Chapter 11

Ute Ethnohistory and Historical Ethnography

11.1 Introduction

Prior to the 1830s, Ute bands occupied over 130,000 square miles. Their aboriginal territory lay between the Oquirrah Mountains on the west, the Unitah Mountains and the Yampa River to the north, the San Juan River south, and through the Middle Park of the Colorado Rockies and along the eastern Front Range. The accumulating archaeological, linguistic, and ethnohistorical data indicate that the Ute have a long-standing association with their aboriginal territory. Regional evidence suggests that during the mid-twelfth century, Yuman and Puebloan cultural traditions began to be replaced by a Southern Uto-Aztecan or Shoshonean cultural pattern.[1]

The Ute refer to themselves as *Nuche*. Ute bands commanded a vast territory that encompassed portions of Utah, New Mexico, Wyoming and most of Colorado. Of particular importance is the eastern portion of Ute territory. The Colorado Rocky Mountains form a formidable geographical marker extending along a north-south axis. Lying behind that eco-zone, in the middle portion of Ute territory, is a montane region cut by deep river valleys. To the west is the Wasatch Front, which is a massive mountain range that marks the western edge of the Colorado Plateau.[2]

The southwest portion of the aboriginal Ute range, are sedimentary plateaus, sculpted by river drainage systems lying in deep canyons, surrounded by mesas. The core of Ute territory lay in the Colorado Plateau. The area is characterized as semi-arid, but receives an average of 20 to 40 inches of rainfall in the north and the eastern portion of their territory.[3]

The northern valleys are dominated by bunchgrass, although short grasses dominate the southern valleys between the territories of the Weeminuche and Uncompahgre bands. The majority of valley systems received 10 to 12 inches of precipitation annually, while the montane and coniferous forest regions receive 20 to 40 inches of rainfall per year. With the mountain snow packs, spring runoffs benefited the valleys, which were often covered with camas, yampa, bitterroot, wild potatoes, and other food crops.[4]

January temperatures averaged between 10 to 20 degrees Fahrenheit. Southern Ute bands would continue to hunt and gather in New Mexico during the winter, where other bands further north would winter in sheltered valleys. During mid-summer daytime temperatures would reach 90 degrees. Because of the high altitude of summer camps (4,500-8,500 feet), high temperatures were mitigated.[5]

Although western Ute bands had fewer grasses available to them, they had greater access to several species of roots, nuts, lilies, and berries than eastern Ute bands. The short grasses of the Weeminuche and Uncompahgre Ute lands yielded at least 12 grass species, compared to 9-10 species for the Unitah. The majority of the grasses produced edible seeds that were seasonally harvested. The Ute had regular access to pigweed, lamb's-quarter, Indian millet, and broomrape. Nearly all Ute bands had access to wokas, brake fern, yucca fruit, and blossoms.[6]

Ute band territories had numerous species of insects and animals. Ute bands and family groups gathered large quantities of crickets, grasshoppers, and locusts when they became periodically available. With the exception of the Weeminuche band, most Ute bands hunted 19 major species as favored game. These included mule deer, whitetail deer, jackrabbits, cottontail rabbits, mountain sheep, antelope, moose, as well as bison. Historically, bison occurred in every part of Colorado, except the southwestern portion of the state. The wide distribution of bison allowed the Ute to hunt them as late as the 1870s:

> Herds of bison on the plains prior to settlement were immense…In the mountains, bison occurred in parks and valleys, and apparently, ranged above timberline frequently…A few bison from the south end of South Park (were reported in 1871)…Bison were taken in Middle Park in 1873 and were present in North Park in 1879.[7]

From the late prehistoric period until the early nineteenth century, mountain bison were present in the east, along with herds of antelope, elk, deer, and mountain sheep.[8] By the mid-nineteenth century Europeans drove many of these species to extinction over hunting, settlement, and ecological disturbance.

11.2 Ute Bands and their Distribution

Although a definitive listing of Ute bands is difficult because of their membership fluidity, mobility, and inconsistencies in the historical record, 11 bands can be distinguished during the historical period. Traditionally a cultural distinction can be made between the Eastern and Western Ute bands. Of these, six are eastern bands with historical ranges primarily in present-day Colorado.[9] Arranged geographically from south to north they are: the Capote, Muache, Weeminuche, Taviwach, Yampa, and Parusanuch.

Residing east of the Continental Divide, south of the Conejos River, is the Capote band. Their range was east of the Rio Grande River to the west of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. They occupied the San Luis Valley in Colorado and near the towns of Chama and Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico. During the mid-nineteenth century they also occupied lands near the Animas River, west of the Continental Divide. Of the southern Ute bands, the Capote and Muache, because of their territorial locations, most often came into direct conflict with various Great Plains tribes.[10]

The Muache band resided in the southeastern and south central portion of Ute aboriginal range. The band occupied the lands north of present Trinidad, Colorado to the Denver area. On the east they claimed areas east of the Sangre de Cristo and Culebra Mountain ranges as far south as Santa Fe, New Mexico. After acquiring horses, the Muache extended their range and traveled as far as the Texas Panhandle, often allied with the Jicarilla Apache.[11]

The Weeminuche band occupied lands west of the Continental Divide from the Dolores River through the Blue Mountains in to eastern Utah. Their southern boundary extended to the valley of the San Juan River, New Mexico.[12]

The Taviwach or Uncompahgre band was located in an area that included the Gunnison River, Elk Mountains, and the Uncompahgre River. Their western boundary extended to near present-day Grand Junction, Colorado. To the east, the band claimed lands through South Park in the Colorado Rocky Mountains.[13]

Aboriginally the Yampa and Parusarnuch Ute occupied the river valleys of the White and Yampa Rivers. The bands also claimed the North Park and Middle Park of northern Colorado. The western boundary of the lands extended into eastern Utah. After 1868, these bands would be known as the White River Ute.[14] Eastern Ute bands frequently journeyed to the Southern Great Plains to harvest resources, trade, or war.

The remaining Ute bands lying further west, the Unitah resided from Utah Lake through the Uinta Basin to the Tavaputs Plateau in the Green River and Colorado River systems. Other Ute bands, living in territories west of the Wasatch Mountains, did not have extensive, direct interactions with the landscape under consideration.[15]

11.3 Subsistence Economy

The variable environment found in Ute territories led to differential exploitation of resources. The western Ute bands had greater access to fish, where as the eastern Ute

bands relied heavily on hunting land mammals. The eastern Ute subsistence round was patterned moving cyclically in a general clockwise direction, exploiting available season resources in different ecological zones. Generally, each eastern Ute band did summer hunting and gathering in the mountains and fall hunting on the southern plains. They moved from one available resource to another as they moved down toward and out onto the plains in the fall. Eventually they would return to the sheltered valleys in winter camps.[16] The seasonal movements of the Muache illustrate the intimate relationship between the subsistence round and use of the landscape. The movements also were intimately connected to the cosmology. During the winter they would camp in Northern New Mexico near Cimarron, Taos, or Abiquiu in sheltered meadows. In winter camp they told traditional stories. Before the vernal equinox they band would break winter camp and move northward.

Once reaching the area around Conejos on the west side of the San Luis Valley, the Muache would perform a Bear Dance ceremony. The ceremony would be timed to be near the vernal equinox. The Bear Dance authorized them to move higher into the mountains. After the ceremony the band would move toward South Park, near Colorado Springs to hunt and gather.[17] Over the course of the summer, the band would use the various resources as they became available. In fall the band would travel down Ute Pass and camp in places like Garden of Gods or Manitou Springs.[18] By tradition, the Ute abandoned the mountains before snow set in.

Once in camp along the eastern Front Range, the band may temporarily divide based on age and gender. Adult men and women would move onto the plains to hunt bison while children and elderly would stay close to the mountains and harvest pinon nuts. Although Ute bands actively hunted bison on the plains, bison held no sacred significance.[19] After uniting, the band would move south along the eastern side of the Sangre De Cristo Mountain range, eventually moving into winter camps.[20]

The Weeminuche band, with fewer large mammal resources or fish, focused their subsistence activities toward intensively using plant resources. Despite the focus toward

hunting among the eastern Ute, gathering also contributed 35 to 45 percent to their dietary intake.[21]

The Ute hunted a variety of animal species. Individuals hunted animals year round using pit-falls, traps, and stalking. Whereas deer, elk, and antelope were hunted by stalking, eastern Ute bands hunted bison, especially the Uncompahgre, Muache, and Capote. Eastern bands had formal hunts chiefs that organized and directed game hunts. The preferred hunting techniques, after the horse's introduction, were running bison or using a horse drive; running the animals over a cliff.[22]

All bands hunted antelope, mountain sheep, and rabbits using communal drives. Subsistence task groups, composed of consanguinal and affinal kin, participated in the hunts. For communal hunting a hunt leader, usually a male relative directed the activity.[23]

Meat that was not immediately eaten was cut into thin strips and sun dried. The Eastern Ute also pulverized the dried meat and mixed with fat. Women made patties with the meat mixture, which was dried and stored in a parfleche for later use.[24]

Birds also contributed to the diet. Sage grouse were captured with nets near springs. Waterfowl, especially ducks and mud hens, were hunted individually and by communal drives. The drives were carried out during the early summer when young birds were not yet able to fly and adult birds were molting. The Eastern Ute drove them into the shallows or on shore. They clubbed them or shot them with arrows. Another source of protein were cicadas and crickets. The Weeminuche also harvested ants for consumption.[25]

All Ute bands caught and ate fish using a variety of weirs, traps, and harpoons. Ute fishing technology included fish arrows, bone or wood gorgets attached to lines, greasewood fish spears, sapling weirs, woven dip nets, cordage nets and basket traps. Most fish were immediately consumed but others were split down the middle, the

backbone removed, and hung on drying poles. Once the fish were dried, women stored them in deerskin or elk skin bags. Dried fish were eaten in fall.[26]

A critical component of Ute subsistence was the gathering or harvesting of plants. All Ute bands and families gathered sunflower seeds, a variety of grass seed, cacti blossoms and fruit, thistles, and a number of tubes and roots. Ute groups also gathered wild tobacco. Some Eastern and Western bands purposefully burned off areas, recognizing that the plant thrived under these conditions. They also harvested a variety of berries.[27]

Women gathered most plant resources, except when harvesting pinon nuts. Pinon nuts were an important seasonal plant resource. Although pinon nut groves were spread unevenly across Ute territory, most Ute bands would locate groves to harvest. Hunters would keep watch on pinon groves for the prospective fall harvest. The fall gathering of pinons coincided with deer hunting. In groves with abundant harvests, several extended families or several bands would congregate to extract the resource. Families would camp for weeks gathering pine nuts but also various plant medicines, which they harvested at the same time. The group would live on pinons and venison until heavy snow. Women would gather the nuts using a straight pole. A large amount of pinons would be stored for winter use. On occasion, pinon groves would be revisited during the winter from the lower elevation camps.[28]

Although Southern Ute bands frequently traded for agricultural products with the Pueblos, among the Weeminuche, wealthy families prior to the 1860s began to farm maize. Men cleared the fields, planted, and harvested the crop. Women weeded the fields. Both sexes aided in irrigating the maize plots.[29]

To gather plants resources women formed kin-based task groups, especially when gathering berries or plants. Northern Ute bands, from early spring to late fall, gathered a great variety of seeds. Food was cached using a number of techniques. Storage platforms were constructed in coniferous trees, grass and bark lined pits were used, and

pits under cliff overhangs offered a dry location. Often a fire was built over the pits to conceal it from bears.[30]

12.4 Technology and Material Culture

As early as 1776, Velez de Escalente observed that the Eastern Ute possessed surplus deerskins to trade. The Spanish explorer also noticed that they were dressed in well-tanned buckskins, a frequent trade item brought by the Ute to the Spanish trade fairs.[31] Ute tanned buckskin was considered to be of exceptional quality and a valued trade item. Women using brain tanning made the buckskin as well as other hides.[32]

Women's clothing was made from two deerskins, although antelope and mountain sheep skins were sometimes used as a replacement. Men wore buckskin breechclouts, leggings, and shirts. Moccasins were two-piece, usually buckskin, with bison hard soles. During the winter a sagebrush stocking would be worn for warmth. Occasionally yucca sandals were worn. Adornment of Eastern Ute clothing was influenced heavily by stylistics from the Great Plains and the introduction of European trade items.[33]

The Ute made necklaces of animal claws, bone beads, stones, fish vertebrae, and juniper seeds. Painted and braided belts were sometimes decorated with feathers. Common paints included white, black, red, yellow, blue, and green. Red and white paint, along with feathers, was used to decorate the hair. Some Ute did facial tattooing; common among southwest tribes, using a cactus needle dipped in juniper or cedar leaf ashes.[34]

The Ute had a sophisticated basket technology that served multiple functions. Ute women manufactured fish traps, water jugs, seed beaters, ladles, cradles, and storage baskets. The preferred materials were willow (*Salix sp*) and squawbrush (*Rhus trilobata*). Most Ute groups made twined seed beaters, also called a "sunflower hammer." Water jugs were smeared with pitch on the inside. By the 1900s, the Ute began to decorate baskets with paint or smear the exterior with white clay or seed paste.[35]

Other containers were made from wood, stone, horn, and sometimes skin. Stretching the skin over a willow frame for example, made skin bowls. It was used as a burden basket. Cordage was made by rolling fibers on the thighs and then combining two to three rolled strands together for strength from sagebrush bark fibers (*Artemesia tridentate*), juniper bark (*Juniperus osteosperma*), dogbane (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*), yucca (*Yucca sp*.), and nettle (*Urtica sp*.) Bundles of tules or bulrushes were used to make mats and blankets. With the cordage of animal hair, sinew, and hide the Ute made nets, traps, rope, and bowstrings.[36]

Some Ute bands did manufacture pottery. Ute pottery is manufactured by coiling, often taking the form of wide- mouthed jars with pointed bases, low shoulders, and flared rims. The smooth exterior surface vessels are finished with rows of fingernail impressions perpendicular to the coil junctures.[37] Weeminuche women made coiled pottery, but Eastern Ute bands did not use pottery, but boiled food by dropping hot rocks into baskets. Most pottery manufacturing was quickly abandoned after the introduction of European metal pots.[38]

Among the eastern Ute, only the Weeminuche traditionally built willow doomed houses standing eight feet high and 15 feet in diameter.[39] Other Eastern Ute bands, prior to direct European contact, lived in tipis. As early as 1720, a Ute band living north of Santa Fe carry with them "tents made of bison hide."[40] Women task groups using six to ten bison hides made tipis.[41]

Eastern bands also constructed conical, hide-covered sweatlodges. Sweatlodges were considered beneficial to cure illnesses, with or without a shaman. It also was used for bathing. Men usually took sweat baths with men and less frequently, women with women. Although among some eastern Ute bands a husband and wife did sweat together.[42]

Ute men manufactured and used a wooden bow of chokecherry or mountain mahogany, although juniper and serviceberry could be used if necessary. Bows of mountain sheep horns also were made. Arrows were 22 to 24 inches long using serviceberry or another hard wood. The war club made of a rawhide covered stone and the Eastern Ute used thrusting spears.[43]

All Ute bands used a notched rasp called a morache for the Bear Dance, rawhide and hoof rattles, and a single-head drum. Men made courting flutes. After the introduction of peyote, the gourd rattle and water drum were incorporated into their society.[44]

11.5 Life Cycle

Once a woman discovered that she was pregnant, she must observe several cultural restrictions. Along with the greater variety and availability of animals for food, the Eastern Ute bands had more food taboos. Women for example, were not allowed to eat the hearts of large game animals.[45] She also must avoid eating fattening foods and animals whose power was strong. Mountain lions and badgers, which were believed to be a former Ute shaman, were especially avoided. Other strong animals were the bobcat and fox.[46] Beaver, gopher, and mole meat also was taboo.

Among some bands, once a woman discovered she was pregnant she could not engage in coitus and must avoid sitting any place where a gopher had dug. Among the Timpanogots, Uncompahgre, and Weeminuche the husband must follow the same restrictions as his wife. It was taboo among some bands for husbands to hunt "strong" animals during his wife's pregnancy for fear that that animal would kill the child.[47]

Delivery never occurred in the dwelling, but in a birthing shelter made for that purpose. After the shelter's construction, the woman's husband collected firewood and made a fire that must be continuously lit in the birthing lodge.[48] Usually a female relative would assist in the birth, but women with birthing medicines could also assist in the

delivery. If the labor and delivery were difficult a medicine man would be called on. He would press his forehead on her stomach and sing power songs.[49]

After the delivery, the mother was bathed. She might take her breast and squirt some milk on a hot rock to insure a constant milk supply. Afterwards, the mother endured a month-long postpartum confinement. She was attended by a relative, drank only warm water, avoided eating grease and meat, and could not scratch her body using her fingers.[50]

The umbilical cord was cut with a stone knife and stored in a skin pouch. It was attached to the child's cradleboard until the child began to walk. A girl's umbilicus would then be placed in a red-ant hill to instill industriousness as she grew toward womanhood.

A father also had taboos. Until the naval cord dropped off, he could not drink cold water, eat meat or grease, scratch his hair or body, smoke, and gamble. Some father's might bathe himself, smudge himself with juniper or sage, and run until exhaustion to insure his child's industriousness.[51]

Ute children were named immediately after birth, after weaning, or after walking. Names often referred to a special individual characteristic, action, material object, animal, bird or plant. Over the course of person's life cycle, a person could change his or her name. Names were not kept secret, but familiar people used nicknames to refer to individuals.[52]

When a young woman began to menstruate, she was isolated in a menstruation shelter, separate from the family dwelling. During this time she had separate eating and drinking items, could not eat meat or consume cold water. Among the Weeminuche, salt was taboo. The young woman cannot scratch herself except using a scratching stick. She also must avoid hunters, gamblers, and sick persons. Some bands practiced the tradition

of setting up menstruation lodges near Bear Dance grounds to publicly announce their new status as a woman by dancing.[53]

Marriage was an individual decision, but parents did influence the selection of first marriages. There was a marked preference for band exogamy. General polygyny existed for the Unitah and Uncompahgre. The Weeminuche preferred sororal polygyny, marrying sisters. [54] Only the Uncompahgre exchanged gifts, similar in cultural tradition to Great Plains tribes, as part of the marriage ceremony. The predominate residence pattern after marriage was matrilocal; living with wife's family.[55] Independent, nuclear households were the most prevalent.

Within the Ute extended family, there were separate kin terms for each grandparent and used these terms self-reciprocally with grandchildren. The Ute also distinguished among siblings and cousins according to sex and age. They made careful distinctions among aunts on the matriside than the partiside of the kin system. Distinguishing the mother's side is compatible with the matrilocal emphasis.[56]

Divorce was common, usually for jealousy, having a bad temper, or sterility. Most Ute, men and women, may be married several times.[57]

At death, the person was removed from the habitation dwelling. The body would be placed under a willow shade during the summer. The corpse was washed, face painted, and dressed in the person's finest clothing. The body was taken and deposited in a rock crevice or cave with the head facing east. The personal property was burned and some bands burned the deceased's dwelling, except if it was a valuable tipi. Relatives mourned for a year by cutting their hair and not participating in dances. Among some Ute bands it was improper to speak the dead person's name, among other bands tradition held that you should not discuss the dead for fear of ghosts.[58]

Ute kin units were mobile; exogamous year round residence groups that were composed of several families related through the matriline and resided matrilocally. In

most instances, individual families would live in separate dwellings and move their household to another relative's camp. Families were bonded by kinship and mutual respect for the camp headman who held status for hunting prowess or abilities to properly direct the camp's movements. The camps usually had a descent from a common ancestor and united by residence. Relationships and statuses within the camp were based on age sex, and generation. Several of these matri-camps bonded together to form a band. Matri-camps within the band were not ranked in prestige or privilege.[59]

11.6 Social and Political Organization

Band organization existed prior to the introduction of the horse. Bands we composed of several residential matri-resident camps under the leadership of a headman. Individuals and matri-camps could change band membership.[60] After the horse's incorporation Ute bands evolved quickly into demographically larger, more cohesive political economic structures.

The abundance of summer resources offered an opportunity for bands to remain congregated for most of the year. While the band was together, groups would temporarily leave the band to trade and raid. Ute raiding and trading parties ranged as far as the Hopi villages and far into the southern Great Plains. They also participated in trade as far north as Wyoming, usually participating in the Shoshone rendezvous system.

The acquisition of horses during the seventeenth century strengthened band organization. Between 1650 and 1850 Ute bands were named for geographic feature of their territory or for a subsistence resource that the predominately exploited. Eastern Ute bands because of their contact with Europeans by the early 1600s and their extensive use of the Great Plains, adopted a Plain equestrian life way and aspects of social structure.[61]

11.7 Conflict and Warfare

The Eastern Ute raided and were raided frequently. Major regional enemies included the Arapaho and Cheyenne. Over the course of history, the Ute allied initially with the Comanche, but by the turn of the nineteenth century they were enemies. In 1809 for example, about 600 Mouache Ute and Jicarilla Apaches were attacked on the Arkansas River by a force of Comanche, Cuampes, and Kiowa. During the battle, a major Mouache leader, Delgadito, along with leaders, Mano Mocha and El Albo were killed.

They had ceremonies for activities before and after raiding and warfare.[62] Similar to Great Plains tribes, raids were conducted for economic reasons, material goods, captives, or women. The Ute, like the Comanche, participated heavily in the Spanish slave trade market, capturing Indians from other tribes and selling them to the Spaniards at the Santa Fe and Taos trade fairs.[63]

11.8 Religion and Ideology

The Ute possessed a belief that all living things in the universe required some supernatural power in order to exist. This supernatural power was not routinely sought but came with life. Some Ute did vision quest, a practice that may be borrowed from Great Plains tribes. Power came from dreams. Dreams were a source of individual power and shamanistic power. In the Ute language, the word for trail is "*poo*." It also means the spiritual road or way. Spiritual leaders are people who know the way and can guide others. The word for spiritual leader is "*poo-gat*" or one who knows the way.[64]

Individuals that dreamt of an animal-spirit or some other powerful spirit-being, usually became a shaman. Some spiritual people have the power to communicate with animals and control them. Buffalo, grizzly bear, and mountain lions were particularly powerful sources of medicine. Others were badger, moose, and especially eagle.[65] Of all sources of healing power, the most powerful source was the *pituku=pi*. *Pituku=pi* were

dwarfs or "little people" who lived underground. Anyone receiving power from them could cure any illness, including souls loss and ghost sicknesses.[66]

Ute men and women could become shamans.[67] The major role of a shaman was to heal. The only distinction between men and women shamans was that only men could receive power to control the weather. A shaman who was born in summer for example would use a bullroarer made from a bison neck bone to call wind to blow away rain or snow.[68]

The basic causes of illnesses were seeing a ghost, dreaming of a ghost meddling with a grave, or having a ghost touch you. Ghosts of suicide victims and murderers were considered particularly dangerous. Evil thought also could make you sick. Shamans could use their powers or ordinary people can think evil thoughts about you. An evil shaman was called *?upu pii=ka=ti* and for their evil were often killed by the community. Violating any taboos, including eating anything that is the enemy of your power, can cause illness, Dreaming of someone becoming ill or of certain animals cause illness. Last, a person could experience object intrusion.[69]

Healing was conducted using a variety of techniques, including plants. A number of healers used plants in association with songs to cure patients.[70] Seldom reported in the literature for example are scarred trees. The Ute would strip bark from trees, principally pine, for a variety of reasons. Aside from using the stripped bark occasionally for starvation food or for manufacturing cradleboards and other items, medicinal teas was known to be brewed from the inner bark. "Some are said," according to Cassells, "to be medicine trees.[71] An ill person would be placed next to the scar during the healing process…" Plants also played a role in determining or predicting good and bad fortune. A person could chew yampa and blow it into the air to bring rain or discover the roots of a cedar grown together, which meant a woman and a man were making love.[72]

The Ute believe were created in the mountains by the their ancestral deities and have an obligation to be in the right place to be stewards of the resources of plants and

animals. According to their traditions, the Ute have always been mountain people, hunters and gatherers across the land.[73] As with other indigenous societies, there exists an intimate relationship between the landscape, cosmology, and seasonal movements for subsistence.

Aboriginally, mountains, especially high mountains, are the representational center of the universe.[74] Emanating from that cosmological center, are four major directions that is demarcated by astronomical events. Ritual and ceremonial life is divided into fours. Four and five are important ritual numbers. These are important structuring symbols in Ute society. The horizon is conceived as a circle that is segmented into four quarters. The southeast is marked by the autumnal equinox, the southwest is associated with the winter solstice, the northwest begins with the vernal equinox, and the northeast commences with the summer solstice.[75]

In Ute symbology there are five basic colors. Each color is associated with an ecological zone, season, and direction. The name for white is "*saawar*," yellow is "*uakar*," and there is also a color that brings together blue and green, which centers on turquoise. Shades of blue, green, and turquoise are called "*sakwakar.*" Red is "*akar*," and black is "*saawar*."[76]

These colors are rooted in the five different levels of the earth or cosmos. The colors also are associated with specific seasons and ecological zones. Red is symbolic of spring and the basin country. This is the Weasel's domain. The Mountain Lion's domain is yellow. Yellow is associated with summer and with mountaintops, where the sunrise hits first. Autumn is represented by the color white. White also represents the sky. It is the period when many plants are beginning to drop their leaves and their colors fade. Finally, black is associated with winter, when trees lose their leaves and "many other things" lose their colors. Winter also is a time of dormancy. The use of these colors in ritual and ceremony often reflects the sacred powers of each of the domains.[77]

Associated with these domains are major animal-spirits. In the traditional Ute religious system eagle, mountain lion, wolf, weasel, and rattlesnake are important. Eagle is a dominant sacred power with the ability to cure many afflictions. Below eagle is mountain lion. Center Earth power is embodied in wolf, grizzly bear, and coyote. Lower in the hierarchy is weasel. Rattlesnake is associated with underworld. In juxtaposition to the above powers that are conceived of as positive sacred powers, Rattlesnake is considered to be a negative power.[78]

The Ute landscape is a dynamic system that is also arranged hierarchically. In the Ute language:

> …they have a term for the sky, and they have a term for the underworld. The traditional view was that this Earth was…an island and it was surrounded by water. The underworld was…considered as a mirror image or a reflection of this world. Their view was that the sun and the moon and the stars and planets, of course, were going through the underworld, below the Earth, during the nighttime and then came up again over there. So they were circling around this island Earth…[79]

Thus, each major Ute band lived and seasonally moved in what they considered a sacred domain, with each band having a sacred mountain center. Other mountains demarcated the territorial limits of the band, identifying the margins of the four directions.[80] The Ute believe that the proper way to move is in a sun-wise direction or clockwise. The Ute linguistically refer to it as the "right-handed direction." Traditional ceremonies, the general seasonal movement through the landscape, and other important cultural matters always move in a "right-handed direction." Moving continuously in that direction forms a circular pattern.[81] Ute ceremonials, rituals, and recounting sacred traditions, were not only timed within this dynamic cosmological order, but also paralleled the seasonal subsistence rounds.

The Bear Dance was the major Ute ceremonial. The origins of the ceremony is connected to the tradition of Grizzly Bear Woman who captured a Ute man who remained in the mountains after snow fell. During their hibernation, in which she had her way with him, the spirit instructed him on how to conduct the ceremony. Grizzly Bear Woman told the man that the Ute should always hold a Bear Dance before ascending into the high country, as the Grizzly Bear spirit is the keeper of mountain game and resources. Traditionally, the Ute did not hunt and kill bears, except one bear in the spring that first came out of hibernation. The bear was a sacred guest at the ceremony and the cooked flesh was eaten as a sacrament.[82]

Each band had a traditional ground to conduct the Bear Dance ceremony. The ceremony originally lasted five days and was conducted at the first day of spring or on the vernal equinox. Ute traditionalists correlate the Bear Dance Ceremony with bears coming out of hibernation. First spring thunder was symbolic of a bear awakening and growling after hibernation. The Bear Dance authorized the band to move higher into the mountains. After the ceremony the band would move to their spring resource camps.[83]

A dance leader and two assistants manage the ceremony. During the ceremony the dance leaders and his assistants would gently whip the spectators and urge them to participate. If anyone fell down during the ceremony, the person would remain on the ground until being doctored by a shaman using a *morache* instead of a feathered fan. Initially men are on one side of the dance ground and women are on the other. They dance back and forth toward each other to songs sung by men while rubbing a stick over a *morache*, a notched rasp, which is rested on a resonator placed over a hole in the earth. The lines eventually separate into couples. The couples dance side-by-side with their arms around each other's waists.[84]

Women, just as Grizzly Bear Woman, are in charge of the dance, making the selection of whom they want to dance with as a partner. The men cannot refuse their offer to dance with them. Associated with the ceremony are fertility, sexual experimentation, and courtship. Young Ute women that were having their first menses

would stay in isolation in a menstrual hut near the Bear Dance ground. Women who were not menstruating, but had experienced their first menstrual period previously during the year, "were the women (woman) chosen to be danced to exhaustion."[85] It also allowed for families to create alliances for the coming yearly subsistence round.[86]

The Ute did practice, during preservation period, a ceremonial dance dedicated to the sun, as symbolic of summer. The ceremony was held at the summer solstice, emphasizing the hunting activities in the high mountain parks. Similar to the Bear Dance, the ceremony was conducted in a special location. Originally the ceremony did not resemble the Plains Sun Dance. The Ute only incorporated a version of the Great Plains Sun Dance, around 1890, after the reservation period.[87] Despite the incorporation of the Sun Dance during the post-reservation period, an oral tradition links the ceremony to its aboriginal intent:

> There was a young man who once got very tired while for from camp and feel asleep. He dreamed about the sun dance, and he when he awoke, there was Sunav [Wolf]. The Sunav told him there would be a time when the streams would dry up and the leaves on the trees would shrivel. He said the sun dance would harden men for this time…The young man returned, knowing that he was supposed to take charge of the sun dance. That is why the Indians are supposed to pray for everything at sun dance. If they grow crops, they pray for them. They pray for abundance. This prepares them for the time when there will be drought. The dance is to give thanks for everything in the world…Ever since that first time they have had the sun dance.[88]

Aside from assuring abundance, the ceremonial also involved curing.[89]

In the fall the band would conduct a Pine or Pinon Nut ceremony that opened the pinon harvest. The ceremonial was held near the autumnal equinox.[90] Other important ceremonies are ethnographically recorded for the Ute, such as the Deer Hoof Rattle

Dance and Round Dance, but they cannot be conclusively placed into cosmology and seasonal round.[91]

The winter solstice marked the beginning of recounting the cycle of sacred oral traditions, origin traditions, and other significant traditions. If they are told during the summer, some misfortune will occur to you. Coyote traditions for example should be only told during the winter. If they are told during the summer it will bring an early winter.[92]

Many traditional stories lay out the values and morals. Other Ute oral traditions recount the creation of diversity in the land and how various creatures chose their own special locations. The Ute often used animals and their characteristics to impart knowledge. The Ute conceived of animals as being related to each other in kinship terms. Animals were models for the way people orient themselves in family relationships.[93]

Plants also were thought of in kin terms and in relationships. For example, the word for pinon tree is "*waap*." The word for cedar or juniper tree is "*pa-waap*." "*Pa*" means water. Cedar or juniper grows in locations with more moisture than pinon trees. However, the Ute view the trees as sisters, who support each other, drawing an analogy to the matrilocal family where sisters and living together in household clusters in the same band forming supportive relationships.[94]

11.9 Conclusion

Despite being forced on to reservations, the Ute have been able to maintain the bonds of cultural identity through a complex array of adaptations. The Ute were able to recast many traditional meanings into new forms, develop pluralistic cultural strategies, invent new heritage forms, and compartmentalize from non-Ute elements of their cultural traditions that they have deemed worthy of maintaining as Ute. According to Quintana,

"the Southern Ute managed not only to survive the ordeal… of government coercion but to preserve the vital core of their own identity."[95]

[1]. Donald Callaway, Joel Janetski, and Omer C. Stewart, "Ute," In. Handbook of North American Indians, Great Basin. Volume 11. Warren L. D'Azevedo, volume editor. (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1986), 336; Steve E. Cassells, The Archaeology of Colorado. (Boulder: Johnson Books, 1983), 90, 145, 191.
[2]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 336.
[3]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 336; Joseph G. Jorgensen, Western Indians: Comparative Environments, Languages, and Cultures of 172 Western American Indian Tribes. (San Francisco: W. H. Freemen, 1980), 380.
[4]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 336.
[5]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 337.
[6]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 337.
[7]. See, David M. Armstrong, Distribution of Mammals in Colorado. Museum of Natural History Monograph 3. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, Museum of Natural History, 1972), 308; Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 337-338.
[8]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 338.
[9]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 338-339; Cassells, The Archaeology of Colorado, 196; Charles S. Marsh, People of the Shining Mountains: The Utes of Colorado. (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Company, 1982), 17-24.
[10]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 339.
[11]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 339; Albert H. Schroeder, "A Brief History of the Southern Ute," Southwestern Lore. 30(4, 1965):54.
[12]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 339.
[13]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 339.
[14]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 339.
[15]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 440.
[16]. James A. Goss "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," In. Ute Indian Arts and Culture: From Prehistory to the New Millennium. William Wroth, editor. (Colorado Springs: Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 2000), 31.
[17]. Goss "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 42-43.
[18]. Many locations across the study area had cultural significance to the Ute. Manitou Springs was a sacred spring to the Ute as was the Garden of the Gods. They defended these areas from the incursions of the Arapaho and Cheyenne. The Ute also fought against Comanche, if they invaded Ute territory, see Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 51.
[19]. The spiritual chief of hunted animals was the big horn sheep, see Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 44.
[20]. According to James Goss, the introduction of horses, while altering mobility, territorial range, and the ability to accumulate and carry more resources, did not alter the general seasonal or cosmological pattern with the landscape, see Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 43.
[21]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 340-341.
[22]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 341.
[23]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 341.

[24]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 342; Omer C. Stewart, "Culture Element Distributions, XVIII: Ute-Southern Paiute," University of California Anthropological Records. 6(4,1942):329.
[25]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 341.
[26]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 342.
[27]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 343.
[28]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 343; Edith Van Allen Murphey, Indian Uses of Native Plants. Originally published in 1959. (Glenwood: Meyerbooks, 1990), 25.
[29]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 343.
[30]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 343, 345; Anne M. Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes. Papers in Anthropology, No. 17. (Albuquerque: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1974), 65, 67.
[31]. Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 80.
[32]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 346.
[33]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 345; Stewart, "Culture Element Distributions, XVIII: Ute-Southern Paiute," 281.
[34]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 345-346; Stewart, "Culture Element Distributions, XVIII: Ute-Southern Paiute," 277.
[35]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 346; Stewart, "Culture Element Distributions, XVIII: Ute-Southern Paiute," 271.
[36]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 347.
[37]. Cassells, The Archaeology of Colorado, 192.
[38]. Coiled pottery was tempered with sand or *Opuntia* cacti leaves and juice. Refer to, Harold E. Driver and William C. Massey, "Comparative Studies of North American Indians," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society. 47(2, 1957):340; Jorgensen, Western Indians: Comparative Environments, Languages, and Cultures of 172 Western American Indian Tribes; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 84-88; Stewart, "Culture Element Distributions, XVIII: Ute-Southern Paiute," 273.
[39]. Ute housing was often built of branches leaned against each other to form a cone structure. On occasion, the branches were leaned against a living tree. The structure was then covered with brush. The Ute also used rock shelters on occasion, see Cassells, The Archaeology of Colorado, 191.
[40]. Alfred B. Thomas, Translator and editor, After Coronado: Spanish Explorations Northeast of New Mexico, 1669-1727. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1935), 171.
[41]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 348.
[42]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 350.
[43]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 350.
[44]. Stewart, "Culture Element Distributions, XVIII: Ute-Southern Paiute," 294.
[45]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 342.
[46]. Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 137.
[47]. Stewart, "Culture Element Distributions, XVIII: Ute-Southern Paiute," 303.
[48]. Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 138.
[49]. The birth of twins was considered a disgrace or a sign of pending misfortune. Twins occurred for eating venison, having intercourse with more than one man during

pregnancy, or having too frequent sex with your husband. Twins also could be interpreted that someone used "bad power" against the mother. To rectify the situation, one twin was usually neglected and left to die, see Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 351; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 138.
[50]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 351.
[51]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 351.
[52]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 352; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 276.
[53]. Jorgensen, Western Indians: Comparative Environments, Languages, and Cultures of 172 Western American Indian Tribes. 536.
[54]. Polygynous marriages accounted for only about ten percent of all marriages in Ute society, see, Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 352.
[55]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 35.
[56]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 352-353.
[57]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 352.
[58]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 352; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 191; Stewart, "Culture Element Distributions, XVIII: Ute-Southern Paiute," 313.
[59]. Jorgensen, Western Indians: Comparative Environments, Languages, and Cultures of 172 Western American Indian Tribes, 466-474.
[60]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 353-354.
[61]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 353-354; Cassells, The Archaeology of Colorado, 193; Schroeder, "A Brief History of the Southern Ute," 53-61.
[62]. Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 223-225.
[63]. Carling Malouf, "Ethnohistory in the Great Basin," In. The Current Status of Anthropological Research in the Great Basin: 1964. Warren L. d'Azevedo, et. al., editors. Desert Research Institute Social Sciences and Humanities Publications 1. (Reno: University of Nevada Desert Research Institute, 1966); Catherine S. Fowler and Don D. Fowler, "Notes on the History of the Southern Paiutes and Western Shoshonis," Utah Historical Quarterly. 39(2, 1971):181.
[64]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 36-37.
[65]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 38; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 154-155.
[66]. *Pituku=pi* live underground and can be found by locating a small amount of smoke coming out of a hole in the ground. Shamans and other left offerings of beads or rings at the entrance to their homes. If horses were grazed too closely to their homes they would occasionally kill the best horse, see, Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 155.
[67]. Callaway, Janetski, and Stewart, "Ute," 354; Marvin K. Opler, "On Devereux's Discussion of Ute Shamanism," American Anthropologist. 63(5, 1961)1:1091-1093; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 154.
[68]. Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 164.
[69]. Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 153, 157, 164.
[70]. Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 162-163.
[71]. Cassells, The Archaeology of Colorado, 193.
[72]. Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 164-165.

[73]. Clifford Duncan, "The Northern Utes of Utah," In. A History of Utah's American Indians. Forrest S. Culch editor. (Salt Lake City: Utah State Division of Indian Affairs/ Utah State Division of History, 2000), 167-168; Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 28-29.
[74]. The Ute refer to Pikes Peak as *Tabakaiv* or Sun Mountain. It is called this because it is the furthest mountain east of the Front Range where the sunrise hits first. It is a sacred mountain for the Ute. One Ute band, the Tabeguache were named after the mountain. They are the Sun Mountain people, see Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 51.
[75]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 32-33.
[76]. The mountain slopes that have shades of green, gray, and blue mixtures in vegetation is "*sakwakar,*" see Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 47.
[77]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 47-48.
[78]. Weasel power is used to protect people on journeys and will kill rattlesnakes. For example, painting moccasins red would provide protection and kill rattlesnakes, see, Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 48-49.
[79]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 33.
[80]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 42.
[81]. The concept of orienting oneself in the right-handed direction also provided a referent to partially define identity. The Ute refer to the Comanche and Shoshone as "*Kumants*" or "Left-Handed-Ones" or "Backward Ones," because they do not do things in the "right handed-direction." In Ute sign language, the symbol for "*Kumants*" is snake moving backwards because they did not do things right. The Comanche and Shoshone were considered people who were poor for occupying permanently the basins and the plains, see, Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 33, 37, 42. The Ute also use plants as a metaphor to describe other indigenous peoples. The Navajo for example are called *Pa^{a}'wits* or Cattails, which simultaneously characterizes them as ludicrously thin by Ute standards for a body type and the manner historically that the Navajo clustered their camps along waterways like "cattails." In similar fashion the Southern Ute referred to the Taos people as *Borborats* ("Pinon jays"), see, Marvin K. Opler, "The Origins of Comanche and Ute," American Anthropologist. 45(1, 1945):155-156.
[82]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 46-47. The fullest ethnographic account of the Bear Dance ceremony is found in Albert B. Reagan, "The Ute Bear Dance," Wisconsin Archaeologist. 9(1930):237-150; Verner Z. Reed, "The Ute Bear Dance, American Anthropologist. 9(7, 1896):237-244, and; Julian H. Steward, "A Unitah Ute Bear Dance, March 1931," American Anthropologist. 34(2, 1932):263-273.
[83]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 42-43, 45; Reed, "The Ute Bear Dance, 239.
[84]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 47; Reed, "The Ute Bear Dance, 240; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 221.
[85]. Reed, "The Ute Bear Dance, 240-243; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 222.

[86].Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 47; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 222.
[87]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 45; Robert H. Lowie, "The Sun Dance of the Shoshoni, Ute and Hidatsa," Anthropological Papers, Volume XVI. (American Museum of Natural History, 1919), 387-431; "Notes of Shoshonean Ethnography," Anthropological Papers, Volume XX, Part III. (American Museum of Natural History, 1924); Marvin K. Opler, "The Integration of the Sun Dance in Ute Religion," American Anthropologist. 43(4, 1941):550-572.
[88]. Opler, "The Integration of the Sun Dance in Ute Religion," 551-552.
[89]. Opler, "The Integration of the Sun Dance in Ute Religion," 551-571.
[90]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 45.
[91]. Opler, "The Integration of the Sun Dance in Ute Religion," 570-572.
[92]. Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 37; Smith, Ethnography of the Northern Utes, 221.
[93]. Duncan, "The Northern Utes of Utah," 168; Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 38.
[94]. Plants are often characterized linguistically and in traditions as female," see Goss, "Traditional Cosmology, Ecology, and Language of the Ute Indians," 38.
[95]. Frances Leon Quintana, Ordeal of Change: The Southern Utes and Their Neighbors. (Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2004), 113.