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Taos Pueblo: an indigenous community holding on to Promethean values

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to give an account – using photographs as well as words – to describe a North American indigenous community that is retaining pre-contact Promethean values.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper adopts as its approach ethnographic literature and field interviews coupled with extensive photography.

Findings – Entrepreneurship may be linked to Promethean values, a characteristic of Pueblo Indians who were imaginatively original, long before the arrival of Europeans. Since ancient times, the use of irrigation in agriculture allowed the Pueblo Indians to reside in permanent houses; these two features – sophisticated farming and settlements – resulted in these indigenous people being unlike their nomadic neighbours. Farming – as opposed to hunting – was the backbone of the Pueblo economies, and theocratic government developed to control land and water usage; complex religious ceremonies became prerequisites to harvests. Religion taught discipline, and religious values remain important. Discipline – significant in this community even today – may be the causal variable explaining Promethean over Dionysian values.

Research limitations/implications – Future research might examine further differences between indigenous groups.

Practical implications – Regardless of how religious a person is, values perpetuated by religion can transcend to a generation that practises them less than their elders. In the case of Taos Pueblo Indians, traditional Promethean values are being perpetuated, including a highly disciplined work ethic.

Originality/value – The paper suggests that entrepreneurship values may be linked to traditional religion and historic innovation.

Keywords Native Americans, Ethnic groups, Communities, United States of America

Paper type Research paper

> We were and still are a communal society in architecture and thought – Tessie Naranjo, quoted by Roberts (1996, p. 93)

Introduction

A distance of 72 miles from Santa Fe (the oldest seat of government in the USA), or 123 miles from Albuquerque, Taos is a small municipality in New Mexico. It was formerly known as Don Fernando de Taos, and also as Fernandez de Taos.

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Three miles north, 7,112 feet above sea level, at the base of the Sangre de Cristos Mountains, is Taos Pueblo, also known as the Place of the Red Willows (as it sits on both banks of Red Willow Creek). In Spanish, *pueblo* means village or town and in English Pueblo has become a general name for sedentary (in contrast to nomadic, as was the case with Apache and Navajo) American Indians who traditionally dwelt in sun-dried adobe or stone buildings in the North American Southwest. (Adobe is a mixture of earth, straw and water poured into forms and dried under the desert sun; the bricks are bonded together with the same mixture.) Taos Pueblo is considered to be the oldest continuously inhabited community in the USA.

Goddard (1913) classified the Pueblo peoples as a special group, apart from other American Indian groups. Dozier (1964, p. 79) observed, "Pueblo communities are set apart from their indigenous neighbors by two main criteria: (1) farming as a principal basis of subsistence, and (2) residence in compact villages." Vlasich (2005) noted that the practice of irrigational agriculture always set the Pueblo Indians apart from other groups of New Mexico. A communal building of a pueblo is a solid structure of adobe bricks or stone set in clay and mortar. Rooms are square, built in terraced stories. The thick flat roof of one storey is accessible by a moveable ladder from the level below. In former times, access to the interiors was by ladders to trapdoors in the roofs, as outer walls had neither windows nor doors; this was a precaution against intruders. Stirling (1940, p. 565) explained:

> At Taos the structure consists of a terraced pyramid built by erecting a large rectangular building with five stories, each smaller by the width of a room than the one below it.

The two main buildings in Taos Pueblo are the oldest continuously occupied structures in the USA. An adobe wall surrounds Taos Pueblo, serving as a boundary around a settlement where traditional cultural beliefs are nurtured.

Laxalt (1970, p. 299) wrote of three ways of life in New Mexico, "New Mexican life is a mélange of three cultures – Spanish, Indian, and Anglo (the local idiom for anyone not Spanish and not Indian) . . . " The objective of this paper is to give an account of the Indian community of Taos Pueblo, a sovereign Native American community. This settlement is the only living Native American community that is designated both a World Heritage Site and a National Historic Landmark.

Simpich (1929, p. v) referred to Taos Pueblo people as "lords of the Southwest in Coronado's day". As will be discussed below, Taos is one of the eastern pueblos.

The need for research about Eastern Pueblos

Taos Pueblo is one of 19 pueblos in New Mexico. The others are Acoma; Cochití; Isleta; Jémez; Laguna; Nambé (traditionally a primary religious centre for Pueblo people); Picurís (the smallest and most secluded of the pueblos); Pojoaque (home of the Cities of Gold Casino); Sandia (which operates a buffalo preserve as well as a hotel and casino); San Felipe; San Ildefonso; San Juan (host to the Oke-Owingeh Arts Cooperative); Santa Ana[1]; Santa Clara (long known for glossy black pottery made by local women); Santo Domingo; Tesuque[2]; Zia; and the successor to the pueblo of Hawikuh, namely Zuñi, one of few groups among whom traditional weaving survived after the arrival of machine-woven textiles. The Zuñi people hunted wild turkeys until 1938 (Simpich, 1938). Recently, the Zuñi community is well-known for needlepoint, inlay jewellery, and stone carvings.

The pueblos are classified according to three language groupings:

(1) Keresans;

(2) Tanoans; and

(3) Zuñis who speak a language of Zufiian linguistic stock that is spoken only among this community.

Keres speakers reside in Acoma, Cochití Laguna, San Felipe (the most conservative Keresan pueblo), Santa Ana, Santo Domingo, and Zia.

There are three Tanoan subcategories:

(1) Tewa (the focus of Creamer and Haas, 1991);

(2) Tiwa; and

(3) Towa.

Tewa can be heard in Nambé Pojoaque, San Ildefonso, San Juan, Santa Clara, and Tesuque. Northern Tiwa is spoken in Picurís and Taos. Southern Tiwa is spoken in Isleta and Sandia. Jémez is the only remaining Towa-speaking pueblo. Dozier (1964, p. 86) noted, "Tanoan village communities have a *Katcina* cult or some vestige of an organization concerned with supernatural beings . . . " As noted by Hodge (1896), a fourth linguistic stock once existed, namely Shoshonean, which is now extinct.

The above are grouped according to geographic location as well as along linguistic roots. Located in the region of the Rio Grande drainage, the eastern pueblos are Cochití Isleta, Jémez, Nambé Picurís, Pojoaque, San Felipe, San Ildefonso, San Juan, Sandia, Santa Ana, Santa Clara, Santo Domingo, Taos, Tesuque, and Zia. The western group (Eggan, 1950) consists of Acoma, Laguna and Zuñi. Hawley (1937) classified the pueblos of Acoma and Laguna as transitional, rather than specifically eastern or western. Among the western pueblos, spirits called *Kachinas* are revered as deliverers of good, and dolls depicting them are given to children.

There has long been a wealth of literature about the western pueblos of New Mexico (Judd, 1923). Espinosa (1918) studied all three. Other scholars focused on one.

(1) *Acoma Pueblo*. A classic study of Acoma is White (1928); today, Acoma is well-known for its Sky City Cultural Center, open since May 2006, as well as the Acoma oil, cattle and commercial enterprises.

(2) *Laguna Pueblo*. Garloch (1944) provided an economic analysis of the Laguna agricultural sector. Recently, where the world's largest open-pit uranium mine used to be, the Pueblo of Laguna developed one of the state's largest enterprises, a hi-tech manufacturing and technical services company, called Laguna Industries.

(3) *Zuñi Pueblo*. An early account of the Zuñis appears in Judd (1923). Benedict (1935b) focused on Zuñi mythology. Li (1937) also researched the Zuñis. Recently, tribal business ventures include: Zuni Entrepreneurial Enterprises; Zuni Forest Products and Services Enterprise; and Zuni Technologies Inc.

There is also a rich literature about western pueblos elsewhere in the southwest (Brandt, 1954; Thompson, 1950; Thompson and Joseph, 1944; Wall and Masayesva, 2004, 2007). The western pueblos continue to be a subject of considerable research (Damp *et al.*, 2002; Norton *et al.*, 1998).

The eastern pueblos have given rise to some fascinating articles, but relatively fewer than their western counterparts. The role of economics in Cochití Pueblo is examined by Lange (1953). Simpich (1938, p. 536) compared pueblos, and suggested that Isleta Indians were "far more sophisticated and progressive" than Zuñis. Ellis (1954) wrote about Jémez with a focus on the Corn Dance. A classic study of San Felipe is White (1932). Whitman (1947) researched San Ildefonso, which has long been known for glossy black pottery made by local women. Laxalt (1970) discussed his experience in Santo Domingo. Ellis (1966) provides a history of Zia Pueblo. Ellis *et al.* (1943) analyzed the Zia economy. Why have the eastern pueblos provided relatively fewer articles than was possible in the west? Dozier (1964, p. 84) proposed an explanation, suggesting:

> No single Pueblo community among the Keresan and Tanoan Pueblos has received the attention and study accorded the Hopi and Zuñi Pueblos. The reason for this is obvious. The Eastern Pueblo Indians resent being studied and hence it is difficult for an investigator to get information out of them. Adverse contact with the Spanish is undoubtedly the cause of this reticence; the Western Pueblos were not as long or as intimately associated with Spanish rulers. It is understandable, therefore, why we have so much more information about the Pueblos most remote from former Spanish control, the Zuñi and Hopi.

Grant (1925, p. 5) wrote:

> Every now and then, some one, pencil in hand, comes to Taos, stays a few days, bent on questioning the Indians . . . To these the red man gives an easy affirmative, . . . Not long ago, one of the older men was heard to give such answers. "What did you tell that fellow all those lies for John," said a bystander later. "Oh," said the Indian with a faint smile, "He likes it."

Historical overview

Legend tells us that Taos Pueblo was founded by a great chief who followed an eagle and led his people up a stream to the mountains. The eagle dropped two feathers, one on the north side of the stream, and the other on the south. At this place, the women built adobe homes on both banks of Red Willow creek (Plate 1). The homes are physically next to one another resulting in two big structures, *Hlaauma* (North House, shown in Plate 2) and *Hlaukkkwima* (South House).

As noted by Reno (1963), Taos Indians know their history through two sources, firstly from ceremonies, songs and oral accounts, and secondly through research. Sutherland (1949, p. 783) wrote that the Pueblo Indians were the "most advanced aboriginal culture surviving in North America." Descendants of the Anasazi culture, the Pueblo people have the oldest culture north of Mexico. For discussions of the Anasazi, see Reed (1946) and Roberts (1996).

The Taos Pueblo people are successors of the basket makers who inhabited the American Southwest over 2000 years ago (Coze, 1957). Francisco Vásquez de Coronado's and his conquistadores came to this region looking for gold (Newman, 1993) and with his soldiers he discovered the Taos community in 1540. In the wake of Franciscan missionaries, colonists followed in 1598 and that year Don Juan de Oñate "standing among old cottonwoods along the Rio Grande, solemnly claimed this land for King Philip II of Spain. The kingdom was called New Mexico . . . (McDowell, 1987, p. 614)." Laxalt (1970, p. 394) recounted, "In 1598 Spanish settlers began moving northward from Mexico. They founded Santa Fe – La Villa de Santa Fé de los

Plate 1.
Wooden bridge across Red Willow Creek; photo by Leo Paul Dana

Plate 2.
North House; photo by Leo Paul Dana

Españoles – in the winter of 1609-1610”. The Spanish introduced cattle, goats, horses, and sheep (Simpich, 1938) to the Pueblo communities, and wool eventually replaced cotton as the principal textile.

Until the mid-seventeenth century, priests whipped Pueblo people who practiced their traditional religion (Scholes, 1937). Working from Taos, a spiritual leader from San Juan Pueblo led a bloody revolt in 1680 and this drove Spanish rule from New Mexico. As noted by Stirling (1940, p. 550):

> In the face of growing colonization of the Southwest, the Pueblo Indians rebelled in 1680 and killed or drove out all the Spaniards. However, the Spanish soon reconquered the region.

Sutherland (1949, p. 824) wrote, “In 1821 Mexican rule succeeded Spanish; in 1846 the United States took over”. Laxalt (1970, p. 335) reported:

> In 1847 the Taos Pueblo Indians joined with dissident Mexicans to resist a new invader, the Anglo. They shot U.S. Governor Charles Bent full of arrows and scalped him while he was still alive.

After the armistice of the Mexican War, in 1848, the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo formally placed New Mexico under US jurisdiction. Laxalt (1970, p. 304) noted, “the last of the magnificent Apache warriors were vanquished in 1886”. By then, traders introduced vegetable-dyed yarn and life for indigenous people was changing rapidly as the number of immigrants was escalating. German immigrants constituted one of the largest immigrants groups to New Mexico. Those who came before the railroad in 1880 were more interested in acculturation than in preserving their German heritage; those after kept their German identity (Tomas, 2005).

In 1906, land was taken from Taos Pueblo to be preserved as part of the Carson National Forest. As such, the land was placed under management of the US Forest Service, which proclaimed the supremacy of man over nature. This was very problematic for the Taos Pueblo people who disagreed with that viewpoint. Blue Lake was, and continues to be, considered sacred. Trosper (1995, p. 86) noted an account:

> There is nothing the human hand has made. The lake is our church. The mountain is our tabernacle. The evergreen trees are our living saints. . . . We pray to the water, the sun, the clouds, the sky, the deer. Without them we could not exist. They give us food, drink, physical power, knowledge.

In January 1912, New Mexico became the 47th state of the USA; the Pueblos maintained an aloof independence (Belknap, 1964). Dozier (1964, p. 85) noted that, in 1913, Pueblo Indians were given the same status as other American Indians in the USA, and cited the 1913 decision of the US Supreme Court:

> The people of the Pueblos, although sedentary rather than nomadic in their inclinations and disposed to peace and industry, are nevertheless Indians in race, customs and domestic government, always living in separate and isolated communities, adhering to primitive modes of life, largely influenced by superstition and fetishism, and chiefly governed according to the crude customs inherited from their ancestors. They are essentially a simple, uninformed, and inferior people.

In recognition of their contribution to World War I, 1924, American Indians were given American citizenship (Reno, 1963).

A few years later, Simpich (1929, p. 248) wrote about Taos:

> It has only about 2,000 inhabitants now; it had about that many in 1680 . . . For its size, Taos may well be the most interesting town in America. Its unspoiled aboriginal life, its odd communal houses . . .

Parsons (1939) discussed the overestimation of population in the pueblos. According to Vlasich (2005), Taos Pueblo had 401 people in 1890, 414 in 1900, and 773 in 1936. Siegel (1949, p. 567) reported the population of Taos as 913, in 1947, and stated:

> Taos, therefore, is one of the most rapidly expanding pueblos. The continuing population increase has begun to make serious inroads into the previous subsistence economy, and has enmeshed more and more individuals in the money economy of their neighbors.

The census in 2,000 counted 4,484 people at Taos Pueblo. About 150 of these live within the pueblo all year, and many of these are elderly (Plate 3). Choosing to retain their tradition, members of the old pueblo do not use electricity or indoor plumbing.

Many owners of homes in the North or South buildings of the pueblo actually reside in homes near their fields, or in modern homes on Taos Pueblo land but outside the old walls of Taos Pueblo. In the pueblo, tribal members have decided not to use electricity or indoor plumbing. Whereas life in Taos Pueblo is traditional, outside the pueblo walls, residents use modern conveniences. Alcohol is prohibited on the entire reservation.

Religion

Benedict (1935a) noted the absence of Dionysian values among Pueblo Indians. A possible explanation is that religion encouraged a Promethean mindset.

Plate 3.
Among the elderly;
photo by Leo Paul Dana

Traditionally, Pueblo religion was pantheistic and deeply spiritual. It constituted an important part of daily life, as Pueblo society was founded on a set of divine instructions from the great spirit. The people were told to plant and harvest in order to survive. Rather than have dominion over nature, the Pueblo people were instructed by the great spirit to be a component of it and to obey the laws of nature, under the leadership of a spiritual guide referred to as a Cacique.

Taos Pueblo people explained to the author that they have preserved their traditional culture throughout history, often adopting superficial changes but maintaining the old ways and beliefs in secrecy. Genesis, according to Pueblo belief, was as follows:

> At the beginning of all beginnings, our ancestors came up out of the earth, until they were living beneath Sandy Place Lake to the North. The world under the lake was like this one, but dark. Spirits, people, and animals lived together; death was unknown (Ortiz, 1991, p. 7).

The Pueblo tribes developed a complex mythology and religion, some aspects of which continue to be observed, in addition to adopted Western religion. Stirling (1940, p. 572) wrote:

> When the Pueblo wears about his neck a small stone image of a mountain lion, it represents much more than meets the eye. The mere carving of the image is but the first step in the preparation of his fetish. The priest of the proper society must perform over it a long ceremony involving hours of prayer and offerings and the placing of the figure on the altar of the hunting society. Here, amid sacred objects filled with supernatural powers it becomes charged with the spirit of the Mountain Lion God, the master deer hunter.
>
> When worn by the hunter, the fetish thus impregnated transmits its power to him. Whenever, he starts out for deer, he prays over his little fetish, offering pollen and tobacco to the ancestral Mountain Lion.

As reported by Sutherland (1949, p. 817) "Pueblo Indians, baptized as Christians, accept the white man's saints even while carrying out their old tribal rites." Alongside Catholicism, pueblo people retain ancient beliefs and many indigenous rituals are practiced, often in secrecy and in sacred religious shrines that serve as ceremonial chambers known as *kivas*. Each pueblo has at least two *kivas*, and many are underground. It is believed that all mankind descended from ancestral twins, and in the centre of each *kiva* is a small hole in the floor, representing the *sipapu*, the sacred place wherefrom the mythological ancestral twins are believed to have emerged.

Coze (1957, p. 219) explained:

> Pueblo Indians of Arizona and New Mexico venerate a multitude of spirits ranking just below the major gods. They call these supernatural beings Kachinas, from the Hopi words meaning father of life.

For a discussion of Kachina dolls, see Colton (1949).

Coze (1957, p. 219) elaborated, "At festival times the Kachinas make visits to the pueblos, bringing the blessings of rain and fertility, teaching discipline, and rewarding good." Indeed, according to Pueblo beliefs, life and blessings such as – the cycle of seasons, rain, and crops – are gifts of Kachinas, who are said to live in the snow and ice of the San Francisco Mountain, an eroded strato-volcano near Flagstaff, Arizona. Coze (1957, p. 219) went into further detail:

> Borrowing the bodies of living men, these lesser gods visit the villages to distribute presents and receive prayers to the gods. He who wears the mask of a Kachina believes he loses his personal identity and assumes that of the spirit.

In her book *Taos Pueblo*, Parsons (1936) reported that unlike other pueblos, Taos had neither a masked Kachina, nor a curing society. This book was reviewed by Titiev (1937).

In 1978, a federal law guaranteed the religious freedom of American Indians. Although Christianity has not replaced traditional religion, pueblos have churches as well as *kivas*. St Jerome is the patron saint of Taos Pueblo, and this pueblo has chapel named after him. San Geronimo Chapel was completed in 1850 to replace the original church destroyed during war. Of the original, only the bell tower still stands (Plate 4).

Vlasich (2005) argued that given the high risk involved in self-employed agricultural activities, the Pueblo Indians developed a sophisticated religious ceremonialism to accompany labour in the field.

In Taos Pueblo, Native rituals persevere in daily life. Many youths who have left Taos return from time to time to regain contact with the social and religious values of their tradition. One young interviewee told the author that religion is less important for her generation than was the case among others, especially among those who had strayed away from farming. Yet, ceremonialism is very much enjoyed.

Where the economy meets religion

During the mid-nineteenth century, the Taos Indians had an annual buffalo hunt to procure meat. The last group buffalo hunt of Taos Indians took place in 1884 (Grant, 1925). During the early 1920s, Grant (1925, p. 83) wrote, "There are still a few Indians living who can tell of buffalo hunts though each year their number is less."

Plate 4.
Remains of original San Geronimo Church; photo by Leo Paul Dana

Coan (1925) estimated that 75 per cent of the sheep in New Mexico in 1880 were controlled by 20 families, of whom 80 per cent were Indigenous. Focusing on Pueblo Indians, Judd (1923, p. 248) noted:

> The dwellings, be it remembered, were the recognized property of the women. When a man married, he went to live with, or near, his wife's people. This is an old, established custom among the modern Pueblos – a custom which has survived the fleeting centuries and the abrading influences of a dominant civilization … The women not only owned, but they also built, their homes – another Pueblo custom which has persisted to within the present generation.

Simpich (1940, p. 713) elaborated, "These Indians own and farm much near-by land, have their own herds, vehicles, and work animals …"

Stirling (1940, p. 565) wrote about the pueblos:

> These communities are primarily dependent upon farming. To maize, beans, and squash have been added many introduced crops, such as wheat, watermelons, and various vegetables. Wild plants are used to some extent for food, and hunting adds variety to the diet."

During the following decade, McClelland and Friedman (1952, p. 249) suggested:

> … that cultures which are concerned with achievement are likely to stress independence training in childhood, which in turn produces a higher level of achievement motivation in members of the culture, at least as reflected in their folk tales. These stories in turn reinforce the achievement orientation which leads to a stress on independence training and so on in a chain of mutually reinforcing events which illustrates nicely what anthropologists mean by such terms as "culture pattern" or "cultural value" orientation.

Dozier (1964) wrote about change and Westernization of the pueblos; he distinguished between two types of changes that can occur in an Indigenous community:

(1) indigenous changes arising from within a community or due to contact with other Indigenous people; and
(2) acculturation, resulting from contact with whites.

About the pueblos, he observed:

> The first major change was the shift from subsistence farming to a credit system … The second dramatic shift, from credit buying to a cash economy, was brought about by the influx of tourists and the operators of craft shops who bought the handicrafts directly from the Indians, paying cash (Dozier, 1964, p. 92).

Laxalt (1970, p. 335) compared, "Unlike the Navajos and Apaches, the 960 Indians of Taos Pueblo … do not welcome the Anglos' wealth or ways." In particular, Taos Pueblo people have had difficulty with the US Forest Service assumption that man has supremacy over Nature. Trosper (1995, p. 85) wrote that Taos Pueblo religion requires:

> … people to adapt their lives and activities to our natural surroundings so that men and nature mutually support the life common to both. The idea that man must subdue nature and bend its processes to his purposes is repugnant … Our religion is based upon the unity of man with nature in the Rio Pueblo watershed. Any outside interference with natural conditions of the watershed interferes with our religion.

The pueblo economy today includes art, handicrafts, tourism (Plate 5), retailing, gambling and wages, as well as agriculture. Livestock rearing is important as are several crops including chilli peppers, cotton and squash. Each pueblo cultivates fields in common. The fields are generally attended to by the men. Pueblo men also continue to be skilled weavers, producing cotton clothing and woollen goods including blankets as well as garments. Women are responsible for the preparation of meals; they tend to children and they are often involved in making pottery. Selling handicrafts supplements income.

At Taos Pueblo, there are families who continue to farm. Tribal members plant beans, corn, and squash, along with various vegetables that are part of the traditional diet. Taos Pueblo people supplement subsistence income through hunting in the mountains.

Taos Pueblo also thrives on tourism. Many of the Taos Pueblo tribal people are artists and have shops in the village. Admission is charged to visitors and revenues collected support administrative entities of the governing bodies.

The pueblo operates Taos Mountain Casino (the smallest one in New Mexico) with a café a gallery, a gift shop, and a video arcade. This is not unique to this Taos Pueblo. Sandia Pueblo, for instance, owns the Sandia Resort & Casino, built on the Sandia reservation, just outside Albuquerque. As well, Tesuque Pueblo operates the Camel Rock Casino.

Individual tribal people work in various career fields on their tribal lands, including education, forestry, health care, and law enforcement. Although many Pueblo people have shifted occupations away from farming, agriculture will remain central to their culture.

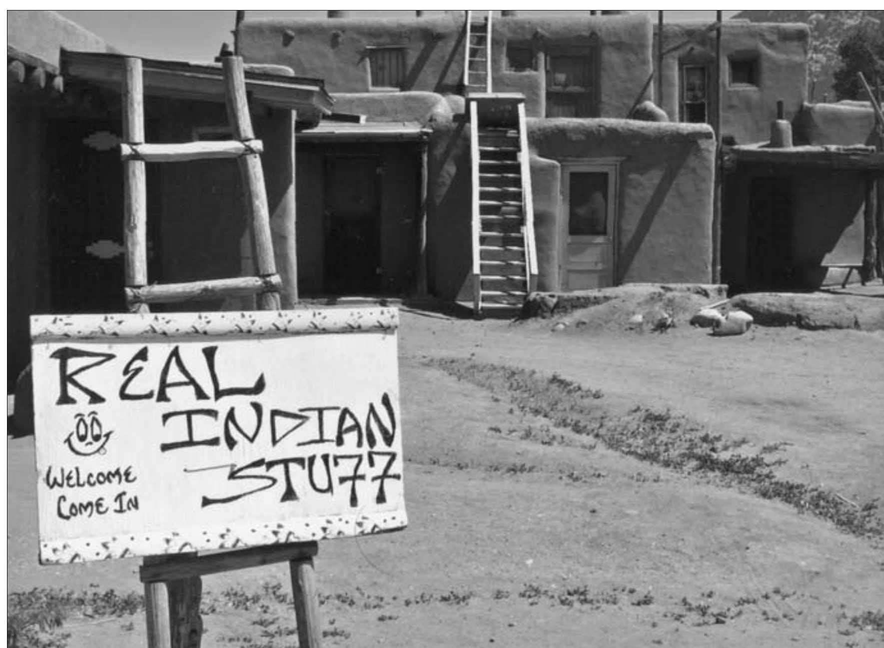

Plate 5.
Selling to the tourists; photo by Leo Paul Dana

Conclusion

Both Lasswell (1935) and Parsons (1936) mentioned a conflict between ideal and actual patterns, as strongly valued collectivism was strained by individualism. Lasswell (1935) suggested that Pueblo Indian religion was preserving the integrity of communal life. In contrast, Parsons (1936) predicted the disappearance of ceremonialism and assimilation into American life. During the following decade, Siegel (1949, p. 562) wrote, "Because of frequent and marked overt manifestations of individualism among its members, Taos has evoked special interest among the students of pueblo society."

Over seven decades later, we observe that both Lasswell (1935) and Parsons (1936) were partially correct in their predictions. Ceremonialism has not disappeared, but it may have less religious meaning than in the past, and possibly more entertainment value. Vlasich (2005, p. 293) wrote: "A half-century ago some experts predicted the demise of Pueblo religion, but these projections have proven to be false ... there has been a revival of ceremonial life ... " Yet, observing the young generation, one sees that Pueblo Indian values have evolved, with individualism having become socially acceptable, as a complement to communalism rather than a replacement.

Nevertheless, ethnic boundaries remain highly pronounced. Externally obvious ethnic markers include phenotype, style, dress, values, and manner. Although cultural content has been evolving, a focus on boundary maintenance is evident. To a degree, ethnic identity appears to be reactive to inter-group contact as opposed to a feature of isolation, while ethnic boundaries represent strategies to exercise claims over resources. Barth's (1956, p. 1088) thesis is relevant here as co-existence of groups within one ecological niche can be stressful, "Different ethnic groups will establish themselves in stable co-residence in an area if they exploit different ecologic niches, and especially if they can thus establish symbiotic economic relations." In the area surrounding Taos, Rodriguez (1987) noted that control over land and water was the primary source of contentions in the relations among Pueblo people and other groups. With regards to the Taos Pueblo's water rights claims to the Rio Hondo and the Rio Pueblo de Taos, the Draft Taos Pueblo Water Rights Settlement Agreement was only released in 2006.

Laxalt (1970, p. 316) wrote:

> As protection against enemies, Indians built their pueblos, or villages, as high as five stories, with no openings on the ground level ... Taos stands little changed ... Women still perform such daily cores as sweeping the dirt plaza and baking in beehive ovens. Unlike other New Mexican pueblos, Taos resists modernization, banning electricity and running water.

Roberts (1996, p. 93)confirmed, "Among Native Americans, the Pueblo peoples have been especially successful at retaining their ties to the past, maintaining their ancestral religion, and keeping their communities intact." Nevertheless, as discussed by Tiller (1997), through increasing access to capital and to markets, tribes throughout New Mexico have been discovering new entrepreneurial opportunities, taking an active role in policy debates affecting industries, and using profits to improve infrastructure.

Taos Pueblo still resists modernization and Westernization. Bread is still baked in a beehive-like cedar-burning *horno,* made of adobe (Plate 6). A cedar fire heats the oven and the hot ash is removed before loaves are placed to bake, just as was done centuries ago (Plate 7). More importantly, traditional Pueblo Indian values have survived.

Plate 6.
Adobe *Horno*; photo by
Leo Paul Dana

Plate 7.
Baking; photo by Leo
Paul Dana

Regardless of how religious a person is, values perpetuated by religion can transcend to a generation that is less practising than is the case among elders. In this case, traditional Promethean values are being perpetuated, including a highly disciplined work ethic.

Notes

1. This pueblo's star enterprises include its casino and Santa Ana Agricultural Enterprises.
2. Located in the red-brown foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, near Santa Fe, Tesuque Pueblo operates the Tesuque Pueblo Flea Market.

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