



Kachinas In The Pueblo World

Polly Schaafsma

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According to the Pueblo Indians the spirits of the dead return to this world as Kachinas, where they take on cloud form-become "cloud people"-and bring the life-giving rains. These rain deities stand at the center of Pueblo religious experience. Without their intervention the crops will not grow, the cisterns will not be filled, the rivers will not flow, the people will not survive. In *Kachinas in the Pueblo World*, fourteen scholars examine the role of kachinas in the cultures of the Rio Grand, Zuni, and Hopi pueblos. They examine the origins of the kachina cult, trace the figure of the kachina to a Mesoamerican original, and look at the fortunes of the rain deities after the Spanish and subsequent Anglo conquests of the Pueblo homeland. In addition they discuss the transition of the kachina doll from religious to art object, and consider the role of the kachina in allowing elements of Puebloan belief to endure in the modern world. Forty-one color plates boldly illustrate the many manifestations of kachinas in the Pueblo world.

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