

Navajo Creation

Locust is the first to come up the "reed of emergence" into this, the Fifth World, the earth surface world, followed by First Man and First Woman, Pollen Boy, Lightning God and Talking God, and all the other *Yei - Diyin Dinee*, the Holy People. All around is water and darkness. There are no peoples, but there are many monsters. There is much *hocho* – disorder and ugliness. At the Emergence Place, the Holy People decide to build a sweathouse, like a hogan though much larger. First Man brings his medicine bundle with him into the sweat bath, the bundle containing four jewels – turquoise, white shell, abalone and obsidian. In the heat and the steam, the Holy People whisper to each other and, with the knowledge of *hozho* – beauty and harmony, plan the earth-surface world. They think of the *biiasti*, the "in-standing ones," the inner forms of all things. Then the Holy People speak the words of the world and sing the world into being.



Dine Winter Hogan

The earth will be,
the mountains will be . . . ,
The earth will be,
from ancient times with me there is knowledge of it.
The mountains will be,
from ancient times with me there is knowledge of it. . . .
The earth will be,
from the very beginning I have thought it.
The mountains will be,
from the very beginning I have thought it. . . .
The earth will be,
from the ancient times I speak it.
The mountains will be,
from the ancient times I speak it. . . .
The earth will be,
the mountains will be, . . .
and so it will be. (from the *Beginning of the World Song*)

And the rivers and mountains, the sun and moon, come forth; each with *biiasti* – spirit and life. And there is *Saah Naaghahii Bikeh Hozho*, "continual reoccurring long life in an environment of beauty and harmony." It would be landscape from which Changing Woman would come, as well as her sons, Monster Slayer and Child of the Water, bringing forth *Hozho*. And she would bring forth the Dine, the Earth Surface People.

Earth's feet have become my feet
by means of these I shall live on.
Earth's legs have become my legs
by means of these I shall live on.

Earth's body has become my body
 by means of this I shall live on.
 Earth's mind has become my mind
 by means of this I shall live on.
 Earth's voice has become my voice
 by means of this I shall live on.
 Earth's headplume has become my headplume
 by means of this I shall live on.
 The cord-like extension from the top of its head
 is cord-like from the top of my head as by means of this I shall live on.
 There are mountains encircling it and
 Hozho extends up their slopes,
 by means of these it will be hozho as I shall live on.
Saah Naaghaii Bikeh Hozho I shall be,
 Before me it will be hozho as I live on,
 Behind me it will be hozho as I live on,
 Below me it will be hozho as I live on,
 Above me it will be hozho as I live on.
Hozho has been restored.
Hozho has been restored.
Hozho has been restored.
Hozho has been restored. (from the *Blessingway Song*)

But there remains much *hocho*. Monsters persist – Sickness, Hunger, Poverty, Lice Man, Laziness. In the heat and steam, the Holy People think the world and then speak the world into being.



And in the hogan today, the Dine re-create and re-member the story of Creation, as the songs of hozho are sung and the images of hozho painted on the ground for those with hocho. As *hozho* within so without.

The Four Mountains Dry Painting. Among the images are the Pine Mountain, Black Spruce Mountain, Spruce Yellow Mountain, and Blue Mountain, as well as the *Yei* or Holy People – hanging Grandchild (top), Monster Slayer (right), Child of the Water (bottom), Reared within the Mountain (left), with Pink Herb, Black Herb, Yellow Herb and Blue Herb, and the Moon and Sun (left). See [Dine Image](#) of the Four Mountains Dry Painting.

The story text is a segment from the Navajo Emergence story. For additional ethnographic background, see Mitchell 1978, Witherspoon 1977 and Wayman 1970.