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Pueblos, Poets, and Painters: The Role of the Pueblo Indians in the Development of the Santa Fe-Taos Region as an American Cultural Center

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Occasionally romanticized and often misinterpreted, the crucial role played by native peoples in the development of the American West is none-the-less universally recognized. In particular, the importance of the Pueblo Indians[1] to the history of northern New Mexico is acknowledged by historians, novelists, and present day tourist bureau writers alike. Given the great influence of the Pueblo people in the development of the region, it is not surprising that these Indians played a particularly significant role in the creation of the internationally known artist colony established in the Taos-Santa Fe area during the early years of the twentieth century. Unfortunately the nature of that role has often been oversimplified, either by reducing it to the view that Indians were merely particularly colorful "subject matter," or by relegating it to the realm of unrealistic romanticization of the Indian culture.[2] The Pueblos were, indeed, appealing subjects, but they were also much more than that to many of the artists and authors who settled permanently in the towns of Taos and Santa Fe between 1900 and 1940. The Pueblo Indian culture had a unique and influ-

Dr. Kay A. Reeve developed this paper from research done on the subject in New Mexico and at Texas A&M University in the preparation of a doctoral dissertation in the field of Western American History.

ential role in nurturing both the initial establishment and the continuing productivity of the region as a cultural center, and that role deserves deeper exploration and greater recognition than it has received previously.

The development of the Santa Fe-Taos region as an American cultural center began in 1898 when Bert G. Phillips and Ernest L. Blumenschein arrived in Taos during a Southwestern sketching trip.[3] These two academically trained New York artists had headed west in order to escape what they considered to be the overwhelming influence of European art and art education upon American painters of the period. They were so thrilled by the beauty and indigenous character of the land and peoples that they discovered in the small New Mexico town that they cancelled their plans to continue on to Mexico and instead painted in Taos through the fall. Indeed, Bert Phillips settled in Taos that year, becoming its first permanent resident artist. During the next thirty years the artist colony at Taos grew steadily with the addition of numerous painters of diverse backgrounds and artistic styles. W. Herbert Dunton, Oscar Berninghous, E. Irving Couse were all successful illustrators-turned-painters with an interest in painting Indians and the West. Leon Gaspard and Nicolai Fechin, both Russian born, came to Taos via New York to add the elements of impressionism and expressionistic portraiture to the growing artistic community. During the late 1920s and in the 1930s the arrival of Andrew Dasburg, Thomas Benrimo, and Emil Bisttram added distinctly modernistic styles to the Taos colony. Meanwhile, seventy miles to the south, another colony of artists had taken root in Santa Fe. By 1930 that village had become the summer home of the distinguished American artist John Sloan, and the permanent home of several other artists of growing reputation. As in Taos, the Santa Fe colony included traditionalists, such as Gerald Cassidy and Carlos Vierra, impressionists, such as Fremont Ellis, and the modernists Paul Burlin, Raymond Jonson, and B. J. O. Nordfeldt.

During these same years several writers of national reputation moved to the region, creating literary colonies to complement the colonies of painters. Alice Corbin Henderson, cofounder of *Poetry Magazine* and an active poet and editor, moved to Santa Fe in 1916. The well known California author Mary Austin resettled there in 1924. Mabel Dodge, once cited as having established the "only successful salon" ever attempted

in America,[4] arrived in Taos in late 1916 as the wife of painter Maurice Sterne. She stayed to become the wife of Tony Luhan, a Pueblo Indian, and to play a vital role in attracting to New Mexico many of the most creative people of her era. A fairly prolific author herself, she added even more to the literary reputation of the region when she brought to Taos its most famous temporary resident, D. H. Lawrence. Lawrence lived in the region for almost three years between 1922 and 1926, and was planning to return permanently when he died in Italy. Other well known poets and novelists visited the area, and several writers, including Frank Waters, "Spud" Johnson, Witter Bynner and Haniel Long settled permanently in the towns. Thus by the 1920s the Santa Fe-Taos region of New Mexico was recognized nationally as a blossoming center of artistic and literary activity. Although subjects explored in the center were varied, a particularly large number were inspired by the contacts between the incoming artists and the native peoples of the area, especially the Pueblo Indians.

Long before painters and writers arrived in Santa Fe and Taos in the early 1900s, Pueblo Indian culture was a vital and influential element of the northern New Mexico environment. Living in twenty-seven pueblos—communal adobe villages—eighteen of which were located in the upper Rio Grande valley of New Mexico, the Pueblo Indian peoples were divided linguistically into several groups. The Pueblo peoples did not consider themselves a tribe or nation. Each village existed as an independent entity, and the individual Indian's loyalty was to his particular pueblo and its members. Despite this highly valued independence, numerous social and ceremonial traditions and religious beliefs, with slight variations in form, were shared by all the Pueblo peoples. Also shared was the significant accomplishment of having preserved their traditional customs, beliefs and ceremonies in their ancient forms to a greater degree than had any other Indian group in the United States.[5] It was inevitable then, that these Indians would be the subject of many artistic works produced in the two towns. Although such a division may border on oversimplification, it is apparent that artists generally employed one of two different approaches in depicting the Pueblos, either that of objective "recorder," or that of "creative interpreter." The vitality and visual charm of the Pueblo culture especially appealed to a particular group of painters for whom a major artistic goal was to record Native

American life before the encroachments of modern society destroyed it. For many of these "chroniclers," among them Joseph Sharp, E. I. Couse, O. E. Berninghous, Bert Phillips, and Joseph Imhof, their interest in painting Indians preceeded their introduction to the Pueblos. After their arrival in Taos, however, they found the Pueblo Indians to be particularly fulfilling as subjects.

Joseph Sharp, well known as an objective recorder of Indian cultures, spent almost twenty years traveling and painting Indians throughout the West, especially the Plains tribes of Montana, before settling permanently in Taos in 1912 to paint Pueblo scenes. Although he was interested in individual Indians as subjects and painted dozens of pictures which revealed the physical diversity of the Pueblo Indians, he was most interested in depicting the customs, ceremonials, and life style of the Pueblo culture. Joseph Imhof's approach to painting the Pueblos was similar to Sharp's in his careful documentation of the basic aspects of their culture. Imhof's interest in the American Indian ironically began when he encountered "Buffalo Bill" Cody's Wild West Show while studying art in Europe. After his return to New York, he painted the Iroquois of Canada and New York, but shifted his interest to Southwestern tribes in 1907, when he began a five year residence in Albuquerque. Even after his return to New York Imhof continued to study the social and religious life of the Pueblos. In 1929 Imhof returned west to settle permanently in Taos where he recorded in oil, watercolor, and lithograph the minute details of Pueblo rituals and ceremonials. His years of study taught him the importance of corn in the Pueblo's secular and religious life, and in 1950 the artist-anthropologist "published" his findings in a series of sixty paintings entitled "Corn in the Life of the Pueblo Indians."[6]

Although E. I. Couse and Bert Phillips were also interested in recording Pueblo culture, their paintings were often more idealized than those of Sharp or Imhof. Yet if their portrayals of the Pueblos must be classified as romantic, this was because of the romantic and idyllic qualities which these artists discovered in the Pueblo way of life. Both artists painted the Pueblo engaged in everyday activities, but Couse, in particular, was dedicated to painting scenes depicting the peaceful, religious, cultured nature of the Pueblo Indians.[7]

As the artists sought to create a visual record of Pueblo culture, so a number of authors working in the Santa Fe-Taos region hoped to record elements of that culture in a literature which would allow the Indian to "speak for himself." Much of this writing was, of course, contributed by anthropologists who translated and recorded Indian legends or folktales. Such works include Frank Hamilton Cushing's *Zuni Creation Myths* and *Zuni Folk Tales.*[8] Natalie Curtis, an ethnologist and skilled musician, studied Indian music, including that of the Pueblos, and published many of their songs in *The Indian's Book.*[9] Other authors who were not scientists attempted to give Indian poetry and legend a permanent literary form. Frank Applegate, a painter who settled in Santa Fe in the early 1920s, turned temporarily to literature to record *Indian Stories from the Pueblos* and *Native Tales of New Mexico.*[10] Mary Austin, already famous for her works on California, incorporated in her *One Smoke Stories* many tales she learned from the Pueblo Indians after her move to Santa Fe.[11]

The "chroniclers" of Pueblo culture sought to capture permanently an objective record of the Indians' world. Other artists and authors of the region, however, found that their reaction to Pueblo culture necessitated not a recording, but rather an interpretation of the basic and enduring elements of Pueblo culture. Among the elements most ardently admired and most often explored by the members of the Santa Fe and Taos art and literary colonies were the Indian religion, art, and communal life style. Rendered in artistic styles ranging from representational to semi-abstract, and in poetry as well as prose, the Pueblo culture was an underlying theme in countless interpretive artistic and literary works.

For the Anglo interpreter as well as for the Indian, it was almost impossible to separate Pueblo religion from the other components of Pueblo culture, for the most enduring and pervasive element of the Pueblo culture was its ancient religion.[12] By the middle of the eighteenth century the majority of Pueblo Indians professed the Catholic faith; each pueblo had its own church, particular guardian saint, and special feast days. Concurrently, however, most Pueblos continued to adhere to their traditional beliefs. Catholicism had been superimposed upon Pueblo religion without basically altering either the function or form of the older religion. The importance of his ancient beliefs for the Pueblo Indian cannot be overstated. Religion transcends

all other aspects of life. Art, drama, social organization, architecture, and even the everyday industries of the Indian's life are ordered and shaped by his religion. The central and most influential feature of the faith is its unique concept of man's unity with the universe. The Pueblo believes in a oneness of life as manifested in all things. Plants, animals, mountains, clouds, skies, and waters all share equally with man the life force or great life principle. The Indian conceives of himself as part of nature, one element among many rather than seeing himself as the master of all creation. The Pueblo, then, seeks to remain in harmony with the natural forces and rhythms he experiences in the world around him. Over the centuries this basic belief has served to institutionalize a complex and extensive Pueblo legendry, ceremonial life, and social structure.

The elemental belief of the Pueblos in the unity of spirit in man, animal, and nature seemed to hold particular appeal for the newly arrived Anglo artists. The inherent harmony between the Indian and his environment was a frequent theme for Taos and Santa Fe painters. B. J. O. Nordfeldt, who painted and etched a variety of New Mexican subjects during his twenty-two year residence in Santa Fe, successfully communicated the sense of unity with nature manifested by the Pueblos in his paintings of Indian dances.[13] "Antelope Dance," executed in an expressionistic style that incorporates several of Cezanne's formal systems into the painting, is particularly illustrative of his success. Tall trees thrust upward and then arch from both sides of the painting across the top. Beneath them, two rows of dancers, moving perpendicularly to one another, echo with their bodies the arch of the tree limbs. Where the lines converge two dancers wearing antelope horn headdresses are bent forward toward the earth. The mass of the dancers is counterbalanced by the looming form of Black Mesa, sacred shrine of the San Ildefonso people, which fills the sky between rough mounds of hills behind the dancers and the curving branches of the trees. The unity and balance so apparent in the design of the painting reflect those same qualities as the artist saw them displayed in his Pueblo ceremonial subject.

Raymond Jonson, the Chicago artist and Graphics Director for the Chicago Little Theater who moved to New Mexico in 1924, was also especially impressed by the Indians' rapport with his environment. Jonson saw this harmonious relationship displayed particularly strongly in Indian architecture.

Although Jonson was steadily developing a personal style which would become entirely abstract by the 1940s, in the 1930s many of his paintings were executed in a semiabstract style which made use of recognizable forms.[14] He was deeply moved by the innate rhythm and form he saw in the New Mexico landscape and produced a very large number of sketches and several finished pieces utilizing the landscape as the central theme. In his "Pueblo Series," he painted a number of highly stylized studies of Pueblo villages which revealed the remarkable harmony between the dwellings and the surrounding natural environment. Similarly, in his painting "Cliff Dwelling, No. 3," the ruin of an ancient pueblo is actually placed inside the stylized cliff which dominates the center of the picture, thus graphically showing how the manmade structure became an integral part of nature.

The Indians' unity with nature was also an important theme in the literature produced in the region. D. H. Lawrence wrote of that unique quality in his essay "New Mexico." In New Mexico, Lawrence asserted, he had discovered many things of great value. Among these was the distinctive religion of the Pueblo Indians. He used the term a "vast old religion," and wrote of it as "starkly and nakedly religious."

> There is no God, no conception of a god. All is god. But it is not the pantheism we are accustomed to, which expresses itself as "God is everywhere, God is in everything." In the oldest religion, everything was alive, not supernaturally but naturally alive. There were only deeper and deeper streams of life.[15]

The Indian's life was merely one part of this cosmic life, and the right relationship was one of harmony and unity. As his religion was inseparable from his daily life, the Pueblo revealed this relationship in secular activities. "When Trinidad, the Indian boy, and I planted corn at my ranch," Lawrence wrote, "my soul paused to see his brown hands softly moving the earth over the maize in pure ritual."[16]

The theme of the Pueblo Indian's unique sense of unity and harmony with the natural environment was also important to much of Mabel Dodge Luhan's writing.[17] From the time of her earliest experiences with the Pueblo Indians, shortly after her arrival in Taos in late 1916, Mabel Dodge sensed qualities in their lives that seemed to be painfully lacking in her own life. For twenty years she had been a wealthy wanderer, living in

Italy, France, and New York.[18] She had been engaged in what she termed "a lonesome pilgrimage," unsure of what she sought. One friend, writing of her as he knew her in the East, described her as a "cut flower," a woman who lacked the essential roots which connect an individual with "the quiet reality of nature," and without which a person never feels a "complete being."[19] Mrs. Luhan saw this same weakness in many of her contemporaries, especially in stylish New York social and intellectual circles. There she had known many people "who float around the world . . . looking for climates or distractions, or something."[20] In contrast, Mrs. Luhan encountered Pueblo Indians who understood their role in the world and their relationship to the other elements of the universe. Pueblo legends told her that there was as much cooperation as there was competition in nature. As she learned more about the Indian and his beliefs, she discovered that this cooperation extended to man, for he was merely one of the elements of the universe. The Pueblos, she asserted rather mystically,

> Know they are themselves the earth and the rain and the sun. . . . We watch things happen in nature as though they were outside of us and separate from us, but the Indians know they are what they contemplate.[21]

Seen in their architecture, legends, and lifestyle, the Pueblo Indians' religious concept of universal spiritual unity was particularly expressed in their ceremonial dances. Performed throughout the changing seasons and associated with almost every aspect of Pueblo life, dances are observed at the proper time and in the correct costume. Ceremonial activity, particularly the dances, contributes to the maintenance of the harmony of nature. The necessities of life—rain, successful crops and hunts, fertility—are all received from nature in return for the strict observance of religious ceremonies. Colorful and symbolic, these dances became an important theme in the creative works associated with the Santa Fe-Taos cultural center, not only because of the color and rhythm they displayed, but also because they so perfectly represented Pueblo beliefs. In 1923, when action by the federal government threatened to destroy the dances, Alice Corbin Henderson wrote a perceptive article for *Theater Arts Magazine* in which she discussed the

dances as art, drama, and religious ritual unified. The dances were, she asserted, "a perfected art form, the result of centuries of tradition, an expression of an esthetic philosophy of life which flows into outward symbols and gestures." The dances themselves were symbolic interpretations of the Indian's conception of "man's relation to the earth, and to the fructifying principles of sun, wind, and water."[22] As drama, the dances were unique and instructive, in that they were performed without regard for or need of an audience. They were performed for the participants, not the onlookers. In this feature, they were similar to the goat dances and nature festivals which were the foundation of Greek drama. Thus, Mrs. Henderson noted,

> As a background for the study of sources of drama they are worth a whole library of text-books; and in themselves they constitute a living organism, a beautiful and vital art, persisting in the face of discouragement and under constant threat of suppression.[23]

They persisted despite government policy, she asserted, because they were religious as well as artistic expressions.

Discussed and defended by authors, the dances were even more often the subject of paintings. Among those who painted the dances were many of the artists who were chroniclers of the Pueblos. Sharp, Couse, and Phillips recorded the details of the costumes and dances accurately and skillfully in their objective, academic styles. Other artists, including Dorothy Brett of Taos and William P. Henderson of Santa Fe painted the dances in a more expressionistic manner. Henderson was particularly successful in capturing the rhythm, movement, and mood of the dances. Not as concerned with literal documentation as with interpretation, his paintings presented an expressive reality characterized by particularly strong, vivid colors, reflecting the strength and vitality of the dances. Similarly Lady Dorothy Brett painted the ceremonies in a style more interpretive than literal. Brett, as her friends called her, first came to Taos with D. H. and Frieda Lawrence in 1924. After Lawrence's death she returned to live permanently in the village. Although fascinated by the Indian ceremonials, she did not attempt to paint them until she had observed them for years and had come to know the Pueblo Indians personally.

Her paintings were executed in a unique style which combined reality, in regard to costumes and setting, with a mystical perception of the spirit of the dance. Perhaps the artist herself best described the unusual combination when she said ". . . I painted what I felt about them, rather than what I saw."[24]

As noted by Alice Henderson, Pueblo ceremonial dances were artistic expressions as well as religious ones, and were admired by the incoming Anglo artists both as an art form and as a reflection of Pueblo religion. The artists were also impressed by other Pueblo arts, especially pottery making and painting, both of which experienced revivals during the early years of the twentieth century.[25] Pueblo pottery was exceptionally made and decorated, and many painters included pots as background pieces or even as central objects in their paintings. Many other artists, however, collected Pueblo pots purely as works of art. Witter Bynner made an extensive collection which was displayed in his Santa Fe home alongside his collection of Chinese art and artifacts. Several of the artists and authors in the region, realizing the value of Pueblo pottery as a continuing artistic tradition and fearful that the newly begun revival might fail and the art form disappear completely, were active in the formation of an organization in Santa Fe in 1923 known as The Indian Arts Fund. This organization collected representative examples of historic Pueblo pottery, then made photographs and drawings, and assembled loan collections which were circulated among the pueblos, providing the interested modern potter with examples of the most beautiful and traditional Pueblo pottery.[26]

Similarly the newly arrived artists admired the paintings produced by the Indians. Painting, which archeological evidence attests was prevalent among the Pueblos in earlier times, had almost disappeared by the late nineteenth century. A revival of Pueblo painting, however, began in the early years of the twentieth century, just at the time of the establishment of the Santa Fe and Taos art colonies. The most common subjects of these paintings were the ceremonial dances, rendered in a flat, decorative style, without background, and employing a unique sense of perspective and color. Among the first of the creative newcomers to become acquainted with the Pueblo painters was Alice Henderson. Her initial contact occurred in 1917, when she encountered the work of Awa-Tsireh of San Ildefonso pueblo. The ancient Pueblo medium had been water-

based colors, derived from the earth and from plants, and Awa-Tsireh, like most twentieth century Pueblo painters, worked in that medium in modern form.[27] The Hendersons collected the paintings of a number of Indian artists, helped find a market for Indian painters, and sent some Pueblo paintings to the Chicago Arts Club. Mary Austin, Mabel Luhan, Andrew Dasburg, and other artists and authors also collected Pueblo paintings. These artists recognized the value of these works as art, not as anthropological objects, and eagerly encouraged Indian painters. As an outgrowth of this view of Pueblo painting and a desire to encourage its development, in 1921 John Sloan arranged for the first showing of Indian paintings as works of art rather than as museum pieces. This successful New York showing was the first of many such exhibitions devoted to Indian art. Eventually several Santa Fe and Taos artists were active in the formation of a national organization called The Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts. As stated in the programs which the organization prepared for each of the shows, the purpose of the group was

> To present Indian art *as art;* to win for it the appreciation that it deserves, and to gain the general recognition and appraisal for the art of our native first Americans, which has been so generously accorded the primitive and folk art of every other race and country.[28]

Even while they were engaged in activities designed to support and encourage Pueblo painting and pottery, the artists of Santa Fe and Taos were aware that they were not merely giving, but were also very definitely receiving from the Pueblo's art. The Anglo artists did not want the Indians to copy the European style of painting, nor did they attempt to paint in a style similar to that of the Pueblos. Many artists were influenced, however, by Indian art in other ways. Various elements of the Pueblo art style were greatly admired, and this admiration often led an artist to examine his use of that element in his works. Paul Burlin, for example, always a modernistic painter and a veteran of the momentous Armory Show of 1913, found the Indian use of design especially stimulating. His study of the abstract element in Indian art helped foster the incorporation of semiabstraction in his own painting. Although Burlin left Santa Fe in 1920, he continued to acknowledge his

debt to New Mexico and its native peoples for the special artistic stimulation he experienced there.[29] Raymond Jonson, another modernist, was similarly impressed by the Pueblos' use of design. He seldom used Indian designs as such in his work, but instead attempted in his paintings, he has asserted, "to establish design—sophisticated, intellectual pure design as it pertains to creative painting—to at least the same degree as in *pure* Indian design."[30]

While individual elements of Indian painting affected particular artists especially strongly, an even larger number of artists and authors were affected by Pueblo art in general. Within Pueblo Indian pottery, music, painting, and dance, many artists perceived a quality for which they personally had been searching, and something which many of them felt was lacking in American art. That quality was a distinct Americanism, a characteristic which in Pueblo art was produced through the interaction of an indigenous people with their native environment. John Sloan maintained that Indian art represented a truly American aesthetic tradition.[31] Marsden Hartley, who encountered Pueblo art during his two year stay in the region, expanded this idea even further. While he admired the pottery, music, and paintings of the Pueblos, to Hartley the ceremonial dances represented the most perfect expression of the Indian aesthetic tradition. It was that tradition, rooted in the American soil and springing from religious beliefs, that Hartley believed should act as an example to American artists. For American artists to develop a uniquely American art, they should learn from the Indian and turn to the American soil for spiritual as well as artistic inspiration.[32] The ideas expressed by Sloan and Hartley were shared by many American artists of the period, and the stimulation which contact with the Pueblo Indians and their indigenous art forms provided the incoming painters and writers acted as one of the most appealing characteristics of the region. This stimulation served to nurture both the original establishment and continued development of the Santa Fe-Taos cultural center.

Members of the emerging art and literary colonies were also impressed by a third basic feature of the Pueblo culture—the Indian's deeply felt sense of community. The Pueblo's communal spirit and lifestyle grew naturally out of his religion, with its emphasis upon a shared life force and the unity of man and nature. The Indian's concept of his unity with nature rep-

resented the broadest application of this communal spirit. That same spirit was also clearly manifested in his personal relationships with his family and the immediate community, his pueblo. Although all the Pueblo peoples had occasionally united temporarily for common action, traditionally the individual Pueblo Indian's loyalty was to his own pueblo and to its members. Of particular importance to him was his family, which for the Indian was an extended family unit including grandparents and married children. In some pueblos the family included the entire clan. Ties within the extended family were close, with each relative having duties and privileges designated by tradition.[33] In addition to his devotion to his family, the Pueblo felt a communal tie to the other members of the pueblo, and an abiding bond with his pueblo as an entity. Although there was no common ownership of crops or other personal property, all land was owned by the community and its use granted to individuals or families. Each village member worked on communal projects, especially irrigation systems, and performed his role in communal ceremonies. Individualism existed, but the Pueblo Indian's final responsibility was to the group.[34] The Indian's sense of unity with nature and the members of his community was reflected even in the architecture of his village. Formed from the clay soil of the region, adobe dwellings echoed the natural forms which surrounded them. Communal houses, some rising several stories high, contained the rooms of dozens of families. Individual lives were lived as an integral part of the whole. Thus the Pueblo's sense of community with his people and with nature, the natural outgrowth of his religion, was actually reinforced by the physical structure in which he lived.

The appeal of the Pueblo's strong sense of communal orientation was intensified by the seeming absence of this same quality in the dominant Anglo-Saxon society of the period. To many of the artists, American society seemed to have lost any sense of unity or community. In the late nineteenth century urbanization, industrialization, and the development of big business in the United States had resulted in a dehumanization of the individual and a breakdown of the traditional family and community life that had once existed in agricultural America. The first World War had accelerated this process. In contrast to the Indian's secure sense of self and community, members of the dominant culture faced progressive isolation and alien-

ation as they struggled with the destruction of traditional lifestyles, and countered the dehumanization which seemed to be an integral part of the machine age with an enshrinement of individualism. Many of the creative individuals who settled in northern New Mexico saw in the Pueblo culture a possible alternative to the societal failings they perceived in Anglo communities, and the Pueblo's communal spirit became an important theme in many of the works produced in the region.

Mary Austin espoused the special value of the communal nature of Pueblo culture in an article discussing the Pueblos' ceremonial dances. The dances were performed not by Indians as individual expressions, but instead were performed in an inseparable unity of dancers expressing a belief in the relatedness of all creation. The resulting sense of oneness with nature and with his people, Mrs. Austin asserted, gave the individual Pueblo Indian a unique wholeness of identity.[35] Mabel Luhan reached the same conclusion as an outgrowth of her recognition of the communal aspects of Pueblo music. The music produced by the singers during a Pueblo ceremony was somehow more than the sum of the individual voices, and created an "entity that is invisibly made up of many single units." Mrs. Luhan appealed to the rest of American society to realize that the constant drive toward "more singleness, separateness, and individuality" was destroying much of the social and familial fabric of American society, leaving the Anglo-Saxon individualist distinctly out of harmony with his fellow man.[36]

As a colorful people with a deeply admired culture, the Pueblo Indians were occasionally idealized by both artists and authors.[37] But many of those writers and painters who settled in the Santa Fe-Taos region came to know the Indians well, and were aware of their weaknesses as well as their strengths. The attitude of these individuals was stated clearly by Alice Corbin Henderson when she wrote, "the Indian, of course, is not all bad, not entirely innocent and naive, and not all good—but merely human like the rest of us."[38] Many interpreters of Pueblo culture were aware that the Pueblo's life was not sublimely idyllic, and that many elements of Pueblo culture which they admired often conflicted with the dominant culture. They also realized that the dominant Anglo culture was steadily extending its influence into Pueblo life. The Pueblo's struggle to find his place in the modern world without losing his place in his traditional world became an important theme in the

works of several of the area's artists and authors. Taos artist Ernest Blumenschein, in particular, often painted the Pueblo juxtaposed to symbols of Anglo or Spanish-American cultures, subtly but deliberately suggesting the tension existing between the different peoples.[39] Similarly, the psychological struggle young Pueblos experienced when returning to their homes after years in a government boarding school was the theme of Frank Waters' novel *The Man Who Killed the Deer.*[40] Early in the novel Martiniano argues that he should not be punished by the tribal elders for not participating in pueblo ceremonials. The Indian agent, Martiniano suggests, should punish the elders for trying to force him to give up the modern ways he had been taught in boarding school. At the end of the novel, however, Martiniano discovers he is able to find peace and regain the feeling of being "in rhythm" with the world only by returning to tribal ways. Thus, he decides that his son should be initiated into a ceremonial association in order for him to "know something of the old before he was confronted with the new."[41]

The Pueblo Indians of northern New Mexico were, therefore, a particularly powerful force in the development of the cultural center which emerged at Santa Fe and Taos in the early years of the twentieth century. Many artists came specifically to paint Indians; other painters and writers were originally attracted to the villages for other reasons. But as the members of the art and literary groups in the two towns sought to understand their Pueblo neighbors, the Indians became much more than simply "colorful subjects." The newcomers found much to admire in the traditional beliefs, art forms, and life style of the Pueblos. In Pueblo art—dance, painting, pottery, music—the artists were confronted with a native Americanism, a quality for which many of them were searching. Their association with Pueblo art stimulated them not to imitate the Indian's artistic forms, but rather to open their own creative spirits to the indigenous influences of the region. They realized, too, that the Indian's art was in many ways an outward expression of a deeply embedded religious faith, a faith which permeated every aspect of his life, structured his concept of the universe, and ordered his relationships within it. The painters and writers of Taos and Santa Fe saw much that was valuable in the Pueblo's sense of community with man and nature, and in his continued dedication to enduring faith that gave his life meaning and order. The Pueblo Indian's ability to reconcile

individualism and community membership deeply impressed the artists of the region. This integrative philosophy offered an alternative to the divisive factors within the dominant Anglo-Saxon society.

In the final assessment, the Pueblos appealed to artists and writers' colonies in the Santa Fe-Taos area in two ways. Some artists remained outsiders looking on, and what they saw visually at a distance remained the dominant theme in their works. But for many other artists the deeper appeal of Pueblo culture stimulated a desire to explore and communicate the intrinsic values they personally admired in Pueblo culture. This deeper appeal of the Pueblos crucially influenced the initial establishment and continued productivity of Santa Fe and Taos as an American cultural center.

NOTES

1. Throughout this study the term Pueblos, in upper case, refers to the Pueblo Indian people. The word Pueblo refers to an individual Indian. The term pueblo, lower case, is used in reference to the traditional communal dwellings of these Indians. Although the writers and artists living and working in the Santa Fe-Taos area had contact with other Indian groups, this study is concerned with the influence of the Pueblo Indians, and for this reason the general term Indian refers to the Pueblos unless otherwise specified.

2. See Frank Waters, "Indian Influence on Taos Art," *New Mexico Quarterly* 21 (Summer 1951): 173–79 for the first view, and Richard H. Frost, "The Romantic Inflation of Pueblo Culture," *The American West* 17 (January/February 1980): 5–9, 56–60 for an expression of the second view. Waters' argument, at least partially, is that while Spanish-American architecture and Anglo literature managed to express many of the "conceptual Indian values of life," the painters of the area failed to do so. While this may be true of many of the Taos-Santa Fe artists of any period, for reasons discussed in this study the present author cannot agree that it was true for all artists. Similarly, if many artists or authors admired the Pueblo culture to the point of romanticization, as Dr. Frost argues, the failure of being unrealistic cannot be attributed to all members of the art and literary community. If many artists perceived the positive qualities of the Pueblos as more pervasive within the culture than was always strictly true, nonetheless these qualities did exist in the Pueblo culture. It was the desire of the Anglo artists and authors to express their conception of Pueblo culture, whether it was anthropologically accurate or not, which so greatly nurtured the development of the art and literary colonies in Santa Fe and Taos.

3. The history of the artist colonies in the region, especially in Taos, has been the subject of numerous books and articles, most of them emphasizing the personalities or artistic development of the individual artists involved. See Laura M. Bickerstaff, *Pioneer Artists of Taos* (Denver: Sage Books, 1955);

and Van Deren Coke, *Taos and Santa Fe: The Artist's Environment, 1882–1942* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1963). Studies of the writers of the area are less common. A general study of the development of both the art and literary colonies in the area is found in Kay A. Reeve, "The Making of an American Place: The Development of Santa Fe and Taos, New Mexico, as an American Cultural Center, 1898–1942" (Ph.D. Diss., Texas A&M University, 1977). The general facts concerning the establishment and growth of the Taos art-colony have been so widely published that only specific or lesser known points are footnoted in this study.

4. Lincoln Steffens, *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1931), p. 655.

5. Leslie Spier, "The Pueblos Since Coronado," *El Palacio* 47 (September 1940): 201. For more complete studies of the Pueblos see the older sources of Adolph F. Bandelier and Edgar L. Hewett, *Indians of the Rio Grande Valley* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1937); Edgar L. Hewett and Bertha P. Dutton, *The Pueblo Indian World* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1948); and Elsie Clews Parsons, *Pueblo Indian Religion*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939). For excellent, more recent studies see Edward P. Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of North America*, Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology, ed. George and Louise Spindler (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1970); and Alfonso Ortiz, *The Tewa World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969). It should be noted carefully that numerous important differences existed between pueblos, but these differences are more obvious to the anthropologist than to the artist. The description of Pueblo culture included in this study is based upon the most basic elements of the culture as they were generally functioning when the incoming artists became aware of them.

6. Coke, *Taos and Santa Fe*, pp. 15–16, 84–85; Pat Trenton, *Picturesque Images From Taos and Santa Fe* (Denver: Denver Art Museum, 1974), p. 131.

7. Bickerstaff, *Pioneer Artists of Taos*, pp. 47, 257.

8. *Zuni Creation Myths* (Washington: U.S. Bureau of American Ethnology, 1896); *Zuni Folk Tales* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1901).

9. *The Indian's Book* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1935).

10. *Indian Stories From the Pueblos* (1929; rpt., Glorietta, NM: Rio Grande Press, 1971); *Native Tales of New Mexico* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1931).

11. *One Smoke Stories* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1934).

12. The ability of the Pueblo Indians to maintain the integrity of their religion far into the twentieth century is due in part to their protection of it from too deep a scrutiny by outsiders. For that reason Edward Dozier's *The Pueblo Indians of North America* is a particularly valuable source: the author is himself a Pueblo Indian. For his comments on Pueblo religion see Dozier, pp. 182–87, 200–212. The general description of the religion given in this study is drawn from Dozier's work, from Parsons' *Pueblo Indian Religion* and from Bandelier and Hewett's *Indians of the Rio Grande Valley*, pp. 15–20.

13. Coke, *Taos and Santa Fe*, pp. 78–79.

14. Author's Interview with Raymond Jonson, Albuquerque, New Mexico, January 6, 1976. For a very complete study of Jonson's work, with emphasis on his artistic development, see Ed Garman, *The Art of Raymond Jonson: Painter* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1976).

15. David Herbert Lawrence, *Phoenix: The Posthumous Papers of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Edward C. McDonald (1928; rpt., New York: Viking Press, 1968), p. 146.

16. Ibid., p. 147.

17. See especially *Winter in Taos* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1935); and Luhan, "Beware the Grip of Paganism," *The Laughing Horse* 16 (Summer 1929): n.p.

18. The best, if at times confusing, source of information about Mabel Dodge Sterne Luhan's life are her own books, especially her multivolume autobiography. See Luhan, *Intimate Memories*, 4 vols. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1933–1937); also see Emily Hahn, *Mabel: A Biography of Mabel Dodge Luhan* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977).

19. Hutchins Hapgood, *A Victorian in the Modern World* (1939; rpt., Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1973), pp. 348–49.

20. Luhan, *Winter in Taos*, p. 78.

21. Ibid., p. 196.

22. Alice Corbin Henderson, "Dance Rituals of the Pueblo Indians," *Theater Arts Magazine* 7 (April 1923): 109–114.

23. Ibid., p. 114.

24. Dorothy Brett, "Painting Indians," *New Mexico Quarterly* 21 (Summer 1951): 108.

25. The revival of an interest in both pottery making and painting among the Pueblos was greatly encouraged by anthropologists and artists alike. For a discussion of the role played by Dr. Edgar L. Hewett and the School of American Research in encouraging the revitalization of ancient Pueblo art forms see Bandelier and Hewett, *Indians of the Rio Grande Valley*, pp. 63–67. For excellent studies of Pueblo pottery itself see Francis Harlow, *Historic Pueblo Indian Pottery* (Los Alamos, NM: Monitor Press, 1967), and Harlow and John V. Young, *Contemporary Pueblo Indian Pottery*, (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1965).

26. The importance of this activity is recognized when it is noted that an extremely large percentage of this traditional pottery had disappeared from the pueblos, often being sold to tourists during the nineteenth century. Thus young potters had few authentic examples of their craft in its finest form which they could study. For an explanation of the goals and activities of the Indian Arts Fund and its efforts to encourage Indian potters see the pamphlet entitled *The Indian Arts Fund* (Santa Fe: Indian Arts Fund, n.d.).

27. For an explanation of Mrs. Henderson's acquaintance with Awa-Tsireh and a general discussion of the revival of Pueblo painting and its qualities see two small pamphlets written by Alice Corbin Henderson, *A Boy Painter Among the Pueblo Indians* (New York: Eastern Association of Indian Affairs, 1926?), and *Modern Indian Painting* (New York: Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts, Inc., 1931).

28. *Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts at Grand Central Art Galleries* (New York: Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts, Inc., 1931).

29. Ralph M. Pearson, *The Modern Renaissance in American Art* (New York: Harper, 1954), p. 42.

30. Jonson Interview.

31. Van Wyck Brooks, *John Sloan: A Painter's Life* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1955), p. 167.

32. This theme was expressed in several articles written by Hartley. See Marsden Hartley, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Red Man," *Art and Archeology* 13 (March 1922): 113–19; "Aesthetic Sincerity," *El Palacio* 5 (December 9, 1918): 332–33; and, "America as Landscape," *El Palacio* 5 (December 21, 1918): 340–43.

33. The form of clans and their functions differ among the various pueblos, and especially between the Western and the Eastern pueblos. For a brief but accurate description of the kinship structure and patterns of behavior exhibited in each major division of the pueblos see Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of North America,* pp. 137–40, 145–50, 163–67.

34. Ibid., p. 26.

35. Mary Austin, "Cults of the Pueblos: An Interpretation of Some Native Ceremonials," *Century Magazine* 109 (November 1924): 28–35.

36. Luhan, *Intimate Memories,* IV, pp. 62–63.

37. Frost, "The Romantic Inflation of Pueblo Culture," p. 60.

38. Alice Corbin Henderson, "The New Mexico We Love," clipping from *The Santa Fe New Mexican,* 20 May 1932, in The Alice Corbin Henderson Papers, Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

39. Author's Interview with Helen Blumenschein, December 20, 1975, Taos, New Mexico.

40. Frank Waters, *The Man Who Killed the Deer* (New York: Farrar and Rhinehart, 1942).

41. Ibid., p. 310.