

# The Pueblo Nations: Our Resilient Neighbors

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A Series of  
Presentations and  
Discussion

First Presbyterian  
Church Santa Fe

October 2021



# Four Sessions

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8 Centuries of History

Survival under US  
Governance

Restoration of Rights

Presbyterian Call to  
Action





# Pueblo Nations

## Joe S. Sando

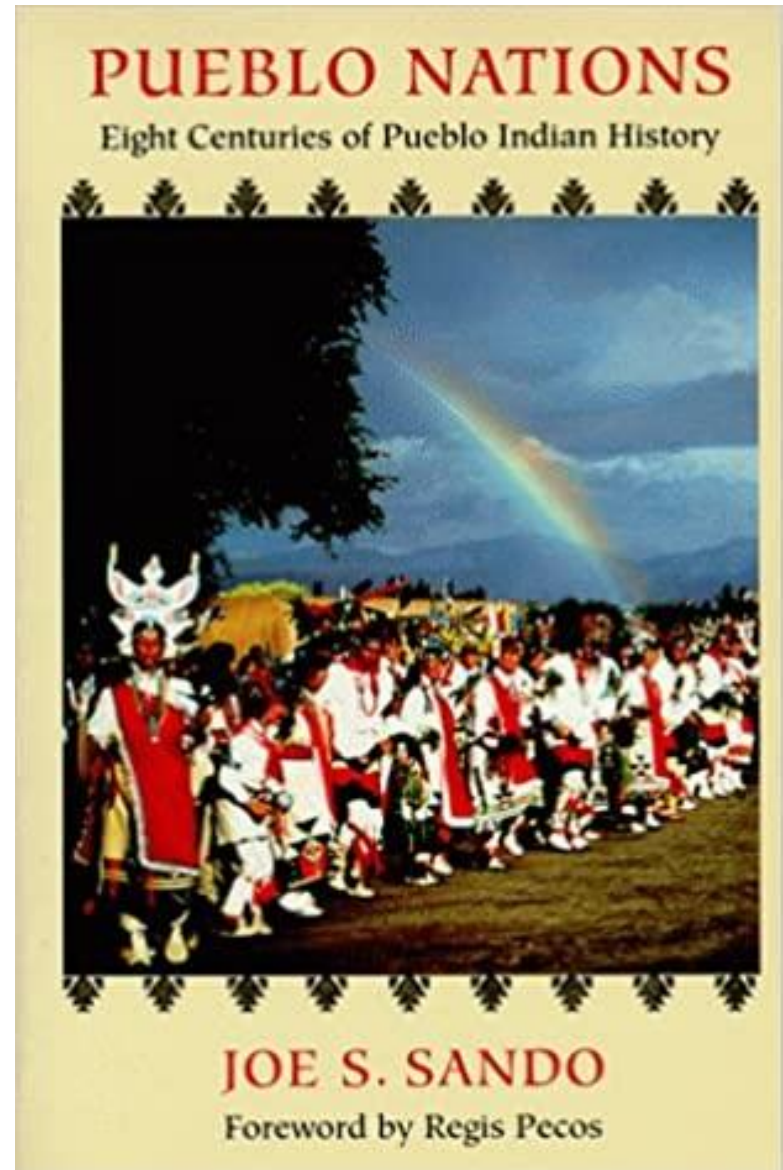
### 1992, 1998

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“Pueblo Nations is the story of a vital and creative culture, of a people sustained by ages-old traditions and beliefs, who have adapted to the radical challenges of the modern world.”

“...presents a detailed account of the unremitting struggle to retain sovereignty, land and water rights in the face of powerful outside pressures.”

[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



# Mexican Independence - 1821

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- Plan of Iguala – all citizens
- Mexican Government more concerned with advancing US forces, than governing New Mexico
- Conflict between church and state in Mexico reduced missionaries in New Mexico
- Anglos came into New Mexico



# US Acquires New Mexico - 1848

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## **TREATY OF GUADALUPE HIDALGO**

United States ended its war with Mexico with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. In the treaty, the United States agreed to

- recognize Pueblo land holdings as granted by Spain and Mexico
- allow Pueblo people to continue their customs and languages
- recognize Pueblo people as citizens of the United States.

## **NEW MEXICO TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT ESTABLISHED**

Legislature had jurisdiction over all citizens of New Mexico Territory unless actions nullified by US Congress

# The Pueblos Religion

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“The Pueblos have no word that translates as “religion.” The knowledge of a spiritual life is part of the person twenty-four hours a day, every day of the year.”

“The tradition of religious belief permeates every aspect of the people's life; it determines man's relation with the natural world and with his fellow man. Its basic concern is continuity of a harmonious relationship with the world in which man lives.” p.30

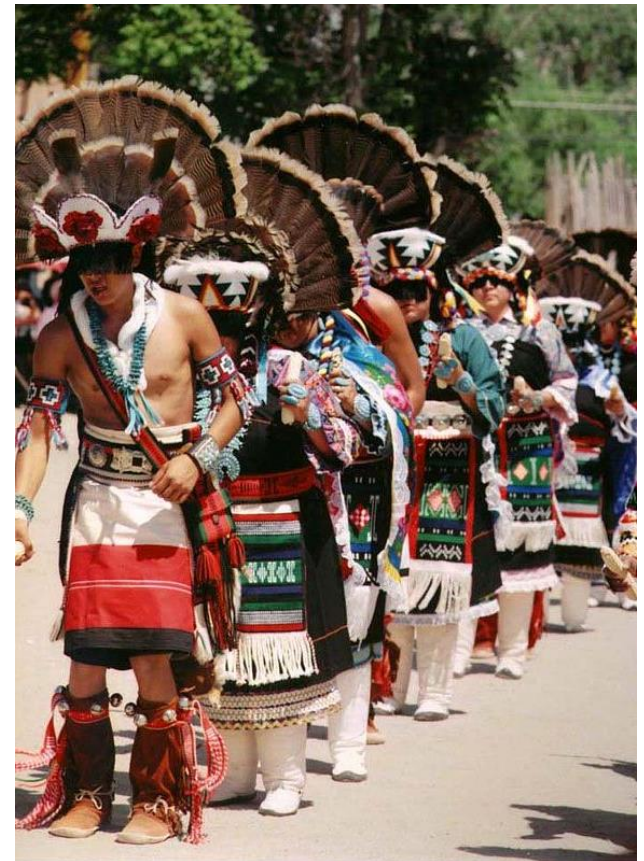


# Pueblo Religion Under Attack

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“Now the Pueblos were faced by strict, ‘God-fearing’ and proselytizing Christians bent on imposing their own religion upon the Indians. “ p. 91

- Bureau of Indian Affairs – 1824
- Religious Crimes Act - 1883



Dancers at Ohkay Owingeh, May 2005

By Carptrash at English Wikipedia, CC BY 3.0,

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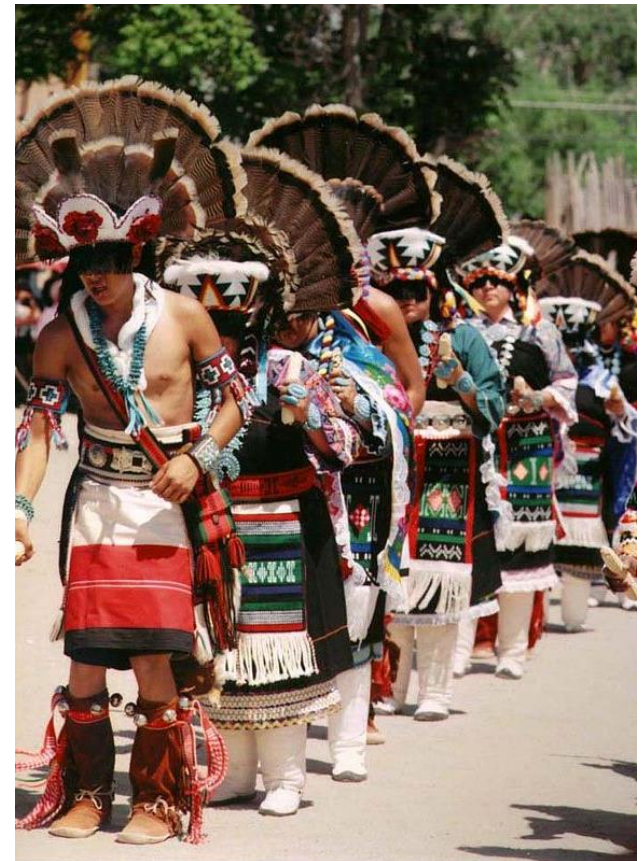


# Pueblo Religion Under Attack

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April 26, 1921 - Superintendent of Pueblos states his attitude in a printed report:

“Until the old customs and Indian practices are broken up among this people, we cannot hope for a great amount of progress. The sacred dance is perhaps one of the greatest evils. What goes on I will not attempt to say, but I firmly believe that it is little less than a ribald system of debauchery.” p. 93



Dancers at Ohkay Owingeh, May 2005

By Carptrash at English Wikipedia, CC BY 3.0,

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# Land Disputes – Legal Conflicts

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- 1834 – Indian Trade and Intercourse Act – making unauthorized settlement of tribal lands by non-Indians a federal offense
- 1876 – NM Supreme Court is backed up by US Supreme Court (*Joseph* case) – 1834 Act doesn't apply to Pueblos  
About 3000 white families settle on Pueblo lands
- 1910 – Enabling Act for Statehood. Terms “Indian” and “Indian country” apply to Pueblos. Upheld by US Supreme Court
- 1913 – *Sandoval* case overturns *Joseph* case making unauthorized settlers into trespassers

# Bursum Bill 1921-22

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*National Photo Company. 1923. "Group of Pueblo Indians photographed at the U.S. Capitol today. This is the first time since the Lincoln Administration that the Pueblo Indians have sent a delegation to Wash. They appeared before the Senate Lands Committee." Washington, DC. Courtesy of the [Library of Congress](#).*

# The Right to Vote

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1948

When Miguel Trujillo, a World War II veteran from Isleta Pueblo, went to register to vote, he was denied, based on the fact that he was a Native American living on a Pueblo. Trujillo brought suit against the county registrar and won.



# Taos Blue Lake

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- Sacred and sanctified place for Taos Pueblo from the beginning of time
- 1906 – Theodore Roosevelt placed the area under the newly organized US Forest Service
- 1970 – Richard Nixon signed Harris-Griffin Bill which returned their land and sacred lake to the Taos Pueblo
- “Through all those years that tried their souls, the Taos people rallied as one to defend their sacred grounds. They fought with courage and persistence, dealing with politicians, lawyers, lobbyists, and opponents with shrewdness and zeal.” p101



# Water Rights

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- “We did not derive our rights from any sovereign, but these rights which our forefathers knew and handed down through the generations to us, to cherish and protect.” p131
- Over more than a century Pueblo water rights have been debated in US lawsuits.
- Latest court ruling was in 2020 regarding a case filed in 1983.



# Leadership Attacked

- US tried to replace All Indian Pueblo Council with a different group organized by the BIA which had no authority or power.
- AIPC countered by adopting a Constitution and Bylaws...“exemplifying the method of parliamentary work familiar to the Pueblo Indians from a date when the Nordic ancestors of those who follow Burke were cavemen” p97

# All Indian Pueblo Council (AIPC)

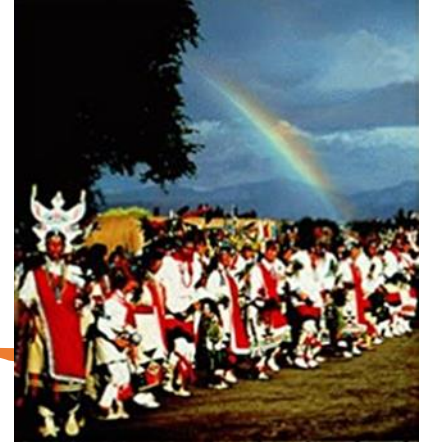
- Advance Pueblo people
- Protect the teachings of the past
- Prepare youth for the future



1922 – Opposing the Bursum Bill

# Resilience

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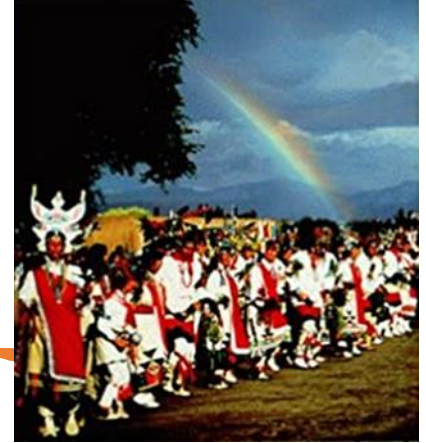
“The people have developed weapons of peaceful warfare now. They know how to fight in the courts, with ideological weaponry, attempting to educate the public; and their patience will probably pay off. A broad group of non-Indians are very supportive of Pueblo issues. What is even more important is that the Pueblo people have the wholehearted, unstinting support of the Indian tribes of America.” P163

Joe S. Sando, author of Pueblo Nations: Eight Centuries of History



# Looking Forward

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“Many changes will certainly come. it is only to be hoped that a new lifestyle will emerge that incorporates the best of the two worlds - features of the Pueblo traditional world and the best of the European world, with restrained technological development and a growing respect for the land as taught by the elders of the ancient pueblos.” P162

Joe S. Sando, author of Pueblo Nations: Eight Centuries of History

# Resources

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- “Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) History.” *Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)*, U.S. Department of the Interior, <https://www.bia.gov/bia>, accessed October 14, 2021.
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