Notebook From the Trip to Visit the Hopi Indians' *

André Breton Text Established by Etienne-Alain Hubert

Museum in Northeast Arizona.¹ Photos of hairstyles of Hopi women: *before* marriage, in butterfly mode² /*drawing*/

after, running water [drawing]

Roughly 7000 Hopi all together with roughly 100 in the Oraibi area.

[Drawing: Hopi woman in profile with her hair in a ponytail and a white wool hairband.]

Navajos in Flagstaff. Turquoise bracelets, necklaces, and earrings (the turquoise is very blue, the only shade they appreciate). The women wear black velvet blouses with silver buttons and long black skirts made of velvet (25 yards of black velvet at \$4 a yard for a Navajo skirt) or silk, reminiscent of gypsy skirts in their color and size.

Booted. Blue turquoise. —Navajos see Hopi as cowardly.

Tuesday morning, 7th or 8th of August 1945

Awakening at Hotevilla, 6 kilometers from Oraibi, on a sand path underneath an apricot tree. The road is bordered with apricot, peach, and apple trees. Dappled sky.

Yesterday evening we arrived at Hotevilla—the houses are all made of sandstone—the high perched village shines like blond crystal amongst these rock structures organized along eroded table mesas that look as though they are piled on top of one another and resemble standing birds. As we walk, children crowd around us, more and more numerous, but run away as soon as we look at them, only to regroup, laughing. They wear Western clothing.

Old witchy woman with white hair, stirring maize that is entirely

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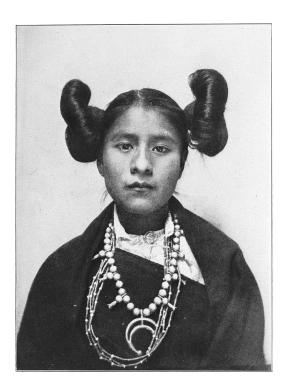


Fig. 1. Emri Kopte, A Hopi Beauty, in Leo Crane, Indians of the Enchanted Desert (Boston: Little, Brown, 1925), between pp. 358 and 359

black.

Kachinas in the houses where we enter, hung on the walls or laid

out.3

Blue Heoto warrior figure found at Moenkopi near Tuba City.⁴ Petroglyphs (look up this word)—Indian inscriptions.⁵

As we pitch our tents that evening, the owner of the fruit trees comes by, a Hopi named Pumasati. I talked to him about how interested we are in Kachinas in Europe—we have great admiration for Hopi art. "It's not too soon," he replied. Fairly defiant and ironic with regard to the Navajos, who steal apricots from the trees when they pass by. (He lets us taste the fruit.)

The day before, we arrived by a difficult route. By desert, and yet it is so different from the desert in Nevada. Sand. We pass a car driven by a Navajo nation employee who stops and provides directions (half in Navajo, half in English). No more venomous Gila Monster lizards at this altitude, although there are still snakes.⁶

A strange trophy made of animal horn along the road, with a few quartz stones at its feet.

At Hotevilla, a Hopi dinner: all of us sitting on the ground, our legs folded to one side. A meal shared around an animal skin, possibly goat (?): a sort of double crêpe and watermelon, with black seeds strewn on the ground at the edge of the animal skin.

Tuesday. Bought four dolls + a feather and a ribbon in Hotevilla. No permission to photograph. Must ask the Chief.

Indians: curiosity followed by mistrust (as if one automatically follows the other). A kind of erratic foolishness, but only in this sense.

Impossible to buy the three beautiful Kachinas with crenelations we were almost allowed to purchase for \$4.00.

Indian paint brush is the flower we see most amongst the sage and tomatored bushes.⁷

Little girls, six to eight years old wearing lipstick.

Hotevilla. A six- or seven-year old child tattooed in red and black, destined to become the tribe's medicine man?

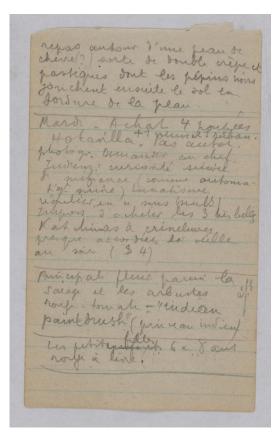


Fig. 2. Page from Breton's Hopi Notebook @ Aube Breton Elléouët; Association Atelier André Breton, http://www.andrebreton.fr

We hear singing in a house in Oraibi. It comes from an Indian who is training for the Snake Dance scheduled for August 22nd. On that occasion, the Hopi look for signs of the reptile. They must capture rattlesnakes of a certain size (very big). Sometimes they're bitten but don't seem to mind. During the dances they take a very powerful antidote to snake venom that is made according to a secret Hopi recipe known only to the elders. This formula is used as an antidote for snake bites at other times as well (a very effective cure).

Hotevilla. Complete refusal to cooperate with the United States, particularly during wars. Thirty young men were imprisoned for their refusal to participate in military service; they are released after a few months in the hope that they will change their minds but they remain implacable, they're imprisoned again, and that continues for four years.

Two photos by Elisa.

Old Oraibi.⁹ A young girl, smiling as she gets out of a car, becomes guarded (and she doesn't leave us; becomes increasingly hostile as we walk). The Chief introduces himself and opens his house to us (shields on the wall). He asks us to spell and pronounce his name on the door. He became the village Chief at the death of his uncle. May we take photographs? —No, they don't like it. He is very old and poor, with trachoma in one eye (a typical illness amongst the Indians). Many children suffer from skin diseases (of the face and scalp).

Old Oraibi, the last point of resistance against White settlers for the Hopi: the village was never abandoned afterwards and the residents are very proud of the fact.

Even after Oraibi was subdued, resistance to the settlers continued at Hotevilla and then at Moenkopi. The Revolution took place in 1906: it had been predicted for that year; certain Hopis were in favor of making peace with the American government; others were against it; the fighting took place along a designated front line. Although the first line of fighters won their skirmish, the second withdrew to Hotevilla. This anecdote illustrates the Hopi's pacifism. When Hopi children are hit in school by Navajo classmates, they just protect their faces with their arms (as told to us by the young ethnographer).

Clan of the devil / clan of the bear [schematic drawing of the meeting]

"Push of war"

1906 Youkeyouma (name of the Chief)

Engraved in stone with a drawing: Well it had to be this way now that when you pass me over this line it will be done. 11 This inscription is in English because the Hopi know only how to write in English.

The clan of the devil lost. Then the Chief turns on his heel and withdraws with his partisans for Hotevilla (even though the season is one of the most unfavorable).

The Chief presents us with a small decree in bad shape, which we

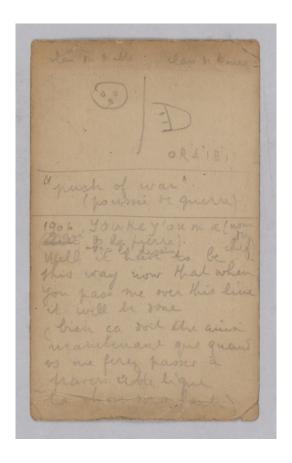


Fig. 3. Page from Breton's Hopi Notebook @ Aube Breton Elléouët; Association Atelier André Breton, http://www.andrebreton.fr

acknowledge (out of irritation-hostility?)

Mesa=table. Pueblo=village.

With Mr. Powers we are on the *Second Mesa* (we identify each *mesa* by the level and the rocky groupings of buildings which make up the Hopi *reservation*). There are three of them, the first one includes Polacca, the second, Shungopovi, Mishongnovi and Shipaulovi, the third, Oraibi. ¹² On each mesa and village there are variations in the designs of the Kachinas. This is how one of the mesas *[drawing of an ornament]* can produce slightly different designs *[drawing of a slightly different ornament]* from another one (according to Mr. Smith, the young ethnographer). Then there are individual variations, according to the artist.

The Hopi are monogamous, but fairly loose in their habits. Such loose moral standards do not touch a person's reputation or standing within the religion. Matriarchal. Children identify with the mother's clan, clan of the father. It's the

maternal uncle who bestows Kachinas on the children (check this).

If a child is naughty, his mother tells him he's ko-hopi (that he's not Hopi).

Thursday.

Shungopovi—Mr. Powers, the teacher on the *Second Mesa*.

Shungopovi, the village at the top of the rock we are climbing on foot. We return in the evening. Along the path, small tombs decorated with sticks of gray-blue or turquoise and of feathers, like fallen arrows from a parade.¹³

Better welcome than at Oraibi. We buy seven dolls, fairly recently made. The women are very entrepreneurial, beautiful with the beauty of stars. One of them walks with Elisa, whom she holds tightly around the waist: "Take me with you," and then she and two others try to drag her to the houses! They also dream of leaving in a car. A falcon poised on one foot on a roof, perched over the precipice as the sun sets. We return the next day. Photographs by me, by Jeanne, of the place where the dancers go (underground) after the ceremonies. No one else is ever allowed to go down there. This place made of stone, whose entry, like an orifice, is taller than a ladder, has the name of *kiva*.

Afternoon.

Mishongnovi (another village built like a pirate's or eagle's nest, in the same region (with Mr. and Mrs. Powers): we are told not to try to take photographs: the Indians could shoot and kill (exaggeration, see below: Hopi pacificism)).

Two large rocks (see photos) = the two bases of the Hopi civilization (there were three, one fell fifty years ago, earthquake). Legend has it that if they disappear, so will civilization. (They dominate the graveyard.) The ensemble of the two rocks together constitute the *Corn Rock*. ¹⁵ Children are not allowed to approach (Corn Rock).

Shipaulovi—Bought three dolls: Heoto [?] and Stag.

The Hopi are recognized as the best cultivators of dry land in the world. Extraordinary glow from the corn (ears of corn that are black?) in the valley.

Mr. Smith—The missionaries are always around but their efforts are without success. At the end of the nineteenth century the American government called the Hopi Chiefs to Washington and presented them with the choice of either having their sons educated by Americans in *Washington* or allowing certain enterprising missionaries (Methodist, Catholic) to enter and stay on their land. Discouraged by this ultimatum, they agreed to the latter, which means that the presence of these religious men is tolerated, but only just (when their word has been given, they utterly respect it, a salient trait of the Indian).¹⁶

Masks and Kachina figures

Blue: azurite

Green: malachite Red: hematite White: kaolin Black: obsidian

They're first prepared with gypsum (white) and galena (an iron mineral used as a brilliant powder).

Thursday evening, dinner with Mr. Smith, a twenty-year-old ethnographer, very nice. Normally he lives on the Apache *reservation* but spends his vacations at Mishongnovi where he lives with the Indians, sharing his life and meals (he has been a shepherd with the Hopi, as he is an Apache *medicine man*). Meals always have a basis in corn and goat meat. He has bought Hopi masks but he has always been very careful with them because he doesn't want to lose the friendship of the Hopi. The Zuni might kill if they found a White person in possession of masks; the Hopi, on the other hand, are less violent but would also be hostile to the idea. The Apache are less attached to the distribution of their ceremonial masks and Mr. Smith owns several.

At the origin of Hopi mythology: Apaches: Dr. Byron Cummings Kinishba ruins¹⁷—9 miles Whiteriver

Zuni: cf. the Zuni capital

The Kachinas are carved from *cottonwood* root from the river (Colorado River). The wood is then dried for a year (buried in sand). They don't make large figures any longer because of the increasing rarity of this wood.

Eagles are seen by the Hopi as an intermediary link between the earth and the sky: hence the importance of the eagle feather.

The eagle feather (held during the dance? or not?) is the vehicle for prayer directed at the sky.

Friday: Walpi the "pueblo of the clouds" [drawing] like a gigantic warship carved out of rock.¹⁹

At Taiwa near Walpi (a doll and a butterfly)

Keams Canyon (night of Friday to Saturday, August 11)²⁰ Violet doll

Look up the *Smithson[ian] Institute* 1901-1902²¹
23rd Report and 19th Report (Mishongnovi)
Feathers that are particularly appreciated by the Hopi: parrot, toucan, eagle.

Indians of the Enchanted Desert

By Leo Crane, Boston 1929 (Little, Brown & Cie)

Sunday, 12 August near Fort Apache²²:

Entry into the Apache zone

Pines, mountains covered in pine trees, road bordered with white poppies, like a white broth, yuccas, smell of skunk, cactus, tents of dried yucca.²³ Elisa takes a photo of Apache tents (in the Whiteriver region).

Photo at Kinishba, ruins (fragments of prehistoric pottery) going back 600 years, themselves built on ruins.

Apaches were considered to be prisoners of war until 1920 (they resisted for 20 years in the forests).

Slept the night at Saint-John—55 miles, Zuni.

Monday the 13th, morning. Zuni reservation. The city—Methodist missionaries are established in one of the world's ugliest buildings.

Hopi and Zuni are of the same origin. The first went eastward, the others, westward.

Zuni dolls impossible to find. We see one at the house of the teacher, Mrs. Gonzalez, without much significance but intact (feather necklace).

Drawings by teenage Indians (13 to 15 years old) at the school.

Dolls are not in the houses the way they are in the Hopi villages and when we ask in the *Kiva* (which women are not allowed to see) it's as if they don't hear our questions about finding such carved figures; the same with the owner of the local *Trading Post*, where we have bought turquoise earrings.

Women and girls wear large Spanish shawls.

Evening in Gallup.

Hopi—the Hopi houses are built so that you need to enter through the ceiling. We climbed ladders which are then removed at night to protect against enemies.

Search for snakes: in all four directions: one day towards the North; the second towards the West; the third towards the South, the fourth towards the East. Before leaving, they spend a few days praying and singing in the *kiva* (prayers to the Snake).

When a snake is found by the Hopi, they surround it and two of them sprinkle food over it and then grab it with their right hands.²⁴

See the article in the *Gallup Independent* on Zuni philosophy where it says that they venerate those animals and things according to their distance from

human beings (dog, snake). See the surrealist position.

15 August—Acoma:

On the road to Gallup—Acoma, *trading post* and zoos (*rattle snakes* and a *gila monster*). Photos by Elisa and large dolls.²⁵

Old Acoma is on the strangest, most beautiful site. Rocks looking like groupings of bears and night birds. Superb, labyrinthine staircase, cut out of the rock (Acoma, the Sky City). Old Acoma is no longer inhabited, except by two war chiefs (warrior chiefs) and a family that goes there every year. Heavy church in the style, more or less, of the village. Torrid temperatures. But there's a cave where the wind turns water into ice when it blows, down to 3° centigrade. Two Acoma women watch the visitors and invite them up from the top of the rock (poor pottery, a signed book, only \$1 per person).

17 August—Gallup—Opening of the ceremony under a beating rain. Six fires burning along the path enhance the *red* worn by the Indian spectators. When the dances end, the dancers gather around the six fires. Extraordinary spectacle: at the bottom, Indian cars with curved roofs glimmering by the light of the fires under the rain casting the colors worn by the shirts and skirts in a dramatic light that make one think of the war paintings by Watteau or Goya. The Indians around the six fires: the pattern they make is like six almond-shaped opals, with a color that flickers and enhances the red of the fires. In daylight, the next morning in the sunshine, it's the blue that is most evident (the color of the shirts worn by men).

18 August—Sand painting by two men and two women under the direction of the *medicine man*.²⁶ They paint with two fingers with dexterity. Birth of a leaf with veins executed so rapidly it's as if we are seeing it in accelerated time.

Photos, 18 August:

Welcome dance by the Hopi

(The same)

Squat dance, Oklahoma (the dance for planting)

(The same)

Dance of the stags San Juan (New Mexico)

Dance of the mountain goats (Cochiti Indians, New Mexico)

Cheyenne dance (Wyoming)

Navajo sand painting

(The same)

Very beautiful Midnight dance

-12. Indians from Santa Ana (New Mexico) with hair covering their faces (night of the 17th)

Return to the Second Mesa on August 21st Shungopovi: three dolls (two of them with long hair).

Dance of the Antelope at Mishongnovi 21 August

Two groups of dancers of which the first takes the lead on the stage, a group of *twelve* men, mostly older (gray or white hair). Naked torso painted red-brown, with white lightening tattoos. Red on the cheekbones. Black *Chin-covering*. Carpet-style red belt. The Kachina dancer on the right wears turquoise necklaces. They wear skirts created for the corn dance along with a pouch (?), a pendant from the Zuni rain dance [added later:] No, this ornament is Hopi. In their right hands, a rattle, in the left, a pinch of sacred food.

(Record = Victor disk 20043).

[Drawing of the painted face of a dancer with feathers in his hair.]

First group—bare feet painted white, bracelets around the calves in braided wool, with a black and red pattern (all the patterns are different).

Fire red feathers in the hair: feathers from a *Rhode Island* cock's tail. One of them (the third one) has a crown of leaves. They hold white *rattles*, behind, attached to the fox-skin belt (or from another animal, a gray or red fox or).²⁷ In each hand, a flat *rattle* holding corn.

The second group: *eleven* men and two children— shell or turquoise necklaces— orange and black feathers— rouge on the cheekbones. Shell bracelet on the right arm. An archer's bracelet like Urban's (*Hopi* archer's bracelet, not Navajo) on the other arm.²⁸ A turtle rattle on the right calf. White tattoos in oblong shapes except for a tattoo in the shape of a "brassiere." A leather bracelet just above the elbow with white incrustations. All wearing red boots.

[Drawing showing the village square, the stone and the small mound covered in branches.]

The dancers outline decreasing and increasing spiral-like circles in the square as they stamp their feet (on a hidden wooden plank under the earth) at the entryway to the hut (as they withdraw, they define a space that is four times *larger* than the planned path) and alternately sprinkle onto the stones, water, held in a lacquered wicker basket, and corn powder.

[Drawings showing the spirals outlined by the dancers. A map of the festival: the kisi that is 6 by 10 feet high, closed by a piece of cloth making a door (in a shelter made of pinewood where they place snakes or offerings) and the location of the spectators.]

[Two drawings showing how the dancers enter and leave the scene:]

Nadir.

Entry. Four times? They have six cardinal points N W S, Zenith and

Four unlit. As they go around for a third time, they throw corn powder on the fire.

They come out (four times). There's an analogy with the Greek symbol for a labyrinth (bracelets), which symbolize the Hopi village.

Very difficult to remember, two hours later, what the hut is for, the purpose of its role (as a hiding place, a place for conjuring), what it holds (the corn branches come out of it), how many times and on what occasions the two dancers enter and emerge from it. It is well covered (with dense foliage) on the bottom.

[Drawing of the mount with sheafs of cottonwood, very important object (kisi), fabric door.]

The dancers from the first and second group stand face to face. Those from the first group begin by shaking their rattles followed by a long chorus alternating with a murmur (a kind of prayer during which they execute steps forward and backward) while two dancers, one young, the other one older, with the older one grasping the younger one's shoulder and gripping in his left hand the corn cob that the younger one holds in his mouth, move between the two rows, singing:

[Sketch showing the movements of the two groups with two celebrants in front of the kisi.]

The atmosphere is of an *initiation. Very solemn*, very serious, the participants pay *no attention* at all to the entourage. Dance steps—always leading with the right foot, very light and not solemn but prolonged.

The first dancer, masked in white (a celebrant) moves from the second line, the second from the first.

Urban testifies that: [incomplete sentence]

The dancers from the second group represent the *Snake clan*, those of the first, *the Antelope clan*. Today's ceremony is taking place by invitation of the *Antelope clan*, tomorrow will by the Snake clan.

To start, vigorous walking in circles four times, hasty (it's as though they had already walked a long time and were *in a rush* to arrive despite being tired (the intervals between them are not equal, each one showing an individual level of energy without concern for the ensemble: very impressive)). The wooden plank

hidden under the earth that the dancers strike with their feet covers a hole called a *sipapu* that represents the entryway to the underground world. The call of the feet constitutes a message to the spirit of the *Great Plumed Serpent* at the origin of Hopi myth. Each time the dancers pass in front of the altar (the hut), they drop a pinch of sacred food.

The second group (the snakes), wear leather skirts, red feathers, and, in their right hands, a pot decorated with feathers. They circle *four* times.

Soft singing accompanied by swaying bodies.

The dance of the Antelope the 21st of August 1945 at Mishongnovi begins at 7 a.m. We are seated almost three hours in the square (on a bench in front of a house). Torrid heat. About twenty White spectators who don't behave very well (groups of young American girls keep entering the different houses asking "Do you have kachinas?" pushing, one woman nonchalantly swings her doll from a string, men joking vulgarly). I have just taken out my notebook and written two lines describing the costumes when I feel a hand on my shoulder and a voice behind me saying: "Give me your book." He takes it and stands behind me throughout the entire dance. He is told afterwards that I don't speak English and that I had only written two lines; he wants to see which ones and tears out that page, folds it, and takes it with him. If I start again I'll be chased out of the village (an American painter was asked to leave Oraibi yesterday by vote of the inhabitants, for sketching). The police officer, the Indian police, with a shield identifying him as a *Deputy*, is very angry. We are worried about not being admitted tomorrow for the Snake Dance. I tell Jeanne that I don't regret anything, that if I admire Hopi art, I don't feel at all obliged to respect Hopi religion any more than any other or to observe its prescriptions (fanaticism, anarchy). We can't figure out if the objection is rooted in religion or commerce.

Staggering problem: the Hopi are apparently the best cultivators of grain on dry land. Nonetheless, the government is proposing to irrigate their land. We can only just imagine what a problem that would be, aesthetically. Should there be irrigation in these circumstances? The population lives under duress. They are the ones who bestow a unique gravity on their ceremonies.

The Snake dance is the public demonstration that closes a secret nine-day ceremony conducted in the kivas by the Antelope and Snake clans.

Julia M. Buttree, author of *The Rhythm of the Red-man* (A.S. Barnes & Co, 1930, New York), who observed the Snake dance at Mishongnovi on August 21st 1927, notes that the Snake priests are led by an albino. This is not the case this time (I've observed a high proportion of albinos among the Hopi: I've met at least five).

The date of the Snake dance is never known until 10 days in advance.

They say that once the sun sheds a shadow from a certain rock in a certain way, they know. In any case, the date is always between the middle and the end of August.

The dance is a prayer for rain. The snakes are emissaries of the powers of the rain.

Beginning: soft singing accompanied by bodies swaying from side to side and the movement of their feathered staffs. They rapidly shake their feathered staffs in the air, twice on the left, twice on the right, nine times (for a total of eighteen times); all of this is repeated five times. Occasionally, they shake their staffs three times instead of twice. They sing in rhythm, although it can be hard to hear their voices clearly. The rhythm seems to be 1—2—3—pause; 1—2—3—pause, then loud—soft on the left, soft on the right with the movement of the feathers, then loud on the left and pause on the right, in the rhythm of the song (according to the above-cited book by J.M. Buttree).

22 August: Snake dance, Mishongnovi

Four to six hour wait, more or less. Over one hundred cars. Sun followed by stormy rain. Light clouds. Fat rain drops under the sun. Entry of the Antelope-priests (eleven Indians, including the dancer with the corncob from the day before).

The S priests (of the Snake), of which thirteen are children (8 to 9 years old). Painted faces: red foreheads, and everything else black—a white band around the neck. Bodies, brown-black.

On the right arm of the Antelope-priests, held in place by a bracelet, they wear poplar branches. Brown moccasins.

Kisi: same as yesterday.

After about three minutes of song, abrupt stop. One of them steps away from the group and turns back, as though looking for someone in particular. Consultation amongst the priests of the Snake (apparently disoriented). Finally, he designates one of the Indian policemen (which would be part of his initiation and would allow him, after a few more tests, to be admitted into the clan of the Snake). According to John (Hopi Indian), this policeman had converted to Christianity (Baptist sect), as well as his wife, but the Chief retains power over him (if he refuses, he would lose his job as a policeman immediately).

What I just described comes from J.M. Buttree. It is thus up to the person so chosen to hand the snakes over to those who are in the *kisi*, behind the line.

The priests of the Snake then gather together in groups of three: the second one puts his left arm around the neck of the first one. The first one places his right arm around the waist of the second one. The third one walks behind them, with number four acting like number one, and number five, like number two, number

six like number three, and so on.

They begin another song, louder this time, sketching a circle and each time raising their right legs higher than their left. In intervals, the right foot stays suspended in the air and holds for two counts. The second time around, the newly initiated begins to hand them the snake, which is taken by the first one in his mouth, roughly four inches from the snake's head, with the tail wrapped around his left arm.

The second one continues to shake the *feathered staff* in front of the snake's head. Same for numbers four and five.

In the meantime, number three and number six walk behind each pair.

SNAKE DANCE transcription of music (from J.M. Buttree)

This happens just at the point when number one and number four throw the snakes on the ground. That is when numbers three and six begin to handle the snakes, to turn them away from the spectators and to pick them up. With the next round, a new snake is given to each of the leaders and the same process continues. (Today, about twenty to twenty-five snakes, of which four are *rattlers* and several others are *bull-snakes*.) At the end of the dance, numbers three and six have their hands full of snakes. We often get the impression that one of the dancers has been bitten. Often, one of the snakes moves up around the face towards the eyes.

Once the priests start to dance, three women appear on one side and nine on the other, enveloped in shawls. When all the snakes have been used, the dancers throw them all on the ground after the first priest has traced a circle of corn and drawn the six directions (snakes inside of this circle, from which they begin to escape). At this moment, the dancers pick up as many snakes as possible and leave, going in the four directions to the places where they found the snakes nine days earlier. After an hour, they return and enter the *kina* in order to re-emerge dressed only in loincloths and then they go to bathe. Afterwards, they absorb a quart of liquid that is very thick and green and brown that the women bring to them (an emetic).

The dancers spend nine days in the *kiva without eating* (?), bathing and manipulating the snakes (Buttree).

Today: the women pass around some sacred food to the dancers and they cover the snakes with this food while they're in the circle.

Six rattle snakes. The others, bull-snakes.

Antelope-priests: the third is crowned with leaves and holds a bowl of water.

The child who takes up the rear of the Snake-priests carries a sort of bow from which hang red feathers that we had seen previously on the *kiva*.

At this point we can see in the distance the dancers returning from bathing while the child with the bow runs towards the rocks. This child had signaled some distress during the two first rounds, caused by the feathers falling on his face. He gained confidence, however, once he was able to stop and adjust his headdress at the beginning of the song.

According to Bill Smith, Hopi children are not afraid of snakes. Nevertheless, as he puts the snake down, this child seems a bit nervous.

23 August.

At the house of Mr. Powers, an Indian of about fifty, Peter, has just brought a basket of peaches. We talk to him about the dance from the day before (some of the people who came by the school during the day said they thought it was mediocre, since they had already seen several *Snake dances*). This Indian has a beautiful face, with great spirituality and, intermittently, an occasional smile that is very fine and very mysterious. Yes, this feast is beautiful and moving, he says, for those you can appreciate the *depth* (*the background*). Nonetheless, he deplores how the presence of Whites has detracted from the solemnity and how the priests do not conduct themselves the way they used to do. In the time of my grandfather, he says, I remember, it was something else. But how can it be otherwise if, during the ceremony, people are moving around any which way on the rooftops while drinking Coca-Colas?

The tumuli we can see in the fields, he explains, were built around places where snakes have been found so that the priests can return to take them.

Peter has a ranch nearby, with two hundred and forty sheep. A few years ago, the American government reduced the quantity of animals allowed for Indians to raise (because of insufficient grazing land). The number of animals that are raised is proportional to the size of the extended family (Peter has ten children). There are other equivalences in play, as well: one horse = twenty sheep; one cow = five, etc.

In the village of Shungopovi eighteen Indians receive government aid because they are indigent.

Each year a program for planting is established by the men, together, that results in long deliberations that take place over several days. During this time, the women gather and prepare a common meal. They always help one another: if one family kills a cow or profits from it, the other families gain a larger share of the harvest, etc.

Hopi children are extremely docile in school. The instructor can absent himself for two hours from the classroom and, upon his return, he will find everything in order and the assignment completed. They never fight, even if they sometimes have lively verbal exchanges.

We ask Peter about the exact meaning of the word *Bohana*, which Indians use for Whites.²⁹ He answers with great decisiveness and eloquence. *Bo-hana* designates the White person (he doesn't answer when we ask him if the word is

pejorative). But *Bohana* has another meaning, which he was told by his grandfather. He learned from his grandfather that, in the past, Indian land was taken away but that one day the *Boha-na* would return the land. (He speaks with great conviction, with a great interior light. The word *Bo-a-na* is often repeated at the beginning of a sentence, as if he was defining the word wisely and magnificently with the tone of his voice.) He withdraws after this explanation. He cultivates corn and beans (just a little, in the third degree, equivalent to eight or nine years). Extraordinary nobility.

A doctor comes by every eight days. The hospital isn't far. There's a specialist in tracheotomy. There are lessons in hygiene at school.

Friday, 24 August—Ruins at Awatowy (Hopi name) or Talahogan (Navajo name), along with Powers and John.³⁰

Pottery. E. [Elisa] finds a fragment similar to the pottery found in flea markets of *Indian Art* of which I had just spoken. —Azurite—two or three arrows (near Keams Canyon). On the difficult road, ferrous formations, hematite, which we initially mistake for meteorites.

Saturday, 25 August

Cow-dance (dance of the Cows) in old Oraibi. The dance begins at noon, Hopi time. About thirty dancers, with the same red, cascading belts. Masks with horns and large necklaces of what looks like tamarisk tree leaves, shell necklaces crossed over the chest and under the arms, necklaces. [Drawing showing a torso with decorations.]

The group is made of twenty-five cows, approximately, one bull (with a more realistic mask), a wolf (in a furred mask), a shepherd (wearing a mask like the small ones Robert Lebel bought in New York), with the nose in the shape of a pipe + a drum.³¹ He is the only one with a turquoise *rattle*, the other *rattles* are natural-colored.

Two men scatter powdered corn near each dancer.

After the meal that concludes this dance and that takes place at a certain distance from the square (women bringing provisions from all over, through the rocks), this dance is started anew and this time includes the participation of four clowns (in blue pants in bad shape, with their faces and torsos painted in black and white, necklaces made of green peppers, wide belts in wool) who are then joined, for the third dance, by a character masked in black and white with three pipes, whose head seems to have a kind of flat piece of wood on top, which is then set aside and set alight by other men; the others wear black outfits that look like workers's clothing. [Drawing of the mask.]

Little variation in the Cow dance. Sometimes the clowns break up the line of dancers, imitating the shepherd, who pretends to shoot his bow and arrow and stands apart from the line. They also imitate those who sprinkle corn. When the dancers withdraw, women bring lots of provisions (all kinds of breads, watermelon, oranges, hard-boiled eggs, orange drinks and gray sweets in the shape of rolled paper called *pikie*. They break up the watermelons and drop them, sometimes lobbing pieces at each another. The women who have brought the food withdraw after having been playfully teased and some of them remove their pepper necklaces. They pretend to dress up shrubs with them, after lengthy debate about where and how to place them. Each of the four clowns goes off; one brings back a broken box, another an outdated magazine. A third removes a European-style doll from his belt, which had been hanging down his back, and sits it down on a shrub, which also bears some of the necklaces, etc.

Women bring food and presents for the dancers who then distribute these to the Indian spectators (watermelon, bread, eggs, which are painted red, olive green, corncob yellow, orange). A Navajo in the first row (recognizable by his large hat decorated with a turquoise ribbon) receives three pieces of a broken, decorated bowl in an ironic fashion.

(According to Mrs. Powers) the clown in Hopi dances represents the most elementary spirit, uncontrolled. They impress the children by provoking their disapproval with exaggerated shaking. Hence, their continuous gesturing and cackling and their eating like slobs (digging out the watermelons with their hands and drinking out of the same bottle, spilling the orangeade they offer the doll). They crowd the drummer (as already mentioned), pulling off his headdress, pushing the ears or horns he's wearing onto his face; the drummer continues nonchalantly. [Drawing of the drummer's head.]

During one dance of the Kachinas, clowns disguised as cats appear suddenly on the rooftops.³² They imitate cats in the night; with various obscenities. They simulate lovemaking by taking positions typical of animals, chasing women in order to pretend to force them to copulate with them, etc.

Drummer: magnificent, with a mask the color of burnt sienna and his body painted.³³ I must look up what he represents exactly (something about him makes me think of the First Man, there is something eternal and animal about him, all at once, a kind of Baphomet, an idol of the Templars), he is the *mudhead* (head of mud).

The church in old Oraibi is separate from the houses and has no roof. It was destroyed by lightening! There was no desire to rebuild it. The Hopi, so peaceful, freed themselves around 1880 with a careful massacre of the priests and, as a result, these never returned.³⁴

Important to note the great sobriety of the dances, with few contortions. The Cow dancers' elbows stay close to their bodies. There's a certain monotony to the dance. The masks are very elaborate, with large black eyes, red earlobes, faces often painted pale blue with large white dots. Altogether, the ensemble is worthy of Seurat the pointillist painter rather than the work of a painter of animals.

Hopi landscape—Blonde stretches of silvered green—often the prairie looks like an emptied sea—the skies—small squares of corn, of beans—the importance of peaches, apricots.

We learn that the dancers (the Oraibi *Cow-dance*) come from Tuba City. Might they be Navajo? Powers imagines so, since the Hopi don't have cows. That's not a reason not to have cow dances (since they don't have antelopes, either): antelopes exist on the Navajo *reservation*.

Sunday, 26 August.

Snake-dance at Walpi. A thousand spectators perched on the rows of the most beautiful amphitheater I've ever seen. The decorated rooftops present the effect of theater balconies over three, two, or one floors. Quite a few onlookers in the square itself, others on the stairs that lead to the rooftops of the houses. In front of us, on the right, the great stone (appearing somewhat anthropomorphic), on the left, the kisi constructed of poplar leaves. Sky lightly stormy. A little rain. We had to climb the equivalent of twenty stories on the sand and rocks. Towards 6, entry of the Antelope priests, a group of four older men and two children, their outer arms bearing poplar branches. They arrange themselves on either side of the kisi. Then the Snake priests also enter by the path coming from behind the great stone. This entry is dramatic, as several observers have already noted. They run rather than walk: their faces, with unpainted foreheads; beneath, from the eyebrows to the mouth, there is black shiny paint, the color of tar; white chin. Variations from Mishongnovi: behind their heads, folded bundles of white feathers, earth-colored skirts marked with black zigzags with white drawings on them (Fig. 4). [sketch]

They are fourteen altogether, *all men*, of which some are elderly (old men). Their song is less beautiful and more muted than at Mishongnovi. It's harder to see the spiral sketched by the dancers when they arrive because of how cramped the square is. When the singing ends, the priests rush to the entrance of the *kisi*, obstructing our view by bending over towards it, all at once. The dancers organize themselves in pairs. On the left, in front, an elderly man walks with an anguished expression that remains unchanged with each circuit. Nonetheless, we are very

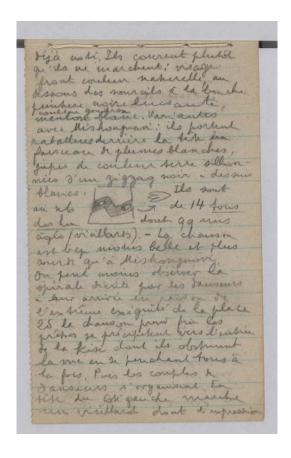


Fig. 4. Page from Breton's Hopi Notebook @ Aube Breton Elléouët; Association Atelier André Breton, http://www.andrebreton.fr

surprised when, after the first turn, we don't see a snake in his mouth. Once the circuit is complete and he has arrived again in front of the *kisi*, he literally spits out a small snake. These snakes are very different in size: on the next circuit, the head of another small snake emerges from his mouth, the same size as the previous one. Another dancer holds a snake that's at least four feet long or longer: Mr. Powers explains how they recently found a *rattlesnake* in the area that was 20 feet long (bought by a circus, as a rarity). One of the dancers passes by with a snake literally encircling his lips: almost as though he were wearing make-up. These snakes are very active and the dancer who moves forward, paired with the one holding the snake, keeps his attention entirely focused on them, his feathered staff never leaving the head or the body of the animal, which, at times, he moves sharply away from the dancer's body. Expression of utter ecstasy on the face of the third dancer, a man of about twenty-five; he holds his head high with his eyes closed, even though he needs to climb and descend two steps each time he approaches the great stone. In general,

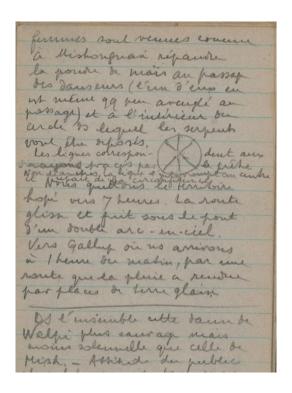


Fig. 5. Page from Breton's Hopi Notebook @ Aube Breton Elléouët; Association Atelier André Breton, http://www.andrebreton.fr

he holds large snakes that slink along the entire length of his body. There are many snakes: about fifty of them. At the end of the dance, those in charge of picking them up after having moved them away from the spectators who are standing nearby, have their *fists full* of them. Two nuns in the audience are as disagreeable as possible. Two dancers have been bitten on the face. The same ceremony on the return of eight dancers from the four directions; six are left to execute the final dance. Women have come from Mishongnovi to shake the corn powder at the feet of the dancers (one of whom is even a bit blinded by it as he goes by) and inside the circle where the snakes will be placed (Fig. 5). [Here, a drawing of the circle with spokes radiating out of it.]

The lines correspond to the radiating spokes drawn by the priest. No diameters. The line is interrupted at the center and then continues to the circumference.

We leave the Hopi reservation around 7. The road slides and

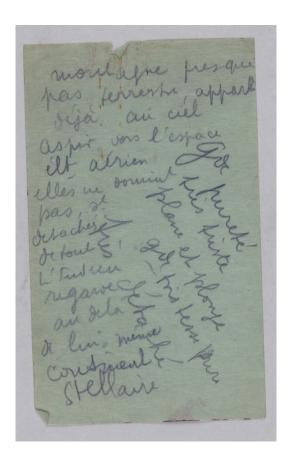


Fig. 6. Page from Breton's Hopi Notebook @ Aube Breton Elléouët; Association Atelier André Breton, http://www.andrebreton.fr

disappears under the bridge of a double rainbow. Towards Gallup, where we arrive at 1 a.m., on a road that the rain has turned into clay in places.

Altogether, this dance at Walpi, was wilder and yet less solemn than at Mishongnovi. The public was even less tactful (chatting and laughing).

Snake-dance Walpi. While the dancers take the snakes into the kisi, the other dancers hold up the wolf-skins of the first ones and stroke them with their feathered staffs.

Gallup 27 August.

Purchase of eight Zuni drawings.

Gallup-Albuquerque (evening arrival).

(Walpi) Insist upon the value of this very profound communication with the hearth, which supplements everything here—its complete, incontestable

authenticity.

The dance at Oraibi: in Gallup we see the designs for the costumes worn in the Cow dance by a *Zuni* (in reference to the constant exchanges between these three tribes).

[On a sheet slipped into the notebook, Fig. 6:]

Great purity very sad glides and plunges
great pure sadness
mountain almost not terrestrial, already belonging to the sky
aspires towards space
element of air
they do not smile, are detached from everything
The Indian looks beyond himself
Stellar continent

Translation from the French by Katharine Conley

- *Translator's note: This text was established by Etienne-Alain Hubert and published under his direction, along with Philippe Bernier, Marie-Claire Dumas, and José Pierre. André Breton, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 3, eds. Marguerite Bonnet and Etienne-Alain Hubert (Paris: Gallimard-coll. Pléiade, 1999), pp. 183-209. This translation includes Etienne-Alain's footnotes to the "Notebook," Breton, *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 3, pp. 1225-1227. I thank Claudia Mesch, Danielle Moretti-Langholz, Wes Bernardini, Marie Mauzé, Marie-Claire Dumas, Constance Krebs, and Fabrice Flahutez for their advice in producing this translation and to Anne-Solange Noble for facilitating permissions and Aube Breton Elléouët and Etienne-Alain Hubert for granting permission.
- 1 See the collection of Hopi katsinam at the Museum of Northern Arizona in Flagstaff, Arizona, dedicated to ethnology and archeology.
- 2 This hairstyle is usually called "in bloom." Translator's note: Breton is citing Leo Crane, *Indians of the Enchanted Desert* (Boston: Little Brown, 1929), p. 338. In Breton's notes on Crane's book he writes: "Photo. A Hopi beauty. The dressing of the hair in these peculiar whorls (or squash blossoms) requires hours of the mother's time. It is the symbol of womanhood." My thanks to Etienne-Alain Hubert for showing me these notes.
- 3 Translator's note: Breton refers to kachinas to designate Hopi spiritual figures as well as the dancers, the drawings, and carved figures that represent them, which he also designates as dolls. Carved katsina figures are known as katsinam or *tithu* in the Hopi language. See Wesley Bernardini, Stewart B. Koyiyumptewa, Gregson Schachner, and Leigh Kuwanwisiwma, *Becoming Hopi, a History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2021), 312.
- 4 Category of katsinam representing a warrior, spelled Heoto, Hoote, Ohote, or Abote. (The warrior-Kachina, the "Turbulent One," is represented with a remarkable blue face in André Breton's collection and may be seen in the exhibition catalogue *La Danse des Kachina*, no. 10.) Tuba City is located about one hundred kilometers northeast of Flagstaff.
- 5 See the photograph of Hopi petroglyphs Breton brought back from Arizona reproduced in *L'Art Magique* (Paris: Club français du livre, 1957), p. 140. Translator's note: See André Breton, *Ecris sur l'art et autres textes, Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 4, eds. Etienne-Alain Hubert, with Philippe Bernier and Marie-Claire Dumas (Paris: Gallimard, 2008), 185.
- 6 A Gila monster is a type of heloderma, a large lizard with a skin covered by protuberances. Breton refers to as "l'héloderme suspect" in "Le grand secours meurtrier," in *Oeuvres complètes*, vol. 2, ed. Marguerite Bonnet, with Philippe Bernier, Etienne-Alain Hubert, and José Pierre (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 99-100. Translator's note: Bill Zavatsky and Zack Rogow translate "l'héloderme suspect" as the "suspicious gila monster" in "The Deadly Helping Hand," *Earthlight*, trans. Bill Zavatsky and Zack Rogow (Toronto: Coach House Press, 1993), 128-29.
- 7 A North American herbaceous plant.
- 8 "Rattlesnakes" in English in the original.
- 9 In 1906, as a result of the tension between the "Friendlies" and the "Hostiles," partisans of opposing attitudes with regard to the United States government, a secession occurred whereby a portion of the "Hostiles" living in Oraibi moved away to Hotevilla, Moenkopi, and a reconfigured Oraibi.
- 10 This episode took place in 1906 and is described in detail by Mischa Titiev in *Old Oraibi, A Study of the Hopi Indians of Third Mesa* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1944), 86.
- 11 This inscription, dated September 8th, is reproduced in Titiev, 86. "Yokioma" or "Youkeoma" was one of the Chiefs of the "Hostiles."
- 12 Translator's note: contemporary spellings for these villages are: Orayvi, Songòopavi or Shongopavi, Musangnuvi, Walpi, and Hotvela. See Thomas E. Sheridan, Stewart B. Koyiyumptewa, Anton Daughters, Dale S. Brenneman, T.J. Ferguson, Leigh Kuwanwisiwma, and Lee Wayne Lomayestewa, *Moquis and Kastiilam, Hopis, Spaniards, and the Trauma of History Volume I, 1540-1679* (Tucson: University

- of Arizona Press, 2015), 5, 11.
- 13 See the illustration representing this kind of mausoleum in Crane, 338.
- 14 Jeanne Reynal. See Etienne-Alain Hubert, "Introduction to 'Notebook from the Trip to visit the Hopi Indians' by André Breton," note 2.
- 15 See Crane, between pages 238 and 239: the illustration of "Corn Rock: An Ancient Bartering Place of the Indians; A Second Mesa Landmark." EAH with translator.
- 16 See Titiev, 73.
- 17 Byron Cummings, *Kinishba, A Prehistoric Pueblo of the Great Pueblo Period* (Tucson: Hokokam Museums Association, 1940).
- 18 A variety of poplar tree.
- 19 The word *pueblo* designates both the Indians of Arizona and New Mexico and the villages they inhabit.
- 20 East of the Hopi reservation.
- 21 The full title: Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology. In the XIXth report (1897-
- 1898), J.W. Fewkes presents snake ceremonies at Mishongnovi and Walpi, with evocations of them, illustrated with photographs, which confirm the descriptions in the Notebook; the XXIIIrd report (1901-1902) is dedicated to the Zuni.
- 22 Indian reservation of the same name, roughly 200 kilometers south of the Hopi reservation.
- 23 "Skunk" in English in the original.
- 24 Find the details in Leo Crane, Indians of the Enchanted Desert (Boston: Little Brown, 1929), 260-61.
- 25 Acoma Pueblo is located between Gallup and Albuquerque (New Mexico).
- 26 Sand paintings, also known as "sand mosaics," are made with colored earth and then erased.
- 27 The rattle is a child's toy made from a turtle shell or calabash, attached to the legs for dancing.
- 28 Translator's note: Urban Neininger, husband of Jeanne Reynal and travel companion to the Bretons. See Etienne-Alain Hubert's Introduction.
- 29 For more on the "Bohana" see Titiev, 74.
- 30 Village on the Mesa of the Antelope, in the eastern part of the Hopi reservation.
- 31 Robert Lebel (1904-1986), art critic and writer, who, in New York City, became close to Breton, with whom he shared a passion for the arts of the Indians from the Southwest and Pacific Northwest.
- 32 Translator's note: Etienne-Alain Hubert's transcription states: "At a dance of the Kachinas of several months the clowns disguised as cats appear suddenly on the rooftops." (À une danse de Katchinas à quelques mois les clowns déguisés en chats apparaissent en surgissant sur les toits.)
- 33 Translator's note: Etienne-Alain Hubert notes that the words indicating the color of the paint on the drummer's body are illegible.
- 34 There is a confusion in the Notebook with 1780, when the Hopi successfully resisted the Spanish.
- 35 See Crane, 231: "Dramatic Entry of the Snake Priest at Walpi."