



**Temperament in Native American Religion.**

Barbara Aitken

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Until quite lately the Hopi have been less in contact with foreign cultures than the other Pueblo Indians, and the environmental conditions which may be supposed to have influenced the Pueblo culture in general have confronted them in a very extreme form. With the Hopi it is natural to include the Tewa (or Thanu) speaking people of Hano on the First Mesa of the Hopi Reservation, so closely assimilated to them; from whom, in fact, many of the examples will be taken.

The Hopi are just as much concerned with *life* as are the Winnebago. Explicitly, the object for which Hopi ceremonies are performed is "so as to live and not die, to go on living to be old men and women." And the common justification of ceremonies and of sacred stories is: "With these we have come along living up till now."

But in the Hopi religion there are developments which give to this life-interest an aspect very different from that which it bears among the Winnebago. Life, seen in terms of livelihood, here means successful corn-growing—corn-growing under semi-desert conditions—the hope of rain.

The first impression made by the Hopi religion is that it is a matter of collective ritual; ritual of chiefs, ritual of clans, ritual of societies, ritual of the whole village; and that all is focussed on a common object, the procuring of rain and germination for the crops. The characteristic form of ritual is the joyful, solemn public dance, following on the ceremony in the lodge. The spirits, the Katsinas, with few exceptions give no blessing to individuals but come "right here in the village" to bless the crops of the whole; and they are visibly represented by living actors. Every boy, qualified by a short formal fast, is put through the common initiation, which resolves itself into learning that the spirits whom he has seen are masked actors.

Characteristically and normally, instead of being urged to make himself *pitiable*, the Hopi is constantly exhorted to be *happy*; to "cast away sad thoughts, so as to live long and never be sick."

"So now you will all cast away sad thoughts and be happy and go up to our town, and think of living to walk about as white-haired men and women."

In particular, a man who is responsible for a ceremony says, "I have to be happy all the time from now to my dance."

In Winnebago theory, if a man falls sick, it is because he has departed from the attitude of serious remembrance and "pitiable" dependence on the spirit who has blessed him. But if a Hopi man falls sick, it is supposed that he has not held fast to being "happy." His uncles cross-examine him: "Why are you sick? you must have had bad (that is, sad or resentful) thoughts. Tell out your bad thoughts and throw them away."

"Then, if it is a lady, she generally says that she has been thinking of something some other lady said to her. And they tell her to forget it."

Sometimes a man is heard to say, "I don't know that I have been thinking of anything, only I am sick." He may even conjecture that it has to do with the boiled cornmeal dumplings he ate the day before. But his uncles (like the physicians in *Erewhon*) will have none of this, but insist on his confessing bad thoughts!

As for the Hopi priest-chief, his prime duty towards the people is to be happy—to avoid anxious or resentful thoughts—"to think good things for the people," that is, constantly to entertain confident thoughts about the coming harvest. A song sung at Hano in February runs thus:—

Whose talk is this,  
"Cloud flowers are here?"  
Satele's talk it is.  
Corn blossoms,  
Pumpkin blossoms,  
Cotton blossoms,  
Wild flower blossoms,  
Red, green, spreading widely.  
That is how we shall have the season.

And is Satele really thinking this all the time? "Well, we can't see his thought, but that is what he is supposed to be thinking!"<sup>1</sup>

Without laying too much stress on linguistic form, it may be noted that in one Pueblo language at least, the Tewa, the verb has no optative, and all requests and wishes are expressed by the future indicative tense. "He says, you will lend him your horse." "It will rain." "We shall be strong." The wishes which accompany offerings to supernatural beings, and the expressed intentions of dances and other ceremonies, are therefore couched in the form not of petitions but of confident future assertions. In songs, these assertions are perhaps oftener made in the present tense; it is asserted that the benefits sought are already obtained.

Away over there on the top of Sheep Mountain,  
Blue Cloud Men are standing;  
Here below mountain-sheep, male and female, are standing;  
Lovely afar their voice sounds,  
"Let us go to the Tewa town"—  
So they say as they come along the way.  
The turkey-feather road is lying;  
Along that road they are coming—  
Hi wa'a lolo'o ma  
Hi wa'a lolo'o ma  
Aya leho leho.

<sup>1</sup> Aitken, *Field Notes, Hano*, 1913.

Naturally connected with this is an enthusiastic appreciation of the efficacy of the ceremonies performed by oneself or by others :—

My old men, my old women,  
 Because of your work  
 Here in all directions now you will make offerings.  
 These are *your* jet clouds, darkness ;  
 Now it is going to rain ;  
 It comes apart : lightning splits :  
 Thunder sounds loudly.<sup>1</sup>

Rather than quote from Dorsey, Voth or Fewkes a description of one of the great Hopi ceremonies, let me give a Tewa man's account of a little Hopi function, which, in its unreflecting, cheerful objectivity, seems to me to represent the spirit of Hopi religion.

“ When some man sees that a spring wants cleaning out, if he feels inclined he tells the man to whom that spring belongs ; and that man feels glad, because the others are willing to clean the spring. He (the proposer) will go to the crier, taking his tobacco, and he smokes that, and afterwards he will ask him why he has come. He says he wants the crier to call out that we will clean Pofi P'oge in four days' time. 'The girls and women are to grind meal to make food for the men and boys and children to eat, noon and afternoon.' (Note that the people in general are put to expense and trouble, but take it as a favour.) 'All the men and boys,' he says, 'will go there, and when it is done they will come home, and coming home they will be happy and think of living to be old men and old women, and be kind to each other.' ”

“ On the day the crier walks four times to call the people. . . . He starts from Tewa and goes to Walpi, and the fourth time goes down from Walpi to the spring. They all go down to work ; the girls in their best dresses look on, and the married women work at carrying away the dirt. At noon the crier calls for them to eat ; but first they take some food of each kind and offer it to the spring ; then he calls again for them to be happy and eat—'not to be thinking *bad* things and eating.' 'Your bad things inside thought having thrown away, you shall eat.' ”

“ Then the man tells them to work again. The old men smoke all day while the young men and boys and children work. In the afternoon the owner of the spring must tell them to stop. He makes four prayer-feathers for the spring—that is, he makes them at home and takes them with him—and when they have done work he takes them to the water and fixes them there. He thanks the people, saying, 'Thanks, I am glad, my water you cleaned for me ; therefore, as we go hence to our house' (the village) 'taking along with you

<sup>1</sup> *Field Notes, Hano, 1913.*

the thought of living to be old men, we will go up and in to our town. This is the way, therefore, we habitually feel (or, we ought to feel) happy.' Then they eat and come home."

Or take this scene of triumphant joy, from the close of a miracle story :—

"While the people are looking, every kind of Katsinas are dancing, singing their own parts; and some are bringing two trees, and the Mu kwaedi are bringing a whole load of things; the Hehe'a are bringing a load of sand, and when they come into the house they spread sand all over the floor; and a tree at each end; and two water-snakes come out at two holes. The Katsinas dance, and it rains; the rain plants melons, pumpkins, beans, cotton, musk-melons and all, and they begin to grow. When they finish their first song the plants grow in bunches, when they finish the second song, in balls. Pumpkin tendrils go spreading all around the floor, and wrap themselves about the men as they sit. Those water-melons grow, turn into balls, get ripe; they pick them. Their corn grows ripe. They break open the water-melons and find them red and sweet."<sup>1</sup>

Voth quotes these among other songs used at the February Powamu ceremony at Oraibi<sup>2</sup> :—

"We are happy over the sunflower,  
We are happy over the sunflower.  
May it bring you a beautiful heart,  
May it bring you a long life."

"I am happy.  
I am happy.  
Over yonder, at Towanashabee,  
Yellow corn ear, my mother.  
May the children grow (*i.e.* the corn ears on the stalk),  
Being clothed (*i.e.* with the layers of corn husk).  
For decorating faces.  
I am happy."

"We have to be happy"; and, "We have to be kind to each other—we have to take care of each other." These are two connected ideals: confidence and co-operation.

This does not mean that there is an important amount of co-operative labour in Hopi corn-growing; still less does it mean any wholesale sharing of the crop. It is clearly understood that every family depends on its own crops, on the labour of its men, the thrift of its head woman; in times of scarcity each will take care that her own family starves last. The cornmeal that is so lavishly given away is

<sup>1</sup> Aitken, *Field Notes, Hano*, 1913.

<sup>2</sup> Voth, "The Oraibi Powamu Ceremony," *Field Columbian Museum*, Publ. 55, Anthr. Series, vol. iii, No. 1, 1901, pp. 138, 140.

scrupulously repaid. The working-parties for chiefs and leading clans, which give so much pleasure to the workers, are thought to be fully recompensed by the ritual contribution which the chiefs and the clans make to the general prosperity. The co-operation on which the Hopi lay most stress is a spiritual co-operation. The clans and the societies "take care of each other," the chiefs "take care of all their children," by contributing their special rain-making ceremonies and their "thought."

What is required by Hopi public opinion is unanimous confidence—a constant, hopeful enthusiasm for the general prosperity. To "want it not to rain" is, of course, a horrible sin against society. But one may do wrong involuntarily by *thinking* it will not rain. In times of unseasonable drought, when clouds come up and blow past again time after time, and "all the people are very anxious for rain," the chiefs call the people together in the open air and exhort them to have no "bad" thoughts. "No one shall think now that it will not rain; all just *let the rain come!*"<sup>1</sup>

Many of the features which we found characteristic of Winnebago religion recur among the Hopi. They, too, insist on the importance of concentration and the efficacy of concentrated thought. Dancers are continually exhorted to "keep their minds on the dance." Characteristic of a chief at Hano, for instance, are his "thought" (*amkyawo*) and his "heart-action" or "earnestness" (*pin'ang*); and all persons and things and animals that, as we should say, have mysterious power are credited at Hano with "heart-action." It is not only by elaborate dramatic ceremonies that rain is obtained; there are also little retired chambers underground "where they used to think for rain"—"rain-heart-action-houses."

The Bead Woman who keeps house for the Sun in his western lodge is said to have an altar set up with feathered prayer-sticks on the floor. The Sun hands over to her the prayer-sticks offered to himself, which he collects in his daily journey over the world; and she sets up the "good" prayers in her altar and throws the "bad" into the rubbish heap under the ladder. "These standing ones are the prayer-sticks made by people who really want the things they ask for, and as they think of them all the time they will get them, presumably; those who forget immediately after offering, their prayer-sticks are piled under the ladder."<sup>2</sup>

The cardinal Winnebago practice of fasting at puberty for a vision and seeking the blessing of a guardian spirit is generally said to be absent from the Pueblo culture. It is certainly not characteristic of it. But that there is some individual

<sup>1</sup> *Field Notes, Hano, 1913.* Mr. J. C. Flügel, who was present at the reading of this paper, pointed out "that as, in the individual mind, it is important for the purpose of suggestion that every kind of conflict should be abolished, so, apparently, in the common mind of the Hopi" (I should prefer to say, in the minds of those persons whose temperament dominates in Hopi religion) "the presence of one hostile mind would be disastrous, by reminding the others of the possibility of the failure of the thing wished for."

<sup>2</sup> *Field Notes, Hano, 1913.*