

Plowing

Widows role in the pueblo

Herbs

Importance of the History and
past generations Indian Heritage

Coyote Story (Migration)

Porfiero Montoya
Santa Ana Pueblo
Interviewer - Dennis J. Stanford
March 19, 1968
Tape 1

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A. Then I cut, just about not more than half a mile, or a quarter mile you see, the east river, so I went there and never bothered to bring them or go after them, see. But now when it changed there, I have to do it, I came to go after him in the evening see.

Q. Well is his car broken down?

A. No, he is still got it only he change, you see he doesn't come by that way no more.

Q. Oh yeah, yeah I noticed yesterday that it was at your house, and I just wondered if it had been.....

A. No, he stayed homes yesterday, I don't know what for, played hookey I guess!

Q. Is that all right?

A. No, not for me, maybe for him it is.

Q. Well, what was this deal yesterday, you just had, you were surveying for the field?

A. Yeah, I was helping the surveyors there, the stake up you know, run the chain for them and then put the stakes in and wrap around that rod you know.

Q. Oh yeah, stadia rod, is that part of the work you have to do for being Lt. Governor or....?

A. Oh no, the woman ask me to do it you see.

Q. Oh, I see.

A. So I thought I do it for her, because that survey guy he couldn't get anybody see.

Q. Is he from Albuquerque, here, this survey guy?

A. I don't know where if he is from Albuquerque, whether he live in Albuquerque or. Last fall his father was buying hay from us you see, from Ponderosa you see, way up there. And Sunday he came down from the rest of them and he said that he goes to school in Bernalillo and used to live in Bernalillo but I followed him yesterday rather than

survey. So I imagine that he lives in Bernalillo and comes into to work, yeah.

Q. Well then you helping him probably was made it less expensive for your friend?

A. Yeah.

Q. What is she going to do with the alfalfa?

A. She is trying to level off, you know level it off more so that it will be alot easier to irrigate it. Of course, one part from the east side of her house, she irrigates from way back this runs all the way back to the east end and brings it back this way toward the house. But now she wants to switch it the other way you see. Instead of running the ditch further down the other end she wants to switch off at the house and irrigate towards the east. I told her it was all right cause there is no use having a long ditch there, while you could switch it that way. Yeah.

Q. Well does she have to get special permission from the pueblo and from the water right's?

A. No.

Q. She can do this just on her own?

A. Yeah, I told her that if she think that it is too expensive to get a land leveler or somebody well the next best thing to do is to get somebody to plow one way only, see. So that the plow, so that the dirt won't go in this way and back and forth you know. It will just throw it off to one way see. Then they bring the dirt up this way see, yeah. And then they drag it and irrigate it and then rut it again see. Two good runs with those tractor plows well they can throw alot of dirt you know, well they will bring it out pretty good, level it.

Q. Pretty ingenious.

A. Yeah, my brother he used to have a little pony plow that has got that you just tip it over and go back and forth in the same furrow but you throw the dirt one way. I did alot of leveling just on account of that plow yeah, push and pushing the dirt toward one way, I went.

Q. Well that is all right. Did you figure that out yourself?

A. Yes.

Q. That is pretty shrewd.

A. Yeah, thank you.

- Q. Yeah it cost alot of money to get them leveled with a leveler?
- A. Oh yeah. My brother you know when he leveled he had to pay three hundred dollars to match funds you know with the government, half and half. The government pay the other half.
- Q. That cost \$600?
- A. No, it cost I think \$10000but you have to match that much money to for the government money see.
- Q. How much land was that?
- A. 9 acres.
- Q. That is awfully expensive.
- A. He had quite a crop see, and he is still not.....
- Q. Level yet?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Boy that is over \$100 an acre.
- A. Oh yeah.
- Q. But still that is alot of work for somebody to have to do.
- A. Oh yeah.
- Q. Well does this woman, what does she have her alfalfa for horses, or.....?
- A. No, she just has it to sell.
- Q. Oh yeah.
- A. Shes ^a white lady.
- Q. Oh.
- A. Down here at Alameda, you know that pueblo road west, up by you know where that Fourth Street, west of 4th St., that pueblo road there, yeah.
- Q. Well it was nice that you could help her.
- A. Yeah, yeah... We know that family see way back in 1950 when our boy was still a little baby in a cradle, that family came up to the house and her dad they were just two of them, the lady and then her dad you see. And they came and saw him and the old man called him daddy then you see, I mean the son, Sonny, yeah and every since then they used

to bring him clothes you know until the old man died some years ago, 8 - 9 year's ago. The woman likes my boy very much too.

- Q. Well that is nice, that is nice that you can help her now that she is a widow.
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Do they have any kids?
- A. No.
- Q. That is too bad.
- A. No, she is never married. Yeah, she is never married.
- Q. I always feel sorry for a widow when, you know if they don't have any kids and there is nobody to take care of them.
- A. Yeah, boy that is a.....
- Q. How do you folks handle that kind of situation?
- A. Oh they go back to their near next of kin.
- Q. And nobody cares at all? I mean that they move in and live with them?
- A. Unless if the person on his own desires to stay alone see. But, usually the next of kin are the ones that take care of them, so we don't have the problem of neglected people. I think Indians are all that way.
- Q. Well that is real good. Well who would you consider, who would she go to first, her sister or her mother, her husband's mother?
- A. Well if she still has her mother....
- Q. She wouldn't go to her husband's parents or her husband's brothers house, or something like that?
- A. Unless if she were really accepted by them you know, cared for her and all of that. Generally she went with her own parents, her own folks.
- Q. And if they are no longer alive, then she would go with her sister?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Or even if her sister was no longer alive, what would she do then?
- A. Well, still I think her another or somebody is bound to be around that is close, yeah.

- Q. Well that is sure good. I was really worried about my mother, well you know she has got 3 children and we can all take care of her. But, she is till you know a young woman, but there is something you know that you think about after it happens, what would happen if she didn't have any children, what would she do then?
- A. That is right.
- Q. You don't worry about a man too much, they can always take care of himself.
- A. Oh, yeah, yeah.
- Q. Oh well. Did Dora tell you that I saw you guys Sunday?
- A. Yes.
- Q. I was going to wave but before I figured out for sure that it was you and you went by. You didn't see us did you?
- A. No.
- Q. Well we were, we just went out for a ride, we went to Jemez Dam, I had heard about it and we had talked about it, would you like some more coffee?
- A. No, thank you that is enough.
- Q. I have to have a morning cup.
- A. I had some this morning.
- Q. So I went out, so we went out and drove around for a little, we drove to Jemez Dam and then we drove on past. Jeannie hadn't seen the old pueblo and we stopped at the sign there, read the sign and looked over to the old pueblo and then we went on up to Jemez Springs. I showed her Jemez Pueblo you know where you and Dora showed me around, oh she enjoyed that. Say when we were going to Jemez Dam though, there was an Indian woman and two young girls, up there on that flat part before you go down into the dam, down the first arroyo and they were up there and it looked like they were picking up rocks. Do you have any idea what they were doing?
- A. No.
- Q. I wonder.....?
- A. Up on top of that Jemez Dam? Mesa?

- Q. Well the mesa before, you know there is a gully before you go down to the next mesa and they were out there, they were picking something off the ground.
- A. I don't know, I wonder how was there a truck or a car or something.
- Q. Yeah, there was a car and it seems to me it was a white Chevy, but it was a pretty new one. But, there was an older woman and then two young girls. One real small little girl and they had little sacks they were picking something up off the ground.
- A. Oh, I know what they were trying to do, they were up there for the greens that comes up this time of the year, they call it in Spanish, Chemoja.
- Q. Chemoja, is this a little plant?
- A. It is sort of a plant, the leaves are they use those leaves for seasoning or they can be used as like you would a maybe asparagus or something you know.
- Q. How does it taste?
- A. Well it tastes really good, you ask Dr. Ellis, she will tell you.
- Q. Oh, I am going to go out and have Dora cook me some.
- A. Yeah.
- Q. I will be back.
- A. What ever you want them in, beans or stew or something you put that in as more of a seasoning type you know. Yeah and then they eat it raw too.
- Q. They cook it, or they eat it raw, they just.....
- A. No, they just like you do with an onion, a young onion. This time of the year boy they really go out and pick them. We went out a week ago Sunday, but we found nothing yet. See and oh about 3 days before my boy and the grandson we call and his sister they went up there and they brought just about that much. Yeah cause, I didn't know where they went to, we never ask them, see. Maybe we went to the wrong place. Cause some places it is bound to come out quicker than other places, and they pick those raw onions too, yeah.
- Q. Well I will have to get you or Dr. Ellis to show me what they are, cause I would like to try it.
- A. Yeah.
- Q. I think that will be a real.....

- A. Maybe next time we will get together I will plant.....
- Q. Okay, I would like you too.
- A. And there is another plant that grows in the fall and they use it too the same way.
- Q. What is it called?
- A. They call it, I don't know what the Spanish name for it is, but we call it Capoi(?)
- Q. Keresean, yes. And you do the same thing with it, it is just a seasoning? Or can you eat it raw too?
- A. Yeah you can eat it either way, eat it raw too.
- Q. Hum, I would sure like to try these, I'am game.
- A. Well I guess Dr. Ellis found a lot of things Dora told her about, plants, and asked her how to fix it too. But one thing it has never been written, that is all, so now she I don't know she never has time yet.
- Q. Well I sure hope that she does, cause that would be really fascinating.
- A. Yeah, one time she had a class, one summer and that was just right after we were getting to know her. She brought her class out to our house and she demonstrated her pottery there to the class and then we down to the 'bosque' and there are some berries down there that grows down in there and it was still in early summer but they weren't ripe yet. And when we got back that there was one that was really interested in the Indian names you see and oh she got a whole list of them, but I don't think that she ever wrote anything about it cause the only work that she told us was that she was trying to fix some for her husband.
- Q. This was.....
- A. A girl that went to school, whe went to school in Dr. Ellis's class for the summer. Yeah, she was from California, she met the boy during that time in the class, yeah, they got married there, after they got back.
- Q. A romantic class! Oh boy!!!
- A. She wrote said to us, "if I ever fail to rite you again, but we will still have in our memory how we got together and we are now married."
- Q. Have they been back to see you?
- A. No.

Q. They must still be in California?

A. I guess. Well she said she was going to start teaching, try to teach, I guess.

Q. Well it is real nice. Well I sure hope that Dr. Ellis works up those recipes and things and publishes those because that would be real nice, cause there are alot of people that would like to know these things. And you know in time the younger girls out at your pueblo are going to forget these things and what they are for and how to use them.

A. They don't know it, I believe alot of them especially the young ones.

Q. Yeah.

A. Alot of them, well I would say about 30 years all ready that don't know nothing about it.

Q. Well that is too bad.

A. Yeah, they but it was just, I have heard that there are only 3 maybe that are pretty well versed to some of these things, yeah.

Q. Well this woman that was out Sunday and her two daughters or these two young girls they will know, at least if they go out with their mother and help gather these things.

A. Well they will know that it is good eating so they will do. But in many ways they don't know, yeah. Just like on kid that had two pieces that Dora made so low about that wide, I call it, I started to call them K rations but you know the Army puts up some kind of a lunch that gives alot of energy rather than carry an whole pack, So in my days, in the days of old, those old people, they carry alot of that you know, yeah. Put up slices of, blocks about that big that look out of that fall plant right there.

Q. And it high energy, I will be darn. Maybe next fall you can show it too me.

A. Are you going to stay here or what?

Q. Oh we are going to stay here, yeah. I like it here real well; I hope that I can get a job here and stay cause I really like it. This summer I am going to Alaska.

Q. Oh?

A. Maybe, I don't know yet, we have applied for some money and we may tet turned down but we will go up there. Jeannie and I will go up and live with some Eskimo people way up almost to the Artic Circle; boy that will be cold. And I am going to do some Archeology up there.

Q. Oh I see.

A. While we are living with these folks. And dig an old Eskimo site and try to find something out about those folks. It will be interesting.

A. Oh yeah. I didn't used to think how interesting it was to learn some thing of the old, oh I remember when I was in school I read alot of this about the older Europeans you know like the Napoleon and Ceasear and the Romans and I like to read of those. And the Egyptians too you know. And that I didn't even realize that there was alot of interesting things in back of it, yeah. If I had already know of course I would have read all of those histories you know. I would have started early enough with those old people were still alive; that is one thing I just do didn't get around to realizing how valuable it would have been. And then I left school and started off and on to do council work until maybe around in 1926, '26 yeah when the Pueblo Land came up and they needed an interpreter and they say that I was the one and they gave me that job, the pueblo did. I was just an interpreter, we had to do alot of the questioning and research amongst the people as to the land there you see. And that is where I pick up quite alot of that other than the grazing that we lost and traveling of the people you know. And then again I, well I didn't go to high of course to school in the grades or nothing. Only that I saw the value of being an interpreter for my people, so I got into educating myself but by reading, and reading about so that I can have the voice to come you know. I read newspaper you know where people talk you know, something that is written like somebody is talking you know. Well I like those better because they teach me how to talk you know. And I thought that I was getting along pretty good then that way. All those years and then I also went into my own language.

Q. That is good.

A. Yeah, and I didn't have too much hard time the, to interpret anything that was brought before my people from the agency or outside transactions that came up. Like the highway, railroad or electric; highways you know they go through there. So then I began to see what the value of that, but I didn't quite get to the real value of the knowing what is back of the people and their coming see. Just what we are trying to put down yet, not yet, I didn't even understood that yet. Just to hear for the land sake you know, but I sense that the old people they stress it a lot, strongly to memorize and be able to put in your brains and yet remember some years later, well that was really good. That, that was the way that they have the books I guess. I call it the 'brain books.' Yeah.

Q. That is all you have left and you have got to get it now, or when...

- A. Yeah, that was until when I got, when this claims act came out again and we got alot of land that we lost. So we went into that and then our return is with Dr. Ellis and I was appointed on the committee to work for my pueblo on that and the other two others from Zia and Jemez. That is why I started to know her; I first saw her during the fiestas before, with Bruce you know, he did the judging sometimes with the pottery and stuff like that, and I didn't know that she was from Anthrology.
- Q. Leo yesterday asked me if I knew Dr. Ellis. I was telling him that I was looking at Dora's pottery and he says, we were talking about the pottery and that there is a white woman that comes out and looks at Dora's pottery too. He said, "her name was Dr. Ellis, do you know her?" And I said, " oh yeah."
- A. Right then I guess we sort of made friends, yeah and then she got me to come down and do some work around the house you know. From there I never left her. Yeah allong time she used to leave me there all alone you know, of course she was here and Bruce was up there and she trusted me to the whole thing. I carried all the keys to the rooms and just look after things you know as.....
- Q. That is a big help to her.
- A. Then that is where I began to learn the value of knowing..... Now I am trying to stress it to my own, to the younger generations, to try to learn all they can so that they won't be Indians without any background to it.
- Q. Yeah, you might as well be a whiteman if you don't have any background.
- A. Might as well just be a human being without any background, yeah. See, I think it is that way, they can't be no white, they can't be no white man, their color will show.
- Q. Right.
- A. And their features will show. But if they don't know anything on the Indian side of it, well what then.
- Q. Right.
- A. Who is going to be believed that they are Indians, they might be taken for Mexican and then.....
- Q. I hope not.....
- A. Just like see those people that come up from Mexico, they say that "I am Indian," that is to the Gallup Ceremonials, yes, well they come to the Indians costumes there, dancer and all of those beautiful feathers they have them down there. So they know what to use for, but when they say about, one group one time they came into

our camp when I used to go to Gallup Ceremonial you know with the boys, so I asked on of them are you really an Indian? "Oh yes," he said, "yes." "Let's see you say at least two three words in Indian," I says. He couldn't say anything.

- Q. And these were guys from Mexico huh?
- A. Yes.
- Q. What part of Mexico?
- A. Oh, I don't know, I couldn't remember.
- Q. They were just Mexicans. Well there are some Indian groups down there.
- A. Well that is the way I look at it, see probably he was an Indian, but an Indian that never learned his language, see. Just like today now, those kids don't know a damm thing in Indian. Run around.....
- Q. Chasing girls and not bothering to.....to get what is actually their heritage.
- A. That is right, yes. They don't know, they won't know a damm thing.
- Q. That is too bad. Although they haven't got away from the actual activities of the pueblo. One thing is language and to know what it is, see, in back of it and who they are and their culture, that is one thing. Sure that is all right they still enjoy their work with the rest of them dancing and the activities that is there today yet you see. But the more real value is to know something about your people.
- Q. Well, like wer were talking about that language the other day. That is really a shame when it is right there and the could learn it so easily.
- A. That is right.
- Q. And then to forget it or not to learn it, that is terrible. But, well I don't suppose all of the kids are that way; I suppose you have some that are real interested in it.
- A. There are a few that are, but most of them in the families are the ones that talk to them mostly in English, and I know that there is 1 or 2 families, the kids just talk, oh they just started to talk and they can talk good, yeah they don't know a word of English, yeah.
- Q. Very good, that is good.

- A. When you say something to them in Indian, well they just look at you. We don't in our house, we talk Indian all the time. My boy, once in a while when he feel like saying something in English, well it is all right, most of the time we talk Indian you see.
- Q. Well that is real good. What do you suppose these boys like we are talking about, what do you think their future is going to be if they don't learn these things. What do you think they think their future is going to be?
- A. I don't know, how to answer that because they haven't expressed their future as to why they don't know the Indian language. The only one that, well 2 or 3 of them have expressed it this way, that they think that is in the way of the advancement, or being up to modern, I don't see nothing wrong with it myself. I tell them too many times that you got all the conveniences of modern things and yet you should know your language, you should know what you are as an Indian, what the pueblo is. And it's history in back of it, that is the thing that I am worried about, you should worry about that too. Of course, you could just like the, a tribe, one of the boys from Oklahoma, he said at the Gallup Ceremonials, we don't do no more old time dances that is religious, it is all commercial, he said. But you fellows you still hang on to it, he said. Yeah, I heard he says, I heard. So that is fine, I like it, but we we don't...
- Q. Yeah, that is too bad for them.
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Well I wonder if these boys, you know they are going to have children and their children will react similar to them, and in two of three generations there will be nothing left.....
- A. Right there I will say this, just like I feel myself now. Some year's later their children and their great children, I mean their you know, their children and their children, you know when they come and they find out that they are Indians and want to know what then right there, then they are going to run into problems there see.
- Q. They sure are.
- A. Just like I said, I said many a time myself that when just like I said many a time myself that I didn't learn the value of it early enough myself to know, see. To gather all the information that I would have had you see.
- Q. Yeah, you could have known then to talk to the old people, true. Yeah, well they will regret it. But fortunatly Porfiero, there are still some people like you.
- A. Yeah.
- Q. So it won't be all lost.

- A. I hope not too quick, yeah!
- Q. Well on that note, let's get started. Do you remember that last story you told me about the people moving down the river to Paco and around?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Well I tell you, why don't we start with what you think is the very beginning and tell me what you want to tell me about it, the earliest history, and then we can work from there.
- A. Well I will just have to see if I can fill the gaps in there cause I don't know, see.
- Q. Well you told me that story about the boy and his grandmother and the awl, is there any more that you can tell me about that?
- A. No, I think that is the place where he found his mother then see, I think it ended there and I just sort of feel that maybe somewhere across the Rio Puerco from there that Mesa San Felipe where we saw alot of that pottery loose out there, potterys, broken pieces.
- Q. Sherds?
- A. Yeah, I thought that that might be the place you see because it points just to that place, yeah.
- Q. Well then where the boy met his mother and the other girls, is this the present pueblo?
- A. That place, Rio Puerco is the last place you see, you see the Rio Puerco is a creek coming away from.....way back there.
- Q. Where did the people go from there?
- A. Well from there, I think that they came south towards, you see this area is pretty close to Laguna. So they went just right over the bridge, just about the last spur of the, what do they call that mountain there? Mount Taylor, on the east side, right today where the Paguarte is. They came somewhere through there, of course today there is a little creek not there is still a little creek there, running, I don't know where it's source is, but that is the place they came to and they had to jump across. So everytime one jumps across why he would have to hollar back, "pass me my baggage or whatever they were carrying." See. And then that word is Kitiykyustey, yeah that is our language means - hand me whatever you ask for. That means, bundles you see. And as the story goes that when there was one Laguna somewhere in the area and he noticed that there was a different pueblo coming there so he hid himself to find out more, to find out who they are, he was hearing all the time that word you see - Kitiykyustey, means from the north, hand me my package from

the north, you see. I don't know that is just a direction, but they were crossing. And when he got back to Laguna that evening he told his people that there were some people coming across there and they were headed somewhere south and that they were saying Kitiykyustey. And then they named that place Kyustey. There is an Indian village named Kyustey. When was it, it was a year ago or probably just this past summer Dora has relatives up there see.

Q. At Kyustey?

A. Yeah, no Laguna, in Old Laguna yeah. But the boy is from Kyustey there. And he, we were saying something about it, and he said that that is the way, all those children that is the way the story goes. So I imagine that as the years go by, it is just something that somebody just cut off the story. But it is still with the.....

Q. Do the Lagunas remember your people coming down or do they think they did that too?

A. It didn't come out clear, or I didn't ask. I will ask when I go back again, where his story came from and all of that you know. Just the way that it went so that they call that place Kyustey, Paguarte, and then from there they, my people, went south again to southwest, they went around Laguna.

Q. They didn't stay with the Lagunas at all?

A. No they didn't stop there, there is a story there, finally they came to Acoma see. Of course there is that lower valley, they came up that lower valley there. And they bypassed Acoma, but way up, the far end of that valley. Then they stopped there you see, the Acoma is still back this way. And then there was one man who wanted to go up there and see who they are, who the people are up there, see. But nobody wanted to go, so he went there himself and then he came back.

Q. He wanted to stay with the Acomas.

A. Yeah.

Q. Why did they go around the Acomas, did they know that they were there?

A. I don't know.

Q. I wonder why they didn't go see them? Maybe they weren't friendly to each other or something?

A. No, I think they just intended to be alone and wanted to travel that is all.

Q. Well then did they build the new village there, at the end of this valley?

- A. No, they only camp there for a while and then they moved on.
- Q. Out far south but the last person that told me, that he heard his grandfather and this old man talking about it, he said that they had mentioned that somewhere in the neighborhood of Las Cruces, not Las Cruces but what is the name of.....?
- Q. Socorro?
- A. Socorro, yeah.
- Q. They went clear down there?
- A. No, that way, there is a ruins right, there is supposed to be a ruins right west of Socorro, somewhere west of the mountains there.
- Q. Towards Ladron?

END OF TAPE

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