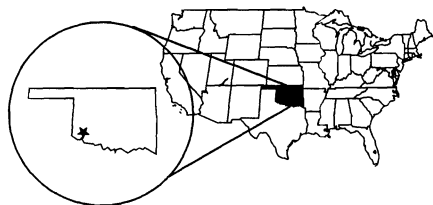


KIOWA



The historic tribal area of the Kiowa, established in 1867, covers 234,000 acres in south-western Oklahoma. This last homeland for the Kiowa came after a long history of migrations dating to the early 1600s. The Kiowa originated in western Montana and over the centuries

worked their way east and then south (ENAT, 110-112). The tribal name comes from the Kiowa word *Ka'i-gwu* meaning "Main People".

The pale blue flag of the Kiowa bears the tribal logo in the center (Letter, Charlotte Redbird, Tribal Administrative Secretary, 15 Feb. 1995). The logo shows a Kiowa warrior of the Plains surrounded by a ring of ten white-and-black eagle feathers representing the ten Kiowa Medicine Bundles (seal provided by the Kiowa Tribal Headquarters).



The ten feathers also recall the Principal Dogs, or "Ten Bravest" warrior society (*Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma*, pamphlet, n.d.). When the Principal Dogs went into battle, the leader stood next to a lance bearing his sash of leadership and encouraged the rest of the tribe onward. From that spot, the head Principal Dog fought and protected his sacred sash. He could not desert his position until replaced by another of the "Ten Bravest". This use of the Principal Dog's sash flying from the head of a lance is one of the earliest uses of flag-like objects, or vexilloids, by a Native American people.

At the base of the logo is a small circle, divided green on the left and yellow on the right, with a silhouette of a buffalo head in black.

The warrior rides an Appaloosa, a breed developed by the Salish tribe of Idaho and Montana in the traditional homeland of the Kiowa.

This horse has a painted lightning bolt on his front left leg, suggesting the voice of thunder heard each spring. (This bolt is also represented on the Great Drum of the Ohoma Society. There it is held in the talons of an eagle.) The warrior wears a Spanish officer's red cape, a red headband, and a bone breastplate. These, as well as the sky-blue circle that acts as a backdrop for the warrior, are part of the *Koitsenko* warrior tradition.

The warrior holds a shield depicting the Rainy Mountain of Oklahoma, a burial ground sacred to the Kiowa and considered the "end of the Great Tribal Journey". The recurring circular patterns in the sky, the feathers, and the small shield at the base of the logo recall the sun and the moon. These two celestial bodies are important in Kiowa ceremonial dance rituals such as the Skaw-Tow or Sundance, the Feather or Ghost Dance, and the peyote religious service of the Native American Church. The entire logo is encircled by "KIOWA TRIBE" above and "OF OKLAHOMA" below, both in black. ☛