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### Cultural Evolution of Isleta Pueblo

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Cultural Evolution of Isleta Pueblo

By  
Sonny Ray D. Olguin

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Arts in History  
University of Portland  
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Growing up in the village was fun. I lived in the village for a time and I remember one of my favorite past times was to visit my uncle and aunt who lived at the end of an alleyway of houses. Visiting my cousins, a couple of houses down from mine was another one of my favorite times. The village, as we all refer to our community, is its own world within a world. The square adobe houses joined together in long rows or built around open areas, cradled me and safeguarded me from the world outside. Under the billowing clouds and running along dirt roads, my childhood and Pueblo way of life was an endless classroom. Growing up in my pueblo I learned everything I felt I needed to be part of my tribe and to be a good member of my community.

Even though I knew my village was ancient, I often wondered how things used to be a long time ago, back before the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors. Being part of my community, I learned many stories, ceremonies, dances, and about behavior that was or was not acceptable and I kept these things close to my heart because it contributed to my identity of being an indigenous Pueblo person. I heard from some of our elders that different Anglo outsiders wrote about my tribe, I was curious to learn more about them. It amazed me how much information was disclosed to these researchers, mostly anthropologists, ethnographers who had come to Isleta and other Pueblo tribes to study us. Reading these books and writings surprised me at how thorough the information was. I also was shocked to learn about many traditions and ceremonies that no longer exist. Reading about these lost ways made me think about how we, as a people could reestablish some of these traditions. This was my main inspiration to study the traditions of my tribe— Shea Whif Tue, ‘Isleta Pueblo’.

The Pueblo People have historically and fiercely guarded their religious and ceremonial practices against intrusion by who they considered “outsiders”, especially non-natives. Because

of the past atrocities they experienced at the hands of the Spaniard Conquistadors and then the U.S. federal government, their fear of losing more of their old ways led the People to remain very quiet when approached by anyone outside of the community circle in order to safeguard whatever cultural traditions and religious practices they still possessed. They recognized that it was imperative to safeguard traditions and religion by not openly sharing knowledge with outsiders. Through this practice, it has allowed the Isleta People to retain the traditions and ceremonies that they still have now. Those non-natives who, by whatever means eventually gained the trust of the People, were cautiously allowed to enter the Pueblo's inner-sanctum to create a record of Pueblo life through writings, recordings, and photography. Not all who gained access to the sacred life of the people did so in an open and honest way. Some engaged covertly with individuals who were willing to sell out their people for some pittance of profit. Even though this deception was seen as a betrayal by the Isleta people at the time, this recorded information has become a modern cultural resource that offers insight into a world still so familiar to the people and yet so changed.

The sacred knowledge of the Pueblo people is safeguarded because of the bad experience Pueblo people had with who they referred to as outsiders. A high level of suspicion and apprehension was created when the Spanish Conquistadors entered the Pueblo world, known now as the United States Southwest region. In 1540 Francisco Vasquez de Coronado led an expedition consisting of several hundred-armed horsemen accompanied by Indigenous Mexican servants<sup>1</sup>. The motivation to invade unfamiliar territory that was unforgiving in terrain stemmed from the desperation to find gold and the stories of cities and riches fueled by rumors from a Franciscan priest named Marcos de Niza. He had traveled into the northern country and caught a

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<sup>1</sup> Edward P. Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of North America* (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1970), p. 43.

glimpse of the Zuni pueblo, having never set foot in the pueblo he returned back to Mexico to tell his tale<sup>2</sup>. Instead of wealth, they found a barren land challenging to travel and with populated village settlements, usually scattered alongside a river or along the foothills of the huge mountain ranges running north and south near sources of fresh water and fertile fields. Initial interactions between the Pueblo people and non-Native/outsideers were ones of caution and curiosity.

However, because the Spanish Conquistadors were on a mission seeking gold, they would do anything necessary to obtain that gold even if it meant killing the inhabitant Native people. The Spanish Conquistadors who had already committed murder and egregious mayhem against the Native People of Mexico were already accustomed to killing Native people for their gain. The Spaniard's aim was to take control of Native populations and dominate them. For example, they were forcing Native people to adopt Christianity and submit to the Spanish Crown. These first interactions of force and disturbance of peace among Pueblo communities had a significant effect on how Pueblo people saw and interacted with these foreign outsiders. They realized that in order to protect their sacred items and ceremonial life from destruction, they had to endure the wrath of the Spaniards.

The invaders began asserting dominance over the People by first demanding their food. Having journeyed far without adequate food sources from Mexico, the conquistadors were starving and in need of food. They established a levy relationship with Pueblos. The Spaniards, who pressured their Native hosts for food, clothing, and supplies, were faced with resistance, which would lead to fierce battles between the two. The Spaniards, who wielded superior weapons often won these battles and would gain further dominance and gave them advantage to force their will upon the people. In 1582, an expedition led by Antonio de Espejo was interested

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<sup>2</sup> Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of North America*, p. 43.

in exploring Pueblo country, interested in establishing a permanent settlement. An account from a soldier named Diego Perez de Luxan on this expedition gives insight into the brutal encounters between the Pueblos and Spaniards. “The people were all in the sierra except for some thirty Indians on the flat roofs of their houses. When we asked them for food, as they were our friends, they mocked us like the others. In view of this, the corners of the pueblo were taken by four men, and four others with two servants began to seize those native who showed themselves. We put them in an estufa. And as the pueblo was large and the majority had hidden themselves there, we set fire to the big pueblo of Puala, where we thought some were burned to death because of the cries they uttered. We at once took out the prisoners, two at a time, and lined them up against some cottonwoods close to the pueblo of Puala, where they were garroted and shot many times until they were dead. Sixteen were executed, not counting those who burned to death (Hammond and Rey 1966: 204).”<sup>3</sup>. The Spanish conquistadors traveled throughout the region, asserting their presence and authority, ordering the Pueblos to give up corn and other food supplies. Andrew Kaunt writes in *The Pueblo Revolt of 1680: Conquest and Resistance in Seventeenth-century New Mexico* about the hostile relationship between the Spanish and Pueblo people stemming from the Spaniards wanting a payment of food. “Even more devastating to the Pueblos were the exactions of tribute in the form of maize”<sup>4</sup>. Pueblo people already knew that their agricultural fields and climate conditions could be productive or unforgiving for their crops’ growth and harvest. When the Spaniards took their food, they still needed to survive during times of drought or a bad harvest. This often led to the people starving and perishing if they did not submit to the

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew L. Knaut, *The Pueblo Revolt of 1680: Conquest and Resistance in Seventeenth-century New Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955), p. 57.

Spaniards. Feelings of exhaustion and desperation to survive finally led the Pueblo people to a revolt against the Spaniards. Contracts for colonization of New Mexico were sought by various Spanish conquistadors and it was eventually awarded to Don Juan de Oñate in 1595<sup>5</sup>. His expedition party left Chihuahua on January 15, 1598 reaching Pueblo country later that year and establishing a settlement in Northern New Mexico, near San Juan Pueblo<sup>6</sup>.

The Spaniards had established a firm rule subjugating the Pueblo tribes for years through enforcement of their laws on them and by punishing anyone who did not obey. The Spaniards forced the adoption of Christianity and forbade them to practice their ceremonial way of life. Oñate enacted various programs with the intention of civilizing and Christianizing the Pueblo people. Any resistance against Oñate was dealt brutally. This was heavily enforced, and the punishment for not following Spanish orders was severe, consisting of public lashing, mutilation, or possibly death by hanging. In 1630, an account written from Father Alanzo de Benavides, a Priest who was in charge of the missionary program reported that 60,000 Pueblo people had been converted and ninety chapels had been built in many villages<sup>7</sup>. The Pueblo people were weary and angered from the cruel subjugation by the Spaniards. The pent-up anger fueled by the restriction to practice their ancestral religion, from being forced to practice Christianity, having to pay the Spaniards with the food they themselves needed to survive, eventually led them to revolt.

The Pueblo revolt of 1680 was led by a Pueblo man named Popé from Ohkay Owingeh pueblo after covertly planning the revolt along with the leaders from all the Pueblo tribes. The synchronized rebellion would lead to pushing the Spaniards south out of their homelands. Popé

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<sup>5</sup> Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of North America*, p. 46.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 46.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 47.

and the other leaders sent young Pueblo runners to all the Pueblo villages with a message that the revolt would soon begin. For two weeks, during August, a war between the Spaniards and Pueblo people broke out<sup>8</sup>. The result was that the Pueblo people were successful in driving out the Spaniards south to an area that is now known as El Paso, Texas. The peace and freedom to practice their religion and way of life was once again possible. The Pueblo people lived in peace once again and were able to live their lives free to practice their traditional and cultural ways and to resume their lives as they had lived before Spanish contact. The Pueblo people once again lived without Spanish control for a short time before the Spanish returned to re-establish their colony and rule. The success of the revolt was short lived, toward the end of the 17th century the Spaniards returned and quickly subdued the Pueblos and re-established control<sup>9</sup>.

The people learned from that time until the present that they must, at all cost protect their customs and traditions from the outside world in order to preserve and continue practicing these traditions. During the reign of Spanish dominance, the only way to continue to practice their religion was to hide it from the Friars. “The people took their religion underground around 1692, due to harassment by the Spaniards in their attempt to substitute another religion for the native one”<sup>10</sup>. They would secretly practice their dances or ceremonies under the cover of darkness. They wouldn’t draw attention to special buildings or houses where they practiced these secret rituals that also housed their sacred objects. They feared that the Spanish would destroy these sacred objects which sometimes occurred if they were discovered. They also feared practicing

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<sup>8</sup> Mathew Liebmann, *Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance and Revitalization in 17th Century New Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013), p. 29.

<sup>9</sup> Edward P. Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of the Southwest: A Survey of the Anthropological Literature and a Review of Theory, Method, and Results* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 90.

<sup>10</sup> Joe S. Sando, *Pueblo Nations: Eight Centuries of Pueblo Indian History* (Santa Fe: N.M.: Clear Light, 1992), p.30.



their ceremonies because if caught, they would be severely punished by the Spaniards. The one important lesson they learned was to be very secretive about their practices and ceremonies, still fearful that their way of life would be jeopardized if not kept secret. This lesson is still ingrained in the Pueblo mindset; that in order to keep our traditions alive, they must be kept secret from the outside world. Dozier writes the lesson of secrecy every pueblo person knows, “The maintenance of secrecy over the native aspects of their culture became a pattern learned in early childhood and kept throughout adult life”<sup>11</sup>. Only people who were very trusted would be invited into the inner world of Pueblo life and culture.

One such person was a man named Charles Fletcher Lummis. He lived with the Isleta People from 1888 to 1892. Lummis gained the trust of the Isleta Pueblo people and not only experienced the traditions and viewed some ceremonies but was also allowed to live within the village. During his stay, he studied and interviewed them, recording sacred information. Lummis also took many photographs of the people.

Charles Fletcher Lummis was an Anglo man who was dedicated to exploring the country. He had written a book, “A Tramp Across the Continent” that was published shortly before he arrived in the southwest. Throughout his travels, he met many people who inspired his writing, poetry, and photography. One such person was an anthropologist named Adolf Bandelier who befriended Lummis and introduced him to other interesting people like him. He also introduced him to his work, which was the archeological study of the Native people,

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<sup>11</sup> Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of the Southwest*, p. 90.

specifically Pueblo people<sup>12</sup>. Subsequently, Lummis took many photographs throughout the Pueblo villages and befriended people from those Pueblos.

One in particular was Isleta Pueblo where Lummis lived among the people and documented much of their life, culture and ceremonial beliefs through writings and photography<sup>13</sup>. Isleta meaning “little island” was the name given to this little village by the Spanish conquistadors referring to the sight they saw when they came upon the village as they journeyed north in search of the ‘Cities of Gold’. The Rio Grande river flowed around the village and would converge at the south end of the village thus giving it the appearance of an island. The village was called Shea Whif Tue meaning Flint Knife village by the people who inhabited it. Lummis would live here among the People for four years. Lummis, being fascinated by the people who lived there, gained the trust of the religious and secular leaders who permitted him to document the stories, religious ceremonies, sacred songs and cultural ways of the People through photography, written and sound recordings.

Pueblo people were often wary of non-Natives who appeared in their villages, especially someone who was anxious to take their photo or ask questions. When Lummis arrived in Isleta, he met the highest ranking hereditary religious leader of the tribe called the Cacique. The Cacique at the time was paralyzed like Lummis who was paralyzed on the left side of his body due to several strokes he suffered as a result of stress and overwork from his previous job at the Los Angeles Times<sup>14</sup>. It could be assumed that the Cacique allowed him to live in Isleta because he empathized with him for enduring the hardship of being paralyzed as he was. Another reason

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<sup>12</sup> Mark Thomson, *American Character: The Curious Life of Charles Fletcher Lummis and the Rediscovery of the Southwest*. 1st ed. (New York: Arcade Pub.: Distributed by Time Warner Trade, 2001), p. 192.

<sup>13</sup> Thomson, *The Curious Life of Charles Fletcher Lummis*, p. 116.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 161.

why Lummis could have gained favor with the Pueblo leader was that the Cacique who was in charge of the community, had accepted that Lummis was already renting from a patriarch of a prominent and wealthy family of the Pueblo.

Lummis, amused by the daily activities of the people of Isleta, enjoyed capturing these moments with his photography. He was determined to document their activities because it was imaginable that one day soon the simple ways of the people and their ceremonial practices would be forgotten if not recorded. Lummis took many photographs at Isleta and they captured the essence of Pueblo's life at that time. An example of

Lummis, Charles F. Photographer. "Woman grooming hair, Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico" Negative Number 136355. Photograph. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Libraries, c1895? From the Palace of the Governors Photo Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Still Image, <https://econtent.unm.edu/digital/collection/acpa/id/12799/rec/194> (accessed September 1, 2020).



this is a photograph he took of a woman brushing a man's long hair. The woman is sitting on a small bench behind a man sitting on the ground waiting to get his hair tied. This photo is interesting because it provides evidence of how men dressed during this time, how they fixed their hair and the roles women had during this time. Hair is important to the Pueblo people and any task relating to the care of hair can be seen as spiritual as it relates to rain.

In Pueblo communities, only certain members, usually only female relatives of a man can touch his hair. The photo shows this because in the photo the man's hair is straight as if she had previously brushed it before preparing to tie it in a traditional hair bun called in Tiwa, Whee-

Phee. It also shows the buckskin leggings the men wore. These leggings are still worn by the men during ceremonies and by certain men who hold a role as a traditional leader. When this photo was taken, these leggings were worn daily by the men.

Lummis also photographed Isleta ceremonies and rituals. For example, captured a



photograph of a woman kneeling in front of a basket of food he titled “offerings for the dead”. The basket contains dried corn and squash, surrounded by lit candles. This tradition that Lummis captures is a ritual that takes place in the fall to celebrate All Souls Day. It is a tradition certainly adopted from Catholicism and Mexican traditions of All Souls Day or Day of the Dead. On this day, food is intentionally cooked for the spirits of family members who have passed. Food is offered to the dead during the morning, noon, and evening. It is a tradition seldomly practiced today.

Another photograph is of

Lummis, Charles F. Photographer. "Woman with offering for the dead, Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico" Negative Number 136371. Photograph. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Libraries, c1888-1892? From the Palace of the Governors Photo Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Still Image, <https://econtent.unm.edu/digital/collection/acpa/id/12946/rec/196> (accessed September 1, 2020).

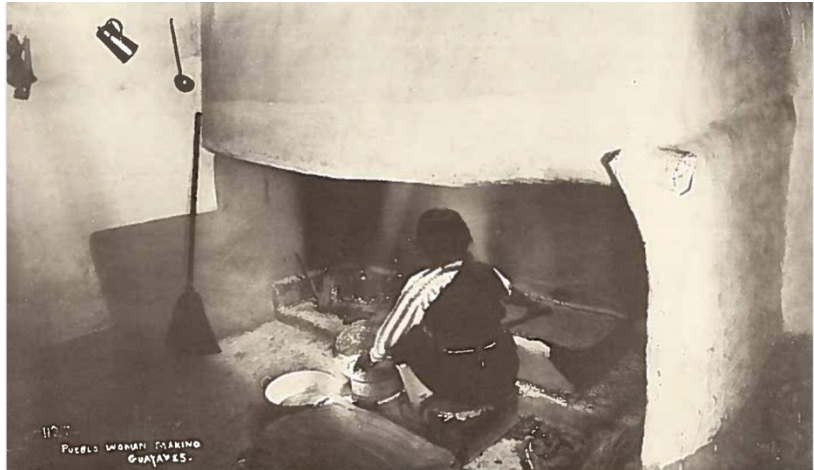
Lummis, Charles F. Photographer. "Mitsha, Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico" Negative Number 002700. Photograph. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Libraries, c1895? From the Palace of the Governors Photo Archives, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Still Image, <https://econtent.unm.edu/digital/collection/acpa/id/12791/rec/109>, (accessed September 1, 2020).

a young woman sitting on a chair in front of harvested corn and squash. This photograph illustrates the clothing women wore, a particular hairstyle, and shows the bounty of agriculture. In the photograph, the woman is wearing a dress under the traditional wool or cotton black dress called a

manta. This underdress is made up of three different fabrics indicated by the different patterns. It could be inferred that Isleta women would make their clothes out of whatever fabrics were available or that families with greater means had access to materials purchased or traded from nearby merchants such as mercantile stores located in surrounding towns. This shirt also demonstrates a style of dress that has changed over time. The dress has a small collar, and the sleeves of the dress are worn tightly around her wrists with a cuff. This style of dress is not worn today. It has changed to a style that has a prominent collar and the sleeves are shorter and do not have cuffs but pleats that flare out. This photo demonstrates how the style of clothing Isleta women wore has changed over time.



Another photograph by Lummis shows a woman sitting under a corner fireplace making a flat paper-like bread known as Piki, the name coming from the Hopi people in Arizona who still make this bread<sup>15</sup>. Piki bread has a paper-like texture that is made from finely ground blue cornmeal. The meal is mixed



with water to make a paste that is evenly spread across a hot flat griddle-like stone resting above a small fire in the household

fireplace. It is unusual to see this bread being made in Isleta because it was thought that only Hopi

Lummis, Charles Fletcher. "Pueblo Woman Making Guayaves". Photograph in book by Patrick T. Houlihan, Betsy E. Houlihan, and Charles F. Lummis, *Lummis in the Pueblos*. 1st ed. (Arizona: Northland Press, 1986), p. 32.

women made this bread. In the present day, no one in Isleta has knowledge to make this bread. It is not common to hear of the Pueblos in New Mexico preparing piki bread. The Hopi tribal women in Arizona are commonly known to still make this bread. Had Lummis not captured this photo, it may not have been known that Isleta women made this bread as well.

When Charles Lummis recorded Pueblo of Isleta's life, ceremonies, and folklore, his intention of doing so was in an attempt to preserve this knowledge because he knew that one day, these stories may no longer exist and would be lost in time. By recording and publishing the writings, he felt that he was contributing to their preservation so they would not be lost. The

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<sup>15</sup> Patrick T. Houlihan, Betsy E. Houlihan, and Charles F. Lummis, *Lummis in the Pueblos*. 1st ed. (Arizona: Northland Press, 1986), p. 32.

informants who told him these stories were elders from Isleta who he named as Lorenzo, Diego, Desiderio, Antonio, Felipe, Vitorino, Ysidro, and Anastacio<sup>16</sup>.

Because Isletans were forced to learn Spanish in order to communicate with the Spaniards, the Spanish language was commonly spoken in the Pueblo. Lummis was fluent in Spanish so communication with the Isleta storytellers was easy. By recording and publishing these stories in a book titled, *The Man Who Married the Moon* in 1894, Lummis gained profit from these stories and fulfilled his intent to preserve them for future generations. When the Isleta People learned that he had written the stories down and published them, they felt betrayed because the information they shared was disclosed to him like stories shared with a friend, not something meant for distribution to the outside. Many felt that perhaps they should not have been told to him in the first place. Perhaps the people did not know he was recording and documenting all the information they shared with him, but it was not a public issue until the publication of the book was known about thirty years later<sup>17</sup>.

Lummis recorded many folk stories from the Pueblo, for example, one story is called, “The Revenge of the Fawns”. The story goes: Once upon a time, Deer and Wolf were friends and lived as neighbors in the country beyond the Rio Puerco river west of Isleta not far from where the Pueblo of Laguna. One friend was a mother-deer of two fawns and the other was a mother-wolf with two cubs. They lived like real people in every way in beautiful houses made of adobe. The two mothers were great friends, and wouldn’t do anything without the other, like going to the mountain for firewood or to dig up *amole*, ‘yucca root’ used as soap for bathing. One day the wolf went to her friend *Peé-hlee-oh* (Deer-woman)’s house to ask her to go to the

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<sup>16</sup> Robert F. Gish, introduction to *Pueblo Indian Folk-Stories* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), p. xxv.

<sup>17</sup> Gish, introduction to *Pueblo Indian Folk-Stories*, p. xxv.

mountains with her to get firewood and *amole* because she was planning to wash the following day. The deer replied, “It is well, friend *Káhr hlee-oh*’, (wolf-woman) ‘I have nothing to do, and there is food in the house for the children while I am gone. ‘*Toó-kwai!* (let’s go).” They went together across the plains and into the hills at the base of the mountain. They gathered wood, tied it in bundles and carried it on their backs. They dug the *amole* and put it in their shawls to carry. Before they left on their journey home, the wolf sat down under a cedar tree and said, “Ai! But I am tired! Sit down, friend Deer-woman, and lay your head in my lap, that we may rest.” The deer was not tired and did not want to, but the wolf urged her to rest. The deer amiably laid her head in the lap of her friend. Just then the wolf leaned over and caught the trusting deer by the throat and killed her. This was the first time ever that anyone betrayed one’s friend and this deed, is the reason why treachery exists in the world.

The false wolf friend then took the hide off the deer, and took some of the meat, and carried it home on the load of wood and *amole*. Before going home, she stopped at the house of the deer, and gave the fawns some of the meat, and told them, “Friends, Deer-babies, do not fear, but eat; your mother met relatives and went to their house, and she will not come tonight.” The fawns were hungry and as soon as the wolf left, they built a fire to cook the meat. As one was tending the fire and cooking the meat, he heard it cry, “Look out! Look out! For this is your mother!” He was frightened and called his brother to listen, they knew then that their *nana*, ‘mother’ was killed by the wicked old wolf. The next day the wolf went back to the mountain to get the rest of the deer meat and her two cubs went to the deer’s home to play with the fawns, as they were used to doing. They played for a while and the cubs asked, “*Pee-oo wée-deh* (little Deer), why are you so prettily spotted, and why do you have your eyelids red, while we are so ugly?” The fawns told them that when they were little, their mother put them in a room and



smoked them to create the spots. The cubs eagerly asked if they could smoke them too so they could be pretty too. The fawns anxious to avenge the death of their mother built a fire in the fireplace and shut the cubs in the room. They plastered the door and windows with mud and layed a flat rock on the chimney hole, so no smoke escaped. They then ran away to the south as fast as they could run. After running for some time, they came across a coyote, pacing back and forth and howling dreadfully with a toothache. They told him “Ah-bóo! (poor thing) Old-man friend, we are sorry that your tooth hurts. But an old Wolf is chasing us, and we cannot stay. If she comes this way asking about us, do not tell her, will you?” The coyote agreed and began to howl in pain again. When the wolf returned home to no cubs, she went to the deer’s home and discovered her cubs were dead from the smoke. When she saw this, she was filled with rage and vowed to find the fawns and eat them. She soon found their tracks and followed them. She then came across the howling coyote and asked if he had seen two fawns. The coyote paid no attention to her, but then she asked the same question again and threatened to kill him. He replied “Fawns? Fawns? Groaned the coyote — ‘I have been wandering with the toothache ever since the world began. And you think I have had nothing to do but to watch for Fawns? Go along and don’t bother me.” The wolf growing angrier left, looking for the trail again.

By this time, the fawns had come across two boys playing a game of *K’ wah-t’ him* with their bows and arrows. They told the boys that if a wolf comes looking for them, not to tell her. The boys promised and the fawns hurried on. Soon, the wolf came across the boys and asked if they had seen two fawns running this way. The boys paid no attention to her and went on playing their game. She asked them two more times threatening to eat them if they did not answer. They replied “We have been here all day, playing *K’ wah-t’ him*, and not hunting Fawns. Go on, and do not disturb us.” The wolf wasted her time asking and continued looking for the trail, running

harder than ever. The fawns soon arrived at the bank of the Rio Grande (river) and found *P' ah-chah hlóo-hli* (the Beaver) working hard cutting down a tree. They then asked if he could pass them over the river on his back. The beaver helped them cross and as they thanked him, they asked him not to tell the old wolf about them. He promised he would not and returned to his work.

The fawns ran across the plain until they came to a big black hill of lava that stands alone in the valley southeast of Tomé (a sacred hill). “Here!” said one of the Fawns, ‘I am sure this must be the place our mother told us about, where the Trues of our people live. Let us look.” When they came to the top of the hill they found a trap door and when they knocked it opened and a voice called to enter. When they went down the ladder into the rock, they found the Deer-people, who welcomed and fed them. When they told their story, the Trues told them that they would take care of them and protect them. The War-captain picked out fifty strong young bucks for a guard. By then, the wolf arrived at the river and asked the beaver if he saw two fawns. The beaver did not notice her and worked uninterrupted. The wolf was in a terrible rage now and asked him again and threatened to eat him. The beaver responded, “I have been cutting trees here by the river ever since I was born, and I have no time to think about Fawns.” The wolf then ran up and down the river looking to cross, then returned to the beaver to ask if he could carry her across, and she would pay him. The beaver agreed and when he was near where the water was deep, he dived to the bottom and stayed as long as he could. The wolf was frantic, and the beaver kept doing this all the way across until the wolf nearly drowned, but she clung as hard as she could to his neck. When they came to the shore the wolf was choking and did not pay the beaver as she promised — because of this, a beaver will never again ferry a wolf across the river.

She finally found the trail of the fawns, and it led her to the hill. She knocked and a voice asked who was there and she responded, “Wolf-woman”. The voice then prompted her to come down. When she got to the bottom, she told her story to the old men of the Deer-people. They responded, “This is a serious case, and we must not judge it lightly. Come, we will make an agreement. Let soup be brought and we will eat together. And if you eat all your soup without spilling a drop, you shall have the Fawns.” She agreed because she thought it was easy enough and would be careful. A big bowl of soup was brought in and each took a *guayave* (piki) and rolled it like a spoon to dip in the soup. The wolf was almost finished with her soup when the fawns appeared suddenly in the door of the next room and at the sight of the two, she spilled her soup in her lap. The Deer-people shouted, “she spilled!”, and just then the fifty chosen warriors rushed at her with their sharpened horns and tore her to pieces. That was the end for the treacherous wolf and from that day on, the wolf and deer have been enemies<sup>18</sup>.

This story was told to the children to teach them about the consequences one might face if they betray or harm their friends. These stories were told to the little ones as examples of punishment for breaking the sacred trust of friendship. It also explained why some animals do not live together, why a deer will not ever befriend a wolf for fear of being devoured. These stories recorded by Lummis from Isleta Pueblo’s oral stories are important because they provided valuable lessons to the children about friendship, loyalty, caution, humility, and other life lessons. These stories are still important to the people of Isleta because they hold teachings that are important for the younger generations. These stories continue to connect humans to their animal relatives and the inter connectedness to all beings.

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<sup>18</sup> Charles Fletcher Lummis, *Pueblo Indian Folk-Stories* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), p. 178.

Time and external influences have impacted the way Isleta people now view the long ago divulsion of cultural and internally held information to outsiders. Now, the People seek out these recordings to help them understand and learn about some of those stories and tales that once filled the winter nights when grandfathers gathered the children around them for teaching and sharing. Families shared time and space together then, lessons were taught, laughter, awe, fright, and wonder filled the nights through these stories. Today, the people look to these historic documents to remember and learn again.

Pueblo people's history and sacred knowledge is passed down orally and is not written. Historically for the pueblo people, it was taboo to share any knowledge or information about the religious practices of the people with anyone who was not a part of the community. Even after five hundred years, the People continue to be wary of sharing this knowledge. This is why they have been able to maintain many of their sacredly held beliefs and practices. This level of secrecy was practiced after contact with Spanish Europeans and much of the very inner circle practices remained hidden till very recent times.

A few decades after Charles Lummis recorded Isleta stories, recorded songs, took photographs of Isleta People, another outsider pierced the veil of secrecy when she covertly engaged the trust of two Isleta Pueblo men. This woman was named Elsie Clews Parsons, she was an anthropologist who was interested in studying Indigenous people and specifically native people in the Southwest region. She started her fieldwork in the Southwest in 1917 escaping American hysteria caused from entry into war<sup>19</sup>. Parsons was curious about how these cultures combine and recombine and wanted to study them. She wanted to reassure people that the

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<sup>19</sup> Desley Deacon, *Elsie Clews Parsons: Inventing modern Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 222.

mixing of cultures did not always or necessarily mean cultural clash or cultural disintegration. Her focus was studying changing culture, opposed to other anthropology that studies cultures of the past. Dozier mentions in his analysis of anthropology that “Parsons’ work covering a span of almost twenty-five years is the most reliable and the most voluminous of Pueblo studies”<sup>20</sup>. She spent a number of these years studying the culture of Isleta pueblo. Isleta was not the only pueblo she studied, she studied many Eastern pueblos in New Mexico, including Laguna Pueblo. Laguna pueblo being the pueblo that she studied the most of her studies in. Some of her work on Laguna being “*Notes on ceremonialism at Laguna*”, “*Laguna genealogies*”, and “*Pueblo mothers and children: essays*” to name a few.

Elise Clews Parsons wrote an ethnographic report in 1929/30, about Pueblo history, ceremonies, traditions, oral stories and rituals that included a section on Isleta Pueblo. It offered the reader a very studied and detailed insight into the sacred knowledge of the pueblo. The informant, Juan Abeita risked his reputation, perhaps even his life, just as had Joe B. Lente at the time they provided Parsons with the secretly held traditions and ceremonial life of the Isleta people. Little did anyone know at that time that the information they provided Parsons would later have value to them. Abeita was introduced to Parsons by a woman named Esther Goldfrank who worked with Parsons in the field of Anthropology. Goldfrank successfully secured an informant from Isleta who opened the door for her and Parsons to write about the internal life of the Isleta people, till then, kept secret<sup>21</sup>. Parsons wrote in detail about the customs and culture of Isleta Pueblo. In the table of contents, there are sections of this study that include: Town and

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<sup>20</sup> Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of the Southwest*, p. 84.

<sup>21</sup> Esther Schiff Goldfrank, Introduction to *Isleta Paintings Rev. Ed.* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1970), p. vi.

Population, Personal Life, Ceremonial Organizations, Rituals, Supernatural, and Calendar. The Calendar section lists various annual dances and ceremonies that occur throughout the year.

In one section of her writing, Parsons wrote about a few topics that would be considered taboo or unusual within society, in this section she writes about Insanity, Albinoism, and Man-Woman which can be referred to as transgenderism<sup>22</sup>. The word she describes as man-women is called 'lunide' in the Tiwa language. For example, she writes that according to her informants, there were no man-women, transgender people in Isleta at the time she was writing about Isleta. However, other informants, a man, and woman who are not named tell her that thirty years before, there was a transgender person named 'Palure' who died at an old age<sup>23</sup>. He wore women's clothing and lived alone. He was a plasterer. 'Palure' was called "mother" and boys would chop wood for him. It is written that he did not like girls. But the girls would visit his home to "...meet the boys"<sup>24</sup>. What can be inferred from this is that he played matchmaker by opening up his home and creating an environment where young people could openly meet and court. It also mentions how the girls who carried their babies on their backs rested at his home. He also made cakes favored by the people and would give them to the children. It could be said that 'Palure's' expression of a lifestyle he engaged in through activities that were generally those of a woman were accepted by the people. He was not ostracized or outcast by the people. In today's Pueblo society, perhaps due to the influence of the non-native, anti-gay and Christian/Catholic attitudes, the topic of having gay, bi-sexual orientations are not openly discussed.

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<sup>22</sup> Elsie Worthington Clews Parsons and Smithsonian Institution, *Isleta, New Mexico* (Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1932, p. 254.

<sup>23</sup> Parsons, *Isleta, New Mexico*, p. 246.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, p. 246.

Within Isleta Pueblo, there are members who identify as queer, gay, bi, etc. It is human nature for people to identify as queer or any sexual orientation, however, there are few members of Isleta who are “out” or open about their sexuality. Like until recently in western culture, the topic of sexuality and sexual preference are not openly discussed nor are they considered taboo within the Pueblo. The conversation about this topic is largely ignored, especially within the traditional setting. I myself, being a member of Isleta cannot think of any stories or folk-tales that mention any aspect of queerness or transgenderism. The elders who hold traditional leadership roles do not talk about this topic or encourage others to truly be themselves or to share their identity with the community. This topic of transgenderism has always made me feel as if this was something Isleta Pueblo was accepting of. Because of Parson’s writings on the subject, it is evident that queerness and transgenderism were accepted by the pueblo and that people who identified as such were free to be themselves.

Parsons goes on to write about a ceremony called the Scalp Dance<sup>25</sup>. This dance celebrates a successful win during a battle between the guards of the village and neighboring enemy tribes. This ceremony includes another victory celebration consisting of foot-races or running relays that are held for four consecutive weekends. The Scalp dance is held at the conclusion of the foot races. The dance consists of two lines of men who are referred to as the scalp-takers. They represent the warrior men who protect the village from raiding tribes. They wore buckskin clothes, and a beaded bandolier. Their faces were painted with stripes in various colors and they wore their hair loosely hung down their back. They danced and carried bows and arrows, guns, clubs, lances, and shields. Facing the men, the women danced wearing wool or dyed cotton black capes. The songs that were sung included many Navajo words and phrases,

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<sup>25</sup> Elsie Worthington Clews Parsons, and Esther Schiff Goldfrank, *Isleta Paintings. Rev. Ed.* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1970), p. 327.

usually pejorative against the enemy. Guns were fired and war hoops could be heard throughout the village during the dance. A lance was carried from which an enemy scalp, decorated with feathers is attached at the top. This dance is no longer practiced in the pueblo. This is an interesting dance because it symbolizes victory for Isleta against their enemies— the Navajo, Apache, and Comanche. Pueblo tribes along the Rio Grande all have a history of battling with other ‘nomadic’ tribes like the Navajo, Apache, and Ute tribes who would attempt to raid them for their crops and domestic animals.

Parsons wrote the book titled *Isleta Paintings*, published in 1970. This book contains writings about the various ceremonies and rituals that took place in Isleta Pueblo. The book contains detailed illustrations provided by her informant, Jose B. Lente, accompanied by written descriptions of the ceremonies or rituals depicted in his drawings. Her friend and fellow field study partner Esther Goldfrank wrote the introduction. Goldfrank discloses that this informant is from Isleta Pueblo and that he provided this sacred knowledge to Parsons. She also writes about the relationship he and Parsons had over a five-year period that enabled Parsons to gather the information she needed to write her book<sup>26</sup>. This relationship was fostered with the help of Goldfrank. Parsons could not have successfully procured an informant from Isleta without the aid of Goldfrank who procured Lente<sup>27</sup>. Once a relationship and payment agreement were established, Lente was then Parsons’ informant. His job was to provide Parsons with the watercolor illustrations and information on Isleta’s secret ceremonial knowledge that she used in her book. When Lente contacted the Bureau of American Ethnology through a Mr. Young, probably a storekeeper or trader at Isleta, he did not have a steady income<sup>28</sup>. Perhaps it was his

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<sup>26</sup> Goldfrank, Introduction to *Isleta Paintings*, p. X.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. vi.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. ix.



unemployment and the promise of money in exchange for his knowledge and paintings that led him to be an informant. While Lente was Parsons informant, he knew that the information that Parsons had on Isleta, would at times be mixed up and not always correct. He tells Parsons, "... you have all this in your history, only you have them all mixed up with other words and it is hard to straighten them out..."<sup>29</sup>. This statement by Lente confirms that some of this information on Isleta can be mixed up, however this does not invalidate the information Parsons wrote on Isleta culture.

In the book, *Isleta Paintings*, Parsons wrote about various dances and ceremonies that follow the seasonal calendar and take place throughout the year. Ceremonies and religious practices take place at special times during the spring and fall equinox or the summer and winter solstices. During these times of the year, a ceremony or dance is held in celebration of, for example, the crop harvest which would be held just before the fall equinox. At the time of the summer solstice and at the time of the winter solstice there are ceremonies and dances to pray to the sun and to 'dress him' anew for his journey across the world. In this book, Parsons writes about a calendar of different ceremonial events and dances that follow along with the annual months, January through December. These same traditional practices she writes about, still follow the ceremonial calendar that occurs at Isleta currently. The difference is that in the book, it describes some dances and ceremonies that are no longer practiced. These specific ceremonies or dances are interesting because they illustrate the ceremonial life of Isleta at one point in its history that no longer exists.

There is a dance that occurs in December that allegedly celebrates Christmas and the birth of the baby Jesus. This dance was originally a hunting dance that was performed during the

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. xii.

winter season to pray for a successful hunting season. When the Spaniards came and forbade the People to practice their traditional religion, the People were clever enough to fool the catholic friars into believing that they were dancing to celebrate the birth of the Christian messiah when in fact they were dancing to ensure a successful hunt to keep them supplied with meat for the winter.

Before midnight mass in the church of Saint Augustine at the Pueblo, a dance is performed by both moiety groups, the Black-eye clan and the Red-eye clan. Alternating dancers from the moiety sides, they dance in the church “to please the Saints”<sup>30</sup>. This practice of dancing inside the church was most likely initiated by the friars and then adopted by the people into their own organized calendar of ceremonies. Parsons, when describing the dance, notes the feathered headdress the men wore during this dance<sup>31</sup>. The men of the Red-eye clan wore a headdress of turkey feathers fanning out at the back of the head while the men of the Black-eye clan wear a sparrow-hawk feather headdress. This depiction and illustration are interesting because the dancers are wearing headdresses that are no longer worn for this dance. Another interesting aspect of this dance is that the women dancers of the Red-eye clan danced with turkey feathers. When this dance is practiced around Christmas, the men no longer wear a headdress and the women from both moieties dance with eagle feathers only.

A dance that is no longer practiced is called ‘Helele’. This ceremony was held for the sun in order to ensure a successful and plentiful harvest<sup>32</sup>. This dance is no longer practiced because the man who would initiate and oversee this ceremony named Hakamito died<sup>33</sup>. This

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<sup>30</sup> Parsons and Goldfrank, *Isleta Paintings*, p. 62.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 62.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 98.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. p. 143.

man held the position called 'Haukabede', which was the counterpart to the Town Chief also known as the Cacique. The Cacique appointed a person to this position and before the Haukabede died, the Cacique did not appoint a successor to that position. Helele was a dance supervised by the Haukabede with help from members of the War Society or 'Kumpawthlawen. Both the Haukabede and the Kumpawthlawen led the songs and conducted the dance. From the illustration that accompanies Parsons' description of the dance, it shows three men who she references as the notched-stick-players, 'Komnin', who are the ones playing the instrument called a rasp. They are sliding a deer leg bone along the notched stick attached to a gourd along with the chanting of the singers and a line of six women are dancing in front of them. This dance would have occurred simultaneously with the 'Thliwapör', a dance calling for moisture or snow during the wintertime. The 'Thliwapör' is still practiced to this day in the pueblo but is no longer accompanied by the 'Helele' dance. This is unfortunate for the Pueblo of Isleta to have lost a beautiful dance, but these depictions and illustrations offer a memory and story for the people to remind them of this once held dance.

The Ditch dance referred to as Qui D'hi is a dance that was held during the springtime<sup>34</sup>. This dance takes place in the Springtime before planting and when the acequias or irrigation canals are cleaned. This ceremony is held in preparation for the release of water into the acequias to irrigate the fields that have been prepared for planting. As part of this ceremony, prayers and songs are offered to the clouds and rain spirits for abundant moisture for their fields and crops. A procession of men and women is led into the village by the moiety chiefs. The men sing while the women dance by moving their arms up and down. Following this dance, another dance ceremony is held called 'Uwepör' or Fertility dance. This is a round dance similar to the

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid. 98.

one danced in Taos Pueblo, having been borrowed from the Sioux and Utes<sup>35</sup>. This dance was said to have been created during a time when the women of the pueblo were not bearing children and thus, the population was decreasing. The people then initiated a dance to foster courtship between the young men and women to encourage the likelihood that babies would be born. Parsons writes about the involvement of the moiety Kapyo's during this dance. Kapyo's are Pueblo clowns who are representations of sacred beings and were thought to only be a part of one of the 'Thliwapör' dances that take place during the end of the summertime. Presently, the Kapyo's only participate in the 'Thliwapör' dance that takes place during the fall, celebrating a bountiful harvest and praying for a moist winter. Because of the writings of Parsons, it is now known that the Kapyo's also participated in this dance, many months before they were known to come to the village. This discovery leads me to wonder if there were other times of the year that these sacred dancers participated in other dances.

Parsons wrote a section in her report, *Isleta, New Mexico* titled Town and Population. In this section, she wrote about the village layout and certain buildings that have special meaning to the people. Within Isleta Pueblo, certain structures are important because they are the places where rituals and dances occur. These dwellings are ceremonial houses called Kivas or in Tiwa 'Tula'. These are buildings where ceremonies are held as well as dances. So Most of these buildings are not outwardly special in architecture but are sacred to the people because they are sanctified like churches. The exception in accentuation to these buildings is the round kiva. This kiva is special because it is round, representing the circular, cyclical representation of life. This kiva is notable because it is where different dances like the 'Thliwapör' are still observed today and 'Helele' once was. This ceremonial structure is still standing within the village and different

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

ceremonies are still practiced within it. Parsons includes a map of important houses within the village in her work *Isleta, New Mexico* that includes an important observation that there was a second round-kiva for the Red-eye clan<sup>36</sup>. It is mentioned in this map that the current round-kiva that is now used by both moieties was once only used by the Black-eye moiety. This means that each moiety clan had their own round-house or kiva. Parsons does not explain what happened to the Red-eye round kiva. The only explanation she gives is the location where it used to be indicating that it was located on the opposite side of the village. The Black-eye round kiva is the one that is still used today.

Another ceremonial building that no longer exists today is the mud-plastered sweat house that used to be located on the west bank of the Rio Grande river southeast of the village proper. The architecture of the sweat house was a plains tipi shape and the walls and poles were plastered with mud except where the poles interlock on the top. Parsons writes that, “steaming under a blanket is a common practice in pueblo communities but not regular sweat bathing”<sup>37</sup>. This structure suggests that sweat bathing was a regular practice or ceremony. The sweat bath curing ceremony would take place only in the summer. It was conducted to help heal people with bone aches, skin diseases, and rheumatism<sup>38</sup>. The medicine men would pour water over the hot stones to create steam. The medicine man and his helper sang four songs with the patient. By the end of the fourth song, the patient ran out and jumped in the river to cool off quickly. Parsons mentions that this form of curing is “... ‘the hardest of all to get by’ (endure)”<sup>39</sup>. This was a curing ceremony that was difficult to go through. This structure used to stand near the river but

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<sup>36</sup> Parsons, *Isleta, New Mexico*, p. 200.

<sup>37</sup> Parsons and Goldfrank, *Isleta Paintings*, p.29.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 31.

was destroyed. The reason it was destroyed was that it was used in a curing ceremony by the medicine men society. When the old medicine man who knew how to cure using this sweat house died, it was then destroyed. This was one curing ceremony that was difficult to go through. This ceremonial practice ended when it was no longer known how to conduct the ceremony. Parsons and her informant did not mention when this ceremony was no longer practiced. Today, the ceremony of curing still exists but the involvement of sweat bathing no longer exists.

Within the village, there were huge ash piles that were located at each direction. These ash piles were created from ashes placed there from the fireplaces located in the kivas and in the homes of the people. These ash piles are used as protection borders from ill will and witches. In pueblo society, witches and witch societies are an ever-present part of life. This idea is a serious matter and not taken lightly. Ashes hold a protective guard against witchcraft and were places where food offerings were made to the spirits and the dead. When various ceremonies are practiced, when the people participating are going to share a meal together, food offerings are made for the spirits and the ancestors. The small pieces of food or offerings are taken to the nearest ash pile and buried<sup>40</sup>. An example of this is when the clan groups are nearing the end of their solstice ceremonies, before the clan leaders are about to eat, the head clan father offers food to the great spirit and the dead, and the food is taken to the ash pile<sup>41</sup>. The ash piles are highly regarded and respected and during certain ceremonies, during the duration of these days, people are not permitted to go to the ash piles<sup>42</sup>. These ash piles were sacred sites because ashes are considered protectants in pueblo society. Because they were elevated, these piles also served as

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<sup>40</sup> Parsons, *Isleta, New Mexico*, p. 299.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, 276.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 321.

places where the Town Cryer or War captain would make announcements or give news to the People. “Among Pueblos, orders, generally in connection with a ceremony, are called out from the rooftop or street, in this case from one of the ash piles or mounds, by the war captain”<sup>43</sup>. These ash piles had multiple uses in regard to ceremonial and civic announcements to the villagers. These piles have eroded to almost nothing because the villagers have adopted electric heating and not many homes still use the fireplace as much to heat their homes. If there are no ashes being produced from burning wood, the mounds are not being maintained and thus have decreased in size. The ash piles are also not being used to make announcements to the villagers anymore. This was still being practiced when Parsons wrote her book and ended about the early 1960’s.

Other buildings she points to are the homes of the Corn chiefs or clan fathers. These men have an important role in leading the different clans of Isleta. Clan groups are very important religious groups in Pueblo society. In the various pueblos, they have different clans that represent different animals, birds, vegetation, etc. In Isleta, there are a number of different clans that tribal members are a part of. In Parsons’s writings, *Isleta, New Mexico*, she writes that there were seven clans— Sun, Aspen, Magpies, Earth, Water-bubbling, Cane-blowing, and Corn of all colors: Eagle, Goose, and Parrot. She describes that one of these clans is grouped up with other clans and has subdivisions. The Corn of all colors group had subdivisions of the Eagle, Goose, and Parrot clans. This is interesting that during this time there were up to ten clans in total. Another report written by F. W. Hodge titled *Pueblo Indian Clans*, lists the various clans of the different pueblos. Hodge writes that he could find little to no information about the clans of Isleta, but when Charles F. Lummis lived in Isleta Pueblo and studied the Pueblo, he was able to

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<sup>43</sup> Parsons and Goldfrank, *Isleta Paintings*, p. 69.

record that there were sixteen clans at Isleta— Antelope, Blue-Corn, Red-Corn, Yellow-Corn, White-Corn, Deer, Eagle, Earth, Goose, Mole, Mountain Lion, Parrot, Sun, Turquoise, Water-Pebble, and Wolf<sup>44</sup>. Reports written by both Hodge and Parsons, describe the various clans of Isleta Pueblo. There is a chance that some of these names of clans can be errors. For example, Hodge describes a Turquoise clan, but the Tiwa name of this clan, ‘Shurmúyu-t’ aínin’, is the name for the Black-eye people. This is not a clan but is a moiety group and its function is to oversee the winter season dances and is not a typical clan. Both reports describe the names of clans that existed at the time of their writing but of these various clans only eight exist today— Eagle, Earth, Water-bubbling, Parrot, Sun, Corn of all colors, Aspen, and Magpie. Many clans don’t exist anymore because one probable cause was that the persons who led a clan died and remaining clan people did not take over the leadership for the clan to continue. However, because of these writings, it is known that there once existed clans like deer, wolf, mole, etc.

One house she also mentions is the last house that has a fireplace or hearth used for making Piki bread<sup>45</sup>. The house is numbered by her as House 23. The significance of this house that is mentioned is that it provides evidence that Isleta people made Piki bread. A special fireplace/ area of the home has to be made in order for the special griddle and tools are to be kept. Not every house in Isleta will have one of these fireplaces to make Piki and Parsons was informed that this was one of the last houses or places where Piki was made. It is important that this knowledge is known because it can give a time frame of when the tradition of Piki making had stopped in the Pueblo of Isleta.

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<sup>44</sup> F. W. Hodge, *Pueblo Indian Clans* (Washington: Anthropological Society of Washington, 1896), p. 347.

<sup>45</sup> Parsons, *Isleta, New Mexico*, p. 29.



Anthropologists have found the Southwest states to provide a great source of evidence on the ancient practices that were integral to the life of the indigenous people that lived in that area. Stephen Lekson, author of *A Study of Southwestern Archeology* believes that anthropology is a quartet of; cultural, biological, linguistics, and archeology. He has made a further claim about the southwest being “once a hotbed, even a hothouse of all four.”<sup>46</sup> The southwest was once a place that attracted anthropologists because of the richness of culture and history of the Native people that lived there. Edward P. Dozier, a Native anthropologist, once cited in an anthropological publication about Pueblo Indians, a brief history of the various anthropologists who have studied the Pueblo people. “Serious and meticulous ethnographic work in the Pueblos started in the late 19th century with Fewkes, the Mindeleffs, Stephen, Voth among the Hopi, Cushing with the Zuni. No comparable work on the Keresan and Tanoan Pueblos was performed until Parsons began her investigations at Laguna Pueblo in 1916. Bandelier (1890-92) carried out investigations at Cochiti and other Rio Grande Pueblos...”<sup>47</sup> Other contributors like Leslie White, Esther Goldfrank, Florence Hawley Ellis, and Charles Lange have contributed work on the Keresan Pueblos. The Hopi and Zuni are two pueblos on which much anthropological work has been done. The reason stated by Dozier is that these two 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.”<sup>48</sup> For the Keresan and Tanoan pueblos, they resent being studied and it is difficult getting information from them because of their experience with the Spaniards<sup>49</sup>. It is the same lesson

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<sup>46</sup> Stephen H. Lekson, *A Study of Southwestern Archeology* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2018), p. 187.

<sup>47</sup> Dozier, *The Pueblo Indians of the Southwest*, p. 84.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p. 84.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*.

ingrained in pueblo people that has not only interfered with anthropological studies but also safeguarded the traditional knowledge and culture that pueblo people still have to this day.

Among the Pueblo People, tradition and religion are highly regarded. Children were taught that divulging certain information about the inner, tightly held practices of their people could bring bad luck or illness. Thus, in the past, older tribal members who were suspected of being an informant to outsiders, especially to non-natives, were accused of practicing witchcraft. Such people were not punished but were often avoided. Joe Lente once quoted "...I hope they will never find out about this. If they do there will be plenty of trouble"<sup>50</sup>. In a recent occurrence of this nature, individuals were banished from their respective tribes for daring to participate in and violate the sacredness of a ceremony for which they had no standing to perform. Despite centuries of imposition by "outsiders", the Pueblos have managed to continue many of their ancient ceremonial practices, whether under the cover of darkness or through their stubborn refusal to open them up to public view. This is not to say that the People have not invited non-native friends and visitors to share in the beauty and sacredness of some of their ceremonies.

Today, we can read books written by Parsons, Lummis, Goldfrank, and others and learn about the life of our people in the early part of the 20th century. They all found interest in the southwest and specifically in the Pueblo of Isleta. If not for the research and documentation they recorded, Isleta Pueblo, nor I would not have been able to get a glimpse of Isleta life so many years ago. Perhaps the informants were not the betrayers of our people and ways as they were accused of. It has been a great lesson to me, as a Pueblo man to have learned about some of the lost and perhaps, long forgotten ceremonies that my people once practiced. This encourages me and hopefully others, to appreciate the wealth of traditional and ceremonial knowledge that my

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<sup>50</sup> Goldfrank, Introduction to *Isleta Paintings*, p. xi.

Pueblo People still hold sacred. Further, it motivates me to learn more about those forgotten ways.

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