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DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN ART

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APACHE MAN AND WOMAN

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THE APACHE INDIANS

THE APACHE INDIANS belong to the Athabaskan linguistic stock and are the southernmost members of that family. At present they number about 9,500 and are increasing. The percentage of full bloods is high. They are now located on several reservations in Arizona and New Mexico. In east central Arizona are the San Carlos and Fort Apache reservations, which touch each other and form one large unit. On it live about 6,650 members of the many bands of the western Apache. On the Camp Verde reservation, lying to the west, are about 460 Tonto Apache. In south central New Mexico are about 450 Mescalero, a few dozen Lipan and about 860 Chiricahua. 300 Chiricahua and Mescalero are in Oklahoma. In northwestern New Mexico is the reservation of the Jicarilla band, numbering about 825. There are possibly several hundred more scattered about on the various southwestern reservations. The bands are named from their geographical location or for some characteristic or industry. The tribes called Kiowa-Apache, Yuma-Apache and Mohave-Apache are not members of the Apache tribe, despite the name commonly given them.

HISTORY. Students of the tribe believe that the Apache came into the southwest sometime prior to the appearance of the Navahos in the late fifteenth century. Until the middle of the 16th century they seem to have been a small, unimportant group. But by adopting whole groups of neighboring Indians into their membership they increased, and after splitting up into a number of bands began to wander and raid over the southwest, the Jicarilla, Mescalero and Lipan being in the east of their area and raiding into Texas and the plains country and the western groups centering about the mountainous country in southern Arizona. They obtained horses very early and became hard and daring riders. By the time of the pueblo revolt in 1680 they were well organized and powerful and had begun that career of raiding, stealing and murdering which lasted for 200 years and kept the whole southwest in terror. Only with the coming of the Americans about 1850 was it possible to begin to conquer them and 40 years of desperate effort were necessary to achieve this end. Since Geronimo's surrender in 1886 the Apache have lived quietly on their several reservations, devoting their time to farming, cattle raising, basket making and the task of adjusting themselves to modern life.

PHYSIQUE. The Apache are of medium height and have unusually broad shoulders and deep and well developed chests. They are not over-muscled but are very lithe and capable of great endurance. Their faces are broad and their skin rather dark.

DWELLINGS. The western Apache all used the brush wickiup or khuva. The eastern groups used the tipi of the Plains type, but lived in brush shelters when hunting. Today many live in log or stone cabins, though often these buildings are used for storage while the family live in a tipi or wickiup close by. For details of these dwellings see Leaflet 9.

FOOD. The Apache hunted the deer, elk, antelope, rabbit, field mice, turkey, quail and doves. They were very fond of the meat of horses and donkeys. They would not eat fish, pork, waterfowl or bear. Today mutton and beef have replaced the game. They practised a little agriculture, but depended for their vegetable food to a very large extent on natural products. Acorn meal, cactus fruits, wild potato, tule bulb, sunflower seeds, walnuts, wild strawberries, wild grass and pumpkin seeds, mesquite beans, the inner bark of the pine and pinole, or parched

corn were all used for food. Their most characteristic food was made from the leaves and stems of the mescal, roasted for two or three days in pits. At present they grow corn and garden vegetables and also buy many American foods at the trading posts. An intoxicating drink called Tiswin is made from fermented germinated wheat or corn. A wine is made from pitaya cactus fruit.

CLOTHING. Men once wore skirts, shirts and leggings; women, skin skirts and ponchos (except Jicarilla long skin dresses). In warm weather the men used only a breechcloth and the women a short kilt. Later the men wore American shirts and long tight woolen drawers. At present American overalls, calico dresses, and hats are commonly used. The war moccasin was of a shape peculiar to the tribe. It was knee length, with several folds at the top. The sole extended past the toe and was turned up and cut into a small disk rising in front of the toe. A band about the hair was the common headgear, though buckskin caps with feathers on the crown were worn by the men at times. Beading was scant, but tin jinglers common. Skins were often painted yellow with native ocher. Some abstract or figure drawings were done with fine zigzag lines. Fringes were common. Cut-work designs, often backed with red cloth, were featured on rawhide saddlebags. The eastern bands used parfleches. The western bands wore bead collars.

BASKETRY. The Apache are amongst the best of the basket makers. There are four types. 1. Twined burden baskets and water jars of sumac, cottonwood, willow, squawberry and mulberry. The burden baskets often have horizontal colored bands and fringes of buckskin. The water jars are coated with pitch, and often have handles. These are made by all the bands. 2. Western Apache coiled bowls and storage jars show fine tight coils with a light background of willow or cottonwood and human, animal or geometric designs in black martynia and rarely red-brown yucca. 3. Mescalero coiled work has broad, flat, flexible coils of yucca with simple light green, brown and yellow designs. The colors come from different parts of the yucca. Shallow bowls of varying size are the commonest forms, but water jars are also made. 4. Jicarilla coiled bowls, deep, straight sided waste baskets, fish creels and round water jars have thick, broad, stiff coils of willow or sumac with simple geometric patterns in brilliant colors, originally native, but now mostly aniline. Sometimes the bowls have a series of loops running around the rim.

POTTERY. All the Apache formerly made pottery, but the art has gradually disappeared until only the Jicarilla carry it on, and perhaps even among them it has died. The pottery was black, unpainted ware with raised designs around the rims. Deep, narrow cook pots with bullet shaped bottoms were the common pieces.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. The Apache made fiddles from a hollow section of agave or aloe stem. The ends were stopped with wooden disks and horsehair strings stretched the length of the tube over a crude bridge. The music of this unusual instrument was supplemented with that produced by flutes, drums, rattles and moraches or notched resonators. The songs of the Apache are but little known.

GAMES. The native games were limited to hoop and pole, dice, running, archery, cats cradle and a women's dice and stone game. The Apache are great card players, being especially fond of monte. When American cards could not be found, they made cards of horsehide.

WEAPONS AND WAR. Bows and arrows, lances, clubs and knives were the native weapons of the Apache, but they always had fine rifles in their last wars. In raiding, guerilla warfare they were supreme.

Their stealthy, sudden tactics enabled them to inflict enormous damage and to escape the large armies which were usually on their trail. With their endurance, skill as pathfinders and as horsemen small groups were able to terrorize very large areas.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS. The Apache were broken up into many small bands, each under a chief appointed for ability. The chief was not supreme, but usually acted on advice of a council of elders. The chieftainship was sometimes hereditary. Several of the bands might unite temporarily against a common danger.

RELIGION. The Apache are very religious, always carrying with them charms and fetishes and the pollen of the tule-rush to use in connection with their endless private prayers and incantations. They have innumerable gods, with the sun and moon as the most important. Most animals, planets, and such natural forces as wind or thunder are thought of as gods. In addition there are various culture heroes which are worshipped. The gods are called Gans or Kans and are often characterised with a color adjective. Medicine men and women are very powerful, and witchcraft plays an important part in the life of the people. There are a good many ceremonies and dances, but they are neither as frequent or elaborate as among the pueblos. A girl's adolescence ceremony is the principal one observed today, though complicated healing dances are also held at irregular intervals. What is known of the mythology indicates that it is rich and varied and of the general southwestern type.

CUSTOMS. Children are kept on baby boards until they can walk, with a resultant head flattening. Marriage is simple, being largely dependent on the wishes of the young couple. It is attended with gift-giving. Among the eastern bands there are no clans and no trace of exogamy, but both clans and exogamy exist in the west. Polygamy was practised. The dead are buried in the rocks and canyons. The graves are avoided and the property of the dead is destroyed. Descent is through the mother. A strict mother-in-law taboo is observed. There is a dislike of telling one's name. Face tattooing is quite common.

Compiled from the following sources by Jean Allard Jeançon and F. H. Douglas:

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