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## **Healing with the Arts in the Lives of Native American Tribes and Turkmen Tribes**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The present article is a comprehensive study of the daily lives, customs, and traditions of Native American tribes and Turkmen tribes, examining their similarities in how they utilize nature and art. I have studied the living conditions of these nomadic peoples, their handicrafts and arts, music, ceremonies, and oral histories. My aim is to highlight the similarities among nature-oriented tribes regarding their interaction with nature and art, as well as their perspectives on life prior to urbanization.

Some past studies indicate potential genetic and linguistic links between certain Central Asian tribes, such as the Turkmen, and Native American tribes. The theory suggests that they may share common ancestral populations that inhabited the land of Eurasia before the continents divided. Researchers have also pointed to various cultural and artistic similarities between Turkmen and Native American traditions, such as their strong connections to the natural world, nomadic lifestyles, the use of similar materials and patterns in their artistic works, and shamanistic spiritual beliefs. These common elements have led some to hypothesize a shared ancestral origin.

In this article, we will explore these topics to determine whether art and nature were used for healing among these tribes.

**Keywords:** Native American tribes, Turkmen tribes, Turkmen, Native American, Healing with the Arts

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### **Objectives of the Article**

Analytical studies in the fields of culture and art are among the methods that can be effective and enlightening in understanding and recognizing the areas of dialogue between civilizations, different nations, and ethnic groups. As an artist and art therapist, I have utilized analyses from books and articles to depict my calligraphy works based on the narrative of these similarities, was holding in an exhibition at the Niavaran Cultural Complex in Tehran in 2023.

Both cultures possess a rich heritage of oral storytelling, poetry, and legends that have been passed down through generations. Studies in this area help artists become familiar with the authentic origins of symbols and signs. The production of artworks and handicrafts inspired by nature among nature-oriented tribes carries a deeper semantic and conceptual significance compared to other works. In this article, I have employed my artistic perspective and expertise to provide nuanced and meaningful interpretations of the symbolic and aesthetic characteristics of these tribes, aiming to illustrate the concept of healing through art, which is now recognized globally as art therapy, beyond merely an academic discipline.

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### **Research Questions**

- Do nature-oriented tribes share a common ancestry?
- Do they draw inspiration from nature in a similar manner and reflect it uniformly in their works?
- Has art been used as a source of relief in their daily lives?

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### **Background of the Research**

Numerous studies have been conducted on nature-oriented tribes worldwide, which we will explore further. However, specifically focusing on the commonalities between Turkmen tribes and Native American tribes, only comparative research on Turkmen *asmalyk* (traditional wall hangings) and North American *chilkat* weavings was carried out by Kashan Art University (Iran) in 2011. There has not been a comprehensive analysis of this nature

that also produces artistic works based on the findings. The upcoming discussion provides an overview of the customs and arts in the daily lives of Native Americans and Turkmen.

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## Research Methodology

This article employs a study of the texts left behind from the nomadic lives of these tribes, based on anthropological methods with an ethnographic approach. Given the accessibility of the internet in today's world, the research has been conducted through informal conversations with various individuals from these tribes, rather than direct field research in their living environments. Additionally, separate articles that have examined these tribes have been utilized to support the findings.

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## Introduction

Who are the Native Americans and Turkmen?

Native Americans, initially referred to as American Indians [1], are the indigenous peoples of the United States, currently existing as a minority among later immigrant populations. These tribes speak various languages, with an estimated total population of around 2.5 million across different tribes today.

Currently, 225,000 square kilometers of land in the United States [2] is autonomously managed by Native Americans. This land comprises the reservations established in the 19th century, overseen by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which operates under the U.S. Department of the Interior [3]. Today, Native Americans enjoy cultural and, to some extent, political independence in many regions. They strive to strengthen their ethnic roots, and the languages they speak are considered somewhat protected. Some continue to live traditional rural lifestyles, adhering to tribal customs, especially in southern areas bordering Mexico. In 2003, their population in American society was estimated at 2,786,652, with 413,382 residing in California, 294,137 in Arizona, and 279,559 in Oklahoma. The Aztec [4] language has the most speakers in Utah [5], followed by Nahuatl [6] with nearly 200,000 speakers and Navajo [7] with around 150,000 speakers. Although Native Americans are dispersed throughout the country, the majority reside in the western and southwestern regions. The significant Cherokee [8] group is located in Miami and along the Mississippi coast, while other tribes inhabit northern areas such as Michigan, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota, where the native population is notably substantial. Additionally, many indigenous people reside in the rural areas of Alaska.

The Turkmen (Türkmenler) are one of the Turkic ethnic groups in Central Asia, residing in a vast area that includes Turkmenistan, northwestern Kazakhstan, parts of Russia, Uzbekistan, northwestern Afghanistan, and northeastern Iran. They speak Turkmen, a language from the Oghuz [9] branch of Turkic languages.

Historically, the Turkmen were part of the broader Turkic peoples, living a nomadic lifestyle [10] in the expansive deserts of the lower Syr Darya River and between the Kharazm Lake. Until around the 7th century AD, they were considered part of the Turkic tribes. Following the decline of the Göktürks [11], a group of Turkic people known as the Oghuz separated from them and migrated from the Orkhon region toward the Aral Sea and the Syr Darya.

Today, the majority of Turkmen reside in Turkmenistan, which had a population of approximately 7,057,000 in 2022. Turkmen in Iran make up about 1% of the country's population, equivalent to nearly one million people according to 2021 statistics. Significant cities for Turkmen in Iran include Bandar Turkmen, Gonbad Kavous, Kalaleh, Aq Qala, Gomišan, Maraveh Tappeh, and Incheh Borun. In Afghanistan, Turkmen primarily inhabit the northwestern regions, especially along the border between the Faryab and Jowzjan provinces adjacent to Turkmenistan.

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## Nomadic Lifestyle

Nomadic life, as a third form of human social existence alongside urban and rural living, has been declining in many traditional societies for some time. This trend is particularly noticeable in countries where a significant portion of the population was historically composed of nomadic tribes.

Both the Turkmen and many Native American tribes have historically been nomadic, moving between various regions and living in portable homes such as tipis [12]. Horses played a crucial role in transportation, warfare, and the overall lifestyle of both Turkmen and Native Americans. Many of these communities were renowned for their traditions and skills in horseback riding and combat. Horses were essential for nomadic life, providing mobility and the means to traverse vast lands and grazing areas. In this context, skilled horsemanship and ownership of valuable horses were indicators of status and wealth within nomadic societies.

The nomadic lifestyle, characterized by migration, has persisted through historical ups and downs to the present day. Coexistence and interaction with the environment, along with continuous effort, adaptation, and alignment of this way of life with the geographical conditions of each region, have led to various forms of nomadic living and resource utilization among different ethnic groups.

A significant reason for this nomadic lifestyle is the deep respect that both Turkmen and Native Americans have for the natural world, viewing themselves as an integral part of their environment. This perspective fosters a profound spiritual connection to the land and natural surroundings. Traditionally, these groups lived in closely-knit communities where cooperation, mutual support, and a strong sense of community played vital roles in their social structures.

Keith H. Basso [13], an anthropologist, offers valuable insights into the deep relationship between landscape, language, and cultural identity among the Western Apache in his book *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* [14]. While the book specifically focuses on

the Apache tribe, it addresses how the natural environment and sense of place are fundamentally woven into the cultural awareness and artistic traditions of the Apache people.

Basso explores how language, storytelling, and symbolic representations of the landscape reflect the holistic and nature-centered perspectives of the Apache. His comparative approach provides a useful framework for analyzing the similarities and differences in the relationships between the Turkmen and Native Americans with their environments. He argues that places hold significant cultural meanings and are deeply intertwined with community identity and wisdom.

In his book, Basso states, "Apache movements are often dictated by the availability of resources such as water, game, and edible plants. Understanding seasonal changes in the landscape helps them effectively plan their migrations. Environments related to rituals, including hunting grounds, gatherings, and ceremonies, are intertwined with stories and teachings that illustrate the community's connection to nature. The Apache have developed a profound understanding of their surroundings, enabling them to adapt to changing conditions. This adaptability is crucial for survival in the diverse and often harsh landscapes they inhabit."

This issue is also evident in the lives of the Turkmen, who have similarly developed a deep connection with their environment, allowing them to thrive in their nomadic lifestyle. Both cultures demonstrate a profound respect for nature, which is reflected in their traditions, practices, and overall worldview.

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### **Handicrafts as a Narrative of Culture**

The indigenous art of America and the Turkmen is deeply rooted in spiritual beliefs, ritual practices, and holistic worldviews. Exploring these connections can lead to richer and more meaningful analyses. Both cultures are renowned for their skilled textile work, including the production of vibrant carpets, embroidery, and clothing, as well as their intricate and dynamic artistic traditions—such as pottery, wood carving, and body art.

Art from both the Turkmen and Native American peoples often features complex geometric patterns, including triangles, diamonds, zigzags, and repetitive motifs. These geometric designs are commonly found in their textiles, pottery, basketry, and other art forms. Symbolic imagery [15] is prevalent in the art of both cultures, often depicting elements of nature, spiritual beliefs, and cultural narratives. Common symbolic motifs include animals, celestial bodies, plants, and abstract geometric shapes. The vibrant and earthy color palettes characteristic of Turkmen and Native American art typically include reds, blues, yellows, and earth tones. The shared use of geometric patterns, symbolic imagery, vivid colors, and traditional techniques in their respective artistic forms highlights a cultural intersection between the Turkmen and Native Americans.

Many geometric designs in both cultures exhibit a strong sense of symmetry, whether bilateral, radial, or reflective. The balanced and harmonious arrangement of design elements is a significant feature, with these geometric patterns often comprising repetitive motifs such as triangles, diamonds, zigzags, or other abstract shapes. These repetitive elements create a rhythmic [16] visual effect that draws from the flow of nature.

While these three elements—symmetry, repetitive motifs, and structure—are commonly used to analyze geometric designs, it is important to note that specific patterns and their meanings can vary significantly across different tribal and cultural traditions. Additionally, some researchers suggest finer categorizations or additional elements, such as the use of positive and negative space, the integration of natural or celestial references, and the symbolic importance of specific geometric shapes within particular indigenous worldviews.

This intricate relationship between art and culture underscores the profound connection between the Turkmen and Native American peoples, reflecting their shared values, beliefs, and respect for the natural world.

The repetition of shapes and geometric patterns can signify the rhythms and cycles of nature, such as seasons, lunar phases, or animal migration patterns. These motifs may also carry symbolic associations with specific natural elements, spiritual entities, or cultural narratives. The act of repetition itself can serve as a means of invocation, reverence, or connection to the sacred or ancestral.

The underlying structure or framework of geometric designs can be analyzed as a representation of fundamental order, interconnectedness, and the sacred geometry of the universe. This network may be inspired by natural structures, such as hexagonal patterns found in honeycombs or snowflakes, or by celestial phenomena like stars. The underlying framework used in these designs can also act as a symbolic pattern for organizing and aligning various design elements, reflecting how indigenous worldviews often perceive the cosmos and the natural world.

The patterns found in Turkmen Gabbe (rugs) are frequently compared to those in the textiles of the Navajo among Native Americans, as both cultures showcase intricate geometric designs, vibrant colors, and a strong connection to their natural environments and cultural stories. The weaving techniques and symbolism in their patterns reveal shared themes of identity and heritage within their respective lifestyles. The nomadic lifestyle and natural environment of the Turkmen people inspire their art, often depicting abstract representations of animals, plants, and celestial motifs such as eagles, camels, trees, and stars.

Desert and steppe patterns, referred to as *Çöl* in Turkmen, are inspired by the arid landscapes of Turkmenistan. These designs may include images of sand dunes, mountains, and other desert features. The similarity between desert motifs and those from arid regions in Turkmen art is often compared to the designs found in the pottery and textiles of the Hopi and Zuni peoples among Native Americans. Both cultures utilize geometric patterns and earthy color palettes that reflect their dry environments. These patterns often encompass elements of nature, spirituality, and cultural narratives, illustrating a deep connection to their landscapes and traditions.

Curvilinear and organic motifs reflect the fluid and cyclical rhythms of the natural environment, symbolizing the profound relationship of these cultures with the land and their place in the larger ecosystem. These patterns may also represent the interconnectedness of all living beings, cycles of growth and renewal, and their holistic worldview.

These geometric motifs serve as a means of preserving and expressing the cultural identity, traditional knowledge, and spiritual beliefs of the Turkmen and Native American peoples. They act as a visual language that connects these cultures to their ancestral heritage, the natural world, and the sacred dimensions of existence. Understanding the subtle meanings and cultural contexts of these geometric designs is essential for grasping the depth and richness of their artistic and cultural traditions.

These geometric patterns are not limited to two-dimensional art forms; they are often incorporated into a wide range of media, including textiles, ceramics, basketry, architecture, and even body painting and design. This versatility allows for the adaptation and reinterpretation of patterns in various contexts and applications, enriching the cultural narrative they embody.

The creation and understanding of these geometric designs are often passed down through generations within Turkmen and Native American communities. Mastery of these techniques and the ability to imbue patterns with cultural significance testify to the continuity and resilience of these traditions.

The preservation of culture in the face of historical challenges such as colonization, displacement, and cultural homogenization has transformed the maintenance and revival of these traditions into acts of cultural resistance for many Turkmen and Native American communities.

Through storytelling, communal practices, and the sharing of knowledge, these patterns evolve while remaining rooted in their cultural contexts. The ability to adapt these designs—whether through new materials, modern interpretations, or contemporary applications—demonstrates the dynamic nature of cultural expression. This adaptability not only honors ancestral practices but also ensures their relevance in today's world.

In this way, geometric patterns serve as living symbols of identity, resilience, and continuity, connecting past, present, and future generations. They embody the rich narratives of struggle, survival, and cultural pride, reinforcing the importance of these artistic traditions in fostering community cohesion and cultural heritage.

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## What Do Colors Represent in These Cultures?

The art and painting of Native American and Turkmen tribes feature a diverse and vibrant color palette, with specific colors holding deep symbolic and cultural significance. Here, we explore some of the most common colors used in their visual works.

### Native Americans

**Earth Colors:** Earthy colors such as yellow ochre, amber, and raw sienna are widely used in the paintings and designs of Native Americans. These colors are often derived from natural pigments [17] found in their environment and are associated with the earth, nature, and the human connection to the land.

**Black and White:** The use of stark contrasts of black and white characterizes much of Native American art. Black is often used to create bold, graphic designs and outline key elements, while white represents purity, light, and spirituality.

**Red:** The color red is highly symbolic in many Native American cultures, often representing life, blood, and the sun. Red pigments, such as sienna or ochre, are widely used in painting, pottery, textiles, and other art forms.

**Blue and Green:** Shades of blue and green, often derived from minerals like lapis lazuli or turquoise, are associated with the sky, water, and the natural world. These colors are sometimes used to signify balance and harmony within the universe. Turquoise is a highly revered and widely used color in Native American art, especially among Southwestern tribes. It is believed that turquoise possesses healing and protective properties and is often featured in jewelry, pottery, and other decorative items.

**Yellow:** Yellow, associated with the sun, is a prominent color in some Native American artistic traditions. It is often used to depict celestial bodies, spiritual energies, and the cycles of life.

The specific color palettes and their symbolism can vary widely among different tribes and regions, reflecting the diversity of Indigenous cultures and their unique perspectives on the natural and spiritual worlds.

### Turkmen Tribes

**Red:** Red is a dominant and very important color in Turkmen art and culture. It is often associated with power, vitality, and the sun, and is widely used in Turkmen textiles, ceramics, and paintings.

**Blue:** Shades of blue, such as turquoise and cobalt blue, are prominent in Turkmen art and design. Blue is typically linked to the sky, water, and the spiritual realm in Turkmen symbols.

**White:** White is an important color in Turkmen visual arts, representing purity, cleanliness, and the divine. It is often used in combination with other colors to create striking contrasts and visual harmony.

**Green:** Green, associated with nature, growth, and fertility, is frequently found in Turkmen paintings and decorative arts. It may symbolize the abundance of the earth and the cyclical renewal of life.

Yellow: Yellow, reminiscent of the sun and desert landscapes, is another notable color in Turkmen art. It is sometimes used to signify prosperity, happiness, and the divine.

Black: While less dominant than other colors, black is occasionally used in Turkmen visual works. It may symbolize night, the unknown, or the mysteries of the universe.

In addition to these primary colors, Turkmen artists often utilize earthy colors such as yellow ochre, amber, and raw sienna, which are typically derived from natural pigments found in the region. The combination of colors, symbols, and specific applications can vary across different artistic traditions among the Turkmen, reflecting the diversity and richness of Turkmen cultural heritage. These vibrant colors are an inseparable part of the distinctive aesthetic and visual language of Turkmen art.

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### **Painting as a Means of Preserving and Transmitting Knowledge and Culture**

Painting and other forms of visual arts hold profound significance in many Native American cultures, serving various important functions. Painting is often intertwined with the spiritual beliefs and religious practices of Indigenous peoples. The images and symbols [18] used in paintings may represent deities, mythical figures, or connections to the natural world and spirits. These paintings are frequently employed in rituals, ceremonies, and other sacred contexts to invoke blessings, show respect to the Creator, or facilitate communication with the spiritual realm.

Paintings, along with other forms of visual art, are used to convey narratives, legends, and significant historical events within Native American communities. The images and symbols depicted in these artworks serve as a means of preserving and transmitting knowledge and cultural traditions.

The narratives expressed through painting can range from creation stories to accounts of important tribal events and the lives of significant figures, allowing Native American artists to articulate their individual and collective identities alongside the unique cultural traditions of their respective tribes.

The use of colors, patterns, and specific symbolic motifs in paintings can reflect distinct artistic styles and aesthetics associated with various Native American communities. This serves as a way for Indigenous artists to express their cultural sovereignty and share their worldview with their people and the broader public. In some Native American traditions, certain paintings or forms of visual art possess healing and restorative properties. These artworks may be utilized in healing and therapeutic ceremonies, with imagery and symbolism believed to have the power to restore balance and blessings. The act of creating paintings can also be a meditative and self-reflective process that contributes to individual and communal healing.

Paintings and other forms of visual art are often used as educational tools, imparting important cultural lessons, history, and practical knowledge to younger generations. The imagery and symbolism in these artworks can serve as a mnemonic device, helping to reinforce the transmission of knowledge within Native American communities.

Overall, painting and visual arts play a multifaceted role in Native American culture, acting as a means of spiritual expression, cultural preservation, identity formation, and community well-being.

Turkmen painting and other forms of visual arts are closely linked to the preservation and transmission of cultural traditions, history, and identity. The intricate patterns, motifs, and symbolic images used in Turkmen art often have roots in ancient nomadic and tribal customs. These artistic expressions contribute to the protection and transmission of the rich cultural heritage of the Turkmen people.

Turkmen painting is deeply intertwined with the spiritual and religious beliefs of the culture, and it is believed that some designs, colors, and symbols used in Turkmen art carry sacred meanings and connections to the divine or nature. These artworks may be incorporated into religious ceremonies, rituals, and other spiritual practices.

As a powerful medium for expressing national and ethnic identity, Turkmen painting reflects the unique cultural heritage and worldview of the Turkmen people through its distinct styles, patterns, and themes. The creation and display of Turkmen art foster a sense of cultural pride and belonging among the Turkmen community. Paintings and other forms of visual art are used to convey narratives, myths, and significant historical events within Turkmen culture. The images and symbols depicted in Turkmen art serve as a means of preserving and transmitting the collective memories and stories of the Turkmen people.

Turkmen painting is often used to decorate everyday objects such as textiles, ceramics, and architectural elements. These practical applications of Turkmen art enhance the beauty of living spaces and integrate cultural aesthetics into daily life. Turkmen painting and other visual arts have also become significant economic and commercial products, both within Turkmenistan and in the global market. The complex and striking nature of Turkmen art has made it a highly sought-after commodity, contributing to the cultural and economic development of the country.

Overall, the multifaceted role of painting and visual arts in Turkmen culture emphasizes the profound cultural, spiritual, and social significance of these artistic expressions for the Turkmen people.

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## Emphasis on Oral History

Many Native American languages and Turkmen languages have rich oral traditions that emphasize storytelling, history, and cultural identity through spoken word. The transmission of stories, myths, and histories through oral traditions has been of great importance in both Turkmen and Native American cultures. Storytelling has been a fundamental aspect of cultural transmission and preservation.

Native American and Turkmen languages belong to different language families and have distinct linguistic roots. However, some similarities can be found in specific aspects. Language often reflects the practices, beliefs, and cultural environments of its speakers. Both Native American and Turkmen languages have vocabularies related to their respective environments, such as plants, animals, and social structures. For example, consider a few words:

Native American Words:

- Tobacco: A plant that holds significant cultural and spiritual importance in many Native American tribes and is often used in ceremonies.
- Coyote: An important animal in many Native American stories and teachings, symbolizing adaptability and cunning.

Turkmen Words:

- Gül: Meaning "flower," this word reflects the natural flora of Turkmenistan, which is significant in their culture and art.
- Gara: Meaning "black," often used in reference to black sheep, which culturally symbolizes wealth in Turkmen society due to their wool.

Many Native American languages have historically been primarily oral rather than written, with storytelling, songs, and oral histories playing crucial roles in preserving the culture and knowledge of these peoples. Since the late 19th and 20th centuries, written forms have emerged, often using the Latin alphabet or syllabaries developed by linguists. In contrast, Turkmen is a written language with a long history that predates its oral traditions. The Turkmen language, spoken by approximately seven million people in Turkmenistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, is considered one of the major ethnic languages in the region.

Turkmen is among the languages whose literature has historically been less focused on writing and written works. The Turkmen language developed centuries before the emergence of written forms and was transmitted orally. This oral tradition shaped the structure, vocabulary, and nuances of the language in ways that may not be fully comprehensible through later written forms. Additionally, Turkmen-speaking communities are dispersed across various countries. As a result, we now see the Turkmen language written in different scripts, including Arabic, Russian, and Latin. As we know, Turkmen in Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria use the Arabic script. However, among the majority of the Turkmen-speaking community worldwide, the Latin alphabet is prevalent, and in Turkmenistan, the Turkmen language is officially written in the Latin script.

In summary, while both language groups have rich oral traditions, Turkmen has a more established written form, whereas many Native American languages are still in the process of developing and standardizing their written representations.

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## Do Shared Traditions Indicate Common Roots for These Peoples?

Both Turkmen and many Native American cultures share a worldview that emphasizes the spiritual nature of the natural world, believing that all beings (animals, plants, objects, etc.) possess a spirit or spiritual essence. This animistic [19] perspective is often reflected in their shamanic traditions. In both Turkmen and Native American shamanism, the shaman is typically viewed as a spiritual leader or healer who acts as a mediator between the human realm and the spirit world. They may perform rituals, interpret dreams, and communicate with supernatural forces. Practitioners of shamanism in both cultural contexts often use techniques such as drumming, singing, and the consumption of psychoactive substances to induce altered states of consciousness and trance-like experiences, which are believed to facilitate contact with the spirit world.

Shamanic traditions in both Turkmen and Native American cultures tend to emphasize deep spiritual and symbolic connections between human society and the natural environment, including specific landscapes, animals, and celestial phenomena. The term "shaman" [20] comes from the Tungusic language [21] of Siberia, originally meaning "one who knows." Some suggest that this Tungusic word itself is borrowed from a Sanskrit [22] term meaning "wise," although the connection between the two is not fully established. The use of the term "shaman" in Persian has a long history, with multiple examples of its use found in the works of great Persian poets and literary figures.

During the Soviet Union era [23], Turkmen shamanic traditions, like many other indigenous religious and cultural practices across Central Asia, faced widespread suppression. This led to a decline and near extinction of open shamanic practices in Turkmenistan. The continuity of shamanic beliefs and practices among Turkmen people in specific areas, particularly in more rural and isolated regions where traditional lifestyles have been better preserved, is more pronounced. These practices may vary among different Turkmen communities. The status and recognition of Turkmen shamans have also evolved, with some still respected as healers and spiritual leaders, while others have had to operate more cautiously or take on different roles in society.

Shamanic practices among Native Americans continue today, although they may vary significantly across tribes and regions. Many indigenous communities maintain their traditional spiritual practices, which may include shamanic elements such as healing rituals and ceremonies that connect with the spirit world. In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in indigenous spirituality, both within indigenous communities and among non-indigenous people. This revival often emphasizes cultural preservation, identity, and healing historical traumas. Some tribes have integrated traditional practices into modern contexts, adapting them to contemporary life while still honoring their ancestral roots. However, these practices can also be

influenced by external factors such as cultural appropriation, commercialization, and legal challenges concerning sacred sites and ceremonies. Overall, shamanic and spiritual practices remain a vital part of many Native American cultures today.

Researchers have studied the shamanic traditions of various Native American tribes and geographic regions, such as the Navajo, Lakota, Cheyenne, and Inuit, among others. These studies provide profound insights into the cultural contexts and subtle differences in various shamanic practices.

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## **The Role of Music in Indigenous Traditions**

Music is deeply intertwined with the spiritual beliefs and religious practices of many Native American tribes. Drumming, singing, and the use of traditional instruments are integral to ceremonies, rituals, and communication with the spiritual realm. Songs and melodies are often used to honor the divine, invoke blessings, and connect with the natural world.

Native American music is frequently employed to accompany the retelling of myths, legends, and historical narratives. The rhythms, melodies, and vocal styles help convey the emotional weight and cultural significance of these oral traditions, preserving and transmitting these stories from generation to generation.

Moreover, in many indigenous cultures, specific songs, chants, and musical practices are believed to possess healing and restorative properties. Music is often incorporated into healing ceremonies, with sounds and vibrations thought to have the power to restore balance and well-being. Drumming, in particular, is widely used in the healing practices of Native Americans.

Music plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of community, shared identity, and cultural continuity among Native Americans. Singing, dancing, and communal musical performances strengthen interpersonal bonds and reinforce collective values and traditions. Music also serves as a means of expressing and preserving distinct tribal or regional identities. Native American music is an inseparable part of cultural celebrations, festivals, and various ceremonial events. Songs, dances, and musical performances are used to mark significant milestones, honor ancestors, and celebrate the rhythms of the natural world.

Overall, music in Native American cultures is not merely a form of artistic expression but a vital medium for connecting with the spiritual, social, and cultural fabric of indigenous life. It acts as a powerful tool for transmitting knowledge, expressing identity, and enhancing individual and collective well-being.

Similarly, among the Turkmen, music plays a central and multifaceted role in their culture and daily life. Turkmen music is deeply intertwined with religious and spiritual beliefs, featuring specific instruments, melodies, and musical practices used in sacred rituals and ceremonies. Traditional Turkmen music is often employed to invoke divine blessings, connect with the spiritual realm, and facilitate healing and purification, serving as an essential medium for transmitting Turkmen oral history, epic poetry, and folklore.

Famous Turkmen musicians use music to breathe life into these cultural narratives, preserving and sharing them across generations. With its distinctive instruments, rhythms, and vocal styles, Turkmen music powerfully reflects national and ethnic identity. Traditional Turkmen songs and melodies are used to celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the country and reinforce a sense of shared identity among the Turkmen people. Music plays a vital role in Turkmen social gatherings, celebrations such as weddings, birthdays, and holidays. Along with group dances, it serves as important tools for strengthening social bonds, enhancing community spirit, and honoring significant occasions.

It is believed that some Turkmen musical traditions, such as the use of the *dutar* (a two-stringed lute), possess healing and restorative properties. Music may be incorporated into healing ceremonies and practices aimed at restoring physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. Turkmen music is regarded as a highly valued art form, with skilled musicians and composers admired for their technical proficiency and creative innovations. Mastery of traditional Turkmen instruments, such as the *dutar*, *qeyjek* (a type of spike fiddle), and *gauldak* (a double reed instrument), is highly respected.

In summary, music is deeply woven into the fabric of Turkmen culture, serving as a medium for spiritual expression, cultural preservation, social cohesion, and artistic virtue. It represents a vital and ever-evolving aspect of Turkmen identity and way of life.

### **Musical Instruments**

#### **Important Musical Instruments of Native Americans**

##### **Drum**

One of the most common and significant musical instruments in Native American culture, including the Powwow drum, hand drum, and water drum, each possessing unique sounds and cultural significance. The traditional water drum produces a distinct sound and is used in spiritual ceremonies and healing practices. Larger drums, which provide deep sounds, are often used in parades, celebrations, and Powwow settings.

##### **Rattles**

Rattles, made from gourds, shells, animal hides, wood, or other materials, often decorated with feathers, beads, etc., are essential percussion instruments in many Native American ceremonies and rituals. They are frequently used to accompany songs and dances and to mark the rhythm of songs and melodies. Each type of rattle can vary in sound and cultural significance based on its materials, reflecting the traditions of different tribes.

##### **Flute**

Native American flutes, including various types of pan flutes, are known for their beautiful and meditative sounds. These flutes are played in various contexts for ceremonies or spiritual matters.

- **Wooden Flutes:** Typically made from cedar or other woods, recognized for their rich, melodic sound. They often have a simple design with five to six finger holes.
- **Bone Flutes:** Often used in traditional music and ceremonies.
- **Fipple Flutes:** A type of flute with a mouthpiece that directs air into the body of the instrument, producing a clear and bright sound.
- **Pan Flutes:** Composed of multiple tubes of varying lengths, connected together, creating different pitches when blown over the top.
- **End-blown Flutes:** Played by blowing into one end, these can be made from various materials, including wood and metal.

#### Other Wind Instruments

Other wind instruments used in Native American music include various whistles, antler horns, and ocarinas, which are ceramic or clay instruments with finger holes that produce soft, melodic sounds. Overall, these instruments play a vital role in the music, ceremonies, and storytelling of Native Americans, reflecting the diverse cultural heritage of different tribes and often associated with specific tribes or ceremonial practices.

#### Singing Bowls or Himalayan Bowls

These are metal bowls that create a harmonic and resonant tone when struck or rubbed. They are used in various spiritual and healing ceremonies among Native Americans. Singing bowls are valued not only for their musical qualities but also for their ability to create a calming and reflective environment, making them an important part of many Native American practices and spirituality.

#### Important Instruments in Turkmen Music

##### Dutar

The dutar is the national instrument of Turkmenistan and one of the most iconic instruments in Turkmen music. It is a long-necked lute made of wood with two strings, featuring unique carvings and designs that produce a distinctive and resonant sound. This instrument is often associated with singing poetry and folktales, reflecting the rich oral traditions of the Turkmen people. It serves not only as a musical instrument but also as a symbol of Turkmen identity and cultural expression.

##### Gijek

The gijek and dutar are both traditional string instruments of Turkmenistan, but they have distinct features and uses. The gijek is a type of spike fiddle with a pear-shaped body and a long neck. Played with a bow, it has a more delicate sound and is essential in classic and local Turkmen music traditions. The gijek is often used to lead and accompany traditional Turkmen songs and dances.

##### Gauldak

The gauldak is a double-reed instrument resembling a horn and is often used in classical and ceremonial Turkmen music. It is especially associated with Turkmen traditions related to spiritual practices and rituals. Traditionally made from high-quality wood, it often features intricate carvings and designs that reflect Turkmen artistry, adding aesthetic value to the instrument.

##### Tüýdük (Tweeduk)

This is a type of flute made from cane or wood. Commonly found in local Turkmen music, it is often used to create harmony and melody alongside storytelling and poetic recitations. The clear and penetrating tone of the tüýdük is a notable characteristic of traditional Turkmen music.

##### Daf

The daf consists of a circular frame made of wood, with one or both sides covered by animal skin. The size of the frame can vary, typically ranging from small to large, and it is played by hand. This instrument is one of the important percussion instruments in Turkmen music, especially in ceremonial and ritual contexts. The rhythmic patterns of the daf and its resonant sound are integral to Turkmen music traditions.

The daf is commonly used in local Turkmen music, providing rhythm and accompaniment for songs and dances. It is often played in groups alongside string and wind instruments and is frequently used to accompany traditional dances, enhancing the overall performance with its rhythmic beats. The daf can also be used in storytelling and poetry recitation, adding a dynamic element to the narrative. Overall, the daf is a vital part of Turkmen musical heritage, contributing to cultural expression and artistic traditions within Turkmen society.

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## Rituals and Healing with the Arts

A detailed analysis of rituals, ceremonies, and the use of symbolic elements (such as drumming, singing, sacred objects, and altered states) has always been a primary focus of ethnographic research. Based on studies conducted in nature-based cultures, music plays a profound role in the lives and cultures of Native Americans and Turkmen people.



Healing with the Arts is a form of expressive healing that utilizes the creative process of art to improve an individual's physical, mental, and emotional health. Creating art can help individuals explore their emotions, reduce stress, solve problems, and achieve personal growth.

In many Native American cultures, art has long been integrated with healing practices and rituals. Here are some ways that healing through art is expressed in Native American traditions:

**Art and Symbolic Imagery:** Native American art often features powerful symbols, animal imagery, and spiritual motifs that carry deep meanings. These symbolic artworks are used in ceremonies, rituals, and healing practices to connect individuals with the natural world and ancestral wisdom.

**Storytelling and Narrative Art:** Painting, drawing, and weaving are used to depict important cultural stories, myths, and histories. The act of creating these narrative artworks is seen as a way to pass knowledge and wisdom from one generation to another.

**Mandala-style Art:** Many Native American arts, such as sand paintings, utilize circular designs similar to mandalas. These symmetrical patterns are believed to have a calming effect and are incorporated into healing ceremonies.

**Collaborative Art:** In some tribes, healing rituals include group art projects, such as drum-making or basket weaving. The collaborative process is thought to enhance connection, support, and a sense of community healing, keeping tribes unified.

**Shamanic Art:** Spiritual leaders or shamans often create intricate artworks such as masks, garments, and ceremonial objects to be used in healing rituals. These sacred artworks are believed to channel spiritual energies and facilitate the shaman's connection to the divine.

**Ceremonial Rites:** These ceremonies, accompanied by dance, share special connections with Turkmen arts, which vary among different tribes and communities and have similar therapeutic effects.

Overall, Native American healing projects through art emphasize the spiritual, symbolic, and communal aspects of the creative process as a means to restore balance, connection, and well-being within individuals and communities.

Similarly, healing through art is also an important part of Turkmen cultural traditions. Here are some ways Turkmen people incorporate art into their healing practices:

**Carpet Weaving:** Turkmen carpet weaving is a highly respected art form deeply connected to healing and spirituality. The intricate patterns and symbols woven into carpets are believed to possess protective and restorative powers. Turkmen may use these carpets in ceremonies to cleanse the body, mind, and spirit.

**Textile Arts:** Embroidery, needlework, and other textile arts are integral to Turkmen culture and are often used in healing contexts. It is believed that textiles with specific patterns and colors can repel negative energies and enhance well-being. Turkmen may incorporate these textiles into clothing, furnishings, or ritual objects used in healing practices.

**Ceramics and Pottery:** Turkmen potters create distinctive ceramic vessels and sculptures imbued with symbolic significance. These artworks may be used in ceremonies to hold medicinal plants, oils, or other healing materials. The act of creating and using these ceramic pieces is believed to have a purifying and restorative effect, similar to practices in Native American culture.

**Oral Narratives and Storytelling:** Turkmen culture places great emphasis on oral traditions, such as epic poetry, folktales, and shamanic songs. These narratives often contain teachings and wisdom related to healing, and sharing these stories is viewed as a form of cultural and spiritual healing.

**Music and Dance:** Turkmen music, with its unique instruments and rhythms, is believed to have healing powers and restore balance. Traditional Turkmen dances are also often included in healing rituals, as the movement and energy of dance are thought to have transformative effects.

In summary, Turkmen healing through art is a holistic practice that seeks to integrate physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of well-being through the creative expression of traditions and cultural symbols.

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## **From Turkmen Purkhani to Native American Healing Ceremonies**

Shamanism is fundamentally one of the oldest forms of healing practiced by humans, based on the shaman's ability to enter trance states and mediate between humans, nature, and spirits. In small-scale societies, shamans have played roles beyond those of traditional healers, serving as prophets, spiritual leaders, custodians of oral literature, and wise sages.

In Turkmen shamanic beliefs, Purkhani (or Parikhani) is an ancient ritual among the Turkmen aimed at expelling malevolent spirits or jinn that cause mental illnesses from the bodies of afflicted individuals. The practitioner of this ritual is known as a Purkhani. Purkhani or native healers treat possessed patients through dance and music. Before converting to Islam, the Turkmen, due to the nature of their land where the light and sky appeared more magnificent than anywhere else, believed in Tengri, the spirit of the sky. The principal figures of this belief are the Heavenly Father (Tengri/Tenger Etseg) and the Earth Mother (Eje/Gazar Eej). Tengri was referred to as an invisible power that transcended everything and everyone, and in contemporary Turkic cultures, it has become synonymous with God. The shaman is their spiritual leader, and shamanism is their practice.

In general, during the Purkhani ritual, the act of striking a sword or ladle around the patient symbolizes driving away or cleansing the patient of evil forces and impurities. The trance state and communication with spirits are two continuous stages similar to those in shamanism that can be observed in the

Purkhani ceremony. The use of musical instruments and melodies, performing rhythmic movements, and spinning with ropes are among the key methods by which the Purkhani enters a trance state.

The Purkhani ceremony is accompanied by the playing of the dutar and the singing of specific music. The Purkhani begins by shaking and moving their shoulders to the rhythm and melody; then, the rhythm of their movements quickens, leading to rapid motions of the head and body, including jumping. The instrument's music induces the Purkhani into a trance, and when this state reaches its peak, they begin to spin with a rope suspended from the roof of the yurt or room, sometimes letting out loud cries. In this state, the trance reaches its climax, and the Purkhani connects with the spirit world, essentially "taking flight."

Among Native Americans, there are also ceremonies that involve spirit expulsion, such as the Sweat Lodge Ceremony. While primarily a purification ritual, it can also be beneficial for cleansing individuals of negative energies or spirits. The Sweat Lodge ceremony is a sacred practice that includes several key elements:

The location is often carefully prepared, and a leader or elder typically guides the process. The Sweat Lodge is usually a dome-shaped structure made from natural materials like wood and blankets, symbolizing the womb of Mother Earth. Participants may use sacred plants like sage or cedar to cleanse the space and themselves before entering. Heated stones, referred to as "Grandfather," are placed in a pit inside the Sweat Lodge. Herbal infusions may be poured over the stones to create steam. This ceremony often includes prayers, songs, and chants that may be specific to tribal traditions, and participants might share personal intentions or stories. Additionally, some tribes may perform specific rituals or prayers aimed at addressing spiritual disturbances, though these practices can vary widely among different tribes.

Participants sit in the lodge and endure the heat, which is believed to purify the body and spirit. This experience can be intense. The ceremony typically concludes with expressions of gratitude, additional prayers, and sometimes a sharing circle where participants discuss their experiences. This ceremony is deeply spiritual and varies among tribes, each with its own customs and meanings.

While there are certainly potential links between the shamanic traditions of the Turkmen and the indigenous communities of the Americas, specific similarities between Turkmen shamanic beliefs and those of Native Americans are not well-documented or firmly established and may require broader and more specialized research.

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## Jewelry and Stones

Native American jewelry is frequently used in cultural ceremonies, rituals, and religious practices, where the pieces hold sacred meanings and are believed to possess spiritual power or protective properties. Various Native American tribes have developed distinct jewelry-making traditions characterized by unique styles, techniques, and visual motifs. These regional and tribal differences reflect the rich diversity of indigenous cultures across North America. Native American jewelry not only showcases the exceptional skills of artisans but also serves as a vital expression of cultural heritage, beliefs, and identity, often imbued with healing and spiritual properties, and is commonly used in various healing practices among different tribes. Here are some ways Native American jewelry is used for therapeutic purposes:

Amulets [24] and Protective Talismans:

Certain jewelry pieces, such as pendants, necklaces, and bracelets, are believed to possess apotropaic power [25] and protective qualities that can ward off evil spirits, negative energy, and various forms of harm. These amulets and talismans are thought to provide spiritual protection and enhance the overall well-being of the wearer.

Chakra [26] Balancing and Energy Healing:

The use of specific gemstones and minerals in Native American jewelry is sometimes associated with balancing and aligning the body's chakras (energy centers). For example, turquoise is often linked with the throat chakra, believed to enhance communication and self-expression, while coral is associated with the heart chakra and love.

Ceremonial and Ritual Healing:

Native American jewelry is frequently incorporated into cultural ceremonies, rituals, and spiritual practices aimed at promoting physical, emotional, and spiritual healing. The designs, materials, and symbolic meanings of the jewelry are believed to hold sacred power and can facilitate communication with the divine and invoke healing energies.

Psychological and Emotional Healing:

The use of Native American jewelry is sometimes believed to have a positive impact on the emotional and psychological health of the wearer. The symbolic significance and personal connection to the jewelry can create a sense of grounding, comfort, and inner balance.

Physical Ailment Treatment:

In some Native American traditions, specific jewelry or combinations of materials are thought to have the ability to alleviate physical ailments such as pain, inflammation, or other health concerns. Placing jewelry on specific parts of the body or using particular gemstones may be part of holistic healing practices.

The healing properties and use of Native American jewelry are deeply rooted in the spiritual beliefs, traditional practices, and cultural worldviews of various indigenous tribes. These pieces serve as a powerful medium for promoting well-being, facilitating spiritual connections, and preserving the rich healing traditions of Native American communities.

In Turkmen culture, it is also believed that jewelry possesses healing and therapeutic properties and is often used for health and wellness purposes. Some ways Turkmen jewelry is utilized for healing include:

Amulets and Protective Talismans:

Certain Turkmen jewelry pieces, such as pendants, rings, and bracelets, are believed to have protective powers. These items are thought to ward off evil spirits, negative energy, and various forms of harm, and they are often worn for their protective and healing properties.

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## Energy Balance and Chakra Alignment

Turkmen jewelry, especially those adorned with specific gemstones, is sometimes used in practices aimed at balancing the body's energy and aligning the chakras (energy centers). For example, turquoise is believed to have a calming effect and symbolizes the earth, while coral is associated with the heart chakra and love.

Spiritual and Emotional Healing

Turkmen jewelry is occasionally utilized in ceremonies and practices designed to enhance psychological and emotional well-being, such as meditation. The symbolic meaning and design of the jewelry are thought to possess soothing powers, promoting and harmonizing the inner state of the wearer.

Physical Healing and Pain Relief

In some Turkmen traditions, certain pieces of jewelry are believed to have the ability to alleviate physical ailments and relieve pain. For instance, wearing specific combinations of gemstones or placing jewelry on particular pressure points may serve as an alternative treatment.

Ceremonial and Ritual Uses

Turkmen jewelry is often incorporated into various ceremonies, rituals, and spiritual practices, where these pieces are believed to possess sacred and transformative power. This includes rites of passage, healing, and other communal events where jewelry is used to facilitate communication with the divine and promote individual and collective well-being.

The healing properties and therapeutic benefits attributed to Turkmen jewelry are deeply rooted in the cultural and spiritual beliefs of the Turkmen people. The use of these adornments in healing practices is an integral part of their holistic approach to health and wellness.

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## Conclusion

Examining the art, culture, and daily life of Native Americans and Turkmen reveals that, despite the lack of precise evidence regarding a shared ancestry or ethnicity, the inspiration drawn from nature and the resulting artistic expressions can be similar. Nature serves as a common source, shaped by the diverse climates and conditions experienced by each group, leading to the use of similar symbols.

Nature has been a constant source of inspiration for artists throughout history. The relationship between art and nature is one of coexistence, as art has the power to illuminate the beauty of nature, while nature provides inspiration and materials for artistic creation.

Indigenous communities possess extensive knowledge about the natural world, including the properties and uses of plants, animal behaviors, weather patterns, and sustainable resource management. This knowledge is passed down through generations and reflects their interactions with the environment. In the nomadic lifestyles of these peoples, survival and the hope of life were invaluable, and efforts were made to harness nature and art to sustain their existence.

When the lives of these communities had not yet been altered by urban living, nature and art were undeniable components of their existence. Now, with the shift from nomadic to urban lifestyles, only remnants remain for examination, and the reverence these peoples held for nature and art has become tradition and culture. Respect for nature is not merely a practical concern for these communities; it is a fundamental aspect of their cultural identity, spiritual beliefs, and worldview. Preserving and supporting this respect for the natural world is essential for maintaining the integrity and continuity of their traditions and ways of life.

Art is considered a divine resource that can bring healing and mental well-being to nature-oriented peoples. These nomadic groups turn to art in the face of life's hardships and challenges, uniting in their efforts to preserve their communities and promote collective welfare. Health, livelihood, and even joy through art appear to be a wise endeavor for these peoples, regarded as a divine blessing. We can learn from their interactions with nature and art and incorporate art therapy into our daily lives.

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## Footnote

### 1- American Indians

The term "American Indians" originated from a historical misunderstanding. When Christopher Columbus arrived in the Americas in 1492, he mistakenly believed he had reached the East Indies (part of Asia). As a result, he referred to the indigenous peoples he encountered as "Indians." This term persisted over time, despite the fact that these groups were distinct from the peoples of India. The label "American Indian" became widely used in the United States and is still in use today, although many prefer terms like "Native American," "Indigenous peoples," or specific tribal names to reflect their unique identities and cultures more accurately. The term "American Indian" is often seen as a product of colonial history and can carry connotations that some find problematic.

### 2- United States of America

The U.S. is a country of 50 states covering a vast swath of North America, with Alaska in the northwest and Hawaii extending the nation's presence into the Pacific Ocean. Major Atlantic Coast cities are New York, a global finance and culture center, and capital Washington, DC. Midwestern metropolis Chicago is known for influential architecture and on the west coast, Los Angeles' Hollywood is famed for filmmaking.

3- The United States Department of the Interior (DOI) is a federal executive department responsible for managing and conserving the nation's natural resources and cultural heritage. Established in 1849, its primary functions include:

Natural Resource Management: Overseeing public lands, national parks, wildlife refuges, and other natural resources.

Native American Affairs: Managing relationships with Native American tribes and administering programs related to tribal lands and resources.

Environmental Protection: Enforcing laws related to environmental conservation and protecting endangered species.

Energy Development: Regulating energy production on federal lands, including oil, gas, and renewable energy sources.

Cultural Heritage: Preserving historical sites and artifacts, including those managed by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

The DOI plays a vital role in balancing resource development with conservation efforts and ensuring the stewardship of the nation's lands and resources for future generations.

### 4- Aztec

The Aztec language is primarily represented by Nahuatl, which is a Uto-Aztecan language spoken by the Nahua people, including the Aztecs. Nahuatl was the language of the Aztec Empire and has a rich history, having been used in various forms since at least the 7th century.

Nahuatl was the language of administration, literature, and culture in the Aztec Empire. Many historical texts, poems, and codices were written in Nahuatl.

Modern Usage: Today, Nahuatl is still spoken by approximately 1.5 million people in Mexico, particularly in central and southern regions. There are various dialects of Nahuatl, reflecting regional differences.

Cultural Influence: Many words from Nahuatl have been adopted into Spanish and English, especially terms related to flora, fauna, and cultural practices, such as "chocolate," "tomato," and "avocado."

Preservation Efforts: There are ongoing efforts to preserve and revitalize the Nahuatl language and culture, including educational programs and community initiatives.

Nahuatl remains an important part of Mexico's cultural heritage and identity.

5- Utah is located in the western region of the United States. It is bordered by several states:

North: Idaho

East: Wyoming and Colorado

South: Arizona

West: Nevada and a small portion of California

Utah is known for its diverse landscapes, which include mountains, deserts, and national parks, such as Zion and Arches. The state capital is Salt Lake City, which is situated in the northern part of Utah.

6- Nahuatl is a Uto-Aztecan language spoken by the Nahua people, including many descendants of the Aztecs. Nahuatl was the language of the Aztec Empire and has been used for centuries. It has a rich literary tradition, with many pre-Columbian and colonial texts written in it. Modern Usage: Today, Nahuatl is spoken by approximately 1.5 million people, primarily in central Mexico. There are various dialects of Nahuatl, which can differ significantly from one another.

7- The Navajo language, known as Diné Bizaad (or simply Diné), is an Athabaskan language spoken by the Navajo people, primarily in the southwestern United States.

**Geographic Distribution:** Navajo is primarily spoken in the Navajo Nation, which spans parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. It is one of the most widely spoken Indigenous languages in the United States.

**Linguistic Features:** Navajo is known for its complex grammar and rich vocabulary. It uses a system of tones and incorporates a variety of prefixes and suffixes to convey meaning.

**Cultural Significance:** The language plays a crucial role in Navajo culture, identity, and traditions. It is used in storytelling, ceremonies, and everyday communication.

**World War II Code Talkers:** Navajo speakers were famously recruited as code talkers during World War II, using their language to create an unbreakable code for military communications.

**Revitalization Efforts:** Due to historical suppression and the decline in speakers, there are ongoing efforts to revitalize the Navajo language, including educational programs in schools and community initiatives aimed at teaching the language to younger generations.

**Language Resources:** There are various resources available for learning Navajo, including dictionaries, online courses, and language immersion programs.

8- The Cherokee people are a Native American tribe originally from the southeastern United States, primarily in what is now North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee.

The Cherokee have a rich cultural heritage that includes traditional practices, art, music, and storytelling. They have their own language, known as Cherokee or Tsalagi, which has its own syllabary developed by Sequoyah in the early 19th century.

The Cherokee were one of the "Five Civilized Tribes," known for adopting many cultural practices of European settlers. However, they faced significant challenges, including forced removal from their ancestral lands during the 1830s, known as the Trail of Tears, which resulted in the deaths of thousands.

9- The Oghuz language refers to a branch of the Turkic language family, primarily spoken by the Oghuz Turkic peoples

**Language Family:** Oghuz languages belong to the larger Turkic language family, which includes various languages spoken across Central Asia, Siberia, and Eastern Europe.

**Major Languages:** The most prominent Oghuz languages include:

**Turkish:** The most widely spoken Oghuz language, primarily in Turkey.

**Azerbaijani:** Spoken in Azerbaijan and parts of Iran.

**Turkmen:** The official language of Turkmenistan.

**Gagauz:** Spoken by the Gagauz people in Moldova and Ukraine.

**Historical Context:** The Oghuz Turks are believed to have originated in Central Asia and migrated westward over centuries, spreading their languages and culture. The Oghuz played a significant role in the formation of various empires, including the Seljuk and Ottoman empires.

**Linguistic Features:** Oghuz languages share common grammatical structures and vocabulary, but they also exhibit distinct regional variations and influences due to historical interactions with other cultures and languages.

Overall, the Oghuz languages are an important branch of the Turkic language family, contributing to the linguistic and cultural diversity of the region.

10- Nomadic life refers to a lifestyle characterized by the movement of people from one place to another, often in search of resources such as food, water, and grazing land for livestock. Nomads typically move seasonally or cyclically, following patterns that allow them to utilize different resources at various times of the year. This mobility can be driven by climate, availability of pasture, or migration routes.

Involves herding livestock such as sheep, goats, camels, or reindeer. Pastoral nomads rely on their animals for food, clothing, and shelter.

Involves moving to follow wild game and seasonal plant resources. This lifestyle is often more sustainable in certain environments.

Some groups may practice a mix of sedentary agriculture and nomadism, moving periodically while also cultivating crops.

11- The Göktürks were an ancient Turkic state and people who played a significant role in the history of Central Asia.

**Historical Background:** The Göktürk Khaganate was established in the mid-6th century (around 552 AD) and is considered one of the first Turkic states. It emerged in the region of Mongolia and expanded over a vast territory that included parts of present-day China, Kazakhstan, and Siberia.

**Political Structure:** The Göktürks were ruled by a khan (a title for a ruler) and had a centralized government. The empire was divided into eastern and western khanates, each governed by a khan. The Göktürk state was known for its military organization and administrative efficiency.

**Cultural Influence:** The Göktürks played a crucial role in the spread of Turkic culture and language across Central Asia. They were instrumental in the development of the Turkic identity and established diplomatic and trade relations with neighboring states, including the Byzantine Empire and the Sassanian Empire.

**Writing System:** The Göktürks are known for their inscriptions, particularly the Orkhon inscriptions, which are among the earliest known examples of Turkic runic writing. These inscriptions provide valuable insights into their language, culture, and history.

**Decline:** The Göktürk Khaganate faced internal strife and external pressures from neighboring powers, leading to its decline in the 8th century. Eventually, the empire fragmented into smaller states and was succeeded by other Turkic groups.

**Legacy:** The Göktürks are considered a foundational element in the history of the Turkic peoples. Their influence can be seen in later Turkic states and empires, and they are often regarded as the ancestors of modern Turkic nations.

The Göktürks are an important part of Central Asian history, contributing to the cultural and political landscape of the region.<sup>12</sup> A tipi (or teepee) is a traditional dwelling used by some Indigenous peoples of North America, particularly the Plains tribes such as the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Comanche.

**Structure:** A tipi is a conical tent made from a framework of wooden poles covered with animal hides or canvas. The conical shape allows for efficient heat circulation and minimizes wind resistance.

**Design:** The typical structure consists of a circular base made of wooden poles that are tied together at the top. The covering is usually made from buffalo hides or modern materials like canvas, which can be easily removed or adjusted.

**Fireplace:** Inside the tipi, there is often a central fireplace for heating and cooking. The smoke from the fire escapes through a flue at the top, allowing for ventilation.

**Mobility:** Tipis are designed to be portable, making them ideal for nomadic lifestyles. They can be quickly assembled and disassembled, allowing families to move with the seasons in search of food and resources.

**Modern Use:** Today, tipis are sometimes used for ceremonial purposes, cultural education, and tourism. They have also been adopted in various contexts, including camping and outdoor recreation.

### 13- Keith H. Basso

Keith H. Basso (March 15, 1940 – August 4, 2013) was an influential American anthropologist known for his work in linguistic anthropology and his studies of Native American cultures, particularly the Western Apache. His research primarily centered on the Western Apache people of Arizona. Basso explored how language, place, and culture intersect, particularly through the use of storytelling and place names in Apache culture.

Basso introduced the idea that landscapes are not just physical spaces but are imbued with cultural significance. He argued that places have stories and meanings that are integral to the identity of the people who inhabit them. Basso's work has had a lasting impact on the fields of linguistic anthropology and cultural geography. He contributed to the understanding of how language reflects and shapes cultural practices and beliefs.

14-The Apache tribe refers to a group of culturally related Native American peoples who originally inhabited the Southwestern United States, particularly in areas that are now Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and parts of Mexico. The Apache are not a single tribe but consist of several distinct groups.

15- The art of illustration is a creative discipline that involves creating visual representations to convey ideas, narratives, or concepts. Illustration refers to images created to enhance or complement text, often used in books, magazines, advertisements, and various media. It can also stand alone as a form of art. The primary purpose of illustration is to communicate messages effectively. It can evoke emotions, clarify complex ideas, or enhance storytelling.

16- Rhythmic visual effect refers to a design or artistic technique that creates a sense of movement, pattern, or harmony through the repetition and arrangement of visual elements.

Rhythmic visual effects involve the use of lines, shapes, colors, and textures in a way that establishes a visual tempo or flow, similar to rhythm in music.

Repeating certain elements—such as shapes, colors, or patterns—can create a rhythm that guides the viewer's eye across a composition. This repetition can evoke feelings of stability and coherence.

While repetition is crucial, introducing variations in size, color, or spacing can enhance interest and prevent monotony. This balance between repetition and variation is essential for effective rhythmic effects.

Rhythmic visual effects can suggest movement or progression within a piece. This can be achieved through diagonal lines, alternating shapes, or dynamic patterns that lead the viewer's gaze.

Just as musical rhythm can evoke emotions, rhythmic visual effects can influence how viewers feel about a piece. A fast-paced rhythm might create excitement, while a slower rhythm may evoke calmness.<sup>17</sup> Natural pigments are colorants derived from natural sources, including minerals, plants, and animals. They have been used for centuries in art, cosmetics, and various industries. Many natural pigments come from earth minerals, such as ochre (yellow and red hues), ultramarine (blue), and various clay-based pigments.

Plant-based pigments are extracted from fruits, vegetables, flowers, and leaves. Examples include chlorophyll (green), indigo (blue), and beetroot (red). Some pigments are derived from animals, such as cochineal (red) from insects and shellac from lac bugs. These are mineral-based pigments, often used for their durability and stability. Common examples include sienna, umber, and various iron oxides.

Derived from plants, these pigments can be more vibrant but may fade over time. Examples include turmeric (yellow) and madder (red). These are less common but include dyes like carmine from cochineal insects. Natural pigments have been used in painting, drawing, and other artistic mediums. They provide a wide range of colors and can be mixed to create new shades.

Many natural pigments are used in makeup and skincare products for coloring. Natural dyes derived from pigments are used to color fabrics and fibers. Many natural pigments are considered safer and less harmful compared to synthetic alternatives. They are often biodegradable and have a lower environmental impact.

Natural pigments have played a crucial role in the history of art and culture, with ancient civilizations using them for cave paintings, pottery, and textiles.

18- A symbol is a visual or conceptual representation that stands for or signifies something else, often conveying deeper meanings or ideas beyond its literal interpretation. Symbols can take various forms, such as objects, images, words, or gestures, and are used in language, art, religion, and culture to communicate complex concepts, emotions, or beliefs. For example, a dove can symbolize peace, while a heart often represents love. The power of a symbol lies in its ability to evoke associations and emotions in the observer, making it a fundamental element in human communication and expression.

19- Animism is a belief system that attributes spiritual essence or consciousness to non-human entities, including animals, plants, rocks, and natural phenomena. It posits that all elements of the natural world possess a spirit or life force, which can influence human life and the environment. Animism is often associated with indigenous and tribal cultures, where it plays a significant role in their worldview, rituals, and practices. In animistic traditions, humans are seen as interconnected with nature, fostering a sense of respect and responsibility toward the environment. This belief system emphasizes the importance of relationships between humans and the natural world, often leading to practices aimed at maintaining harmony and balance within ecosystems.

20- Shamans are spiritual leaders or healers in various indigenous cultures who are believed to have the ability to communicate with the spirit world. They often serve as intermediaries between the physical and spiritual realms, using rituals, ceremonies, and altered states of consciousness to gain insight, heal, and guide their communities. Shamans may employ techniques such as drumming, dancing, chanting, or the use of hallucinogenic plants to enter trance states and connect with spirits or ancestors. Their roles can include healing physical and spiritual ailments, conducting rites of passage, and providing guidance in matters of life and death.

21- Tungusic languages are a group of languages spoken primarily in northeastern Asia, particularly in regions of Siberia and Manchuria. They belong to the larger Altaic language family, which also includes Turkic and Mongolic languages. Here are some key points about Tungusic languages:

The Tungusic language family includes several languages, the most notable being Evenki, Even, Manchu, and Nanai. Manchu is historically significant as it was the language of the ruling Qing dynasty in China. Tungusic languages are primarily spoken by various indigenous peoples in Siberia, such as the Evenks and Evens, as well as in northeastern China.

Tungusic languages exhibit features such as vowel harmony, agglutination (adding prefixes and suffixes to base words), and a rich system of noun cases. These languages are integral to the cultural identity of the Tungusic-speaking peoples, encompassing their traditions, folklore, and worldview. Many Tungusic languages, especially those with fewer speakers like Manchu, are endangered due to globalization and the dominance of larger languages like Russian and Mandarin.

22- Sanskrit is an ancient Indo-European language that originated in the Indian subcontinent. It is one of the oldest languages in the world and has a rich literary and cultural heritage.

Sanskrit dates back over 3,000 years and is the liturgical language of Hinduism, as well as a scholarly language in Buddhism and Jainism. Many of the ancient texts of these religions, including the Vedas, Upanishads, and epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana, are written in Sanskrit.

Sanskrit is known for its complex grammar, including a sophisticated system of inflection and a rich vocabulary. It has influenced many modern languages in India, such as Hindi, Bengali, and Marathi.

Beyond its religious significance, Sanskrit has played a crucial role in Indian philosophy, science, mathematics, and arts. It is associated with classical literature, poetry, and drama.

While not widely spoken as a first language today, Sanskrit is still studied and used in religious and academic contexts. Efforts are ongoing to revive its use in everyday conversation.

Sanskrit has influenced various languages and cultures worldwide, contributing to the development of linguistics and comparative philology.

23- Narrative art is a form of visual art that tells a story or conveys a sequence of events through imagery. This genre encompasses various mediums, including painting, sculpture, illustration, and photography. Narrative art often employs characters, settings, and actions to create a cohesive narrative, allowing viewers to engage with the story being depicted. It can draw from historical events, myths, folklore, or personal experiences, and may use techniques such as composition, color, and perspective to enhance the storytelling. Artists may choose to present a single moment in time or a series of

events, encouraging interpretation and emotional connection from the audience. Overall, narrative art serves as a powerful means of communication, bridging the gap between visual expression and storytelling.

24-An amulet is a small object or charm that is believed to possess protective qualities or to bring good luck to its wearer. Often made from materials such as metal, stone, wood, or fabric, amulets can be inscribed with symbols, prayers, or images that hold significance in various cultures and belief systems. They are typically worn as jewelry or carried on the person and are often associated with spiritual or religious practices. Amulets have been used throughout history across different cultures to ward off evil, provide health benefits, or ensure safety during travel. The effectiveness of an amulet is often attributed to the belief and intention of the wearer, making them a powerful symbol of personal and cultural significance.

25- Apotropaic power refers to the ability of certain objects, symbols, or rituals to ward off evil, misfortune, or malevolent forces. This concept is prevalent in various cultures and belief systems, where specific items are believed to possess protective qualities. Examples include:

Amulets and Talismans: Objects such as charms or jewelry, often inscribed with symbols or prayers, are carried or worn for protection against harm.

Symbols: Certain symbols, like the evil eye or specific geometric patterns, are thought to repel negative energy or malevolent spirits.

Rituals: Ceremonial practices, such as blessings or purification rites, are performed to invoke protective powers and safeguard individuals or communities.

The term "apotropaic" comes from the Greek word "apotropaios," meaning "to turn away." Overall, apotropaic practices reflect humanity's desire to seek safety and security from perceived threats in the environment.

26- Chakra is a concept originating from ancient Indian spiritual traditions, particularly in Hinduism and Buddhism, referring to energy centers within the human body. The term "chakra" comes from the Sanskrit word for "wheel" or "disk," symbolizing the spinning energy centers that are believed to correspond to various physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of a person's being.

There are seven primary chakras, each located along the spine and associated with specific qualities and functions.

Various practices, such as yoga, meditation, and energy healing, aim to balance and align the chakras, promoting overall health and harmony.

Each chakra is often associated with specific colors, elements, and symbols, reflecting its unique qualities and characteristics.

The chakra system serves as a framework for understanding the interplay between the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of life, emphasizing the importance of balance and harmony within oneself.

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