First Woman, First Boy and Girl did the same with Blue Twilight Spirit, Yellow Twilight Spirit and Folding Darkness Spirit. Those that stepped up on the Spirit Dawn, Blue Twilight Spirit and the Spirit of the Four Cardinal Directions were carried to the next world, the Blue World.

For as long as the People are able to recall oral *hane'*, they used it to teach the children the meaning of respect, honor, and appreciate the elements of life such as playing with fire. Young children should understand that fire

hurts and destroys when used carelessly. They are encouraged to know that fire is an essential life element first created by the Holy Ones and it must be respected.

Traditional elders relate to fire through kinship terms: grandfather and grandmother fire and it is use tenderly and with care. Fire is referred to by many names such are: *Áłtsé Dahiichii'í Asdzáán dóó Áłtsé Dahiichii'í Hastiin* (First Created Bright Light Woman and Man), *Hajíínéí Kó* (Emergent Fire) or *Tséghádinííní Kó'* (Crystal Fire). Fire is recognized sacred, living and useful for cooking food, heating up a home, healing and nurturing the mental and physical body in certain ceremonies. For instance, fire is used to heat up rocks for the sweat lodge ceremony. Songs are constructed to patronize and honor the strength of fire to heal. Another example for using fire to heal is in the Mountain Way Chant. Fire dancers are people initiated and/or healed by fire and have gained their place to use fire to heal. Traditional teachers advised that a person not initiated by fire not use fire for sport, work and/or in healing due consequences of becoming confused and losing a sense of direction.

In the contemporary society, special events such as weddings, the fourth of July, New Year and/or birthdays are celebrated with luminous firecrackers of various colored lights. The understatement of the elders is: How respectful a person feels for the sacred elements of life is how he conducts himself because he is related to by the sacred elements in the same matter as fire, so be mindful of how the fire is used in the home.

Nihodootł'izh / Blue World

Nihodootł'izh, the Blue World, is identified as the Second World. *Hane'* portrays there was more water than land and everything was the color of the blue sky. Powerful *Táshchozhii Dine'é*, a certain bluish bird, inhabited the Blue World. They had unusual dwellings located in the four directions. One day First Man approached the creatures and was attacked by them. The bird creatures wanted no part of the creatures from below. First Man defended himself with his bow and arrows and killed many *Táshchozhii Dine'é*. They were no-match to the weapons First Man was using. The birds offered prayers and songs to make peace with him. Feeling sorry for the *Táshchozhii Dine'é* he restored life to the dead ones.

The Blue World was divided into regions. In the eastern region lived the wolves, *Ma'ii Tsoh*. In the southern region lived wild cats, *Náshdóí*. In the western region lived the kit fox, *Ma'iił Tsooí*. In the northern region lived mountain lions, *Náshdóí Tsoh*. There were many other four-legged animals such as buffalo, deer, weasel, bear, sheep and others. Emergent People lived with the *Táshchozhii Dine'é* and learned from them the sacred prayers and songs. Harvesting Spirit created and planted sacred plants such as squash, tobacco and beans. Corn was created in the Black World. Plants did well in the four directions where they were planted. However, the creatures did not live in peace. Animals fought and killed each other. First Man made arrows out of oak and nap arrowheads out of flint and attached it to a long straight piece of oak and used it to kill the animals that made troubles. Animals offered peace for an exchange of songs and prayers with First Man. First Man brought the dead ones back to life.

As time went on, more and more disharmony rose amongst them. Soon, the natural laws of the four cardinal directions were forgotten. The living beings became disobedient, stole, lied, cheated and mistreated one another. First Man from the top of the highest mountain blew tobacco smoke in all directions to rid the world of evil. Trouble ceased for a short period and continued again. He sent zigzag and straight lightning bolt, rainbow and sunray spirits across the land but made little impact on the problems. Next, he called the Yellow Wind, *Nítch'í Kitsoi*, and it drilled an opening into the northern sky. The world began to move side to side causing bitter cold winds to blow and blow across the land. He placed footprints on his sacred wand and offered survival for those wishing to go to the next world to step upon the footprints and be taken into the Yellow World. The Blue World was then destroyed by wind and ice, *Niyol Tsoh dóó tin*. The Holy Ones moved on to the Yellow World, *Ni'holtso*. Bitter cold wind and water followed the first beings into the Yellow World.

Using the *Hane'*, children are taught to avoid wind twisters *na'ats'q'ooldísii yázhí*, hail *níló* from tornadoes, *níyoltsoh*, and avoid playing in icy water. Lack of respect for the sacred elements will result in illness, discomforts and mishaps. A person should not retrieve items that the wind carries off, such as pieces of clothes, hats and caps. Children are taught not pick up hail after a storm to eat or play with. People should not retrieve an animal that has fallen into an icy pond and use for food. The ceremony *Nítch'íjí*, the Wind Way, is identified as remedy for illness and discomfort

connected to wind and air. *Tóyee*, the Water Way, is identified as a ceremony for healing illness, discomfort, mishaps and disease due to becoming disharmony with moisture. Water and air are sacred elements of life and were first created at the beginning of time.

Ni'haltso / Yellow World

Ni'haltso, the Yellow World, is identified as the Third World. This world was yellowish green in color. *Ni'* is referring to the ground and *haltso* means grassy yellowish green. Two large rivers crossed one over the other one flowing from the east to west and the other from south to north. There were six sacred mountains, four coinciding with the four cardinal directions and two centered. The birds became a symbol for happiness in the *Ni'haltso*. They agreed to provide healing knowledge for the First People. Turkey was the first to step into the Third World. As he shook himself, corn, beans, nuts and other seeds dropped from his wings. The Holy Ones, the sacred mountains, the four cardinal directions were reestablished in the Third World. First Man and First Woman were anointed with white and yellow cornmeal on a flawless buckskin placed on the ground with the head end facing east and they laid with heads toward the westward direction, covered with another buckskin. White, Blue, Yellow and Black Winds revitalized the spirit of First Man and First Woman to possess humanistic features. They were given feathers to wear in their hair. Harvest Holy One modeled how to plant and harvest the plants for food and use for medicine. First Man and First Woman had children. Children were sung to and they moved with the songs. Flute was constructed to produce various sounds. Certain animals became domesticated. First Family learned to hunt large animals for food. They learned to make clothes, jewelries and tools to make life more interesting. First Family constructed a home and they used fire to cook their food. Women folks became more involved in providing leadership in the every day activities. *Ni'haltso* was a good place to live and raise young ones. Plenty of plants grew and used for food and medicine. There were varieties of large animals hunted for food. More work became obvious for both men and women to do.

Separation of Male and Female

The Holy Ones lived in the *Ni'haltso* with various beings. Life was wonderful and plentiful for every one. Everyone had plenty of leisure time to play, to explore, and to experiment with new ideas. However, again, troubles brewed and caused the separation of the male and female for the Holy Ones. Female folks decided to move away from their counterpart, the males and show them they can survive without their help. The males agreed, also, to move away and see if they, the females, can actually survive without their help. They moved across one of the river.

The first year, the females performed well. They planted, harvested and worked hard to show the males that they were determined to prove themselves. The second year, they did fairly well. They gathered and stored enough food to take them through the winter without starving. The third year only half of the fields were planted and very little food were gathered and stored. Some become sick and died. The fourth year, the females became fewer in numbers by attempting to swim across the rivers to reach the males and drowned. The males did not performed well either. They failed to reproduced and decreased in numbers to sickness and death. Recognizing what the separation of the male and female has caused, they agreed to unite and live as one People again.



Hajínéí – Emergent
Told by Miller Attakai, 1956
Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



One day as First Man was looking inside his pouch, a white shell fell out and Coyote begged for the shell. He would not stop his begging, so First Man gave him the white shell. Coyote took the shell to a whirling pool to find out what magic was inside it. He took the shell and held it over a whirling pool. The pool began to whirl round and round, faster and faster. He moved the shell up and down over the pool. The moving water rose up and down with the shell. He discovered the water rose and fell in unison with the shell. He continued to manipulate the water until the water rose higher and higher and until the floor of the pond was exposed. He discovered the babies of the water monster, *Tééhoołtsódii*, at the bottom of the pool. He thought them to be cute so he quickly snatched them from their home, tugged them under his arms and run away with them.

Four cycles of time later white pillars rose from the four directions and the First Beings send runners to gather information about the white pillars. "It's water. Lot's of water rising toward the sky." They proclaimed.

The Holy Ones quickly called a council meeting to find a way to escape the rising water and discussed various ways and means to get away. Others prepared to leave the Yellow World. First Man collected samples of clouds, mountain dirt from the six mountains, various corn kernels, seeds from various plants, and told the rest to climb the highest mountain. The Beings tried to climb a tall blue spruce. It was not tall enough. They tried a tall pine tree. It was not tall enough. First Man found a reed plant growing at the edge of a pool of water. He prayed and sang to stimulate the *Lók'aa Tsoh* to grow faster. It grew and grew and grew higher and higher responding well to his songs and prayers. It reached the sky above. The Beings climbed inside the hollow reed. Locust, First Man and First Woman were at the front. Turkey was the last to get into the reed. He was huge and fitted like a stopper at the end of the reed plant. His tail constantly brushed the white foam of the rising water. The caravan traveled upward inside the reed over a period of time. Yellow World was destroyed in a great flood.



Water Monster Babies

Told by Miller Attakai, 1957
Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



Locust emerged into the White World first and discovered water had covered the land in the White World as well and was seeping yet into the new world. The caravan built a dike around the opening to slow the water from seeping into the new land. The caravan huddled around the place of emergent. The nose of the water monster, *Tééhoołtsódii* continue returning and was seen poking out of the seeping water several times.

First Man questioned the notion unusual and concluded that someone is responsible for upsetting the water monster and causing the flood. He called a council meeting and made known to others on the conclusion he has reached for the water to continue seeping into the new land. The Holy Ones looked at one another and became curious at the behavior of Coyote. Coyote was distanced and unusually quite. They questioned him of his action. He denied all allegations and said he does not know why the water continued to seep onto the land. The Beings moved around in desperation. Someone noticed Coyote wrapping his covering tidily around him and refusing to take it off. Two Beings approached him and ripped the covering off him. Two little water monster babies fell to the ground.

From *hane'*, children are taught, to leave animals, birds, reptiles, insects and amphibians and their habitats alone if they have no purpose with them. The critters were once beautiful members of the Holy Ones. However, because they lacked respect for one another their powers were reduced or taken away. The Holy Ones heard their plea and were given permission to inflict illness, discomforts, mishaps and diseases on anyone lacking respect for them. For examples, children should display respect for snakes by dragging their feet over tracks left by snakes before continuing their journey on a road or trail. Children are taught to leave birds, feathers, eggs, claws and beaks alone. They are not to handle any of them. Handling any parts of a bird disrespectfully or inappropriately will result in developing sores on the body. Making feathered fans and/or bird-bone whistles, used in many ceremonies, should be done away from the home and family members.



Nihalgai / White World

Told by Miller Attakai, 1956

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



The Holy Ones emerged to the *Ni'halgai*, the White World or the Fourth World. The story identifies the place as the Place of Emergence. The Holy Ones came from the lower worlds into this world. Locust, *Dinééh Diyini*, was first to come upon the surface and was challenged by water monsters called *Chííhtahjiilgaii*. *Dinééh Diyini* is not the locust we are familiar with today. He sacrificed his gift in the name of courage to win a place for the First Living Beings to live and migrate within the White World.

At the time of emergence, he was a beautiful handsome being. As he emerged, he was challenged by a White *Chííhtahjiilgaii* and was told to return to the underworld. *Chííhtahjiilgaii* told him they live in peace and want no part of their evil ways. Locust was determined and persistence. He was given four days to endure the heat without food and water and see if he still wants to stay. Locust felt the hot air and could not endure it. He scooped up mud and covered himself head to toe. The mud dried and formed a hardened crust. He loosened himself from it and returned to the underworld for healing. He blistered and scratched himself crazy. First Man administered prayers and songs he had obtained from the Blue World to heal Locust.

At the end of the fourth day, Locust resumed his position at the place of emergence and was quickly approached by a Blue *Chííhahjiilgaii* from the south. He was, again, told to leave. Creatures of the White World wanted no part of the underground people. Locust, again, stood on his determination and stayed. *Chííhtahjiilgaii Dootłizhigii* told him if he is still there the end of the fourth day, his request may be considered further. He disappeared. Locust remained and on the third day, he discovered that he had developed sore throat and cough persistently. He, again, returned to the underworld for healing. First Man, again, had remedies for this type of sickness. He rolled up medicinal tobacco and treated Locust. At the end of the fourth day, Locust returned to his position. No sooner then he settled back at the mouth of the emergence, a Yellow *Chííhtahjiilgaii* approached him from the west in fury. He roared and tried to intimidate Locust back to the underworld. He firmly stood his ground not blinking an eye. *Chííhtahjiilgaii Łitsoigii* left with a warning that at the end of the

fourth day, the Mighty All Powerful *Black Chííhtahgjiilgaii* will destroy him. Sure enough, at the end of the fourth day, *Black Chííhtahgjiilgaii* approached Locust from the southern direction. *Chííhtahgjiilgaii* Łizhinigii thrust an arrow through his mouth and pulled it out at the other end of his body. He thrust another arrow from the other end of his body and pulled it out from his mouth. He ordered Locust to do likewise. If he lives, he and his followers will be allowed to stay. Locust, then, took two arrows and crossed them through his chest cavities under his armpits, one out through the other. He told *Black Chííhtahgjiilgaii*, it's more risky through the heart than through the mouth and out the other end where there are openings already.

Black Chííhtahgjiilgaii backed away from Locust and said, "You are welcome to stay." Locust wheezed a "Thank you." and was not able to speak again. Locust became the locust of today. On a very hot summer day, a person may hear *Wiineeshch'íídi* buzzing on tops of bushes.

The lessons learned and taught to the children from this story are many. One could be that determination and persistence can get you what you want, however, there is a price for everything. You will get what you want for an exchange of sweat and hard work. Nothing is free. The story also portrays the origin of earth surface human infections, diseases, and illnesses. Remedies are attainable as well. The story conveys an understanding that the counterpart for negative activity is to gain the positive understanding and heal. Due to the story, long ago, children were encouraged to eat locust to be immune to illnesses, diseases, and other infections. Scientifically, insects are high in proteins, vitamins, iron and other minerals a body needs to be healthy. Children are taught to display respect for all living matters and to understand the animals have a place amongst the human species.

There are countless stories told that branched into various directions in the White World for various purposes. Many are told within *hátáál* ceremony for healing.

One story told often to children is of how Coyote stole the babies of the water monster and caused the flood in the Yellow World. He refused to return the babies to their mother. He continued to say that he had legitimate reasons for taking the babies from their mother. So, the Holy Ones

met and decided to offer precious gems to the water monster in exchange for the babies. Precious piece of gems brought and placed in a basket by the Holy Ones. The basket was placed on top of the water monster's head when she merged out of the water. She emerged back into the water as quickly as she was out and never bothered the Beings again. The Holy Ones offered prayers and songs in appreciation for the water monster babies. The male water monster baby was asked to be the guardian over *Nítsá Biká dóó Nítsá Bí'áád*, moisture in upper creation. The female water monster baby was assigned to take care of moisture in the lower creation, *Tó Asdzáá*. She is called upon in time of need as *Tó Asdzáá Nihimá*. The babies became useful to the earth surfaced people. In time of need, a medicine person will offer precious gems to a natural flowing mountain spring water asking for help. Water is, also, used as a healing element in many ceremonies.

The lesson for a child to understand is to appropriately offer precious gem should he/she need to use elements from the environment. A person should not be disrespectful of sacred elements or of other living matters in the environment. There are others living in this world same as humans. All contribute to the living world in their own way. All continue to contribute to searching for answers to issues of this world. It is appropriate for one to offer precious gems or *tádííín* to obtain for personal use. One important habit for a child to develop is to sit still, listen and observe the activities within the environment. For instance what would a child learn if he took the time to listen and observe the environment on a rainy day? He may learn to use all of his senses to explore and yet remind in one place. He may learn to appreciate and understand the awakening of the animals at the first sound of the spring thunder. He may learn to listen, observe and understand how many creatures communicate same as the earth and sky communicate through the rumbling of thunder, flashes of lightning, raindrops and rainbow. A child at an early age may learn he is apart of the great mystical creation. He may understand the importance of displaying reverence. Traditional elders understand that water sustains life and is properly called *Tó Asdzáá Nihimá*. It is told children should understand the sacred relationship and the interdependency of the living and the nonliving world. The most important lesson to learn is to respect the natural world as you would respect yourself.



Tł'iish Tsoh, Náshdóí Tsoh, Shash, Ma'ii Tsoh, and Dahsání

Told by Ernest H. Begay, 2004

By Sylvia Jackson

The Holy Ones, Wind, Crystal and Mist People existed throughout the various worlds with the first living beings. Respect, responsibility, having compassionate, fairness, and honesty became virtues shown by the Holy Ones as the living beings progressed through time. Before reaching a decision, the Holy Ones encouraged and welcome ideas from everyone. In many stories the *Nítch'í Diyin Dine'é* called on the quite reluctant ones and often the ideas they contributed were valued and fruitful.

Hane' portrays *Tł'iish Tsoh*, *Náshdóí Tsoh*, *Shash*, *Ma'ii Tsoh*, and *Dahsání* selected to be spokespersons for their kind. There were others selected for the flight, reptile and fish people. They, once, were beautiful handsome beings, respected, recognized with authority and power to speak for their kind. Several cycles of change went on, they became abusive, unfair and failed to serve their followers. They were observed by others to serve their own needs above others. Therefore, the Holy Ones striped them of their authorities and gave them bodies that they now have. For hitting, kicking and yelling at others, the Holy Ones took away arms and legs from the *Tł'iish Tsoh*. So, today, he crawls and hisses. *Náshdóí Tsoh*, *Shash* and *Ma'ii Tsoh* were given their fearful permanent appearances of today, so that others run away from them. They no longer speak but roar, growl and show their terrible teeth. *Dahsání* was given her fearful appearance as well. She has no friends because of her quills.

The Holy Ones came to a time when leaders were needed to keep order, to guide, to teach, and to protect. *Shash* was appointed as spokesperson believing that he would represent his kind well. He displayed his quality through a song and was given the authority to lead. A day came when he was sought for his ability to advise and lead. He was nowhere to be found. The followers looked far and beyond the mountains surrounding the settlers. *Shash* was gone. A tracker was consulted and was asked to find *Shash*. He tracked him right into a cave and reported that he is asleep and could not be awoken. He was out of sight for three full moons. Finally, in

early spring, along side the new budding plants, *Shash* came out of the cave to find that *Ma'ii tsoh* was now in authority to lead.

Everyone was happy with *Ma'ii tsoh*. He was observed to have an abundance of energy and enthusiasm to be moving about all the time. He had no problem visiting with everyone. He was a traveler. One day, a problem arose and he was sought for advice and leadership. No one could find him as the followers return to his home day after day until they lost hope, faith, and trust in him to be there for them. *Náshdóí Tsoh*, cougar, replacement of *Ma'ii tsoh* for being in the right place and time as a discussion was taking place for a replacement. He was observed to possess patience, excellent in hunting skills, and had keen sight for hunting. The followers thought he was a good listener.

The followers were once again happy with their appointed leader. Once again, a dispute arose over hunting region between the hunters. *Náshdóí Tsoh* could not be located. Three followers were placed on surveillance to catch *Náshdóí Tsoh* on his return to his home. They witnessed a female cougar come and go for several days and finally they approached his home to inquire on their leader's whereabouts. The female cougar told them their leader did not live there. The followers became confused. The nearby neighbor told them he has seen him come out of his home through the back entrance each night. The next night, the followers covered both entrances and saw a female cougar go in from the main entrance and later a male cougar left through the rear entrance. They went to the home and insisted on waiting for him until he returned. No one was home. They entered the home and found evidence that cougar lived double lives. They concluded that he/she was confused.

Next, *Tlishtsoh* was appointed to replace cougar. His quality was silence, a keen observer, and listened well to others. His role was to provide protection for his followers. One day he was asked by his neighbor to watch over the children while they are gone. The children were beautiful and he could not resist his admiration to touch them. When his neighbors returned they observed the children to withdraw, afraid, and were not the happy children they left with big snake. They were afraid to come out of the home and play lively as they once did. The parents found out what had happened and ask eagle to punish *Tlishtsoh* for touching the children and causing them to be afraid. Eagle discovered that *Tlishtsoh* had two

children of his own. In his ruling, one child was taken away for him and was changed into a cat to show that his action has a consequence on his own children. For his shortcomings, his own children will never ever get along again as earth surface living beings. If ever in the same local, a cat will kill a snake.

Tłishtsoh was again replace by the eagle, himself. His qualities were endurance to fly high into several layers of various air/wind as he flies into the sky and yet, is able to see activities close to the ground level. He displayed knowledge of appropriateness and inappropriateness. He was discovered to be honest, true, frank and compassionate in his ruling. Eagle ruled for a long time. He rules the sky even today.

There were many others chosen to lead such are Blue Jay, whom was easily persuaded and manipulated by her followers. There was *Dahsání*, porcupine, whom was a critical creature and no one could stand her.



Nihodisqs / Glittering World

By Sylvia Jackson

Hajíínéí is the White World, leadership role for the male and female were identified. The Holy Ones established roles and responsibilities for the male and female in this world. It became clear that the role of the male is to provide protection, direction and guidance for his home and family. The role of a female is to take care of the home and nurture the young ones. The Beings understood that they must work as a team, father and mother to provide for the family. The family will have a home such as the sacred mountains surrounding the People is a home. Appropriate behaviors and attitudes for the People were identified. Respect, responsibility, caring, honesty, self-sufficient will be the virtues for the home and family. There will be a continuous need for learning, through listening, observing, displaying curiosity and yet have emotional self-control. It was observed and agreed upon by everyone that each needs to contribute to the wellness of the family.

According to the understanding and belief of the Navajo elders, Mother Earth is the mother of all creations. All earth surface creatures came to the earth surface from within Mother Earth as if coming through her in

birth. In essence, she nurtures the development of all living things from the beginning of time. With what she provides, human beings dress themselves materialistically and psychologically. She materializes within the human intelligence, habits, sensations, and simply through living and breathing. This means all that is to be learned by man is met to be or waiting to be uncovered. The understanding of growth and purpose can be fully understood from having knowledge of how the People came to be the human race on the earth surface. The greatest creation, *Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh Hózhóón*, the living world, deserves honor, respect, perseverance and care for life to continue replenishing itself is the teaching of the medicine people.

Upper creation, the sky nurtures earth with the necessary elements that sustains life: light, air, and moisture. Therefore, the Navajo elders address the upper creation as Father Sky, *Shitaa' Yádiłhił*. Father Sky materializes within the human intelligence through understanding the spiritual laws and the natural laws for life to exist. Evidence of *áhó'ni* between Mother Earth and Father Sky is observable through existence of people, animals, birds, insects and other living creatures of this world. The understanding of how humans develop attitudes and behavior is directly related to understanding the spiritual world and patterns of communication with self and surroundings. Traditional elders understand that the appearance of human being reflected the creation in that the feet and legs are planted firmly on the surface of Mother Earth, *Nihimá Nahasdzáán*. The body is standing erected as *Yá'hałnííneeyání*, so that the head is one and the same with the upper creation. Knowledge is one and the same with the stars that light up the sky at night. Storm clouds and rain are understood to be one and the same with the hair on the head of the People. In this matter the human being is created in the image of the Holy Ones. Water, light, air and food are essential elements that produce growth. All aspect of being a human being is viewed sacred through the understanding.



Jóhonaa'ei doo Tle'hona'ei

Sun and Moon

Told by Miller Attakai, 1956
Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

A time system by which to understand the passage of time was discussed in the *Nahat'á hooghan* by the Holy Ones. The system by which the earth surface people would understand the passage of time: birth, aging, dying, death, and returning to Mother Earth was determined by the *Ya't'aa Nazilei*, the heavenly bodies: sun, moon, and stars.

Traditional *hane'* tells of light that seemed to evolve around the People in a clockwise fashion. Morning, mid day and evening were not notable. The Holy Ones came together and talked about a need for more lighting in the *Nahat'á Hooghan*. They tried several means, methods and ways, but all failed to be reliable. Sun was made from ember carried from past kingdoms and a strong person was sought out to carry the light across the sky, an ideal position to light up the world. The Holy Ones had been meeting for a length of time and were running out of suggestions when they noticed a slim young man sitting near the entrance, attending all the meetings, and refraining from contributing. He sat quietly and observed. One curious individual finally asked the young man to identify himself and tell everyone why he has not contributed to the discussion. The Holy Ones asked him to come forth, swing the light element, *Jóhonaa'ei*, sun, over his shoulder, mount a palomino stallion and ride into the horizon. He did and was able to do so with such grace, easement, and flexibility. Everyone was happy with his ability to carry the daylight giver. They agreed that he should be the caretaker of the daylight giver. He became the Sun Bearer. The Holy Ones discovered the young man had been the caretaker of fire in the underworld and was acquainted with the power and energy of fire and light.

Next, the Holy Ones discussed light for the nighttime. The night critters requested for more light at night, just enough light to see by while the

day creatures slept. An element with lesser lighting was discussed and created. A question was asked, "Who is going to be the caretaker of this element?"

Young ones were observed for ability, capabilities, strengths and enthusiasm. Again, an individual, quite, aloft and did not contribute to the discussion was noted sitting near the entrance of *Nahat'á Hooghan*. They asked the young person to come forth. He did and was told to swing the element with lesser lighting over his shoulder, mount a bay mare and ride into the horizon. He did so with easy and satisfaction. Everyone agreed he should become the caretaker of the *Tle'honaa ei*. The shy young man became known as Moon Bearer. He had been the caretaker of cinder and ash in the underworld. The Holy Ones now had a brighter daytime and nighttime light. They were happy with the results of their work.

Jóhonaa'ei came up on the first day from the east and rose into the sky. It was considered one of the most beautiful days. People busied themselves with eagerness to get much done in the bright, bright and warm daylight. The sun rose to mid morning and returned to the horizon. The People became alarmed and asked one another, "What is the meaning of this? Who will answer for this occurrence?"

Everyone came together to discuss what has just occurred and tried to understand what should be done to correct it. Another person disturbed the discussion by saying, "*Asdzáá Naat'ááh* is missing. She is nowhere to be found. Has anyone seen her?"

Older People continued the discussion to understand why the *Jóhonaa'e* failed to reach mid day. Two young people were sent out to look for the missing person. First Boy and First Girl returned to the place of emergent and found that *Asdzáá Naat'ááh* had returned to the underworld. She sat with her back to them, brushing her long black hair. They asked her why she had returned to the underworld and she responded that the wager for the Sun Bearer would be lives of the earth surface people. There would be a beginning and ending for everyone and everything on the earth surface. All will return to the Mother Earth. First Boy and First Girl returned to the group discussing why Sun Bearer failed to reach mid day. They told them they had found the missing person. She had returned to the place of emergent and reentered the underworld. Elders in discussion asked,

"Why had she done this?"

First Boy and First Girl explained to the council what *Asdzáá Naat'ááh* had told them. The People understood and agreed. The sun rose again and this time, the first day was completed without any further interruptions.

The first evening came with the *Tłe'honaa'ei* rising in the east. Again, the People said it was a beautiful evening and they continued to work by the bright light it gave off. There was much to be done and every passage of time was important. Then, the light began to fade and disappeared into the horizon. Again, the *Tłe'honaa'ei* failed to reach mid sky. It returned to the east and the evening became dark. The People understood the wager for Moon Bearer to provide light was to take life from the living on the earth surface. Those that return to earth at night would be wagers for Moon Bearer. However, those that are born to earth surface people would replace those leaving. The process of death, dying and rejuvenating life was understood. There would be a renewing process with the process of time. The People agreed that this was fair. The moon rose again and completed the first night providing light for the night creatures.



Sq̣ Diyin Dine'é / Creation of Constellation

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

The Holy Ones discussed the growing process, as they observed and understood it. If all living things return to earth and are replaced with new life, then, there is a growing process in place. The passage of time is in the system and the People understood the system by observing a moment of germination and conception, new births, maturity and old age for all living matters. The Holy Ones met, discussed, planned and laid out the constellation by which the People will understand the passage of time, growing and aging.

One day was set aside for everyone to participate. *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* placed a flawless buckskin on the ground. Other Holy Ones brought precious gems of all colors, sizes, and shapes to produce specific pattern and design to depict their character and ability. First Man constructed a pattern he called *Náhookosi Bik'á'ii*, the Big Dipper. He chose seven colorful stones in the pattern. First Woman constructed a pattern she called

Náhookosi Bi'aadii, Cassiopeia and had five stones in the pattern. They placed the patterns in the northern sky around the North Star, with their own fire hearth, between them. The pair will evolve around their fire hearth, *Náhookosi Bikq*, the North Star. Everyone was satisfied with the arrangements. First Slender One constructed the pattern and named it, *Átsé Áts'óózí*, First Warrior. It is also known today as Orion. He said the pattern would remind the earth surface People to protect one another and to have compassion for all living matters in the environment. The pattern would remind the People to protect themselves against harmful ailments of the world such as illness, virus, bacteria, and dangerous pollutant in the environment.

The constellation, *Átsé Átsoh*, Scorpius, portrays the growth of all living things and the process of growing to become old. *Átsé e'tsoh* has a cane depicting the aging process as well as births. First Boy and Girl constructed *Dilyéhé*, the Pleiades. They remembered children were often left behind or left out each time the Holy Ones journeyed away from home. Children would remind the People to enjoy life, take time out to play and have fun. *Hastiin Sik'ai'íí*, also known as Corvus, would remind the People to develop thinking and planning skills. The pattern would remind the People to enjoy living life by initiating plans, goals and pursuing initiatives to make it all happen. The pattern would remind the earth surface People the importance of practicing good leadership. *Só' Ahóts'íí*, Taurus, was created to interpret affection and concern for life. *Gah Heet'e'íi*, Tail of Scorpius, depicts a colorful growing cycle that replicates with the passage of time. It represents animals, birds, and others of the living world to be used for food. It would be understood that they have a place on earth to live and enjoy life as well. However, their purpose would also be to provide energy and mental / physical strengths as they become a meal for others. The creatures agreed to be food for others. Understanding leadership abilities and capabilities are then set within the constellation patterns.

Everyone was deeply involved when Coyote, *Hayoolkááltah Dítwoshí*, came upon the construction of the constellation patterns. In his display of anger, he grabbed the edge of the buckskin and flanged the gems into the sky with the twist of his wrist shouting, "Why not do this and save time. There is much to be done around here."

Apparently, Coyote was upset, because no one reminded him of this planned activity. He was too busy wondering aimlessly, poking his nose into businesses of others. The beautiful gems landed and became the *Só'laanii* of today. One big reddish gem did not stick to the sky, it returned to earth. Coyote picked it up and tossed it into the southern sky, shouting, "This will be known as *Ma'ii bizq* from this day forward."

The bright star appears in the southern night sky at sundown for a short time and then it disappears out of sight into the western horizon. The gem is known, today, as the planet Venus.

The constellation patterns placed in the sky were discussed and designed for specific purposes such as the *Náhookos Bikā'* and the *Náhookos Bi'áádii* and the fire hearth, *Náhookos Bikq'*. The pattern exhibits the changes of the seasons. In early spring, *Náhookos Bi'áádii* will be visible in the northeastern sky. *Nahokosi Bika'ii* will be visible in the same location in the early fall evening. *Náhookos Bikq'*, the North Star, remains in one location all the time. All constellations evolve around the North Star.

The traditional understanding is that, the constellation patterns depict proper roles and responsibilities of families. *Náhookos Bikā'ii* reigns over the fall and winter seasonal activities for the People. *Yéi'ii Bichei* and *ílnáshjinjí hataál*, are winter healing ceremonies. *Nidáá* and *Hozhonjii Hataál* are the spring and summer healing ceremony under the reign of *Náhookos Bi'áádii*. Being aware of the purposes of the constellations helps in understanding the traditional practices of *Diné* Way of Life. Such as the First Slender One also known as *Átsé e 'ts'ózí*, representing youthful initiatives and minds of inquisitions. First Warrior, also known as *Átsé Tsoh*, representing matured male adult and his role is to protect and guide the family. The Pleiades, *Dilyéhé*, reflecting the role and responsibilities for children. It is told that when the Holy Ones were migrating from place to place, the children would play and often get left behind. An individual would have to be in the back, to get the children caught up with the group. It also depicts an understanding of youthfulness and beginning of new life. The elders use the movement of the Pleiades to begin preparing to plant. The traditional healers use the movement of the Pleiades to begin practicing certain ceremonies.

Eclipse of the Sun and Moon

Told by Miller Attakai, 1957

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Eclipses occur when the sun, earth and moon line up. Lunar eclipse occurs when the earth moves directly between the sun and moon and casts a shadow on the moon. Solar eclipse is when the moon moves between the sun and earth and casts a shadow on earth. All activities should cease when an eclipse is occurring. Traditional medicine people encourage a display of respect and reverence. No one should eat, sleep and avoid looking at the eclipse. They understand a special interdependency and rejuvenating relationship is occurring between the sun, earth, moon, and stars so that earth surface life can rejuvenate in the upcoming of the spring and summer season.

Summer solstice occurs when the sun reaches the furthest raising point to the north. Winter solstices occur when the sun reaches the furthest raising point to the south. Summer and winter equinoxes occur when the length of day is equal to the length of night in either season. It is understood by the traditional people that these are sacred times for the natural world, the elements of life. Traditional medicine people encourage meditation, singing of sacred honor songs and prayers at the time any of this activity is occurring. Children were taught to understand the meaning of this practice early in age. Natural occurrence should be understood as experiencing affection between the universal makeup, the people, animal, and other living matters. The activity is understood by traditional people as normal and necessary due to the force of creation however sacred.

The act of displaying affection for another person is a sacred act similar to the act of the natural world. Earth surfaced people are of a higher order of species and members of higher order of species are able to think, talk, and display sound mindedness. They are expected to control their emotions. People are thinkers, they are able to expand their knowledge and understand appropriate behavior and attitude. They are learners and have ability to understand before they act. They are, also, blessed with the capabilities to express emotion, joy, laugh and cry. Human beings are emotional mammals, highly skilled to create and improvise for themselves. The Five Fingered Beings are created in the image of the Holy

Ones. They are created with the highest level of intellect to reach beyond the animal instincts to control their emotions.

Traditional people use to watch the movement of the moon and the appearances of the sun to predict the type of weather approaching within the particular crescent moon or the appearance of the sun circle. A straight crescent moon with the ends at the top and bottom predicts wetness in the air. A crescent moon with the ends to the side forming a bowl in the sky, predicts wind and the movement of air. A rainbow encircling the sun predicts rain or wetness. A short rainbow at each side of the sun predicts the amount of moisture to expect within three to four days. These are the common predictions made.

One other prediction is predicting the birth of a child within a movement of the moon from crescent to full. If the birth of a child is approaching a particular crescent moon, the prediction is the child is male. If the birth of a child is approaching full moon, then, the child is female. Traditional mother predicted the birth of their grandchild first by being aware of possible conception time using the moon phase. To the *Diné* People, there are thirteen crescent moons within one year.

Na'atłó / String Game

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Na'atłó originated with the story of *Na'ashj'e'í Asdzáá* at the beginning of time. *Na'ashj'e'í Asdzáá* is mentioned in several stories as a character with magical gift and performs wonders as she comes to the aide of the Heroic Twins.

Naayééneizighání and *To'bájishchini* listened carefully as Grandmother Spider, *Na'ashj'e'í Asdzáá*, told them the creation story and of the various kingdoms through which the People emerged to the White World over time. The Twins had come upon a hole in the ground following the sound of a singing female voice. It sounded so beautiful they stopped to listen when the opening to the hole expanded and caused them to fall into the hole. It was the home of *Na'ashj'e'í Asdzáá*. She did not look away from her loom to see who had come to see her. She told them to sit down on the floor covering provided so she can began her story on the road to Sun Bearer's home. She began her story, "The journey will be treacherous,

long, and hard to your father's home. Dangerous plants, animals, and natural occurrence will test your wits and courage before you arrive at your father's home. He, himself, is not to be trusted."

The story was long and entailed information on difficult obstacles and the Twins just did not want to imagine challenges just yet. They were excited with taking the journey to meet their father and did not want to think about obstacles. They attempted to excuse themselves to leave but Grandmother Spider told them to wait while she observed how much daylight is left yet for traveling. She excused herself through the opening to check on the position of the sun in the sky. The sun had reached mid day. She looped the sun with her web string and dragged it down to setting in the west to delay the young warriors for one night to tell them more stories.

Na'ashj'e'i Asdzáá has always been one of the Twins spiritual guardians throughout the creation story. In the story of fighting the evil *Yé'í Tsoh Tséninahalééh* she came to the aide of *Naayééneizighání* when he became stuck atop *Tsé Bitá'í* after knocking the monsters down the bluff and crashing into the ground. On a very hot day, a little moving speck came closer and closer to the call for help by *Naayééneizighání*. When the little speck reached the top of *Tsé Bitá'í*, it was *Na'ashj'e'i Asdzáá*. She climbed the *Tsé Bitá'í* to the top and scolded her grandson for the foolishness of getting stranded. She placed her grandson in her bag of webs with a warning to keep his eyes shut tightly, regardless of how long it takes her to take him down to the ground. Her order was firmly given, "Whatever you do, keep your eyes shut until I'm firmly on the ground."

Spider Woman descended to the ground with a chant, "Between the craves, I bounced back and forth. *Jaah, Jaah, Jaah.*"

Naayééneizighání listened to the chanting of Grandmother Spider as the basket swung back and forth, back and forth and back and forth. It seemed like forever getting to the ground. He became edgy and took a little peek. Down, down, down they fell and crashed to the ground, head over heel. Spider Woman was furious. She scolded him for not following her direction. She tried to stand up. Her legs bend way over her head. Her head was near the ground. *Naayééneizighání* stood up and looked at his

grandmother. He refrained from laughing out loud. She looked funny. She jumped up and down, trying to straighten her legs out.

He proposed peacemaking with his grandmother and offered her feathers, beaks and bones of the dead creatures on the ground. She was delighted. She filled her bag of web with feathers of multi-colors and soon forgot about her condition. *Naayééneizighání* warned her to avoid traveling through the patch of sunflowers with her bag or she will loose her bag to the sticky leaves of the sunflowers. *Ná'ashje'í Asdzáá* eagerly agreed that she would not go through the patch of sunflowers however, she did.

Na'ashje'í Asdzáá is known as a creature of intellect possession of knowledge of what is unknown to human kind. She creates. *Na'atló* was learned from her. As she told of the creation story, she was designing her story so that the Twins could remember.

Certain string patterns are openers for the winter season. Two Coyotes Running for One Another, *Ma'íí Atsáá Yíwoli*, is the first opener. One Big Star, *Só tsoh*, is the next pattern. *Só Bidééi*, the Horned Star, is third with *Só Lání* as the fourth and final pattern to learn and produce before allowing children to play with string. To end the winter season and conclude playing with string, there are closing patterns to learn and produce, referred to as *Atsá Lééh*.

Ma'íí Atsáá Yíwoli represents the four coyotes running to the four cardinal directions to find understanding to his questions: "why", "what", "who", "where", and "how" the *Diyin Dine'é* performed or requested certain task to be done in certain sequence or patterns. *Só Tsoh* represents the importance of light. Light guides and provides visible pathway to finding out answers. A child is advised to seek guidance which may provide light / understanding. *Só Bidééi* represents determination and persistence. *Só Lání* represents numerous things to learn within a lifetime and one will not learn all there is to learn.

A child should learn the correct name for the patterns they reproduce. The concepts of the traditional names are important due to their significance in understanding the environment. There are specifically forty-eight patterns.



T'ązhii Brought Seeds to the New World

Transcribed By Sylvia Jackson

Turkey, *T'ązhii*, was the last to come upon the new land from the underworld to the Fourth World. She looked around and saw that the new land was immersed in a thin layer of water and a foot deep mud. Others before her looked at her and laughed pointing at her tail. Her long dark tail was no longer solid brown. Foam from the rushing water left the tip of her tail white. *T'ązhii* was tired, moody and did not appreciate being teased and laughed at. She rolled her little beady eyes, tipped her chin upward and looked away from those teasing her of her tail. She stalked away in the pool of mud still proud of her long tail.

It all happened so quickly without any type of warning and without much time to prepare to move. To get away from the rising water, everyone scampered into the giant reed as fast as they could go when the group discovered that the giant reed might be their only means to escape the water. Not wanting to be left out everyone pushed, shoved, and dashed into the reed. They looked around and found that *T'ązhii* was missing. They called for her to hurry into the giant reed for the rushing water was coming and they would all perish if she doesn't get into the reed.

T'ązhii was busy gathering various kinds of seeds anticipating what the new world might look like. She thought of the plants they were leaving behind and may never see or eat again. She gathered as much as she could and was last to enter the giant reed. She had so much seeds stored under her wings and in her feathers that she was actually oversized and very large. She squeezed into the giant reed and was the last to enter.

The creatures were in the giant reed many days and nights. Some grew hungry and became antsy, grumpy and irritable. The caravan stopped moving upward and *T'ązhii* sat patiently quite as she felt wetness on her bottom. Water was not seeping into the giant reed upward as she sat like a cord blocking the water from coming into the reed. Finally, over an arm length of time, the caravan moved upward again. This time they moved quickly and soon entered the fourth world. *T'ązhii* was the last to sat foot

on the new land. While her eyes were adjusting, she heard laughter all round her. She noticed that others were laughing while pointing to her tail. She looked and noticed the tip of her tail as now white from the foam left by the rushing water.

She ignored the laughing and looked around at the barren site. There wasn't a thing growing. Gopher, *Na'áchi'd*, began pushing mud away from the entrance to form a ring of mud around the entrance so that the group can gather and decide what they want to do. First Woman and First Man gathered everyone for a council meeting. Mouse, *Na'atsqósi*, Rat, *Nahat'e'ii*, and Gopher, *Ná'azisi*, wanted to return to the underworld. They were hungry and their stomach ached for something to eat. There was nothing here for them in the new world. The rest of the caravan decided against returning to the underworld. They voted to stay and wait for the land to dry. The crew returned to the giant reed to wait while Locust sat at the entrance. Days passed.

First Man and First Woman talked and decided on an alternative. First Woman asked for a white, blue, yellow and black bead from anyone that can contribute to help in drying up the land. Several members of the convoy contributed the items she asked for. First Woman stood at the entrance of emergent and whirled the white bead to the east, the blue bead to the south, the yellow bead to the west and the black bead to the north and returned to the giant reed. She had asked the four winds to help dry up the land. The convoy waited four days and four nights, listening to the wind above them. Finally, what seemed like the fifth day, all was quite.

The wind had stopped blowing above. First Man and First Woman were among the first group to check things out. *Hasbídí*, a homely pigeon, was asked to fly out over the land and observe. She flew away. Within twelve hands stretch of time, *Hasbídí* returned with a willow leaf between her beaks. She told the convoy, "From where we are to the east, south, west and north the land is drying up steadily. I came upon this green plant and returned to show you."

Turkey, *T'ązhii*, said, "It is time for me to scatter the seeds I have brought with me to the new land." Everyone looked at *T'ązhi* in surprised to hear that she had thought about seeds for the new world. They understood

why she appeared larger and rounder. She was the last to enter the giant reed and everyone was upset with her because she was so slow. All the time, she was preparing to replant the seeds in the new world so that they can have food.

The creatures lowered their eyes in shamed for teasing her and offered their help to plant the seeds. She proudly spread her wings and gave a vigorous shake, shake, shake and shake. Seeds of all kinds fell to the ground. There were large and small seeds. There were round, pointy and flat seeds. There were red, white, yellow, blue and green seeds. Everyone picked a handful and asked, "Just tell us where to plant the seeds."

Tá'chééh Baahane'

Sweat Lodge

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

On one of his excursions, Coyote came upon the Water People and Rainbow People and observed and formed his own perception of the ceremonial activity the Water People were involved in. He returned to the People and encouraged the emigrants to experience the activities of the Water People. He insisted of them to practice the ceremony. No one took him seriously. He left the group and sought more information on the activity. He visited the Rainbow People and asked for information on a *tá'chééh* activity. They told him of the holy proclamations involved and once again, he returned to the emigrants with additional knowledge on the use of *tá'chééh*. Again, no one paid him any attention.

Meanwhile, the Holy Ones discussed what to do about the bad and inappropriate behavior and attitude adapted from the previous worlds / kingdoms. They understood that their eviction from the previous four worlds have been because of their inappropriate behaviors, attitudes and actions. How should they perform mental, emotional, and spiritual cleansing? They continued talking among themselves and agreeing more and more on going through a purification ceremony to rid of the bad attitudes and behaviors is an appropriate thing to do. Each one agreed to end all terrible, horrible and disgusting things he/she had been engaged in. The Holy Ones all agreed to purifying and cleansing the mind, body, soul and spirit and to live in harmony with themselves, one another and their sur-

roundings. A ceremony would require them to go through the whole body, mind, soul and spiritual cleansing. Physical cleansing using water and yucca suds was not enough.

Haashch'ééyááłti'í, in the meantime, observed the heavens in the early morning dawn and evening, asking for guidance and direction for many days. When on the morning of the seventh day he witnessed a bright light appearing in the evening sky to the eastern direction. A small light grew brighter and brighter and soon appeared to have five distinct points. Four points grew longer and longer away from the center of the large bright star similar to arms and legs.

Haashch'ééyááłti'í instructed First Man and others to gather information from others all around as to what might have arms and legs and used for a healing and purification activity. Coyote again returned from one of his excursion. He suggested an activity he observed used by the Water People, but no one had information on the ceremony. Coyote said he had observed and perceived a ceremonial activity of the Water People and the Rainbow People, he insisted on building a dwelling submerged into the ground so half would be a dugout, water and light would be used.

First Talking God sent runners to the four directions to find and bring back information from others how this would be done. Runner to the eastern region brought back a straight log. Runner to the western region brought back a log with a split end, "Y". Runners to the southern and northern region brought back similar logs. The runners replied the logs were all they found and they have been to the edge of the land to the four directions. *Haashch'ééyááłti'í* and *Haashch'ééwaan* talked and discussed what possible creation would come from the items collected. Coyote came by once again and sat on his behind watching and listening to their discussion. *Haashch'ééyááłti'í* and *Haashch'ééwaan* observed Coyote in his sitting position and understood the items would be useful in building a shelter in resemblance to the Coyote in his sitting position. It would have a large round base with the upper part pointing straight up similar to his ears. His front legs planted side by side in front of him resembled an entrance.

The People began the construction. First, they placed the log with the "Y" in position from the western direction, leaning forward and catching a

straight post from the eastern direction. It was understood by the People, the post from the west would represent the feminine characteristic and interlock with the post from the eastern direction, representing the male characteristic. The log from the south caught the log from the north. The dwelling began to take shape. It was built against an incline, so that, part of it was actually submerged into a dugout. Entrance was to the east. When the poles came together it formed the cone shape.

Coyote, again, returned with a strip of rainbow and light rays he said the Rainbow and Light Rays People gave him as gifts for healing purposes. He crisscrossed the rainbow and light ray over the post and a dome roof formed over the structure. Light rays blend from the east to the west and the rainbow bend from south to north and formed a dome structure for the dwelling. Coyote finally demonstrated the appearance and concept of *táchééh* to the People with the help of the Rainbow and the Light Rays People. The crisscrossed arches became covered with darkness and a dome structure became apparent, a healing place. The entrance closed with a curtain of dawn. Coyote did not disclose in-depth information he received for the *táchééh* and he was off on another excursion.

The People understood the sunrays arching the dwelling east to the west initialized the dwelling with light energy. They understood the arch to represent male energy, *Sá'ah Naaghái*. A rainbow arching the dwelling from the south to the north initialized the dwelling with night energy representing the female energy, *Bike'Hozhóó*, coinciding with the split end poles and the straight end poles.

The People did not know what to call the structure and were still in discussion, when *Ma'ii* came upon the group and called out, "Aah haa, I see *táchééh* is going up." The structure received its name, *táchééh*.

No one knew exactly how to use the *táchééh* for purifying and cleansing ceremony and continued to discuss how they were suppose to use it when *Tsétah Dibé*, *Tábąąh maii*, *Cháá Dine'é* and *Ná'ashjaa* all agreed to help the People with materials needed for the ceremony. *Chaa' Dine'é*, beaver people, volunteered wood from near the pond where he lived. Crystal Boy, *Tséghádi'nídínii Ashkii*, volunteered to start the fire with his light to the wood from the pond. Next, the *Dibétsétah*, mountain sheep, volunteered rocks from the mountain where he lived and place them in the fire to heat.

Tó'baq ma'ii, little raccoon, offered water from the stream where he lived. Each creature volunteered specific items, did so, first by offering precious gems with prayers and songs to the location where the elements were gathered. The People constructed songs to honor the contributors and the items they brought. Throughout the construction, male folks worked away from the women and the women folks stayed away from the male.

Men set up their sweat lodge north of the settlement. It was understood that the northern direction signified emotional and spiritual development for the males. They prepared to enter the small dwelling only with a piece of skin covering the groin area, *t'eestsooz*. The women set up their sweat lodge south of the settlement under the direction of *Haashch'ééyáálti'í* and *Haashch'ééshzhini*. South signified physical, social and mental development for children and therefore, the females conducted their sweat lodge ceremony in that direction.

When the rocks became red hot, First Talking God invited everyone to enter and he placed the hot rocks inside the dwelling. He volunteered prayers and songs. It is told that *Dótsoh*, *Ma'ii*, and *Haashch'ééshzhini* did not participate in the sweat activity. *Dótsoh* and *Haashch'ééshzhini* took care of firing of the rocks. *Ma'ii* was on his daily excursion.

Ná'áshjaa', owls, volunteered his feathered blanket to seal off the entrance from sunlight. Through *cha'ha'theet* the Holy Ones merged into the living world and it was understood that *cha'ha'theet* and herb water would provide nurturing experiences to their rebirth. The Holy Ones recognized that the sacred elements necessary for purification and cleansing were at their fingertips all along: earth, water, air, darkness, light, and heat. Fire was important, it provides light and warmth to the growing process from the center of Mother Earth at the beginning of time. It made sense to use fire to heat the rocks through which they came to the fourth world. Within darkness and hot mist, the People understood purification and cleansing as they came through the previous three worlds. They, also, understood the plans for the Fourth World and beyond.

Haashch'ééyáálti'í and *Haashch'ééshzhini* conducted the first sweat ceremony for the women folks as well. They sat outside the lodge sang and prayed the creation songs and prayers while the women sweated. The women sweated with bare torso. It became clear to the Holy Ones that

drinking bitter herb tea induced vomiting and heated rocks caused them to sweat to rid the body, mind and spirit of evil thoughts and actions. Everyone understood the sweat activity to be the teaching from the *Diyin Dine'é*, Spirit People.

As the Beings sweated and experienced the heat they understood the dwelling represented Mother Earth from hence where they emerged to the White World. *Cha'hałtheel*, darkness, to the north, addressed as *Nihimá Cha'hałtheel* received the evil thoughts, attitudes and behaviors. It was understood that darkness should be addressed as Mother Darkness. She was understood to be the guardian for life coming through *cha'hałtheel* to emerge onto the earth surface. She should receive their evil thoughts to be cleaned and purified. Therefore, *Cha'hałtheel* nurtured the process of the rebirth through *táchééh*.

Inside the lodge, a pit dugout north of the entrance inside the dwellings received the hot rocks. Participants crawled into the dwelling and positioned themselves in resemblance of an infant in the mother's womb. One conducting the sweat sprinkled the hot rocks with water that created steam. Participants prayed and sang in appreciation for life and to be restored balance and to be given another chance for improvement. At the end of four songs everyone exit the lodge, greeted the sun and rubbed sand on their bodies for physical cleaning by earth. Everyone encouraged to participate, did so, exception of Coyote and a few others. Each time the participants exited from the sweat lodge they greeted light to feel reborn and revitalized their soul with energy from the sun.

Holy Rainbow People manifested themselves to the new settlers by bringing a shower of rain to them after their cleansing and purifying ceremony. Plants, too, grew more abundantly around them over time. *Táchééh* was added to the activities of the People. Coyote had been emphasizing a ceremony and it finally came to pass. Thereafter, the People constructed songs and prayers connected to the sweat healing lodge and for items used in the purification ceremony.

The practice of sweating became a popular activity thereafter. When the Twins came into the world, *Yootgaii Asdzáá* and the Holy Ones raised them as best as they could. *Haashch'ééshzhiin* took on the role of an uncle to the Twins as they grew. He counseled, taught and disciplined them. It was

Haashch'ééshzhini that constructed spears, bows and arrows for the Twins and showed them how to use them. When the Twins became young men, *Haashch'ééshzhini* put them through a sweat ceremony. He prayed, sang and told them the creation stories as they sweated. *Haashch'ééshzhini* prepared bitter herb tea for them to drink while they sweated. Between the sweat activities they ran toward the sunrise direction, yelling as loud as they could, turning around with the sun path way and returning to the lodge. The activity aided in their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development required to perform the roles of becoming men of courage and strengths. They were counseled on manhood activities and on the importance of self-control.

Táchééh ceremony is recognized as an initiation ceremony for *Diné* male reaching puberty following the *Diné Baahane'* of how Sun Bearer initiated the Twin Warriors into manhood when the boys came to visit him in the east. He allowed the Twins to experience extreme heat, sweat and rid their bodies of toxin by drinking bitter herb tea that induced vomiting. Young *Diné* male, entering manhood, is put through the sweat activity by his uncle or grandfather at the time his voice begins to change. Sweat activity will be prepared by the older men carefully offering sacred tokens to earth, air, water and the traditional dwelling through prayers and songs on behalf of the young male. Sweat lodge begins with singing sacred songs honoring the elements of life and introducing the young male to the elements. Elder men counsel the young male on the aspects of being a male creature possessing strong emotional control and courage. Young male runs toward the sunrise after each sweat ceremony for physical development. He is to yell as loud as he can while running and returning to the lodge. The ceremony is held daily for four days. It is believe that a young *Diné* male is properly initiated into manhood through heat, sweat, bitter herb tea and strenuous physical exercise to encourage him to become a protector, a warrior, and a leader of his clan.

Haashch'ééshzhini played the major role in the development of the young warriors. Therefore, the roles of the father, uncle and grandfather are important in molding the young male children of the clan. Guardian and disciplinarian roles are identified with the clan uncles and grandfathers. These have been the practices of the *Diné* People before the invasion of the various cultures. Uncles and grandfathers are the disciplinarians, counselors and teachers of the clan children. Young men are taught to

control their emotions and recognize the importance of taking care of their physical and mental health. Creating multiple sex partners and engaging in incest acts are against the *Diné* traditions. Traditional *hane'* portrays the consequences of such activities, children may develop with "related" genes and will not be mentally, physically, or emotionally healthy as once seen in the children of First Man and First Woman.

Traditional elders believed and practiced early childhood teachings beginning with embedding the young minds of children with understanding the importance of being respectful and responsible. Before western culture invasion, children were given responsibilities beginning with small tasks as early as three. By five years old, children would be demonstrating enough understanding on taking care of a pet given them. By twelve, young men and women were expected to know enough about taking on the father or mother's role and responsibilities. They were expected to know enough on the role of being a provider, supporter and protector for a family. The monarch of the clan family makes sure that the young ones are taught. She encouraged the young clan mothers and fathers to teach appropriately. She is taught that attitude and behavior of the clan children reflects the clan teaching, therefore, everyone must be responsible.

If the clan monarch is not able to advise, guide and direct, then, her brother/s/ take on the role to advise, guide and direct clan activities. He, than, is consulted on all clan activities. He has the innate birthright to discipline the clan children. All young men should understand the role of being a disciplinarian and advisor for someday, they will have the authority within the clan society.

Sweat bathing is returning to many Navajo communities in the contemporary societies for men and women. Contemporary sweat lodge has become favorable. It is convenient, portable and easily set up. The semi original sweat lodge is made from long thin tamarack branches tied together forming a dome structure and covered with thick blankets, pieces of rugs and/or canvas. More preferred portable structure is made from welding rods welded together forming a dome with a diameter of ten to twelve feet across. The height could be four and half feet to five. The opening is usually to the east. The opening to the traditional sweat lodge can be in any direction because of its use. It is a healing lodge. Rocks are heated outside, taken inside and placed in the center of the structure with

a shovel or hay fork. The entrance is sealed with heavy blankets. Participants, twelve to fourteen in numbers, may drink herb tea, sing and pray for twenty to thirty minutes interval. The first group will come out, allowing the second group to enter the sweat lodge. A sweat activity can last three to four hours as each group reenter the sweat lodge four times. Most people hold their sweat activity on weekends, preferably on Sunday afternoons. Male sweat ceremony is more common than the female.

In the contemporary society, the females may wear sweat outfits into the sweat lodge and the male folks wear swim trunks or cutoffs. The purpose of the sweat is the same, to go through a mental, physical and spiritual purification and cleansing of the body, soul, mind and spirit. Some participants drink bitter herb tea, *iitkóóh*, each time they reenter the sweat lodge. *Iitkóóh*, induces vomiting for some. The tea helps eliminate various toxin materials from the body. No one is allowed to exit while others are singing songs of the creation. Anyone can pray while others are singing. A group will exit at least four times to complete a ceremony. *Táchééh* is a useful healing place for physical, mental, and spiritual cleansing / purification and now, being used in health facilities, department of behavior health services, schools and in detention center.



Dził Diyinii / Dził Na't'aah
Spirited and Sacred Mountains

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

After the completion of the purification event, *táchééh*, the Holy Ones resumed planning for settling by placing first the sacred mountains in positions and adorning them with precious gems, plants and animals.

The Holy Ones placed life values and survival principles learned throughout the whole ordeal of destruction and rebuilding throughout the four worlds in the mountains. First Man had collected dirt samples from the original four mountains from the underworld and carried it into the present world. From the mountain dirt sample, the Holy Ones created four mountains and place them within the four cardinal directions to identify themselves with a home.

In the instruction of First Man, the mountains were placed within the four directions and named. The mountain to the east was given the name *Sisnaajini, Yootgaii Dził*, White Shell Mountain referred to as *Sa'ah Naaghái dóó Bik'eh Hózhóón* with the male and female strength. Spring, dawn and renewal of life were character traits recognized connected to the mountain. Precious gems of *yootgaii*, white and black feathers symbolizing purity and gentleness adorned the mountain by the *Níłch'í Diyin Dine'é*. Today, It is also known as Sierra Blanca Peak, or Mount Blanca. It is located in the Sangre De Cristo Mountains near Alamosa, Colorado.

Tsoodzil, Dootłizhii Dził, Turquoise Mountain was next to receive a name and location. It, too, received guardians, *Sa'ah Naaghái dóó Bik'eh Hózhóón* with the male and female strength, lies in the southern region of the *Diné* homeland. Summer, adolescence and leadership were character traits connected to the mountain. It was adorned with precious gems of *dootłizhi*, black and turquoise feathers by the *Níłch'í Diyin Dine'é* representing power and authority over the sky and moisture. Today, the mountain is also known as Mount Taylor, *Tsoodzil* is located in the San Juan Mountains near Grants, New Mexico.

Dook'o'ostłííd, Diichili Dził, Abalone Shell Mountain, *Sa'ah Naaghái dóó Bik'eh Hózhóón*, the western pillar of the *Diné* homeland was placed and named. *Níłch'í Diyin Dine'é* blessed the mountain with female and male strength. Fall, adulthood, social development and physical strength of life would characterize the mountain for the People. Today, it is known as Humphrey Peak. It is adorned with precious *diichili*, yellow and white feathers ruling the evening twilight. *Dook'o'ostłííd* is located in the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff, Arizona.

Dibé Ntsaa, Bááshzhinii Dził, Black Jet Onyx Mountain, *Sa'ah Naaghái dóó Bik'eh Hózhóón* was placed in the north of the *Diné* homeland. The female mountain representing winter, old age, and harmony was adorned with *bááshzhinii*, and white and black feathers by the *Níłch'í Diyin Dine'é*. Along with the moon, this mountain is known as the ruler of night. The English name is Mount Hesperus and is located in the La Plata Mountains near Durango, Colorado. The Holy Ones placed the mountains around them to identify themselves with a *hooghan*.

The sacred mountains placed in the four cardinal directions formed the "sacred home" for the *Diné* People. History intertwined with tribal values and principles are embedded in the mountains for positive and negative teaching and learning. *Dził Ch'óol'íí* and *Dził Ná'oodíthii* were identified in the White World as the protection mountains. They are identified as guardians for the entrance to *Diné* land. Changing Woman was placed on top of *Dził Ch'óol'íí* and she raised her twin sons, *Naayééneizighání* and *Tóbájjishchíní* around the area of *Dził Na'oodíthii*. Therefore, *Dził Ch'óol'íí* represents *nítłiz*, precious gems, adorned and shielded *Yoolgail Asdzáá*. *Dził Na'oodíthii* represents prayers, songs and sacred tobacco the Twins used for protection and guidance in battling the giants. The two mountains are guardians for the entrance to *Diné Bik'éhya*. Due to the *hane'*, the mountains identify the sacred home for *Diné* People.



Asdzáá Na'dłeehé Niilyaaígí

Birth of Changing Woman

Told By Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

The following *hane'* is on the coming of the People into the *Nihodisqsi*, the Glittering World, that formed the fundamental practices and beliefs to understanding life as a process of growth and growing. The bases for understanding the Blessing Way, *Hózhó k'eíiná*, begins with the birth of Changing Woman.

Not long after the People emerged into the White World, they held a council session to establish rules and laws, by which to migrant and multiply. They realized they had made many mistakes in the past kingdoms and were force to move on. White Glittering kingdom was a good place to make a permanent establishment so many wrong doings have to end and not repeated. The First People were the Holy People, *Diyin Dine'é*, and they did not resemble the modern man of this century.

As they were busy preparing to make the White Glittering World their home, they became aware of a crusader to come to demonstrate and teach of the growth process for the People. The First People have been voicing a need to be delivered from the hideous giants devouring on them. It, also, became clear to the *Diyin Dine'é* to leave the earth surface and

to prepare the earth for the next breed of humans, *bíla'ashdla'ii*. A crusader would develop and demonstrate life values that would promote positive ness, enjoyment, and learn to live life to the fullest potential as earth surface beings. The next immigrate will have the capabilities to reproduce to sustain the generations of many people to come, the Five Fingered People.

Upon the emergent into the White World, First Talking God approached the early morning Dawn, *Háyoolkááł*. The approaching Dawn was so beautiful in the White World that it overwhelmed *Haashch'ééyáálti'i*. One morning he offered white cornmeal to the approaching Dawn to express the wonderful feeling he felt about Dawn in the new world. He uttered his emotional feeling, "*Kodóó hózhóqódóóleet hai.*" He, then, approached Dawn every morning speaking his thoughts, expressing his gratitude for the beautiful world.

One morning, he greeted Dawn and quickly noticed a lavender colored cloud surrounding *Dził Ch'óol'íí*. He stood still, listened, observed and heard the approaching soft rumbling sound of the spring thunder. It grew louder and louder and yet softly. He observed flashes of lightening inside the purplish cloud. Clouds settled atop the *Dził Ch'óol'íí*. First Talking God reported his observation to the rest of the Holy Ones and was asked to investigate the situation further. He reverently observed the growing cloud over *Dził Ch'óol'íí* three additional mornings. Clouds descended down the mesa mid way and stopped. First Talking God approached and climbed the Gobernador Knob Mesa first from the north side. The Mesa ascended with him and he could not reach the top. The occurrence was repeated from the west and south sides also. The closer to the top he climbed, the top seemed to grow with him higher and higher and was not able to reach the top. After counseling with the Holy Ones he approached the mesa with songs and prayers from the eastern direction from which the rumbling thunder and the bright streak of multiply colored lights were first observed. He reached the top.

At the top of *Dził Ch'óol'íí* First Talking God came upon a little person resting in soapy like mist. Her head radiant with an array of rainbow colored lights. She was wrapped in white clouds with zigzag lightening patterned down her front. First Talking God, in amazement, tried to pick up the child and yet his finger slipped through the mist as if there were nothing there.

He came off the mesa, returned home and consulted with the others. The Holy Ones instructed First Talking God to call upon the Twilight Dawn Boy, from the east, Blue Twilight Girl, from the south, Yellow Twilight Boy from the west and Black Twilight Girl from the north. He did. They came and together blew air/wind across the child's face. She burst out a cry. First Talking God noticed two other spiritual beings present also and he asked them to identify themselves. They were White Striped Wind and White Spotted Wind claiming to be informants to all future human beings coming into the world. They would provide all earth children the breath of life and a spiritual character-guardian. White Striped Wind possessed a calm wind spirit and the Spotted White Wind possessed a much more aggressive spirit. They will decide at birth the wind spirits of a child. A newborn may receive both a calm and aggressive spirit at birth at the same time, one dominating the other or they could be equal in strength.

First Talking God picked up the child, held her to his lips four times drawing in her scent into his lungs, heart, soul and spirit. He took the child to First Man and First Woman's home. First Man and First Woman held the child to their lips four times drawing in her scent into their minds, body, soul and spirit. The little child was held to their right breast to accept her with, '*Áshinee' She'awéé, Shi'yázhí á'háláne'ee'*'

Holding a female child to the right breast first is claiming ownership and promising to nurture with love, warmth and care. Verbal acknowledgement, "*Áshinee' She'awéé, Shi'yázhí*" is the appropriate way to welcome all children into the living world meaning, "Precious little love, resemblance of myself in a tiny form, my seedling."

First Woman placed the child with the crown of her head toward the fire hearth. The fire hearth nurtures the mental development with the strength of the fire, *Tséghádinídíini łigai kq Ashkii dóó Tséghádinídíini łigai kq At'ééd* so that the child will possess inquisitiveness and is alert and has quick reflexes. Light of the fire, *Tséghádinídíini dootłizh, łitsoi, and dithłi* serves as guide and protector, and provides clear conscience for the child as it grows.

The action of First Woman became the traditional practice of Navajo mothers in accepting children into the world. To appropriately welcome a female child into the living world, the mother receives the child into her

right arm and feed her first on her right breast. If the infant is a male child, the mother welcomes the child into her left arm and he would feed on the left breast first. The practice emphasizes the appropriate feminine and masculine character development within each person. This is regarded an appropriate practice to bond with children, mentally, physically, and spiritually as practiced first by the Holy Ones.

Light, water, air and earth are sacred elements to life as they were the very substances from which the Holy Ones were formed. They are the sacred essential elements of life in the Navajo philosophical teaching and regarded as Mothers of life. It is appropriate to understand that water and darkness first provide life to a child in the womb. *Tó Asdzáán Nihimá* and *Cha'halheet Asdzáán Nihimá* would witness conception and nurture the child first in the womb. Light, sun and sky are of the upper creation. *Shit'aa' Jóhonaa'éí*, *Shit'aa' Yadiłhił* are the appropriate way to address the upper creation, respectfully. It is understood that a child is born to light, sky and sun. Earth substances provide life to the child as it grows. The air/wind, *níłch'í*, provides the spiritual guardian for child. Therefore, it has been the traditional practice of a Navajo mother to bathe her newborn in warm water and placed him/her near the fire hearth with the baby's crown toward the fire for four days. The child is first the child of nature and the force of creation and therefore, introduced to the sacred elements to life when he/she entered the world of nature.

Similarity can be made between a little seed in the ground needing warmth to continue developing to the practice in placing the newborn near the fire hearth with the crown toward the source of warmth. The young brain needs warmth to make adjustment after birth. Developing inside the womb no doubt provide experiences different from experiences in the larger environment. Therefore, consistency in warmth is important. This was the practice in the earlier days, when a *hooghan* was the only family home with fire in the center and all family activities surrounded the fire hearth. Today, modern conveniences provide a home with rooms, proper plumbing, gas heating furnaces, and it is not convenient to place an infant near the fire hearth for four days.



'Awéé ts'áál / Cradleboard

Told by Marie Nez Attakai, 1958

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

First Man constructed a cradleboard for *Yoolgaii Asdaáá* in resemblance to the view *Haashch'ééyáálti'i* described in his observation when he approached the child on top of Gobernador Knob Mesa.

First Man went into the forest and brought back two wooden slaps equal in length one from an oak tree and the other from a pinon tree. He worked diligently for several days and nights smoothing out the slaps and matched them identically. He attaches them together forming a split opened "V" at the top end so that the head of the child would not rest on solid wood. The right slap made from a pinon tree represented Mother Earth from hence all life comes and considered *Bik'éhózhóón*, feminine characteristic. The left slap made from oak, represented Father Sky, nurturer of all life form with light and moisture and *Sá'áh Naaghái*, masculine characteristic. First Man constructed a wooden arch from a slap from the pinon tree and attached it to the head area of the cradleboard. The arch represented the radiant lights of the rainbow that nurtured the baby with colorful knowledge, language and experiences. Developing of the mind would be the most important development of the Earth Surface People. First Man attached the foot support board made from blue spruce representing the People's life values and principles upon which the child will grow knowing appropriate and inappropriate behavior and attitude. The most important attributes of life are to have respect, listen well, observe well, and display learning well. Next three are to know responsibilities, to have compassion, and be trusty. First Man, also, wished for her to grow tall and strong similar to the blue spruce. He wished her strong mental stability, to possess positive self-esteem, to have control over emotions and to develop qualities for leadership.

First Woman sewed on buckskin wrappings to the right and left outer side of the cradle representing white mist and clouds that wrapped in the child where she was found. Right wrapped represented Female Rain and the left, the Male Rain. She tied a long piece of deerskin strip to the right side wrappings to lace together the wraps. Zigzag lacing from top to bottom

down the front represented lightening and sunrays *Haashch'ééyáálti'í* observed. First Man and First Woman marveled at the finished product.

The couple anointed the finished cradleboard with red earth clay representing earth surface people and placed the baby in it. First Woman and other females nurtured the child as she grew with songs, stories, and riddles. The baby girl grew relating to her earth family with *Shimá*, *Shit'áá*, *Shichéí*, *Shinali* and so forth. She became known by many names: Child of Dawn, Child of Vegetation, Child of the First People and Child of Mist, *Tó áłtahnáshchíín Tóbiyáázhi'*. She was adorned, loved and cherished by everyone. Everyone helped in feeding her. Some collected pollen from various plants while others moistened the pollen with dew drops off blades of grass and fed her. When she laughed, took her first step and lost her first tooth, the Holy Ones came together, discussed and initiated appropriate celebration to show appreciation for the growing process and most importantly, life. The Holy Ones cherished and loved this wonderful child. They observed, recognized and celebrated seven developmental stages that she went through to maturity.

Hane' of Changing Woman portrays the knowledge that children belong to everyone. *Diné* mothers are mothers, aunts and grandmothers to all children. *Diné* fathers are fathers, uncles and grandfathers to all *Diné* children. Children are children of the growing process and the force of creation. They are precious, valuable and necessary for growth to continue generation to generation.

The event of her birth and growing all set various stages for Navajo child bearing and child rearing practiced long before the acceptance of the western culture. Today, the *Diné* people remember the story of Mother of People, White Shell Woman, by placing their newborn in cradleboard to rest in, to grow in, to mold and nurture their patience, endurance, and their emotion stability development. Between one and two years of age, the child is weaned from the cradle and it is taken apart and stored for the next child. The cradle provides security just as the womb and placenta provided security. It keeps the child warm and he/she sleeps longer without too much disturbance.

Yoolgail Asdzáá Itkʼaad
 White Shell Woman's *Kinaaldá* Cerebration

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



Traditional *hane'* recalls Child of Dawn reaching maturity within twelve changes of seasons. It is told that one day the People witnessed the days progressed through *haniísá*, new life, *a'noosééł*, maturity, *neest'á'*, aging and reaching *sá*, old age over a short length of time. *Diyin Dine'é* witnessed Changing Woman returning to her youth with each complete cycle as she walked round the fire hearth. Metaphorically, the *Diyin Dine'é* understood with the woman's menstrual, life would repeatedly renew itself with new births passing through her mind, body, soul, and spirit. It would be like the magic of spring, the cycle would renew life. It would be a time of awaking for new beginning of life and every living creature and species would awake to renew life and living would begin again for another cycle and so it would also be for the Five Fingered People.

The Holy Ones became aware of the tremendous task laid before the wonder child. They gathered and discussed how to approach molding the Mother of People for her task. Her purpose for coming to the earth surface and to the People was to full fill the role of becoming the Mother of People. Preparation for her role required her to be physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually in control to successfully accomplish the enormous task before her. First Woman took on the responsibility of molding her daughter with the help of *Diyin Dine'é*. They understood the growing process would be part of the natural order of living.

Atsé Asdzáá informed everyone when her daughter experienced her first women menstrual. The Holy Ones came together and dressed Changing Woman in white deerskin adorned with white shells. She stood before them glowing with beauty, they called her *Yoolgail Asdzáá*. First Woman brushed her daughter's hair with a grass brush. She brought her hair together at the nape of her neck and tied it in a ponytail with a strip of buckskin cut from a kill called *Doo k'aa k'ehii*.

Buckskin, *Doo k'aa k'ehii*, is from a buck killed without piercing the body with sharp weapons. The animal would be wrestled down and suffocated by causing it to inhale pollen through its nostril while covering its mouth. The hide is tanned and whitewashed in white clay. A strip measuring two

fingers in width is cut from the nose, neck, down the back to the tip of the tail and is used to tie the hair of the *kinaaldá*. Buckskin from this type of kill is highly valued and used in many ceremonies for restoring mental balance and harmony.

Gathering Changing Woman's hair at the nape of her neck and tying it with a buckskin strip signifies the importance of learning to gather one's thoughts, learning to focus, to set priorities and to make good decision. The event of Changing Woman maturing with the aging process set precedence for all earth surface females.

Diyin Dine'é placed a pair of moccasins on the feet of *Yoolgail Asdzáá*. It was red with white wrappings, representing the lower and upper creations. A sash belt representing sunbeam and rainbow wrapped around her middle. It is told by the elders that sunbeam represents life pathway for male children on the underside of the belt and rainbow, on the outside, is the life pathway for female children not yet born. Each Holy Ones placed a strand of beads around her neck, earrings on her ears, and bracelets on her wrist. It is a traditional belief that jewels display an appreciation for the creation of the People, created from the same sacred elements of which Mother Earth is adorned. Wearing a piece of jewelry displays a connection to Mother Earth and *Yoolgail Asdzáá*.

Diyin Dine'é encouraged Changing Woman to run to the four directions in accordance to values placed within the directions. *Alkqad* was prepared each time she experience woman's passage at four consecutive occasions. Twelve feathers placed over the sweet cake in circular position initialized and recognized fertility in the power of the female body and represented maturity. This has never been repeated in the making and baking of the *Alkqad*.

Haashch'ééyáálti'í conducted *Hózhóqjii doo iigháásh* for Changing Woman. Everyone was invited to volunteer a song or two in appreciation for life and the process of living. This is a wonderful event for the earth surface people to practice in rejoicing reproduction of self, a continuous growth of people from generation to generation.

All night event, *Hózhóqjii*, includes honoring the force of creation, the process of growth, the natural order of nature and fertility for the living

world. It is the traditional *Diné* mother's role and responsibility to reflect the values of this celebration to her daughter. Additionally, Navajo woman should dress appropriately daily to identify with Changing Woman. Mothers should encourage their daughters to wear a piece of jewels as part of her everyday wardrobe. Jewels are worn to reflect homage to Changing Woman, Mother of the People. She, in return, recognizes her children and offers protection, guidance and direction. The jewels are called *Yodí* and *Nitlíz Altaas'éí*, the human's connection to the elements of life and the natural world.

Ke'ichi'

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

A very young girl sings a song of her *Ke'ichi'* while she walks after the family flock. "This is my beautiful shoe, *shike'ichi*, my grandfather made it for me. It's beautiful and marks the hand work of my beautiful grandfather."

According to *Diné* elders there are four different types of moccasins that the Holy Ones wore from the Black to the White World. The first moccasin after wearing woven straw shoes were made from buckskin sewed with wildcat ligaments as threads. As time progressed into the more recent times, moccasins are made out of horsehide, cowhide and deerhide. It was a skill that required everyone to know how to keep the sole of the feet safe from cuts, scratches and tear. Each animal hunted and killed served a purpose to keep the people alive, well and clothed. Every part of the animal's body and parts were used ranging from a shelter covering, bedding, clothing, water bag, traveling bag and etc. Moccasin making throughout early history was a major activity required and to be mastered by young men.

One pair of moccasin was used only for working and hunting worn mostly by men with a high top covering the leg up to the knees. Another pair was made for special occasion and kept in good condition. The moccasin for men had a high top and for women, the moccasin had half a deerhide sewed to the side for wrapping over the calf. These were also used when the women folks went out to gather wild seeds and berries. They are also worn to ceremonies. The low-ankle length moccasins are worn in the

summer time. The fourth pair of moccasins would be used at a healing ceremony. This pair would be blessed with corn pollen, prayers and songs and it should not be pass down to children or to other people to wear. It is considered a sacred moccasins recognizing a person's *ke' k'ehaash-chiin*, sacred footprints using white corn meal and *tádídiin*. A child may receive his/her first pair of sacred moccasins when he/she takes the first step in learning how to walk to recognize determination and persistence, becoming an individual. An older child is taught to have his shoes on as soon as he/she is awake and it should be the last thing taken off before he/she goes to bed at night. Going about your house without shoes is inappropriate. It is also inappropriate to wear someone else's shoes or moccasins.

"Moccasins are considered sacred footwear. A person should wear it proudly. It is an honor to identify with a group of people whom display respect and appreciation of animals for giving up their lives so that people can use their body parts for food, clothing, and footwear. Moccasins are made from sacred animals and with the hands of a good person thinking only good thoughts about your pathway of life. I know this because, I make moccasins for my grandchildren and each time I offer a prayer to gather the materials from nature to add color to the moccasins, I pray for good health, good knowledge and happy pathway of life for my grandchildren. This is the reason why an elder may say do not walk where you may be harmed physically, emotionally and spiritually. Use your good conscious and make good decisions. Remember you are walking in the pathway of corn pollen. The sole of your moccasins represent Mother earth, that you walk on daily and the upper part represents *yá'dilhił*, Father Sky, that you walk under daily. In that perspective, you are being watched and protected all the time." Explained by Miller Attakai, Teesto, 1956.

A moccasin maker is not without a song. He/she has prayer songs that he sings as he/she works forming the moccasins for several days and nights. The songs depict *gááł*, growing process, a pair of moccasins being made will take a person through.

During current times, moccasins can be purchased from shoes stores made either commercially and/or handmade. The People display the same pride and value in wearing the moccasins in ceremonies just the same. The materials from which the shoes are made still come from sacred ani-

mals. Navajo People, respect and honor the sacred animals that provide the necessary material for their livelihood.

Hashk'ąąhadzohnii Dine'é Ts'áá Adahyiila



The Navajo Basket Story

Told by Mr. Irvin James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



Before the Fourth World, the People had baskets of various style, color, shape and sizes. There was no specific design that identified the *Diné* People from other people of the earth surface. The following story tells how the *Diné* People's basket derived toward the end of the Fourth World.

Hashk'ąąhadzohnii, Yucca People, was assigned the task of making the special basket for the clansmen, children of Changing Woman. The group met, discussed, and produced the pattern the People now call the Navajo basket. When they displayed the basket to the Holy Ones, they were asked to produce the information that led to the specific design and pattern because of its beauty and uniqueness. The group told their story:

"We thought long and hard and recalled the journey of the People coming to the earth surface long ago." They began. "The basket is woven from the center with twelve layered spirals outward and upward using *k'íí' bitsiin*, *bikáaz*, *doo biká'gi*. A small opening at the center is to remind the People they emerged from the center of earth to this beautiful and multiply colored world. There are also others that have returned to the underworld. The center of the basket represents earth and the place of emergence. As the People came to the earth surface, water covered the land. White at the center represents water. From water all life comes. Mountains were placed in the four cardinal directions holding the values and life principles that should never be forgotten. Six white pyramids just before the red band represent the sacred mountains. It includes two additional mountains found here in the White Glittering World, *Dził Ch'óol'íí'* and *Dził Na'oodíí'*. Remember, Changing Woman was given to the earth surface people on *Dził Ch'óol'íí'* and she gave birth to her twin sons near *Dził Na'oodíí'*. The mountains identify the home for the people. Black pyra-

mids just before the red band, represent female and male moisture that sustains life. All living things must have moisture to live. Water is Mother of Life. She keeps living matters alive, well and growing. Red band around the middle of the basket specifies understanding the life pathway for all to follow, *T'áá hóajít'éigo*. It represent *Shábitłool* for the male people and *Natsilid* for females. Life pathway provides for continuing growing process for the living world, to grow, to maturity and to return again to the elements of life. The row of dark storm clouds just beyond the life pathway signifies the *Diyin Dine'é*, who sustains life from the beginning and will continue into eternity. The Holy Ones will depart for their position in the sky. From the sky, they will watch over the earth surface people, absolute and unchanging, just as they are today. *K'é*, interwoven with hope, care, faith, trust and love encloses the basket round the edge, as sunbeam, the elements that will sustain the People from one generation to the next. The basket will be used by many generations of earth surface people as they continue to express appreciation for life, living and for cleansing and purifying the mind, body, soul and spirit in the *Hózhóqji* ceremony. The People that will use this basket will be called, *Ni'hookáá' Diyin Dine'é Bila'áashdla'í bits'áá* and *bighan*.

Ts'aa' (the Navajo word for basket) most often refers to the familiar design that has become to be known as the Navajo wedding basket. *Ts'aa'* are used extensively in Navajo ceremonies and have been made for many years by women of the Navajo, Paiute, and Ute tribes. Baskets are generally crafted of *chiilchin* or *k'íí'* (sumac), strips of which have been dyed with *tsé'ésdaazii* (mountain mahogany) root, (red), juniper ashes mixed with sumac leaves for black, and black alder to obtain a reddish brown color for reddish brown. Some people use *jeeh* (pinon pitch) combined with powdered coal or roasted *chííh* (red ochre) to produce black.

According to one narrative the center spot in a *Ts'aa'* represents the beginning of this world of the *Diné* People as they emerged from the fourth world to find water covered the land. The white pyramids represent the sacred mountains as they were placed in the four cardinal directions and two identified the entrance. Black pyramids represent clouds and moisture that sustains life. The red band at midway represents sunray pathway for male children and rainbow pathway for female children. The black pyramids near the rim represent the Holy Ones as they promised to be near and will wait to hear from the earth surface children for as long

as life exists on the earth's surface. Every *ts'aa'* contains a *ch'é'étiin*, opening to the east, which is aligned with the entrance when a ceremony is being conducted and the basket is being used. Storytellers relate that the basket pattern and the significance of the design was given to the Diné People by *Yoolgail Asdzáá* (White Shell Woman) at the beginning of the White World.

Ts'aa' have numerous uses: as drums when turned upside down and beaten with a stick made of yucca; as container of ritual paraphernalia, such as rattles, prayer sticks, medicine bundles and fetishes; as containers for use in ritual baths; and as food containers in certain ceremonials; most notably for *taa'niil* (corneal mush) consumed during traditional Navajo wedding ceremonies.

The father of the bride sprinkles corn pollen on the top of the mush as he blesses the mixture for a clan union. The bride and groom then wash their hands with water and eat the mush with their fingers. The basket, then, belongs to the mother of the groom.

There are other baskets called *Ts'aanaashchíín*, varied and altered slightly. They may have the same colors, patterns, design, and may have more storm cloud patterns near the rim of the basket. They do not require the one-day completion and are used in healing ceremonies.

One important ceremony, *Hózhóójí doo' iigháásh*, one night Blessing Way ceremony, was the first ever held for the *Ni'hookáá Diyin Dine'é*, children of Changing Woman where the definite design is told originated. The event is to renew life, rejuvenate the inner mental strength, to promote positive thinking mode through songs of the mountains, animals, hooghan and song about life and creation. *Hooghan Biyiin* originated with this event. Soon, after the completion of the ceremony, the Holy Ones left for their position assigned them in the spirit world.

Hózhóójí is a sacred ceremony to rejuvenate the spiritual energy for the People. A family may sponsor *Hózhóójí* in appreciation for self, health and prosperity. It's an affirmation celebration for positive living and the abundance of good blessing.

You
have noticed that everything
a Native American Indian does is in a
circle, and that is because he understands the
Power of the World always works in circles and every-
thing is connected in this matter. In the old days when we
were a strong and happy people, all our power came to us from
the sacred hoop of the nation and as long as the hoop was unbro-
ken, the people flourished. The flowering tree was the living center
of the hoop, and the circle of the four quarters nourished it. The east
gave peace and light, the south gave warmth, the west gave rain, and the
north with its cold and mighty wind gave strength and endurance.
Everything the Power of the World does is in a circle. The sky is round, the
earth is round, stars are round and the wind, in its greatest power, whirls.
Birds build their nests in circles and their way of life is the same as ours.
The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. The moon does the
same, and both are round. The seasons form a great circle in their chang-
ing, and always come back again to begin another season. The life of a
man is a circle from birth to old age, and so it is in everything
where power moves. Our tepees are round like the birds and are
set in a circle, the nation's nest, where the Great Spirit meant
for us to hatch our children.

Black Elk

Growth Celebration / Hózhóqjí Doo Iigháásh

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Traditional *Diné Baahane'* conveys information of self destruction caused by acts of irresponsible emotional gratification practiced by the Holy Ones as they migrated into the Fourth Kingdom. Because of the wrong acts and horrible consequences Diné traditional teaching stresses the importance of developing pride of one's body, mind, soul and spirit and honoring life with growing celebrations beginning with conception, birth, a first laugh, a first step, puberty, and marriage. *Hózhóqjí Nanitiin* is embedded in the growth celebration ceremonies and believed to be the backbone teaching obtained from *Yoolgail Asdzáá*.

Diné People celebrate the conception and birth of a clan child, his/her first laugh, first step, losing the first baby tooth, practices proper disposal of umbilical cord, puberty celebration and uniting of clans in marriage. *Ts'aa'* is used in all growth celebrations. The People review and recall tribal narratives on the importance of existence and reproduction from one generation to the next generation of the People. Knowledge has been past down through *hane'*, songs, prayers, arts, crafts and social activities for centuries for the next generation of the People to know. The purpose of life, existence and living is to regenerate healthy spirited and hopeful people same as the Holy Ones created humankind in the image of themselves to express appreciation for being given the opportunity to exist and to enjoy life.

Hózhóqjí doo' iigháásh, displays appreciation for life, the precious gift for existence and to live long and healthy. Anyone can sponsor this celebration for an unborn child, before birth, or when the child takes his/her first steps, receiving a sacred name and/or puberty celebration.

For instance, expressing honor in receiving the first moccasins by a child may begin with the chanter, first, blessing the *hooghan* with the sacred corn pollen by touching the four pillar post coinciding with the cardinal direction requesting good blessing. The mother baths her child in yucca root suds prepared in a Navajo basket. She and her child circle the fire hearth and returns to his place to the left of the medicine bundle, in the west side of the *hooghan*. White cornmeal is use as an absorbent to dry the child. The medicine person anoints the child with white cornmeal as

the he sings sacred growing songs. He touches the child with white cornmeal from the feet up: both legs, knees, palms, chest and back, shoulders chin and cheek and the top of the child's head. He anoints the child's first pair of moccasins with white cornmeal before the mother places them on his/her feet. Clothes and any jewels his mother puts on the child are anointed with cornmeal also.

The Blessing Way, *Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh*, begins when the Pleiades reaching mid sky and the crescent moon is making its journey back to becoming whole again, full moon. It is a one-night celebration for the clan family and begins around ten or eleven in the evening and concludes at the crack of dawn. Gifts of robes, materials, quilts, flannel throw blankets are spread out in front of the medicine bundle. Things of value to carry on livelihood are placed on the blankets to be blessed and to rejuvenate the growing process for the clan families.

Everyone is welcome. Relatives will bring their medicine bundle or other prized possessions. Long ago, people brought items they used with animals, for example: saddle, bridles, ropes, etc. In the contemporary time, people may want their automobile keys and various work tools blessed for safety and good luck. Other items are usually purses, wallets, house keys, etc. These are placed on the blanket spread for blessing along with the renewing of the growing process for the clans. The event is to renew hopes, dreams and understand the values of the four cardinal directions: *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin* for the family.

Throughout the night, everyone attending is welcome to contribute their songs of praise for creation, life and the growing process. It is understood by the *Diné* People, long ago, the Holy Ones demonstrated appropriate way to express appreciation for life when *Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh* was first held for the clansmen near San Francisco Peaks and for Changing Woman when she experienced her first woman's menstrual. The significance of *Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh* is to renew the soul, mind and spiritual nourishment. It is an opportunity to feel one with the natural world and to understand that humans have the quality of tenderness and sacredness as in plants and in the elements of life. *Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh* gathers support of prayers and songs by relatives, friends and neighbors.

A child performs initiatives, persistence and individuality in taking his first steps and his clan families gathers to show support and encouragement for him to continue becoming an individual, to appreciate his uniqueness and differences. It is a family celebration.

Just before dawn, the chanter sings the morning bird songs and anoints the child with *tádídíín* from his feet up, legs, knees, palms of his hand, chest, back, shoulders, and cheeks. A pinch of *tádídíín* is placed on his tongue and on top of his head. *Tádídíín* placed on his tongue is to acknowledge and honor the mind, soul and the wind spirits within him, which provides him life. *Tádídíín* placed on top of his head is to acknowledge and honor the *Diyin Dine'é* within his daily environment: air, light, water and earth. *Tádídíín* sprinkled on the ground for him anoints the life journey to be positive and long for him as he grows. The child's sacred name is use in the morning in the utterance of prayer and meditation. His first pair of moccasins is anointed with *tádídíín* along with any jewels he puts on to wear for the next four days. The medicine person allows everyone attending, choosing to anoint his/her soul, mind and spirit with *tádídíín*, to do so. The child exits the ceremonial *hooghan* to greet Dawn, *Haashch'ééyáálti'í*, his grandfather and *Haashch'ééwaan*, the Evening Holy One. His parents, grandparents, older siblings and visiting relatives can join him in greeting the morning spirits. Together, they offer white cornmeal to Dawn and pray together. They return and offer cornmeal to the medicine bundle. The child circles the fire hearth and returns to his place. Participants reclaim their possessions in the morning from the blanket. The rest of the other items are given to the medicine person. He/She will distribute the items to each person attending that contributed a song. The celebration ends with a traditional meal for everyone.

The child's mother bathes him on the fourth morning following the conclusion of ceremony and may change into his every day normal clothing and he resumes his normal daily activities.

It is told that the earth surface people first performed this activity while returning from the west to *Dinétaah*. Children were found playing in a cornfield and Holy Ones placed the sacred white corn pollen on the right footprint of the male child and recognized him as *Sa'ah Naaghái Ashkii*. Yellow corn pollen was placed on the right footprint of the female child and recognized her as *Bik'e Hózhóón At'ééd*. The event was done for all chil-

dren to follow on the road of life *Hózhóqgo*, in the beauty way children will grow. The significance of the practice is sometimes referred to as Walking in the Beauty Way, *hózhóqgo nasha dootéet*.



Yoolgail Asdzáá Ílts'ee'gi Hane'
Story on White Shell Woman's Wedding

By Irvin James, 2001
 Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

It is a traditional belief that all creations have a beginning and that air, water, light, and earth are living spirits that provide life to the living world. The living spirits are the Holy Ones who are the beginning and are also responsible for keeping everything in proper working order. Traditional understanding is that all things possess a male and female spiritual characteristic and have an ultimate purpose to rejuvenate existence. This is understood to be the teachings from the *Diyin Dine'é* through the attraction of Sun Bearer to Changing Woman and the traditional bonding that took place.

Soon after the honoring puberty ceremony, *Yoolgail Asdzáá* tended to her chores of gathering wood not far from her home. She grew tired and laid down to rest on a hillside. Sun Bearer took notice of the beautiful maiden and marveled at her appearance. She was so young and lovely he could not control himself to want her for his wife. Days went by, she, again, lain down near a small stream to rest. She felt exhausted from carrying water in two large vases from the stream to her home. As soon as she closed her eyes, she drifted into a deep sleep. Gentle Mist from the stream noticed the beautiful maiden resting in the sun and marveled at her appearance. She was certainly the loveliest thing he had set eyes on. He could not control himself to want her for his wife. She slept unaware of the present of Gentle Mist.

It is told that Sun Bearer was more persistence to have the beautiful maiden and asked for her hand in marriage. The Holy Ones came together and planned the first traditional wedding ceremony, *Ílts'ee*.

Quickly, a round arbor was constructed. First Man and First Woman invit-

ed everyone to attend. Fire was built at the center of the arbor and *honeeshgish* was placed near the fire hearth. A large vase of water was brought into the arbor for those arriving early to refresh from traveling. *Haashch'ééyááltíí* was asked to bring in the vest of water for the ritual hand washing and to bless the ceremonial cornmeal mush with *tádídíín* signifying good wishes for the couple to live long together in happiness. Being the advisor for the event, he appropriately placed *tádídíín* on the four directional posts of the arbor to signify it a place of honor and asked the Spirits to bless the union of his granddaughter and Sun Bearer. First Woman prepared the special bonding blue cornmeal mush and placed it in basket. The wedding took place at *Dził Ch'óol'íí*.

Sun Bearer and a few relatives arrived and took their position to the north wall inside the arbor. He placed his belongings behind him in the west wall of the arbor. White Shell Woman dressed in her finest clothing brought in the mush and placed it in front of Sun Bearer. *Haashch'ééyááltíí* brought in a vase of water with a dipper for the ritual hand washing for the couple and sat down next to his granddaughter. Everyone following seated themselves next to the south wall of the arbor. First Woman chose not to be in view of her son-in-law and seated yourself behind a curtain of blanket out of eye contact of Sun Bearer.

Haashch'ééyááltíí instructed Sun Bearer to pour enough water from the vase into his cupped left hand and sprinkle water onto the hands of his bride. He did so. White Shell Woman rubbed her hands together and allowed the water to run off her hands to the dirt floor. She then, sprinkled water on her groom's hand and he washed his hands. *Haashch'ééyááltíí* sprinkled *tádídíí* first from east to west, then, south to north crossing the trail of corn pollen at the center of the mush in the basket. He, then, sprinkled corn pollen all round the edge of the mush not enclosing it entirely. He left an opening to the east to resemble a home with an entrance toward the sunrise. *Haashch'ééyááltíí* instructed Sun Bearer to scoop mush from the east with his index and pointer finger and eat. He did so. *Yoolgaii Asdzáá* followed in the same matter until they ate a pinch from the four sides coherent with the four cardinal directions and from the center of the basket. An elder woman representing Sun Bearer's grandmother picked up the basket for her own. Those accompanying Sun Bearer to the wedding ate the mush and received food from First Woman and First Man.

Tokens of jewels were not part of the Sun Bearer and *Yootgaii Asdzáá's* wedding at this time. The value was in the sharing of the traditional bonding cornmeal mush blessed with *tádídíín*. The value was and is, today, gaining a son for the bride's family and a daughter for the groom's family. The traditional belief is authentic even today in the contemporary society.



Significance of Corn In the Clan Bonding Ceremony

By Sylvia Jackson

Traditionally, the blue cornmeal is identified as an essential food item in the Navajo wedding ceremony. Blue cornmeal is used in the clan bonding ceremony because it represents food for mental and emotional strength, as is darkness to the northern direction. *Diné* values are placed in the four cardinal directions, as are the mountains, sacred food, sacred prayers, songs and are signified by colors; white to the east, blue to the south, yellow to the west and black to the north. Blue corn is significant of the northern direction as spiritual food. The surrounding environmental elements are also fundamental elements in the makeup of the *Diné* People: the air, light, water, pollen and sacred gems. Some traditional mother will prepare the clan bonding corn mush from blue, white, yellow, and red corn.

White and yellow cornmeal is used with prayer offering in the morning and evening to continue growing in harmony and with positive thoughts. The use of white and yellow cornmeal is associated with healing, purification and cleansing ceremonial element. For instance, the white cornmeal is sprinkled toward the approaching dawn with a prayer. *Haashch'ééyááltíí* once performed and exhibited appreciation for the beauty he observed in the twilight dawn and evening. He was taken emotionally by the beauty of the approaching and ascending light and felt a need to express his emotions. He pinched a handful of white cornmeal and sprinkled toward the eastern direction in *t'áá shá bikehgo* from his left to his right marking the sun pathway across the sky with his prayers. He pinched a handful of yellow cornmeal and sprinkled it toward the western early evening twilight in *t'áá shá bikehgo* from his left to his right marking the sun pathway across the evening sky with his prayers. Yellow cornmeal is sprinkled toward the approaching evening twilight to the west marking the sun

pathway. *Haashch'ééyááltíí* resembles the white corn wrapped in white and appears to have twelve white tassels, feathers in his hair.

Before the western culture invasion, grandparents and parents took the children out of the *hooghan* at dawn and in the evening to sprinkle cornmeal to express enthusiasm with for life. A person approaches dawn and with hand out stretched having white cornmeal in his/her hand and sprinkles from his/her far left along the surface of earth to the far right marking a pathway, *gáál*. In the evening, the gesture is same as for morning. A person approaches twilight evening light, and sprinkles yellow cornmeal across the evening twilight marking a pathway, *gáál* promising / reaffirming to carry on life duty with positive ness. Today, some people continue to practice this in their homes and at a healing ceremony.

Traditional medicine people use white cornmeal as an absorbent after bathing the patient in herb mixture. He uses white cornmeal as a sacred element and anoints his patient after the herb bath. The notion helps the patient reaffirm his position with *hozhóqogo íiná*, walking in beauty. As part of his/her healing practices, a traditional healer may use white cornmeal to reproduce footprints on sand for the confused individual to reaffirm his life valuable and sacred. The notion encourages a confused individual or an emotionally disturbed person to return to the corn pollen path of life. White cornmeal is use with a male patient and yellow with a female patient. The patient will step on the imagery of the footsteps leading to his place of birth in the west side of the *hooghan* while the medicine person sings the sacred songs of life. If the patient is lost and not present, the imagery of the footsteps is still made. The motion helps the patient and the family reaffirms their position in the living world. If the person is lost, the notion is done to wish him/her to return to the corn pollen journey of life or to return home.

The use of white corn is significance to creation of First Man by the Holy Ones at the beginning of time as the yellow corn is significance to creation of First Woman in the Black World. The same procedure is mentioned in the *Hane'* with the creation of First Boy and First Girl. The First children were found in the cornfield in the story of the First Clansmen returning to *Dinetah* in the White World. They were White Corn Boy and Girl, Yellow Corn Girl and Boy, Blue Corn Boy and Girl, Mixed Corn Boy and Girl, *Tádidíin* Boy and Girl, Corn Beetle Boy and Girl. Therefore, corn is signif-

icance to the origin of life. Prayer songs revealing interpretations of these significances are sung in the healing ceremonies.



Darkness and Dawn

By Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

The Holy Ones understood that Darkness is the mother of *Yoolgail Asdzáá* and Dawn is her father as she came to the People through *Háyoolkááł* from the fading of Darkness. As the People observed and became aware that Darkness and Dawn are not present at the same time, it became apparent to them that children develop in the darkness of the mother's womb and darkness is the first nurturer of a child. Traditional people believe, metaphorically, a child develops in the darkness of its mother's womb and born to the light of the living world, they are delivered to life by *Adinidiin*. Light, *adinidiin*, then, nurtures life for children to reach adulthood and then old age. To respect and honor the natural occurrence of Darkness and Dawn, *Diné* traditional clan bonding takes place after the sun is no longer visible in the evening sky. For the same reason, First Woman chose to avoid "seeing" Sun Bearer wed her daughter. She nurtured her daughter from childhood to adulthood and in marriage, she begins a new life with her husband, Sun Bearer. She refused to witness bonding her daughter's life with her husband out of her deepest respect for her daughter and her husband. Therefore, she sat behind a curtain of blanket throughout the wedding.

A traditional Navajo wedding begins in late evening twilight light at the home of the bride's parents after arrangements are made between the groom and bride's family. The ending of one day is similar to closing one chapter in their lives and the next day, another chapter begins for them united to live together with a set of goals to work on. They, eventually, become the next clan parents and grandparents within of the next generation of clan children. The groom comes into the livelihood connected to his bride's mother's homestead as a protector and caretaker. One day his wife becomes the clan monarch inheriting her mother's authority and belongings same as he inherits the right to share his sister's authority.

Diné Traditional Wedding

Told by Irvin K. James

Transcribed By Sylvia Jackson



Participating in the traditional wedding ceremony offers, many positive teachings toward understanding the roles of the parents, grandparents, and other members of a family, says Irvin James, Traditional Educator, 2001. Uniting clan families in marriage is much more than the concept of a wedding in the western society. It is uniting clan families through *Diné* concept of utilizing relationship, *k'é*.

Traditional activity that unites the clan families begins with the bride's family coming together to help with the traditional meal preparation. The family will obtain a ceremonial wedding basket, traditional water vase, and dipper. The men folks will prepare the wedding *hooghan*, fetch cooking fuel, and water for cooking. A day before the wedding, sheep or a cow will be slaughtered. On the day of the wedding, the meat is cooked over open fire or made into stew. Stew will be served with the cornmeal mush. Bread, roasted meat, dried fruits are boxed for visitors to take home.

In the contemporary time, relatives of the bride prepare gift baskets to give to the groom's family and relatives to express *K'e*. Gift baskets may have blankets, dish or bath towels, fruits, traditional oven baked bread, kitchen items and etc. Bride's mother prepares the blue cornmeal mush for her daughter, the groom and his relatives. She prepares this mush using a pinch of juniper ash, water and cornmeal. Mush is stirred carefully with the wooden stirring sticks until cooked. This is poured in the new wedding basket and cooled for at least two hours before the ceremony. A bowl of fruits may be served with the mush. Either the male or the female's family wishing to add the contemporary decorated cake and exchanging of rings can do so. Vows can be exchange by the bride and groom also.

Traditional Navajo wedding begins just before sundown, late in the evening in accordance with the wedding story of *Yoolgail Asdzáá* to Sun Bearer. Just before dusk, the groom arrives at the wedding site with his

father, uncle, grandfather and/or brothers on horseback with a herd of horses. The prospecting bride's brother/s/ and uncle/s/ try to "catch" as many horses as they can on foot. The groom unsaddles his horse, takes his riding gear and his clothing into the wedding *hooghan* and places them behind his seating area, next to the west wall of the *hooghan*. Over his left shoulder he will have his pendleton robe. It will be appropriate for him to wear a strand of turquoise beads, bracelet/s/, ring/s/ and a silver Mexican style concho belt. On the crown of his head, he may have a folded bandana wrapped round his temple with the ends tied securely over his left ear. He may have moccasins. On his left wrist, he may have a bow guard. His family and relatives seat themselves to his left, to the north wall of the *hooghan* and wait for the bride and her family to come in.

The bride dressed in her wedding attire brings in the blue cornmeal mush in the wedding basket. She will have on gathered satin or velvet shirt and top. She, too, will have a couple strands of turquoise necklace, bracelets, rings, and a concho belt over her sash. She may have wrapped leggings with her moccasins. Over her outfit she will wear her pendleton shawl over her shoulders. She places the basket of mush in front of the seated groom. She sits next to the groom to his right facing the visitors. Her father or uncle or grandfather follows her carrying a jug of water with a dipper. He sits next to his daughter facing the couple. The rest of her family members come in with food prepared for the traditional meal and place them in front of the couple. The bride's family seat themselves in a dignified and respectful matter to the south wall in the *hooghan*.

Mother of the bride will voice her wishes whether she wants to avoid eye contact with her son-in-law and waived the traditional practice of sharing a tobacco with him. If she wishes to avoid her son-in-law, then, she will avoid being in the same locale with him for as long as she wishes. There would be no eye contact and she will "hide" from him whenever he is in the same locale meaning she and her son in law must avoid being in view of one another on a daily base for as long as she wishes to do so. Due to illness or other hardship she may decide to break the practice so her son in law can comfortably assist her. She will share the mountain tobacco with him.

Traditional practice of avoiding eye contact with a son-in-law derived from the story of *Yoolgail Asdzáá Ílts'eegi Hane'*. As mentioned earlier,

Darkness is believed to be her mother while Early Morning Twilight Dawn is her father. Since darkness and dawn are opposite and are not present at the same time the practice of the mother-in-law is to avoid her son-in-law. It was believed to be the teaching of the Holy Ones. The understanding became the appropriate practice for the People. Traditional *hané* portrays that First Woman chose to avoid eye contact with Sun Bearer, her son-in-law, and sat behind a curtain of blankets during her daughter's wedding. The wedding, also, took place late in the evening for the same purpose. Traditional teaching stress that either the mother or the son-in-law will become blind if they do not adhered to the rule. The belief set precedence to traditional Navajo wedding to take place in the late evening.

If the bride's mother wishes to have a working relationship with her son-in-law she rolls a mountain tobacco with a piece of cornhusk, lights it with the *honeeshgish* and shares the smoke with him while seated next to her husband. The gesture communicates to him, his family, visitors and the Holy Ones her wishes to establish a working relationship with her son-in-law and avoid becoming personally involved for any reasons.

The use of the sacred mountain tobacco is considered a healing element for physical, mental and emotional purification and cleansing following a demonstration by the Holy Ones in the Fourth World. The positive understanding to this ancient practice is to allow the new couple to establish a working relationship with little or no interference from the mother-in-law and to keep a close ties with her daughter.

The purpose of the seating arrangement for the family of bride and groom reflects the understanding of the cardinal directions. The groom and his family will provide protection, emotional and spiritual development for the young family. The bride and her family will provide physical and mental development for the family placed within the southern direction. Therefore, the appropriate seating position for the bride's family will be next to the south wall inside the *hooghan*.

Elders teach that the family virtues are placed within the various directions by the Holy Ones as the People migrated into the southwest region. The seating arrangement reflects the *Diné* understanding of the cosmic pattern of stars and the four cardinal directions. Eastern direction reflects

the value teachings of the father in form of guidance and nourishment. Western direction reflects the value teaching of the mother in form of love, guidance and nourishment. Southern and northern direction reflects the value teachings of the maternal and paternal grandparents in form of developing spiritual awareness. The cardinal four directions are embedding in the clan family guidance, directions and teaching in this form and style and has been before Columbian.

Traditional teachers believe that how the People understand and perform their daily lives and carry on yearly activities depict contemplating in the constellation patterns. The male revolver, *Náhookqs Biká'íí* is the Big Dipper. The female revolver, *Náhookqs Bi'áádíí* is the Cassiopeia and *Diłyé'é*, the Pleiades, evolve around *Náhookqs Bikó'*, the North Star. It is believed that they represent the cosmic order for family structure. In Early Fall, *Náhookqs Biká'íí* will be visible high in the northeastern sky in the evening. This signifies the beginning of the male season. Plants and animals will begin hibernation. The air gets colder and the leaves change to yellow, orange and brown as they drop from the trees to the ground. Winter healing activities begin. Winter storytelling and games begin.

In early spring, *Náhookqs Bi'áádii* will be visible in the northern sky in the evening. This observation is understood to begin the female season. Plants and hibernating animals begin to stir and awake. Spring thunder will be heard and the female rain showers will begin. Breeding season begins for animals. Plants will pollinate. *Diłyé'é* will no longer be visible in the western sky in the evening. *Hastiin Sik'áíí*, the Corvus, will be visible in the summer sky. It is through this observation that the elders understand the constellation patterns portrays the understanding of leadership and the aging process.

As the earth rotates around the sun, the winter and summer constellations revolve around the North Star, *Náhookqs bikó'*. Elders believe that the constellation patterns is a system by which the Holy Ones displayed how the People should live as the Five Fingered People of the earth surface. Traditional clan bondage ceremony is embedded into understanding the significance of the celestial structure.

The bride pours a little bit of water into the palm of her right hand using the dipping gourd and sprinkles water on the groom's cupped hands. He

rubs his hand together in performance of washing his hands. Water is allowed to run off the hands to the dirt floor, on to Mother Earth. In her present, the couple gestures a commitment. The groom, then, pours water into the palm of his right hand and sprinkles the bride's cupped hands. She rubs her hands together to wash. The performance displays washing away inappropriate experiences, if any occurred in the earlier years of their lives. The couple unites with a clear conscious to begin a new life together. From that day forward, past events of either person will not be voiced or used as emotional punishment. The results of this sacred union will be the clan children. They must form without physical or emotional blemishes of the parents.

The father of the bride welcomes everyone and proceeds with the blessing of the cornmeal mush with corn pollen. He sprinkles a trail of *tádídíín* on the blue cornmeal mush from the east to west, straight across the mush. The opening of the design on the basket is usually lined up with opening of the *hooghan*. He sprinkles *tádídíín* straight across the mush from the south to north. The trail of pollen crosses at the center of the basket. He, then, sprinkles the pollen round the edge of the mush in the sun pathway fashion beginning at the east, to the south, to the west, to the north and back to the east, being careful to leave an opening to the east. The trail of corn pollen round the edge does not make a full circle. He sprinkles *tádídíín* continuously in one smooth stroke. He should not restart or back track the trail of pollen. The trail of pollen represents *gáál*, growth and home, for the new family. Home will contain family values, teachings, prayers, and songs to nurture the life journey through the many years to complete the circle of life. To journey the complete circle, the couple will witness the births of their children and grandchildren through the fifth generation. Blue Corn signifies feeding the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs for the growth of the family. It signifies the importance of practicing unbroken *K'é*, love and development of stability for the family to journey on the road of life together. The corn pollen signifies spiritual connection to the sacred elements and the Holy Ones as they have promised to be with the People always. The opening on the basket design is the same as the opening of a home toward the east and is blessed with *tádídíín* in the same matter.

Father of the bride instructs the groom to use his pointer and index finger and scoop mush from the east and eat. The bride follows the groom in the

same matter scooping up mush from the east, then south, west, north and from the center of the basket. The couple reenacts the performance once done by *Yootgaii Asdzáá* and Sun Bearer. The performance displays the importance of working as a team to raise the children; to have a home; to teach the clan values placed in the for cardinal directions for the People. Many relatives would witness the clan bondage ceremony and therefore, the couple should respect it.

The groom's relatives eat the rest of the cornmeal mush from the basket. Each member walks up to the basket, scoop up the mush, eats it off the fingers and return to their seat. The basket is not moved in this process. It stays on the ground as it was placed. Mother of the groom claims the basket when all the mush has been eaten. She will keep the basket in a safe place for use by the grandchildren. The basket will be used again in the *hozhóóji* celebrations such as with the baby's first laugh, the first step and blessing of the first moccasin, and the puberty ceremony of the female child. The basket, the cornmeal and *tádídíín* are considered sacred elements and the use of any one of them is with reverence. *Ts'aa'* signify the importance of home, songs, prayers and the values of the four cardinal directions. Designs on the *Ts'aa'* portray the emergent history of the People to the current kingdom. It should be kept in a safe place on a flat surface holding precious gems, jewels, *tádídíín* and other paraphernalia. Traditional mothers advised not to use the basket as a decorative item. It is not to be displayed on the wall hung. Clan bondage basket is not to be used in a healing ceremony. The bride and groom can keep the water vase and the dipper in remembrance of its significances.



Giving of Tokens in Respect for Clan Bondage

By Sylvia Jackson



When the elders from the male's family agrees on a prospecting bride, they propose clan bonding ceremony/ marriage, with the acknowledgement of the young man. In the contemporary society, paternal grandfather, maternal uncles and aunts may contribute to the tokens to be offered to the young lady's family. Tokens/gifts may include: a concho

belt, several strand of turquoise beads, horse/s/, cow/s/, sheep and money.

Traditional elders understand from the *Diyin Dine'é Baahane'* that everything in the environment is respected with the highest of honor and should not be taken without an offering of precious tokens, gems, pollen and etc. Appropriate practice is to offer precious token of gems, cornmeal or pollen for elements that would be use for personal usefulness. For instance, before a medicine person can take a plant from its locale for medicine, he/she must first sprinkle a pinch of pollen at the base of a living plant and make known the purpose for taking a plant. The performance is displayed in respect and dignity for taking life of a living thing to help another to live. Within the same frame of understanding is the offer of precious possession of a concho belt, turquoise necklaces, a horse or cow to unite the clan family of the female to the clan family of the male. This is done so that life will continue in a harmonious fashion and for the clans to survive. Jewels are *Ní'tłiz*, precious gems and are used as tokens, offerings, to the Holy Ones when asking for blessing. Within the same understanding, *Ní'tłiz* is offered to bond two unrelated clans together.

Western society may refer to the clan bondage as a "wedding" ceremony. Traditional marriage ceremony unites two clan families through a thorough understanding of the *Diné* traditional *K'é* system. The ceremony validates commitment of one clan to other. The initiative is much more than a "wedding" between two people. Partaking of the sacred cornmeal mush in the *ttaa'* bonds two unrelated clans together in spirits and physically. Pollen signifies lifelong commitment as understood through the *Yoolgail Asdzáá Íłts'eegi Hane'* that tells how *Haashch'ééyááłtí'í* sprinkled pollen around the edge of the basket unbroken and in one smooth stroke.

Horse/s/ offered as gifts are for work and transportation for the clans. The offer of cattle or sheep is for the clan celebration feast for uniting and to nourish the beginning of a new lifelong relationship. It, also, signifies enjoyment to live life given once as Five-Fingered People by the Holy Ones. Uniting of unrelated clans form a family to raise the children. The materialistic articles offered are in "good faith" to continue a compassionate relationship with one another throughout life.



Verbal Commitments

By Sylvia Jackson



Sharing information on the art of prosperous living is part of the traditional clan bondage ceremony. Parents of the couple will verbally exchange their expectations of the union. They will encourage the couple to recognize the values and principles of the clan families and advised them to display care, faith, charity and love in their home. The most important tribal virtues are respect, responsibility, self identity, being compassionate, trustworthy, having courage and understanding the value development of *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná*, and *Sihasin*. They are encouraged to remember the significance of the clan bondage. In time of trouble or hardship the families will come together again to seek resolutions.

The young man is encouraged to provide a home for his family and begin providing for his wife and her livelihood. It is not acceptable to live with parents or other relatives. He is encouraged to work the family livestock until at such time he establishes his own livelihood in his strive toward becoming self-sufficient. He is advised to be sensitive to the welfare of his new extended family. His role as a member of his wife's family is to help supply firewood, food and water for the elder members of her family if that is needed. His wife's role is to make sure his family members are also cared for. She is to take charge of the household duties and provide a wholesome, warm, and secure place for her family. She is responsible for the safe keeping of the family possessions and the well being of relatives of both clans. She is expected to be hospitable and offer a cup of coffee or a meal compassionately to her visitor/s/ despite the time of day. She relates to her husband and his family as the next of kin and vice versa for the husband. The two will consult with one another's primary family members before a decision is made that may affect the clan family members.

Honorarium elders remind the newly weds children will soon become new members of their home. They demand responsibilities and yet are a joy to have. The first immediate need of the children is a home. Children will reflect love shared between two people. They become responsibility for both parents, including feeding, bathing, changing diapers and teaching

them to talk. Parents are to guide and teach the children through *hané*, songs, games and actively being involved in the world of the children. Children grow up and become parents themselves, so they must be provided good nurturing experiences. Children are teachers of life.

Visitors and elders provide support, encouragement and advice while traditional meal is being served. They may emphasize appropriate roles and responsibilities of husband and wife; the technique of raising healthy children; maintaining positive relationship with clan members of both husband and wife considered important. Throughout the meal others may volunteer advice and encouragement to enjoy their new roles.

Woman folks will emphasize the role of being a nurturing mother, being a caring wife, bring forth new lives to love, cherish, to enjoy and being a leader in her household. The husband is reminded of his role and responsibilities. He is informed that a mother with a child should be given the utmost care and respect. He is expected to display the highest of honor to his wife with a child. From conception on, his wife is approached with respect understanding that her unborn child and she are one. Relationship with a pregnant wife is a relationship with a child. A husband should approach his wife tenderly as he would a child, with patience and understanding. He should be protective and make sure his wife's happiness is his top priority. He is expected to provide security and hope each day. The welfare of his family is now the most important responsible for him. Guidance and directions are offered by anyone wishing to speak.

After the meal, members of the groom's family are given boxes of gifts consisting of food, fruits, nuts, candy, and household items. Traditional wedding event may advance into early morning hours. Those wishing to stay for the rest of night will bed down in the wedding *hooghan* with the newly weds. The couple will bed down directly where they exchanged their vows fully clothed as they were married. Those spending the night should offer white cornmeal with prayers in the morning alone with the newly weds. The couple will offer yellow cornmeal in the evening. *Diné* wedding is a sacred clan bondage ceremony that incorporates appropriate modeling the understanding of respect, responsibilities, and upholding all that are considered sacred, sacred.

Fundamental to Valuable Teaching

By Sylvia Jackson

Diné elders believe and understand that the extreme opposites, the young and old are keepers of wisdom and knowledge. They view children blessed with the ability to be curious and with energy to take risk. Elders are blessed with the development of patience, understanding and maintaining mental strengths. Children provide adults with experiences to enhance development: patience, love, care, and endurance. Elders provide personal hands on experiences to promote, to stimulate, to create, to find skills, to hope, trust, commit, and develop persistence for the growing process. Children have not live long enough to make mistakes and elders have lived long to learn from mistakes and not repeat them. Children and elders are the demonstrators and teachers for the natural cycle of the growing process. The two extreme opposites are keepers of understanding, wisdom and knowledge for the People.

In a more contemporary style marriage ceremony, the bride's family may prepare a decorated wedding cake and would request for an exchange of vows by the couple. Father of the bride will take a moment to appropriately ask blessing of the cake and allow the couple to exchange wedding rings and vows for all to witness. Gift giving has also been added as a contemporary appropriate thing to do with the Navajo traditional wedding. These are presented after the traditional meal has been served and cleaned up. Other can still provide verbal wishes as the couples jointly open their gifts.

In the contemporary society young *Diné* people decide whom they want to live with or marry. Guardians seemed reluctant to say otherwise. In many incidents, conception occurs before parents are made aware of commitments resulting in an increase in the number of young people marrying into the same clan of their parents and grandparents. The fundamental understanding of *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin* are usually absent in the new household for young people causing many short termed common law marriages. Young parents separate and children are left to a single parent or adopted by relatives due to physical and mental abuse in the family. These are not traditional teachings of the People.

Jóhonaa'ái Baaghango Nigishaazhi
 Enemy Slayer and Born For Water

Told By Miller Attakai, 1957
 Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



Impregnated female creatures migrated from the Third World, Nihaltsoi, to the Fourth World, Nihodootłizh with the Holy Ones and soon gave birth to little ones and were disappointed, shamed and ridiculed. Due to poor health, sickness and diseases experienced by the mothers, babies were born deformed and to some degree abnormal in the *Nihodootłizh*.

Dine'é Baahane' recalls that soon after the birth of these hideous babies, the mothers buried them alive, hid them under brushes and shrubs. However, time past and the babies popped their heads out of sandy areas everywhere, ran into the brushes, bushes and survived. They grew and became the *Yé'íitsoh*. They ate and ate and never seem to get their fill and preyed on all living matters of the earth surface. The People became fewer and fewer in number and prayed hard for deliverance.

Many *Yé'íitsoh* flew overhead and picked up their meal before any clue is portrayed of their present. Some walked the face of the earth resembling rock boulders. Traditional *hané* tells some had extra brains and hearts hidden at various parts of their bodies or locale. Many ran their prey to death and ate them. Others used their tails and legs as weapons and killed. Some paralyzed their prey with stares and ate them. *Hané* recalls that they were responsible for the near extinction of all the living beings of the White World and had to be killed. Most ferocious and feared was the *Yé'íitsoh T'áá la'í Naaghaii*, One That Walks Upright. There were many attempts to battle this monster and none were successful. The People prayed hard for deliverance.

Yootgaii Asdzáá gave birth to two sons, *Naayéé'neizghání* and *Tó bájishchíní*. *Hané'* tells, the boys were delivered just a hand length of time apart. *Naayéé'neizghání* was delivered first. He was given the name Child of the Sun Beam and later gained his warrior name, *Naayéé'neizghání*. *Tóbájishchíní*, at birth was called Child of Mist and later gained his warrior name also. While the boys were growing *Yootgaii Asdzáá* often hid them in a dugout beneath the fire hearth whenever she sensed danger for

them. They are, also, referred to as *Leeyánaayani* elsewhere in the *Diné Baahane'*.

As the passage of time progressed through the growing cycle, the monster, *Yé'íitsoh*, became curious with tiny small footprints around the home of *Yoolgail Asdzáá*, so he visited her often. He asked her about the little human footprints all about her home. She told him she lives alone and gets lonely the footprints about her home aided her to feel less lonely. She told him, she creates the little footprints using the side of her fist pressed into the ground, showing *Yé'íitsoh* how she made the footprints herself, she pressed her doubledup fist into the ground, using her fingertips added toe prints to the fist imprinted into the ground. *Yé'íitsoh* observed closely and agreed, "*Shooya'*."

Yé'íitsoh was thought to be slow at comprehending as he displayed his attitude and behavior in that matter. Whether he was slow or pretended to be slow is not known.

The Holy Ones, *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* and *Haashch'ééwaan* were both delighted with the twin boys, *Naayééneizighání* and *Tóbájishchíní*. The boys displayed inquisitive minds asking many questions. *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* and *Haashch'ééwaan* took pleasure in taking care of the boys when duty called Changing Woman to be away. Sun Bearer was not present and no one mentioned him in the present of the Twins. His duty to the People required much of his time and was not physically involved in the upbringing of the Twins. The Holy Ones understood the purpose for the Twins to the earth surface People. They knew they would grow strong and destroy the monsters. All efforts and attentions focused on safe guarding the Twins. Soon, the monsters would be destroyed and gone. They will not be seen again on the earth surface.

In the meantime, the terrible, horrible giants continued to infest the earth surface preying on the small animals and people. *Diné* People continued to become fewer and fewer in number due to the big appetite the giants have and the People possessed little fighting skills to defend themselves. Some walked upright and stood ten times over the people. Some flew overhead and picked up their prey with their giant scrapers (beaks) and claws and carried their meals to the tops of high cliffs and fed their babies. Some appeared to grow from the side of rock wall and lain out on the pathway to major watering points and kicked passersby off the cliff to feed the young ones below. When asked, " Why are you lying on the pathway?"

The Part Rock Monster would answer, "My old legs need resting and I'm resting. Go ahead and step over me and be on your way." When one attempts to step over, he/she was kicked off the cliff. No place was safe.

To spare the children from the hideous monsters, children were hidden in large dugouts beneath the fire hearth covered by big slaps of sandstone most of the time so that the giants would not be able to detect the people smell. Charcoal and ash possibly distorted the smell of children and were safe. *Naayééneizighání* and *Tóbájishchíní* were rushed into such a dugout beneath the fire hearth whenever the giants were spotted near their home.

As the Twins grew stronger, *Haashch'ééyááltíí* and *Haashch'ééwaan* continued to display guardianship and volunteered as spiritual keepers for the boys. They taught the boys to provide for their mother small games such as rabbits, squirrels, gophers, and prairie chickens. *Haashch'ééshzhini*, the Dark Spirit, made bows and arrows for the boys and taught them the basic hunting skills. The boys practiced on everything that moved around the *Dził Ch'ool'íí* and *Dził Na'oodíí* area. The rabbits, squirrels, gophers, prairie chickens, and birds complained to *Yé'íitsoh* to do something about the naughty disrespectful boys living with Changing Woman. As a result, *Yé'íitsoh* planned a gathering of everyone to *Tónts'ísí Kooh'* to lure Changing Woman away from her home so that he would thoroughly check out her home for the little people living with her.

Traditional moccasin game originated at this particular time with those that came to the gathering. *Yé'íitsoh* did not quite have the game organized. He asked the first arrivals to give up their moccasins for a game and he buried them in the sand. He did not want the early arrivals to leave the gathering before the others get there. Coyote saw *Yé'íitsoh* stalling, so, he helped organize a game. He and *Yé'íitsoh* played many tricks on one another and he liked him.

He knew the *Diné* were excellent hunters and he remembered observing them wash their hair with yucca root suds. He brought back two whole yucca plants, with roots and stems and threw them on the ground in front of the gathered and said, "This is all I brought because I know the *Diné* People are excellent hunters and they wash with this plant. Maybe the rest of you can figure out how to use the items."

The animals began to design the moccasin game. The buried moccasins stayed buried. Coyote volunteered to issue out the yucca stems and

added two longer ones to hundreds (100) the animals prepared. He, also, observed older *Diné* People layout daily plans for everyone in the village where they lived, he called the longer two, bich'o'o. *Yé'íitsoh* enjoyed being the center of attention that he forgot the purpose of calling the meeting.

The spiritual guardians continued molding the boys mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually to be strong, to have courage and to be persistence. *Haashch'ééshzhini* and Spider Woman played the major role in providing spiritual nurturing of the boys.

One day, *Haashch'ééshzhini* encouraged the boys to pay close attention to all that they are being taught because they would be battling the giants as soon as they manage to hit their marks with the spears and arrows. The thought of battling and destroying the giants overwhelmed the Twins. They began seeking out information about their father. They asked everyone they met for information on who their father is and where they can find him. The rabbits, squirrels, sparrows responded that their father was all around and could not be found in one place.

No one was able to tell them where they could find their father. They began their journey toward the rising sun. Not far from their home, they spotted a hole in the ground. Younger Brother said he heard someone singing and a tap, tap, tap. He looked down the hole and suddenly the entrance to the hole became big enough for them to enter. Spider Woman was singing as she was weaving. She welcomed them in without turning away from her loom and asked what brought them to her house. Younger Brother told her of their plans to find their father.

Spider Woman could not keep the information from them. She told them to sit down while she tells them where they will find their father. Sun Bearer's home is at the edge of the big water far to the east. The journey is long and very dangerous she began.

Jóhonaa'ái Baaghango Nigishaazhi

Journey to Sun Bearer

Told By Miller Attakai, 1956

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



Throughout the journey to *Jóhonaa'ái baaghan*, *Naayéeneizighání* and *Tóbájishchíní* encountered many dangerous obstacles but were determined to reach the home of Sun Bearer. They never gave up. Sun Bearer, himself, was an obstacle once they arrived at his home. He put them through numerous sets of challenges to test their wits and courage. With the aid of the Holy Ones, they managed to please Sun Bearer and he furnished them with a suit of armor and lightening bolts. In the event of destroying the monsters, other living matters were also destroyed possibly by poisonous gas in the air.

One of the final challenges and tests of courage, Sun Bearer emerged the earth in smoke and asked the Twins to identify the mountains by name and locale before he send them home. Only the tips of the six mountains were visible from high above the earth. The Twins, with confidence recited the names and locations of the mountains correctly with the help of *Nítch'í Yazhii*. Sun Bearer gave each boy a suit of armor, lightening rod and *k'aabeesh*. Then he sent the boys back to the earth surface on his lightening rod knowingly that truly, the youngsters were his.

The Twins destroyed the evil monsters one by one while sparing others that pleaded and promised if spared they would be useful to the earth surface people. These were transcended to lice, laziness, jealousy, enviousness, old age and hunger. Their purpose would be to promote a need to strive beyond laziness, jealousy, enviousness, old age, hunger, and lice and to strengthen motivation and become enthused with living life to one's full potential. The monsters spared became the monsters of today.

Journey to the Home of Sun Bearer, *Jóhonaa'ái Baaghango Nigishaazhi*, begins on a warm, sunny, and clear day the Twins questioned their mother about their father. They asked for information on where to find him, where he lives, how does one find him. *Yoolgaii Asdzáá*, at first, avoided the question and responded, "Your father possesses destructive powers and you do not want to know him. In fact, he is all around and can not be found in one place." The Twins insisted on finding their father.

The Twins, being persistence, found Grandmother Spider and asked the where about is their father and how to find him. She told them what she knew. Sun Bearer lived far away in the east, at the edge of the great water. There are many dangerous and difficult obstacles to overcome before his home can be reached. There are the unfriendly sand dune people, the water people, the forest people, cliff dwellers and many others that are harmful and should be left alone on the journey to the Sun Bearer. The Twins listened carefully as Grandmother Spider told them the creation story, the various kingdoms through which the People emerged to the White World. The story was long. Grandmother Spider went on and on and on. The Twins asked to be excused so that they could be on their way. The stories are certainly helpful, but they must be going. Grandmother Spider told them to wait while she observed how much daylight was left yet for them to travel. She went outside. The sun had reached midday. She looped the sun with her web string and dragged it down to setting in the western horizon. She returned and told the boys they should plan to stay the night because the sun is setting in the west and there is little daylight left for traveling. The Twins gasped in surprise, they have not spent enough time for the sun to be setting in the west. They hurried outside to check out her information. She was right. The sun was setting in the west. They returned to Grandmother Spider's home and agreed to spend the night. She fed them, told them more stories until they both fell asleep.

Early the next morning, the boys were up before Grandmother Spider. They prepared quietly to leave. Before they were out the door, Grandmother Spider awoke. She scolded them for sneaking around and told them to sit down for she had gifts to give them. She took from her bag of webs two beautiful eagle tail feathers. They were white with black tips. Each young warrior received an eagle tail feather with a prayer and song of the "life plume," *hinááh bits'os*. She instructed the Twins to use the feathers with prayers and songs asking the Spirit People for protection and guidance. She told them that the *hinááh bits'os* carries the prayers and songs of the creatures to the spirits for their safety. *Hinááh bits'os* are feathers obtained from a living eagle, ordained with the power of wind/air for protection. Spider Woman reminded them to use the prayers and songs she taught them and no harm will come to them. They ate and left on the journey to find their father.

They traveled many days and nights. On a very hot day, they came upon a very sandy area. Older Brother began to move onto the sand when the sand began to boil and roll. They had encountered the big rolling sand dune. Grandmother Spider mentioned the sand dune in her story. The sand rolled like boiling water at the slightest movement they made toward it just as Grandmother Spider told them it would. Sand creatures lived in the sand dunes and they ate living things that perished in the sands. The Twins stood side by side and recited the prayers and songs with the *hinááh bits'os* in their hands. The sand became still and they crossed it. The next day at noon, they came upon the slicing reeds. Younger Brother attempted to enter the field of reeds when the blades of leaves began slicing the air. The slicing reeds had sharp blades of leaves that rustled in waves and chopped up innocent living things that wandered into the field of the reeds. Little insect critters ate the chopped flesh on the ground. The Twins resorted to the *hinááh bits'os* to keep them safe as they recited the prayers and songs. The threshing leaves stopped and allowed the Twins to enter and cross the field.

The third day, just before the sun set in the west, they came upon a little stream. Eldest Brother began to cross the little stream when it quickly widened and became a rushing river displaying a strong current. He quickly jumped back. The Twins quickly recalled the small stream mentioned in Grandmother Spider's story. It widened at anything that made the slightest movement to cross it. Creatures that fell in became food for the water creatures living in the stream. Again, the young men took the *hinááh bits'os* and waved their feathers over the stream, that quickly, returned to its original width and flowing gently again. They recited the sacred prayers and songs connecting with the stream. They crossed the gentle stream without a problem.

The fourth day at noon, they came to a trail leading between rock walls. As soon as Younger Brother advanced between the rock walls, the walls slammed together and grinded. The crushing rocks slammed together and grinded anything and everything getting between them just as Grandmother Spider said it would. Rock creatures living at the base of the crashing rock waited for those that mistakenly got between the rocks. The brothers recited the sacred prayers and songs and the rock walls became still and the brother continued the journey.

The young men journeyed for many days. They grew tired, hunger and thirsty. They could hardly keep upright as they walked. Younger Brother walked behind the Older Brother. He noticed his brother's feet turned inward, his legs appeared bow and he walked slower and slower and slower. He stopped and called to his brother to stop. The two looked at one another and were shocked at the appearance of one another. They had aged tremendously and were no longer young. Their hair had grown long and was now gray. The joints in their fingers were knotted and wrinkled. Their eyes set deep in the sockets and were dull. They thought for a hand length of time and discovered that they must have taken the old aging road a while back. The old aging road was just that. Anyone taking this path, aged fast, died and became a meal for critters living along the road. The young men sat down and tried to recall how far back they would have to retrace their steps to correct the mistake.

Suddenly, they spotted an old man moving very, very slowly on a path toward them. He pushed forward each leg, one over the other, to move along. He stopped and asked the boys to identify themselves and provide information on why they were on this road. He asked them where they were headed. They let him know the purpose for their traveling to the Sun Bearer's home. The old wrinkled man, *Wíishiyishii*, caterpillar, with slow legs told them more of the evil Sun Bearer was capable of. He told them not to worry for he will give each one powerful medicine to use when Sun Bearer test their survival strengths with poisonous tobacco. He turned halfway away from them and regurgitated into his cupped hand. He gave the boys particles he vomited out and told them to place it in their mouth at the time Sun Bearer offers them a smoke from his pipe. He told them Sun Bearer is not to be trusted. He eliminates those who know too much with poisonous tobacco. The substance vomited will help neutralize the poison in the tobacco. The Twins placed the vomit behind their ear lobes and thanked the old man for the gift. They turned around and backtracked to the location where they must have taken the wrong turn.

Knowing the sacred names, songs and prayers for each obstacle were helpful and the young warriors managed to gain passage over more deadly obstacles and continued to the Sun Bearer's home. They walked and walked for many days.

They neared Sun Bearer's home late one evening. He had fearsome creatures guarding the four exits to his home. At the first exit, there were two big snakes, *Tliish Tsoh*. They hissed, shook their rattlers, showed their fangs and would not allow anyone into the entrance. The Twins called the serpents by their sacred names, introduced themselves, offered prayers and songs to honor them. The serpents calmly responded to the songs, became tamed, laid their heads down and allowed the young men to enter. Two lightening bolts, *Átsintliish*, flashed, cracked and shook the ground at the next entrance. The Twins offered prayers and songs reverently in respect for their powers. They were allowed to enter. Next, two big cats, *Nashdóii Tsoh*, whipped their tails, showed their terrible sharp teeth and growled. The Twins called them by their sacred names and offered prayers and songs in respect for the creatures. *Nashdóii Tsoh* calmly returned to their sleep position and closed their eyes. The young men entered the third exit. *Ma'ii Tsoh*, wolves, guarded the fourth entrance. They sat quietly, looking harmless but they were quick to their feet when the boys attempted to move pass them. The Twins waved their "life plume", called the wolves by their sacred name and ordered them to calm down. They stood motionlessly and allowed the Twins to pass.

The Twins entered a huge white room. A large woman sat near the south wall weaving. To the north wall were stacks of baskets, pots, cooking tools and food. The woman greeted them in a harsh loud voice without turning away from her loom. Her hands moved quickly to separate the warp and ran a strand of yarn through it. She picked up the weaving comb and pressed the yarn between the warp. She asked, "For what purpose are you here at the home of the great Sun Bearer?"

Older Brother recited from whose home and location they came from and the purpose of their visit to their father, Sun Bearer. The woman turned and looked at them. She was not bad looking. She was actually beautiful with fair skin and hair neatly tied in a knot at the nape of her neck. Her eyes light like her hair. As she looked at her visitors, and thought, 'They are awfully thin, sun burnt, dirty and smelly. They need a bath.' She spoke with a slight irritation in her voice, "What do you hope to gain by coming to the Great Sun Bearer's home?"

Before they could answer, the thunders rolled and rumbled from east to west and west to east. The woman grabbed the weather beaten, dirty,

and dusty young men by the waist and rolled them up in a curtain of black silky clouds that hung from the north wall. She stood in the middle of the room.

Sun Bearer burst into the room. "Where are the two individuals I saw approaching this house now for several days?"

The woman standing in the middle of the white room with a weaving comb in her hand answered him harshly, "Who is the one that claimed he behaves himself as he travels the sky each day?"

Sun Bearer ignored her and began turning over the huge baskets and pots. He flipped stacks of hides and looked under and behind them. He grabbed the rolled white clouds from the east wall and sent it unraveling to the floor. Nothing fell from it. He grabbed the rolled blue cloud from the south wall and sent it unraveling to the floor. Still nothing. He grabbed the rolled yellow cloud from the west wall and sent it unraveling to the floor. Nothing fell from it. The woman held her breath as her eyes followed her husband to the north wall. Tiny beads of sweat appeared on her forehead and she felt wetness on her palms. Sun Bearer grabbed the black clouds from the north wall, it unraveled and the young men fell to the floor, "Thud. Thud." The boys scampered to their feet and faced Sun Bearer. His eyes were deep black, big and round like large obsidian pebbles. He viewed them up and down from their feet to the top of their heads. He stood with legs astride, hands on his hips and demanded an explanation.

Before the Twins could say something, Sun Bearer's wife answered in a husky voice, "These two are looking for their FATHER, the Great Sun Bearer. The one that claims he does not look at other women."

Older Brother cleared his throat and identified themselves as children of *Yoolgaii Asdzáá* from *Dził Na'oodilí* and *Dził Ch'ool'íí'*. They have come to see their father, Sun Bearer. Sun Bearer's eyes grew bigger as he looked into the eyes of the taller boy and then, at the shorter boy. He called Moon Bearer to enter. He rushed in from an adjacent room. He directed Moon Bearer to prepare the sweat lodge for the visitors. Moon Bearer was not as tall as the Sun Bearer but he had a kind face as he reached over and shook hands with them before he left. Sun Bearer instructed his wife to

prepare something for the visitors to eat. She busied herself nosily at the fire hearth. He motioned to the young men to sit with him near the west wall of the room. The three of them sat on the floor with legs crossed. Sun Bearer filled his obsidian tobacco pipe with tobacco, the boys watched. They recalled the warning given them by the old man on the journey, *Wiishíyishii*, caterpillar. He had cautioned them against the poisonous tobacco and the dangerous sweat ceremony Sun Bearer used to test courage of his visitors. Before the older brother took the tobacco from Sun Bearer, he quickly placed the small ball of vomit from behind his ear lobe in his mouth and rolled it under his tongue. He notched Younger Brother with his elbow to do likewise. They accepted the pipe and smoked. Sun Bearer encouraged his visitors to inhale deeply the smoke for it was strong medicine. The young men responded eagerly. Sun Bearer watched closely as they smoked. Sun Bearer thought, "They seemed to enjoy the tobacco almost as much as I am, if I say so myself."

Moon Bearer reentered and told them the rocks are hot and ready for the sweat activity. The young men thanked Sun Bearer for the good tobacco. They told him that it was one of the finest smoking tobaccos they have had since they left home. They enjoy it very much. Moon Bearer led them outside to the sweat lodge. He moved closer beside them and in a whisper he told them he had prepared a small chamber at the back of the sweat lodge for them. They are to crawl into the chamber and enclose themselves in with black jet rock placed at the entrance to the chamber. He told them Sun Bearer has plans to test their courage using the sweat lodge. It is not pleasant. As soon as the sweat lodge was enclosed, they scampered into the small chamber and enclosed it with the black jet rock. Sun Bearer reached in with a huge gourd full of icy cold water and poured it on the heated volcanic rocks. The brothers could hear the explosion sending thousands of deadly pieces of rocks in all direction. They looked at one another and whispered, "We could have been killed."

The boys sat safely in the chamber and listened to the commotion. The rocks sizzled to a quite sound. The young men removed the black jet rock away from the entrance and waited for Sun Bearer to call them out.

Sun Bearer called, "Come on out now. Dinner is nearly ready." They quickly crawled out one right after another. Older Brother said, "The sweat was very hot, Father. Wouldn't you say so, Younger Brother?" They stood side

by side shiny with sweat from head to toe. Sun Bearer displayed a look of surprised and stood speechless.

The young men sat in the nearby sand pile and rubbed sand on their legs, arms, and stomach. "The sweat was better than any that we've experienced since we left home. You should have joined us, Father." Younger Brother said looking directly at his father.

Sun Bearer's other children came and surrounded them smiling with eagerness to meet their brothers from the Land of the Five Fingered People. Two older daughters of First Wife volunteered to massage their two brothers head to toe. They have never been massaged and the experience was good. The girls left. The young men seemed more erected, stood straighter, shoulders squared and with more distinction of their faces, eyebrows, lips, noses, chins and cheeks. They felt terrific as they looked at one another. Each felt as they viewed one another how magnificent his bother looked. The girls returned with clothing and they assisted dressing their brothers. The clothing displayed excellent craftsmen in tanning and sewing of animal skin. The clothing felt soft next to their skin. Sun Bearer placed jewels on their fingers and bow guards on their wrist. He was almost proud of them. He knew if they were not his children, they could have perished in the sweat lodge or with the tobacco. Sun Bearer's wife called for them to eat. She had prepared venison stew. Sun Bearer's favorite dish.

After they ate, Sun Bearer showed them his homestead. To the eastern direction, the brothers saw pastures of all kinds of animals feeding in grass reaching up to their bellies. They especially thought the horses were the most beautiful animals they had ever seen. There were animals with horns, long hair, fat and round tummies, feathered birds that did not fly away from them, and many more that they have never seen in the area of *Dził Ná'oodilii*. To the south, there were fields of all kinds. Various fruits were collected off the field and used for food. Some could be eaten as soon as they are picked. Many they have never seen before. There were baskets, tools, and jewels, of all kinds. To the west, there were more animals. To the north, were all kinds of beautiful feathered creatures that chirps, whistled and sounded friendly. Sun Bearer watched the young men and nothing that he had shown excited them. Finally, after the tour, he asked what they wished for.

Older Brother looked at the father and said, "We came to ask for your suit of armor, for your deadly weapons of lightening bolt, *atsinilt'ish k'aa*, bows, arrows and spears." Younger Brother told him, "The horses are beautiful, plants used for food, pots, tools, and jewels are all wonderful things the People would like, but, later, not now."

Sun Bearer asked for what purposes they asked for his weapons. Older Brother told him the weapons are needed to kill the *Yé'íitsoh*. Sun Bearer was stung at the request. He, had, also fathered the *Yé'íitsoh*. He had not imagined he would ever have to help in killing them and to part with his weapons also was not in his thoughts. The weapons he proudly displayed over his entrance and the thought of parting with them never crossed his mind. He looked at the young men in silence. They looked magnificent and he was proud to have fathered them. The young men, then, told him how their mother, *Yoolgaii Asdzáá*, kept them hidden beneath the fire hearth, to keep them safe from the terrible giants.

Younger Brother said, "We live in fear daily. Every day our People are becoming fewer in number. Children are not surviving because of the horrible giants. We need the weapons, Father."

The young men had a lot to tell Sun Bearer and they talked into the night. Sun Bearer did not sleep soundly that night. He was bothered by what his sons had told him. The young men were up early and prepared for the return trip home. First Wife prepared cornmeal mush and they all ate breakfast in silence. Sun Bearer told them that he had decided to give each a suit of armor and weapons they asked for and that he will take them with him over the land. He told them that he, also, fathered the *Yé'íitsoh* and that he was not happy with the plans to kill them. However, if the *Yé'íitsoh* are killing the People, than they must be stopped and he will help them where he can. They, each, mounted a beautiful horse and rode into the sky high above the earth along side their father, Sun Bearer.

At mid day, they were directly over the *Dinétaah*. Sun Bearer suggested they dismount and enjoy a smoke before the young warriors descend back to earth. He filled up his turquoise pipe with tobacco. They talked and smoked. *Dinétaah* quickly became covered with dark clouds. Only the tips of the sacred mountains were visible. Sun Bearer asked the young men to identify the mountains by name and location. The brothers looked at one

another realizing this must be another trick of Sun Bearer. They observed the mountains carefully. Not only were the mountains covered with smoked, two were placed in different formation. The eastern mountain was in the north. The northern mountain was in the east. The young warriors quickly identified the mountains with correct location for him. Sun Bearer openly recognized them as his children. He hugged them both to his left breast and advised them to be alert, observe carefully, listen with comprehension and be quick on their feet. He called the powerful lightening bolts. The young warriors stepped onto the lightening rods and before they could blink twice were back on the ground at *To'sidoh*, Hot Spring.



Naayéé Jiigháá'gi Hane'

Told by Miller Attakai, 1956

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Yé'íitsoh T'áá'á'á' Naagháii / One That Walks Upright Giant

Yé'íitsoh T'áá'á'á' Naagháii faced the young warriors at a place called *Tósido'*, Hot Spring. Sun Bearer called the lightening bolts and returned his sons to the earth surface at midday. The giant, *Yé'íitsoh T'áá'á'á' Naagháii*, came to *Tósido* every day at noon for water and a bath. Sun Bearer knew the water served to rejuvenate the giant's spirit and strength. It was the source of his energy and strength. Sun Bearer planned this would be the young warriors' opportunity to confront the giant and for him to observe their battle skills against the horrible brother. The Spiritual Guardian, *Nítch'í Yazhii*, whispered the intention of *Yé'íitsoh T'áá'á'á' Naagháii* into the inner ear of the young warriors and were always a step ahead of him.

It was on a very hot day when the young warriors approach the pond, *Tósido'*. They heard a loud rumbling sound approaching the pond from the opposite direction from where they stood. They knew it was the enemy. They quickly drank their fill and waited for him. Soon, the head of

Yé'íitsoh T'áála'á' Naagháii appeared above the edge of the pond. He was big, ferocious in appearance and was covered head to toes in black armor, jagged scales protruded down his back, down the side of his arms and legs. The ground shook and the surface of the water rippled as he approached the pond. He moaned and groaned with each step. He appeared full length on the edge of the pond. He stood tall like a pine tree. He sniffed the air to his left and to his right. He positioned himself on the edge of the pond, lowered himself to his hands and knees. He looked into the pond, brought his lips to the water surface and drew in water nosily between his teeth. He sighted a reflection of the Twins in the pond. He drank and drank and drank. The water shrank and shrank and shrank to a small puddle until he no longer saw the reflection of the young warriors in the water. He seemed puzzled. He stood up, sniffed the air to his left and to his right. He looked around and saw the young warriors in their suit of armor across the pond. The Twins did not move, kept their eyes on the giant and waited for him to make his first move.

The giant stood up straighter, took in air slowly and filled his chest. He stretched out his arms and neck. "Who are the beautiful creatures across the pond?" He groaned, as if talking to himself.

The young men moved apart and stood ready to use the bow and arrow they held in their hands. Quick as a flash of lightening, the giant drew from his back spears and threw them across the pond at the intruders using both arms. Spiritual Guardian, *Nítch'í Yazhii*, told the Twins to leap into the air. They did. The charging spears wheezed beneath them where they stood, striking the ground and sending clouds of dust into the air. The giant looked surprised, rose straighter, and drew in air through his flared nostrils. He walked a couple of steps to his right and returned to his previous position. He swung his club back and forth as if trying to figure out his challengers. Before the young warriors can blink an eye, the giant threw two more spears across the pond. *Nítch'í Yazhii*, instructed the Twins to drop to the ground. They dropped to the ground. The spears sizzled passed above them and strike the ground behind them. The Twins quickly resumed their positions.

The giant drew in lungs full of air, stood straighter and peered across the pond. He roared, "Who are the beautiful creatures across the pond? Answer me."

He drew in more air and studied his challengers. The young warriors replied with a question, "Who is the ugly and horrible creature across the pond?"

The giant released two more spears. The young warriors jumped to their far right as instructed by *Nit̓ch'í Yazhii*. The spears whistled by as they sliced through the air. The giant has never missed this many times before. Quick as a wink, the giant released two more spears from his back. *Nit̓ch'í Yazhii* whispered to the Twins to leap to their far left. The spears landed in the ground behind them with a THUD. The giant gave out a loud ground-shaking roar and threw his club across the pond. It flew over the heads of the Twins aimlessly and they knew the giant was out of weapons. Older Brother yelled, "Who is the blind, old, careless creature across the pond? He flings his club away aimlessly."

Nit̓ch'í Yazhii whispered to them to take aim carefully for the giant is in furry and will soon expose his heart. The giant directly facing his challengers waved both arms in the air and roared out a terrible roar, swaying his head back and forth. The young warriors took aim, drew the bowstrings back as far as they could and released the arrows. The arrows flew true to their aim and pierced the heart of the giant. Blood burst and gushed out from the giant's chest. He looked terrified as he scratched at his chest and roared. He gave out his last earth shaken roar and fell backward to the ground sending a large cloud of dirt into the air. He laid motionless on the ground, breathing rapidly and spreading blood from his nose with his eyes wide open. His whole body shook in a rapid continuous spasm. Finally, his body became lifeless. His eyes wide open became dull. *Nit̓ch'í Yazhii* instructed Younger Brother to quickly cut off the giant's head and cut out his heart and throw them in opposite directions. Older Brother cut off the limbs, cut up the backbones and threw them in all directions. Their spiritual guardian, *Nit̓ch'í Yazhii*, warned the young warriors the giant is capable of regaining his strength and growing new limbs because he has extra brain and heart hidden inconspicuously. *Nit̓ch'í Yazhii* advised Older Brother to used *Nolyinii k'aa beesh* to redirect the flow of the giant's blood away from Hot Spring. *Nit̓ch'í Yazhii* told the Twins Hot Spring is a source of strength for the giant. Therefore, the blood must not run into the empty pond.

It has been many full moons since the Twins have been gone from *Dził Ná'oodilii*. The mother of the Twins, Changing Woman, sat outside her home watching the path leading to her home as she did every evening for any sight of her sons. They have been gone too long and she feared for their safety. *Yé'íitsoh T'áálá'á' Naagháii* has been constantly checking her home for the children. Before, entering her home for the evening, she looked out to the path one more time. She saw two small specks approaching her home carrying a load.

The Twins placed the bloody bag a short distance north of their homestead and called to their mother waving, "*Shimá, Shimá, Yé'íitsoh T'áálá'á' Naagháii seelyí.*"

Changing Woman recognized her sons and ran out to meet them. She hugged them both and asked how the trip was to their Father. The Twins eagerly told her they managed to destroy the most feared giant, *Yé'íitsoh T'áálá'á' Naagháii* at Hot Spring.

"No. No. You did not. Nothing will kill that horrible monster." Challenged Changing Woman.

The young warriors lead their mother to the bloody bag. Seeing the piece of flesh off the crown of the One That Walks Upright Giant. Changing Woman danced in circle first to her left and than to her right in happiness and to display a feeling of victory over the enemy. The boys told of their adventure to their father, Sun Bearer and his family far in the east. Changing Woman noticed her sons had matured and they looked a bit different. She knew they had seen their father and were now young men.



Déélgeed / The Giant of the Valley

On one of older brother's mission, *Naayéé'neizghání* came upon a monster known as *Déélgeed*. *Déélgeed*, particularly enjoyed resting in an open plain near Red Valley from there she could see all around. It was on a nice sunny clear day. *Naayéé'neizghání* spotted *Déélgeed* resting in the middle of the valley. *Naayéé'neizghání* tried to get near the monster and was not successful after many attempts. He wondered how best to get near the

giant without her spotting him. He waited for an opportunity for several days. One mid day, *Na'azísí*, a gopher, overcome by curiosity, came to see him and asked, "What are you waiting for? You have been at this location for days now."

Enemy Slayer told *Na'azísí* he had come to slay the monster, *Dééłgeed*, but he cannot get near her without her seeing him first. The monster seemed to sense his presence. The gopher, then, offered to help. She dug four tunnels with small chambers to the monster from the four cardinal directions. When the monster discovered her, she merely told her that she needed a tiny bit of hair for her nest. The monster calmed down and allowed *Na'azísí* to help herself to the hair on her chest while she rested. Feeling the hair being pulled off her chest it was like getting a massage, the monster soon fell into a comfortable sleep. *Na'azísí* informed *Naayéé'neizghání* the monster was ready for the kill and to be quick at doing it. *Naayéé'neizghání* shrank to a small size with the help of the "life plume" and entered the tunnel from the north. He found the monster's heart beating steadily overhead when he reached her. He drew back the shaft with a long black jet arrowhead and pierced the heart using the full force of his strength. The monster jumped high into the air, clawed and plowed the ground with her horns as *Naayéé'neizghání* ran to escape from tunnel to tunnel and chamber to chamber. Finally, the monster fell to the ground, breathing heavily, spluttering blood from its nose. The Monster shut her eyes and did not move again. *Naayéé'neizghání* watched from a distance, wishing to find a way to see if the monster was dead and yet, was afraid to approach her. *Hazéésts'osii*, chipmunk, came along and asked what Enemy Slayer was waiting for. Enemy Slayer informed her of the dying monster in the valley. He asked her to find out if the monster was indeed dead. *Hazéésts'osii*, told him to watch for a signal that she will give. She will climb to the tip of her horn and wave if the monster is truly dead. *Naayéé'neizghání* waited anxiously as Chipmunk scampered off toward the monster. Soon, he saw Chipmunk climbed to the tip of the horn and waved. Enemy Slayer reached the dead monster, cut her up and threw its body parts in all directions. He cut out the intestine and filled it with blood and arranged it over his left and right shoulders. He thought it would be a good way to lure the flying monsters to pick him up and deliver him into their nest at the top of *Tsebitá'í*, Shiprock, New Mexico.

Younger Brother, *Tóbájishchíní*, reminded at home with his mother, Changing Woman. They had an important task of keeping the fire burning bright at the center of their home. *Naayéé'neizghání* requested them to function in a positive frame of mind while he is battling the monsters. This is to ensure his safety and to maintain good health. The fire must never weaken. It would be the source of his physical strengths, mental focus and courage. It is important to keep the *hóneeshgish* near the fire. He told them to stir the coal and pray for his safety often. He will need all the support they can give. Younger brother tended to the fire and kept it burning bright. Changing Woman used the *hóneeshgish* to send her prayers to the Holy Ones.



Tséninahalééh / The Flying Monster



Naayéé'neizghání walked into the *Tsebitá'í* area near noontime with the intestine filled with blood over his shoulders crossing over his chest cavities. Soon, the flying giant, *Tséninahalééh* cast its shadow over him. Before he knew what was happening, the flying monster scooped down, picked him up with huge rough claws and carried him to the top of *Tsebitá'í*, where she had her babies in a nest on a ledge lower than her nest. She flew directly over *Tsebitá'í* and dropped him into the nest where there were four baby *Tséninahlééh*. *Naayéé'neizghání* quickly held the *hinábitsoos* in his hand, sang and prayed for his safety. He landed gently into the nest. He, quickly, pinched the intestine open and the blood it contained ran freely from him as he lay very still. The babies, *Tséninahalééh*, being always hungry, scurried to what looked like a lifeless body and pecked at it with huge sharp beaks.

Naayéé'neizghání opened one eye and warned the babies to get away, "Shoo. Shoo." The babies looked at their mother, whom was resting on the upper ledge, called to her, "This one is still alive, Mother."

Seeing the pool of blood, the mother told her children to stop whining and eat. She flew off into the southern sky to find a meal for herself.

Naayéé'neizghání slipped off the intestine and asked the babies when they expected their father to return and to identify his resting place. The babies

responded quickly, "Our father returns late in the evening from the northern sky about the same time the male rain clouds begin to rumble and he usually rests on the northern upper ledge."

Naayéé'neizghání climbed to the upper ledge and hid directly under a pointy slapped boulder that protruded out like a shelf that apparently was a resting place for the male giant. True to the babies' word, their father appeared in the northern sky, about the same time when the male rain began to rumble. He dropped into the nest a maiden with hair fixed into a bun, dressed in a new black *biit*, sash and her *ké nitsaahá'á*. He approached his resting place and folded up his wings. His wings spread twenty feet or more. He slowly brought in his wings by several folds close to his body. *Naayéé'neizghání* leaped to his feet and swung his club over his head several times and clubbed the flying giant over the ledge. He fell all the way down to the ground and crashed. He cried out only once and was dead. The babies shivered and sobbed. *Naayéé'neizghání* commanded, "Shush. Eat for there won't be any more coming."

Naayéé'neizghání asked the babies, when they expected their mother to return. They quickly answered, "Our mother comes in from the southern sky at the sight of the female rain clouds just before sunset. Her resting place is there." They pointed to a large boulder on the south edge.

Naayéé'neizghání hid under the slap of boulder used by the mother for resting and he waited. Soon, when the female rain clouds appeared to the south, the giant mother appeared in the horizon. She carried a furry animal and dropped it into the nest on the ledge. She looked exhausted and tired. She slowly brought in her wings and settled perched up on her boulder. *Naayéé'neizghání* sprang from his hiding place, drew back his club and swung it as hard as he could and clubbed the giant in the back of her head. Before, she knew what had happened, she fell over the ledge and crashed into the ground far below. The babies cried out and sobbed loudly. *Naayéé'neizghání* dropped to the ledge where the babies were nestled.

The babies, in unison, begged not to be destroyed. *Naayéé'neizghání* picked up the male babies looked at them directly in the eyes and told them, "You are going to provide healing power with your body parts to the *Diné* People from this day forward. The People will use your feathers,

bones, tears, claws, and beaks in healing ceremonies."

He threw the larger one first into the northern sky, he awkwardly flapped his wings and soon glided. "You are now *Kinyaadoke'é Tsilkééh'*," the golden eagle.

He threw the second one in the same direction and told the little monster, "You are *Átseelgái*." *Átseelgái* is the bald eagle

They glided to the north mesa. They both screeched as they landed on the north mesa. He, then, picked up the larger female baby. He looked at her straight into her eyes and told her, "You are going to provide instinctive ness and be a carrier of messages for the *Diné* People from this day forward. There will be times when the People will need to be reminded of the proper ways of living. You will be helpful."

He flung her into the southern sky and she flopped her wings awkwardly and glided to the southern mesa. She returned a call "Whoo, Whoo, Whoo." She became known as *Ná'áshjaa'tsoh*, the horned owl. He threw the second baby monster in the same direction and told her, "You are now going to be known as *Tseeltsoi*." *Tseeltsoi* is the red tail hawk. She glided to the south mesa and called in a much higher screech sound.

Naayéé'neizghání realized he was in solitary, high on top of *Tsébit'a'í* and he did not have a clue as how to get back on the ground. He called and called and called to anyone who might hear him, "*Kodee. Kodee. Kodee.*" There were no responses. He stayed on top of *Tsé bit'a'í* for what seemed like several moons. He grew weak from hunger and thirst. The male and female rain clouds failed to appear as they have on the day he killed the huge flying reptile giants.

Meanwhile, at home in *Dzil Ná'ooditii*, Changing Woman and *Tóbájishchíní* observed the fire growing weaker and weaker no matter what they tired to do to get it to burn brighter. They stirred the coal. They fed it dry wood. They sang the song of creation. They burnt cider and smoked tobacco to send their prayers to the Spirit People for help. They knew something terrible has happened to *Naayéé'neizghání*. However, the fire kept flickering steadily that gave them hope that whatever *Naayéé'neizghani* was in is not quite so bad and he will come home in time.

Dichin, Iłthóyéé', Sá, and Yaa' Dine'é

Told By Miller Attakai, 1956

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

The oral story is passed down by word of mouth to *Diné Alchini* of Enemy Slayer and Born for Water coming upon a group of enemies in a dugout and the enemy, each, pleaded for their life to be left along and allowed to live because they existed for a purpose.

Hunger, Lice, Lazy, Old Age and Jealousy awoke to a nice warm hot day in the dugout where they lived near *Dził Ch'ool'íí*. Hunger said, "I'm hungry. Who has something that I can eat?" Lice hear him and said, "My coat is full of lice and they are big, round, and fat. Come sit by me again and eat the lice off my coat."

Hunger thought, "I have in mind something more exotic and tasty. I've devoured lice for some times now. I'm looking for a change."

Lazy was still rolled up in his bedding. He gets up until noon and is always grouchy and unhappy. He never washed, combed his hair or changed his clothing. He enjoys living in filth. Jealousy and Old Age seemed to be a pair. They get along well together. Jealousy visits with everyone at least twice within a day and is always interested to know what is happening with people. She always had something interesting to pass on about other people. Old Age was just that, old and uninteresting. She would sit at the entrance of the dugout and observe others go about their business. Every three stretch of time, Jealousy would come by to whisper things into her ears. Sometimes, she would response with a smile. But mostly, she responded with a nod of her head and sat staring out into the open area.

It was on a typical day, mumbling and grumbling, Hunger poked around in the food storage trying to find something to eat. "There must be something here to eat."

A shadow blocked the entrance to the dugout and inside the dugout became pitch black. "Hey," yelled Hunger, "Get away from the entrance. I can't see a thing."

"Is this what you are looking for?" came a deep husky voice and Hunger

felt a hard poke to his middle with something that smelled like roasted meat. His mouth became watery and he licked his chops, "Lick, Lick, Lick." He thought, "At last, something good and tasty to eat." Before he could grab the something that poked him, it was taken away. He turned around quickly and faced a tall muscled warrior. He held in his hand a club smeared with grease from roast meat.

Behind the tall muscled warrior stood another one but a bit shorter. Lice, Old Age, and Jealousy pushed and shoved at one another to see who had come to visit with them. Hunger became paralyzed at the sight of the handsome warriors and forgot what he was looking for. Lazy stirred in bed to see the intruders. He became wide awake from all the excitement and commotion.

The huge tall warrior stood taller and said, "We've come to eliminate Lazy, Lice, Old Age, Hunger and Jealousy and their family members. We received messages about how these people live and the bad habits they are promoting. If you would direct us to where we may find these People, We will be on our way. By the way, who are you people?"

Hunger quickly replied, "I'm called Hunger and this here is Lice and those three are Lazy, Old Age and Jealousy." Quickly, Lice tried to cover up by saying, "We are members of the...huh..huh..huh."

Before he could finish his sentence, the tall warrior said, "I think we have come to the right place. You must be Hunger, you are Lice and you must be Old Age, you are Jealousy and that one is Lazy."

The dirty pitiful characters looked at one another and nodded their head. The Warrior looked at each one and thought how best to go about eliminating these pitiful and helpless souls? The tall well-built warrior sat down on a boulder near the entrance and looked at his brother standing in front of him, now. The dirty malnourished characters stood side-by-side and stared into his eyes. His thoughts were heard out loud looking at his brother who stood beside him, "We can't do this. We can't hurt these pitiful characters. Just look at them. They are nothing but dirt and filth. What harm are they to the People?"

Just then, Old Age spoke up, "I'm thinking. You really don't need to do

this. We serve a purpose if you would be kind to allow us to explain why you should allow our existence."

Lazy and Jealousy jumped in with an interruption, "Yes, we could be the reasons for the Earth Surface Being to move around so that they don't become one of us. We will promote them to work hard to avoid becoming one of us. We will remind them how not to live. We will be the reminders of what laziness, filth, jealousy, untruthfulness, and old age can be like."

Old Age sat back down quietly observing as her friends deal with the magnificent warriors, her eyes moving back and forth between her friends and the warriors.

The tall warriors finally agreed that he would spare them so that the Earth Surface People would have to work hard to rise above laziness, poverty, jealousy, hunger, lice and old age. Earth Surface People will need to be challenged daily to maintain physical fitness, good personal hygiene, and to have good emotional control.

The Warriors allowed the characters: Hunger, Lice, Lazy, Jealousy and Old Age to exist with the Earth Surface People.

The moral of the story is that, each person is responsible to rise above obstacles, stumbling blocks, challengers and to maintain focus to accomplish a goal that he/she has set for him/herself. Nothing is free. A person has to work hard to earn a decent living style.



Dlohodichí / Humor

Written by Sylvia Jackson

The moral of the *Diné* traditional oral stories is to develop well-rounded *Diné* children with a good sense of humor, slow to anger, and ignore being overly sensitive and be able to handle sensitive situations.

Humor was demonstrated between the *Yé'íitsoh T'áá lá'a Naaghái* and *Naayééneizghani* and *Tóbájishchiini* at Hot Springs which set precedence to teasing distance cousins, known as clan brothers and sisters which are actually, cousins. Sisters-in-laws and brothers-in-laws can tease one another in the presents of other in-laws. They can pretend to be jealous of one another. People married into the same family are allowed to tease one another. Mother and father-in-laws are not to be teased by daughter and son-in-laws. It is considered inappropriate for siblings to tease one another living in one household. Parents should not tease their children. Grandparents can tease older grandchildren lightly, however, grandchildren should not tease grandparents.

There are several understandings on the use of humor from the traditional *Diné* stories. These are portrayed in the following stories: *Yé'íitsoh T'áá lá'á' Naaghái*, the First Moccasin Game, *Diyin Dine'é* and The Adventures of Heroic Twins.

Use of humor is considered healthy when a person learns the rules for clan-kinship joshing and teasing. First of all, use of humor is at the top of the list in healing art, an essential skill for survival, maintaining good mental health and having an ability to view problem issues from various angles and level of understanding.

Having a good sense of humor is to be optimistic and being open-minded to accept difficult situations. Use of humor alleviates stress, anxiety, fear and discomforts. Humor sets the stage to relating, an "opener." Traditional people did not greet one another without some type of humor to establish kinship before getting to the main agenda. A laugh or two set the stage for serious discussion. Humor is a powerful traditional concept of

utilizing *K'é* in relating with relatives drawing a reserved person into a "group." It, also, could be a tool testing "wits", "courage", and "wittiness" of a distant cousin. Native people are generally humorous people, a skill they obtained in dealing positively with something uncomfortable or sensitive.

Traditional story recalls that the Holy Ones at the time of their departure from the earth surface first exchanged relationship through humor with one another and displayed acceptance of one another's power, gift and uniqueness. W. Aronilth, *Diné* College, Tsaile, AZ., tells of the origin of humor for the earth surface people. At the beginning of life for earth surface people, *Bíla'áshdlá'i*, the Holy Ones volunteered themselves to be keepers of values and life principles as they took their positions in specific locale. They became part of the elements of life within the four cardinal directions, atmosphere, night, constellations, and the process of growth and existence. When the Holy People took their positions, they looked at one another, shared a laugh or two, and recognized one other's uniqueness and authority through the humor of *K'é*. The people understand that the Holy Ones coordinate, collaborate, communicate and work together through interrelationship and humor even today.

Humor is very much apart of the traditional moccasin game enacting the humor used by the various creatures extending honor and respect for each uniqueness, ability and character differences of animals and birds. Each song is constructed to honor the players, animals, birds or objects used in the game. Night creatures designed songs to honor the day creatures and visa versa for the day creatures as they played several games. The Twins used humor with *Yé'íitsoh T'aalá'á' Naa'gháí* at Hot Spring to test his ability to control his emotions and concentration. They answered *Yé'íitsoh* with a question, " Who is the blind old being who throws his weapons away aimlessly?" when *Yé'íitsoh* asked who the beautiful beings were across the pond from him. His question may have implied that the beautiful beings across the pond from him should not be there, because they are "beautiful" and unblemished and do not have the skills to fight him, the giant, the mean and skillful warrior.

Using humor with culturally different group of people, people outside the clan circle, may not be a good idea because they have little or no knowledge of how humoring is used within the clan circle. First of all, they are

not clan relatives and may not know how to handle "teasing" because they do not understand the purpose for the "teasing". The base for clan teasing is to connect with a close relative and to form a base for relating to carry on fellowship. A person outside the clan circle, a member of other ethnic group, may not understand the system well enough to use "teasing" to form a connection. However, it is a skill that most can learn and use. If misunderstood, it may be understood as "personal manipulation", "a put down", "lack of respect", "mischievous" or "cruel" teasing.

Cruel teasing is, also, depicted in the oral *Hane'* of the People. It occurred with *Yé'ítsoh* and other animals, for instance, coyote. Coyote developed a habit of being "first" at new ideas or to receive credit for new discoveries, inventions, or plans. He enjoyed being the center of attention, so, to teach him a lesson or two, animals used "cruel" teasing to get their message across to him. However, the characters in the story are magical characters, the wrong done to one character at the end would be made right. For instance: *Ma'íí dóó B'ííh Baahane'* depicts how deer tricks *Ma'íí* into burning his babies in fire. The story begins:

Long ago, Coyote and her pups met Doe and her fawns on a foot trail. Coyote asked Doe, "Your babies have beautiful spots. How did they developed spots on their backs?"

Doe refused to answer Coyote. She looked at the pups and noticed the solid tan color coats. The pups were beautiful babies. Coyote asked again, "How did your babies get those beautiful spots on their backs?"

Doe told Coyote, "Pick an armful of dried pinon branches and some pinon sap. Put your babies at the rear of an overhanging cliff edge. Build a big fire at the entrance. The babies will get spots on their back from catching the burning sap flying in all direction with the sparks. The flying sparks will land on the backs of your babies and leave little black spots."

Coyote and her pups went on their way. Doe took her fawns on the way to the water pond thinking, "Sister Coyote will not try to change her baby's coat by burning sap in a hole with her babies in it. She is much too smart to do that."

Coyote, rehearsed the information on how the cute little fawns received

the spots on their backs. She decided to put spots on the back of her babies just like the cute little fawns. She found an overhanging cliff edge. She encouraged her little pups to gathered dried pinon branches and sap. "I plan to make you all very handsome and beautiful." She told them.

Coyote placed her pups at the rear of the overhanging cliff edge. She told her pups to be patient and endure the heat for they will have beautiful coats when all is done. She built a big fire at the entrance of the overhanging cliff edge. She waited anciently. She heard the babies whined and cry. "Just a few more seconds and all will be done." She assured them.

The pups stopped whining and everything was quite. The fire went out and she removed the coal. Her babies were burnt black and laid lifeless. The skin over their teeth had pulled away. They appeared smiling. "I told you, you would be happy with the spots." She said.

She pulled the babies out of the overhanging cliff all lifeless and singed black. She understood what she had done, being foolish to listen to Doe, she, quickly, sought help to bring her pups back to life.

Luckily, *Yé'íitsoh T'aalá'á Naagháii* knew how to help her. She had always depended on this creature and he comes through for her each time. He revived the pups using prayers and chants of the deer people, *Dine'ee K'ehjii*. The story, songs, and prayers depict the origin of the ceremony, *Dine'ee K'ehjii*.

Halloween activities are closely assimilated to "teasing" and/or playing "tricks" on one another for enjoyment. Activities may be "family fun" things to do with very young children, however, children enjoy appearing "different" with unusual hairstyles, black nails and dress "different" on ordinary days. It feels "cool." How they want to appear, seem important, over what they eat. Parents often wonder where, how, what and when the children developed the ideas to present themselves differently. The "trick" is on parents, through some encouragement parents have taught the children they are "cute" when they look disparate, and, it may have begun with celebrating Halloween.

Base on traditional oral stories, grandparents, uncles and aunts use the skill of understanding humor with children at a very early age to develop

the ability to predict, to read between the lines, to make inferences, to be mentally sharp and ready with an answer when challenged by grandparents and/or by clan relatives. The skill is one that is considered important in leadership development. Using traditional humoring is for a different purpose from Halloween activities where children dress and present themselves in costumes and not a mind game.

Primary and extended adult family members are members of a healthy family relationship when they display the use of proper humor with one another. As member of the clan family, they enjoys one another and have a good time humoring one another while working to complete a project, activity, or participating in a ceremony. To understand the use of proper humor, a person displays knowledge of appropriate *k'é* relationships to extended clan family members. Kidding or teasing with everyone and anyone is not an appropriate use of humor, *k'é*. Kidding and teasing with little understanding of kinship and clanship relations may be understood as cruel teasing and may cause anger and hurt. In the traditional sense, acceptable teasing is learned through interrelationship first with grandparents, aunts and uncles. Grandparents, uncles and aunts display appropriate teasing and help mold a child's sense of relating through humor.

Elders believe that the art of self-control and self-discipline develops through proper humor. For a short review, parents and siblings of the same household should not tease one another. Distant cousins, same as brothers and sisters, can tease one another. Those married into the same clan family can tease one another in pretense to be jealous of one another or in pretense to out-do one another trying to get on the best side with the-in-law. A person is believed to possess mental strength to deal with emotions and sensitive issues through the use of humor if he can first handle being teased or can tease back through proper *k'é* relationship. The use of humor in the traditional understanding is to acknowledge uniqueness, appreciate differences, strength tolerance and pride in relationships. A display of being inferior in a teasing situation by adults displays immaturity in the eyes of elders.



Origin of the Diné Healing Ceremonies

By Sylvia Jackson

Yé'í Tsoh, monsters, disappeared and the Fifth World became safe for the earth surface human to multiply. Once again, much planning had to be done. However, not long after the monsters were destroyed, Changing Woman and few of her followers left the group and migrated west due to disagreement over planning management. The Twins became ill and nothing the Holy Ones left behind could administered would restored the health of the Twins. Herbs were gathered with prayer offers but the health and physical condition of the Twins continued to decline.

Council of Beings felt defeated and seemed to come to the end of the discussion. They sat in silence in the *Na'ha t'á hooghan* when one person looked up into the smoke opening in the ceiling and saw *Dq'tsoh*, White Crystal Boy, sitting at the edge of the smoke opening eavesdropping to the discussion. The Beings were upset with him. They ordered him down and questioned his behavior. They demanded he supply them with any and all information he may have regarding the restoring of the Twins' health. *Dq'tsoh* suggested a ceremony called *Nidáá'* that may restore balance and harmony back in the Twins' health. He gave instruction as how *Nidáá'*, the Enemy Way Ceremony, was to be conducted.

The Holy Ones gathered and conducted the first *Nidáá'* following the instruction of *Dq'tsoh*. The Twins' health continued to worsen. They lost weight, became thin, darken, and their dull eyes set deep in their sockets. *Nidáá'* performed left them with very little improvement in their health. It was performed again and again, two additional times, with little improvements in the Twins' physical and emotional health. *Dq'tsoh* was consulted again. He listened to the report on the events. At the end of the reports, he informed the People that a very intricate part had been overlooked, the role of females, since the Twins were not married, the ceremonies were conducted without the opposite gender. Female role, *Bik'éhozhó*, was left out to restore positiveness. No one remembered to include the role of the female. The fourth *Nidáá'* was, then, held with the inclusion of blackening two female cousins with ash for the warrior twins. Certain members were send out to gather grass, leaves, stems from var-

ious plants and burn into ash. On the last day of the event, before the Twins return to their hut, the two female cousins were smeared in fats and rubbed with ash. It is told the performance erases the mental negative images imprinted in the memory of the warrior twins and thereafter drag their robes from the ceremonial hut to the arbor to neutralize the negative effects caused by killing and slaughtering the monsters. Healing began. The twins regained their strengths and soon regained their health as well.

Nidáá' ceremony originated for the purpose of restoring harmony and balance for the twin warriors have since been reenacted to restore harmony and balance for warriors, men and women in the current times. Its purpose is to purify illness caused by impurities of negative action and force. A person may become imbalanced mentally, emotionally and spiritually due to witnessing death of other ethnic person or persons. An emotional experience of killing, witnessing death of an enemy may cause a person to become mentally unbalanced and disharmony with his/her environment.

On the other hand, the stories identify mishaps that can occur in dealing with earth surface creatures in an inappropriate way such are: insects, reptiles, birds, fish, amphibians and certain mammals. Sun Bearer warned the Twins that all creatures are his children and eventually was against the destruction of members of own family. Sun Bearer allowed the destruction with a price of suffering, illness and death in return.

Nidáá'/ Enemy Way Ceremony

By Sylvia Jackson

One most important parts of *Nidáá'* is for the wounded warrior to obtain a piece of enemy hair called *Atsiiziz*, signifying the crown of the giant, and leaving it north, a short distance, from the ceremonial hut. On the third morning of the ceremony, the enemy will be killed, also an enactment of killing the giant. The victory dance of Changing Woman is reenacted by the people dancing in circle first to the left and to the right in the healing ceremony, *Nidáá'*. Currently, this is called round dancing. It is done on the last evening of the ceremony. The participants in their act of dancing are unraveling troubled emotions, stabilizing it and replacing it with a feeling of being victorious and a feeling of overcoming the odds.

Nidáá' is a healing ceremony requiring famine participation. The ceremony is most effective when a woman is rubbed in animal fat and blacken with ash then she drags her robe over the warrior's track from the ceremonial hut to her home. The ceremony is intertwined with gift exchanging and feasting by everyone. It's an expression of victory for the wounded warrior or warriors. It has been mislabeled and called Squaw Dance by other ethnic group.

It is a three-day ceremony and various events take place at three different camps. On the first day the host party, the patient and his relatives, journeys to the second camp with a peace offer, *ágaat*. The second party, accepting the *ágaat* will join the visiting party and begin returning to the host camp. The night of the first visit, the second party feeds the visiting host party and exchange gifts. The gifts range from party treats, boxes of groceries, pendleton shawls or robes, materials, and money. The gathered will sing and dance until morning. The second party will feed the visiting host family again and present the headpersons with gifts. The gathered will return to their homes and prepare for the third day event when the second party will be returning to the host ceremonial grounds for feeding, singing, dancing and exchange gifts.

On the evening of the second night, the hosting party will identify the camping spot and provide water, wood, and food while the second party arrives to the campground. The two parties, jointly, will spend the night in an opened area, cooking, eating, camping, singing victorious song, and dancing. Second party accepting the *ágaat* would have a designate "carrier and keeper" of the instrument for the duration of the ceremony. Carrier Keeper of the *ágaat* is usually a very young unmarried inexperienced female without a male companion. She and her female family members pick the male dancers to dance with on the first, second and third night.

On the morning of the third day, the joint parties will charge into the camp of the enemy (into the camp of the hosting party) and display a kill of the enemy by shouting war cries, shooting into the air and circling the ceremonial *hooghan*. The host party will feed the visitors and exchange gifts. There may be more singing, cooking, eating and dancing. At mid morning, the wife, husband, or cousin of the patient will get blacken with ash and receive piles of gifts in shawls, robes, and material that she drags

back to her hut attempting to erase all trace of mental imageries caused by the enemy on her husband, wife, or cousin. The gifts are, then, shared with members of her family for helping with the event. She is allowed to keep a gift or two for herself.

Naayééneizigháni use the *Dolyinii k'aa beesh* to redirect the flow of blood flowing from the *Yé'itsoh* at *Tó'tsidoh* is reenacted in various healing ceremonies in current times to eliminate negative powers causing illness and/or diseases. Medicine person may reenact various part of the story to rejuvenate mental strength and to separate evil thoughts and activities from the mental imagines. He marks the ground with a zigzag line next to his covered patient using *Dolyinii k'aa beesh*, obsidian arrowhead, to separate evil thoughts from his patient. The patient lies completely covered with a piece of white cloth on the ceremonial *hooghan* floor while the medicine person burn medicinal herb under the cloth for the patient to smell cleansing the mind, soul, and body. This is called *ách'ááhoodzo'* and *hát'aa nahoniitkos*. The medicine person provides healing remedies to the ill person to recover from negative imageries of killing and bad experiences using songs and prayers of *Naayééneizigháni* and *Tóbájishchini*.

Diné manhood ceremony, *Táchééh*, is, also, an enactment of challenges the Heroic Twins encountered at the home of their father, Sun Bearer. A young man is initiated into manhood by their uncle and/or his grandfather at the time when his voice becomes deep and huskier. At this age, a young man is, also, going through physical and emotional changes that he has never experienced before. Therefore, he is best guided and counseled by ones who have gone through the experiences. His elders teach him of the powerful force for reproduction is natural and is an appropriate behavior of both male and female. Manhood and womanhood initiation practices are good practices in the development of positive characters counseled by elders. It is a valuable experience in that aids in the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional development of young men and women. Womanhood ceremony, *Kinaaldá*, held for *Yootgaii Asdzáá*, is enacted by *Diné* women in effort to mold young woman into adulthood.

Manhood ceremony, *táchééh*, held for *Naayééneizigháni* and *Tóbájishchini* by their grandfather *Haashch'eezhini* is enacted by fathers, uncles and/or the grandfathers to initiate young men into adulthood. It provides

an opportunity to speak appropriately of sexual attractions, attitudes and behaviors of men folks in private and in an enclosed dwelling while experiencing heat and steam from heated rocks. The experience promotes bondage between the uncle, father, son, and brother. They build common grounds, speak, work together and share experiences. It displays the importance of learning the skills of being persistence, set goals and to overcome negative thoughts. It offers learning the skills of self-control and avoids activities of self-destruction. Male roles and responsibilities are the primary focus in the ceremonial sweat lodge by members of close relatives.

Hane' of the Heroic Twins are teaching stories. Exposing *Diné* children to the stories will teach them about the People, history and language. Having knowledge of the stories, children will understand the cultural environment of which they are very much a part.

The moral of the story is multiple. One would be a person must have a plan to get a job done correctly on the first try. Children are encouraged to learn that opportunities may not occur often. Another one would be, it is important to listen with comprehension, become aware of the consciousness and the sub-consciousness, a person may have to act according to the first intuition. Traditional teaching is to look at the enemy in the face, take courage and gain its respect. It is encouraged and taught to young children to identify the negative force that is working against them and face it with courage.



Nóhokáá Diyin Dine'é Ninááagi Hane'

Told by Miller Attakai, 1956

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

The clan mother, *Yoolgail Asdzáá*, Changing Woman, journeyed west to a beautiful homestead, Sun Bearer had prepared for her. It is told that he insisted she move there to be with him more and to take her away from a tribal uproar in the *Dinétaah* region after the giants perished from the land. She refused to journey there alone so she encouraged twelve Holy Ones from *Dinétaah* to accompany her to the west. The home was beautiful appearing to float on a large body of water. Mossy vines covered the

hooghan. She and her followers called it *T'átl'íd BıldaNaa'eel Hooghan*. It was in a beautiful location. Everything she needed was supplied by Sun Bearer and the land. She and her followers lived there for a length of time, until her family became lonesome and requested to be allowed to return to their homes in the *Dinétaḥ*. Changing Woman, also known as *Yoolgail Asdzáá*, decided it was time for her to carry out her last task in producing the clan people, *Bila'ashdla'ii*. The People will relate to one another and the effort will sustain the fundamental understanding of *K'é* that was one of the essential elements that began the creation and the most important task for her to carry out before she departs from the earth surface. She will not return to *Dinétaḥ*.

Yoolgail Asdzáá rubbed off dried particles from her skin from her right and left breast and mixed the substance with precious dust particle of white shell, turquoise, abalone shell, obsidian, dirt and crystal. She, then, formed the mixture into a male and female human pair resembling the *Diyin Dine'é*, and herself. She used the mountain tobacco smoke and blew breath into the forms and stimulated them to life while the four directional *Nítch'í Diyin Dine'é* sang their songs. She did likewise with the rubbings from her left and right upper back, her left and right sides and created four distinct human pairs.

The group became the first clansmen: *Hashtłishnii-Tótsohnii* from her left side, *Kinyaa'áanii* from her chest area, *Honágháahnii* from her back and *Tódich'íi'nii* from her right side. Each clan group received an animal guardian and a cane decorated with precious gems for protection and guidance. *Hashtłishnii* received the porcupine for an animal guardian, an obsidian cane and the ability to philosophy. *Kinyaa'áanii* received the bear, *Shash*, for animal guardian, a white shell cane and the ability to lead. *Honágháahnii* received, *Tłiish Tsoh*, big snake, for an animal guardian, a turquoise stone cane and the ability to possess spiritual healing. *Tódich'íi'nii* received *Nash Dói Tsoh*, big cat, for an animal guardian, an abalone shell cane and the ability to possess spiritual healing. They were given pleasant disposition to draw people to themselves. They are, in essence, the connection between the earth surface people to *Diyin Dine'é* and the sacred elements that sustains existence.

Changing Woman believed her task was completed. She stepped back and wiped the sweat off her forehead with the back of her hand. She realized

she had mixed the sweat with the particles left on her hands. The fifth pair of clansmen was made from the sweat off her forehead and was given the name *Tábąąhá*. *Atá ąąhdóó atáziil ąąh yit'óodgo bits'ąądóó dine'é hazl'ígíí éí Tábąąhí sil'íí' jini*. Therefore, the first clansmen are referred to as *Nihookáá' Diyin Din'é Bila'ash dła'ii*.

The substances that Changing Woman gathered and mixed became various body parts for the human body. White shell became the bones, teeth, finger/toe nails and the white of the eye. Turquoise gem became the body fluids and a way to eliminate waste from the body. Abalone shell became the nerves to supply stimulations throughout the body and a means by which the human being will learn from its environment. Obsidian became the hair and the black part of the eyes. Crystal became the mind, senses and eyesight for the body. Sweat and dried particles off the skin of Changing Woman became the pores and covering for the human body. In all, there were seven elements from which the human body was designed.

Therefore, there are seven major growth developments stages recognized by the *Diyin Dine'é* for celebration by the *Diné* People to honor, respect, and appreciate. Any time, throughout the growing process, a person can express gratitude for living with *Hózhóqjii* ceremony. The ceremony provides opportunity to reaffirm existences and to express gratitude for life on the earth surface throughout seven stages of growth development including pregnancy, birth, first laugh, first step, first word, puberty and bonding with another person of another clan.

The following is a caption from a Navajo prayer that best describe how the *Diné* People view themselves as the People:

"We are the Holy People of the earth surface. *Ni'hokáá' Diyin Dine'é Niidli*. Earth is our Mother and Sky is our Father. We exist between them. *Nahasdzáán nihmá doo Yádiłhił nihitaa' bita'gi nínihi'deelya*. The mountains hold our prayers and songs representing the skills of thinking, planning, living and reflecting on our work inside our home. *Dził ei tsodizin doo sin, nitsáhákees, nahat'á, íina doo sihasin bił hadít'eego nihighan*. The door way is to the east. *Ha'a'aahjigo ch'é'étiingo niha'ályaa*. The Holy Ones gave the People language. *Diyin Dine'é saad nihániilá*. and with it we feel strong and are at peace with our being. *Dii bee nihidzil doo chanah niidli*."



Returning to Dinétah

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Before the clansmen began their journey to return to *Dinétah*, they asked Changing Woman how would, they, the Earth Surface People understand she would be in their presence and for all the generations to come. Changing Woman walked from the entrance of the *hooghan* to her left round the fire hearth returning to the entrance from the north. As she walked, the people witnessed various changes in development in the growing process. They observed her returning to her youth, adolescence, maturity, old age and youth again at the full circle round the fire hearth. "This is how, you, the People will know." She said.

Changing Woman transcends with the various seasons same as new growth, growing, maturing and old age. *Diné* People for a decade experienced the interdependence and interrelationship with the surroundings, as they believe that Changing Woman demonstrated the intelligent for them to understand. Furthermore, with each new season, it would be a new start within the process of growing for the People. At the completion of each year, a person may reflect on the past year to view his/her accomplishment. To begin a new season, a person may set new goals and objectives to strive toward and accomplish again. Within a growing season much would be learn serving as foundation to built on for the next cycle. The life cycle evolving from the first, second, third, fourth and to the fifth world depicts growing to become more human. Traditional *hane'* tells of more kingdoms beyond the fifth world yet to come which may be interpreted as gaining new intelligences on becoming more human. It, also, means as the People multiply, they continue to renew themselves through the births of their children. Life is precious, fragile, and is given just once.

Upon returning to the original land, *Dinétah*, the clansmen came upon a certain bird family near San Francisco Peak, Arizona *Doo K'o'oosłííd*, the sacred mountain to the west. They were the *Kinyáándokí'* (the golden eagle), *T'ájiłgaii* (the bold eagle), *Tááłtsool* (the black eagle) and *T'aajilkiizh* (the spotted eagle). The eagle family lived in the San Francisco Peak area, at a place called *Tsin binił'áí*. As the clansmen approached the Peaks, the birds became alarmed and questioned the coming of the strange beings. They asked, "What is the purpose for these strange crea-

tures not yet seen before in this part of the land?" The eagles ordered the clansmen to go away. They were not welcome.

This was not a common acquaintance with these creatures. These creatures were not seen in the area before or anywhere on the earth surface. The eagles questioned one another, "Where are they coming from? Who are they? What is the nature of their purpose here?"

Diyin Dine'é approached the startling eagles from the east and told them the creatures are children of Changing Woman known as *Yoolgaii Asdzaán*. They are returning to *Dinétaah* from the west. Their purpose is to rejoin the earth surface human beings in the original land. They have been expected, therefore, *Diyin Dine'é* have come to meet them from *Dinétaah*.

The eagle family could not say anything more. They and the *Diyin Dine'é* from the *Dinétaah* came together and discussed an appropriate *Hózhóqji doo' íigháásh* ceremony to be held in honoring, displaying respect and recognizing the value of the clansmen. The event was necessary before the clansmen can freely mingled with others.

Various tasks were assigned to individuals to perform. Yucca People, *Hashk'aa hadzohi Dine'é*, were asked to produce containers to hold the herb mixture, white cornmeal, sacred offerings (*k'eet'áán*), and precious gems belongings for the clansmen. Others placed a white skin, deerskin, over the entrance of the ceremonial lodge to signify that earth surface children are being honored and initialized with *Sa'ah Naaghái dóó Bik'é Hozhón* to possess positive mental, physical and emotional development. Entrance closure signifies Dawn, a new beginning, a rebirth to light and to display the place for reverence. Another group was asked to supply yucca roots for bathing. Before each element is taken from its biological place, an offering of precious gems or *tádídíín* was given in exchange.

Clansmen were given herb bath from one of the container, dried off with white cornmeal as absorbance and ordained as earth surface children by placing *tádídíín* on their feet, body, tongue and head. The path on which they will travel was ordained with *tádídíín* and recognized by the creation songs, prayers, and stories throughout the night until morning.

In this fashioned, the clansmen were introduced and recognized by the sacred elements of the natural world, light, water, plants, pollen, and the four cardinal *Nítch'í Dine'é*. A specific designed basket was woven first by the Yucca People for this special ceremony and it has never been altered since. *Hozhóqjii doo' íiggháásh*, set precedence for anyone to express appreciation of self, life and living and for the abundances of the seasons. The ceremony is a reenactment in all aspect of the activity: herb bath of yucca root suds, moisture absorbed with cornmeal off the body, the person would dress in jewels and find clothing. Family members and others would pray and sing of the living world. They will reenact the sacred *hane'*. Lastly, a person will be anointed with corn pollen to rejuvenate the spirit, soul, and mind. It is appropriate to be thankful for life because it is given only once.

Da'ak'e Hosleegi Hane'

Told By Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

The first clansmen, *Tótsohnii*, *Kinyaa'áanii*, *Hónáagháahnii*, *Tóbááhá* and *Tó'dichii-nii* were on a return journey to *Dinéta'h* from the far west back toward the sunrise direction when they came upon cornfields of various shape and sizes. In a center of a circle cornfield, they found a perfect stalk, taller than the rest of the corn with six ears of yellow corn on one side and six ears of white corn on the opposite side to match the other side. They were the children laughing.

The story begins, on the twelfth day of their journey, the group stopped at one location to investigate laughing sounds in tiny voices coming from fields of corn. The group followed the happy sound and came upon little children playing in a cornfield. The cornfield was round among others that were of various shapes and sizes. There were a circle, a triangle, a square and a rectangle shaped cornfields. The Clan People soon learned the fields served several purposes. Triangle shaped served to protect the People and to convey how the growing process is put in place. It represented the young, the middle aged and the old ones as depicted by three equal sizes. Square shaped field was for understanding leaders and how they work with their people. The message conveyed was leaders and their people are

equal in creation, rank and should respect each one another. Four equal sides for the shape conveyed the understanding that no one person should overpower or take advantage of another living thing. All are equally created. Rectangle shaped served the family. Everyone helps with the planting, weeding the field and harvesting the fruits. All families share in effort for all to survive. Circle shaped field conveyed growing, learning and teaching begin at a point, progresses around and returning to the starting point but at the next level of knowledge. Knowledge discovered with this observation was all living things exist with a structure. Life has a beginning, it will mature and will end with old age, die and return to the natural world. Renewing of self will be through the birth of young ones. Life will renew itself as the families grow and stay together. The highest value for life and living is being compassionate, responsible, and respectful which is embedded in the teaching of *T'aahóijit'éégó*.

The Clansmen met the owners of the fields and consulted with them on the event of finding the children in the cornfields. They talked and agreed to hold *Hozhóqjii doo' iighaash* for the children. *Diyin Dine'é* agreed to name the children *Naadǎ'atgai Ashkii* (White Corn Boy), *Naadǎ'altsooi At'ééd* (Yellow Corn Girl), and *Aniit'ánii Ashkii dóó Aniit'ánii At'ééd* meaning Growth Girl and Growth Boy. Another set of a boy and a girl received names, *Tádídíín Ashkii dóó Tádídíín At'ééd* meaning Corn Pollen Boy and Corn Pollen Girl. The children were bathed in yucca root suds, dried off with white cornmeal and dressed appropriately in moccasins and jewels. They had their hair brushed, tied at the nape of their necks, and received their names given them by the Holy Ones.

The clansmen reenacted the practice of *Haasch'ééyááltí'í* to bless and ordained the growth children with prayers and songs of creation throughout the night until morning. In the morning, the children were anointed with *tádídíín* from feet, legs, body, hand, to the top of their heads. Small pinched of *tádídíín* placed on their tongue. They greeted the morning sunlight in appreciation for their recognition and existence.

Children found playing in the round cornfield conveyed they are the purposes to life and growth for the many generations of people to come. *Hozhóqjii doo' iigháásh* ceremony, today, is an enactment of the *Hane'*. Traditional people believed and practiced ordaining the children properly to the creation and spiritual beings for protection and guidance with the Blessing Way ceremony long ago. They believe children should be immune to aliens such as virus, infection, allergy, and other foreign material recognized as diseases with *Hozhóqjii doo' iigháásh* ceremony. It is a belief the event properly introduces children to the living world that contains many impurities and to recognize his/her given personal "space" uniquely belonging to them. Through the ceremony, they are introduced by sacred names, shadow, *k'ekehachin*, sacred footprints and *Nitliz / Yodi altahs'ee'* forming a connection to Mother Earth, Father Sky and *Yootgaii Asdzáá*.

No one should enter into the personal "space" of another without being allowed to. The teaching prevents hitting, kicking, scratching, pinching, and other types of physical abuse of children or spouse or grandparents. From the personal "space" a person is recognized by the Holy Ones and is provided *A'yoo'o'oni* as protection and guidance.



GEMS: White Shell, Turquoise, Abalone Shell and Black Obsidian



Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Within the Black World, *Yah'alnii'neeyání*, One Formed at the Center of Heaven, was very much alone and lonely, so he used the intelligence that he possessed to bring forth four elements. *Yah'alnii'neeyání* spoke with the spirit of the white shell language and brought forth light and placed it within the eastern direction. He spoke with the spirit of the turquoise language and brought forth moisture and placed it within the southern direction. He spoke with the spirit of the abalone shell language and brought forth four types of *Nitch'í*, air (wind), and placed them within the western direction. Later, *Yah'alnii'neeyání* placed wind within the four directions; white wind was placed to the east; to the south the blue wind; to the west

the yellow wind; and to the north the black wind. *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* spoke the language of the obsidian and formed pollen which became the dirt substance and was placed within the northern direction.

It is said, *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* brought forth Dawn and place life and light into it and placed it within the eastern direction. Spirits of Dawn, *Hayooł káál At'ééd dóó Hayooł káál Ashkii* were identified and placed within the eastern direction. Their purposes were to provide direction to the lives of earth surface beings by which they will travel, *gáál*. Within the House of Dawn, *Hayoołkáál Hooghan*, *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* placed the Crystal Light, *Tséghádi'nídínii Ashkii dóó Tséghádi'nídínii A'tééd*. By the aid of Crystal Light the earth surface beings will be capable of developing the ability to process thinking, forming ideas, to be inquisitive and have a need to know. *Nitsáhákees*. *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* brought forth Blue Twilight, *Nihodeet'iizh At'ééd dóó Nihodeet'iizh Ashkii* and he placed them within the southern direction in the House of Blue Twilight, *Nihodeet'iizh Beehooghan*. It was part of the great plan for earth surface people to develop knowledge by which to construct plans for living from one generation to the next. This is referred to as *Nahat'á álya'*.

Yah'ałníí'neeyání brought forth Yellow Evening Twilight, *Nihootsooi At'ééd dóó Nihootsooi Ashkii* for the western direction and placed *áhó'ní* for social development and family unity in the House of Yellow Evening Twilight, *Nihootsooi Beehooghan*. *Yah'ałníí'neeyání* brought forth Folding Darkness, *Chahalheel At'ééd dóó Chahalheel Ashkii* for the northern direction and placed life, home and rest within the House of Darkness, *Chahalheel Beehooghan*. *Yah'ałníí'neeyán*, also, placed development of awareness and protection within the House of Darkness. With all the elements and the power of the four directions in place, *Yah'ałíí'neeyání* brought forth four types of air substances, *Níłch'í ligai* (white air), *Níłch'í doolizh* (blue air), *Níłch'í łitso* (yellow air), and *Níłch'í diłhił* (black air), and placed them within the four directional clouds. It is told by the elder the four types of air/moisture impacts the four seasons, *Dąągo*, *Shíłgo*, *A'ak'éédgo*, dóó *Haigo*.

Yah'ałníí'neeyání, his helpers (*Haashch'éé Dine'é*), the four elements and the four winds gathered and constructed a plan for creation. They used their powers and created *Ya'Bii'astiin*, Within Upper Creation Spirit, which became known as Father Sky. He was assigned to oversee all activities

and control the functions of the upper creation. The Spiritual Ones gathered again and decided to create a counterpart for the upper creation, *Nahasdzáán Bii'astíín*, Within the Lower Creation Spirit. They created Mother Earth to control and oversee all activities in the lower creation. *Yá Bii'astíín* and *Nahasdzáán Bii'astíín* are known to breathe, think, talk and all-knowing as they control the balance of the creation. They constantly coordinate, cooperate, collaborate, and communicate through the elements of their being; *Kq'*, *Tó'*, *Níłch'í* and *Nahasdzáán*.

Therefore the elements from which life comes are connecting to the gems: white shell, turquoise, abalone shell and black obsidian. It is the understanding of the traditional *Diné* People to recognize the connecting elements, the power of the gems were in jewels as part of the every day attire. Both men and women wear jewels: necklaces, bracelets, earrings, ring on their middle, ring or pinky finger. Mexican style silver belts called concho belts can be wore by both men and women.



Ádóon'é Ídłí / Clan System

By Irvin James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Ni'hodisq̓s, the Glittering World, is identified as the Fifth World. In this world, Changing Woman created the clansmen, clarified the rules for the growth process and renewed the natural order of progression and rules for *Hózhóq̓jii* (The Blessing Way). Changing Woman and the Holy Ones left the earth surface to take up position among the constellations. Earth surface people, recognizing the purpose for the clan system, migrated to all parts of the land and are still migrating even today.

In Accordance to *Diné* traditional legends, Navajo originally begun with five distinct clans: *Tótsohnii*, *Kinyaa'áánii*, *Tódích'íi'nii*, *Honágháahnii* and *Tábaq̓hí*. The five clansmen journeyed back to *Dinétaḥ*, Navajo land, from the far west after Changing Woman formed each clansman from her own body rubbings. *Hane'* of the clansmen may differ due to various healing ceremonies by various medicine people. Children are taught the *Hózhóq̓jii Hane'* for simplicity.

Changing Woman rubbed off dried skin from her right breast and molded

a female *Kinyaa'ááni*, from her left breast, she molded a male *Kinyaa'ááni*, to produce a pair. Rubbings from over her right shoulder blade she molded a female *Honágháahnii*, from over her left shoulder blade she molded a male *Honágháahnii* and made a pair. Rubbings from the outer left arm she molded a female *Tódich'íi'nii*, from under the left arm she molded a male *Tódich'íi'ni* and made a pair. Rubbings from the outer right arm she molded a female *Tótsohnii*, from under the right arm she molded a male *Tótsohnii* and made the last pair.

In the process of molding out each pair, she mixed the elements of the four directions: *Nítch'í* (*łigai*, *dootłizh*, *łitsoi*, and *dilhił*), white shell, turquoise, abalone shell, obsidian, sweat, pollen, heat and wind to mold each clansman in pairs, female and male. The finished figures were placed on a piece of deerskin while the Holy Ones produce sacred songs to bring life to the figures. The sacred songs failed to bring life to the figures. *Diyin Dine'é* called upon the four cardinal *Nítch'í* *Diyin Dine'é* for assistance. Light and rainbow also came to assist in bringing life to the figures. They covered the figures with another *dok'aakehii*, unblemished deerskin.

EH Begay, Traditional Consultant, 2001, states that the elements from which the people emerged are important in that white crystal became the brain and the spinal cord, white shell became the bones, finger/toe nails, teeth and the white of the eyes. Turquoise became the fluids for the body. Abalone shell became the nerves and senses for the body. Obsidian became the black of the eyes and hair on the body. Sweat from Changing Woman's body became the pores for the body. Dried substance from Changing Woman's body became the skin. Four cardinal wind, air, light, darkness, and water helped to bring life to the human figures. Changing Woman was not able to do all by herself. Work of bringing the Five Fingered People to life required *Nitsáhákees* and *Nahat'á* of all the *Nítch'í* *Diyin Dine'é*. Her purpose for coming into the world was to become the Mother of People. The significance of her birth, her upbringing and her teaching set precedence to the way of life for the earth surface people, the *Diné* People, also preferred to be called by *Nihokáá* *Diyin Dine'é* *Bíla'ashdlá'ii*.

Changing Woman believed her task was completed. She stepped back and wiped the sweat off her forehead with the back of her right hand. She realized she had mixed the sweat with the particles left on her hands. The

fifth pair of clansmen was made from the sweat off her forehead and was given the name *Tábaq̄hi*. *Atá baq̄hdóó atáziil baq̄h yit'óodgo bits'áádóó dine'é hazl'ígíí éí Tábaq̄hí sil'í jiní.* The first clansmen became five pairs and are referred to as *Nihookáá' Diyin Din'é Bila'ash dła'ii*.

It is told that *Hashtłishnii*, Mud Clan, received their names following an event that occurred while the group journeyed eastward. The pair was asked to find water for the travelers and all they found was an empty dried shallow creek. They dug and uncovered "muddy" water. After the incident, they earned the right to be called the Mud Clan. At the next camping, the pair from the left arm was asked to look for water. They found another dried shallow creek and dug with their *gish*. They dug and uncovered a stream of water bitter to taste and were called *Tódich'iinii*, Bitter Water Clan. *Honágháanii* were the pair that "walked around" while others slept at night. Other storyteller say the pair came from the rubbings from above the shoulder blade of *Yoolgaii Asdzáá* and that is why they are called *Honághahdę́'Dine'é*. *Kinyaa'áanii* were the last to be named at a place where the group stopped to rest again. The pair was observed to lead against a high rock wall as they rested and appeared as if they were apart of the sandstone wall.

Another version on how the *Hashtłishnii Dine'é* received their names came after the first People emerging into the White World through water, *Tótsohnii*, through a giant reed, *ló'k'áá tsoh*, then came upon mud, *hashtłish* and later, when the mud dried, leaves appeared on the *ló'k'áá tsoh*, the people were renamed to *Bit'ááni* the leaf people. As they moved on to another region, they became *Hooghanláni*, *Dzáanezlánii*, and *Tsédeéshgishnii*. All are said to belong to *Hashtłishnii Dine'é*.

It is told, additional *Diyin Dine'é* accompanied the clansmen back to *Dinétaah*. As they traveled they became lonely and needed to return to their homeland, between the sacred mountains. Currently, the *Diné* People view the first four clansmen as "pillars" for the Navajo people. The extended clans, *k'é tsoosi*, are sub-classes to the original clans in that they received their names from habits and talents they formed or after the locale they settled.

Sub-clans, best referred to as *k'é tsosíí* may have many origins from bringing other Natives into the clans, from raids or taking in "slaves" from

neighboring tribes and or trading for them. For example, the extended clans for *Hashtłishnii* are the *Tótsohnii*, *Bitááanii*, *Tsédeéeshgishnii*, *Hooghanláńí*, *Dzáanezłánii* and *Lók'aa' Dine'é* previously stated received sub-clans from migration. While the *Hashtłishnii* migrated, they settled first near a large body of water *Tótsoh* and earned the name *Tótsohnii*. Soon, *Lók'aa*, reed, grew around the large body of water and the people began to use the leaves of the *ló'k'aa* and earned the name *Lók'aa Dine'é* and *Bitááanii*. The people quickly enlarged their membership and built many *hooghan* and earned the name *Hooghanláńí*. Soon, they began to raise donkeys and earned the name *Dzáanezłánii*.

While migrating from the west to *Dinétaah* and throughout the land, the clan group settled in various areas and became known by the description of the location they settled on. Some are named after a particular skill or habit developed for the group. For example, *Dzáanezłánii* refers to people with many mules, the same band of *Hashtłishnii*, who developed a skill for raising work mules. *Lók'aa' Dine'é* describes a band of *Hashtłishnii* People that settled among reeds and used the plant to make tools.

Diné People migrate through matrilineal society. A child is borne into his/her mother's clan and borne for his/her father's clan. A child is a child of his clan membership. All children borne into the clan are brothers and sisters. All clan mothers and grandmothers are mothers and grandmother to all the children. They have the authority to discipline, and take responsibility to teach and care for the well being of the clan children. Same age children are brothers and sister and not "cousins." Terminologies used for kinship expressions include: *Shi deezhii* (my younger sister), *Shitsiilí* (my younger brother), *Shadí* (my older sister) and *Shínaah* (my older brother). Proper names or nicknames have less influence on a person. Parents model proper use of kinship relationship for children to recognize kinship expression in the household. For instance, an older brother/sister recognizes his/her little sister, *Shi deezhii Yazhii*, with or without the proper name. A younger brother/sister recognizes his/her older brother, *Shínaah* or *Shínaah*, Jimmy. Parents model proper use of kinship relationship for children to recognize their parents and older relatives properly, *Shizh'éé* (Father) or *Shichéí* (Maternal Grandfather), *Shinalí* (Paternal Grandfather). To acknowledge kinship with older women depends on the age: *Shimá* (My Mother), *Shimá sání* (My Grandmother) and *Shicho' Sání* (My Great-Grandmother). The use of appropriate termi-

nologies to extend clan relationship of family members shows and highlights ownership, belonging, honor and respect for roles and position. Use of proper names in a family setting is not stressed.

Appropriate practice of the Diné clan system is for children to know their clan membership as not to make mistakes in marrying into the mother, father, maternal and paternal grandfather's clan. Traditional understanding is that membership to these four clans is who a person becomes. Mother's clan is represented by love from the western direction. Father's clan is represented by faith from the eastern direction. Maternal and paternal grandparents' clans are represented by compassion and hope from the southern and the northern directions. A person coming into the living world is because of love and faith (west and east), meeting and stirring their strengths together to form life. Care and hope (south and north) nurtures and supports life. The importance of understanding the principles for living for the *Diné* People is embedded in the four cardinal directions and is emphasized repeatedly at birth with a new member of the clans. The child greets each direction with *Shimá*, *Shizhé'é*, *Shichei*, and *Shinálí*. Appropriate recognition using the clan system begins at a very early age, so that, there is no misunderstanding about how the child will function among his or her relatives. The significant roles and responsibilities become clear and precise when one introduces him/herself to relatives through clan membership. Maternal and paternal grandparents quickly take on the role of spiritual advisors and counselor no matter how distanced they are.

Traditional teachings emphasize the importance of teaching clan membership through appropriate kinship and terminology. Traditional elders believe that having personal knowledge on clan expectation dictates roles and responsibilities of an individual within the primary, extended and community clan families. *Diné* clan family system dictates appropriate behavior, attitude, aspiration, motivation and expectation of clan children. When the clan system is working, it's a molding social system for healthy social expectation of all children. When the clan system is working it influence nurturing and compassionate of fathers and mothers so that children develop healthy social habits. Children with positive social habits become effective leaders for the neighborhood and tribe. Each clan family has monarchs, headsmen, *Naat'áanii*, noted for their wisdom, knowledge and/or special talents. For instance, *Hashtl'ishnii* are noted for their

ability to see the whole forest and yet not lose track of the uniqueness of a single tree. They are artists and builders. *Tódích'íinii* are more apt to be risk takers, bold and ready to try out new ideas. They are good listeners. *Honágháahnii* are protectors. They are compassionate, sensitive to spiritual healing and gifted to be spiritual counselors. *Kinyaa'aanii* are visionary people and have abilities to trust and treat people equally. This is the teaching of Changing Woman and the Holy Ones when they made the first clan people.

Presently, there are over one hundred different clan groups recognized. Some clans have become extinct. Constantly, there are new creations of clans merging from *Diné* People intermarrying with other ethnic groups: Black, Hispanic, Oriental, White, French, German, and others. The names for mixed blood *Diné* People are not recognized yet. In the early nineteenth century or possibly earlier than that, new clans began originating from adoption of various foreigners, *Anaa'í*. These have come from various tribes such as the Hopi, Plains, Pueblos, Utes, and Nakai, Mexicans. Children of mixed blood for Hopi Tobacco clan and Navajo became known as: Tobacco-*T'achii'nii Dine'é*, *Naaneesht'eezhí Tabąąhí Dine'é* is mixed Zuni and Navajo, *Nóóda'á Táchii'nii Dine'é* is mixed for Ute and Navajo, *Nihobáahnii*, *Naakai Dine'é* is mixed Plains Indian and Navajo and many others.

Navajo clan system is based on the matrilineal society as mentioned earlier. The maternal grandmother and her brother/s/ have a very important role as teachers and disciplinarians. They are consulted on all matters of clan concerns before a family decision is made. Grandmother's brother/s/ holds an important position in the clans. He serves as a spokesperson for the clan. As mentioned earlier, within the clan family, there are no "cousins." The sisters' children relate to one another as brothers and sisters. The terminology used by a sister to her brother's children is similar and would be *Shi yáázh*, my son, and to his daughters, *Shi ch'é'é*, my daughter. The terminology used by the brother's children to their aunt's children differs, depending on the sex of the child. A nephew to his aunt is *Shibízhí* or *Shimá*. A niece to her aunt is *Shi'zeedí*, *Shik'a'á'*, or *Shimá*. A nephew relates to his uncle's son as *Shi'naa'aash* and to his uncle's daughter as *Shi'zeedí* and *Shimá Yázhí*. A brother relates to his sister's sons as *Shidá'á* for individuals and *Shidá'á k'ee'* for many and his nieces as *Shimá Yázhí* for individual and *Shimá Yázhí k'é* for many. Sisters' chil-

dren use the terminologies *Shi tsilkeh'* and *Shich'eekeh'* with one another. Brothers relate to one another's children as their own children. He will relate with *Shitsi'* to all females, meaning "my daughter" and *Shiye'* to all males, meaning "my sons." Mother's brother is called *Áhast'oi*, the disciplinarian, honored with the highest respect. And holds a very important position in the clan family.

In summary, the clan system provides parameters for an acceptable way by which a group of people will conduct their lives to sustain a healthy growth of the people for the future generation. The clan system identifies the kinship relationship for the family. The four clans of a person represent four equal supports: mentally, physically, socially and spiritually was related by Irvin James, Traditional Educator, (2001). Father's clan is responsible for the mental development of children. Mother's clan is responsible for health and physical development of children. Maternal and paternal grandparents' clans are responsible for the social development and spiritual develop of children. Some traditionalists interpret the four bloodlines to represent mothers' line by red, fathers' by white, maternal grandfather's by blue and paternal grandfathers' by black. The colors are consistent with the four directional colors, except red, which, here, is understood to represent earth. Through the clan system, a person connects with his/her environment, history and ways of the People.

TMorris, Traditional Education Consultant, 2004, reveals that *Tábąąhi Dine'é* originally are the fifth pair of clansmen made by Changing Woman when she wiped her sweat off her forehead with the back of her right hand and the gem particles mixed with the sweat. *Asdząą Na'dłeehé bitábąądóó bitáziil yiyit'óogo bits'ąądóó din'é hazl'ígíí éí T'bąąhi silj' jini.* This is the origin of the *T'bąąhi Dine'é*. The five group of clansmen become *Nihookáá' Diyin Din'é Bila'ash dła'ii*, Earth Surface Five Fingered People.



Fundamental Teaching for Young Diné People

By Sylvia Jackson

Traditional Navajo mothers and grandmothers believe that the carelessness of *Yoolgail Asdzáá* as she slept on the hillside and near the stream encouraged Sun Bearer and Gentle Mist to marveled at her beauty. The story is used as a fundamental base for teaching young girls at an early age, appropriate conduct and behavior around people especially men. Young ladies are told lying down in the present of other people or to rest in the opened area is inappropriate. Young women are to dress with very little body exposed. Traditional clothing revealed little exposure of the body, legs, thighs, upper arms and neck area probably due to this belief as well as for body protection while picking berries and other plants for food. Young females are taught very early in life to present themselves in an appropriate matter.

Traditional mothers and grandmothers were strict on how young women of their clan sit, talk, walk and carry on their work. Being openly gigglish and flirtish is believed, almost always, an overt invitation to sexual attraction of the opposite gender. Young women were taught to refrain from giggling openly around other people. Horsing around with brothers and other male cousins were considered an inappropriate conduct for young women. The fundamental base for teaching young *Diné* ladies was, that they should be seen, respected, honored, and understood to hold a position of leadership in her home therefore, to remain constantly modest and dignified.

In the contemporary society, the traditional teaching of young Navajo men and women is declining. There are little or no efforts to produce young traditional clan leaders to carry on the teaching of Navajo elders. Just a decade ago, molding properly mannered young men and women was the utmost important clan family responsibilities. For instance, by puberty young males and females were expected to display appropriate behavior and attitude for their age. Basic maturing skills and proper social behavior skills were intense subjects for teaching during the early adolescence age. Male and female responsibilities were stressed throughout early childhood. After puberty young men and young women were thought to

be well prepared to embrace their leadership role to begin a clan family. After puberty, elders sought out prospecting partner (bride) for their eligible clan gentlemen.

Through traditional marriage ceremony, one clan bonds to another clan for survival, to reproduce healthy children for the next generation to carry on. Elder uncle, grandfather or father of the eligible young man observed and identified an eligible young woman, a partner, for their son. Clan elders proposed marriage / clan bonding to the young woman's parents once they identified the young lady. If the proposal is accepted and approved by the prospecting bride's family, the clan bonding ceremony would be arranged.

Elders of each clan have specific clan goals for the clan children and therefore are particularly interested in the character traits and personalities of the bride and her family. A properly trained young woman may receive many propositions for marriage. When the character of the young man is not appropriate, the elders of the young woman can reject the proposition.

Traditionally, personality molding begins with young females and male as soon as they can walk, talk, and begin to do little female and male oriented tasks around the home. The task of raising properly mannered young men and women is the ultimate purpose of parenting today as it was long ago. Properly trained children follow directions, experience responsibilities, display honor and respect for all members of the immediate and extended clan family. They display proper social skills with peers and older people. They are observed to be obedient and respectful. They display care, trustworthiness, and courage. Teaching of proper skills for youngsters was easier in the one room home, *hooghan* where proper family interaction, respect, obedience were displayed constantly by older people. Clan adults modeled behavior and attitude they want the children to display. Outside the home, family members shared work, responsibilities, obligations, ceremonies, and played together. For instance, the grandparents or parents would initiate a project such as preparing the cornfield. Physical and able people would manually plow the field with a team of workhorses. Young people would clean the debris off the field. Very young children would be responsible for supplying water to the workers. It was seldom that an adult asked a child to do something he/she could not do

alone.

The family worked, played and learned the teaching strategies that promoted developing positive character of young children merely by going about taking care of daily activities as a family. Everyone contributes to the welfare of the clan family. Learning and establishing the art of harmonious living began at a very early age for children. Developing mental positivism was the ultimate purpose of family events. The ultimate goals: to enjoy life by learning to challenge self; being motivated with life; being persistence to reaching a goal; and to share accomplishments with relatives. These were simple and attainable by everyone. Western culture refers to this concept of life as seeking for pursue of happiness.

The concept of family circle is utmost important with other natives as it is with the Navajo. Adult guardians/teachers include a mother and a father, grandparents, aunts and uncles and have responsibilities in resemblance to the role of Mother Earth and responsibility of Father Sky. Life sustaining elements: *Tó'Asdzáá*, Mother of Water; *Kq'Asdzáá*, Mother of Fire; and *Nilch'í Diyinii*, Holy Air Spirit, possesses equal roles and responsibilities as earth and sky. Mother Earth provides a home for all living and nonliving matters. Father Sky provides the nourishment necessary through rain, snow and warmth from the sun for all earth surface beings to live and grow.

Traditional teachers emphasize the importance of understanding the roles and responsibilities of each family member as observed in the natural world by all elements. They believe the roles are one and the same as is in the nurturing of all clan members. Most importantly are the roles and responsibilities of the female and male adults in raising the clan children. Proper attitude and behavior are utmost important in the development of *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin*, as they are the four pillars to successful living. The understanding is the two entities interact and relate to one another in the matter that promotes positive, effective and productive development. For instance, male and female, earth and sky, positive and negative, direct and indirect and *Nitsáhákees* and *Íiná*. According to the fundamental beliefs and practices, uniting clan families is a lifetime commitment based on the same fundamentals as that of the natural existence in the living world. Intimate act of the mother and father brings children into the world. Raising happy and healthy children in a safe envi-

ronment so that they live to reach their full potentials is the clan family's responsibilities. The ultimatum in reproduction is to live and grow healthy.

Years ago, the elders believed and practiced child bearing and child rearing education beginning with puberty ceremony and reviewed again at a marriage ceremony. Many *Diné* mothers and grandmothers still practice the ceremonies today to certain extend. Clan family members are usually very supportive and readily eager to get involved in all aspect of child growth and development beginning with conception. A grandmother may project the sex of the child by counting the crescent moons before the birth of her grandchild. She may project, again by counting the crescent moons before the birth of the child, the characteristic the child may possess. She concentrates on the type of *nítch'í* the child will be delivered in. She prays for protection. She advises her daughter and son-in-law to be careful daily so there would be no complication at birth. She reminds them there are certain tasks they are forbidden to perform while the child is developing. These are examples of how close netted the clan family can be.

To ensure healthy and mentally strong clan children, the elders matched their children in marriage according to potential and character compatibility. Most importantly for elders to witnessed results of their own hard work vested in raising proper daughters and sons for the future generation to possess good habits and practices. The act of clan bondage, eating blue cornmeal blessed with *tádídíín*, was and is believed to be a sacred union of clans. Matchmaking practice is not far from the idea of the western society that encourage the young adults to seek out marriage partners that maybe academically and economically compatible. The thought supports the idea that equal matched in habits, goals, initiatives, and motivations are important in raising children to have good characters and qualities. The more compatible two people are, the longer they will stay together.



Eligibilities for Marriage

By Sylvia Jackson

In earlier times, a young woman was eligible for marriage soon after she has had the puberty celebration. Elders of a young man eligible for marriage observed the behavior, attitude, habits, and intellect displayed by young women at gatherings and ceremonies. Indicators for positive favorable character traits are kindness, compassionate, courtesy, responsiveness, respectfulness, and good habits for hard work. Wealth of her family is considered critical in the selection of the bride. It conveys a positive sense of the family's good habits, which may display a degree of self-sufficiency, motivation with life's processes, and the family's compassionate character. *Diné* traditional wealth is understood as possession in good habits. It reflects good acceptable character traits. A wealthy person enjoys living life, displays having energy, enjoys work, show enthusiasm for life, and willing to contribute to the livelihood of others.

Teaching of young men rests with the uncle, grandfather and father. The teaching concept may include: young clan men to possess good character for leadership; young men should display the skills for building a *hooghan* and taking care of the family's livelihood such as the family resources: cornfield, livestock, and provide warmth and food for the family. By puberty young men should be able to understand the basic fundamental in building a shelter, setting family goals, strategizing to obtain the needs of the family and provide protection and guidance for the family. Raising appropriate mattered young men requires time and daily involvement in family activities to instill the knowledge of becoming a leader in the home and to raise the children with good values.



Pros and Cons on Arranged Marriage

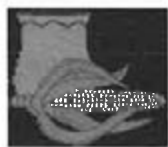
By Sylvia Jackson

Participating in a traditional wedding ceremony offers many positive learning and teaching experiences says Irvin James, Traditional Educator, 2001. He states that uniting clan families in marriage is much more than the concept of western society wedding celebration between two people. Navajo wedding is uniting clan families through *Diné* concept of utilizing lifelong relationship of *K'é*.

Before the use of materialistic values of money, concho (Mexican style silver belt), necklaces, horses, and/or cattle, the bride's family would agree to the sacred cornmeal mush with a traditional feast. Traditional clan union included a feast with the sacred blue cornmeal prepared in a newly woven basket blessed with *tádídíín*, corn pollen. The mush with a feast is considered an honorable meal. It signifies uniting clan families in prayers for physical, mental and spiritual development. *Tádídíín* signified fruitfulness for clan children in the old days and still yet, today.

Traditional teaching is that a young man should not wed a close clan relative. Marrying any member of the mother and father's clan is absolutely forbidden. Some people approve a distant grandfather, a member of an extended clan, *k'étssoosi*, to marry into the matrilineal family. The belief is that *k'étssoosi* is based on "thin or no" blood relation but merely "adopted" into the maternal and /or paternal grandfather's original clan. Other people believe strongly that marrying someone of the maternal or paternal grandfather's clan regardless of *k'étssoosi* is not acceptable. Children are strongly encouraged to marry outside their four clans. True, a distant grandfather through *k'étssoosi* may not be of the original clan, through the clan history. They may have descended from the original clan, merely by location of settlements as the clan migrated across the land and have separated from the original clans. Depending on the individual's self respect, self worth and self concept may choose to practice what they can live with. Developing healthy mental, emotional and spiritual strengths of children is the teaching of safe guarding the clan's heredity. The union of clans in marriage is "planting the family seed."

Intermarriage within the clan related families is forbidden to avoid mishaps, endangering physical, mental and spiritual makeup of the clan children. The teaching stems from the experiences of the First People, the *Diyin Dine'é*, in the Blue World. It is told that First Woman and First Man practiced uniting their children to promote reproduction of their own kind. When they performed this task, the first through the third child appeared healthy and whole. Fourth through the sixth child displayed some physical and mental disabilities. Observing what had happened, the *Diyin Dine'é* put a stop to the practice. Beginning with the era of Changing Woman, arranged marriage became a definite practice to ensure safe guarding the clan family heritage. Reproduction of offspring with strong mental character with motivation to carry on the clan values and family principles into the next generation became momentous. Due to the belief, extended clan grandfathers are also not acceptable for marriage partner.



Preparing for Clan Bonding Event

By Sylvia Jackson

With an appropriate and accepted proposition offered by the young male's family, the date for the clan bonding, wedding, is agreed upon. Clan members of the bride and groom are contacted along with honorarium leaders to provide guidance, direction and information on traditional cultural commitments. Honored and dignified elders are contacted to witness the uniting of clans.

Upon acceptance of the token gifts the activity begins with the bride's family coming together for planning. The family obtains a wedding basket, water vase and dipper. Men folks prepare the wedding *hooghan*, fetch cooking fuel, and water for outdoor cooking. The bride and her mother will work on her wedding attire. The day before the actual wedding event, sheep or a cow is slaughtered to feed hundreds of people. The morning of the festivity the clan family members prepare the traditional feast. Women folks begin making dinner rolls, tortillas, fried bread and roast meat over opened fire. As relatives come in, they are quickly fed. Many contribute to gift boxes that will be given to the groom's family to express value for *K'é*. The gift baskets may have blankets, kitchen items, decorative items of home and traditional oven baked bread, fruits and dried meat.

The bride's mother prepares the blue cornmeal mush. She, first, places a couple teaspoonful of juniper ash in warm water and stir. Juniper ash should be sifted through a drainer to eliminate any large solid particle of ash. The mixture is drained again into a larger bowl and heated. Ash makes the mush bluer and adds a pleasant taste to it. Stirring sticks are used to add the cornmeal to the hot water. The mush is stirred carefully with the wooden stirring sticks until cooked. Cooked mush is placed in the Navajo basket to cool for a couple of hours. Mother of the bride may choose to serve fruits with the mush. Father of the bride prepares the vase and dipper for the hand washing ritual. The bridal family waits for the arrival of the groom, his parents and relatives.

In a more contemporary style marriage ceremony, the bride's family may prepare a decorated wedding cake and would request for an exchange of vows by the couple after the traditional meal and giving of gifts to the groom's family. A decorated wedding cake will be brought into the *hooghan* and placed in front of the bride and groom while standing and reminding in the *Nitsitlah*, to the west wall. A pastor of a particular church can be invited to marry the couple at this time. If a pastor is not present, then, father of the bride can take a moment to appropriately ask blessing of the cake and allow the couple to exchange wedding rings and vows for all to witness.

Gift giving has also been added as a contemporary appropriate thing to do at the Navajo traditional wedding. These are presented after the traditional meal has been served and the dwelling cleaned up. Others can still provide verbal wishes as the couples jointly open their gifts.



T'áá Díígo Ha'hodit'á
Values of the Four Cardinal Directions
By Sylvia Jackson

The most valuable virtues are embedded within the four cardinal directions initially placed by the Holy Ones, *Nilch'í Diyin Dine'é* is the information passed down by the *Diné* elders. To the east, the Holy Ones placed the process for conceptual thinking development, *Nitsáhákees*, which begins within a small child becoming curious with stimulation-motivation and explores his/her environment. To the south the Holy Ones placed the

process for conceptual planning development, *Nahat'á* which follows the concepts of stimulation-motivation to exploring-identifying his/her environment. To the west, the process for carrying out a way of life skills, the *Diné* call it *Íiná* which is applying, putting into practice all the skills learned was placed. To the north, *Sihasin*, is embedded with the process of self-reflecting, self assessing and being truly humble which is to identify own weaknesses and strengthens and making corrections within one's life.

Diné elders believe that the values set within *Háyoolkaat*, the approaching early morning dawn, is *Nitsáhákees*. The skill forms the foundational development for practicing *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin*. The process in obtaining *Nitsáhákees* includes learning to listen with comprehension, to question, to observe with full attention, to display understanding and actively participate.

It is believed that stimulation is the first initiative in developing a need to find out, to learn how something works. For instance, a child learns to walk as he becomes fascinated with movement around him. For instance, he may observe another child run after a rolling ball, fall over the ball laughing. The child becomes excited and wants to do the same. He pushes himself to do likewise. He stands, balances, take a step, and before he knows what is happening, he is walking. Another example may be, a child learning to talk. He learns to talk for the same reasons he learned to walk. He becomes fascinated with the sounds of language around him and he begins to understand that people communicate through sounds. He learns to listen and soon learns that things have names. He begins to imitate the sounds to see if the responses will have an effect. It does. He becomes motivated to learn the system of communication through sounds.

The next important process in obtaining *Nitsáhákees* is exploring. A child learning to walk or talk begins with exploring freely. When learning how to walk, he may fall or bump his head on furnishes a couple of times and cry. But, he continues to learn from his mistakes and persists. Exploration allows him to figure things out on his own. He learns to take risk, develops courage, and to draw conclusion. This, in essence, is developing *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin*. In comparison to the western cultural learning style, the natural process of learning provides the same important steps: stimulations, exploration, application, and testing and retesting. A child naturally uses the process of learning embedded into

understanding the values and principles of the four cardinal directions.

The traditional guardians begin molding the skills for *Nitsáhákees* through *hane'*, games, songs, prayers, and actively involving everyone in the family activities. For instance, working the family cornfield includes grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, and the children. Children are asked to pick out the good matured kernels for planting, kernels that appear whole. They may sit on the floor to do this. Strong and able young men plow the fields and get rid of the debris. Other relatives helped with the actual planting, weeding, harvesting and preserving of the fruits. Directions are usually clear and precise given by the monarch or guardians. The well being of the clan depends on how well each family member contributes. If a person fails to do his or her part, the family knows who failed the clan. The family projects and activities all require collaboration, coordination, communication and commitment. At harvest, the family celebrates by hosting *Hozhóqjii doo' iigháásh*. The event requires involvement by everyone.

Nahat'á, a process for planning, prioritizing, organizing and making projections is the second most important life quality emphasized by traditional elders. It is understood to be the second natural step to forming an idea, a dream, a want or a need in doing for self. It is learned through participation in family events beginning at a very early age as mentioned in the above paragraph. Children learning the process of *Nahat'á* are involved in all aspect of planning a family task, completing a task and assessing the completed task. The concept, first, includes goal setting and working out the details for completing the goal. It includes projecting, exploring, and trying out ideas and opinions. This level of learning is an opportunity to experiment with concept and to broaden personal experiences.

The third most important life quality emphasized by traditional elders is the process of application, *Íiná*. The process of applying the necessary steps, energy and enthusiasms to *Nitsáhákees* and *Nahat'á* is to demonstrate working with a certain learned task/ skill. *Íiná*, the process of carrying out the value of *Nitsáhákees* and *Nahat'á*, is understood to be a virtue placed within the western direction. The concept encompasses understanding application, carrying out the plans for an idea to become a reality. Within the growing cycle, it is reaching maturity and becoming

more knowledgeable with the process of living life, *Íiná*.

To the north, the direction reminds the Navajo people to enjoy life to the fullest of ones potential humbly and earnestly, *Sihasin*. The fourth most important life quality to possess is *Sihasin*, a feeling of satisfaction and pride knowing that you gave application your best shot. *Diné* life cycle is a destination to grow old to witness the fifth generation of grandchildren, the greatest accomplishment. The individual completing a life cycle relates to his/her fifth generation of grandchildren as his/her brothers and sisters due to the completion of one full life cycle and begins the next cycle with the fifth generation of grandchildren. To complete a cycle of life one has to maintain good health, positive attitude and have close connection with spirituality. The purpose for life is living life to its full potential and to become more self directed applying all virtues of *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin* which are one and the same as stimulation, exploration, application and self reflecting in the learning growing cycle.

Sihasin, then, becomes self-assessing, reflection on your work, demonstrating a learned skill with a degree of competency. This area provides a chance to demonstrate, receive feedback and work out an improvement plant.

Navajo understanding of lifelong learning cycle begins again with uniting young people in marriage for reproduction of self. When young people demonstrate successfully the knowledge of *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná*, and *Sihasin*, they would be married off. Marriage for young people is to display knowledge and skills for developing toward becoming self-sufficient individuals. To understand the lifelong learning cycle from a natural perspective is to understand that within dawn is the process of beginning, *ha'níísá*, as in the season of spring. Summer, to the south, is nurturing the growing process and becoming matured, *Anoosééł*. To the west, the process of becoming matured and ripened is within the season of autumn, *Nínisá*. To the north, is the process of aging and preparing to return to Mother Earth for another life cycle, *Sá*. The People understand the growing process will always include elders, middle age, teenage, and babies as in plants and animals.

The pattern of the growth cycle within the four cardinal directions can also be understood as physical, social, emotional and spiritual developments of

a person. This means developing good habits to care for the mind, body, soul and spirit. To the east, understand the importance of exercising daily for a long healthy life. To the south, understand the importance of eating healthily and consuming plenty of water. As the body moves, work and play, it loses water and water should replace lost water. To the west, understand the importance of getting plenty of rest at night and between work and play. It is important to socialize in a healthy matter through *K'é*. Humans are emotional beings and need the championship of others in the same matter as animals need championship of other animals. Horses need the championship of horses. Dogs and cats need championship and humans are no exception. To the north is the importance of developing positive spiritual values and developing respect and compassionate for all living matters, cosmic elements, air, water, plants, insects, and understanding the interrelationship of all elements.

Significance of the *Diné Baahane'*, songs and prayers express appreciation of all elements. Traditional belief, *T'áá ho'ijít'éégo Nizhónigo jiiná dooléet* meaning a person is responsible for his/her life. Life path cycle is available to everyone. Elders understand to enjoy life one recognizes and take opportunities to attain the life goals. Life is for all to enjoy. The Holy Ones designed human beings to be upright on two strong feet and legs, with the same number of arms with five fingers and to be inquisitive, energetic and enthused with living. The mind and senses work together to identify things in the environment and learning how to use them. This is experiencing and experience is knowledge. Experience is referred to as *Hane'*.



Hozhóqjii doo' iighaash An Appreciation Celebration for Existence

Told by Mr. Irvin James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Hozhóqjii doo' iighaash was first held by the *Diyin Dine'é* to initiate *Yoolgaii Asdzáá* into womanhood at *Dził Ch'oolí'í*, where she was raised by the Holy Ones. They realized the purpose for Changing Woman was going to change the structure of living world on the earth surface. Therefore, *Hozhóqjii doo' iighaash* was planned and held. *Haashch'ééyáált'í'í* conducted the ceremony. *Hozhóqjii doo' iighaash* took place again when the

Holy Ones and the First Clan People, children of Changing Woman met around the San Francisco Peaks area. The Holy Ones expressed appreciation for existence along with the First Clan People through *Hozhóqjii doo' iighaash* ceremony. The purpose for the ceremony was to restore positive mental and spiritual strength by which one can live in harmony, beauty and function positively within his/her environment in the Glittering World. The ceremony required the participant to take herb bath and use the white cornmeal as an absorbent to dry off. The event physically and spiritually revived life and existence for the *Bíla'ashdla'ii*.

Songs used with the ceremony are songs of creation originating within the *Hozhóqjii doo' iighaash* by the Holy Ones. The imperial beauties of the mountains, plants, pollen, animals, home and living are sung about in the songs. Each *Diyin Dine'é* contributed a song honoring the force of creation. It is told *Haashch'ééyáált'íí* constructed the *Hooghan Biyiin*.

Soon, afterwards, the Holy Ones left the earth surface and took their position assigned them in the spirit world. Therefore, the *Diné* People value the *Hozhóqjii doo' iighaash* as a sacred ceremony to be done to rejuvenate the spiritual energy of a person, family and/or community. *Diné* elders believe that the ceremony demonstrates an appropriate way to give thanks of the wonderful life.

According to *Diné baahane'*, the *Diyin Dine'é* of the earth's surface reflect the image of the Holy Ones. They are the Five Fingered Earth Surface people. They understand that they are the children of life and are given the ability to obtain knowledge from the Holy Ones. *Hozhóqjii doo' iighaash* is a structured ceremony to celebrate existence in the positive way. Traditional *Diné* People practiced the ceremony to express appreciation at various developmental stages of growth: e.g., at birth, at the first utterance of laughter, at the time the umbilical cord drops off, at the time the first step is taken, when the first tooth falls out, at puberty, and at marriage. Each *Hozhóqjii* ceremony is an opportunity to reenact *k'é*, relationship, with the Holy Ones through *hane'*, the use of corn pollen, songs and prayers. It is the traditional Navajo way of displaying respect, appreciation for existence, the uniqueness and the beauty of our makeup.

Diné elders believe and understand that the extreme opposites, young and old are keepers of wisdom and knowledge. Children are blessed with

the ability to be curious and the energy to take risk. Elders are blessed with the development of patience, understanding and mental strengths. Children provide adults with experiences to enhance development: patience, love, care, and endurance. Elders provide personal hands on experiences to promote, to stimulate, to create, to find skills, to hope, trust, commit and develop persistence for the growing process. Children have not live long enough to make mistakes and elders have lived long enough to learn from mistakes and not repeat them. Children and elders are the demonstrators and teachers for the natural cycle of the growing process. The two extreme opposites are keepers of understanding, wisdom and knowledge for the People.



The First Family and Their Adventures

Unknown Author

First Family felt there must be a better way to live then under rock shelter, bush and in dugouts. First Family decided to observe, listen and gather information from their neighbors: the birds, animals and insects. They came upon a beaver busy cutting down trees, dragging the logs to the middle of a pond and stacked them in a circular formation. First Family thought logs could make a good home. They walked down along the stream and saw an eagle circling overhead. They stopped to observe the eagle. Mother eagle brought sticks, vines, feathers, and leaves and placed them in a circular structure to build her strong nest. First Family asked the mother eagle why she built her nest high above the ground and why didn't the wind blow it down. She replied, "My nest is assembled strong with the weaving of the vines, roots, feathers and sticks. And, I like to see all that goes on from my home and that is the reason for my home high in the tops of trees."

First Family thought the reasons given by the eagle family were all good. Next, First Family came upon a cliff swallow building her nest on the sunny side of a cliff. They asked her, "Why do you build your nest on the sunny

side of the cliff?"

Cliff swallow annoyed, by the First Family, did not answer promptly. She continued working thinking, "I haven't the time to be bothered by these creatures."

Her babies are coming and her nest is far from being completed. The creatures did not go away. They waited for her information. She decided to be polite and answered, "I need the first streak of light to come into by home for warmth. As the light progresses out of the entrance, I know when it is noon or evening to feed my little ones."

The first family thought that was a good idea. They thanked mama cliff swallow and left her to finish making her nest, knowing her babies could come any minute and her home was far from being ready for her babies.

Into the deep wood came a beautiful rhyme, Knock, Knock, Knock. The sound was coming from nearby, so they followed the sound. A woodpecker was pecking at a hollow tree stump. First Family greeted the woodpecker and told him he was making beautiful music. Woodpecker kept on pecking at the log. "It sounds like the beat of my heart." said First Boy.

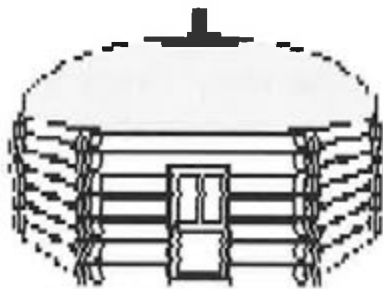
First Family thought it would be nice to have the beautiful sound in their home. They went on and were nearly home to the cliff overhanging where they were staying when they spotted a unique nest hanging from a willow branch. They looked inside. There inside the nest was a mother wren sitting on her eggs. First Family examined the nest. It was made from animal hair, straw and long blade of grass. They told the wren, "You have such a beautiful strong home." Wren did not answer.

The very next day First Family went to work constructing their home. They walked round the locale and found a perfect spot for their home. Their home would overlook the valley from there they would be able to look out and see everywhere around them. Next, they gathered logs and laid them in a circular formation with an opening toward the sunrise. They wanted the first streak of light to come into their home for warmth just like the cliff shallow. They gathered more logs and added a dome shape for cover just like the beaver's den. They gathered sticks and filled the openings between the logs with mud to keep out the rain, snow and wind.

They found a hollow log and covered both ends with a piece of skin to make the wonderful sound the woodpecker made. They dug out clay from the nearby streambed and made a clay pot just like the nest of the wren that hung from the branch. They used the pot to hold food and other things. First Family was happy with the new home.

First Family observed, listened and learned from the little red ants that lived nearby. Little ants lived in a hole in the ground. They run around all day gathering food, and were involved in adding new rooms to their home as they came in and out carry pebbles. They seemed coordinated, collaborated, and worked together to get an enormous piece of work done. Every ant had something to do to contribute to the livelihood of the whole family. From this observation, First Family learned to preserve food, care and trust one another and work together as a family. First Family learned to live in a communal structure and method of working and helping one another.

It has been told that there is much to learn from observing the behavior of animals, birds and other living things. They demonstrate the importance of providing a secure place for the young ones to come into the world. They feed and keep them warm. Their health and safety appear utmost important to them. They teach the little ones to take care of themselves before they wean them. They seem to know exactly when to leave them, so the young ones can learn to survive on their own.



Hooghan Haz'áagi Díłzin
Home, a Sacred Place

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001
Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Irvin James, Traditional Educator, 2001, expressed an understanding of home, a sacred place for a natural order of existence and a place on becoming more human in this way:

"*Dąągo* (Spring) is a time for new growth. At that time, people observe the beauty of love, as the sides of mountains become covered with beautiful multiple colored flowers. Bees hop from flower to flower sucking sweet nectar from the flower pedals. Most importantly, they are mixing pollen gathered on their legs from plants as they hop from plant to plant. Summer comes and the plants reproduce and bear fruits. Creator, God, Life Giver, One All Mystical or whatever name is use to refer to one greater than man, loved life so much that the creation of the living world occurred. The vegetation, water, light and air provide support for life to reproduce and continue the growth process as it was met to be. Human being is apart of this sacred creation similarly. The need to understand and appreciate existence is up to each individual to seek and find it meaningful."

Home is a sacred place. Earth is home to all living matters and it has been for thousands of years. Earth to the *Diné* People is *Ni'ádzáá Nihimá*, Mother Earth. The fundamental value of home is reemphasized in the structure and design of the traditional *Diné bighan*, *hooghan nímazi*. Traditional *Diné* People identify the circular dome dwelling as female home according to various understandings. Metaphorically, Mother Earth is home. She provides a place for all living things. Home is mother, *Nihimá*, *Hooghan Asdzáá*, a place for living and growing. In earlier times, it was use as a birth lodge and a place to raise children. In contemporary times, *hooghan nímazi* is used for bonding clan families together in marriage, making commitments and for blessing and healing ceremonies.

Diné Baahane' specifies that the Holy Ones formulated the names for the *hooghan* interior structure using sunlight as it traveled in and out of the home and are still used today. *Ch'é'étiin* is a term used to identify the entrance, sunlight traveling into the home early in the morning before dwelling had doors. *Honiidiq Nesitlah* identifies the far back area of the *hooghan*, interpreting or identifying the area directly lights up first by sun light. It is at the far back area of the *hooghan* as light comes in through the entrance. *Beenest'ah* mark any corner. *Yáahalnii'* identifies the center area, between the *Nesitlah* and *Honibąąh* which is directly under the opening for the smoke to escape. *Honibąąh* identifies an area near and round the fire hearth. *Honeeshgish* (the fire poker) has a place near the fire hearth. It is use to stir hot coal. *Ch'ílahdei* identifies the smoke escape opening at the top of the dome, light going out of the home. Sun is low

in the eastern horizon causing light to advance out of the home. Outside area is referred to as *tl'oo'di*.

In many traditional *hooghan*, herb plants will be visible between the logs over the entrance to the east, to the south, west and north signifying the importance of the four cardinal directions. Life sustaining elements: the fire hearth is at the center of the *hooghan*; water jug and cooking tools: grinding stones, brush, baskets have a special place north of the fire hearth. Various foods are noted as essential elements in the *hooghan*: corn, beans, squash, fruits, meat, bread and water. Interior design of the *hooghan* has specific work, play, and eating areas distinguished. *Hooghan nímazi* is home for some people and for others it's a place to hold ceremonial events. The ceremonial elements: tools, herbs, colored sand for sand painting are stored in containers and placed south of the entrance of the *hooghan*. South of the entrance is male's work area. West is identified as family area, story telling, eating, and sleeping area. North is women's work area. Children learn the family values, proper clan relationship and socializing with siblings and older people in the one room home.

Making a proper entrance into a *hooghan* is necessary in a healing ceremony. A person will move in the sun pathway fashion, greeting individuals with a handshake and taking a space where a space if available or directed to sit. Exiting the *hooghan*, a person moves forward toward the entrance in the sun pathway fashion with a handshake with everyone again.

Atch'í' adeez'á / Nahat'á Hooghan

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Atch'í' adeez'á, the forked *hooghan*, was first constructed by the Holy People at the place of emergent. It is told that it is a male *hooghan*, specifically built, first, for administering healing, cleansing and purifying ceremonies. Later the Holy Ones used the structure for consultation, designing and planning meeting place by the Holy Ones. In the contemporary times, the People have adapted the use of the tipi structure for family healing and purification understanding the purposes for *Atch'í' adeez'á*. It is practical in that it can easily be put together and taken apart. It is mobile. The practice came to the *Diné* People with the use of the peyote tea and buttons from the Plains Indians. The tipi structure is

popular and used often by the People.

Traditional Educators emphasize value and discipline learning to be intertwining with the understanding the natural order of living things, sacredness of the elements for living and the *hane'* of the female and male *hooghan*. To understand the significance of the home and family, a person must first understand the sacredness of the environment in which he/she lives. It is believed that the process of time system is regulated by the change of the seasons, the four cardinal directions, and the heavenly bodies: sun, moon, stars, and constellation patterns. The process of the time system is understood as the process of growing. The understanding of the process of growth forms positive interrelationship and interdependency of all elements that sustain life in the living world. Knowledge serves as the base for a happy family with good health and a safe environment. It simply means if a person can understand the holiness and sacredness of himself in the interrelationship and interdependency of his environment, he understands the sacredness of himself, his home, his wife and children. Human life is as sacred and delicate as the air, light, water and plants from hence life comes. It is believed by the elders that life is a sacred gift to be explored with full potential only once as an earth surface human being. It requires tender care, appreciation and respect to enjoy it to the fullest.



Hooghan Nimazí / Round Shaped Hooghan

Told by Irvin K. James, 2001

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Contemporary society promotes modern framed homes and/or mobile trailer homes equipped with electricity and proper plumbing as an ideal home for health and safety purposes. Young people choose to live in modern homes with all the convenience children enjoy such as technology. However, they find it necessary to have a traditional *hooghan* next to their modern home to be use for ceremonial events such as puberty, marriage, other healing ceremony or *hátáál* (chants). Some *hooghan nimazí* are equipped with electricity, plumbing, bedrooms, kitchen and other convenience today and are still used both for living quarter and for healing ceremonies. The old traditional *hooghan bigaadlání* (*hooghan* with many legs), *hooghan tsénasdlin* (*hooghan* with rock foundation), *hooghan chidi* (mobile home), *hooghan tsijn diit'in* (*hooghan* made with logs), *leey i'hooghan* (submerged into the ground *hooghan*), *nibáal dóó chaha'oh* (tent and arbor shelter) are still visible across Navajo land but are not

used as living quarters. They are visible and are more or less abandoned by the younger generation. They hold the *hane'* of the clan people that once lived.



Diyin Dine'é
Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



Diné Baahane' portrays that the creation of the world took place at Hogan made of Dawn, *Hayootkáát Beehooghan*. Due to the *Hane'* the People understand the children of the Holy Ones were given the wisdom to understand and learn through experiences, *Hane'* and gain knowledge to lead the family.

The growing process emerged to the present level through various experiences. The People kept their experiences in form of *Hane'* and embedded the knowledge into songs and prayers. Traditional practice is first to acknowledge existence, life, as a part of the growing process by all earth surface children. Traditional teaching encourages a realization that human beings are part of a great spiritual plan to intellectually develop positive ness, respect for self, others, and environment. How comfortable a person wants to live depend on how well he/she get along with others, cares for the environment and the four sacred elements of life: water, air, earth and light. As all living matters have interdependency with their surrounding, human beings, likewise, have the same interdependency with their surrounding.

Elders believe that human beings are created equal, sacred and mysteriously holy so that they will function and react to certain experiences through visual, kinesthetic, taste, smell, hear, have a consciousness and sub consciousness and treat everyone equal, subjecting them to the same laws and rules. Obtaining leadership capabilities and abilities develops with time depicted by the *Hájíínei Hane'*.

Within the Black World, *Nihodithit*, Darkness and Moisture were the headsmen in charge of development and forming. There were no specific rules and order for living matters to live by, they grew, developed and formed into their unique structure. Within the Blue World, *Nihodóótłizh*,

Táshchozhii Dine'é, a certain blue birds were in charged. They did not resemble birds of the current world. They hunted other land animals, grabbed them by their big claws and carried them to the tops of tall trees. They torn up their meals with their many sharp teeth and large claws and were always hungry. Within the Yellow-Greenish World, *Ma'ii Tsoh*, *Ma'iiltsooi*, *Nashdoi Tsoh*, *Ma'ii* were headsmen and each were in charged within a region. *Ma'ii Tsoh* oversaw the activities within the eastern direction, *Ma'iiltsooi* was the headsmen in the western region, *Nashdoi Tsoh* in the southern region and *Ma'ii* in the northern region. The water people had their own headsmen.

Each time the People moved from one region to the next, they would request approval and acceptance from the headsmen to live amongst them. Within the *Nihałgaii*, the White World, a certain *Chiin'tahjiilgaii* were the headsmen. A white *Chiin'tajiilgaii* for the eastern direction, blue for the southern, yellow for the western, and black for the northern. When the Holy Ones approach the leaders of the White World, Locust, *Wiinéeshch'indii*, challenge the leaders to thrust two arrows through their chest cavities from one armpit to the other, demonstrating the performance *Wiinéeshch'indii* overcome the *Chiintahjiilgaii* and the newcomers were allowed to live in the region.

Within the White World, Coyote stole the water monster's babies and caused the great flood to cover the land. The First Holy Ones had to move to the next level of worlds through a giant reed planted by First Man. *T'ązhii*, Turkey, felt the next world would have to be replenish with various plants so she collected seeds of all kinds and brought them with her to the next world, *Nihodisqs*. She was the last to enter the giant reed and the tip of her tail brushed the rising water foam. She is left with the white tip today. Once in the Glittering World, the group busied themselves in settling.

Dził Nat'ááh, four of them, were placed within the four directions holding the values and life principles for the People, Five Fingered Beings of this world. *Sq̓ Dine'é*, were brought forth and placed in the sky to depict rules and regulations appropriate in positive growing process. *Táchééh* and *hooghan* were designed to depict rules and laws of the sacred elements for life and living, *Kq̓* and *Honeeshgish*, *To'*, *Niłch'í*, and *Náhasdzáán*. *Hooghan Nimási* representing values of Mother Earth, nurturing and car-

ing of all living matters. It entails both *Náayééji Nanitiin dóó Hózhóqí Nanitiin* through the various ceremonies.

Dził Nat'ááh coordinates, communicates, and cooperates with the powers of *Hayoolkááł*, *Nihodeetłizh*, *Nihootsoohi*, *Chahałtheet*, same with *Daan*, *Shi*, *A'ak'ééd*, and *Hai*. All are apart of creation and possess characters for living and all are the first leaders for the *Diné* People.

Other *Nat'aani* of the *Diné* People include *Yoolgail Asdzáá / Asdzáá Naadłeehi* and other *Diyin Dine'é*. For all life sustaining elements, there is a special name, place and kinship terminology used by traditional *Diné* People to establish respect and relationship and to reaffirm self in the midst of the living world. Affirmation begins similarly in the following manner:

Koodóó Hózh— dooleet

From Here, where I exist, I greet thee in positiveness;

Nahasdzáán Shimá, Yádilhił Shitaa'

My Mother Earth, My Father Sky;

Bił Hayoolkáhi, Nohodeetł'íizh

With Early Eastern Dawn Spirit, Southern Blue Twilight Spirit;

Nohootsooi, Chahałtheet

Western Evening Yellow Spirit, Northern Darkness Night Spirit;

Sis Najini, Tsoodzil

Spirit of Mount Blanca, Mount Taylor;

Dook'o'oosłtii, dóó Dibé Nitsaa'

San Francisco Peak and Mount Hesperus, Laplata Mountains;

Dizł Na'oodilhi, Dizł Ch'óol'íí

Spirit of Mount Huerfano and Gobernador Mountain;

Haach'ééyááłti'íí Shichei

Grandfather, Talking Spirit of the East;

Haash'ééwaan Shichei

Grandfather, Talking Spirit of the West;

Yoolgail Asdzáá Shimá, Asdzáá Nádleehé, Shimá

My Mother White Shell Woman, My Mother Changing Woman;

Naadǎ'algaii Ashkii, Naadǎ'altsooi At'ééd
White Corn Boy, Yellow Corn Girl

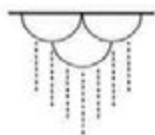
Yódí Altaas'éí, Nit'iz Altaas'éí
All Soft Material Things, All Hard Material Things;

Tó Altah Náshchiin, Tóbiyáázh
Water of Different Forms, Children of Water;

Tádidiin Ashkii, Anit'ánii At'eed
Corn Pollen Boy, Corn Beetle Girl;

Sa'ah Naaghái Ashkii, Bik'eh Hózhóón At'ééd
Spiritual Male Sky Protector of Life, Spiritual Female Beauty of Life;

Hózhó Náhasdlíí, Hózhó Náhasdlíí, Hózhó Náhasdlíí, Hózhó Náhasdlíí
Peace Restored, Peace Restored, Peace Restored, Peace Restored.



Seasons, Climate, and Weather

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

The four cardinal directions, *Ha'yoot káál*, *Nahodeetlizh*, *Nahootsoi* and *Cha'halheel*, *Sisnaajini*, *Tsoodził*, *Dook'o'ootliid*, *Dibé Ntsaa*, *Dził Ch'ool'íí*, and *Dził Na'oodiíí* constitute a home for the *Diné* People. It also constitutes a Way of Life in which the process of growing is reflected in following the sun pathway for daily living. It is believed that seasons, climate and types of weather are depicted in the sun pathway of growing throughout one cycle, a year. The surrounding mountains are referred to as the *Dził Diyinii*, *Dził Asdzáá*, *Sa'ah Naaghaii dóó Bik'ehozhóó* identified with precious gems of *Yootgaii*, *Dootlizhii*, *Díchííllí*, and *Baashzhinii* and embedded with moisture, lightening, thunder, heat and light to promote rain, snow, hail, and movement of the air.

Sisnaajini identified and placed within the eastern direction representing *Yootgaii Dził*, which is light, sun, sunrays, purity, new ideas, and knowledge and representing *Daan*, spring, beginning of new life. It is adorned with precious gem of *Yootgaii* and white and black feathers, which symbolize purity and gentleness. It is also known as Sierra Blanca Peak, or Mount Blanca, with an elevation of 14,346 feet above sea level. *Sisnaajini* is located in the Sangre De Cristo Mountains near Alamosa, Colorado. It

is told that the Holy Ones brought with them samples of dirt from the Black, Blue, Yellow and White World to recreate the mountains in the present world. It holds the values and long-life principles to encourage each individual to challenge themselves to high standards of life and to enjoy it to one's fullest potentials.

Tsoodziit, Dootlizhii Dziil, lies in the southern region of the *Diné* homeland. It is referred to as Turquoise Mountain with the strength of moisture and water. It represents the season of summer, the growing season for plants, animals, birds and adolescences and planning in leadership for the People. It is adorned with precious gems of *dootlizhii*, black and turquoise feathers. The mountain represents the energy, *Sá'ah Naaghaii dóó Bik'ehozhóq* for planning for survival, use of the strong legs and perfectly formed arms, hands and fingers for grasping and holding. The value of using the perfectly developed eyes, nose, ears, tongue and mouth for learning to support oneself is bestowed within the mountain as a reminder to the People. The mountain is also known as Mount Taylor, with an elevation of 11,3091 feet above sea level. *Tsoodziit* is located in the San Juan Mountain near Grants, New Mexico.

Dook'o'oostiid, Diichilí Dziil, is the western pillar of the *Diné* homeland. It is told the mountain represents the female character representing the season of autumn, *A'k'éégo*, maturity and ripening of the plants and adulthood with the animals and the People. Within the growing cycle, the mountain reminds the People learning should peak and successful application of learning is expected with maturity. A matured person is expected to marry, have children and know his/her responsibilities in taking care of his/her family by providing shelter, food, clothing and happiness. The mountain represents adulthood and physical / mental strength found in practicing appropriate socialization and *k'é*. It is also known as Humphery Peak. It is adorned with precious *diichilí*, yellow and white feathers and rules the evening twilight. *Dook'o'o'stiid* has an elevation of 12,633 feet above sea level and it located in the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff, Arizona.

Dibé Ntsaa, Baashzhinii Dziil, black jet onyx mountain is placed in the northern region of the *Diné* homeland. It is said that this mountain possesses a female character representing the season of winter, old age, and harmony. Within the season of *Haigo*, seeds are reaching maturity, aging, to

be capable to reproduce happens. With the People, aging means seeking and reaching spiritual understanding, physically aging, and reproduction. It is the time when old ones look back and view accomplishments and appreciate more each day given the opportunity to live. *Dibé Ntsaa* is adorned with *baashzhinii*, and white and black feathers. Along with the moon, this mountain is known as the ruler of night. It is known as Mount Hesperus and has an elevation of 13,225 feet above sea level. *Baashshinii Dziil* is located in the La Plata Mountains near Durango, Colorado.

Hane' reveals one day, *Yoolgail Asdzáá* demonstrated for her people her existence within the seasons, weather and climate and purposes for her coming to the earth surface as she walked round the fire hearth from the east to the south, west and north. The People witnessed her returning to her youth, adolescence, adulthood and old age as she completed the circle round the fire hearth. She said to them, "You will know I will be with you as you witness the change of seasons from *Daango*, *Shiingo*, *A'k'éégo*, and *Haigo*. I will be the seasons."

To be youthful and young at heart, body, mind and spirit, adults and children bathed in the first fallen snow so that they will be healthy and immune to the cold winter winds. Older youngster, ten, eleven, twelve, through twenty were expected to run to a tree covered with snow and shake the snow off on to themselves while wearing only a brief underwear. Much older young men were expected to break open a sheet of ice on a lake or pond and jump in wearing only a brief, underpants. The practice encouraged young men to endure extreme cold and understand personal capabilities and limitations also exists within leadership. Young men are warriors and protectors of the clan and must develop strong emotional control to become effective leaders of his clan family.

In the hot summer days, youngsters, both male and female were encouraged to sweat using heated rocks, water, and consume herb tea while they sweat to be clean of toxin element in their bodies. Songs and prayers used in the sweat ceremony are the creation songs and prayers. Once in the sweat lodge, no one is allowed to exit until the songs and prayers are completed. Participants exit from the sweat lodge four times to complete a ceremony. Long ago, young men were first initiated into adulthood/maturity in the sweat lodge by their clan elders and were counseled on manly needs and appropriate self-control skills.

Ndáá ceremony is usually practice in the spring and summer as they are considered female seasons. The ceremony is performed for a returning warrior in effort to overcome negative mental imagery by positive activities such as singing, dancing, and exchange of gifts with relatives. It is a three-day event of songs and prayers, singing and dancing, sharing relationship with relatives. *Yé'íibichei* ceremony is a winter ceremony and performed at one time for the abundance of food gathered in the spring. Today, it is a type of healing ceremony to revitalize energy to continue living. Addition to the two mentioned ceremonies, there are many various types of *Hátáál*, singings performed as needed. Certain stories and games are told and played only in certain season.

Azhdiłdił / Stick Game

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Diné Hane' tells of two large river crossing one over the other separating the land into four regions the eastern, southern, western, and northern region. Carnivores with sharp teeth and claws, with terrible growls ruled the regions. As time passed, the rivers became wider and wider and the four regions drifted apart. Soon, the rivers became large bodies of water and the four regions were no longer in close proximity. The land, at one time was one large area, became separated by the four large bodies of water never to be seen as one again.

Azhdiłdił recalls, the story of how the one large piece of land became separated by four large bodies of water. The game is played with one large flat piece of sandstone lying at the center of twelve pebbles laid around the sandstones. The flat piece of sandstone represents the one large piece of land. One set of twelve bubbles are laid out to northeast, southeast, southwest and northeast of the center, separated by spacing representing rivers, lakes and streams. As pebbles are laid around the slap of sandstone each group of twelve is separated by larger space represent four large body of water, ocean, for instance. The openings are coherent with east, south, west and north.

Four sticks, nine inches in length, approximately two inches in width and half an inch in depth and each stick shaded solid black on one side and

white on the opposite side are dropped on the slab of sandstone. When dropped, they produce a loud thundering sound. They are the dices for the game. The dark side of the sticks represents night and the white side represents day. When the sticks are dropped on the slab of sandstones, the probability of the sticks landing on the floor with all black sides up; all white sides up; a combination of two whites and the two others black; with three white side up to one black; and with three black side up to one white are the emphasis and goals of the game. Each combination is assigned a number so that each player represented by a token will move the number of spaces between the pebbles round the sandstones in the clockwise fashion after throwing the dices (the four sticks). The object of the game is to complete the circle without stopping within the four larger spaces separating the group of twelve pebbles. If a player stops within one of the four large spaces, he/she has fallen into the ocean and perhaps drowning and is out of the game. He/she may return to "start" which is within the large space from the east. He/she may reenter the game on his/her next turn. For instance, all black sides up may equal moving "four" spaces. All white sides up may equal moving eight spaces over the pebbles. A combination of two black and two white may equal moving "five" spaces forward. The game is played only in the winter with four to six players. It is known to be a game played only by women and children.

Azhdildit comes from the noise made when the sticks are dropped on the slap of sandstones. It represents the elements that caused the large mess of land to separate into four large areas and creating four large body of water impossible to cross. Each time a player dropped the dices on the slap of sandstone he/she calls attention of the Holy Ones to the earth surface. The center of earth is where the *Diné* People believe they begin their journey. Powers for mental enlightenment, comforts for the soul and spiritual rejuvenates with calling attention of the Holy Ones to the earth surface.

Keshjeeh / Moccasin Game

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



Changing Woman gave birth to two sons, *Naayééneizighání* and *Tó bájishchíní*, twins. The story tells that the boys were born just a hand

length of time apart. *Naayééneizighání* was delivered first. He was given the name Child of the Sun Beam and later gained his warrior name, *Naayééneizighání*. *Tó bájishchíní*, at birth was called Child of Mist and later gained his warrior name also. While the boys were growing, Changing Woman hid the boys in a dugout beneath the fire hearth whenever she sensed danger for her children. They are referred to as *Łeeyánaayani*, Raised Underground, elsewhere in the *Diné Baahane'*

One day, the monster, *Yé'itsoh*, became curious with seeing little footprints around Changing Woman's home, so he made a special visit to her home. He asked about the little human footprints all about her home. She told *Yé'itsoh* she made the little footprints using the side of her fist pressed into the ground because she lives alone and gets lonely. Seeing the footprints all around her home helps her feel less lonely. She showed him how she made the foot imprints. She pressed the tip of her pointer finger into the ground to add toe prints to the fist imprint to create images of footprints.

Through the passage of time, through the growing cycle, the monster, *Yé'itsoh*, grew more curious with tiny small footprints around the home of *Yoolgaii Asdzáá*, and visited her often. He asked about the little human footprints all about her home each time. She gave him the same information she always gave him each time he asked. She gets lonely living alone and the footprints about her home aides in her feeling less alone. She creates the little footprints using the side of her fist pressed into the ground, showing *Yé'itsoh* how she makes the footprints herself, using her fingertips added toe prints to the fist imprinted into the ground. *Yé'itsoh* would observed closely and agreed, "*Shooya'*." He displayed slowness in comprehending as his behavior was displayed in that matter.

As the Twins grew stronger, *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* and *Haashch'ééwaan* continued to display guardianship and volunteered as spiritual keepers for the boys. They taught the boys to provide for their mother small games such as rabbits, squirrels, gophers, and prairie chickens. *Haashch'ééshzhini*, the Dark Spirit, made bows and arrows for the boys and taught them the basic hunting skills. The boys practiced on everything that moved around the *Dził Ch'ool'í'í* and *Dził Na'oodilí* area. Soon, rabbits, squirrels, gophers, prairie chickens, and birds complained to *Yé'itsoh* to do something about the naughty disrespectful boys living with Changing Woman. However,

Spiritual Ones were aware of the purposes for the Twins so they protected them. When the Twins grow older, they would destroy the mishaps and hideous meat-eating monsters and help create a safer place to live.

Yé'itsoh thought of a plan to lure Changing Woman away from her homestead so he would thoroughly check out her home for children. He invited everyone to *Tónts'ísí Kooḥ* (Mancos, Colorado) for a very important meeting. All kinds of animals, birds and insects showed with anticipation because no one was told what the meeting was about. *Yé'itsoh*, at first, tried to give directions as how to use their shoes in a game of chance. The creatures became confused, did not understand why they were called together. Some traveled far. The creatures talked and designed the game of chance as they played. Each time they played, the game improved.

The game of chance was up the alley of Coyote and so he ran to the four cardinal directions and observed how other living beings entertained themselves. He had many times observed the *Diné* People wash their hair with yucca root suds and he concluded the yucca plant contributed to the developing knowledge. He has observed *Diné* People hunt well. He pulled out two whole yucca plants and ran back to the gathering place and through them in front of the attendance saying, " This is what I have observed the People use to wash their hair. Maybe we can use it in the game to be good hunters like the *Diné* People."

Porcupine and mole pulled off hundred blades from the yucca plants and were left with the root. They carved out a round object and suggested they hide the ball in the moccasins. Coyote did tell them he has observed *Diné* People hide a small piece of yucca root in water, swish water around with the yucca root to create a pile of suds and use it to wash their hair. He has observed them hunting many times and has concluded they are excellent hunters. They are good trackers and never return home empty handed. The game would be a good game for the animals to develop knowledge just like the *Diné* People.

The evening of the first real game, various animals and birds volunteered their moccasins, the bear, gopher, owl, and raven. As the game progressed, *Yé'itsoh* grabbed the *hóneeshgish* from near the fire hearth and used it to dig out the hidden ball saying this is how the *Diné* People clubbed their prey. Owl suggested using his feather blanket to blind oth-

ers from looking on while the ball is being hidden. Each wrong guess would cost a team yucca counters to pay out to the opposing team until one of the teams have gained all the counters. Coyote added two extra long inseparable counters making a total of one hundred and two counters in all. He said the two would be called *bícho'o'* to represent old age and wisdom. He volunteered to pay out the counters to both teams until they are all distributed. He ran back and forth between the two teams. They animals enjoyed the game and returned night after night to play.

Both the night and day creatures were good in making prediction and the ball went back and forth, back and forth throughout the night between the two teams. The night creatures would take out the yucca ball after a guess or two from the day creatures' shoes and it was repeated with the day creatures.

As the game improved and progressed, the animals begin to use the game to make decisions on issues. A win game would support an issue. A lost game would oppose an issue. Making decision was no longer a difficult task. *Yé'itsoh* enjoyed being the center of attention and forgot the purpose of bring the animals together. His plan to lure Changing Woman away from her home and then sneak upon the Twins did not work. Changing Woman did not attend the game.

Night creatures made up songs to honor and show respect for each day creature according to their unique characteristic, talent and makeup. Day creatures did similarly for the night creatures. Honor songs were constructed for the batten, yucca stems, deerskin used in flipping, and the curtain of feathers. Eventually, singing songs became a distraction to concentrating and to keep the game going and interesting. Humor was rejuvenated with the game after near extinction when used only by the *Diyin Dine'é* at the beginning of time. The game motivated and promoted logistical thinking skills for the creatures. They gathered and played.

The creatures played many games and developed it into a full-scale contest over day and night activities. Night creatures formed a team forcing the day creatures to form a team as well. To begin the game, the creatures flipped a piece of deerskin shaded *łizhin* on one side and *łibá* on the other side. Day creatures yelled, "*łibá. łibá. łibá.*" Night creatures yelled, "*łizhin. łizhin. łizhin.*" The flipped piece of skin landed on the ground with

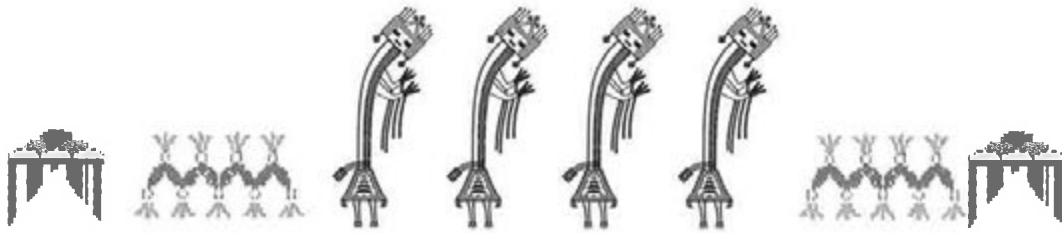
the black side up, so the night creatures hid the yucca ball, *Tó'disht'ooshi* first. Night creatures proposed if they win, they should be granted their wish to hunt in the night all the time and vice versa for the day creatures if they win they would hunt in the daytime all the time. Each team wanting to win constructed honor songs for the yucca ball, the blanket, the *hóneeshgish*, the deerskin and the originator of the game, *Yé'itsoh*. The creatures played four games and tied two to two and the game was approaching early morning dawn. Day creatures became alarmed at the sight of only two extra long yucca stems left to loose the game to the night creatures. Gopher was asked to check the moccasins. He did and found the moccasins empty of the round yucca ball. He returned to his teammates and told them, the moccasins are empty of the yucca ball and that someone is holding it in their hands. Day creatures observed the opposing team closely and found the owl holding the ball in his right claw. Gopher volunteered the club and hit the owl's right claw. The ball rolled. Owl was caught cheating in the deciding game.

Everyone became upset and disbursed to their homes in the early morning light. Bear, hurriedly, put on his moccasins and discovered they were on the wrong feet but did not have time to put the right moccasin with the right foot. He was, also, caught by the early morning sunlight that left highlights on his hair. Crow, once a beautiful white bird, turned solid black, when he stumbled and rolled in the fire hearth just before the sun came up. They group had run out of white clay to mark their faces. Crow was left solid black. There was no winning side and therefore, the day and night animals have equal time to hunt.

Traditionally, healing moccasin game is appropriately played at *hát'áál* on any evening of the five-day ceremony. Each time ten yucca stems are paid out to the opposing team, they are first held to the patient's body to transcend power for a fast recovery and to strengthen his/her spiritual being. The traditional moccasin game originated at this particular time and is played today as it was once played by the day and night creatures.

Ye'ii Bichei

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson



Once upon a time there was a very small boy who lost his clan family in an enemy raid and was left alone to take care of himself. He wandered alone over the land and came upon others in the large village. The people of the village offered him little in food, clothing and shelter. Many times, he was left to himself with very little to eat. He often ate after others have moved away from the empty dishes and picked up crumbs by wetting his fingertips, pressing against bits and pieces of cornmeal left behind and fed himself.

Many times he wandered away from the village, found solitary, and cried missing his parents, brothers and sisters. One day, he followed a path away from the village to be alone with his unhappiness. He was so lonely and sad and had no one to play or talk with. Other young boys had uncles, aunts, and grandparents to teach them skills for hunting. He often went to the stream and tried to wash dirt off himself and not appear so apathetic. He found himself near the small stream in a deep wooded area and sat down to listen to the rushing water. He threw small pebbles into the water and listened to the splash that he created. He listened to the birds chirping happily above him in the trees. Two blue birds building a nest chirped happily as they were deeply occupied with the work of build a nest for their little ones.

Suddenly, he heard tree branches rustling to many hooves coming down the side of the mountain. He hid behind a big boulder and waited to see what was coming down to the stream. Moments later, eight big mountain sheep appeared, beautiful animals with curled horns on the side of their heads, stepped out in unison, left hoof, then right hoof down to the stream. They lowered their heads to the running stream and drew in water between their lips and teeth. The little boy watched in amazement,

not moving, breathing in and out slowly and careful not to disturb the animals. They drank their fill, turned and began climbing up a small foot trail on side of the mountain back into the wooded area. The little boy, refusing to let go of the beautiful animals from his sight, followed the animals up the side of the mountain. They climbed and climbed nonstop. Evening approached the tip of the mountain. It grew dark and they entered a layer of thick fog. The animals still climbed and the small boy followed as best as he could. He felt his chest pounding, his legs weakening and his body aching from being "winded". He thought he heard voices and stopped to listen. Yes, there were voices at the tops of trees. He resumed climbing. Singing voices became louder and louder closer to the top of the mountain they climbed. At the very top of the mountain he came upon a large gathering of people dancing and singing. They moved in unison toward the sunrise direction, moving their left feet forward in tiny steps and then, the right feet followed. Each had a branch of fern in their hands. Before they turned, they moved the ferns to the sky and turned and dance toward the setting sun with their eyes closed. The young boy, moved with the beat of the dancers, motioned to the sky with the dancers with his hands and became aware of his actions. He looked at himself and found he had become one of the people dancing and singing. The beautiful mountain sheep he was following had become one with the people and were dancing and singing also. One of the persons behind him gave him a branch of fern and he continued to dance and sing with the group. The celebration lasted nine nights and nine days and finally only a few people were left behind while others departed. The young man followed a group back down the side of the mountain in the direction where he had come up back to the little stream through the thick fog. The beautiful animals returned to their majestic form of mountain sheep and he to a body of a young handsome man.

He approached the village late in the evening from where he left and young people ran to meet him. They were full of questions: "Where have you been? We looked all round the camp for you. Your tracks were found leading into the stream but not out of the stream. We found tracks of the mountain sheep coming to the stream and returning to the mountain." Older people requested, "Tell us all that you have been through."

Thus, was the beginning of the *Yé'ii Bichei* ceremony for the *Bíla'ashdla'ii*, the Earth Surface People. The young man return to his village with the

songs, prayers, and dance style of the Mountain Spirit People whom is also the animals amongst the earth surface people. The ceremony celebrates and gives thanks to the plentiful spring and summer growth of plants, fruits, and for the young ones born. Each dancer has a name and a distinct position: *Haashch'éeýááłti'í*, *Naayééneizghani*, *Tobájishchiini*, *Zahodeelzhahii*, *Ghą́ą'ask'idii*, *Tó Nainilii*, *Haashch'eezhini*, and *Haashch'éewaan*. *Haashch'éeýááłti'í* wears twelve feathers in his head dressing depicting a plant of corn on his forehead between his eyes. Attached to his belt, is a bag of white cornmeal used to sprinkle on the dancers. Anyone wishing to offer cornmeal to the dancers can reach into the bag for a pinch of cornmeal and sprinkle the dancers from feet up to the tip of their head dressing wishing for good health and being thankful for the abundance received through spring and summer. In the contemporary times, the emphasis of hosting a *Yé'ii Bichei* ceremony have shifted to asking for physical healing of hearing, seeing, and/or memory lose. *Haashch'éeédine'é* are many and anyone of them is capable of restoring health.

Asdzááni éí Nihimá At'é, Dítzin
Honor and Respect All Women
By Sylvia Jackson



A woman is related to with the utmost honor and respect. Understanding the purpose of *Yoolgaii Asdzáá* and her birth, all females are viewed one and the same with her. She proved mental focus and strength in her capabilities to reproduce new life and the innate abilities to promote the growth process with pride and dignity throughout her early childhood and adulthood. She displayed love, leadership and patience with her people throughout her reign. It is the understanding of *Diné* traditional elders, Navajo woman, is Mother of all her people. She provides unconditional love to all clan children. Her home is open to the hunger, homeless, lost, and the less fortunate young and old.

Traditional elders understand that it is the wish and the plan of the *Diyin Dine'é* for earth surface beings to reproduce. Plants germinate and reproduce. Larger animals and humans unite the female egg with the male sperm that causes chemical reaction for reproduction of self occurs in fertilization of the female egg. The role of the male is just as important as the female. It is an understanding of the People that *Diyin Dine'é*

designed the brain to respond to the desire for reproduction in larger animals and humans is apart of the process of growing, the natural order of reproduction, placed within each living organism. With larger animals and humans, female body is designed to nurture the tiny little seed implanted in her womb by her male counterpart. The female carries the seed and nurtures it as it develops inside the womb. Her body supplies the nutrients for proper development. She experiences the anguish and pain in bringing the new life into the world. Her body is designed to supply the rich fluids for growth and development, her breast. Her role in this universe is specifically to help her male counterpart in the reproduction of self and to care for the offspring/s/ as they take their places on earth.

Act of mating and reproduction is understood to be a natural expression of love, *Áyoo'ó'ó'n*, for life, living and existence. Reproduction is a sacred gift from the *Diyin Dine'é* for life and existence to continue replenishing the earth surface. Traditional elders understand that affection between human beings is the identical affection between Mother Earth and Father Sky. Evidence of celestial affection between Mother Earth and Father Sky is in form of mist, moisture, light, heat, and in absolute quietness. Universe displays affection throughout the celestial kingdom and evident through lunar and solar eclipses and the event of equinoxes. During those moments, the belief is that something very special is occurring. Therefore, *Diné* People showed reverence and respect by being calm, ceasing all activities and were engaged in prayers and songs of life.

More and more young parents do not recognize the authority of the clan monarch and reject their involvement in family function and activities. They fail to introduce their children to the clan family society and roles of uncles, aunts, and grandparents. The practice is having an impact on why children display lack of respect for elder's authority and/or clan mothers, aunts and uncles. For instance, young people decide on when, where, and with whom they want live with as man and wife. They move in together. Parent's refusal to object or talk with the young couple displays lack of knowledge on life principles and values. In many incidents a child would be conceived between a young man and a young woman without planning on how to provide for the child. As a result, the next generation of clan begins without knowledge of life principles and family values that are the very bases of being the *Diné* People.

Furthermore, many grandparents do not demonstrate and teach traditional life principles and family values pass down over thousands of years possibly because they too missed out on the traditional teaching because they were away from home attending boarding school. Others feel they are not sought out for traditional teachings. Many homes have access to electricity and have television that the whole family, spend time watching rather than listening to *hane'*. Most *hane'* are told at ceremonies of which few of the children attend.

Lack of teaching have cause clan children to marry into their parents and grandparent's clan and have children. Young parents soon separate due to lack of guidance and help from the clan family possibly because of they have married a close relative. Soon after, children are left to one of the parent or to grandparents, relatives, or adopted to other ethnic parents. The lack of clan family involvement also cause clan children to be irresponsible for themselves, for others, and to display disrespect for sacred elements sustaining life.

Traditional teaching emphasize the teaching of *Ásdzǎǎ Ná'dłeehé Baahane'* as the backbone teaching for *Diné* women that teach women are the life bearer and nurturers. They are the essence of good living for the clan family, society, and in the community. They are referred to as *Yódí Yésdáhá*, guardian of possession and *Nítlíz Yésdáhá*, guardian of gems and jewels. *Yódí* and *Nítlíz* form the fundamental values of all household possessions. Women have the innate right to be honored, respected, protected and loved for her status as keeper of the household possessions. The role of the male, the female's counterpart, is to protect, provide, and nurture the fire hearth in the home, community, and society comparable to the roles of the *Naayééneizigháni*, *Tóbájishchini*, *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* and *Haashch'ééwaan*. Men-husbands provide support, faith, love, and positive teaching for the family. They provide completeness in home/family leadership.

Children are the life force that provides beauty and balance to the gift of life and purposes for living and functioning. Traditional *Diné* society does not tolerate destructiveness and abusive behavior inflicted on members of own flesh and blood for any reasons. No act of violence against children, women and on another fellow relative is justifiable within the *Diné* way of living. All are children of *Diyin Dine'é* deserving of *Ayoo'ó'ó'ní*, respect and positive relationship. It is unacceptable to mentally and physically abuse

mother, father, and/or grandparents of the children. Neglect is a type of emotional and physical abuse to women and children by fathers, visa versa, for woman to abuse their mates, her sons, and/or her brothers.

Traditional teachers understand the powerful emotional stimulation to reproduce by humans, similar to other living things. Therefore, when youngsters reached appropriate age for mating, marriage was arranged between compatible partners by guardians. It was done to ensure the next generation of young *Diné* people to be healthy, sounded minded and to possess strong characters. Arranged marriages prohibited young people from experimenting with "free" sex and promoted safe guarding the clan's bloodline. It encouraged stability, trust and commitment in the union of a male and female because the event was totally family oriented. Act of mating / reproducing should be carefully planned by matured and responsible partners. Understanding this process and purpose is important for young *Diné* female and male approaching reproduction age. Life is real. It is not a game. Lives of people are real and no one is privileged to take it and abuse it for personal satisfactory.

Contemporary life style has drastically influenced the declination of Navajo values and the child rearing practiced before the invasion of the western society. Young *Diné* parents choose their mates without involvement of the clan monarch or parents, have children, and find the responsibilities beyond what they can handle and, soon, one is left to raise the child/ren/ alone. The practice is in direct contrast to the traditional teaching of the *Diyin Dine'é*.

The focus on developing positively strong characters in *Diné* children for the next generations are seemly left to chance. Parents and guardians are not teaching, counseling and promoting strong characters in their children. There is a breakdown in encouraging the necessary ceremonies that are held to acknowledge gratification for life, growth, maturity for their children. Children are merely growing up on their own, without counseling, mental molding and lacking appropriate character development and are becoming adults without the clan's traditional beliefs and practices.

There appears little or no knowledge on the importance of developing strong mental, physical, and spiritual connection to the Holy Ones. There appears little or no knowledge on the importance of forming family

bondage with clan families through traditional marriage ceremonies and to understand the obligations involved. Elders refrain from providing traditional teaching on clan bonding and/or the young people refuse to learn the ultimate purpose for uniting compatible partners in marriage. Safe guarding and maintaining a healthy clan bloodline to develop strong character clan children is lost.

More young *Diné* People view the *Diné* Way of Life, old fashion, outdated practices and believe that nobody practice the old ways anymore. Many parents and grandparents share the feeling and opinion of the young people. Old traditional practices are fading away and being replaced with stereotype attitude by *Diné* People and may be a result of less emphasis place on the traditional value teachings by parents and schools. More *Diné* children denounce, embarrass of and elude their heritage which may be the result of a decade of denouncement, ridicule, and shame brought on the *Diné* people at schools. In addition to the above mention attitudes it appears to be accepted by most parents that appropriateness comes with new methods, new society, and/or new culture despite its effect on Native society. There is a generalized assumption that since everyone is doing "it" then it must be appropriate to do so.

Most traditional grandparents and guardians have become ineffective, confused, and may even agree on perhaps the old ways are indeed old fashion and outdated. They accept the young people's choice to live together, have children and learn through experiences the meaning of obligations to parenthood. In some incidents it may work and the young people may admit they made a mistake and need help. With many common law marriages, the couple gives up and separate. Elder parents also give up and stay aloft about the situation. In many failed marriages, the act of marriage / bonding is not understood as sacred bondage of clan relatives. Furthermore, young people have adopted the practice of "free sex" as a game and have multiple sex partners contributing to a probable cause in sexual transmitted diseases. Traditional elders believe the results attribute to lack of respect for women, children and home.

International society has yet to find cures and stop the spread of HIV/Aids, syphilis, and other sexual transmitted infections transmitted to unborn infants. Research and scientific studies report abuse of drugs and other substances contribute to birth defects, child abuse, and incest activ-

ities.

Diné traditional elder conclude incurable diseases are the monsters of today's society and are results of sexual stimulations and lack of emotional molding of children by clan families. At one time, in the early days, traditional teachers taught viewing sexual engagement of humans and/or of animals with the naked eye were forbidden out of respect for sacredness in the activity. Sexual activities were private matters between matured adults in the making of the next generation of people and/or animals when the activity involves animals. Children were taught not to view sexual engagements of people or animals. Horsing around, physical wrestling with brothers and sisters were forbidden.

Scientific studies on behaviors of sex offenders conclude: A. Most sex offenders are victims of other sex offenders themselves. B. Children are allowed to view sexual dramatization on the television screen and/or on films impacts on destroying the youthfulness and innocents of children. They are no longer innocent children after being exposed to sexual activities seen on television screens. C. Movies with nude and sexual activities demean the sacredness and the meaning of sexual activities. The beauty of being engaged in the making of the next generation becomes an act of being irresponsible, greed, and self-centered. D. It is the responsibility of parents to teach the children the importance of proper sexual engagements and the practice of emotional self-control. Years ago, traditional *Diné* People taught the female and male clan children through developmental ceremonies *Kinaadlá* and *Táchééh* to avoid being irresponsible in emotional control.

Currently many children are born out of wedlock to inexperienced, very young, and uncommitted parents therefore increasing in the number of single parents raising children or children left to grandparents and other agencies for adoption. There is an increase in children born with birth defects, with permanent damages to the brain, with incurable diseases, addicted to substance, and other drugs. Traditional views are that children are not at fault. They do not have a choice to come into the world with defects, permanent damages, diseases. They do not have a choice on the types of parents they would have.

Changing Woman's role and responsibility were to prepare for the coming

of the human race, the *Diné* People, and was charged with several tasks requiring of her to be mentally strong, to developing stable character, and aiding her to stay on task. Roles and responsibilities of the *Diné* women are those of Changing Woman, *Yootgaii Asdzáá* and were put in place years ago. *Diné Asdzáani* has a tremendous task to rejuvenate the next generation of healthy people. First woman's menstrual celebration, *Kinaaldá*, held for young women entering womanhood follows the practice of Changing Woman. Ceremonial activities promote physical, emotional, spiritual development and capable to provide leadership in the home, for family and society. Preparation for this activity begins at an early age between a mother and her daughter. It is the mother, grandmother and aunts' responsibility to involve the clan daughters in activities to help her develop awareness of proper roles and responsibilities expected of a *Diné* woman. Her training includes developing proper attitude, behavior, good habits and to display proper relationship skills. She is expected to be friendly, caring, and pleasant with all people, young and old. She is to be cooperative, expressive, display positive behavior/attitude, and presents herself in a dignified matter. It is not appropriate for her to be lazy, sassy, bossy, and/or over weight. She is to display her proper roles and responsibilities as a nurturing and compassionate female for her clan family.

Diné traditional elders believe and practice child bearing and child rearing education to intensifies with puberty and marriage ceremonies. Older extended clan family members are aware of the necessary involvement expected in all aspects of child development and growth. They appreciate being asked to participate in all stages of child development celebrations. When they are not invited to a growth celebration of a grandchild either to a first laugh, anointing with pollen, puberty or marriage, they become disappointed and wonder what they have done to cause this unwelcome ness on themselves. Attendance and involvement of clan mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and uncles are expected by clan obligations. Elder monarch and her brother/s/ in the clan would be upset with anyone in the family noted for neglecting proper teaching in the home. Molding proper mannered young men and women is the utmost important responsibility and it begins before conception. More and more younger parents do not recognize the authority of the clan monarch and reject their involvement in family living. Failure is reflected in the work of the whole clan society.

Gems and jewels identify the *Diné* People by the Holy Ones meaning the *Diné* People are one and the same with *Yootgaii Asdzáán* and Mother Earth and are adorned with gems and jewels. Gems and jewels are indicators of strength against weather, water, heat and wear. They last. To wear a piece of gems or jewels, a person displays strength with living. It represents motivation, persistence, spirituality, and integrity. Traditional people believe that wearing a piece of jewel with precious stones shield and shelter emotions and protect a person from illnesses, diseases, and hardship. It is appropriate to wear a piece of gem daily to affirm existence and connection with the Holy Ones.



Kinaaldá Bik'iidoo'igháásh'
One Night Blessing Ceremony,
By Sylvia Jackson



In accordance to the first *Kinaaldá Bik'ii doo' iighaash Baahane'*, the ceremony begins with brushing the young woman's hair and tying it at the nape of her neck in the ponytail fashion with a strip of buckskin taken from *Doo k'áá k'ehii bíkaagi*, a highly valuable type of deerskin used in mental molding ceremonies of which *kinaaldá* ceremony is known for. The animal is wrestled down by hunters and suffocated by forcing the animal to induce pollen through its nostrils. The hide is without blemishes from weapons.

A woman known to possess good character is appointed to counsel the young woman throughout the celebration. She dresses the young woman, brush, and tie her hair. Strands of her hair are left loose at her temples to hide her face as she work. *Kinaaldá* is massaged with a weaving tool, a batten, from her head, down her back, arms and legs as she is positioned on a pile of robes, shawls and buckskin inside the *hooghan* on the first morning that begins the ceremony.

Before she begins her ritual run to the east, she welcomes young children to stand in from of her as she marks their cheeks upward stroke with white clay from the stone mettle using a grass brush. In the process, she is recognizing children to be children of time and to wish them good health, to possess positive mental imagine of themselves and to enjoy life. She runs from the ceremonial *hooghan* toward the eastern direction with children running after her and returns.

It is recommended that the woman counselor be of the same clan as the *kinaaldá*, the matured young woman, an aunt, a grandmother or an older sister. Same clan membership authorizes the older woman to teach, counsel, and provide guidance to the younger woman without hesitancy. Role and responsibility of the woman counselor is to inform the young woman on the significant and purposes of the *kinaaldá* celebration using *kinaaldá baahane'*. She oversees all activities throughout the duration of the *kinaaldá* ceremony.

Maturing young woman begins the daily running ritual toward the eastern direction from the ceremonial *hooghan* and returns to it three times daily: morning, noon and evening. Each time she runs, she increases the distance by ten, twenty, thirty, or forty feet and should always turn with the sun pathway and return. It is a traditional custom to turn with the sun pathway at the end of her run and return to the ceremonial *hooghan* due to honor and respect for growth, *gáál*, which is believe to be in place within the sunrays and rainbow for the *Diné* People.

Volunteers may run with her but not run ahead of her. Those choosing to run ahead of her will succeed in aging before her. This is her celebration and recognition for becoming matured and therefore, no one should succeed her back to the ceremonial dwelling. At the end of the fourth day, she runs the furthest distance. All her jewels must be secured so that none will fall from her when she is running. She is not to stop or look back for anything. The running signifies her life pathway and goals.

Traditional *hane'* portrays that *Yootgai Asdzáá* ran to the four directions on the fourth day. As she returned from the east she circled the fire hearth and proceeded to the south, west and north and returned.

In preparation for making the sweet underground baked cornbread, the *kinaaldá* grinds white and yellow corn within the first three days. She uses stone corn mettle to grind the kernels into cornmeal. Volunteers may help with the task using the conventional corn grinder. After grinding the kernels into fine cornmeal, then, it is toasted to a golden brown over fire or in the conventional oven. The matured young woman is advised against using sugar and salt on her food to keep her teeth and bones strong. She is advised to pose correct posture, display positive attitude, practice

healthy hygiene, be attentive and listen with comprehension, as these are acceptable lifelong characters. She must understand she is no longer a child she is becoming an adult person with adult responsibilities.

The fourth day and night are critical in the *kinaaldá* ceremony. At noon, the women will begin mixing the cornmeal in big pots using hot boiling water and wooden stirring sticks. Wooden stirring sticks are made from greasewood bushes. Bushes have strong elasticity straight stems and make good tools. Some women have bundles of four and others have bundles of seven. Numbers in the bundle represent: the four cardinal directions, the four major stages of growth and development, and the four phrases of light entering the *hooghan*, *ch'íládeih*, over the doorway, *nitsétl'ah*, in the west corner, *nitséhah*, fire hearth, *ch'ílayi'*, smoke hole. Others say it represents white, yellow, mixed and blue corn. Bundle of seven stirring sticks represent seven major constellations connected to time, change, and progression. Others say the seven represent the white, yellow, mixed, blue, very, very short corn and corn without a bare spot on the cob. These are called *naada'ałgai*, *naada'ałtsoi*, *naada'á'alt'aas'éi*, *naada'á dootl'izhí*, *naada'á dijoolí* and *naada'á'honoot'inii'*.

Contemporary *Diné* women use wheat germs, raisin and/or brown sugar to sweeten the cornmeal. However, in the earlier days, children helped sweeten the cornmeal using the natural sweeten, saliva. They sat in a circle and moisten spoonful of cornmeal in their mouths and contributed it into a large bowl in the center and added to the cornmeal mush just before pouring into the hot pit. In contemporary time, women use brown sugar, raisins, or corn syrup to sweeten the corn mush. Older women help soften dried cornhusk, arranging them in a circular fashion, joining them together to line the bottom, sides, and top of the pit. Men Folks measure and dig a circular pit in the ground directly southeast of the *hooghan* entrance, about thirty feet away the morning of the fourth day. The pit measured approximately three or four feet in diameter and seven to twelve inches in depth. The men burn wood in the opened pit until just before pouring.

Before sundown, the pit is prepared for the pouring of the cornmeal. Hot coal and ash are removed and the pit is swept clean. *Kinaaldá* will place four cornhusks at the center. Each husk coincides with the four cardinal directions depicting growth outward to honor and respect life, fertility, and

Mother Earth to have nurtured life at the beginning of creation. Women line the bottom and sides of the pit with cornhusk prepared by the older women. Cornmeal mixture is poured into the lined very hot pit. The women work fast to get the cornmeal poured and covered preserving heat for cooking. Just before covering the cornmeal mush, the young matured woman again places four cornhusks at the center of the cornmeal mush, again, coinciding with the four cardinal directions depicting growth outward to honor and respect life, fertility, and Mother Earth. Standing over the pit from the eastern direction *Kinaaldá* sprinkles unused cornmeal over the cornmeal mush from *ts'áá*, Navajo basket. She requests blessing for life and existence. She sprinkles a trail of cornmeal from east to west, south to north and around the edge in the sun pathway fashion before the top lining is secured in place. Wet packaging paper, thick foil and a layer of dirt will completely enclose the cornmeal mixture for baking.

Kinaaldá ceremony is a woman event and men are encouraged to stay away from the ceremonial *hooghan* as much as possible. They tend to the preparation of the pit for cooking, making available cooking fuel, heating a tub of water for mixing and cooking. After the cornmeal is placed in the underground oven, the *hooghan* is swept clean, pots and stirring sticks washed and dinner is prepared for everyone. Men are welcome to enter the *hooghan*. Soiled water from washing the pots and stirring sticks are poured out onto the ground outside the *hooghan* and not down the drainage pipes.

During the night, the woman counselor keeps a stick or two burning on top of the bread baking underground until morning. The underground baked bread symbolizes promotion of strong fundamental family values interwoven into the *Diné baahané*, history, stories, songs and prayers. It symbolizes healthy fertility for the clan family for generations to come. It is believed that songs, prayers, and *hane'* of creation mold positive mental attitude for the young and old people in attendance. The People believe that running toward the sunrise promotes good health and physical development of the young woman and all who runs with her. The celebration promotes understanding the importance of spirituality in life as well as togetherness, a sense of belonging and develops positive self-esteem in the young and the old people. Everyone plays an important role in the initiation of the young woman into adulthood.

Hózhóǵjii doo' íígháásh begins around ten o'clock in the evening while the underground sweet bread is cooking. The ceremony is similar to the *Hózhóǵjii doo' íígháásh* held in the celebration and recognition for the baby's first step and first moccasins. Relatives will attend the *Hózhóǵjii doo' íígháásh* to renew their songs, prayers, stories and to begin anew with life's goal. Participants are welcomed to contribute their songs of prayers to motivate, simulate, and express appreciation of life and living. It is a time for rejoicing and renewal of spiritual support for the clan society.

On the other hand, the celebration recognizes the young lady's first step into maturity / adulthood. Teaching, counseling, guiding, mental and physical molding are emphasized by the women folks. *Kinaaldá* is encouraged by her elders to listen, observe and participate in all aspect of the celebration with positive attitude and behavior. She is told the Holy Ones are present and are observing her performance in renewing energy for life and fertility for the next generation of the People.

Before the crack of dawn, the young woman runs her final early morning ritual run in the direction of the sunrise. First, she will have her hair washed with yucca root suds, dressed in her finest and adorned with jewels while the chanter offers morning prayers and songs. All jewels are securely fastened as not to become loose and fell from her attire. She is not to stop, look back and look for lost items. She is leaving her childhood behind and entering adulthood and there is no going back. However, the young and old are encouraged to run with her as far as they can then stop, wait, and follow her back on her return run. No one should return before her. If anyone does, they are told to except growing old before their time. The final run is one that is the furthest. Some people will advise that she runs to the four directions on the fourth morning. This requires her to circle the fire hearth in the sun path fashion each time she returns from the east, south, west and north and return.

Yoolgail Asdzáán baahané portrays that she ran to all four directions on the final day of her ceremony. The story, also, conveys that she participated in four *kinaaldá* ceremonies to properly initiate her into womanhood. The People allow two ceremonies to properly initiate the young woman into womanhood due to availabilities of time, place, and the nec-

essary materials required such as cornmeal. The two are understood to be the first and the last ceremony.

After the final run, her hair is combed and brought together and tied at the nape of her neck. The chanter will anoint her with *tádídíín* from her feet to the top of her head. He anoints her by placing a pinch of pollen on her feet, legs, palms of hands, chest, shoulders, back and a pinch on her tongue. He sprinkles a pinch of *tádídíín* toward the doorway to anoint her life pathway. Anointing of the sacred *tádídíín* is to strengthen her physical image and her *gáál*. A pinch of *tádídíín* placed on top of her head is to strengthen her spiritual keeper. The pinch placed on her tongue is to feed her spiritual image. She is to be recognized as a Navajo woman by her family as well as by her spiritual keepers. She takes a standing position in the western area in the *hooghan*, facing the entrance holding a grinding mettle with a piece of white clay stone in her hands. Individuals needing to reaffirm their existence walk up and stand in front of her. She marks their cheeks with white dust from the stone using a small grass brush to wish them good health, long life, and spiritual growth.

Next to the last event, *kinaaldá* stretches out face down at the outer entrance of the *hooghan* on shawls and robes laid out for her massaging and to initialize her to take control of her new role. Before pendleton shawls and robes, hides from animals such as *ch'ídí yaateet*, buffalo skin, *ábaní*, deer skin, *yaateet*, sheep hides and/or rugs were placed on the ground for her massaging. *Kinaaldá* stretches out with her head toward the *hooghan* entrance, arms stretched outward from her sides and her legs/feet together for physical massaging. Woman counselor massages the *kinaaldá* from head to toes by pressing a weaving tool, batten stick, against her body as she massages. The activity encourages the *kinaaldá* to develop strong mental character, understand the importance of having a good posture and to present herself in a dignified matter throughout her life. She is counseled on the importance of keeping physically, mentally, and emotionally in control of herself. The role of a mother is to possess good understanding on nurturing, guiding, protecting and loving the little children. *Kinaaldá* is encouraged to stay healthy and physically fit. She will be bringing "young" lives into the world. Her task requires her to be physically fit and to possess good work habits and to have positive cheerful personality. Shawls and robe are handed back to the people at the conclusion of the massaging. She enters the ceremonial *hooghan* ready to

take on her role as a mother next to her aunts, grandmother and her mother.

Woman counselor and others help her cut the underground cornmeal bread out of the pit. The pit is uncovered with care, assuring the cornbread to be free of dirt. The woman counselor begins at the east and cut out pieces of bread in spiral movement. Pieces of bread are taken inside the ceremonial *hooghan* and placed in front of the Chanter. Woman counselor helps the *Kinaaldá* by placing pieces of corn bread in the basket *kinaaldá* is holding and everyone, children and adults, take a piece from her basket. Chanter who offered the songs of creation is given the center cut, *ilkąąn bijee'*. Small pieces are returned to the center of the pit before filling it back up with dirt. Mother earth is not forgotten. She is acknowledged with a piece of bread also. Everyone is served a piece of the underground baked sweet bread and a traditional meal.

Kinaaldá does not eat her own cornbread. If she wants a piece of cornbread, she may from another young woman's ceremony. She will honor herself in reverence for four days. Traveling away from the ceremonial *hooghan* within the four days after the completion of the ceremony is not advisable. She will refrain from cooking, chopping, cutting, pounding on things in respect and reverence for the songs of creation sung for her. She will stay dressed in her ceremonial attire until the fourth morning. On the fourth morning, she washes with herb water and carefully disposing of the soiled wash water to the earth surface rather than down the drainage pipes. Traditionally, the event should be repeated on the second, third and fourth menstrual for young women to be properly molded. Each time the size of the underground cornmeal increase and the distance she runs.

Kinaaldá takes her place next to her mother and grandmother's role and responsibilities. She is expected to be hospitable and helpful to all visitors coming to her home. She will be expected to prepare a meal, serve, and engaged in conversation with her visitor as a matured person.



Dłííh Naabáh

Told and Written by Sylvia Jackson



Dłííh Naabáh was born in the season of *A'ak'éégo*, Fall, at *Na't'eetiin*, dur-

ing the peak of lamb marketing. *Dinééh Yazhí* insisted that his wife accompanied him to the trading post to sell the lambs. It was in the middle of October. *Asdzááłchíí* was close to delivery and he did not want to leave her alone. The nearest trading post was twenty miles away on dirt and rough road.

It was lamb-selling day at *Na't'eetiin* and *Diné* people from all around bring lambs to sell. Two elder sons helped their father catch the lambs and loaded them up into the back of the wagon with the legs tied. *Dinééh Yazhí* helped *Asdzááłchíí* into the wagon and they hurried off to the lamb sale, they planned to be back before dusk. The birth *hooghan* waited with plenty of firewood, water, *honeeshgish* (fire poker), several sheep hides, sand, a rope, a large pan and receiving blankets.

They arrived about noon at the trading post. *Dineeh Yazhí*, quickly busied himself with unloading and weighing the lambs to be sold. *Asdzááłchíí* went inside the trading post and told the trader's wife, Silvia, her labor pains had begun. Silvia quickly gathered the women to prepare the *hooghan* behind at the trading post for birth and asked what was needed. The ladies provide her a list: a sheep hide, a large bowl, towels, warm water, receiving blankets, a small package of diapers, clean scissors, string, and wood. Traditional dwelling used by travelers to stay the night was swept out and prepared for childbirth. Luckily for *Dííh Naabáh*, *Hastiin T'aaiitsoohí*, her maternal grandfather, was at the lamb sale. He quickly prepared to sing the birth song and anoint his grandchild with *tádídíín*. He first anointed the four cardinal directions of the *hooghan* with *tádídíín* speaking to the Holy Ones to recognize the place for reverence and to witness the birth of his grandchild. He anointed the rope looping a post placed in the west side of the *hooghan* with *tádídíín*, reverently blessing the life path of the child as he/she enters the living world.

Asdzááłchíí positioned herself on a sheepskin near the wooden post and wrapped the end of the rope around her fist and lifted herself up and pushed with her contractions. Two sisters helped. One supported her by wrapping her arms around her sister's middle from behind her and squeezing gently with each contraction. The other sister positioned herself in front of her to receive the baby. As soon as the birth chant begin, *Dííh Naabáh* came into the world, squirming, hollering, wet and waving her arms and legs in fright. *Dííh Naabáh* slipped into Big Thumb's wife

outstretched opened hands and she cut the umbilical cord. She, first, motioned over the area to cut with an arrowhead and then used a clean knife to separate the baby from the placenta. She tied the remaining cord with a clean white string close to the baby's stomach. She bathed the infant in warm water and wrapped her in a receiving blanket. *Asdzáá Yazhii* received the placenta and wrapped it in the sheepskin her sister delivered on. She helped her sister onto a clean hide and made sure she was comfortable. *Asdzááłchíí* received her baby girl into her arms and held her to her lips four times drawing in her scent and placed her to right breast uttering "*Áshinee, Shíyáázhi, Shá'áwéé'.*"

Hastiin T'aaiitsoohíí named his granddaughter, *Dlííh Naabáh*, a name that belonged to her great grandmother, *Asdzáá To'tsohnii*. *Asdzáá Yazhii* prepared the placenta on the sheepskin to be offered to the natural world. *Dlííh Naabáh's* father took the placenta and offered it to living world outside under a tall juniper tree. He, first, sprinkled the ground with water and placed the placenta on a tall juniper tree branch not too far north of the *hooghan*. He thanked the Holy Ones for his little baby girl, *Yoolgái Na'yooaali Ch'ikeeh* (Keeper of the White Shell Girl). He asked for good health, strong body, mind and spirit for his daughter. He spoke of gifts he wished for his daughter; to grow tall; to become an observable person with good listening and attention skills. He requested protection and guidance for his family and returned to the birth lodge.

Placenta is believed to be a baby's first home. It is where the baby grows and is nurtured by the mother's love for nine months and in the care of *Cha'aal yeel Adsdzááni doo Tó' Asdzááni*. A baby is born to *Adinidiin*, light, and Mother Earth. This will be his/her second home. Living elements of this world is asked to know her/him as they will protect and guide the child as he/she goes forth in this living world.

Asdzáálichii place her baby next to her with her crown toward the fire hearth at the center of the *hooghan*. *Hastiin T'aaiitsoohíí* completed the ceremony by placing a small pinch of *tádídíín* on the bottom of the baby's feet, legs, on the palms of her little hand, on her chest, back, shoulders, on her tongue and lastly, on top of her head. Elders believe that the Holy Ones communicate with newborn babies through the soft crown on top of their heads until it closes. Warmth from the fire nurtures the growth of the child as she adjusts to new atmosphere that differs from the security of

mother's womb.

Silvia prepared pork broth for the new mother while *Dinééh Yazhii* purchased lunch from the store and everyone ate. Some people stayed the night and kept the fire burning. Before everyone fell asleep from the exhausting ordeal, a miracle of birth, the new parents announced to name their daughter, Silvia, after the Trader's wife, a daily used name.

Upon returning home, *Dííh Naabáh's* mother took the disassembled cradleboard from the storage, washes it using yucca root suds and rubbed it with red earth clay, *chii'* She raised her two older sons in it and now she laced it with new cloth and bedding. She placed her daughter inside for comfort, security and health. *Dííh Naabáh's* father gathered soft barks from the cliff rose bush on the side of the mountain for bedding and to be use as absorbent. Mother softens the barks by shredding it and placing the pulp inside a clean washed flour sack for bedding. She prepares several smaller ones big enough to place between the baby's legs for absorbent. They will be washed several times before replacing the used pulp with fresh pulp. Auntie Mary, *Asdzáálichii's* younger sister, coached the older brothers on the care of their new baby sister. She told them, they are now "older" brothers and they are to model appropriate behaviors for their sister so that she can grow up to be a good person. One day, she will be old enough to cook for them.

Asdzáálichii wears a sash belt around her waist for four or six weeks which helps her stomach and uterus to return to its original size. Wearing the sash belt also promotes straight posture and lessens the chances of injuries to the lower back while carrying her baby in the cradleboard. She drinks herb tea for healing, cleansing and restoring her body strength for at least a couple of months. She refrains from strenuous exercise and work. Breastfeeding will restore her strength and protect her child from common viruses. Within the first three months, she will drop breast milk into the infant's eyes for healthy visual development. She quickly bonds with her baby while she is breastfeeding. She continues to eat healthily and keep fit for her children. Her sister, Mary, helps her with the house chores and care of the older children as she is also referred to as their mother.

Years ago, the traditional Navajo mothers begin preparing their daugh-

ter/s/ at puberty on conception, childbirth and motherhood. The teaching stressed appropriate position practiced at giving births, a sitting/swatting position as to lying down on a bed to deliver in the contemporary time. The position encouraged young mothers to avoid becoming too heavy with a child. It is believed that becoming too heavy with a child promoted various difficulties at birth. A young mother should avoid creating complication for herself and her baby. The four legged, animals, are given the gift of lying position to give births to their little ones. Young people in response to the encouragement of elders are reviving information of certain traditional practices such are: offering the placenta to the natural world, objecting to circumcision on male babies, introducing the child to the natural world by a given Navajo protection name and celebrating the growth process with *Hózhóqjii*. Many young Navajo mothers choose to breastfeed their babies. Many are going back to using the cradleboard to carry their babies in and for safety purposes. Traditional mothers asked to take the placenta home from the hospital and appropriately offer it to the natural world. They strongly believe that the baby's first home should not be burnt or thrown away without a prayer. It is believed that *Diné* People are *Diyin Dine'é ba'alchíní ní'dl'í* (Children of the Holy Ones) and are to be respectful of the natural physical make up.

Placenta and Umbilical Cord

Using an analogy, humans are very much like pumpkins and squash. Mother pumpkin plant grows from a seedling and produces fruits on the vine. It nurtures the little fruit on the vine with water and other nutrients. Warmth from the sun helps the fruit to grow and mature. New fruits grow and grow until they look exactly like the mother plant, big and round. Umbilical cord is similar to the vine from the mother plant to the baby plant. Through the umbilical cord the mother nurtures the young one with all the good nutrients from the healthy food she eats and, of course, milk, juice, and water she drinks.

Traditionally, placenta and umbilical cord are believed to be sacred connection of the mother to her child. Placenta is considered the baby's first home. Umbilical cord is a special organ that supplied the necessary nutrients for babies to grow and develop. It is the baby's first life pathway. The baby separates from his first home at birth when the umbilical cord is cut and tied. The remaining umbilical cord on the child's body will dry up and

eventually drop off the baby's body. When that happens, it is advisable not to throw it in the trash bin or in the garbage disposal. Human body, in the traditional Navajo understanding, is a sacred living being. Any part of the human body, such as the placenta, umbilical cord, teeth, hair and finger and toenails are not burnt or dispose of in the garbage bin. Doing so demeans the value of life and is an act of disrespect for the creation and the Holy Ones. It is advisable by the elders to remember *Diné* People are the *Diyin Dine'é* of the earth surface and the appropriate act to perform when the dried umbilical cord stub drops off the belly is to offer it to the natural world, the second home, for the child.

Grandmothers suggest placing it in the cornfield, sheep/horse corral, or in a special area where children find comfort, happiness, security and feel at home. Some parents bury the umbilical cord stub in the cornfield or place it on an animal with good wishes for the child to develop positively, mentally, spiritually and physically. A positive thought one may have offering the dried umbilical cord stub of a female child to a specified location may be, 'My little one will grow with understanding and appreciation for the surroundings as she learns to become a good weaver.' For offering the male child's umbilical cord stub, one may utter affirmation such as, 'My little one will develop positive thoughts toward animals and will develop an appreciation for his land.'

Scientific reasoning for orally repeating positive thoughts is affirming a personal position on something valuable and important to one's life. The act of verbalizing a positive thought promotes development of personal reverence for self and children. Ultimately, orally affirmation redefines personal wants and needs and strengthens personal efforts to carry it out.

To help carry out certain practices, the grandmother may question what happened to the umbilical cord stub of a child when the child is observed to display short attention span, or is unable to focus, leaves task unfinished and does not clean up after himself. She may comment that the child is wondering around trying to find his lost umbilical cord stub. Implication by the grandmother is that the umbilical cord stub is a sacred part of the mother and the baby's body. It is important for the child to have his umbilical cord stub appropriately offered to nature with positive thoughts. Ultimately, the practice emphasizes the understanding of valuing the human life. Parents should take the opportunities at the various

stages of growth and development to express appreciation for existence for their children. The practice continues to affirm a personal position in valuing life. Offering the umbilical cord stub to the living world may compel the parents to teach their children to develop respect and appreciate self, family and livelihood. The practice is not far from the teaching of the westernized society in valuing life. If a child is expected to be successful in life and to appreciate life, then the teaching begins early in life with the modeling of the parents.

A'wée Chi'dééłdłoh / First Laugh Celebration

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

A'wée Chi'dééłdłoh is a wonderful message on the child's ability to communicate expressed by a small child as early as three to four weeks old. A child enters the world mentally without the ability to focus and visually without colors. The two areas will develop with time. Traditional elders believe that a person who helped a child to express himself with a laugh will influence the development of the child's personality, behavior and attitude. This is an important developmental stage for the child and the one that helped the child to laugh, *A'wee Chi'diníłdłohígíí* will help the child express gratification for the special gift by sharing.

Irvin James, Traditional Educator, 2001, states: A child laughs when he/she has developed focusing skill and is seeing variation of colors or movements around him. The child displays his understanding of the colorful world of which he is apart of through the spirit of his senses and his expression of joy and happiness. Traditional elders encourage a celebration with the child giving away food and small pieces of natural rock salt.

The child's first laugh is celebrated with the extended family members of both parents. Anytime after three weeks or so, the baby begins to smile at images and soon utters a happy sound called "a laugh." Important understanding of the clan family role and responsibility begins with active participation in this family event. Parents invite the relatives and let them know the child has extended him/herself to the living world through laughter. The child has expressed *k'é* in his/her unique way. An individual that assisted the child to laugh will entertain and provide a giveaway event with a meal for everyone. First laugh is the child's unique way of

greeting the environment on his own terms. It is believed that when a child utters a laugh, the Holy Ones has blessed the child with a personality, uniqueness and capabilities. The child received the special gift from the Holy Ones. Grandparents provide the Navajo basket from which gifts are given to all the relatives present for the celebration. *Awéé' Chi'diniłdłohigii* feeds everyone a traditional meal. Before everyone eats, a sample of food is given to the fire in appreciation for the gift of laughter

A small piece of natural rock salt is the first gift of the child. The person that witnessed the child's first laugh will hold the baby on her/his lap. She or he will help the baby give the gift of salt by placing a small piece of salt in the baby's hand for people to receive. Other gifts are placed in the Navajo basket to be received one at the time from the child's hand. Relatives will greet the child by kinship terms and expressed gratitude. The child gives away the gifts. Everyone celebrates by sharing a traditional meal. This is done to reenact compassion and kindness displayed by Salt Woman, who lived with Changing Woman in the west. *Hane'* reveals that Salt Woman and Changing Woman fed their visitors and send them on their way with gifts. *Diné* People consider the first laugh celebration an enactment of generosity of Mother Earth and the creation. The event displays a lesson on respect, appreciation and the importance of caring for the welfare of others. Traditional meal may include roasted mutton, stew, tortilla, cornmeal, cake, candies and etc. Games can be played. Failing to entertain and celebrate the event, the elders say, the child will not be generous, compassionate and caring. The child will be stingy. The important idea for all to experience is the nurturing and promoting positive character in the clan children.

More on A'wéé Ch'i'deeldłoh

An utterance of laughter is the second language the baby used to express his feelings to his surroundings and is understood as an expression of *k'é*. The celebration is an effort to help the child extend him/herself to all the relatives. Laughter is a valuable possession viewed sacredly and uniquely belonging to an individual character make up, attitude and behavior. It is an individual expression and appreciation for life and existence. It is an extension of self to strengthen *k'é* with the surroundings.

Laughter is a gift of healing from the Holy People to the earth surface peo-

ple. The Holy Ones planned life's journey to include hardship, hard work, difficulties as well as happy-enjoyable moments. In time of difficulties, a person will rise above unhappy-sad moments with the spirit of laughter. Similarly, crying is the first language the baby learned to express discomfort and to call for attention. Laughter on the other hand strengthens the positive outlook to feel emotionally and spiritually happy. Medical science supports that sharing a laugh or two lessen negative ideas of illness, depression, anxiety, fear, loneliness, and sadness brought on by death and/or other unpleasant events.

Laughter is a precious gift to the earth surface people to express and share emotional feelings. Laughter is met to be practice often to strengthen the *k'é* concepts. Therefore, when first expressed by a newborn, it is understood as his first initiative step toward the development of *k'é*. Traditional *hane'* tells how the Holy Ones, when they first took their position within the four directions, observed one another, laughed and greeted each others in honor and respect for their position assigned them. Within their action, relationship and interdependency formed and exists today unchanging.

Gift giving validates the understanding of *A'yoo'ó'ó'ni*, love. The event promotes care and strengthens personal development of generosity for people and surroundings. The act of gift giving is to reenact the traditional understanding of kindness, compassionate and consideration for people, animals and earth surface living and non-living matters. The gift of laughter belongs to everyone. The event reminds the People to be thankful, appreciative and preserve by sharing. The idea of respect is to learn that it is not appropriate to take more than what is needed from people, animals, plants and earth.

Ke' k'ehashchiin / First Moccasin and First Step

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Traditional *hane'* interprets when a child begins to walk on his own, he is making an individual effort, expressing his need to direct and control his life journey. His effort is then recognized with an appropriate introduction ceremony, *Hózhóqjii'*, by anointing his footprints with cornmeal or *tádídíin* along with prayers and songs of the growing process. Footprints represents *gááł*, lifelong journey. The baby's first step shows personal choice, determination, persistence, reaching and obtaining a want or a need. All

the fore mentioned skills are necessary lifelong learning skills important to acknowledge with *Hózhóqjii*. The child's parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles will hold the event. Either one of them can make the traditional moccasin for the child. The making of this special moccasin begins in the morning and completed in the evening before the actual *Hózhóqjii* begins. Clan family members are invited to share in the event.

Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh begins with the mother bathing her child in yucca root suds prepared in a Navajo basket. Mother and child circle the fire hearth returning to their place left of the medicine bundle, in the west side of the *hooghan*. White cornmeal is use as an absorbent to dry the child. The medicine person anoints the child with white cornmeal as he sings sacred growing songs. He touches the child with white cornmeal from the feet up: both legs, knees, palms, chest and back, shoulders chin and cheek and the top of the child's head. The child's first pair of moccasins is anointed with white cornmeal before they are placed on his/her feet. Clean clothes and any jewels his mother puts on the child are anointed with cornmeal. The Blessing Way, *Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh*, begins when the Pleiades reaching mid sky. Gifts of robes, materials, quilts, flannel throw blankets are spread out in front of the medicine bundle. Things of value to carry out living life are placed on the blankets to be blessed and to rejuvenate the growing process for the clan families. *Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh* is a one night chant for the family. It begins around ten or eleven in the evening and concludes at the crack of dawn.

Everyone is welcome. Relatives will bring their medicine bundle or other prized possessions. Long ago, people brought items they used with animals, for example: saddle, bridles, ropes, etc. In the contemporary time, people may want their automobile keys and various work tools blessed for safety and good luck. Other items are usually purses, wallets, house keys, etc. These are placed on the blanket spread for blessing along with the renewing of the growing process for the clans. The event is to renew hopes, dreams and understand the values of the four cardinal directions: *Nítsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin* for the family. Throughout the night, everyone attending contributes their songs to praise the creation of life and the growing process. It is understood by the *Diné* People, the Holy Ones demonstrated appropriate way to express appreciation for life when *Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh* was first held for the clansmen near San Francisco Peaks and for Changing Woman when she experienced her first woman's menstrual. The significance of *Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh* is to renew the

soul, mind and spiritual nourishment. It is an opportunity to feel one with the natural world and to understand that humans have the quality of tenderness and sacredness as in plants, and in the elements of life. The child performed initiatives, persistence and individuality with his first steps and his clan families will continue to support and encourage him to continue becoming the individual he was met to become. *Hózhóqjii doo' iigháásh* gathers support of prayers and songs by relatives, friends and neighbors. It is a family celebration based on developing an understanding of *k'é*.

Traditional Treats of Diné Children

Dahyistin, Hashch'éeé Dáá', Bé'estłóní, Tóshchíín, doo Abe' Bee Neezmasí

By Sylvia Jackson



Dahyistin

Long ago, *Diné* mothers toasted, grained and mixed cornmeal to make *dahyistin*, a special cornmeal treat for her family. She prepared the treat late in a winter evening while father and grandfather tell stories to the children. Children sat around their mother and helped. They sprinkled handfuls of cornmeal into the mixing pot while Mother stirred the mix with her wooden mixing sticks. Before the cornmeal is poured into a flat pan, Mother squeezed off cornmeal from the mixing sticks into the pot with her fingers. She turned the sticks with the mush covered ends up toward the smoke hole, an opening in the domed *hooghan* and verbalized her wishes for her family. She wishes her family good health, happiness and abundance in living. Together, the children and Mother pour the cornmeal mix into a baking pan. The children watched Mother spread a handful of hot coal from the fire hearth. She picks two equal sized coals and places them in the center of the pan of mush. Metaphorically, the two pieces of coal are eyes for the sacred cornmeal as it looks up into the heaven of stars and absorb cosmic knowledge, alertness, and smartness. Children would be blessed with positive mental development.

Dahyistin is sacred winter food and is made while *hane'* is being shared with the children. The sacred cornmeal is placed over the entrance of the

hooghan to freeze. Two coals, the eyes, absorb the heavens for understanding until morning. Grandmother believes understanding for a good life can be found in the stars. Everyone sleeps thinking how tasty the *dahyistin* is going to feel on the tongues and inside the tummies early the next morning.

Early the next morning, Mother serves the frozen cornmeal with breakfast. Each person is given a spoon to shave and scoop up shaved cornmeal to eat. Blue cornmeal becomes sponge-like after it thaws out. A person can squeeze excess water from it and eat it like bread with stew. Favorite for the children is the frozen yellow cornmeal. It usually becomes sweeter with freezing. Reward for Mother's hard work is seeing her children enjoy the cornmeal. She smiles as the smallest child scoop up the last spoonful and runs out after the older siblings.

Hashch'éeé Dǎǎ'

On warm sunny summer morning a *Diné* mother would take the children out to the field of *hashch'éeé dǎǎ'*, usually found in batches along side dried up ditches or empty washes. Each child is given an empty coffee can to collect the berries in. They would collect as much berries as they can carry home in the late evening. Children refrain from eating the berries they pick. From experiences, they know that raw berries can upset their little tummies badly. Upon returning home, mother washes and grinds the berries on the stone mettles. She, then, cooks the berries until it appears mushy and creamy. Then, she allows the mushy berries to cool. Older children are allowed to stir the mushy berries until the substance appear smooth and creamy. While the children stir the berries, mother takes *nímasii dleesh* from the sack where she stores the earth clay adds three handfuls to three cups of warm water and stirs it until creamy. The dish of creamy berries and the clay are covered and set to cool. Mother prepares a traditional meal of squash and mutton stew. She serves the berries with *nímasii dleesh* before the children go to bed after another *hané* told by Father. Children sit round the dish of berries and clay. They scoop up the creamy berries and dip into the dish of clay similar to dipping strawberries into whipped cream and eat. *Nímasii dleesh* covers up the bitter taste of the berries but brings out the sweetness. It is the treat of the summer season.

Bé'estł'óní

Bé'estł'óní is made from finely grinded roasted blue cornmeal. Mother begins by placing three to four teaspoonful of juniper ash into a cup of hot boiling water. Traditional mothers keep in their cupboard a jar of prepared juniper ash that she prepares once or twice a year. Juniper branches are collected from healthy full juniper trees. Branches are burnt on a finely meshed screen until the green buds completely burned to ash and fall through the screen. The fine cool ash is collected from a metal sheet at the bottom of the screen and stored.

In making the sweet blue tamales, Mother mixes three or four cups of blue cornmeal in a large bowl with half a cup of sugar. She drains juniper ash water into the mix and stirs with her stirring sticks. Immediately, she adds four to five cups of hot boiling water to the mix and stirs until the mix forms a ball of blue dough. She, then, uses her hands and adds one or two handful of raisins, almond or walnuts to the cornmeal. The ball of cornmeal is very hot to handle. She covers the ball of dough and begins preparing cornhusk for wrapping. Hot water is poured on the dried cornhusk enough to soften them, at least twenty sheets. She prepares the pot for the tamales. She, then, begin making the blue tamales by opening a sheet of cornhusk, spoons on enough cornmeal for one serving in the middle and wrap it in by folding the sides, slightly overlapping the ends and the top is folded back to cover the filled. This is placed on another cornhusk in an opposite direction so that the end is now folded back to cover the tamale. She takes two striped pieces of cornhusk and tied round the tamale at each end. This is placed in the pot of boiling water. Tamales cook for an hour over slow heat and than placed near a window to cool. They are sweet to taste and can be eaten alone or with a meal.

Tóshchíín

Tóshchíín is made using the same method for making *bé'estł'óní*. Mother prepares the juniper ash and set that on the side. She prepares three or four cups the finely grinded blue roasted cornmeal in a bowl. Depending on the number of people or children to serve, the cup of cornmeal varies. For two or three children, she limits the cups two or three. Her cooking pot is placed on the burner with five to six cups of water and heating. She drains the juniper ash water into the hot water in the pot being careful to

remove any solid ash. She mixes the blue cornmeal in a cup of cold water and she adds that to the hot water. The cornmeal is stirred constantly for five to ten minutes over high burners until the content becomes thicken. If the content is too thick, add more water and stir until the content is firm and not thick. Cover and continue to cook for twenty minutes over low heat, stirring often. The mush will appear blue and creamy. Sugar or salt or chili powder can be added before eating or use as dips for roast meat or tortillas. *Tóshcíín* is good with a bowl of stew or a bowl of fruits.

Abe' Bee Neezmasí

Abe' Bee Neezmasí is blue cornmeal pancakes made similarly to the fore-mentioned cornmeal treats, *tóshcíín* and *bé'estłóní*. It is made with juniper ash water to bring out the mild sweet taste of corn mixed in milk. The mix is ready for pouring on hot grill when the content becomes creamy and not runny. Animal fat was used on the hot grill to prevent the batter from sticking to the grill. Half a cup of batter poured on hot grill make a nice serving size. When the bubbles pop on the surface of the batter, it is time to turn it over for cooking on the other side. It does not take long to make a stack of delicious pancakes. Blue pancakes can be served with fruits and hot goat milk.

Long ago, mothers raised goats for their milk and every morning at dawn she and her children would take an empty pile to the corral and milk the goats. She milked and the children would catch the goats and hold on to their horns while she milk each one. She cooked the milk over opened fire for at least thirty minutes and then cooled. Children drank milk with the blue cornmeal pancakes. The pancakes can be rolled up and serve in place of bread also.



Asdzáá Shash Na'dłeehé

Told by Miller Attakai, 1956

Transcribed by Sylvia Jackson

Naayéeneizighání doo Tó'bánjishchíní traveled throughout the land eliminating unwanted monsters. They were on their way to returning to *Dził Na'oodil'í* when they came upon a group of *Diné* People living atop *Dził Lizhiin* and the hunters requested their help to eliminate of *Asdzáá Shash Na'dłeehé*. They told their story:

They have met her on one of their hunting excursion as a beautiful woman and one of the brothers fell in love with her and he left the hunting party to be with her. The following day, they met another beautiful woman sitting under a tree brushing out her long black hair. Another brother fell in love with her and he left the hunting party to be with her. On the third day, the hunting party did not advance out of the area, when they came upon a beautiful woman bathing in the small stream. They stopped to visit with her. She told them she lived just beyond a row of trees in a den and that she would be happy to share lunch with them. The hunting party followed the woman back to her den. She prepared lunch for them and invite them to stay with her while they hunt in the area. Their stay would cause her no problem. The hunters accepted the invitation and agreed to stay with her for a couple of days since the animals they were hunting have moved further into the region.

The hunting party of five stayed and hunted within the area. After a day or two, the beautiful woman offered to wash and clean the hair of lice that she had notice on one of the hunter. She influenced him to stay home with her while the others left the den for another day of hunting.

The beautiful woman requested they sit under the shade of a tree while she picked the lice from his hair. They sat together and she picked lice from his hair throughout the morning. The lowering of the sun in the sky cast a shadow of them in front of the hunter as he sat in front of the woman. The shadow caught his eyes. He looked and thought. 'It is strange that the shadow right next to his own depicts a bear with its mouth wide open, ready to bite into his neck'. He moved to get a better view of what was casting the shadow of a bear. The beautiful woman told him to sit very still, for he was startling the lice to hide from her.

They sat under the tree until their shadows grew longer and longer next to them. Each time the hunter saw a shadow of the opened-mouth bear he would quickly turn his head to look and find the beautiful woman behind him. The hunter begin to suspect something strange with the woman, when the shadow was a bear, he would feel heavy breathing and sharp claws combing against his scalp. He decided to resort to his power as a hunter and shape-shift. He closed his eyes and concentrated very hard to shift his shape into the tree they sat under. He became one with the tree. He watched as the beautiful women changed into a bear and

opened her mouth wide to bite into his neck, he quickly jumped back into his body and told her he needed to relieve himself. As soon as he was out of sight, he ran to escaped from the she-bear. He ran away to find his brothers.

The frightened hunter ran into the hunting party returning to the den and told them what had happened and for them to return home with their kill and move away from the mountain. The place was much too dangerous for them.

After hearing their story, *Naayéeneizighání* and *Tó'bájíshchíní* went into the *Dził Lizhinii* area to kill the *Asdzáá Sash Na'dłeehé*. The news of her had spread widely and so hunting her down was easy. They found her sitting under the shade of a tree, brushing out her hair. She tried to trick the handsome warriors but they knew better. Before she would lure them to her will, Younger Brother thrust his spear through her heart and killed her. *Nítch'í Yazhii* quickly aided in telling Younger Brother to also thrust his spear through a beautiful white tulip growing nearby. Within the beautiful white tulips was where *Asdzáá Sash Na'dłeehé* hid her second and third heart. Other hunters have killed her but she had come back to life because of her hidden heart.

The Twins cut her up her body into small pieces and through them throughout the wooded area, some landed on tops of trees. The People believed the pieces of *Asdzáá Sash Na'dłeehé* changed into pinon tree nuts, *Naashch'ii'*, *Asdzáá Sash Na'dłeehé bibé a'té*.

Characteristics of Leadership From the Traditional Hané Yoolgaii Asdzáá / Asdzáá Nadłeehi

One morning, *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* and the others observed purplish clouds formed on top of the nearby mountain, *Dził Ch'óol'í'í*. Soft rumbles of thunder and flashes of lightening were heard from the east with the early morning twilight dawn. What *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* has been expecting for days, apparently, arrived and yet, he was overwhelmed and puzzled by the event. He was not sure of exactly what to make of it. He, finally, approached the mesa, *Dził Ch'óol'í'í*, after the passing of four mornings, not quite sure what he would find. The clouds over *Dził Ch'óol'í'í* descended midway down the mesa with each passing day. On the third morning,

the clouds stopped moving downward and settled just pass midway. With songs and prayers *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* attempted to reached the top of *Dził Ch'óol'í'í* from the south, then from the west and north. The mesa descended with him and he failed to reach the top with each attempt. *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* consoled with the others before he attempted to climb the mesa on the fourth morning. Others advised him to call on the four directional Twilight Spirits for assistance. He did. Twilight Boy from the east, Twilight Girl from the south, Twilight Boy from the west and Twilight Girl from the north responded and they accompanied *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* to the top of the mesa. They came to the top of *Dził Ch'óol'í'í* from the east praying and singing sacred songs of the Spirit People. They approached an array of bright lights. They were astounded at what they saw, a small child wrapped in clouds with a rainbow arched over the head laid before them. They stood round the child and marveled at the sight. *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* moved closer and attempted to pick the child up but was not able to. His hands slipped through the mist as if there was nothing there. He, again, talked with the Twilight Spirit People and they advised him that they would help by blowing gently across the face of the child. The four directional Twilight People blew gently across the face of the child and she gasped in air and cried out. *Haashch'ééyááltí'í* picked her up and held her to his breath four times. He accepted the little bundle onto himself and the sunlight.

Nitsáhákees, Nahat'á, Íiná Dóó Sihasin
Thinking, Planning, Applying and Believing

The *Diné* elders believe that the values set within *Háyoolkaal*, the approaching early morning dawn, is *Nitsáhákees*. The skill forms the foundational development for *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin*. The process in obtaining *Nitsáhákees* includes learning to listen with comprehension, to question, to observe with full attention, to display understanding and active participation. It is believed that stimulation is the first initiative in developing a need to find out, to learn how something works. A child learns to walk as he becomes fascinated with movement around him. For instance, he observes a child run after a rolling ball. He wants to do the same. He pushes himself to do likewise and sure enough, he walks. Another example may be when a child learns to talk. He learns to talk for the same reasons he learned to walk. He becomes fascinated with language sounds around him and he begins to understand that people com-

municate through sounds. He learns to listen and soon learns that things have names. He begins to imitate the sounds to see if the responses will have an effect. It does. He becomes motivated to learn the system of communication. The next important process in obtaining *Nitsáhákees* is exploring. A child learning to walk or talk begins exploring freely. When learning how to walk, he may fall or bump his head on furnishes a couple of times and cry. But, he continues to learn from his mistakes and persists. Exploration allows him to figure things out on his own. He learns to take risk, develops courage, and to draw conclusion. This, in essence, is developing *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin*. In comparison to the western cultural learning style, the natural process of learning provides the same important steps: stimulations, exploration, application, and testing and retesting. A child naturally uses the process of learning embedded into understanding the values and principles of the four cardinal directions.

The traditional guardians begin molding the skills for *Nitsáhákees* through *hané*, games, songs, prayers, and actively involving everyone in the family activities. For instance, working the family cornfield includes grandparents, parents, uncles, aunts, and the children. Children are asked to pick out the good matured kernels for planting, kernels that appear whole. They may sit on the floor to do this. Strong and able young men plow the fields and get rid of the debris. Other relatives helped with the actual planting, weeding, harvesting and preservation of the fruits. Directions are usually clear and precise given by the monarch or guardians. The well being of the clan depends on how well each family member contributes. If a person fails to do his or her part, the family knows who failed the clan. The family projects and activities all require collaboration, coordination, communication and commitment. At harvest, the family celebrates by hosting *Hozhóqjii doo iigháásh*. The event requires involvement by everyone.

Nahat'á, a process for planning, prioritizing, organizing and making projections is the second most important life quality emphasized by traditional elders. It is understood to be the second natural step to forming an idea, a dream, a want or a need in doing for self. It is learned through participation in family events beginning at a very early age as mentioned in the above paragraph. Children are involved in all aspect of planning a family task and in completing a task. The concept includes goal setting

and working toward completing the goal. The third most important life quality emphasized by traditional elders is the process of application, *Íiná*. The process of applying the necessary steps, energy and enthusiasms to *Nitsáhákees* and *Nahat'á* is to demonstrate working with a certain task. *Íiná*, the process of carrying out the value of *Nitsáhákees* and *Nahat'á* is understood to be a virtue placed within the western direction. The concept encompasses the understanding of carrying out the plans for an idea to become a reality. Maturity and becoming more knowledgeable with the process of living life is expected with *Íiná*.

To the north, the direction reminds the Navajo people to enjoy life to the fullest of ones potential humbly and earnestly, *Sihasin*. The fourth most important life quality to possess is *Sihasin*. *Diné* life cycle is a destination to grow old to witness the fifth generation of grandchildren, the greatest accomplishment. The individual completing a life cycle relates to his/her fifth generation of grandchildren as his/her brothers and sisters due to the completion of one full life cycle and begins the next cycle with the fifth generation of grandchildren. To complete a cycle of life one has to maintain good health, positive attitude and have close connection with spirituality. The purpose for life is living life to its full potential and to become more self directed applying all virtues of *Nitsáhákees*, *Nahat'á*, *Íiná* and *Sihasin* which are one and the same as stimulation, exploration, application and self reflecting in the contemporary society.

The Navajo understanding of the life cycle begins again with uniting young people in marriage for reproduction of self. They understand the skills for *Íiná* is application for the concept of *Nitsáhákees* and *Nahat'á*. Marriage for young people is to display knowledge and skills for developing toward becoming self-sufficient individuals. To understand the life cycle from a natural perspective is to understand that within dawn is the process of beginning, *ha'níísá*, as in the season of spring. Summer, to the south, is nurturing the growing process and becoming matured, *anoosééł*. To the west is the process of becoming matured and ripened which is within the season of autumn, *nínisá*. To the north, is the process of aging and preparing to return to Mother Earth for another life cycle, *sá*. The People understand the growing process will always include elders, middle age, teenage, and babies as in plants and animals.

The pattern of the growth cycle within the four cardinal directions can also be understood as physical, social, emotional and spiritual developments of a person. This means developing good habits to care for the mind, body, soul and spirit. To the east, understand the importance of exercising daily for a long healthy life. To the south, understand the importance of eating healthily and consuming plenty of water. As the body moves, work and play, it loses water and water should replace lost water. To the west, understand the importance of getting plenty of rest at night and between work and play. It is important to socialize in a healthy matter through *K'é*. Humans are emotional beings and need the championship of others in the same matter as animals need championship of other animals. Horses need the championship of horses. Dogs and cats need championship and humans are no exception. To the north is the importance of developing positive spiritual values and developing respect and compassionate for all living matters, cosmic elements, air, water, plants, insects, and understanding the interrelationship of all elements.

The significance of the *Diné Baahane'*, songs and prayers express appreciation of all elements. The traditional belief, *T'áá ho'ijít'éégo Nizhónigo jiiná doot'éét* meaning a person is responsible for his/her life. The life path cycle is available to everyone. The elders understand that to enjoy life, one recognizes and take opportunities to attain the life goals. Life is for all to enjoy. The Holy Ones designed human beings to be upright on two strong feet and legs, with the same number of arms with five fingers and to be inquisitive, energetic and enthused with living. The mind and senses work together to identify things in the environment and learning how to use them. This is experiencing and experience is knowledge. Experience is referred to as *Hané*.

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