

SOUTHERN OWL ARMES

Southern Owl Armes, Chota Band member and part of the Cherokee Talking Leaves staff, comes from a strong Cherokee heritage. He is an avid promoter of the old "Tsalagi culture", language, and the instilling of these values in young people.



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Southern Owl is tuned in to Native American spirituality, being gifted himself with Owl Medicine at birth. He served in the Army and Army Reserves from 1984 until 2004, including during "Operation Enduring Freedom"

He holds a B.S. degree in Communications/Linguistics from the University of Tennessee. Among his accomplishments are an associate degree in thanatology, licensed funeral director, and several published articles, poems and original musical compositions. Several of his poems, stories and articles addressing Native American culture have been published in previous editions of the Cherokee Talking Leaves.

Southern Owl is a quiet meditative person who enjoys a solitary stroll through the forest or sitting by a stream or brook listening to and watching the sounds and movements of the waters. # # #

TRADITION

By Southern Owl Armes

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "tradition is the handing down of information, beliefs and customs by word of mouth (oral), or by example from one generation to another with written instruction". If I hear my older siblings, parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles tell me stories of how life was during 1800's, early 1900's to mid 1900's, do I challenge, dispute or question the veracity of the stories? Do I ask for documentation or cited sources? No, I listen and accept that their words are true, for they have learned and received these stories from their elders to be passed down to the young and to their young or have lived the experience. This is tradition.

Southern Owl has observed some non-Native people and Europeans with little Native American mix that are consumed in the Euro-American mindset or culture, known as "European Wannabes". Such might demand published documentation on Native ways, written by non-Native "White Eyes" with no Native blood, to tell what it is to be Tsalagi, Lakota, Apache or some other Native culture, and these words, in their way of thinking, are true and the traditional native ways are disputed, challenged and questioned whenever a Native is speaking of their tradition, custom and belief. The European and European "Wannabe" disregards the Native and concludes the words spoken by the Native speaker are not true

if they cannot be verified by the White Eye's "talking leaves".

Southern Owl, being a traditionalist, will seek information about the Tsalagi from other Tsalagi sources, and then will research other reliable White Eyes sources concerning the Tsalagi. Southern Owl does not limit his research to only one White Eyes writing for truth, but will read writings of many and compare the coinciding against the contradicting views and arrive at a conclusive truth. One can not set back and listen to a speaker and dispute and challenge the speaker's words, when the speaker is speaking his truth through tradition and living the experience which is being presented to a group of people. If one does this act, it shows contempt and disrespect toward the speaker. One should quietly and respectfully listen to the speaker's words and upon conclusion and off to the side away from the crowd, speak with the speaker and express their concerns privately.

As a child, one sits back quietly and listens to the elders tell their stories of personal experiences and of ancestral events that relate to the family, which will reveal family tradition, heritage, history and how the family is related to other families and where the family roots began. For many American families, their roots began in Europe and transcends to present day United States. For Southern Owl, his siblings, parents, grandparents and past generations, the family roots are firmly planted here in the true Tsalagi Nation of East Tennessee and the Appalachian mountain chain long before the European invasion of the 1500's and prior to "The

Removal" or "Trail Of Tears" of 1838-1839 where our people were forced marched to the Indian Territory known as Oklahoma. The ancient Tsalagi belief of how man came upon the Center Plain of Earth is simple. "Here we have always been." # # #



In his book ANIMAL-SPEAK, Ted Andrews writes: "One who works with owl medicine will be able to see and hear what others try to hide. You will hear what is not being said, and you will see what is hidden or in the shadows. You can detect and pinpoint the subtleties.

The owl, as a bird of the night, can teach all of the secrets of the night. These secretes involve everything that transpires when the Sun is gone. Owls are the eyes of the night, and they see what is not in the open. They have secret knowledge that they can share. Their medicine can extract secrets.

The owl is a symbol of the feminine, the moon, and the night. It has been called a cat with wings."

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