



# Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache

By Keith H. Basso

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This remarkable book introduces us to four unforgettable Apache people, each of whom offers a different take on the significance of places in their culture. Apache conceptions of wisdom, manners and morals, and of their own history are inextricably intertwined with place, and by allowing us to overhear his conversations with Apaches on these subjects Basso expands our awareness of what place can mean to people.

Most of us use the term *sense of place* often and rather carelessly when we think of nature or home or literature. Our senses of place, however, come not only from our individual experiences but also from our cultures. *Wisdom Sits in Places*, the first sustained study of places and place-names by an anthropologist, explores place, places, and what they mean to a particular group of people, the Western Apache in Arizona. For more than thirty years, Keith Basso has been doing fieldwork among the Western Apache, and now he shares with us what he has learned of Apache place-names—where they come from and what they mean to Apaches.

"This is indeed a brilliant exposition of landscape and language in the world of the Western Apache. But it is more than that. Keith Basso gives us to understand something about the sacred and indivisible nature of words and place. And this is a universal equation, a balance in the universe. Place may be the first of all concepts; it may be the oldest of all words."—N. Scott Momaday

"In *Wisdom Sits in Places* Keith Basso lifts a veil on the most elemental poetry of human experience, which is the naming of the world. In so doing he invests his scholarship with that rarest of scholarly qualities: a sense of spiritual exploration. Through his clear eyes we glimpse the spirit of a remarkable people and their land, and when we look away, we see our own world afresh."—William deBuys

"A very exciting book—authoritative, fully informed, extremely thoughtful, and also engagingly written and a joy to read. Guiding us vividly among the landscapes and related story-tellings of the Western Apache, Basso explores in a highly readable way the role of language in the complex but compelling theme of a people's attachment to place. An important book by an eminent

scholar."—Alvin M. Josephy, Jr.

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### Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Basso, an anthropologist who has done fieldwork among the Western Apache of Arizona for over 30 years, provides a fascinating scholarly study of the meaning and significance of the Apache place names found in the area surrounding the community of Cibecue, Arizona. Some Apache place names describe features of the landscape or climate, while others derive from historical or mythological events. All, however, are rich in descriptive imagery and depth of meaning for the Apache people of the area. With the help of several Apache informants, Basso explores the place worlds underlying the names of localities and through them lets the Apache express their own understanding of their history, identity, values, and morality. This work, which won the Western States Book Award for creative nonfiction, is a valuable contribution to anthropological studies of place and location. At the same time, it provides a sensitive perspective on the Apaches' understanding of themselves. A useful addition to anthropology and linguistics collections in academic libraries. Elizabeth Salt, Otterbein Coll. Lib., Westerville, Ohio  
Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Review

"This brilliant book on linguistic awareness of local landscapes is a gem." --(*Arizona Republic*)

From the Inside Flap

Explores the connections of place, language, wisdom, and morality among the Western Apache.

### Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Robin Boucher:**

The book entitled *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* is the e-book that recommended to you to study. You can see the quality of the e-book content that will be shown to you. The language that author use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The article author was did a lot of research when write the book, and so the information that they share to you is absolutely accurate. You also could get the e-book of *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache* from the publisher to make you more enjoy free time.

**Louie Thompson:**

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**Hattie Robb:**

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**George Hyler:**

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