

Paiyatuma

God of Mist and Dew, Music and Flowers



Paiyatuma

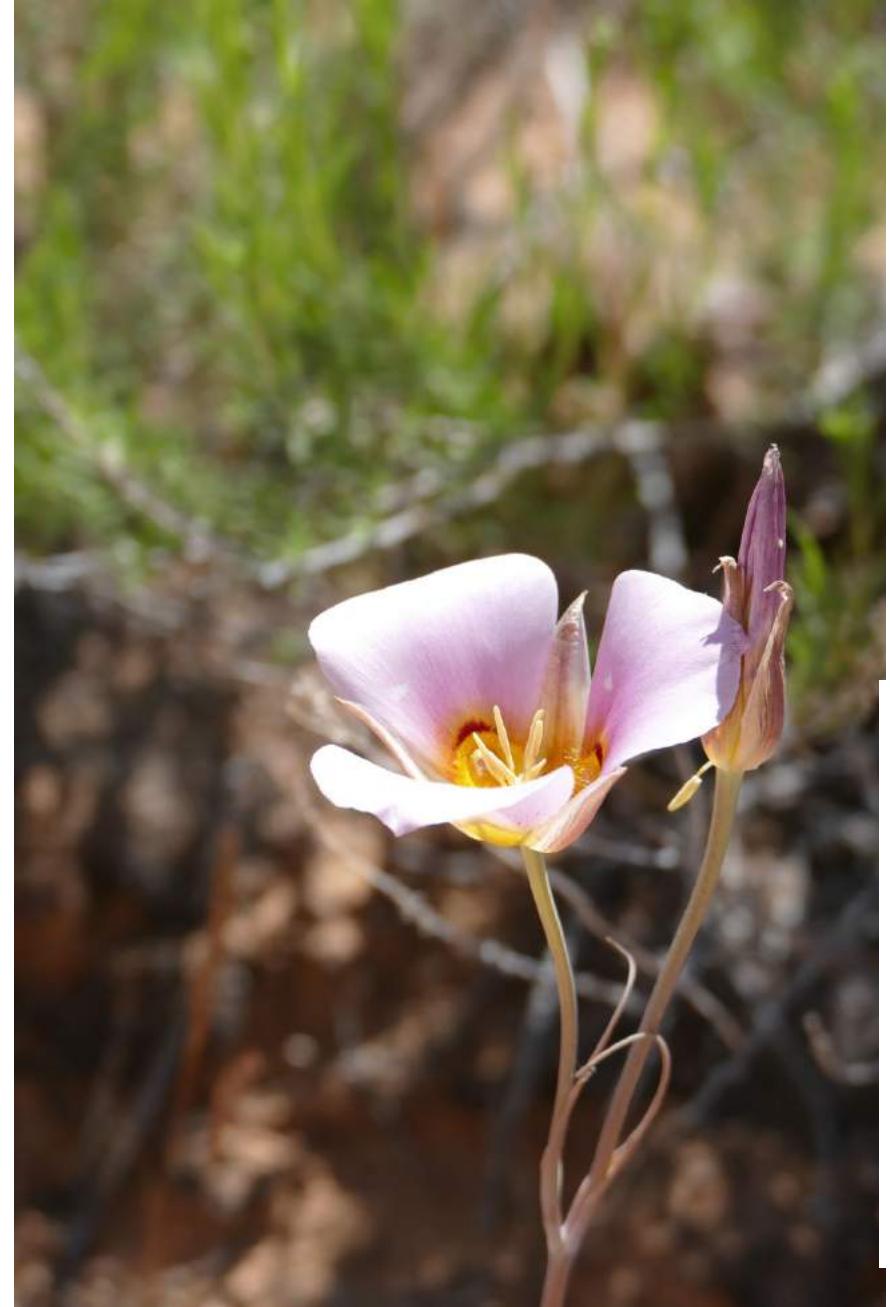
- First youth or Sun Youth, in the early world, played his flute, the young men sang, and the Corn Maidens ground corn. The songs were prayers for the return of warmth and vegetation (Parsons 1939, 452).
- However, as the son of the Sun, Paiyatamu is the God of Dawn and morning moisture of Dew, the elements of early light and moisture that are deemed necessary to the growth of corn.



Masks Appearing with Grinding Ritual. Fig. b (See Plate 37)

- As the people gazed in wonder at the marvelous plants with their many-colored seeds, three gods rose from the drifting mists in the east. First came forth the flute-playing child of the Sun, Paiyatuma, God of Dew and Music, followed by Tenatsali of the All-Colored Flowers, the God of Time and Directions, and then torch bearing Kwelele, God of Flame.
- Passing through the plants, Paiyatuma strengthened them with the invigorating breath of his flute. Tenatsali touched the plants with the essence of his flesh renewing flowers while Kwelele hardened the seeds with the ripening flame of his torch.
- Then as Paiyatuma waved his flute, Tenatsali, the seven Corn Maidens, and the attendant Kwelele, vanished into the mists of morning.





Tenatsali

"Pa'yatamu causes flowers, especially the te'na'sali to bloom with the music of his flute. The te'na'sali, a plant supposed to bear blossoms of the colors of the 6 regions (cardinal directions plus nadir and above), is collected once in four years by those specially designated for the purpose. Two plumes to the Sun and Moon, two to Payatumu, two to Te'na'sali are made by each collector and deposited just previously to collecting the plant. They keep the roots and flowers and combine hearts of the butterflies and dragonflies to make Sun Medicine." Stevenson 569



Datura



“Te’na’sali” in Zuni

- In ceremony it is associated with Pa’yatamu (God of music, butterflies, and flowers). The plant is cut close to the root and deposited in the large serrated bowl of the flutist at the drama of “The Coming of the Corn Maidens,”
- A crystal supposed to have been brought from the undermost world is laid in the center of the plant. Water is then put into the bowl and sprinkled with corn pollen. The flutes of Pa’yatuma are laid across the bowl and the whole thing is covered with an embroidered white cotton kilt.
- A shell to be used for administering the water is placed on the kilt. When the water is given to the flutists by the director of the order of Pa’yatamu, they eject it into their hands; rub it over their bodies so “that their hearts may be as beautiful as the flowers and butterflies of Pa’yatamu; that the rains may come to make the corn and all vegetation grow.” Stevenson, Zuni Plants; pg 58.

- Paiyatuma, the flute-player, is the godfather to the Corn Maidens, and the patron of the Newekwe society or sacred clowns.
- It was Paiyatuma who brought back the Corn Maidens who fled from the youths who were attempting to make free with their persons.
- Paiyatuma finds the Corn Maidens and returns them to the starving Zuni from whom they had fled because of their disrespectful treatment by the Flute Youths.

The Myth of the lost Corn Maidens

- Long ago the War Gods heard sweet music while they were out hunting and followed it to its source.
- They found a spring in which a handsome youth was playing a flute while eight beautiful maidens ground corn. When the war gods returned to Zuni, they told the director of the Little Fire Society of their interesting encounter.
- Paiyatemu, the Keresan word for youth, accepted and stood beside the maidens playing his flute as they ground medicine for the members of their society. (Stevenson 1901-02, 569.)

Day after day, season after season, year after year, the people of the seed clan and the A'-ta-a, who were named together the Corn-clan, or people, prepared, and their maidens danced the dance of the Thla-he-kwe, or "Beautiful Corn Wands," until their children grew weary and yearned for other amusements.



At such times, near the Cave of the Rainbow, a beautiful halo would spring forth, amidst which the many-colored garments of the rainbow himself could be seen, and soft, sweet music, stranger than that of the whistling winds in a mountain of pines, floated fitfully down the valley.





At last the priests and elders gathered in council and determined to send their two chief warriors (Priests of the Bow) to the cavern of the rainbow, that it might be determined what strange people made the sights and sounds.



- No sooner had the warriors reached the cave-entrance than the mists enshrouded them and the music ceased. They entered and were received by a splendid group of beings, bearing long brightly-painted flutes, amongst whom the leader was Pai'-a-tu-ma, the father of God of Dew.
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- "Enter, my children," said he, "and sit. We have commanded our dancers to cease and our players to draw breath from their flutes, that we might listen to your messages; for 'not for nothing does one stranger visit the house of another.'"
-





They put the best yellow parrot feathers on his head and dressed him in a white shirt. They tied a sash and belt around his waist and fastened a fox skin at his back. They gave him socks and tied yarn below his knees. They put on blue moccasins on his feet. They hung a bandolier of black and white beads over one shoulder and fastened the wrist guard on his wrist.

Benedict writes: “This is the costume of Paiyatamu” (Figure 34).

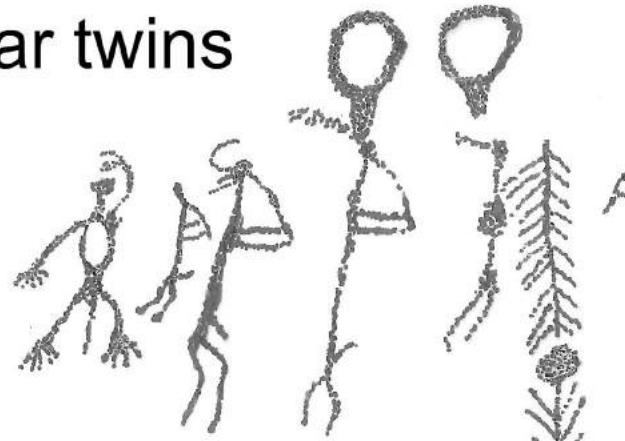
- "True," replied the warriors. "Our fathers have sent us that we might greet you, and the light of your favor ask for our children. Day after day the maidens of the corn-people dance one dance which, from often repeating, has grown undelightful, and our fathers thought you might come to vary this dance with your own, for that you knew one we were taught by your music, which we sometimes heard."
- "Aha! " replied Pai'-a-tu-ma, "it is well! We will follow; but not in the day-time-in the night-time we will follow. My children," said he, turning to the flute-players, "show to the strangers our custom."
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- The drum sounded fill it shook the cavern; the music shrieked and pealed in softly surging unison, as the wind does in a wooded cañon after the storm is distant, and the mists played over the medicine bowl around which the musicians were gathered, until the rainbow fluttered his bright garments among the painted flutes.



Hla'hewe Dance. Maidens filed out brandishing wands whence issued tiny clouds white as the down of eagles, and as the sounds died away between the songs the two warriors in silent wonder and admiration departed for their home.

- As the night deepened, the sound of music and flutes was heard up the river, and then followed the players of the rainbow-cave with their sisters, led by the God of Dew.
- When the Flute players entered and saw the maidens their music ceased and they were impassioned. And when their turn came for leading the dance, they played their softest strains over their medicine bowl--the terraced bowl of the world--whence arose the rainbow.
- The people were delighted, but the corn maidens were sad; for no sooner had the dancing ceased a little than the flute players sought their hands and persons.
- In vain the corn maidens pleaded they were immortal virgins and the mothers of men! The flute players continually renewed their suits 'till the next day, and into the night which followed, while the dance went on.
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war twins



corn maidens



flute youths



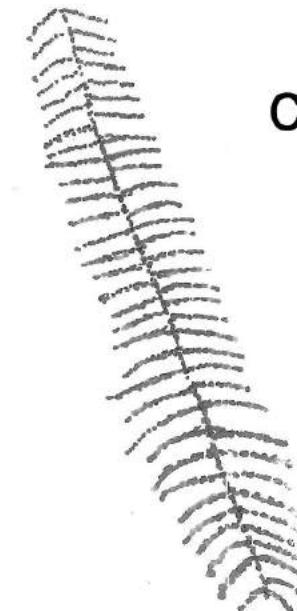
leaving



sky

rainbow (ladder)

corn



- "Alas, we have laden our hearts with guilt, and sad thoughts have we prepared to weigh down our minds. We must send to seek the maidens, that they desert us not. Who shall undertake the journey?"
- "Send for the **eagle**," it was said. The two warrior-priests were commanded to go and seek him. But eagle failed to find them.
- So the warriors went to seek the **sparrow-hawk**. "we wish you to go and hunt for our maidens--the corn maidens," said the warriors,-- "your old brother, the eagle, cannot find them."

- The **sparrow-hawk** flew away to the north and the east and the west, looking behind every cliff and copsewood, but he found no trace of the maidens, and returned, declaring as he flew into the bower, "they can not be found. "Oh, alas! alas! our beautiful maidens! " cried the old women; "we shall never see them again!"
- "Hold your feet with patience, there's old *heavy nose* out there; go and see if he can hunt for them. He knows well enough to find their flesh, however so little that may be," said an old priest, pointing to a **crow** who was scratching an ash-heap sidewise with his beak, trying to find something for a morning meal. So the warriors ran down and accosted him.

- Then the people were very sad with thought, when they suddenly heard **Pai'-a-tu-ma** joking along the streets as though the whole pueblo were listening to him. "Call him," cried the priests to the warriors, and the warriors ran out to summon Pai'-a-tu-ma.



b

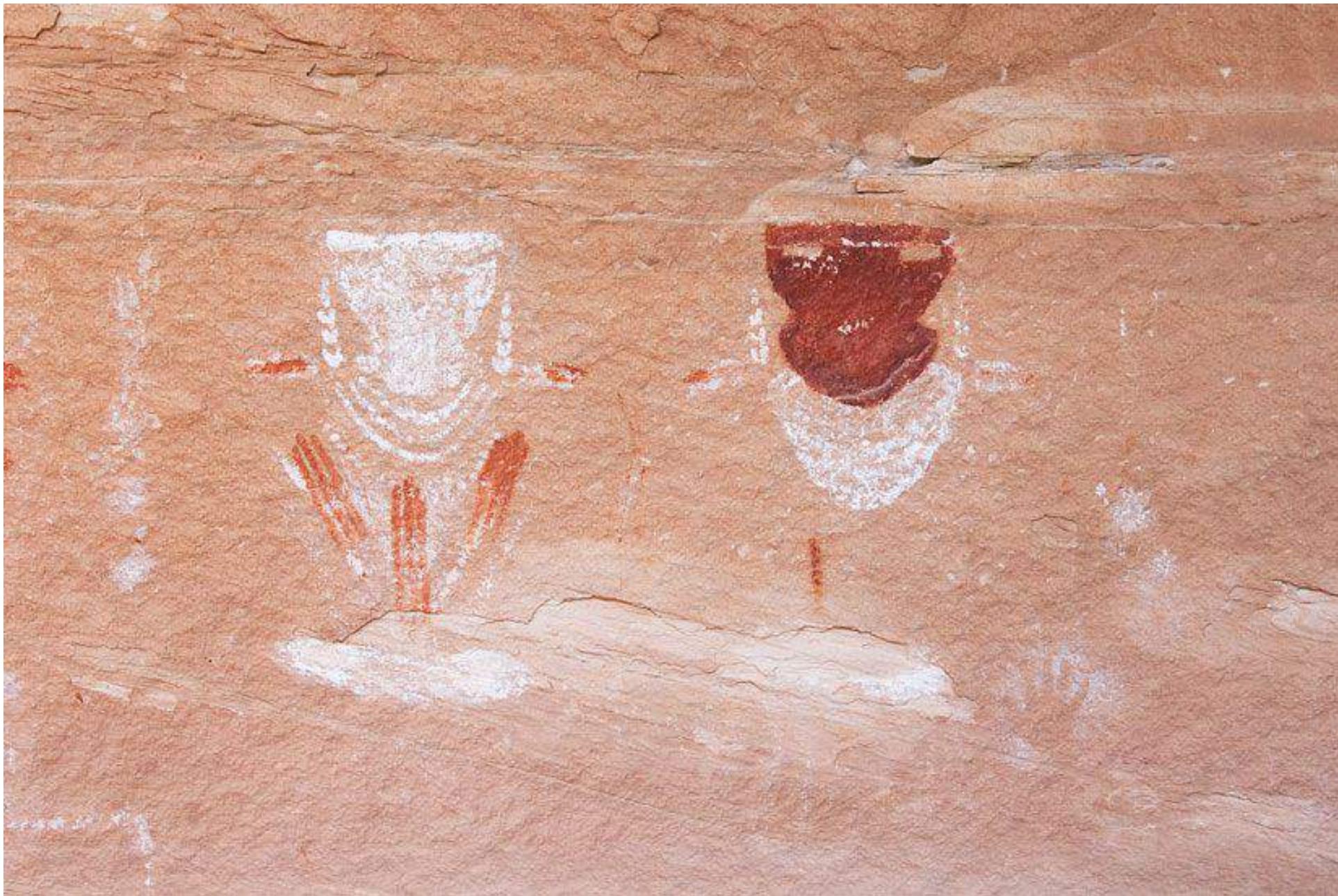
- 13 Faces, in Canyon Lands National Park may depict the corn maidens on their corn bases on the left, but Black Corn is on the far-right side.
- Benedict writes: “During the time that they were hiding, Black Corn had been placed in the rear of the sisters so that they were covered with darkness i.e. invisible” (Vol I, 41, note 2).
- The lineup of corn maidens shows the dark-faced maiden at the right end. Next to her are Corn maidens not fully defined and partially invisible. Moving to the left they appear more well defined in colors and elaboration, ending with the last four that have corn bases

The Corn Maidens go into hiding



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- "With rapid strides he set forth toward the south. When he came to the mouth of the "Cañon of the Woods," whence blows the wind of summer in spring-time, he planted the yellow-plumed stick. Then he knelt to watch the eagle down, and presently the down moved gently toward the north, as though some one were breathing on it. Then he went yet farther, and planted the blue stick. Again the eagle down moved. So he went on planting the sticks, until very far away he placed the last one. Now the eagle plume waved constantly toward the north.



Masks Appearing with Grinding Ritual, Fig. 5 (See Plate 37)

- "Aha!" said Pai'-a-tu-ma to himself, "It is the breath of the corn maidens, and thus shall it ever be, for when they breathe toward the northland, thither shall warmth, showers, fertility and health be wafted, and the summer birds shall chase the butterfly out of Summer-land and summer itself, with my own beads and treasures shall follow after." Then he journeyed on, as a grand god, with a colored flute, flying softly and swiftly as the wind he sought for.
- Fn b: It will be borne in mind that Paiytamu had assumed the form of a duck (Stevenson 1902:52).



- Corn Maidens flee to an island in a lake and hide in a nest under a pair of ducks and were undetected for four years.
- Stevenson writes “After leaving I’twanna, Paiytamu ascended a tall cottonwood tree (ftn a) and looked all over the world. Finally he espied one of the maidens in the far south through the separated plumes of one of the duck’s wings (ftn b). ”













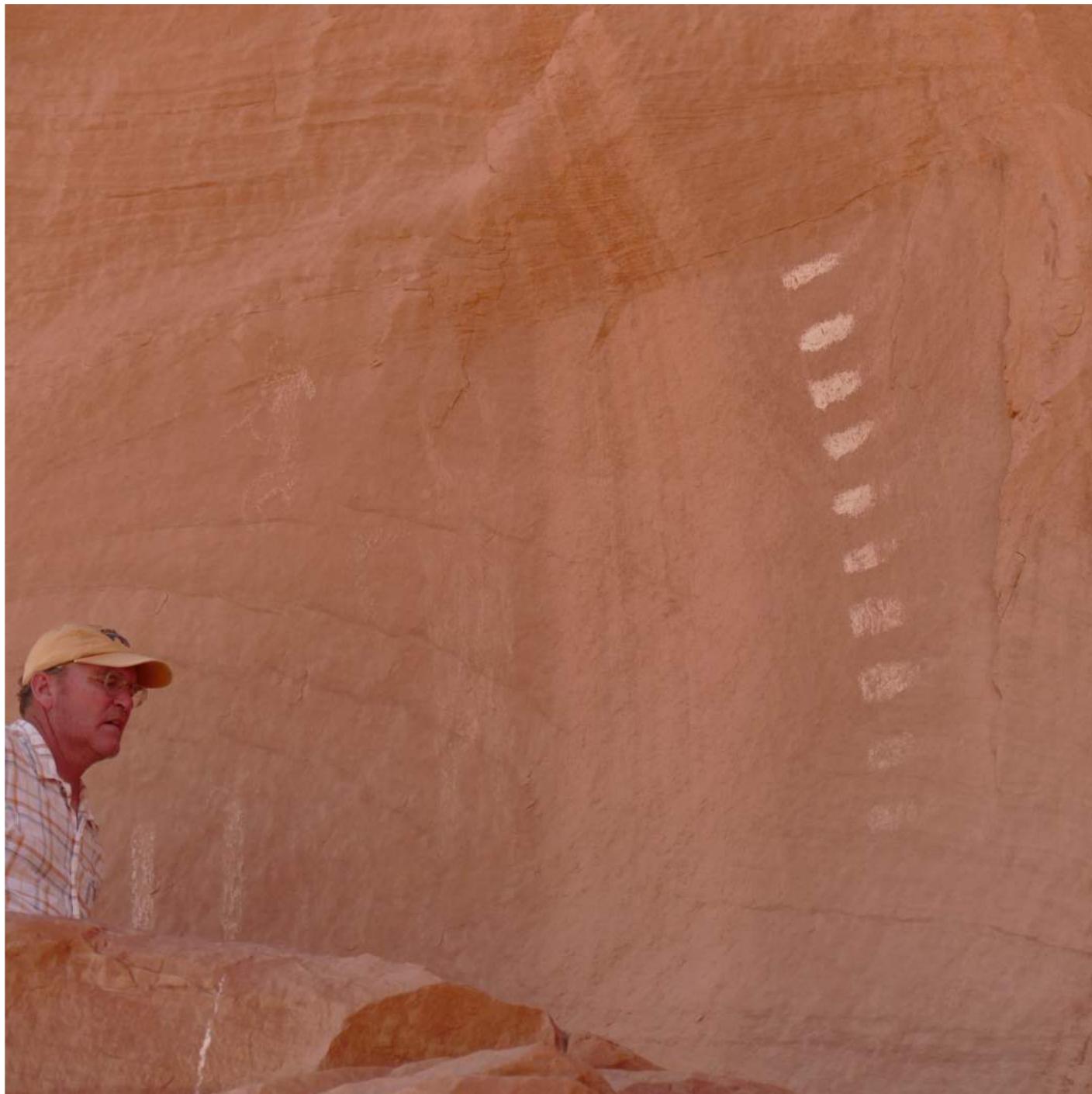




- Soon he came to the home of the maidens, whom he greeted, bidding them, as he waved his flute over them, to follow him to the home of their children.
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- The maidens arose, and each taking a tray covered with embroidered cotton, followed him as he strode with folded arms, swiftly before them.
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- At last they reached the home of our fathers. Then Pai'-a-tu-ma gravely spoke to the council.
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- "Behold, I have returned with the lost maidens, yet may they not remain or come again, for you have not loved their beautiful custom--the source of your lives--and men would seek to change the blessings of their flesh itself into suffering humanity were they to remain amongst you.







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Zuni Corn Dancers and Zuni Corn Maiden doll



- The drama of the Hla'hewe (singular hla'ha) which is enacted quadrennially in August when the corn is a foot high, is supposed to be a reproduction of the ceremonies held at the time of the third appearance of the Corn maidens before the A'shiwi and is regarded as one of their most sacred festivals.
- Great preparations were made by the A'shiwi for the third coming of the Corn Maidens who were to dance that rains would come and water the earth, that the new corn might be made beautiful to look upon, and that the earth would furnish all food for nourishment.

- These they saved, and in the springtime they carefully planted the seeds in separate places. The breaths of the corn maidens blew rain-clouds from their homes in Summer-land, and when the rains had passed away green corn plants grew everywhere the grains had been planted.
- And when the plants had grown tall and blossomed, they were laden with ears of corn, yellow, blue, red, white, speckled and black. Thus to this day grows the corn, always eight-fold more than is planted, and of six colors, which our women preserve separately during the moons of the sacred fire, snow-broken boughs, great sand-driving winds and lesser sand-driving winds.
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“Dancing the Corn”

It was Pai'-a-tu-ma who found the corn maidens and brought them back. He took the trays from their heads and gave them to the people; hence, when in winter, during the moon of the sacred fire, the priests gather to bless the seed-corn for the coming year, the chief-priest of the Ne'-we-kwe hands the trays of corn-seed into the estufa

Zuni

Ever since these days, the beautiful corn maidens have dwelt in the Land of Everlasting Summer. This we know. For does not their sweet-smelling breath come from that flowery country, bringing life to their children, the corn-plants? It is the south wind which we feel in spring-time.

