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perform in a superior manner, in a sense wore a halter which the Anglos used to check this Indian tyro from time to time.

Arrell Morgan Gibson
University of Oklahoma

Navajo History. Edited by Ethelou Yazzie and illustrated by Andy Tsihnahjinnie. Many Farms, Arizona: Navajo Community College Press, 1971. 100 pp. \$14.50 hardcover

The Navajo Curriculum Center at Rough Rock Demonstration School on the Navajo Reservation has been instrumental in changing the nature of Native American studies through their innovative approach to Indian culture, literature, and history. One of the ways in which the curriculum center and Navajo Community College have worked jointly to bring about this change has been through the publication of books such as *Navajo History*. The volume is not a chronological-historical narrative of Navajo relations with the Nakai (Hispanics) or the Bilagáana (Anglo-Americans). Rather it is "a statement of Navajo prehistory for the use of our students and others who may be interested in the earliest times as seen from the Navajo viewpoint." This volume is a Navajo history in the truest sense of the word, for it outlines the origin and development of the Diné, The People, as told by the traditional historians of the tribe.

There are many interpretations of Navajo creation stories, for there are many traditionalists who learned the stories from their ancestors with slight variations in the presentations. The stories outlined by Ethelou Yazzie are a composite of these various interpretations, and they represent an excellent overview of the many stories relating to creation. "At the beginning there was a place called the Black World, where only spirit people and Holy People lived." The holy people were the major force in the first world of the Navajos, and the influence of these beings is evident in Navajo cosmology today. The first world was filled with beings who conversed and interacted very closely with one another. The Beetles, Bat People, Black Ants, and other insects lived with First Man, First Woman, Spider Man, and

Spider Woman. Many of these beings had special power, but they could not all get along with one another. For this reason they moved like clouds into the Blue World.

Coyote, Wolf, Wild Cat, and Badger were all to be found in the second world, but the Blue World was not a happy place, so the beings asked First Man to help them leave. With streaks of lightning, a rainbow, and sun ray, First Man tried to create a method by which the beings could travel to the third world. But these failed, so he fashioned a wand made of jet, turquoise, and white shell. With this wand, First Man created the power and instrument that took the beings to the Yellow World. "The Blue-bird was the first to reach the Third World. After him came the First Four (First Man, First Woman, Coyote and one of the Insects) and then the others." The Yellow World was characterized by *Tó Bi Dahisk' id* (Place Where the Waters Crossed) and six sacred mountains. The Third World was inhabited by Turquoise Boy, White Shell Woman, Spider People, and Cat People. Coyote played an important role in the Yellow World, and because of one of his tricks, the People were forced to escape into the fourth and last world.

Coyote or *Ma'ii* had stolen the baby of the Water Monster as a prank, and the mother caused the world to be flooded. The People did not know about Coyote's deed and were afraid because of the great flood. First Man rescued the People after gathering elements of nature which gave him power to help the others escape the flood. Everyone gathered on White Shell Mountain and there waited while First Man used his power to make an escape. He tried three times to grow a plant that would reach so high that they would take the People into the next world. Finally, on his fourth try (the number four being sacred in the Navajo world), First Man planted a Female Reed which grew to the top of the sky. All of the People and the animals raced up the reed and entered the Glittering World. The turkey was the last one through the reed, and he was chased up the center of the plant by the flood waters. The foaming water churned around his feathers which is the reason that turkey feathers are white on their tips. Upon entering the Glittering World, the People learned that First Woman had instructed Coyote to take Water Monster's Baby, and all of them told Coyote to put the baby into the water. When Water Monster received the baby, the waters receded.

The volume proceeds to outline the history of the Diné in the Fourth World, dealing with many aspects of Navajo lifeway and culture including sacred mountains, sweat bathing, hogans, healing, agriculture, marriage, and mores. The book narrates stories of Changing Woman, the Slaying of the Monsters by the Twins, the origins of Navajo clans, and the migration of the People to the many corners of Dinétah, the Land of the People. *Navajo History* is not a traditional historical study as defined by most academic historians. Verse 10 might expect that the book would deal with contact history. However, there is much within the volume which would be of great use to serious historians and buffs interested in Native American history. Indeed, Navajo history cannot be understood without knowledge of the religion, culture, and literature of the Diné. The volume, first published in 1971, has great value to Navajo students and students of the Navajo people.

Clifford E. Trafzer
Washington State University



A Branch of California Redwood

by
William
Oandasán

William Oandasán is Yuki and Pilipino in ancestry. His poetry is American Indian traditional, political protest, contemporary spiritual, and Senryu pieces. From his Round Valley songs to free verse to Senryu to city surrealisms, William Oandasán carries the old ways forward into a new day—"fusions of dream and reality, red hope," the marvelous, genuine presentation of human existence. These poems fuse divergences of one poet who, in turn, speaks through us all, in a unified set of voices, given their many directions coming and going. In the traditions of native dance and song, William Oandasán's roots leaf forth here in *A Branch of California Redwood*. Prof. Kenneth Lincoln, English Dept., UCLA.

"The ideas of attempting to fuse the oral and literate components of the language, of bolstering the cultural foundations of Native American political rights, and the personal contribution toward this foundation, etc., have come after the spontaneous immergence of the first verses [of the *Round Valley Songs*] from the unconscious via sleep." from a letter to Leslie Ullman, 1978 Yale Younger Poet. William Oandasán.

1981. 72 pp. \$3.00

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