

INDIAN ROCK ART OF THE SOUTHWEST

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Contents

Foreword	ix
Preface	xi
1. Introduction: Images on Stone	1
2. Techniques: Brush and Hammerstone	25
3. Hunters and Gatherers	33
4. Hohokam Rock Art of Southern Arizona	81
5. The Anasazi	105
6. The Fremont of Utah	163
7. The Mogollon	183
8. Pueblo Rock Art After A.D. 1300	243
9. Navajo and Apache Rock Art	301
10. Concluding Remarks	343
References	347
Lists of Illustrations	367
Index	373

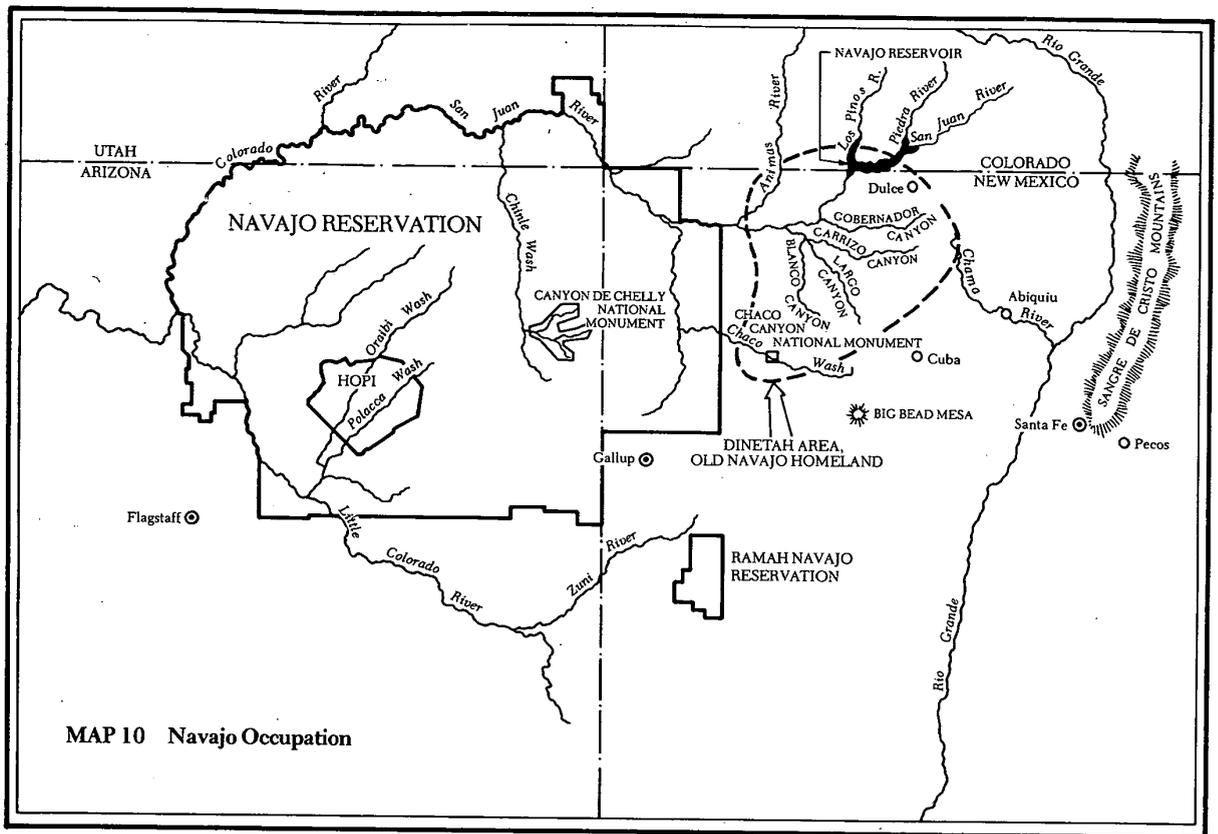
In these reports and others prior to 1626, the Apacheans are referred to either as Apaches or Querechos (Hester 1962:24), with no distinction between the Apache and the Navajo. In the seventeenth century several Apache groups in the Sangre de Cristo region were maintaining a semisedentary existence and raising gardens, but exactly when the Navajo emerged as an ethnic group distinct from other Apacheans and what the distinctions were at first are hazy points in southern Athabaskan culture history. At the first mention of the Navajo in a 1626 document of Fray Zárate Salmerón, as "Apaches de Nabaxu," they were living on the upper Chama River northwest of Santa Clara, where they were farming. The name "Nabaxu" is from a Tanoan word referring to "a place on the Rio Grande where a group was farming," the Spanish translation being *sementares grandes*, or "wide planted fields" (Hester 1962:21).

THE NAVAJO

Today the Navajos are the largest Indian tribe in the United States. They occupy an extensive reservation of nearly 24,000 square miles in the old Anasazi country on the Colorado Plateau, which includes much of northeastern Arizona and adjacent parts of New Mexico and Utah (Map 10). The earliest known Navajo remains, however, are to the east on the upper Chama River above Abiquiu (C. Schaafsma 1975, 1978), and these sites corroborate the historical references that mention Navajos on the upper Chama in the early 1600s (Bartlett 1932; Hodge, Hammond, and Rey 1945).

The history of Navajo and Pueblo contact, long and varied, is divisible into two periods. Initial contact dates from 1540 or earlier to 1680 and involves intermittent relationships (Hester 1971:51). During this period, agriculture was acquired by the Navajo and added to their hunting-and-gathering economy. The second period follows the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. By this time, the Navajo population was concentrated to the north and west in the upper San Juan drainage and the Gobernador District. To these mesa hinterlands some of the Pueblo Indians fled to live with the Navajos to escape Spanish oppression after the Reconquest of 1696:

This group of people who first occupied the area along the San Juan River in the present Navajo Reservoir District and who later shifted southward into the Gobernador District were, judging from ar-



archaeology and history, a mixed Indian group which formed as a result of the unsuccessful Pueblo Revolt of 1696. In 1696 Jemez Indians, Tewa from Santa Clara and San Ildefonso, and Keres from Cochiti moved northward from their homes on the Rio Grande and joined the Navajo (Forbes 1960:270-73) in order to escape Spanish domination. It is from these four groups—Jemez, Cochiti, Tewa and Navajo—that the 18th century inhabitants of the Gobernador seem likely to have been descended. (Carlson 1965:100)

This period in Navajo history in northwestern New Mexico, from about 1696 to 1775, is known as the Gobernador Phase (Hester 1962:63-65). During the early years of this phase the Navajo underwent intense Pueblo acculturation. Intermarriage probably occurred between Navajos and Pueblos, and many of the Pueblo people ultimately remained with the Navajos. The Navajo practice of matrilineal descent, matrilocal residence patterns, and clan structure are believed to derive from the Pueblos and are attributed to this

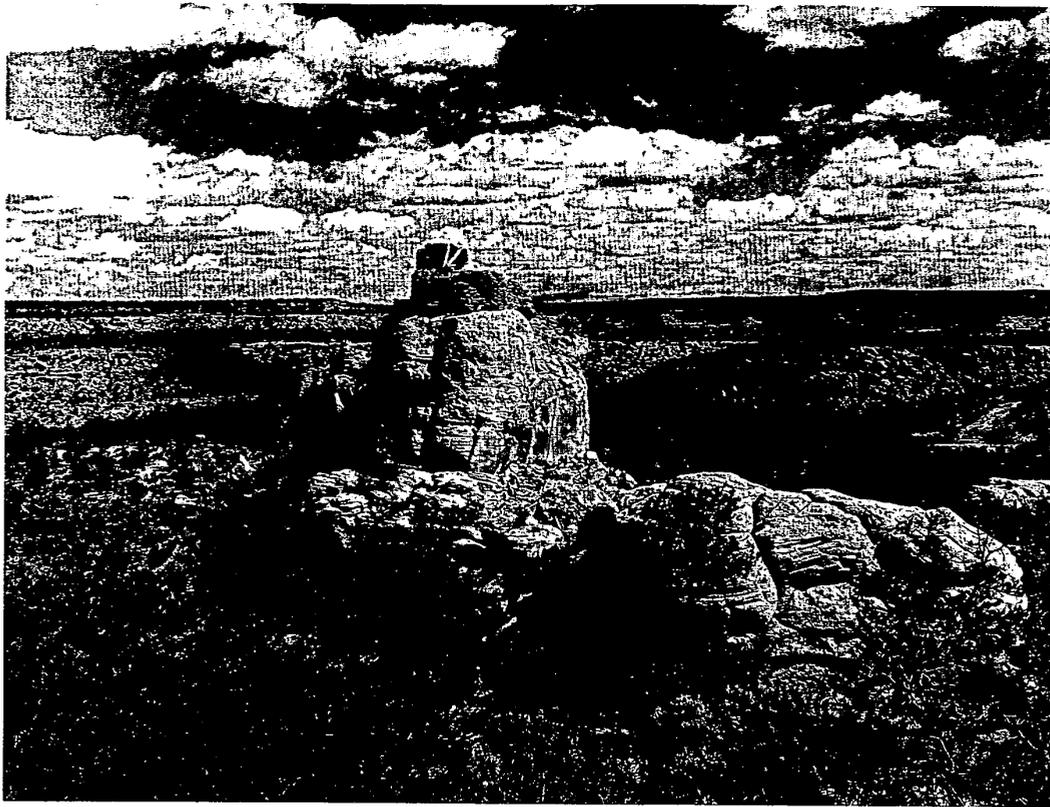


Figure 251. Eagle's Nest, Gobernador Phase Masonry Pueblito, Gobernador Canyon drainage, New Mexico. Photograph, Karl Kernberger.

period (Hester 1971:53). Archaeologically the period is recognized by forked-stick hogans along with the appearance of *pueblitos* (small masonry pueblo structures) and towers strategically situated in defensive locations on high points of land, apparently built for protection against the Utes and Comanches (Fig. 251). The settlement pattern is one of hogan clusters dispersed over a wide area and sometimes associated with the masonry *pueblitos*. In the Gobernador District there are the remains of large masonry citadels, with up to forty rooms, that probably provided protection for all the inhabitants in the locality in times of danger (Carlson 1965:100-101). Characteristic of the phase are a number of different pottery types, among which Dinetah Scored and Gobernador Polychrome are the most common, the latter being a Pueblo-derived type. In addition there are remains of eighteenth-century European trade goods. The Rabal document (Hill 1940) contains a good ethnographic account of the Gobernador Phase Navajo and describes them as using wooden implements for agriculture and growing

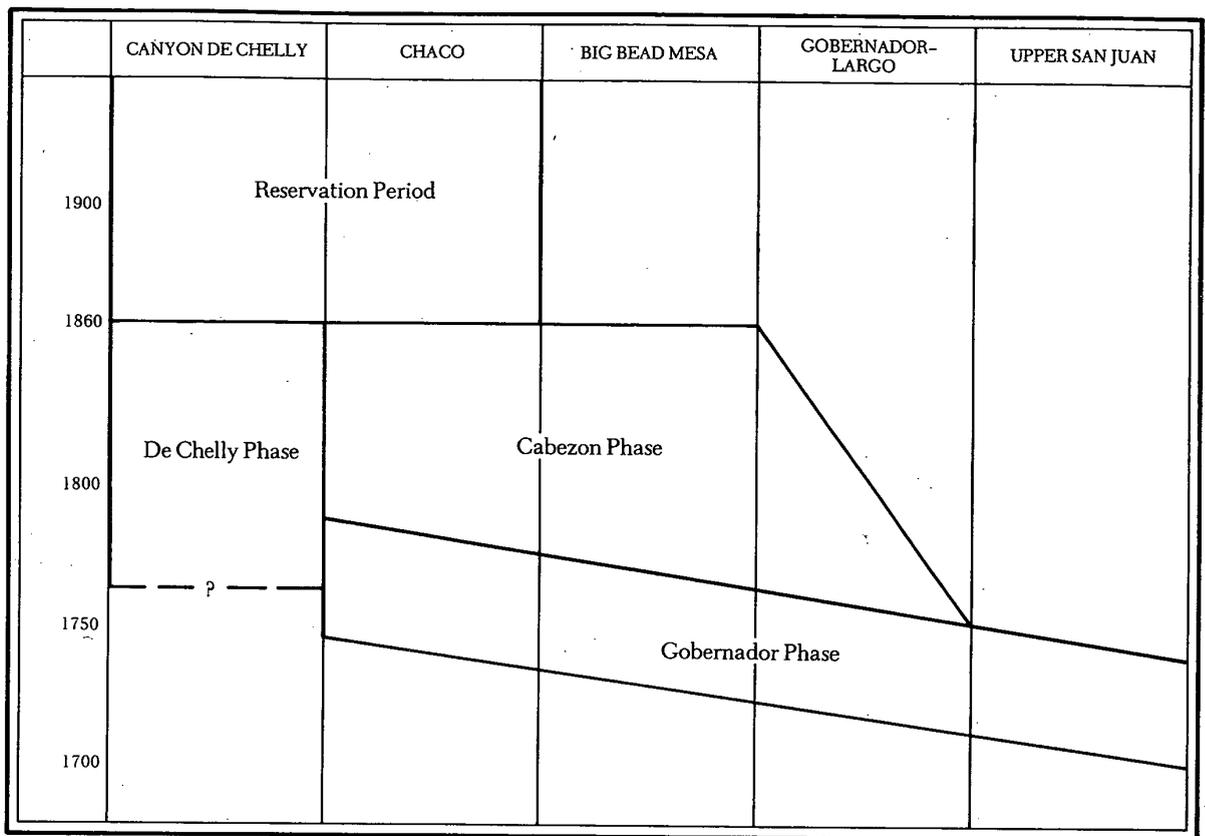


Figure 252. Chart showing approximate dates of various Navajo phases prior to the Reservation Period. (Modified after Hester 1962:Fig. 22).

maize, beans, pumpkins, and watermelons. Horses, goats, and sheep are reported, but “only the tracks of cattle” (Carlson 1965:101).

At this time many aspects of Pueblo religion, such as myths, certain ritual practices, paraphernalia, and art forms, were adopted by the Navajo. It is from this period that the first Navajo rock art is recognized. It is ceremonial in content and resembles both the Pueblo religious art of the period and modern Navajo drypainting art; in many respects, the rock drawings of the eighteenth-century Navajo may be regarded as intermediate between them.

The Gobernador Representational Style

The Gobernador Representational Style, previously referred to as simply Gobernador Phase Navajo rock art (P. Schaafsma 1963, 1966a, 1972:31-50), is known from the upper San Juan in the present Navajo Reservoir district and from the Gobernador and Largo drainages to the south (Map 10). This entire

region constitutes the old Navajo homeland or the Dinétah country of Navajo legends. A small number of rock drawings from this phase of Navajo history are also present in Chaco Canyon. Approximate dates for the Gobernador Phase in each of these localities is shown in Figure 252. The phase occurred earliest in the upper San Juan, or in the northernmost district, and slightly later farther south in the Gobernador-Largo and Chaco localities, respectively. The absence of the Gobernador Representational Style, with the exception of the planetaria or star ceilings in Canyon de Chelly, is evidence that either (1) the Navajo of Canyon de Chelly were not in close communication with those to the east (considering the degree of mobility possible by this time because of the horse, this seems unlikely), or (2) the Navajo were not occupying the canyon before 1750 or so. A recent reanalysis of tree-ring dates indicates that Navajo occupation may have begun there as late as the end of the 1700s (Brugge 1967:396-98) and thus supports the second possibility.

The portrayal of religious subjects in graphic form by the Navajo seems to have resulted from adopting the practices of the resident Pueblo population, who made petroglyphs in profusion in the Rio Grande drainage and who also made kiva murals, altar paintings, and drypaintings in connection with ritual functions. As we might expect, the Gobernador Representational Style is similar in both style and content to that of the contemporary Pueblos and is thus a further manifestation of the Jornada-Rio Grande art tradition and its associated ideology (Fig. 199). As organized structures within their respective and diverse cultural systems, however, the Pueblo and Navajo religions are quite dissimilar. The various associations and sodalities characteristic of Pueblo religious organization that serve to integrate the large village structures are absent among the Navajos. Navajo ceremonialism is directed by singers (shamans or medicine men) and is centered around curing, which Willey (1966:234) suggests is an Athabaskan focus carried over from the past. As we have seen, however, curing societies make up a major part of the religious structure of the Pueblos.

Like the Rio Grande style, eighteenth-century Navajo rock art depicts masked ceremonial human figures, shield bearers, shields, eagles, cloud terraces, birds, and corn plants (Figs. 199, 253). Occasionally masks alone are depicted, although these occur in the Navajo work in significantly smaller numbers. A comparison between Navajo supernaturals and ceremonial figures from the Pueblo kiva murals was made in an earlier study (P. Schaafsma 1963:58), where it was observed that both are outfitted with similar gear, including kilts, sashes, tassels, and necklaces. Some of their headdresses are