# Looking for Lost Lore

STUDIES IN FOLKLORE, ETHNOLOGY, AND ICONOGRAPHY

GEORGE E. LANKFORD

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## *Studies in Folklore, Ethnology, and Iconography*

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Chapter 5: This article was originally written as a sequel to the previous chapter (4), and that role still seems appropriate. Thus it is published here in a revised form, but still separate, from its original publication in *Mid-America Folklore* 16(1) (1988): 24–39. It is printed here by permission.

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Chapter 8: Figure 8.1, a map from Lawrence Mills's 1968 study of head pots has been reprinted courtesy of *The Missouri Archaeologist.* Figure 8.2 is from the photographic collection of the University of Memphis, courtesy of the photographer, Dr. David Dye of the University of Memphis, and the owner, Dr. James F. Cherry of Fayetteville, Arkansas. Figure 8.3 has been reprinted courtesy of the Peabody Museum Press from figure 147 in Philip Phillips and James A. Brown, *Pre-Columbian Shell Engravings from the Craig Mound at Spiro, Oklahoma,* vol. 1., Peabody Museum Press. Copyright 1975 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College.

Chapter 9: The inspiration for this unusual chapter came from a conversation with David Dye, V. J. Knight Jr., and Vincas Steponaitis. I am grateful for their insights, and I hope the outcome meets their expectations.

The cover art design is based on two photographs of artifacts from the collection of Dr. James F. Cherry of Fayetteville, Arkansas. The photography is the work of Dr. David Dye of the University of Memphis. Both ceramic works (University of Memphis collection numbers 520-25 and 662-7) are from the Campbell site in Missouri. I am grateful to both the owner and the photographer for permission to use these wonderful examples of prehistoric Mississippian art, both of which illustrate so well the meaning of "lost lore."

# Introduction

Lore gets lost. Even today, specific contemporary information about human behavior and its effects on social structure is sometimes hard to gather. Part of the problem is that there is simply too much information, and sifting through documentary records is so arduous and time-consuming that few undertake the task of locating the data and understandings that will make sense of our own time.

When the goal is to understand earlier societies and their cultural perspective the task is equally difficult. While the available data are fewer, both because of loss through time and the lack of documents, the understanding of them is even more difficult. Those societies are gone. Even the descendants of the players on those former human stages are puzzled about their past. Perhaps of greatest importance is the fact that we cannot assume that people of earlier days thought and behaved in the same way we do. One recent historian found a line from a novel that succinctly expresses the problem of doing history, and he used it as the title of an excellent book on historiography: *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Lowenthal 1985). The full quotation completes the point: "The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there" (Hartley 1953).

When this problem of "doing history" is shifted from societies that commit everything to paper, whether contemporary or past, to societies that left only objects in the ground and oral traditions among their descendants, the foreignness of the country becomes truly daunting. Archaeologists are called to the arena, and anthropologists and ethnohistorians work with them to create models of the past that make explanatory sense. Even folklorists, wrestling with their own peculiar problems of establishing the historical background of traditional belief and narrative, get involved in the multidisciplinary work.

Nowadays, most serious attempts to look for lost lore are projects using perspectives and achievements from many academic disciplines. Even if an enterprise in understanding a particular historical problem is not undertaken by an actual team, the team is present in the bibliography. Any recent study of a prehistoric event or process bears witness to that teamwork in the array of disciplines that are called upon for assistance in creating a model and presenting an argument for its plausibility.

The chapters in this book are demonstrations of the multidisciplinary approach to the study of prehistory. Each is a study of a particular problem of missing knowledge and understanding, and the arena is the prehistory of the Native American societies of the Eastern Woodlands and Plains. Although I am a folklorist, the chapters are not pure expressions of that academic discipline. These studies by necessity make use of the achievements and insights of scholars of many disciplines. This team approach seems natural to me, for I have had the pleasure of living in a small liberal arts college environment for three decades, with the last quarter of a century in a single institution, Lyon College, where the barriers between disciplines tend to be more permeable than in large universities. I have been permitted to teach courses in folklore (my Ph.D. discipline), anthropology, religion, and history. I have been fortunate to have team-taught with an amazing group of talented teachers from a wide array of disciplines.

One of the drawbacks to living at the intersection of disciplines is that articles tend to get published in a variety of journals. In this volume each chapter is a separate study, and most could have been published in the journals of more than one discipline. What brings them together here is the fact that they are all examples of approaches to recovering lost lore from prehistoric societies. Earlier versions of four of these chapters (3 through 6) have been published before, three in journals of the discipline of folklore and one in an archaeological journal. Five are completely new studies.

Each is an attempt to answer a question. The first section, "Thinking through Myths," focuses on some problems in understanding the processes of the retention of knowledge in oral traditional societies and what sorts of procedures we need to follow in addressing those issues. Opening the section is a chapter on "Losing the Lore," an exploration of why we don't know all about what happened in prehistory and why. In recent decades I have found myself trying to reconstruct belief systems that are no longer in existence or have been altered in major ways by the descendants of the ancient artists and priests. The inevitable question is whether such attempts at reconstruction of cognitive structures are really *re*-constructions or simply modern inventions. When we claim to have shed light on an aspect of ancient thought and its cultural expressions, we inevitably have to deal with the issue of whether we have superimposed a false clarity in interpreting the data. There is rarely unambiguous ethnographic information that can be appealed to, and the

current descendants do not necessarily have any better understanding of their ancestors' thought than any other student of the past.

Another way of coming at the problem of reconstructing lost lore is to raise the question of how the knowledge of one era can be lost by the people of the next. How does lore get lost in the first place? This study of "Losing the Lore" turned into an examination of myth, oral traditional societies, and acculturation processes much more complex than was imagined in the original question.

The second chapter focuses on myths themselves. It is an attempt to make sense of a large and complex corpus of mythic materials about maize, a staple crop of many Indian societies during the Mississippian era (roughly A.D. 900 to 1550). The title of chapter 2, "A Maze of Maize Myths," expresses the bewilderment I felt three decades ago, when I was first examining this corpus. I published some of this material—the portions relating to the Southeast—years ago, but with limited conclusions (Lankford 1987:145–158). This fresh study is the result of a return to the corpus; it explores the problem of extracting useful historical information from myths, essentially by treating myth texts as artifacts and tracking their distribution. Methodological procedures of myth analysis come to the fore in this chapter, but there are some conclusions about religious patterns and social connections that emerge from the study. This new presentation of the material attempts to sift through the myths surrounding the important cultigen and suggest some implications for the examination of art.

The focus of the second section, "Looking for Lost Rituals," is on ritual behavior and some of the concepts behind it. The four chapters in this section are new versions of articles originally published in *Southern Folklore, Mid-America Folklore,* and the *Arkansas Archeologist.* They are published here by permission of those journals. In preparing these articles for republication in this volume, I have resisted the impulse to do drastic rewriting, even though the scholarship around the subjects has grown and changed in some ways. The ongoing work related to the problems discussed has provided paths to reinterpretation of the arguments as well as amplification and support for them. I have yielded to the desire to correct typographical errors and a few of my incomprehensible phrases and grammatical blunders that escaped the editor's pen in the original publications, but the arguments remain the same. They are offered to a wider audience as interpretations of past behavior that may still be useful for reflection, discussion, and rejoinder.

The section opens with a study of the use of color as a way of ordering the intellectual understanding of the cosmos as reflected in the society. "Red and White" (chapter 3) resulted from asking the deceptively simple question of how a dual color scheme could be used as an organizational metaphor. To my astonishment, the question provoked a series of questions about the nature of prehistoric Southeastern Indian social organization, and the answers became complex. The ongoing studies of prehistoric and historic social structure and how it changed through the

centuries have opened new avenues of approach to the "Red and White" issue, and this chapter serves as an invitation to reinterpretation.

Chapter 4, "Saying Hello in *La Florida,*" began as a question about the ancient trade networks hypothesized by archaeologists as explanations of the presence of exotic artifacts in a variety of sites. The question focused on a minor problem: what kind of greeting protocol would have made possible the peaceful international travel and communication implied in such networks? A study of the documentary reports of first-contact experiences between Europeans and Native Americans on the east coast revealed a pattern of behavior that took shape as a reconstructed greeting protocol among the extinct Timucua of Florida. That model seemed to be ratified by the accounts of other European-Indian first-contact experiences.

The east coast protocol model in chapter 4 in turn raised some questions about the development of a better-known protocol—the calumet ceremony—in the Mississippi Valley (chapter 5). In the light of chapter 4, the calumet ceremony appeared as roughly the same protocol with the addition of the calumet. The wide array of ethnographic accounts of greeting rituals and variants contained several unusual behaviors that excited the comments of Europeans. One of those practices led to some speculative thinking about what sort of belief system lay behind that hypothesized greeting protocol: why would people insist on the peculiar practice of physically carrying visitors, sometimes awkwardly, to their encounters? The result was a brief article, "Reysed After There Manner" (chapter 6), that pursued one of the rituals incorporated in the general greeting protocol.

The three chapters comprising the final section, "Looking at Lost Art," have not been published before. The question behind them arises from one of my major academic interests, interpreting the prehistoric iconography of Mississippian-era peoples, an area that involves a variety of approaches to looking for lost lore. The first, "Riders in the Sky" (chapter 7) is a study of one of the most sophisticated of the designs on prehistoric engraved shell gorgets. It demonstrates the fairly straightforward process of examination of the details of the entire corpus of art forms, with insights into the nature of the iconography interpreted by mythic references.

Chapter 8, "Heads and Tales," is on the ancient practice of gambling in Native American society. It was occasioned by an incidental observation during a study of a set of myths about competition and violence. The frequency of the linking of gambling and beheading led to an increased sensitivity to the importance of gambling in tribal life in North America. By the time that insight had been followed up, a new hypothesis involving prehistoric art had been developed.

The last chapter (9) is not a study in its own right, but a tool offered for the use of scholars—especially archaeologists—faced with the task of interpreting prehistoric figural images found primarily in rock art. Many of those displays appear to present heroic scenes: conflicts and adventures of human (or humanlike) figures. Such pictures suggest that there were stories behind the art, and hope of re-

constructing the subject matter inevitably leads interpreters into the collections of recent versions of ancestral myths. Since those collections are not the usual reading material of archaeological scholars, an index of heroic adventures has been organized for their specialized use—the search for myth plots and motifs of heroic behavior that might be clues to the stories portrayed in the art. It is a "finder" tool to aid them in their own interpretations of art.

It is my hope that the reader will find these nine studies interesting in their own right, whether because of subject matter or the approach to an interpretation. All together, these chapters attempt to offer the hope that the foreignness of the past is not completely impenetrable. If any readers are provoked to refute my conclusions or improve on my methods, I will be pleased. After all, looking for lost lore ought to be more than just a pleasant pastime for academic detectives. It ought to be a process with a payoff—the generation of plausible interpretations of how and why humans behaved as they did in the foreign past, where "they did things differently."

# I
# THINKING THROUGH MYTHS

# 1
# Losing the Lore

## Some Notes on the Destruction of Knowledge

Students of North American prehistory frequently find themselves confronted by enigmatic myths, beliefs, and art. Trying to explain their cognitive content or the set of events that produced a complex distribution pattern often leads a researcher into attempts to reconstruct former myths and beliefs that no longer exist. One of the major problems in assessing the plausibility of such efforts lies in the fundamental assumption—that there was in earlier times knowledge that has been lost. Is it possible for societies to lose important knowledge? How would such a process of destruction occur? What are the dynamic principles of losing the past? Are there any indications that such a process has in fact occurred in the Native American past? This chapter argues that the destruction of esoteric knowledge *has* occurred and, further, that it is not difficult to understand how such a thing can happen.

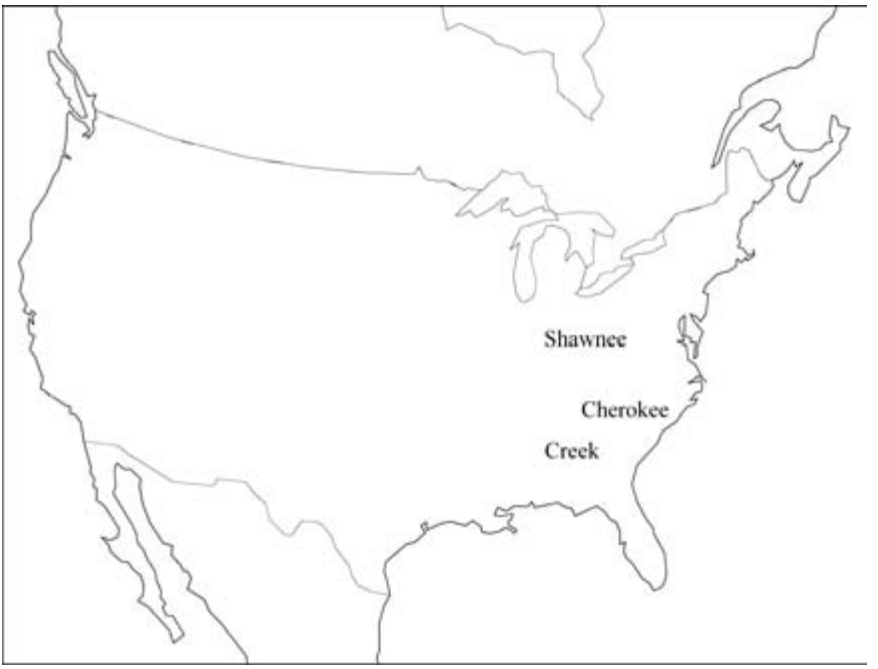
## Some Assumptions

A hypothetical model of the societal loss of knowledge can be put forward as a set of assumptions, each of which seems reasonable on the basis of what is known both about oral traditional societies in general and about Native American groups of the Eastern Woodlands.

1. Complex knowledge in an oral society will not be known and understood by all members of the society, any more than the knowledge of chemistry or phys-

ics is possessed by all citizens in a literate society. It will instead take the form of esoteric knowledge that is known only to a small number of people.
2. Such complex knowledge will be encoded by them in various forms of mnemonic devices such as visual charts, collections of objects, and iconographic images, as well as myths and songs.
3. The ability to interpret mnemonic devices is the key to the possession and preservation of the esoteric knowledge. That ability will be demonstrated in the society by both public and private interpretations by the "owners." The demonstrations will both affirm the performer's possession of the knowledge and aid in the retention and preservation of the lore. While the public interpretations will be ritual occasions that reiterate at least the basic beliefs of the society to all in attendance, the private interpretations will likely take the form of more intensive training of apprentices who have been chosen to be the next generation of bearers of the traditions.
4. Due largely to the public performances of the lore, most of the people in the society will know at least that the knowledge exists, even if their own understanding of it is sketchy. The society's retention of the knowledge, however, will depend upon the transmission process of passing on detailed lore from master to apprentice. In order to be effective and trustworthy, the process itself must be a good educational system, and the rewards for becoming a master must be great enough that the best minds of the society will dedicate themselves to the process of learning from the master.
5. In the light of this process of retaining knowledge in an oral traditional society, it seems clear that the stability and security of the lore depend on two primary factors—the number of people who bear the knowledge at any given time and the ability of each bearer to pass on his or her knowledge to one or more competent successors. To the extent to which the transmission chain is reduced in size or suffers broken links, the society's knowledge is endangered. In an oral traditional society, the corps of bearers is the core of the knowledge.

From these principles of the preservation of knowledge within a traditional society it is not difficult to envision the dynamics of a process by which specialized knowledge can be lost. The basic factor is death. The death of tradition bearers by definition reduces the central corps, and if their deaths are sudden and unexpected, it is likely that the transmission chain will be broken before the next links can be forged. The chain is even more fragile if a particular tradition is owned by only one person. If a society undergoes a catastrophe in which a great number of the possessors of the esoteric knowledge die in a short period of time, there is a strong probability that some significant chunks of the lore will be permanently lost. The mnemonic devices will still exist, along with the general awareness of the existence of the knowledge, but the preservation of the lore will depend solely on




1.1. Map of historic location of the Shawnee, Cherokee, and Creek.

the ability of the survivors to interpret the mnemonics or create a usable reinterpretation of them.

Could such catastrophes have happened in the Native American past? Was there a disastrous loss of the traditions, by the death of those entrusted with them? Here are three provocative possibilities of such destruction of knowledge, one each from the Shawnee, the Cherokee, and the Creek (Muskogee) (Figure 1.1). Since this material is largely from the already published work of three scholars, Noel Schutz, Raymond Fogelson, and Joel Martin, I will merely summarize their presentations in brief form.

### *Shawnee*

In a lengthy analysis of Shawnee myths in general, Noel Schutz used as a major focus a myth of which versions had been recorded for a century and a half. The earliest text was by Tenskwatawa, the Shawnee Prophet, in 1824, and there is another early 19th-century text. Three more versions were collected by C. F. Voegelin in 1933–34, and Schutz himself collected another in 1972. He referred to versions that have been recorded from the Cheyenne, Creek, Koasati, Alabama, Hitchiti, and Yuchi (Schutz 1975:147–175; Kroeber 1900:184; Swanton 1929:36–38.) Additional

texts are known from the Caddo, Pawnee, Crow, and Dakota (Dorsey 1905:81; Gatschet 1889; Lowie 1918:220–222; Dorsey 1889:136).

Although the details change from text to text, in the usual manner of myths in oral tradition, the basic plot seems stable and the myth is readily recognizable. The plot is as follows:

> A small group of men were hunting together when they happened upon a giant turtle. Deciding to take a ride, all but one of the men climbed on the shell. After a while the turtle came to a body of water and walked steadily into it. When the men tried to leap down, they discovered that they were stuck to the shell, and they were carried into the water to their deaths. When the lone survivor carried the news of what had happened back to the town, the leaders decided to take their vengeance. Armed with their own magical powers, as well as the first menstrual blood of a young woman of the tribe, the doctors went to the body of water and began their singing, calling the turtle. A series of underwater creatures (ranging from snakes to fish to turtles to alligators) came to the surface and were slain by the power of the menstrual blood. They were resuscitated by the doctors and sent back into the depths, since they were not the one responsible for the deaths. Finally the head water manito (the horned water serpent, in the Shawnee Prophet's version) came to the surface and was likewise slain by the blood. They burned his body, and many of the people took portions of his flesh to use as power sources in their sacred bundles. "Thus was created the evil power of the witch bundles."

Schutz considered this myth, if not originated by the Shawnee, at least to be basic to their belief system. "[I]t is my contention that the origin of witchcraft motif in the myth is no mere aetiological addendum by the Shawnee, but is an integral part of the myth which attests to its authenticity" (Schutz 1975:180). His analysis demonstrates an important dimension of the Shawnee self-understanding. Their national life is caught in the tension between benevolent power, as manifested in the tribal bundle and in the personal spirit guides of its leaders, and malevolent power, which is focused in the witch bundles kept by individuals who wield their powers against others in the society. The source of the power of the witches is the flesh of the primordial horned water serpent, gathered in the mythic dawn times (Schutz 1975:196).

> I contend that it is the purpose of this myth to explain not merely the origin of witchcraft among the Shawnee, but the fact that despite the power invested in the Shawnee by the Great Spirit, and despite his (her) favour, there exist forces of disorder which threaten an end to the Shawnee, and thus to

> human society—bringing about the end of the world. The weapon used by the Shawnee in their battle is the sacred power invested in them by the Great Spirit in the form of the tribal palladium or bundle. . . . The opposition of the monster serpent continues from within society by those who possess witchcraft bundles in which a piece of the serpent's flesh is kept—still alive after thousands of years. [Schutz 1975:209–210]

It is noteworthy that the tension inherent in the Underwater spirit's role as the source of both good and wicked medicine is reflected in the Central Algonkian Manabozho myth in which the Water Spirits are the origin of the Midē Society and are also thought to be sources of negative power. With a change of personae this same ambivalence is embedded in the Cherokee myth of the killing of the giant Stone Coat, from whose burned body comes power objects used for good or ill (Speck and Broom 1983:13–18). This myth, Schutz argued, is the explanation of the quite real tension and violence that exist between factions within Shawnee society, labeled in the particular situation as followers of the path established by the Great Spirit versus "witches." The existence of witchcraft and witches was a firm belief, and doubt was strongly suppressed, he pointed out. In his comparative examination of other peoples' versions of the myth, particularly those from the Muskogee (Creek, Alabama, Koasati, Hitchiti) of the Southeast among whom Shawnee had lived for many years during the historic period, Schutz concluded that the loss of detail and the lack of a central place in the mythic corpus of those groups indicate the diffusion of the myth to them from the Shawnee. However, the other texts do not necessarily imply the same message about witchcraft, even if the Shawnees were the source of the narrative.

If the myth were the charter for the existence of witches among the Shawnee, what would be the social context for its use? Schutz suggested that the ongoing process of discovering and executing witches would have kept the myth in the heart of the corpus, but that special periods of religious turmoil, such as revitalization movements, would have called the myth to the fore, or even caused its creation. He pointed out that the political use of witchcraft accusation could be easily seen in the movement led by the Shawnee Prophet, who probably not incidentally provided the earliest text of the myth. In that movement, he pointed out, "older leaders who opposed the confederation which [the Prophet and Tecumseh] proposed found themselves tried and executed as witches." However, despite the connection between the myth and the revitalization movement of the early 19th century, Schutz concluded that the myth did not originate with the Shawnee Prophet, but was refined and used by him for his purposes. Instead, he argued, it may have been forged several decades earlier, when the Shawnee had been bested in wars with the Iroquois and had undergone a religious upheaval. "I hypothesize that one such [nativistic revitalization] movement in the late 17th century, involved in the wars with

the Iroquois, formulated the structure of Shawnee mythology and other aspects of Shawnee culture as it existed at the earliest known period for which documentary evidence is available" (Schutz 1975:235).

For the purposes of the argument of this study, the conclusions do not need to be more precise. The identification of a series of revitalization movements beginning in the late 17th century and continuing sporadically for decades, culminating in the disastrous war with the United States in 1812, as the occasion for the execution of many "witches" provides a context for the destruction of knowledge among the Shawnee. The major insight into the process offered by Schutz's examination of the myths is that the religious dispute that is the heart of many revitalization movements may take the concrete focus of the elimination of some of the religious leaders, of whatever variety, under the aegis of purification from witchcraft.

One important aspect of the process, which was not discussed by Schutz, is the identity of the witches. Comparison with the religious structures of other Central Algonkian societies opens a fruitful avenue of understanding. The Shawnee witches received their power from the flesh of the Great Serpent, or underwater manitou. Their equivalent in societies such as the Ojibwa, to focus on but one well-recorded group of the Algonkian peoples of the Great Lakes area, was the respected shamanic doctors of the Midē Society, for they, too, derived their powers from the Great Serpent (for one among many sources on the Midē Society, see Smith 1995). If the Shawnee at an earlier period had been participants in the broader religious tradition of shamanism that is rooted in a relationship to the Great Serpent and other Beneath World powers, then they, like their sister Algonkian societies, would have had a significant number of religious leaders who possessed sacred bundles and esoteric knowledge. When the revitalization movements came, those specialists would have become the targets and been reidentified as "witches." Their elimination almost certainly would entail the loss of knowledge important in the society. In this scenario, the Shawnee myth Schutz analyzed would originally have explained the source of the power of a group of respected doctors in Shawnee society, but the myth would have been reworked in more recent times in order to explain the dark origin of a group of witches who were then deemed malevolent and executed as the religious upheavals occurred. Although speculative, this model provides a way of understanding how the destruction of knowledge among the Shawnee could have happened.

### *Cherokee*

That same process has been discussed in regard to Cherokee history. In a provocative article two decades ago, Raymond Fogelson gathered the evidence for the violent extermination of a hereditary group of Cherokee leaders. The information came from 19th-century documentary sources, from early in the century to James

Mooney's ethnographic work at the end, and those sources rested on still earlier oral tradition. Here is a brief summary of the evidence adduced by Fogelson.

In 1809 Major John Norton, an adopted Mohawk, visited the Cherokees to attempt to trace his own Cherokee ancestry. His journal included information gathered from a Cherokee informant who told him of the priestly men who presided over the Green Corn Dance and related rituals. He said that in his boyhood he recalled a New Fire ceremony in which the priest spoke in a barely intelligible dialect, reciting a migration legend and communicating religious information gained by a celestial journey to the Great Spirit. "This person was joined by many others in his office, their numbers greatly increased; their persons became sacred in the opinion of the people. They called themselves Anikanos." Because of their wickedness, however, the people rose up and put them all to death (Klinck and Talman 1970:79–80, in Fogelson 1984:257).

Charles R. Hicks, who became Principal Chief in 1827, earlier gave an oral tradition to John Haywood, who published it in 1823. Hicks claimed that their ancestors had "extirpated" a superior group of priestly people within the tribe because of the attempt by one of them to take the wife of the chief's brother (Haywood 1959:249). In 1826 Hicks wrote down the tradition in a letter to John Ross. He claimed that the Cherokee formerly recognized three ranks within society—the head man of a town (political chiefs?), "the Auh, ne coo tauh, nies," and the common people. The second group was composed of teachers of "Heavenly knowledge from the Creation" who were related to the New Fire, but "this order of men had exercised their offices to an extent that it became disagreeable and oppressive to the people," which led to their annihilation. Hicks speculated on whether the Aní-Kutánî were transformed or replaced by the "Jugglers and Doctors, for it is found in our days that the Jugglers and Doctors possess more knowledge of the Traditions of this nation than any others among the present race" (Letter in Ayer Collection, Newberry Library, quoted in Fogelson 1984:238).

A decade later, in 1836, Dr. J. P. Evans wrote a manuscript about Cherokee life in which he mentioned the destruction of a priestly group, apparently the same tradition as that given by Hicks, and perhaps from him (Evans 1979:5–12; Fogelson 1984:256).

Three decades after that, Dr. D. J. MacGowan read Evans's manuscript and interviewed Chief John Ross, then wrote an article on "Indian Secret Societies" for the American Ethnological Society. He identified the massacred group as a family or clan named "Nicotani," a "mystical religious body, of whom the people stood in great awe." "They became haughty, insolent, over-bearing and licentious to an intolerable degree," and when one of them tried to take the wife of a young warrior, he organized a rebellion against the Nicotani that resulted in their extermination. "Thus perished a hereditary secret society, since which time no hereditary privi-

leges have been tolerated among the Cherokees" (MacGowan 1866:139–140, in Fogelson 1984:256–257).

At the end of the century Mooney mentioned the tradition that the Aní-Kutánî, "a priestly class or hereditary clan," had been "massacred in a public uprising in response to their corruption and sexual impropriety." The legend, Mooney said, was dying out by the time he learned it from his informants. He pursued the story with the Cherokees, and he was given two interpretations of the death of the obscure people—"Aní" means "group," "people," but "Kutánî" was an unknown word even then. One interpretation claimed that the Aní-Kutánî were the remnants of the earlier mound builders who had been superseded by the Cherokees; in this view the story enshrines the final outcome of a two-culture amalgamated society. The second interpretation identified the Aní-Kutánî as a clan or society within the Cherokees that was destroyed "by pestilence or other calamity" (Mooney 1900: 342, 392).

After presenting all the known evidence from the oral tradition, Fogelson was able to determine that the legendary event, if historical, could not have been later than the mid-18th century. He pointed out that the story has some support in a separate tradition of hereditary religious leadership among the Cherokees: "God at first, or at the commencement of their government, appointed a certain man to be at the head of their civil and religious affairs, instructed him in all things relative to his duty, and declared that the office should be hereditary in his family" (1835 letter from Daniel S. Buttrick to John Howard Payne, quoted in Fogelson 1984:259).

Ultimately, whether strictly historical or not, the tradition encapsulates the knowledge of a major change in the religious structures of Cherokee society in the 18th century, Fogelson concluded. "What we seem to perceive, however faintly, is recollection of an ancient religious revitalization movement preserved in memory through legend." Whether or not there was an actual massacre, the Cherokee religious structures changed. "By the end of the [18th] century this highly organized religious system was greatly diminished and mostly a memory. Instead of an organized priesthood, the end of the 18th century witnessed the fragmentation of traditional Cherokee religion and its partial underground survival in the form of widely dispersed and fiercely independent conjurors or medicine men" (Fogelson 1984:258, 260). Religious upheaval in a society, particularly when part of a response to great change caused by pressure from an invading European society, appears to be an occasion for the death of many of the former religious leaders, and thus for the destruction of knowledge.

### *Muskogee*

The religious history of the Creeks—the Muskogee confederacy in the historic period—is a third case of the loss of knowledge. It is frustrating that early observers in the Southeast recorded so little information about the religious practices

of the Muskogee peoples. Although the ongoing religious life of their descendants is rich, attempts to fill in the gaps between contemporary life and the religious patterns of the protohistoric period are to a great extent speculative patchwork endeavors that leave much unexplained. Even more tentative are the attempts to make sense of the archaeological remains of the prehistoric ancestors, especially the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex, and the few European documented observations at first contact.

One of the major reasons for the difficulty is that the evolution of Southeastern religion was not a pattern of steady development, but was instead punctuated by periods of great upheaval in which major changes may have taken place. While it is probably impossible to know the details of such prehistoric upheavals, one important watershed in the Muskogee religious story occurred in the historic period. Joel Martin has provided an interpretation of the Creek War of 1814 that is of great use for this study, for it focuses particularly on the religious dimension of that war among the Muskogee (Martin 1991).

At the beginning of the 19th century the Muskogees had three major classes of religious practitioners: doctors (*alikchaki*), medicine makers (*hilis háyaki*), and knowers (*kithlas*). Some of the *hilis háyaki,* "apparently only males, underwent rigorous training, gained esoteric knowledge, practiced clairvoyance, and could travel to secret realms of reality. They served as the priests or shamans of the town, and one of them might become the high seer, a very powerful person in Muskogee society" (Martin 1991:123). According to William Bartram, the high seer had "communion with powerful invisible spirits. . . . They foretell rain or drought, and pretend to bring rain at pleasure, cure diseases, and exercise witchcraft, invoke or expel evil spirits, and even assume the power of directing thunder and lightning" (Bartram 1791:390, in Martin 1991:123).

The religious tradition of trance and out-of-body travel was strong in the Southeast. French observers recorded a 16th-century description of a Timucua diviner's trance in regard to war (Milanich 1996:178–181, figure 7.1). An 18th-century description of a Mobilian divination is an impressive example of the sort of trance ceremony seen many times by Europeans. An observation made at a Naniaba town around 1755 told of the chief, Fine Teeth, who had divinatory powers. Missing his tobacco, Fine Teeth smoked a pipe with an invisible spirit and learned that one of the warriors had taken the tobacco. Confronted, the warrior confessed, and the tobacco was soon recovered. Fine Teeth, at the request of the French, then brought his otter-skin medicine pouch to life (Swanton 1918:62–63). That sort of religious practitioner was what André Pénicaut also described earlier in the century, for they "make magic such as perambulating the straw-filled skin of an otter dead for more than two years. . . . The ones that do these kinds of tricks—whether magical or otherwise—are esteemed very highly by the other savages. During their illnesses the savages put much faith in their treatments" (McWilliams 1953:64).

Jean-Bernard Bossu gave an important description of an Alabama shamanistic performance: "He enters the [skin] hut completely naked and utters words, understood by no one, in order to invoke the spirit. After that, apparently in a complete trance, he gets up, shouts, and moves about as the sweat pours from every part of his body. The hut shakes, and the spectators think this is evidence of the presence of the spirit." Martin pointed out the similarity between this description and those given for Algonkian religious visionaries to the north, such as the Ojibwa (Bossu 1962:149, in Martin 1991:123 and note). This divination ceremony of the "shaking tent" is widely known in the Great Lakes region, and it has recently been interpreted as having an astronomical element (Conway 1992). If the parallel to the Southeastern forms holds to that extent, then there is a strong hint at a body of shamanistic lore about which nothing is known from the documents.

Martin has argued in his study of the Creek War of 1814 that from the Muskogee side, the conflict is best understood as a revitalization movement (see also Wright 1989:15–84). The case he presents has two different groups of religious practitioners as the major players. On the one hand there were the traditional religious figures just presented, and on the other hand a new group of interpreters—prophets—appeared just prior to the outbreak of hostilities. One traditionalist was Captain Sam Isaacs, from Coosaudee. He was a shaman whose vision focused on his receiving instruction from the Great Serpent, the master of the Beneath World, who made him "acquainted with future events and all other things necessary for a man to know in this life" (Nunez 1958:149, quoted in Martin 1991:124). Martin said that, "For a while in 1812–13, he was widely regarded as the Upper Muskogees' greatest shaman" (Martin 1991:124).

Ranged against the traditionalists was the new prophetic movement that began among the Alabamas, but grew to incorporate many of the towns of the Muskogee confederacy. They had been influenced by the religious movement and the political plans of the Shawnees. Tecumseh and some of the prophets of the Shawnee revitalization movement headed by his brother Tenskwatawa had visited the Southeastern peoples in 1811 to urge them to join the movement and the impending uprising against the Americans. Although they went home empty-handed, as far as the official councils were concerned, they left behind a number of Muskogees who were eager to become followers of the new movement. Over the next few years some of them made the journey to Ohio to visit and learn from the Shawnee prophets, returning with new visions. Since Isaacs was among them, it appears that the growing dispute among them was over the question of how to institutionalize the Muskogee version of the revitalization movement.

A good illustration of the growing tension was the different interpretations of the earthquake of 1811–12. Tecumseh, and the Muskogee prophets after him, said that it was a sign of the Great Spirit's displeasure with the acquiescent behavior of the Indians and the rapacity of the Americans. Isaacs, however, interpreted it as

the movement of the Great Serpent who was releasing new power for religious renewal, but of the more traditional variety. The religious tradition rooted in the Beneath World was thus ranged against the Above World basis of the new prophetic movement, and it took only the fuse of politics to light the powder keg. The fuse came in the summer of 1812 when the traditional leaders, including Isaacs, acceded to the American demands that the Creeks execute some warriors who had killed some white settlers. One of the executions was even done in the square grounds of a white peace town, breaking the traditional rule of sanctuary. "Younger leaders came to the fore, bitterly attacking Isaacs, the town chiefs who had approved the executions, and the warriors who had performed them" (Martin 1991:125).

As the verbal attacks on the traditionalists mounted, Isaacs was identified as a religious leader who as a shaman had taken the step always feared by the people—his vision source, the Great Serpent/Tie Snake, was a "diabolical spirit" whose power had been used by Isaacs to injure and destroy people. Martin interpreted the argument this way:

> Because [Isaacs] consorted with an aquatic spirit, the critical shamans may well have identified Isaacs as one of the highly feared class of spiritual beings known as water cannibals, dangerous killer beings that resided on the bottoms of deep rivers and ate their human victims. . . . Where the serpent belonged to the Lower World, [Breathmaker, the inspiration of the prophets] was associated with the Upper World. The serpent was morally ambivalent. It was a symbol of raw creativity, and it was a source of chaos and conjury. In contrast, the Breathmaker was the good spirit that "extends above all things and . . . hath created them." [Martin 1991:127]

The outcome of the religious dispute was the assassination of Isaacs and four others of his party by the prophets, after which they called for similar treatment of all those who had participated in the American-inspired executions. The resistance of the traditionalists hardened, and the religio-political dispute between two groups of religious visionaries expanded into civil war within the Muskogee confederacy. When some white Americans joined in the violence against the prophets, the hostilities expanded to involve the United States, culminating in the pitched battles of the Creek War of 1814. Martin emphasized that the "Red Sticks" adhered to the principles of their revitalization movement throughout the war, cleansing the Muskogee world of American influences by destroying goods from the white man's world. In the process they also altered the traditional Muskogee religious structure with such innovations as creating a new "pure" town, "Holy Ground," and introducing a new dance borrowed from the Shawnee.

In the end, the prophets even insisted on magical protection from American bullets, and several climactic battles—Holy Ground and Tohopeka, in particular—

were disasters. Despite the fact that many of the Creek towns supported the United States, the outcome was catastrophic for the Muskogee. On the side of the prophets, approximately 1,800 warriors, women, and children died. Around 2,000 fled to Florida, where they became part of the Seminole resistance against the United States (Martin 1991:163). There is no estimate of the number of the traditionalists, both religious and political leaders, who had been killed, and it may no longer be possible to make that assessment. The United States concluded the war by demanding and getting from its victorious traditionalist allies some eight million acres of land as reparations. A little more than two decades later, the Removal brought the Muskogee way of life in the Southeast to a halt.

## Some Reflections on Lost Lore

Contemporary Native Americans often find it disturbing that historians of religion probe into the traces of earlier forms of what is to modern practitioners a vibrant religious pattern. They feel, probably correctly, that dispassionate examination of the sacred is disrespectful and dangerous. This reaction is exacerbated when those probings produce suggestions that the present practices are not quite the same as those of the ancestors. As scholars of Christian history and the Judeo-Christian Bible have often discovered, diachronic study of living religious patterns can be extremely upsetting to contemporary worshipers. It is in the nature of most religions, after all, to think of the wisdom of the religion as eternal, unchanging, not subject to historical forces, and the current generation wishes to believe that it possesses that eternal wisdom in full measure. Devout participants are usually strongly wedded to synchronic reality, while historians of religion tend to value diachronic understanding. There is no reason to think that Native Americans are disposed to tolerate the diachronic examination of their own religion with any greater equanimity than members of Christian churches.

Yet the scholarly endeavors will inevitably continue, and not because of any disrespect or hostility to current religion. The goal is to understand the processes by which religious patterns change and thereby to imagine particular religious patterns, especially those of oral traditional peoples, in their full historical panorama. This goal holds true for the Eastern Woodlands and the Southeast, because archaeological evidence such as the extraordinary explosion of art in Mississippian times suggests that the diachronic picture of Native American religion, if filled out, would reveal an extraordinary richness the synchronic present cannot offer by itself. That richness, unfortunately, is hidden in lost lore.

This brief chapter has looked at three possibilities of the loss of esoteric knowledge through time in the Eastern Woodlands. All three posit struggles of worldview and religious power between groups within the societies. Although external forces, most likely European pressures toward acculturation, may have triggered

the religious upheavals, the revitalization movements had an internal focus. The societal purification process included the destruction of former religious leaders, who were reidentified as witches and vilified as the source of the troubles within the society.

In Anthony F. C. Wallace's classic formulation of the dynamics of revitalization movements, he noted the problem of witchcraft only incidentally, as one of the characteristics of Native American movements. In his primary example, the Iroquois Handsome Lake movement, he pointed out that one of the responses to "sociocultural disorganization" was an increase in the fear of witches, and that among the elements of the new "code" was the stamping out of witchcraft. In his clarification of the generalized "stages" of the process, Wallace noted in the "Period of Cultural Distortion" (Stage III) that "scapegoating" was one of the institutionalized efforts to oppose the destructive forces. In the "Period of Revitalization" (Stage IV), he argued, the creation of a new religious standard will include the defense of the new movement against the supporters of the status quo, by force if necessary. "The general tendency is for codes to harden gradually, and for the tone of the movement to become increasingly nativistic and hostile both toward nonparticipating fellow members of society, who will ultimately be defined as 'traitors,' and toward 'national enemies'" (Wallace [1970]1997:337–339).

Those few dispassionate comments in his model of the dynamic process may subsume a great deal of violence and death. As Martin characterized the step,

> In the Lenape, Shawnee, and Muskogee revolts, prophets verbally and sometimes physically attacked the indigenous insiders who had accepted an Anglo-American understanding of civilization and were imposing it on their own people. . . . Within the millenarian movement, these chiefs were for the first time unmasked and named "malicious enemies." They were not scapegoats randomly selected but a class of internal enemies identified through critical vision. Violent attacks on these enemies appeared early and ferociously in both the Shawnee and the Muskogee revolts and relatively late and on a small scale in the Lenape prophetic movement. [Martin 1991:181]

Those "enemies," traditional religionists, were the bearers of the esoteric knowledge of the society. In the destruction of the shamans, and in the case of the Creek War the prophets as well, the societies ran a great risk of the permanent breaking of transmission chains, with the concomitant loss of specialized knowledge.

These three examples are not the only ones known. If this model can be taken as a valid description of what may have happened to societies undergoing revitalization, then a list of such movements becomes a chronicle of the probable destruction of tribal traditions. Martin gave a quick list: "Before the Muskogee revolt of 1812–14, prophetic movements affected the Shawnees [Tenskwatawa] in 1805, the

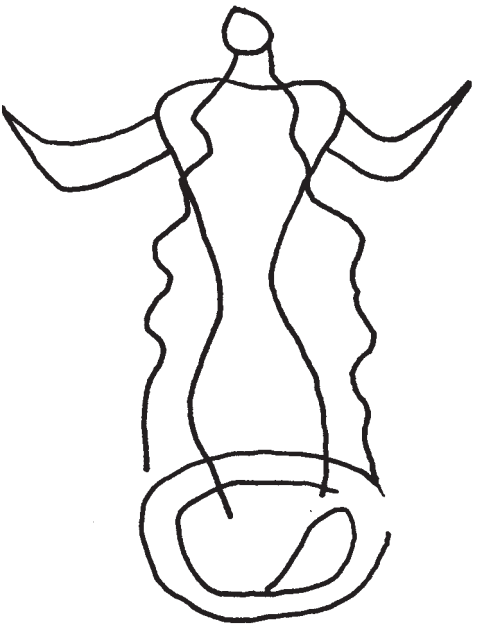
Iroquois in 1799, the Lenapes and Ottawas in 1763, the Cherokees in 1760, the Yamasees in 1715, the Tuscaroras in 1711, the Sewees in 1680, and the Powhatans in 1644 and 1622" (Martin 1991:177). There are undoubtedly other tribes and events that should be added to the list of possibilities. For example, a myth recorded from the Miami suggests that they belong on the list:

> [Members of the society grew jealous of Cold Feet because of his power. They were not able to destroy him.] At length they found from his son, who was also a member, that the old man had a secret med[i]cine bag, sewed in his clothes. They possessed themselves of this, and then proposed to the old fellow a trial of their strength at lifting a great rock. When he had taken it up, they caused him to fall, & the weight of his burden crushed him to death. Then they burned his body, and on the following morning nothing was seen in the ashes, but an immense number of toads, lizards and such small reptiles. The Son, who was much incensed at the treatment of his father, prepared a grand medicine, by which he destroyed all the conspirators. As they were the principals of their respective bands, and the remaining members were not fully empowered, the Society has not been so formidable since that event, and they have entirely lost the power of transformation. [Kinietz 1938:85–86]

Consider the implications of a passing remark like this one by James Adair about the Chickasaw during the smallpox epidemic of 1738: "All the magic and prophetic [diviners] broke their old consecrated physic-pots and threw away all the other pretended holy things they had for physical use, imagining they had lost their divine power by being polluted" (Adair 1930:245).

Scholars in recent years have begun to fill out the diachronic picture of Native American societies as they changed in the process of coping with the challenges that came to them from the European presence (see, e.g., Smith 1987). One of those changes was the loss of leadership, both by epidemic disease and by internal conflict. A concomitant change, it appears, was the degree to which traditional knowledge was lost, but the dimensions of that loss seem impossible to measure. This brief study, however, argues that such changes did in fact occur and that they are quite understandable as part of the dynamic process of revitalization. Such a hypothesis goes far to explain the disjunction between some of the archaeological realities, such as prehistoric art, and Native American tribal life of the recent historic period. This disjunction can only be viewed with sorrow; so much has been lost.

It is perhaps fitting to end this chapter with a Native American view. In the late 19th century, some Ojibwa informants helped W. J. Hoffman interpret some of the symbols on Midē birch-bark scrolls. One of the images, glossed as "Almost crying



1.2. An image from an Ojibwa Midē scroll (Hoffman 1891:203).

because the medicine is lost," looked like the illustration here (Figure 1.2). Hoffman's note clarified what he learned about the drawing from his informants: "The lines extending downward from the eye signifies weeping; the circle beneath the figure is the place where the 'medicine' is supposed to exist. The idea of 'lost' signifies that some information has been forgotten through death of those who possessed it" (Hoffman 1891:203). The religious practitioners themselves clearly know about the problem of lost lore, and they weep.

# 2
# A Maze of Maize Myths

In 1951 Gudmund Hatt published a wide-ranging study, "The Corn Mother in America and in Indonesia" (Hatt 1951). It was a masterful survey of agricultural myths from three continents, North and South America and Asia. A quarter of a century later I discovered the article as I was concluding my own study of the distribution of corn myths in North America, with a primary focus on the Southeast (Lankford 1975). I was startled to find that Hatt's assessment of the maize myth complex seemed quite different from my own, with somewhat different conclusions. Where I found a pastiche of mythic themes and evidence of variation and adaptation over centuries, he found a major North American divinity with roots in Mesoamerica, South America, and Indonesia.

Perplexed about the difference in our readings, I published some of the material about the Southeast (Lankford 1987:143–158), but I left the problem of parsing the maize lore of North American Indians in the limbo of unsolved problems. Since that time Hatt's study has seldom been cited, despite the importance of some of his conclusions and suggestions. Why does Gudmund Hatt's study seem unpersuasive? Seeking an answer to that question involves looking at the method and rationale of comparative myth study. That seems a worthwhile investigation, whether or not the outcome sheds any new light on the maize complex itself.

One way to come at the problem is the classic dichotomy of lumping and splitting as a way of approaching arrays of data. Lumpers seek the underlying unity of the material and therefore tend to dismiss the evidence of differences in order to highlight the basic agreement. Splitters seek to identify the number of separate groupings and explain them, at the risk of missing the unifying factors. Neither is

the "right" way to look at data, of course, for each produces insights. It may be that one of the safeguards against one-sided skewing of the interpretation is to be conscious of a tendency to follow the lumping or splitting path in order to be aware of the need to compensate and find a balance.

The dichotomy is illustrated in Hatt's approach to the maize complex. The title of Hatt's essay indicates his path: "*The* Corn Mother." Before reading the study, the reader already knows that Hatt will conclude that there is such an international divinity embedded in the materials. The label may also spark the suspicion that Hatt may have been guided by that conviction in the course of the investigation. It comes as no surprise to find this conclusion: "*The Corn Mother myth* may belong to the world's oldest agricultural folklore—very much older than the influence of Hinduistic culture in Indonesia. The immolation type of the Corn Mother myth is older than the flight type. And element (5) [the motif of spying on the woman as she produced maize from her body, with subsequent revulsion], represented in the outskirts of the area of distribution, is probably one of the original elements of the myth" (Hatt 1951:908, emphasis added).

Such a clear divinity is in the spirit of a classic work of Mesoamerican iconography, Paul Schellhas's 1904 study of Maya divinities. Schellhas undertook the task of finding the basic visual identifiers of divinities in three Maya codices. He waded through all the variations and attached motifs to find the basic characteristics of individual gods and demonstrated the range of ways in which they were portrayed in the graphic materials. In order to avoid prejudging their identification with gods known from ethnographic sources, he assigned them letter labels, such as "God K." Even though the names of many of them are now known, thanks to progress in Mayan iconography and linguistics, Mesoamericanists still find the Schellhas labels familiar and useful. To avoid the incautious use of this method as a general technique, however, it is important to recall the limitations of Schellhas's study: the gods were derived from three graphic sources from a single culture. The comparisons are of the work of three theologian/artists of the same cultural tradition, and they were probably fairly contemporary.

The contrast between this very limited study and Hatt's project is great, for Hatt was studying the myths (with a very great chronological range) of three continents (a very broad geographical stretch). While Schellhas could reasonably expect to find agreement, Hatt had every reason to anticipate little more than diversity, given the expanse of space and time. That he found "the Corn Mother" is therefore unexpected, exciting, and troubling. If his study is correct, it is a very important conclusion—that a coherent divinity can be so clearly discernible under the circumstances.

The basic issue raised by Hatt's "Corn Mother" is how to know that myths about two or more gods are describing the same god. What are the standards for

equating them? Must they have the same name? Must their appearance be the same? Must the ritual in which they are involved be the same or closely related? Perhaps most importantly, must they have the same function in the society? Must all four of these requirements pertain, or is any combination of two or three of them sufficient to indicate an identity of two or more divinities? If they share just one of the characteristics, are they the same figure? These are not idle questions, for in some of Hatt's cases, not all the mythic females even share an interest in *maize,* particularly some from Asia who were responsible for rice. It appears that looking for "*The* Corn Mother" is a problematic—and somewhat biased—quest.

To turn the problem around, what would it take to make Hatt's study persuasive? If the basic procedural flaw is that the presentation of the evidence does not justify the conclusions, as I believe, then one answer is to build the argument sequentially, so that the justification is apparent at every level. The "Corn Mother" should be clearly delineated for North America, then that evidence should be shown to be connected to Mesoamerican materials reflecting the same divinity. This might produce a coherent New World "Corn Mother" who can be reasonably compared with the evidence from Asia. That sort of building of the argument would demonstrate a delineation of the divinities at every broadening of the geographical scope, so that the consistency is apparent and the presentation becomes persuasive. This is the old problem of tracing the process of diffusion of myth and belief.

Will an approach to the same materials from a splitting perspective provide an interpretation of the data that is any clearer or more persuasive? It seems worth the effort to reexamine the evidence, if only to test the possibilities of further insights into the process of comparative myth analysis. This chapter will concentrate only on North American myths related to maize, with a few side trips to the south.

In the splitting approach, a major task is to separate the myth corpus into types, themes, and motifs, with the goal of identifying diffusion patterns. Such patterns are to be expected, for one hypothesis that can be posed at the outset is that maize has arrived at different places in the northern continent at different times. Two facts are believed to characterize the history of maize as a cultigen: it was not native in North America north of Mexico or an evolutionary result of northern horticulture, and it is so fragile a species that it cannot survive without human cultivation. Maize came to northern North America. Bruce Smith has summarized current thinking about its advent.

> Most likely because of a climatic adaptation to northern growing seasons, this [8-row] variety of maize dominated, to the apparently almost total exclusion of other varieties, the post A.D. 1000 agricultural systems of the northern latitudes. . . . It is likely that one or more long growing season varieties of maize had been introduced into the Southeast prior to A.D. 500, and

> that subsequent, perhaps relatively frequent, arrivals of new varieties, either overland from the Southwest or northern Mexico, or across the Caribbean, contributed to an expanding gene pool and the development of a greater diversity of indigenous cultivar forms (Fritz 1990). . . . [T]here is still much that is not known concerning the identity, developmental history, relative importance, and geographical and temporal distributions of different varieties of prehistoric eastern maize. [Smith 1992:294]

If these hypotheses are correct, then maize must have arrived as an import through some human mechanism, probably trade or gifts, from farther south where maize is known to have existed earlier, and it probably happened more than one time. Whether in trade or as a gift, it seems unlikely that maize would have been treated simply as a commodity. It would probably have been accompanied by origin myths containing instructions on how to cultivate it and how to celebrate it in rituals. Those rituals and myths should bear the stamp of the earlier owners of the maize, the donor culture, and thus provide evidence of diffusion.

In the attempt to reconstruct the path of mythic diffusion, the first step is to determine conceptual categories for organizing the large corpus of maize myths. One layout that seems to work, albeit with some ambiguities at points, is a three-category approach. The first category is one that was not recognized by Hatt, it seems—a minimalist response to the arrival of maize. This group consists of preexisting myths that appear to have been adapted by the local society to accommodate its new cultigen or even its new agricultural pattern. The emphasis here is largely on maize as a food that can be received. Such a possibility seems realistic, for many societies may have had horticultural myths about its reception of other important plants—beans, squashes, or tobacco, for example—and would have been more interested in folding maize into the mix rather than creating a special conceptual niche for the additional cultigen.

The second category consists of instructional stories, lore about the cultivation and care of maize that may have been part of an original maize myth package or may have developed locally as maize became integrated into tribal life. The third category is the one that interested Hatt the most, for it contains the narratives he interpreted as dealing with "the Corn Mother." It consists of primary myths of the origin of maize, stories that answer the questions of where it came from, what its nature is, and how it fits into the culture's understanding of the cosmos. Hidden in this category is the hypothesis that some or all of these myths arrived de novo, as stories that were not known before the arrival of the maize and its myths. A primary characteristic of most of the material in the third group is an emphasis on the personification of maize. These three categories will serve as an organizational framework for the presentation of the evidence: various myths that seem to have

been adapted to accommodate maize, secondary myths about maize culture and experience, and primary myths focused on the origin of maize.

## Group 1: Maize as a Commodity

The first category of maize myths is focused on preexisting stories to which maize was added. These myths treat maize simply as a substance, as opposed to a divinity or other such personified image. Although some historical legends of the arrival of maize from neighboring tribes have survived, for most peoples the account is rooted in mythic origins in the primordial past. Maize is something that can be possessed or bestowed as a gift by someone, but the maize itself is just the plant or seeds. This image rests upon an ancient concept in Native America, that it is possible for persons to "own" such commodities. In primordial times even the water was owned by someone, as were important trees and plants. There were owners of the animals and plants, all together and by species. This belief led to two secondary concepts that appear frequently in the myth collections: the various owners have the power to give the commodities to others (thus leading to a religious practice of supplication, asking for gifts) and the power to withhold their commodities (a situation that produces heroic efforts to steal commodities from the "hoarder"). Both concepts have produced a large number of texts describing these possibilities, both primordially and in contemporary life. The common theme that someone hoards animals and they must be stolen if humans are to benefit, for example, is expressed in the motif of the "hoarded game" (A1412), which has virtually universal distribution among the hunting tribes (i.e., across the northern part of the continent, down into California, across the Plateau region and throughout the Eastern Woodlands) (Thompson 1929:292–293, note 75). Stith Thompson included the hoarded plants as an addendum to this list rather than in a separate motif. He found that the hoarded game was found in every area of North America, but that the theme of the hoarded plants was concentrated in the Eastern Woodlands: Iroquois, Menomini, Micmac, Cherokee, and Caddo.

Åke Hultkrantz and other students of comparative religion have identified the concept of the "owner of the animals" as one of the basic structural elements of the worldview of hunting cultures around the globe, and Hultkrantz has argued that "such dominant complexes of ideas as the belief in the guardian spirit, totemism and the culture hero can only be understood against the background of the concept of the owner of nature" (Hultkrantz 1961:55). He suggested that the owner of the animals is a springboard for the development of ideas about the ownership of other commodities important in the economic life of a tribe, a step important for this study. "There are, naturally, also other 'guardians' or 'owners' in North America than the animal guardian. The plants have their guardians, as have also places—and so has man, for the Supreme Being is, of course, in principle a guard-

ian or owner of men. . . . Among the agrarian peoples the plant guardian, as a rule the corn goddess, naturally occupies a prominent place" (Hultkrantz 1961:57).

One of the mythic motifs that catches up the theme of a plant-hoarding Power is the "inexhaustible food supply" (D1031), which is found in widespread distribution, at least in its most general categorization (Thompson 1929:335–336, note 210). It is often expressed in an episode about a magic pot, its misuse, and the consequences. E. A. Smith recorded two Iroquois versions of it in her early collection. A boy noticed that his uncle seldom ate anything, so he observed him secretly. "He saw him go to a hole and take out a kettle and a few grains of corn, which he put into it. Then he took a magic wand and tapped the kettle till it grew big; then he ate some corn and again tapped the kettle till it became small once more." When his uncle had gone, the boy tried it himself, but he put in too much and his uncle caught him. In this version the uncle is angry, but he explains that witches hoard all the rest of the corn, whereupon the boy in standard heroic fashion procures more corn from them for his uncle (Smith 1883:96–97). Smith's second version differs in some details, but the major difference is that it is chestnuts and not corn that is the focus (Smith 1883:97–98). Other collections agree with this inconsistency (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:147–151, #24; 187–191, #36; 199–223, #41; 151 note; 501–519, #109; 572–586, #117). The chestnuts come from a magic tree that is guarded by witches whose number and character vary from tale to tale, and the supply of food/tobacco cannot be renewed. The youth goes on a quest to procure the exhausted item, and the remaining episodes in the collection vary with the usual complexity of heroic narratives. What is significant here for our study is that the predominant testimony is about the origin of chestnuts (and/or tobacco), which leads to the conclusion that the maize texts are later adaptations of the earlier story (but see Parker 1910:38 for a different opinion).

The story is not restricted to the Iroquois. The Menomini have what is clearly the same episode, but with some significant differences. As with the Iroquois, the uncle hoarded the corn, warning his nephew never to open the mysterious bundle. The boy opened it, took the corn and put it in the coals, where it exploded into popcorn. The uncle returned in a rage, beat the boy and threw him out into the snowstorm summoned by him. After ten days the boy arose and slew him. "When the old man was dead, the youth inherited his effects, including the corn, which the old man had selfishly hidden away from mankind, but which the nephew gave to the world" (Skinner and Satterlee 1915:155). Here the pot has turned into a bundle, and the uncle (rather than the witches on the island) is revealed as the one who hoarded the corn from mankind. His death is therefore portrayed as the act of the culture hero against the powerful "giant"—that is, the being who has power to control the winter storm. The Menomini maize tale is characteristic for the area, for in attempting to survey the folklore of the Central Algonkians (particularly the Cree, Ojibwa, Menomini, Potawatomi, and Ottawa), C. M. Skinner listed 12

"stereotyped properties" of the corpus as a whole; among them was "the inexhaustible kettle" (Skinner 1911:98). The Menomini tradition differs from the Iroquois in that the uncle is himself the one who hoards the maize, but the basic principle is the same: there is someone who owns the plants and withholds them from mankind.

The same principle is found among the Caddo, although it is somewhat obscured by a curious ambivalence concerning the major old-woman figure among the Caddoan tribes. In one text, for example, "Great-Father" entrusts all seeds to Snake-Woman, who with her sons distributes them to mankind (Dorsey 1905:18, #7). In another text she is the hoarder, depriving rather than distributing. The hoarded item is pecans rather than maize, though (Dorsey 1905:52, #27). Here the motif of the magic pot is missing, but the hoarding of food supplies is central to the story.

The Pawnee—or at least the Skidi—follow the Caddo tradition. In one tale "Spider-Woman and her people control seeds. When people visit her for seeds they are challenged and killed. In contest they jump up, storms are called, and they are frozen" (Dorsey 1906:233–236, #73; 1904b:39–44, #8).

The motifs involved in this complex are also present in South America. The inexhaustible pot is found in a closely related form among the Warao, for a man eats privately from his magic corn pot until his sons discover it and destroy its power, to their father's consternation (Roth 1915:303). The South American great food tree is recognizable in the chestnut trees that are guarded by an "owner," and the island of witches from which tobacco must be stolen resembles the South American island of women popularly known as "Amazons" (Roth 1915:335). This island peopled by women is also found in a Southeastern legend of the women who live on an island in the Okeefenokee Swamp (Swanton 1929:83, Creek #89).

The hoarding theme is frequently coupled with an account of heroic journeys to wrest the hoarded commodity from the owner, and the result is the establishment of the present order with human access to the released animals, water, or plants. It is an interesting fact, though, that the quest to seize the hoarded plants rarely includes maize, an omission that probably indicates the more recent time of the arrival of corn or its importance in tribal subsistence strategies.

## Journey to the Home of the Owner of Maize

The quest to seize the maize from the hoarder has a more popular benign parallel in the quest by a supplicant, humbly petitioning the owner for the gift of seeds. Both types are found in Iroquois myths. Two creation epic texts from the Onondaga and the Mohawk include the Twins' journey to the lodge of their father as a separate episode. Sapling, the benevolent twin, goes into the water to retrieve an arrow lost when he missed a bird; there he finds his father's lodge, where he is given

a bow and arrow and corn (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:188). The episode is followed by one in which the other boy and their grandmother interfere with the abundance of corn brought by Sapling.

A journey to the lodge of a benefactor is a common mythic metaphor for a vision "journey." The northern hunting cultures had a standard religious framework for handling innovation. Any new ritual or lore could be introduced into the tribe's life by means of a vision (for a good summary and bibliography, see Underhill 1965, esp. chapter 10; Irwin 1994). At the folkloric level, the vision quest provided a smooth process for the incorporation of new lore. We should therefore see the vision pattern as a structural framework independent of specific motifs. A Menomini text placed the arrival of maize in a chief's vision "from one of the powers above" who told him to go to war; after setting out with his war party, he received another vision telling him to go to a certain place, where he found corn growing. "'Why this is corn,' said the mikao. 'This is what we shall call "Wapi'min"' (white kernel). . . . It was good, so they decided to bring home some seed, and this is what they did. Some took five ears, others ten ears of corn. When they got home they said, 'This coming spring we will plant some of this in the ground so it can grow.' This is the old story that our people tell. *Squashes were received by us in the same way.* They were found by another man at another time" (Skinner and Satterlee 1915:446–447, emphasis added).

Elements of the owner of plants theme are present in tales of the Old Woman of the Plains tribes. The Mandan, Hidatsa, and Cheyenne, in particular, see her as the owner of agricultural plants, and the magic pot is standard equipment for her. One of the keys to her nature lies in the owner-of-nature complex, for despite the different garb she is given, the element of her possession of plants betrays the ownership tradition with which we are presently concerned.

The episode seems most strongly concentrated among the northern Siouans. Since this material has been ably presented by G. F. Will and G. E. Hyde, only a brief summary is needed here (Will and Hyde 1917:210–236). Mandan mythology, which tends toward lengthy compound cycles, includes the journey of two men to the lodge of the Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies, although the corn gift is excluded (Bowers 1950:197; Beckwith 1938). The Hidatsa information on Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies closely parallels that of the Mandan. Her dwelling has a distinctive description: "she has taken up residence far to the south on a large island where she cares for her gardens and is guarded by four water monsters. . . . [T]he spirits of vegetation, particularly the corn and other garden things, spend the winter with her, coming south with the waterbirds in the fall and returning with them in the spring" (Bowers 1963:336) In the Mandan-Hidatsa tradition the figure of the Old Woman is remarkably strong and figures in a great deal of their myth and ritual, even though the pure vision-quest journey is not given. The focus of her story is

on her relationship with Grandson, and their myth, according to Alfred Bowers, is "the most widely related and discussed" of all the Mandan-Hidatsa lore (Bowers 1963:340).

The Cheyenne tradition is similar, and it seems quite stable, for it varies only in details from text to text. The shortest one gives the basic story of the visit of their two culture heroes to an old woman in a spring, who gave them access to both buffalo and maize (Kroeber 1900:163; Grinnell 1907:169–194; Voth 1912:45; Powell 1969:26). The journey to the Old Woman's lodge in the spring is, of course, in the mainstream of the motif under discussion.

Among the Caddoan-speaking tribes, the Pawnee have the clearest representation of the journey to the lodge. The sole text from the Kitkehahki band has elements of the Buffalo-Wife tale without corn elements, but it has been put in the context of the cosmological myth: a man follows a woman who turns into a buffalo, and she leads him to a lodge in the west in which four men sit; the result of the encounter is the killing of the buffalo (Dorsey 1906:19–21, #2). In a Chaui text the starving boy has to cross a wide stream before meeting the old men who bestow corn (Weltfish 1937). In another Chaui text, a boy in time of famine is led by the moon (shown as a female of four different ages, presumably representing the lunar phases) to a cave in a spring; a succession of visits produces gifts of games, information on how to construct earth-lodges, corn and meat, the buffalo and a sacred bundle, and seeds for planting. The cave then disappears and the spring goes dry (Dorsey 1906:21–28, #3). Skidi texts are similar, although the details differ. Various heroes go to a lodge where they are given seeds, rituals, and games by the four men, identified as the weather-powers (Dorsey 1906:44–46, #9; 1904d:20–23, #3).

The Arikara preserve only the appearance of a boy with a sacred bundle that contains corn, among other things. The boy functioned as culture hero during the migration, but the source of the bundle is never explained, except that it was given by "the Father," and the corn in the bundle is referred to as "Mother" (Grinnell 1893:124–125). A later note makes it clear that "Mr. Grinnell did not hear that the people were created by the Mother Corn, but the Arikara constantly expressed their reverence for her who gave them all their culture, taught them how to make kettles of clay, knives from stone in the ground, and how to make bows and arrows" (unsigned "Note" in JAF 22 (1909):90–92).

The Caddo creation account is equally terse; the first man disappears, then returns with seeds for planting; no explanation is given (Dorsey 1905:7–13, #1). A separate narrative, however, says that, "The Great Father gave the seeds of all growing things to Snake-Woman." She and her two sons "traveled all over the world, giving six seeds of each kind to every person" (Dorsey 1905:18, #7) The only journey to a lodge in the Wichita lore is by the first man to the Sun's lodge in the east, where he determines day and night by killing a deer; corn is not involved (Dorsey 1904c:25–29, #1). The Caddoan tradition of the gift of agricultural seeds thus seems

focused largely in the Pawnee/Arikara mythology, with only faint reflections in the lore of the other Caddoan speakers.

Perhaps the most obvious way in which a tribe may account for the coming of corn is to attribute it to the culture-hero who was already understood to be responsible for the other cultural phenomena important in the life of the tribe. The minimal accommodation would consist of simply adding corn to the list of culture gifts. Thus the Ojibwa have also preserved a tradition of primeval times, when humans were ignorant and poverty-stricken. "Then the spirit of the creator sent a man to teach them. The man was called *ockabe'wis* (messenger). . . . Tobacco and corn were given them, but it was the *ockabe'wis* who taught them how to use them" (Densmore 1929:98). Here there is reference to the creation, the situation that prevailed even before the coming of the more familiar culture hero; "this was long before Winabojo. . . . After a while Winabojo was born, but he had to do as the natives did." This appears to be a relic of an earlier explanation; the Ojibwa and neighboring tribes had the far more popular tale of Mondamin to describe the advent of corn (see below).

There is a structural similarity of the journey episodes to the widespread "Orpheus" and "journey to the sky" myths, in which one or more humans travel to the sky where they receive gifts (see Lankford 2007b:chapter 8). There are several such texts that specifically include the acquisition of maize. In the far Northeast, the Micmacs have incorporated the corn element more integrally with the tale. A father and his friends journey to the "Land of Souls" to attempt to recover the father's recently dead son. When they arrive they are forced to gamble with Papkootparout, the Keeper of Souls. "The Indians staked their bows and arrows, their spears and clubs that they had brought from their land, and Papkootparout staked the seeds of corn and tobacco and fruit, the food of souls; and the game began. They tossed the little black and the white bone dice again and again; again and again; until at last the Indians were victors. Papkootparout gave them the seeds of corn and tobacco and told them to plant them in their land of Gaspé" (LeClerq 1910:210; cited in Robertson 1969:44).

Both of these tales have been discussed by Åke Hultkrantz in the wider context of the Orpheus tradition. He sees the motif of the heavenly gifts as forming two groups: the texts from California to the Great Lakes usually involve the teaching of ritual dances, while those from the Southwest and the Eastern Woodlands focus on the gift of plants and seeds (Hultkrantz 1957:154–156). As to the age of the narrative, he arrived at the conclusion that the North American Orpheus tradition arose out of the shamanistic experiences of hunting cultures and antedates the arrival of maize and the development of agrarian economies (Hultkrantz 1957:230). It therefore constitutes yet another folkloristic context into which the maize element was inserted.

The northern instance of this insertion is something of a puzzle, for the Mic-

macs have always been north of the corn-growing region and were at most marginal farmers. Yet they have pointedly specified corn as the gift of the Keeper of Souls, and the other Micmac text refers to their Green Corn Dance. Hultkrantz sheds no light on this phenomenon, merely noting that "Both Wallis and Muller [also] find the statement of the tradition curious" (Hultkrantz 1957:269).

Texts of the journey to the sky have been collected from the Alabama, the Koasati, the Choctaw, the Yuchi, and the Cherokee (Swanton 1929:139–141, Alabama #20; 189–190, Koasati #26; Choctaw: Bushnell 1909:35; Yuchi: Speck 1909:144; Cherokee: Mooney 1900:252–254, #5). The first of the three Alabama versions in John Swanton explicitly includes the gift of corn:

> Then they asked him for some seed. After they had teased for a considerable time he said, "I will give it to you when you are ready to go. You shall start tomorrow." He made them lie down and after they had lain down and slept they awoke at their old home. The seeds were lying by the crowns of their heads. (These are said to have been seeds of corn, watermelons, and beans.)
>
> "The mother of my interpreter told him that men got the first seed (corn) from God in the sky." [Swanton 1929:141]

Adding maize to a list of gifts is a simple change to make, and the fact that only two texts that contain it now survive does not necessarily indicate that it was always a marginal tradition, for it may have been replaced by the much more important and intricate maize legends yet to be discussed.

It seems clear that in the various texts—journey to lodge, journey to sky, journey to the realm of the dead, journey to the land of corn—there is a variety of destination and identity of the person visited. The basic structure seems to be the quest for gifts from an "owner," shown both in the benign supplication form and its dark side, the assault on the hoarder to seize the commodity. The theme appears to be more important than the particular commodities made available for humankind. Thus a quest for an ancestral myth, other than the "hoarded game" appropriate for hunting cultures, does not offer a useful outcome. The theme alone suffices to express the basic religious concept of gratitude for the sources of human life, and maize is but one of them.

## Gift: The Beautiful Young Woman

Farther to the east, the image of a female figure connected with the gift of maize is somewhat different. That figure is a beautiful young woman who was not identified by name or as a personification of corn. In 1743 John Bartram visited Mount Toppin, near Preble, New York. He later noted this Iroquois legend concerning it. "An Indian (whose wife had eloped) came hither to hunt, and with his skins to pur-

chase another; here he espied a young squaw alone at the hill; going to her and enquiring where she came from, he received for answer that she came from heaven to provide sustenance for the poor Indians, and that if he came to the place twelve months after he should find food there. He came accordingly and found corn, squashes, and tobacco, which were propagated from thence and spread through the country, and this silly story is religiously held for truth among them" (cited by Beauchamp 1922:60). W. M. Beauchamp noted that he had another text "from a Seneca source twenty years later" (Beauchamp 1922:61).

Yet another text dealing with an appearance of the young woman is a Tuscarora text collected by J. N. B. Hewitt in New York, which leaves its geographical affiliation open to question, since the Tuscaroras formerly lived on the Atlantic seaboard close to the Cherokees before rejoining their northern Iroquoian kin during the colonial period. The legend is in most ways an obvious variant of the Eastern texts already presented, but it places the scene near a village. The singing woman on the mountaintop calls an old man to come up, which he does at the bequest of the tribal council. Despite his age, he is able—at her insistence—to have sexual intercourse with her, and corn grows from the spot where they lay. "Such is, it is said, the manner in which the white corn originated among the Tuscarora, who have generously shared the seed with neighboring tribes and kindred" (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:652–653).

Essentially the same narrative was used by the Creeks, Hitchiti, and Yuchi of the Southeast to explain the origin of tobacco (Swanton 1929:1–20, Creek #10, #11, #12; 87–88, Hitchiti #2; Speck 1909:146). Here, too, the growth of the new plant was the result of sexual intercourse, an agrarian theme that probably reflects the sympathetic magical belief in communicating human fertility to the fields to strengthen the crops. H. R. Schoolcraft noted the Ojibwa practice of having the wife drag her clothing around the cornfield during the planting season, presumably to add her fertility to the field (Schoolcraft 1851–60, vol. 5:193–195; cited by Hatt 1951:857).

An almost identical legend was recorded by Charles Lanman while traveling in the Southeast. Attracted by a dovelike sound (perhaps a way of linking this story to the Choctaw bird donor), two Choctaw hunters met a beautiful woman who identified herself as the daughter of the Great Spirit. When the men later returned to the spot as directed, they found corn growing (Lanman 1856:463). H. B. Cushman later published the same legend, but the details are so precisely parallel to Lanman's account that it is probably taken from that source (Swanton 1931:208–209).

D. M. Brown gave essentially the same legend for the Sauks, listing the gifts of the woman as identical to the Susquehannah tale: "They found that where her right hand had rested on the ground, corn growing, and where her left hand had been, beans, and where she had been seated, tobacco" (Brown 1940:22–23). The similarity of this detailed sentence to Franklin's (see below) makes the text somewhat suspect, and Brown gave no source for the information.

Benjamin Franklin noted the same legend from the Susquehannah in 1784, in his "Remarks concerning the Savages of North America" (in Schoolcraft 1851–60, vol. 4:343). As he presented it, two hunters saw a beautiful woman descend from the clouds. She refused the meat they offered her, but told them to return to that spot in thirteen months. When they did so, they found plants. "Where her right hand had touched the ground they found maize; where her left had touched it, they found kidney-beans; and where her backside had sat on it, they found tobacco." Schoolcraft noted the same legend, but he restricted the gifts to corn and tobacco. He had apparently heard the legend several times, for he added the qualification that "This allegory is, however, variously related by the different tribes" (Schoolcraft 1851–60, vol. 4:538).

It may be that the fertility dimension was understood to be integral to the meaning of the story, but it is difficult to draw any conclusions from its omission in some of the texts, because that could easily reflect only the reluctance of the collectors to tell the whole story.

An even more western tribe told a modified version of the same legend, with modifications. In 1880, Battiste Good, a Brulé Dakota, explained his pictorial "winter count," one era of which was highlighted by the arrival of the Corn-Woman. He dated that era as A.D. 901–930. The two men to whom she appeared received from her the sacred pipe and a package containing four grains of corn: white, black, yellow, and variegated. The legend shows Plains adaptation in that she identified herself as "the White Buffalo-Cow": "my milk is of four kinds; I spill it on the earth that you may live by it. You shall call me Grandmother." She is represented pictorially as a buffalo-cow (Mallery 1888:290). The collector of this narrative noted "several different versions of this tradition" (Mallery 1888:292), and only a few years later James Mooney recorded the story from Capt. J. M. Lee (Mooney 1893:1063–1064). The only significant change from Good's text is the omission of corn; in this version the focus is on the sacred pipe alone. A curious detail contained in both versions is that the woman is described as having a green ornament:

> She had what appeared to be snakes about her legs and waist, but which were really braids of grass (Mallery 1888:290).
>
> . . . she suddenly stooped down and took from around her ankle something resembling an anklet, which she waved about her head. The motion was so rapid that it seemed as though a cloud encircled her for a few moments, when she ceased, and the snake which she had taken from off her ankle glided away through the grass. [Mooney 1893:1063]

No interpretation was offered, but it is included here for complete reporting of these texts, since it seems to be a distinctive detail that was significant to the Sioux audience.

All together, these accounts of the appearance of a beautiful young woman and the growth of maize from where she was sitting comprise a far-flung group with no apparent connection: Iroquois, Susquehannah, Dakota, Choctaw, Creek, Hitchiti, and Yuchi. The woman was not identified as maize, but she was at the minimum a donor of it. The strongest interpretation, emphasizing the sexual dimension, is that she gave birth to maize.

## Gift: A Bird

A special variant of the gift theme features the role of a bird as the owner or representative of such a power. In 1643 Roger Williams, in his account of the New England Algonkians, primarily the Pequod, noted tersely: "These birds [crows], although they doe the corne also some hurt, yet scarce one *Native* amongst an hundred will kil them, because they have a tradition, that the Crow brought them at first an *Indian* Graine of Corne in one Eare and an *Indian* or *French* Beane in another, from the Great god *Kautantouwit*s field in the Southwest from whence they hold came all their Corne and beanes" (Williams 1827:86).

Vernon Quinn has attributed the same belief to the Narragansetts, but he may be merely repeating Williams (Quinn 1936:144). Another early journal simply notes that "They have a tradition that their Corn was at first dropt out of the mouth of a Crow from the Skies" (Wolley 1902:42). It seems that at least some of the Algonkian tribes of the Atlantic seaboard presented the origin of corn as due to a helpful crow.

The bird-corn motif is reported from other areas. In mid-19th century the "Indian Agent" in Oklahoma reported that the Chickasaw "say they got the first corn just after the flood, that a raven flew over them and dropped a part of an ear of corn, and they were told to plant it by the Great Spirit, and it grew up; that they worked in the soil around it with their fingers" (Schoolcraft 1851–60, vol. 1:311). Henry Halbert gave the Choctaw episode a little differently: "A long time ago thus it happened. In the very beginning a crow getting a single grain of corn from beyond the great waters, brought it to this country and gave it to an orphan child who was playing in the yard. The child named it *tanchi* (corn), and planted it in the yard. When the corn grew up high, the child's elders merely had it swept around. But the child wishing to have it a certain way, hoed it, hilled it up and laid it by. When this single grain of corn ripened it made two ears of corn. And it was really in this way, that the Choctaw discovered corn" (Halbert 1899:230–231). A Chitimacha text identifies the corn-bearing bird as a dove (Swanton 1907:287). On the Atlantic side of the Southeast, Frank Speck found the episode among the Siouan Catawba in the context of the flood, which, like the others, may indicate Christian influence (Speck 1934:23–24).

Among the Sioux there was at least a fragmentary tradition of this episode;

D. M. Brown summarized their myth of the creation of earth from a pinch of soil brought from beneath the primeval water by a waterfowl. "Among the seeds, brought by birds to him for planting, was corn" (Brown 1940:20–21). The Arapaho sometimes account for corn in the same way. Mooney reported that the duck brought them the sacred pipe and an ear of corn "from which comes all the corn of the world" immediately after the creation of land by turtle (Mooney 1893:959). George Dorsey and Alfred Kroeber presented three Arapaho origin texts, all Earth-Diver myths, but only one of them included the corn motif: the first man placed the duck and turtle with the sacred pipe, and "Some time afterwards, these made Indian corn for the first food" (Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:3–4).

Even the Hidatsa, who have a quite different mythic framework in which to account for the origin of corn, have preserved a bird episode. When the flood arrives, sent to cleanse the earth of people who mistreat buffalo and birds, a boy turns into a magpie and carries Mother Corn (in the form of an ear of corn) to safety (Beckwith 1938:18–19). So, too, the Zuni have used the Crow, albeit in an incidental way. After the flight of the Corn Maidens, the Crow found they had left an ear of corn, so he flew away with it. "[E]ver since then crows have been so fond of corn that they steal even that which is buried. But bye and bye the old Crow came back, saying that he had a 'sharp eye for the *flesh* of the maidens, but he could not find any trace of the maidens themselves'" (Cushing 1920:48; see also the motif "Mockingbird brings corn" as given in Benedict 1935, with reference to Bunzel MS I:340).

This collection of texts indicates a connection between the Earth-Diver tradition and the bird-corn motif among the Dakota and Arapaho, and a Flood-Bird connection among the Chickasaw, Catawba, and Hidatsa. The bare-bones bird motif is recorded among the Northeastern Algonkians and Southeastern Muskhogean tribes, an unusual distribution.

## Gift: Buffalo

Alongside the bird as the source of the maize gift, there is a buffalo tradition in the Plains, as might be expected. The only surviving Iowa tradition has the corn as a gift from the buffalo, but it may reflect an etiological tradition of the origin of red corn ("it made their mouths bleed, and the blood stained the corn red") rather than corn in general (Dorsey 1891:338). An Omaha text has a youth encounter a buffalo that vanishes; from the spot grows red corn (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:76–78).

There are variations on this theme. As early as 1884 an Omaha, Henry Fontanelle, asserted that, "The tradition of the Omahas handed down to this day is, that they were living at the mouth of the Missouri river in a destitute condition (no date is given), when by accident some one of them found an ear of corn in a mole hill, the kernels of which were divided among the different bands or fami-

lies. From that time hence corn has been cultivated by them" (Fontanelle 1884:77). His testimony does not stand alone; Alice Fletcher and Francis La Flesche gave the same legend, with the addition of accidental planting of the corn (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:71–72). This tradition of the finding of corn also seems to be related to the myth preserved as part of the lore accounting for the social organization of the Omaha tribe, the founding of the Nini'baton subgens. "The woman went out one day and found little mounds on the ground. In a few days she went again, and saw that out of the mounds plants were growing not known to her. . . . These were the people to whom the corn was sacred; so to this day they do not eat the red ear of corn" (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:147).

Of note here is the fact that in no way does this legend (in its present form) actually account for the taboo on red corn. It seems to be but a specialized usage of the general Omaha tradition of the finding of corn. The buffalo are not present, but the "mounds" are the source.

In a Ponca text seven buffalo disappear, leaving behind seven manure piles from which grew red, white, blue, and yellow corn (Howard 1965:20–21). Four buffalo bulls gave corn to the Osage; they rolled upon the ground, whereupon an ear of corn and a pumpkin fell from the left hind leg of each—red, spotted, dark, and white (Dorsey 1884:379). The Dakota, it will be recalled, also share the buffalo element with their Siouan-speaking kin, for their corn-bringer is a buffalo cow.

Two Oto texts collected by William Whitman also involve the four buffalo, but the death motif has been incorporated. Four persons (= buffalo) had come from above and were ready to return there. One fell ill and died, and his brothers later returned to see his grave, from which were growing many colors of corn, melons, pumpkins, and other vegetables. The oldest buffalo then distributed the seeds among the people (Whitman 1938:194–197).

This is a curious group of texts. It is the property of the Dhegiha and Chiwere Siouans and is their only recorded corn tradition, but the non-Plains northern Siouan group, the Winnebago, do not seem to have it. The absence of the buffalo points to an origin for this form after the Plains Chiwere departed the ancestral home. By contrast, the Pawnee tradition is strongly in favor of the "four gods of the west," usually portrayed as old men, as the donors.

This has been a hurried survey of myths. When the texts of these narratives are presented in this fashion, the differences in details give the impression of many plots, but they can all be summarized in a general statement: maize is the gift of an "owner" of plants, whether a hoarder or a friend of humans, by means of a heroic journey or vision, or by the unsought arrival of the owner-donor or her emissaries, such as woman, bird, or buffalo (see Figure 2.1). While some of these texts may have come with the maize itself, there appears to be no reason to see more in this category than the creative adaptation of much older "owner" traditions in North America, long antedating maize.


2.1. Distribution map: Hoarding, journey, *gift from divinity* (woman, bird, or buffalo).

## Group 2: Secondary Myths

*Mistreatment and Flight, Corncrib, and Marriage Contest*

The second cluster of myths, like the previous one, is peripheral to the major focus of this study of a possible "Corn Mother," and it is dealt with here to remove these narratives from the maize corpus. For any tribe dependent on corn for its subsistence the proper treatment of corn products is a matter of great concern. This concern is manifested frequently in the literature in the form of warnings and instructions about procedures of planting, storage, and ritual respect. It has also taken shape as an identifiable episode; the fullest presentations of it illustrate a form of mistreatment, the resulting famine, which is often mythologized as due to the flight of the corn-spirits, and the recovery of the maize. The theme of this group of myths is "mistreatment and flight."

A Seneca text tells of an old woman of a famine-ridden village who hears weeping and discovers it comes from the corn, bean, and squash plants, who explain to her that the Senecas' gross neglect of the proper planting procedures has caused the lack of crops: "So it is that many of us have remained only a few hours or a day or two and then have gone home" (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:701–704, #134). The

woman carries the news to the tribe, which is properly penitent; they correct their care of the crops and deal harshly with the crop-thieves (rabbits and raccoons), thus recovering prosperity.

Two other Seneca texts are virtually identical (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:636–642, #121; Parker 1923:205ff.). After the corn-bringing woman has married into the tribe and bestowed corn upon them, her brother-in-law scorns her gift by throwing bread into the fire, causing her burns. Sorrowfully she leaves her husband and the tribe to return to her mother in the south; the stored corn departs with her. Her husband then has to undertake a long and dangerous journey to his wife's home; after he has been there for some time, his wife tells him that his brother-in-law has died and the starving people are penitent. She then gives him seed and sends him home to his people.

The Shawnee have virtually the same legend, at least in structure. A man, upon finding a vulva-shaped corncob, decided to have intercourse with it. That night the Corn-Person "went away," and the next morning the corncribs were empty. The journey to find her then follows (Voegelin 1936:7).

In a Pawnee tale a man hears a woman crying, and in a dream a woman appears to him. At her instructions he picks her up (she is a kernel of corn that had been dropped and left on the ground); she then becomes "medicine" for him. When the bundle is made (this text is the origin myth for the Grain-of-Corn Bundle), she comes to him and gives him fuller instructions on the proper treatment of corn. "Never drop a kernel upon the ground, for Mother-Corn will curse you and your life will be shortened" (Dorsey 1906:58–61, #14).

The mistreatment-and-flight legend is strongly represented in the Southwest. Hatt has given an excellent summary of the tradition: "In Zuni ritual and myth, the corn Maidens flee from erotic attempts of some male power. . . . The flight of the Maidens causes great mourning, because it means the loss of the nourishing corn. Several emissaries, the Eagle, the Falcon, the Raven, go out, seeking them in vain. At last, however, they are found in the faraway ocean, hiding beneath the wings of a duck. They return to earth, or they send their corn. In one version, 'each maiden bathes herself, and takes the rubbings from her body and makes them into a shape like an ear of corn, each ear colored like its maiden maker'" (Bunzel 1932:914ff.). In another Zuni myth, the flight of the Corn Maidens is caused by the carelessness of people who were playing with corn bread and throwing it away, and throwing the corn into the corn rooms heedlessly, not piling it up carefully. When the Corn Maidens had fled, it was as if life had left the corn; it was not nourishing, and it did not sprout when it was planted. Therefore, the priests sent out emissaries to discover the whereabouts of the Corn Maidens and bring them back (Hatt 1951:860).

As is obvious, both the sexual abuse and wastefulness mistreatment motifs are present in the Southwestern lore. A very closely related marriage-mistreatment-

flight text is also found among the Tepecanos of northern Mexico (Mason 1914: 204–205)

Another Zuni mistreatment motif—playing games with corn products—is paralleled in texts from the Miami and Ojibwa. The young men of the tribe throw cobs at each other and break ears. When the hunting season comes, no game can be found, and the corn-repositories are surprisingly empty—the Ojibwa text has the mice steal it (another Southwestern motif) (see Cushing 1901:69; Handy 1918:463). A youth then stumbles onto a lodge in the woods; inside is an old man, very ill. He explains that he is the "spirit of corn" (Ojibwa: Mondamin) who has been mistreated and outlines what must be done to rectify the situation. The youth returns to the people with the message and all is set right (Miami: Schoolcraft 1851–60, vol. 5:193–195; Ojibwa: Kohl 1860:266, reprinted in Clark 1960:49ff.).

These texts constitute the more obvious mistreatment-flight legends, but the entire complex is much larger, for there seems to have occurred an ecological transformation of the tale among some of the Plains tribes. Robert Lowie referred to a popular Plains tale as the "piqued buffalo-wife," a term that has become standard (Lowie 1918:115). The tale tells of a man who has a son by a buffalo-woman; when he refuses to marry her (or she is otherwise offended [see C31: Thompson 1929:340, note 223a], she and her son leave. In order to regain them he must undertake a dangerous journey to the home of the buffalo and undergo tests, including the picking out of his wife and child from the herd of buffalo (H161: Thompson 1929:340, note 224). The conclusion varies, for he either returns with them or remains there and becomes a buffalo.

This tale is found among the Caddo, Wichita, Kiowa, Osage, Omaha, Pawnee, Arikara, Cheyenne, Assiniboine, Blackfoot, Arapaho, and Crow (see Lowie 1918:115; Thompson 1929:339, note 222). This distribution is distinctively Plains and suggests a tightly delimited type. If the details of the Buffalo-Wife tale are ignored, however, it is clear that the plot structure is identical to that of the Corn-Wife already discussed. In both cases the woman comes to marry into the tribe, leaves because of some mistreatment, and is followed by her husband to another land. If the two tale-groups are connected, then this is a clear case of adaptation to different subsistence/ritual contexts.

As it happens, there still remain examples of a transitional form. The mechanism is simple: the man is given two wives, Corn-Wife and Buffalo-Wife. Each one bears a son, and the Buffalo-Wife leaves because of a quarrel between the children. In no case is the Corn-Wife more than an appendage to the tale, usually disappearing when the journey episode begins. The distribution of this transitional form is restricted to the Mandan, Hidatsa, Crow, Ponca, Skidi Pawnee, and Oglala Sioux (Mandan: Beckwith 1938: #5; Bowers 1950:272ff.; Lowie 1918:107; Ponca: Dorsey 1890:157; Skidi: Dorsey 1906:62–68, #16; Oglala: Walker 1917:183). Both

the transitional and the pure buffalo forms are found among the Skidi and Ponca (Omaha).

As if to make certain that the link between the two tale-groups is clear, some tribes have even preserved a portion of the pure Corn-Wife tale and have attached it to the transitional form as an introduction, thus creating a compound tale of Corn-Wife plus Corn-Wife/Buffalo-Wife. This compound form is found among the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Crow, as mentioned above. Robert Lowie styles this opening episode "Bluebeard" (Lowie 1928:107n), but that is a misleading designation, for it is obviously related to the more eastern Corn-Wife marriage episode.

## Corncrib

In some of the Southeastern texts an old woman visits the people. "Then she told him to build two cribs with an entry between them, and she said, 'At night, just at dark, put me at the door of one and push me in, and come right away.' He did so and could hear a roaring that night. Next morning, when he went to the cribs, they were both filled with corn. It was in this way that flour corn and flint corn originated. The same old woman also told the man not to drop the corn around or waste it" (Swanton 1929:13–15, Creek #7).

In this Creek text, the Koasati and the Seminole versions, she stays overnight; in the other Creek version it is four days. All are agreed that there is an unusual sound during the night that is variously described: a "roaring" "like distant thunder" (Creek), "a rapping noise" (Koasati), a "noise like electricity" (Seminole). When the morning comes, the woman is gone (except in the other Creek version), but the corncrib is filled with corn.

This crib motif does not stand alone. There are four examples of it among the Iroquois. Two were attached to the creation epic as introductory episodes. While Hewitt collected them from both Mohawk and Onondaga informants, they are virtually identical (i.e., where one varies from the majority opinion about the epic plot, the other varies similarly) (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:280, 1). This probably reflects the fact that they were both taken down at the Grand River Reservation in Canada; the two informants had either influenced each other or, what is more likely, they were heirs of a common local tradition. In either case, their tribal affiliation seems to have made little difference.

Their tale begins with an illicit love affair (incest) that results in the illness and death of the man. The daughter of the union is instructed by her father from his coffin to take a marriage journey. After some trials on the way, she submits to, and passes, tests of being splattered with hot corn mush and being licked by dogs. This portion of the legend seems to be a version of the classic tale of the "son-in-law tests" (H310) with the sexes reversed (See Lowie 1908; Thompson 1929:324–325,

note 170). After some time the woman longs to visit her family, so her husband gives her a basket of compressed meat [D490: Thompson 1929:336, note 210a] and instructions to have the people remove the roofs of their lodges that night. "[I]t showered corn [hail] during the entire night. . . . The white corn [grain] lay above one's knees in depth" (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:280). She then returns to the sky from whence she will fall as the major portion of the epic begins. The Onondaga version is essentially the same.

The two versions from the Seneca were collected by Hewitt and A. C. Parker (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:636–642; Parker 1923:205–206). While Hewitt's text has received fuller treatment, they are in agreement on most essentials, and they appear to be the more original tradition that has adapted to the epic cycle in the two texts just considered. In these Seneca texts, since there was no need to get the woman to the sky-world for the Fall episode, the woman is simply portrayed as a woman who arrives in a town full of starving people to marry a man and aid the town folks. "I have come from the south to assist you and your people in obtaining food for your needs. I came because my mother sympathizes greatly with her people, and it is she who has sent me here to become the wife of your elder son." After the marriage she instructs the people to clean the corn bins. At the dawn of day the next morning the people, awakening as if they had been frightened, hear sounds that indicate that corn was falling into their corn bins, which had been empty so long (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:637).

The myth then continues with the mistreatment and flight motif. In Parker's version the woman does not even wait for night. She has the people uncover their corn barrels, go into their lodges, and cover their faces. "The people did not like their faces covered, but soon they heard a sound like corn falling into their barrels" (Parker 1923:205).

Several things are made clear in these texts that were obscured in the preceding two. The woman was sent by her mother, who apparently owns the corn and lives in the south (rather than by a dead human father). This shift is easily explainable in terms of the requirements of the epic cycle, in which the sky is the locus of plenty. The woman's journey back to her home is unnecessary in the Seneca versions, for her marriage journey is the trip to the impoverished people—that is, the marriage journey and the gift-giving journey are the same. The Mohawk and Onondaga tradition also incorporates a strange view of the woman after she has become the grandmother of the twins, because she sides with Flint against Sapling, and therefore against mankind, in the creation process. This becomes more comprehensible in the light of the influence of the opening episode; in it she is presented as the recipient of the gifts rather than the donor, as in the Seneca tale.

This motif is also found among the Zuni. In one tale, which deserves to be called a corn-epic because of the plethora of corn motifs in it, the corncrib motif is used three different times (Cushing 1920). First the Corn Maidens bring the two

starving children corn and other plants, which, when placed in the storehouse, fill them. Then the dragonfly made by the boy (this role is taken by the hummingbird in another Zuni text [Benedict 1935, vol. 1:20–22]) brings them corn by the kernel, which it drops upon the sleeping children in great volume, possibly a version of the bird-donor theme. Finally, the Corn Maidens return and place ears of corn and other items in the storerooms, where they expand to fill them. This motif also appears in other Zuni versions that need not be recounted here (see Benedict 1935, vol. 2:1ff., 20ff.; Parsons 1917:316ff.; for a Keresan text, see Dumarest 1919:231ff.). There is a significant difference between this Southwestern tradition and the Eastern versions, for the latter are characterized by the gift of corn falling from above, as evidenced by the emphasis upon the sound heard during the night. By contrast, the Southwestern motif is rooted in the phenomenon of magical growth from seed, for in all cases (except the dragonfly/hummingbird episode) the seeds must first be placed in the storeroom before it is filled. It is interesting that garments and beads have gained the same power of growth as the seeds, probably by the fact of their inclusion in the motif. "These things were not what they seemed—single, but the seed of other things which the wonderful Mothers of Seed knew best how to multiply, as their flesh the corn multiplies itself many times from a single grain" (Cushing 1920:102).

These Zuni instances of the corncrib motif are couched in the context of the theme of the deserted children, and are an extremely widespread and popular tale-element in North American lore. This fact, in addition to the Southwestern emphasis upon the growth factor in the filling of the storerooms, makes it possible to identify further diffusion of the motif-complex. The corncrib motif itself is found in two other tribes, the Pawnee and Arikara. The Arikara tale is a simple one: a baby girl receives blessings from the buffalo and corn; when she is grown she relieves a famine by planting corn, beans, and squash in the people's empty "cellars." "[A]fter the fourth day they all opened their cellars and beheld the corn, beans, squash, and other things, which filled their cellars (Dorsey 1904a:124–125, #42; this is the same text as the one erroneously identified as Arapaho by Hatt 1951:865)." The same motif is found in the Pawnee tale of the "Wonderful Boy" (Dorsey 1906:95–102, #24).

This inventory exhausts the clear-cut instances of the corncrib motif.

## Marriage Contest

A distinctive tale dealing with maize (although not its origin) has an extremely restricted distribution, being found only among the Ojibwa, Potawatomi, Iroquois, and Cherokee. The plot is simple: corn wishes to marry, and interrogation of the suitors reveals that only one is able to feed her correctly, and that decides the marriage.

The Ojibwa legend of Mondamin (a corn-person discussed below) includes this

episode: After the flood, Mondamin came to marry the newly created sister of the survivor. White-Earth, at her brother's instruction, refused four suitors, who each then became vegetables: tobacco, pumpkin, melon, and bean. She accepted the fifth, who was Mondamin, corn (Skinner 1911:165ff.). There are three Potawatomi texts, but since informant data are not given, it may be that they are re-tellings of one another or have a common source. They are all identical to the Ojibwa text, with the exception of a disagreement about whether the second suitor should be translated pumpkin or melon (it is the same word in all cases) (Hodge 1910, vol. 2:21; De Voe 1904:156ff.; Peithmann 1964:56).

The five Iroquois texts are not in full agreement. One agrees with the Central Algonkian tradition in restricting the actors to plants, but the male corn-person rejects only the pumpkin-maiden before marrying the bean-maiden (Beauchamp 1922:59ff.). In two other texts it is bean-maiden who seeks a husband. She rejects the Panther (meat), Deer (buds and bark), Bear (nuts), and Wolf (carrion); she accepts Corn-Man (sweet corn). "This is the reason that the bean vine is at all times found entwined around the cornstalk" (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:648–649).

In another text the marriage legend has been incorporated in a loosely knit compound tale about the Corn Maiden. She marries "Sumac" (the translation is not certain), then watches the marriage interrogation of her sister, who is probably Bean-Maiden: "We, the varieties of corn, beans, and squashes, are the mothers of the peoples of the whole world." She rejects Wolf (meat), Bear (nuts), and Deer (buds and moss) before accepting Corn (corn). The tale concludes with ritual lore for corn dances (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:642–648).

The final tale is from the Oneida, while the first is Onondaga and the others were collected among the Seneca; all are from New York. Bean-Man rejects owl (snakes and mice) and frog (worms and flies), then accepts the Corn Maiden. It ends with the etiological comment about the way corn and beans grow (Allen 1944:280–281). This is a confusing tale, for it stands alone in reversing the sex of corn and beans, and the owl and frog and their offerings are not found in any other text. Yet it agrees in spirit with the Seneca texts, for the carnivorous world is pitted against the plant world.

The sole Cherokee text is as follows:

> In a wild spot near a river, beautiful singing was heard. . . . Everyone went to find out who it was that was singing. Everyone saw that it was a woman, a beautiful young woman.
>
> The Panther went up to her and said, "I will marry you."
>
> "What can you do? What food can you give me?" she asked.
>
> "Deer meat," replied the Panther.
>
> "I don't eat deer meat. I don't like deer meat," said the woman.

Next the Wolf came to her and said, "I will marry you . . . I can give you meat that I have stolen."

"I don't want things that have been stolen," said the beautiful young woman.

Then the Wildcat said to her, "Why don't you marry me? I will catch mice and moles for you."

"I don't live on such meat," she said.

Finally a young man came forward and said, "You can be my wife, and I will feed you roasting ears and beans."

This made the young woman very happy, and she arose and threw her arms around him. [Kilpatrick 1966:444]

As it stands, this text appears to deal with the virtues of a vegetarian diet, for the identity of the young woman and man is not given. It is, of course, impossible to know what the informant envisioned when he told this story, and he may have intended a corn identification; the singing woman appears in the Cherokee vision texts as Selu, but this marriage text seems inconsistent with the Kanati-Selu narrative (discussed below). In its present vague form, the lack of a clear etiological statement makes the text nothing but a simple tale. All that can be said is that a woman rejects carnivores (Panther, Wolf, Wildcat) in favor of corn and beans (a young man).

On comparison, there seem to be two groups of tales: the Ojibwa, Potawatomi, and the Onondaga texts restrict the contest to the agricultural world, while the other Iroquois tales agree with the Cherokee in contrasting the animal and plant worlds. All agree in the maleness of corn (except the deviant Oneida text), and only the Onondaga text has the Corn-Man in the role of the decision-maker. The Cherokee text is closest to the Seneca versions, and it is tempting to draw conclusions about diffusion among Iroquoian speakers, but the lateness of the collection of the Cherokee text—and its absence in the Mooney collection, which was from the same area 60 years earlier—make it unwise to rest much weight upon the single text.

The omission of the Cherokee text brings this legend into a very tight distribution area: the Great Lakes region. Whether the Iroquois or the Algonkians are the source for the legend is impossible to say, for reasonable arguments can be made for each. The ancestor of the legend is probably to be identified as the "animal-wife contest" (B600.1), which has a spotty distribution across the north: Siberia, Eskimo, Kathlamet, and Tsimshian in the Northwest, and Cree, Ojibwa, and Menomini in the north-central region. The last two are closely parallel and will serve to provide the outline of the motif, which is here used as the introductory episode in a tale about a bear-wife. A man first marries a Canada jay, but abandons her

because she eats poplar sprigs, but when she flees he marries a bear-woman who came to feed him while he was in despair (Skinner and Satterlee 1915:377–380; see Thompson 1929:348–349, note 254b).

It is difficult to assert flatly that this is the ancestor of the legend under discussion, but the distribution argues strongly for a connection. This clearly delineated episode seems to be yet another example of accommodation of hunting culture myths to agricultural uses. The maleness of corn in the texts, together with the location, suggests that this secondary myth developed as part of the Corn-Boy tradition to be examined shortly.

## Group 3: Primary Myths

With these two large groups of maize lore surveyed and removed from the corpus, the remainder focuses on the various figures who are the raw materials for Hatt's "Corn Mother" complex. The primary myths highlight a single characteristic: maize is revealed to be a person, rather than a commodity owned or controlled by a person. It is probably easier to examine this group of maize texts by looking at four thematic groupings that comprise the complex: Corncob Boy, Mother Corn, the Person Whose Body Is the Source, and the Maize-Person Who Dies. This sounds clearer than the survey will actually be, because some texts fall into more than one of these groupings, but it is at least an orderly way to approach the myths.

### *Corncob Boy*

In the Southeast there is a Seminole text about maize as the result of a visit from a small male figure who was the Corn Person. Louis Capron collected it in 1938 in Florida from the Creek-speaking Cow Creek band. He identifies it as a tale of the origin of medicine rites. In it the culture-hero visits the Seminoles, giving them many gifts, but withholding maize. "When Stuf-a-sta ['Gives-Everything,' the culture-hero] go he say, 'man comin.' In 'bout two-three weeks, Fas-ta-chee, 'Little Give,' come. He look like corn. He about that tall (about 2 feet). His hair like corn—his body all corn" (Capron 1953:165–166). The story then continues with a presentation of maize as a magical gift, but the figure himself is understood to be corn. This is a peculiar story because of its isolation. There is no other figure remotely resembling "Little Give" in the extant folklore of the Southeast. The Seminoles are an eclectic tribe drawn from various "towns" (*talwas*) of Muskhogean-speakers, many of them refugees from the Creek Confederacy in historic times. There are many possibilities of separate introduction of myths from outside sources, for much of the historical detail has not been recorded.

However, there is a similarity of "Little Give" to some northern Algonkian texts in that the figure is the male personification of an ear of corn. A Missisagua text from Ontario is a good example. In it a father interrogated his son concerning his

puberty vision. "[H]e said that he had seen a little old man coming towards him, with only a little hair just over his forehead. He (the father) then lifted the corner of the blanket and pulled out an ear of corn. . . . It was the corn (monda'min) himself coming that the boy saw. . . . This, our people think, is the origin of corn" (Chamberlain 1889:143–144).

A Potawatomi text follows the same pattern, but it introduces the notion of a wrestling match between the seeker and the Corn Man. The contest was instigated by Medamin, and it was, of course, essential that he lose in order that his gift be coerced from him. After the match he gave the boy an ear of corn and taught him what to do with it. The boy then became the teacher of his tribe. "They followed his instructions in planting it, and they had a big crop of corn, and ever since then the Indian has been raising corn" (Brown 1940:21–22).

The same format is the basis for an Ottawa text. A great doctor of the tribe, out hunting alone, "met a small man, wearing a red feather on his head." When the hunter had out-wrestled the little man, "his opponent at once disappeared. In his place there lay on the ground a crooked ear of *mondamin,* or Indian corn, with a red hairy tassel at the top. . . . [He follows instructions and scatters the pieces of cob and kernels over the ground.] In one moon he was to return. This he did, and found the plain filled with growing corn. From the broken cob grew luxuriant pumpkin vines. . . . Thus came the gift of corn and pumpkins" (Beauchamp 1898:197–198). Here is an important transition from the Corn-Person who comes in a vision and bestows corn upon the seeker, to the Corn-Person who is himself the gift. The idea of the latter is implicit in the former, but its explicit form provides a much clearer picture of this total tradition, which goes yet another step to include the actual burial of Mondamin.

In an Ojibwa tradition made famous by Schoolcraft, Mondamin wrestles with a young man, is overcome and buried, and "from his body corn grows" (Will and Hyde 1917:235). Schoolcraft's description of Mondamin presents him as "richly and gaily dressed, having on a great many garments of green and yellow colors, but differing in their deeper or lighter shades. He had a plume of waving feathers on his head, and all his motions were graceful" (Schoolcraft 1851–60, vol. 2:230). Another Ojibwa text tells the same story of the burial of Mondamin, but the description is closer to that of the little man: "a stranger with a shiny coat which was hard, like husks, and a flowing, ruddy feather in his scalp-lock. He was short and stubby" (Skinner 1911:165). Curiously, there is one reference from the Choctaws (who told of the bird who brought maize) that might reflect the Algonkian wrestling tradition, although it is far too fragmentary to bear any weight. Adam Hodgson recorded that his informant "told me that they had an obscure story, somewhat resembling that of Jacob wrestling with an angel" (Hodgson 1820).

This sampling of texts provides a helpful picture of the primary legend of the coming of corn to the Central Algonkians. Patrick Munson analyzed the linguistic

data regarding words for maize and its personification and found that these Algonkian speakers formed a distinctive grouping in creating their own word for maize by using known Algonkian roots rather than a loan word (Munson 1973:114). The corn-giver is male, the personification of an ear of corn; his Algonkian name is the word for corn, all variants of *menda-* ("good, admirable") + *-min* ("grain, seed, berry"). Munson's "Cree Group" (Sauk, Fox, Kickapoo, Cree, and Shawnee) uses a variant form of the word, which implies the mythic figure. The Ojibwa Group thus appears to be the core of this corn tradition linguistically, and the texts under discussion offer no disagreement. The conclusion is obvious: the Ojibwa Group was a northern diffusion center for the lore and language concerning the advent of maize, which Munson identifies as probably Northern Flint corn.

The identification of the Ojibwa as an Algonkian diffusion center does not exhaust the corpus of the male corn figure. An even closer parallel to the Seminole "Little Give" is found in yet another body of tales. He resembles the "Corncob Boy" of Cochiti and "Moing'iima" (alternate: Muingwu) of the Hopi. "Moing'iima makes corn. Everything grows on his body. He is short, about the height of a boy. He has a female partner with him. Every summer he becomes heavy, his body is full of vegetables: watermelon, corn, etc., etc. They grow in his body. When the Hopi plant corn, they invariably ask him to prosper the crop; then their things come up, whether vegetables or fruits. When he shaves his body, the seeds come out. After this, his body is thin. He used to live on this earth and go with the Hopi. When things grow ripe, he becomes thin and is unhappy. He stays in the west" (Wallis 1936:10).

This figure functions as a fertility god among the Hopi, and the phenomenon of a male instead of a female in this role has given students of the Southwestern tribes some difficulties. With the exception of Cochiti, the Corn Mother is standard among the other tribes of the area. While there is speculation about a replacement of the mother goddess by Moing'iima at some earlier time, there is no satisfactory conclusion (a summary of the discussion may be found in Tyler 1964:131–134). The Moing'iima tradition of the Hopi seems so firmly fixed that it must be accorded some antiquity, even though there may have been some ideological revolution in the past that set the Hopi apart from their Zuni and Keresan neighbors.

The Cochiti Corncob Boy is not quite the same as the Hopi-Seminole-Ojibwa figure, for he seems to be a much more human figure, and the tales of him seem more related to the general Plains "Dirty Boy" tradition than to the personified corncob. Nevertheless, Corncob Boy is the local culture hero of Cochiti. "He belongs to Cochiti, and the other pueblos are said to be in awe of this little village because of his blessing" (Benedict 1935:217). This Corncob Boy is probably a reflection of the Hopi one, but how and why this came about need not concern us here.

An unusual text from the Prairie Potawatomi tells of a fish who became a boy

(it is the origin myth of the Fish Clan). While hunting with his brothers one day, the boy told them to kill him, sprinkle his blood around, cut off his head, throw it away, burn his body, and return in a year. "Tell mother to take tobacco and go to a certain place and pray for me. She will see corn, beans, pumpkins, and melons there, that will be me myself" (Skinner 1923:62–63). The presence of the immolation/grave motif (discussed below) gives the tale a different tone, but the figure seems quite close to that of the Corncob Boy/Mondamin tales.

Two highly unusual tales of Corncob Boy are found among the northernmost Plains tribes. From the Cheyenne and the Dakota, both recent immigrants from the northern Algonkian region to the northern Plains, come two texts of the stabbing of the Corncob Boy. In the Dakota text the little boy comes as a playmate to a young Indian boy, a situation reminiscent of Lodge-Boy and Thrown-Away (LBTA); at his mother's request, the boy stabs the visitor in the stomach. He flees, dropping corn as he goes (McLaughlin 1916:101ff.). The Cheyenne Corncob Boy comes in vision-quest format to a man who shoots him with an arrow. In both cases the trail of corn leads to a hidden corn cache (Marriott 1968:129ff.). Both texts seem to be as much an attempt to account for the invention of the cache-hole as corn itself.

The small size of the visitor, his being filled or covered with corn, and the culture-heroic function indicate that these tales are part of a Corncob Boy myth type found among the Hopi, Seminoles, and Central Algonkians, improbable as that may seem. Moreover, despite the male gender, they belong to the Corn-Person tradition, at least conceptually. The notion that such a divinity should be stabbed seems alien for the Hopi, but we have seen that it is at least acceptable to the Algonkians, whose Mondamin is killed and buried. The very unusualness of the stabbing detail, however, suggests influence from yet another source. In the "Release of impounded water" (motif A1111) the hero slays the water hoarder, releasing the waters for the good of mankind (Thompson 1929:293, note 76). The slaying is often by stabbing in the stomach. With distribution from Siberia and the northern Pacific to the Northeastern Algonkians, the myth stands alone in many cases, but it is also found in the Iroquois cycle and the Winnebago Hare cycle. A text from the Shawnees illustrates the episode, for the grandson stabs the hoarder of water in the stomach. "Now that water is spilling out. Now the boy runs outside and he is being chased by that water." The flood ensues (Voegelin 1936:9). Thus it appears to have been an ancient episode ready at hand to be amalgamated with the Corncob Boy. While this similarity of action does not prove that the stabbing of the water hoarder provided the model for the stabbing of the Corncob Boy, it points the possibility. Such an amalgamation—impounded water and Corncob Boy—would produce something approximating the Cheyenne and Dakota texts under discussion.

The identification of this mythic emphasis on a male embodiment of maize

calls for a source (or the lack of one that would suggest an independent invention). As it happens, the Corncob Boy has possible relatives in Mesoamerica. There is a fairly sizable collection of texts from the Yucatán, Veracruz, and Central Mexico areas that appear to have affinities with the texts from North America. In the vicinity of Uxmal (Yucatán), John L. Stephens heard the legend of the old woman who hatched a child from an egg: the dwarf engaged in contests with the king and replaced him (in *Travels in Yucatán,* quoted in Spence n.d.:192ff.). Stephens linked this with a tradition from Maní, fifty miles away. In an underground passage is "an old woman sitting on the bank of a river shaded by a great tree, having a serpent by her side. She sells water in small quantities, accepting no money, for she must have human beings, innocent babies, which are devoured by the serpent. This old woman is the dwarf's mother." Virtually the same tale was reported from Chan Kom, with the egg-child ("Ez") killing a serpent as well as defeating the king (Redfield and Villa-Rojas 1962:334–337).

These two scant narratives are augmented by three fuller texts from the Popoluca of Veracruz. G. M. Foster's text tells of the old couple who find an egg by a stream; from it hatches "Homshuk." When the fish and birds mock him because of his origins, he kills them, to the consternation of his foster parents. When they decide to kill him, a bat aids Homshuk by killing the old man. The old woman pursues the boy up a tree where she is burned to death. Homshuk then engages in a series of contests similar to those of the *Popol Vuh*'s Twins in Xibalba, but the "king" is identified as the Mayan high god Hurakan (Foster 1945:191ff.). Ben Elson's text is almost identical, but the old man is identified as "*una gorda serpiente,*" and the old woman is named "Tsitsimat," "an old Nahuatl word taken over by the Popoluca." This text adds an episode in which the old woman's ashes are collected in a bag; when it is opened, stinging insects emerge. Homshuk engages in contests with the powers of thunder and lightning, and he succeeds in resurrecting his father—a *Popol Vuh* theme not completely consistent in the present text (Elson 1947).

In some of the episodes of the Mesoamerican myths of the young male there are similarities to the young hero myths of North America, such as Grandson. The most important connector for this study, however, is given by Elson: Homshuk is the Popoluca god of maize and is described as "a dwarf or child probably less than three feet high. His hair is of corn silk. When corn is first planted the Homshuk is young and childlike; as the corn grows he also grows older until when the corn is dry and the stalk is dead, the Homshuk appears aged, withered and parched" (Elson 1947:193; see Nicholson 1967:64–65). It seems a fair speculation that the Homshuk is a descendant of the Mayan God E, the maize god, Yum Kax (Abreu Gomez 1993:50) and is related to the Nahua Cinteotl (Taube 1993:32). As we have seen, the physical appearance of the Homshuk and the Corncob Boy of the Central Algonkians, the Hopi, and the Seminoles coincides closely.

Maize was brought by the male culture-hero in yet another tribal group. Since

this group is peripheral—but not insignificant—in regard to this study, it will be presented very briefly. The tribes are found in the far Southwest, and their traditions seems influenced by the Puebloan groups but not totally derived from them. The Walapai origin myth serves as a guide to the tribes of the area, for the two brothers who function here as creators made the tribes from cane: Mohave, Walapai, Havasupai, Hopi, Paiute, and Yavapai (MacGregor 1935:12–13).

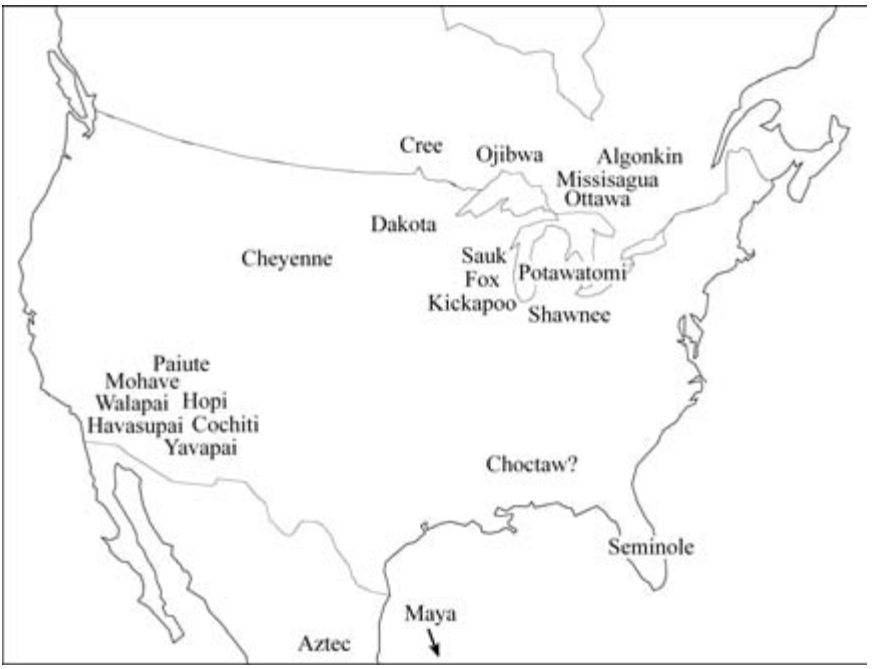
The Walapai culture-hero's brother dies by stepping on a frog. When he does not return to life, the culture-hero causes corn, pumpkins, watermelons, and beans to spring from his grave (MacGregor 1935:13). After the Yavapai emerged from the ground, their leader Frog sickened and died after instructing the people on how to burn his body. Coyote stole the heart and ate it, but corn sprang from the spot where it had burned, anyhow (Gifford 1933:349–352, see 402–403). Ruth Underhill recorded only this fragment from the Papago: "The corn was once a man and he lured a woman away to sleep with him. She stayed a long time, and when she came home, she knew the songs that made the corn grow" (Underhill 1936:25). These examples are evidence of a very tight Southwestern group of male corn myths.

All together, these various lines of testimony indicate the existence of a North American tradition of male maize figures, for there seems little reason to subdivide this unusual collection of narratives. The myth of Homshuk, currently found in the Mayan-Mixtec area (or Yucatán and Veracruz) seems to be the folkloric form of Schellhas's God E, the iconographic image of the Mayan young maize god, who is also the ancestor or relative of the Nahua Cinteotl. The description of Homshuk tallies with that of the Seminole "Little Give," the Hopi "Moing'iima," and the Algonkian "Mondamin," as well as the stabbed boy of the Cheyenne and Dakota. In short, it is proposed here that we are in the presence of a coherent complex of motifs focused on a male personification of corn. Figure 2.2 is a map of this distribution. This map suggests the tentative conclusion that at one or more points in time there was some connection between the Maya world and the ancestors of the Hopi, the Seminoles, the Central Algonkians, and the northern Siouans. This conclusion—the ancestral role of Homshuk in this complex—is strengthened by the deviance of this tradition from the other Corn-Person episodes, to which we must turn.

### *Mother-Corn*

In the emergence traditions of the Southwest the existence of corn is generally assumed, rather than made the focus of a special episode. There are, of course, figures associated with corn, and their complex mythology reflects the agrarian ritualism of the Pueblo peoples, but the *coming* of corn is not an issue. It is usually part of their origin narrative. This is hardly surprising in view of the antiquity of maize cultivation in the Southwest.

Hamilton Tyler has brought together the data regarding the corn traditions of the major Southwestern groups (Tyler 1964:esp. chapters 3–5). The actual fertility




2.2. Distribution of male personifications of maize.

figures vary greatly among the Hopi, Zuni, and Keresan peoples, and even within those groupings. Essentially, they agree that corn growing began at a cosmic level below the present one, and that corn and its rituals were brought from below by the people in the emergence. In fact, the necessity of finding better conditions for the growing of corn is frequently given as a major motivation for leaving the lower levels. Under different names the Zuni and Keresan groups share a female fertility figure who is closely connected with the emergence. The Hopi, as we have seen, are very much the exception in the Southwest in their male Moing'iima.

The same sort of general emergence tradition exists among the Caddoan tribes—the Arikara, Pawnee, Wichita, and Caddo, as well as the Plains Village people, the Mandan and Hidatsa (Dorsey 1904a:12–32, #3–9; Bowers 1950:156–163; see also bibliography, 156 note; Bowers 1963:298–302) The key figure for the Arikara is Mother-Corn, who leads the emergence from below; some versions also suggest that the people who emerged from below were themselves made of corn.

The Mandan/Hidatsa tradition is similar, with the one major shift to the positing of a male corn-person ("Good Furred Robe") who was inadvertently left behind when the people climbed out, but the female theme is maintained by having him pass on his power to his daughter (Corn-Silk), although she always seems

eclipsed in both Mandan and Hidatsa traditions by Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies (Bowers 1950:156–163). Maize is singled out by the belief in Corn Spirits and Corn-Silk, but the central figure is always Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies, who appears more in the role of a general fertility figure than as a Corn Mother (Bowers 1950:194–205; 1963:333–348). For this reason, she has been presented in Group 1 as a general fertility figure for whom maize is but one of her gifts, which may have been an addition to an ancient tradition of the Owner of Plants.

The Pawnees also speak of Mother-Corn, but in the narratives she seems eclipsed by Evening Star. The two, however, may be the same figure in different guises. Just as there is only a faint sign of direct relation of Evening Star to the Puebloan/Mandan Mother-Corn, the Pawnees also know the emergence tradition, but it appears to be a relatively unimportant one with them (Dorsey 1904b; 1906). In all of these tribes, however, there seems to be little question of the mythic status of Mother-Corn, and the term "divinity" is not unjustified. This figure—at least in this strength—is not found in North America outside of the Southwestern and Caddoan tribes.

### *The Person Whose Body Was the Source of Maize*

In another group of narratives a woman is revealed to be the source of maize, for it comes directly from her body as part of herself. A group of Southeastern texts include an episode in which an old woman produces corn, and in some instances beans, from her body. One Creek text hints that the corn has a vaginal source: "Then he saw the old woman shake her body, and when she shook it the grain poured out of her" (Swanton 1929:13–15, Creek #7). Another has but a fragmentary form of the motif: "One day on his return from hunting she gave him new food to eat. The boy wondered where she had obtained this delightful food. He asked her, but she refused to tell him" (Swanton 1929:16, Creek #8). In yet another the woman provides both corn and beans, apparently from her vagina: "Then he saw his grandmother place a riddle [basket] on the floor, stand with one foot on each side of it and scratch the front of one of her thighs, whereupon corn poured down into the riddle. When she scratched the other thigh beans poured into the riddle" (Swanton 1929:10–13, Creek #6).

This idea that the Corn-Woman has the power to create corn from her body is found in another context as well as in relation to her death. One Creek text opens with two separate episodes, the body-source and the magical filling of the corncrib; it then continues with the more important story about her death that will be considered below. Here is the text:

> In early days the Indians lived in camps, and when they got tired of one place they moved off to another. The men would go out hunting and the women would go to dig mud potatoes. One time, while they were living this way, each clan encamped by itself, an old woman came to one of the camps

and said, "I would like to warm myself on the other side of your fire." They said they had no place for her and added "Maybe they will give you a place at the next camp." But the people at the next camp said the same thing, and so it was with all of them until she came to the last, which was the Alligator camp. There they said to her "Why, there is plenty of room here. You can stay here." Next morning the men started out hunting and the women went for potatoes, leaving the children at home. Now this woman was Corn itself, and, while they were away, she made hominy out of herself and fed the children with it. When the grown people came home the children said "Why, this woman had plenty of food. She fed us all while you were gone." Then the leading man said "Tell her to have plenty of food and I will eat when I come back." So the children told her, and she made blue dumplings and all kinds of foods made from corn. The children said, "Why, she shelled it off from those sores," but he answered, "All right, I will be hungry and eat it." When he returned he feasted with the old woman and thought the new food good. Then she told him to build two cribs with an entry between them, and she said, "At night, just at dark, put me at the door of one and push me in, and come right away." He did so and could hear a roaring that night. Next morning, when he went to the cribs, they were both filled with corn. It was in this way that flour corn and flint corn originated. The same old woman also told the man not to drop the corn around or waste it. [Swanton 1929:13–15, Creek #7]

The body source theme is therefore utilized in two different ways in this one text, and it is the only one in which this occurs. The opening legend, however, seems to have an independent life of its own, for there is another Creek text of it, as well as one from the Koasati. In a Creek text she produces corn by washing her feet and fills the crib (Swanton 1929:9–10, Creek #5). The Koasati text agrees with Creek #7 (Swanton 1929:168, Koasati #6).

There is a Corn-Woman Seminole text in addition to the Corncob Boy text already discussed. It is a body-source text that was collected from Josie Billie in 1939.

Corn women lived in the woods and were big, fat and heavy. Their bodies were made like a big ear of corn. They scraped their legs and kernels fell off on the ground.

One time a corn woman stole a little Indian boy scarcely four weeks old. She took him home and fed him on corn kernels. He grew up big and strong. When he was grown the corn woman returned to him. He was soon married.

> Corn woman gave him four kernels of corn from which he grew four large plants. Soon the family have plenty of corn. [Greenlee 1945:141]

In a Natchez text, "Corn-Woman" is spied upon by the twin *girls* who see her shake herself to produce corn and beans. Thinking it excrement, they scorn the food, which then produces the death episode (Swanton 1929:230, Natchez #7). Another Natchez text conforms more closely to the Creek pattern. The boy sees "Old Corn-Woman" produce corn by sitting "astride of a basket." Like the girls, he thinks it is excrement (Swanton 1929:230–234, Natchez #8). Neither of the two Natchez LBTA texts has the corn episode.

The Cherokee texts all agree on having the body-source, even a fragmentary Moravian text. The majority agree that both corn and beans come from her body. Mooney's text has her produce corn (by rubbing her stomach "leaning over a basket") and beans (by rubbing her armpits) (Mooney 1900:244). Traveller Bird disagrees only to the extent of having her rub her right and left sides (Traveller Bird 1974:29). The bluntest statement is that "Corn and beans fell out of her vagina onto the ground" (Kilpatrick 1966:91). The Wahnenauhi Manuscript gives a picture of "large ears of corn" that fell into the basket (Kilpatrick 1966:189), and J. Kilpatrick's text has her hit her sides, from which corn falls into the pan (Kilpatrick 1964:132).

While the Creek texts give little information on the reaction of the youth to the phenomenon, and the Natchez texts speak in terms of excrement, the Cherokee opinion is more sinister. "Our mother is a witch. If we eat any of that it will poison us," says one of the boys in Mooney, and Traveller Bird agrees. The Wahnenauhi Manuscript is silent, but the two other texts refer vaguely to "something bitter" and "unsavory thing."

In examining the "inexhaustible food supply" motif we found that it was known in the northern part of South America. That same Caribbean area appears again in connection with these corn motifs. One of the major figures in the South American Twins complex is a Frog-Woman who is associated with both fire and water, is protectress of the great tree, and is seen as mother of the jaguars and foster mother of the twins. Even more to the point is the fact that in some texts she is spied upon by the twins, who see her produce food (manioc) or fire from her skin. Here are two relevant passages from the Guiana collections, Warao and Carib:

> On each occasion when they shot fish, the old woman would say, "You must dry your fish in the sun, and never over a fire"; but what was curious was that she would invariably send them to fetch firewood, and by the time that they had returned with it, there would be the fish all nicely cooked and ready for them. As a matter of fact, she would vomit fire out of her mouth, do her

cooking, and lick the fire up again before the lads' return; she apparently never had a fire burning for them to see. The repetition of this sort of thing day after day made the boys suspicious; they could not understand how the old lady made her fire, and accordingly determined to find out. On the next occasion that they were dispatched to bring firewood, one of them, when at a safe distance from the house, changed himself into a lizard, and turning back, ran up into the roof whence he could get a good view of everything that was going on. What did he see? He not only saw the old woman vomit out fire, use it, and lick it up again, but he watched her scratch her neck, whence flowed something like balata (*Mimusops balata*) milk, out of which she prepared starch. Sufficiently satisfied with what he had witnessed, he came down, and ran after his brother. They discussed the matter carefully, the result of the deliberations being summarized in the somewhat terse expression, "What old woman do, no good. Kill old woman." This sentiment was carried into execution. Clearing a large field, they left in its very center a fine tree, to which they tied her; then, surrounding her on all sides with stacks of timber, the boys set them on fire. [Roth 1915:133]

The two lads now proceeded on their way and arrived at last at a clump of cotton-trees in the center of which was a house occupied by a very old woman, really a frog, and with her they took up their quarters. They went out hunting each day, and on their return invariably found some cassava that their hostess had baked. "That's very strange," remarked Pia to his brother, "There is no field anywhere about, and yet look at the quantity of cassava which the old woman gives us. We must watch her." So next morning, instead of going into the forest to hunt, they went only a little distance away, and hid themselves behind a tree whenever they could see everything that took place at the house. They noticed that the old frog had a white spot on her shoulders: they saw her bend down and pick at this spot, and observed the cassava-starch fall. On their return home they refused to eat the usual cake, having now discovered its source. Next morning they picked a quantity of cotton from the neighboring trees and teased it out on the floor. When the old woman asked what they were doing, they told her that they were making something nice and soft for her to lie upon. Much pleased at this, she promptly sat upon it, but no sooner had she done so than the two lads set fire to it; thereupon her skin was scorched so dreadfully as to give it the wrinkled and rough appearance which it now bears. [Roth 1915:133]

It was this extraordinary correspondence of the body-source episodes between the Southeast and northern South America that led Hatt to identify the two mother figures as the same, and he certainly seems to have been right in seeing a diffusion

connection between the two (Hatt 1951). The crucial question is whether the linkage is between the figures themselves or in the motifs. What diffused from one area to the other—a divinity or a set of unusual behaviors (excreting food and the burning of the woman)? It is clear that the precise food did not transfer from one to the other. Manioc and maize have nothing in common, other than being staples for the people of each area. And how should the frog persona of the South American tradition be understood?

It is a curious fact that the Alabama and Koasati twins texts do not have the body-source episode, but they agree in having the boys kill their father's wife (paramour?), a giant frog who lives in a pond. The Cherokee twins text has no frog, but the boys kill their mother because she produces corn from her body, thus provoking their father's hostility. A reconstruction seems reasonable: the South American tradition of the boys who kill their frog-mother because she produces food (but not maize) from her body was communicated to North America, where it is found in at least two complexes. The Cherokee complex retained the body-source motif, but transformed it into a maize episode, and the frog became a woman in the process. The Alabama and Koasati are part of a complex that retained the frog but lost the maize/body-source episode as part of that tale (Swanton 1929:134, Alabama #16; 181, Koasati #16). This is speculative, of course, but it is a hypothesis that satisfies the data. How the proposed diffusion from the Caribbean occurred cannot now be reconstructed.

Disagreements among these body-source texts as to the precise source in the body do not suggest a pattern and are probably to be attributed more to idiosyncratic preference on the part of the narrators than to any diffusion of traditions. The basic concept is the same for all of the texts—that the Corn-Person is physically corn, the personification of an ear of corn that can be treated as the ear itself or as the repository of corn. From a stylistic point of view it is interesting to observe how the conjunction of this motif with alternate succeeding motifs (the death of the woman on the one hand, and her next act of generosity on the other) changes the tone of the entire composite tale; in the body-source/corncrib sequence there is no revulsion at the woman's production of corn.

### *The Maize-Person Who Dies*

In the Tuscarora text of the Beautiful Young Woman there is a superfluous comment by the Corn-Woman, "As for me, I shall die." It is not followed up or explained, but it serves to lead into the mythic motifs related to the death and burial of the maize person. This theme has already been examined in regard to the male corn figure, where it seems basic to the plot, but it is just as strongly represented in some of the narratives about a female corn person.

Surprisingly, in an Arikara tale the episode is tacked onto a more characteristic Plains Village tradition of the visit of Mother-Corn to the tribe in which the corn

rituals are taught. In the Plains myths, Mother-Corn is usually understood to be immortal, and it is thus unexpected to find that when the enemy attack the village, she is killed. "The Arikara were defeated on that day. They took Mother-Corn and buried her. From the place where she was laid, grass, weeds, bushes, trees, and almost everything sprang up" (Dorsey 1904b:37). It should be noted that *all* vegetation is the result of her death and burial in this text; corn is not specifically mentioned.

The Iroquois have followed a similar procedure. Their creation epic cycle is important as a repository of mythic episodes well known in Iroquoia. There are 25 known texts of the epic from across three centuries, which allows useful comparative examination (Fenton 1962:283ff.). In the case of corn myths, there seems to be no standard single explanation in the cycle, but there are several different maize episodes that have been incorporated in different texts.

In four of them corn is explained as growing from the grave of the mother of the Twins. Her death is a permanent episode of the cycle, and the grave motif may easily be inserted at that point without causing any inconsistencies in the plot—as long as the narrator sticks to only one explanation for the origin of corn, which is not always the case. A. C. Parker's text, for example, has corn given to the grandmother as she falls from the sky-world, which makes its later growth from her daughter's grave unnecessary (Parker 1923:63ff.).

In the single Huron text the mother's grave produced pumpkins from her head, beans from her limbs, and corn from her breasts (Hale 1888:178). The other three are from the Seneca. In one, potatoes (feet), beans (fingers), squash (abdomen), tobacco (head), and corn (breasts) are produced (Parker 1923:64). Curtin's text has just corn from the breasts (in Hewitt 1903:460ff.), but Wright's has beans from one breast and corn from the other (in Parker 1923:413). Notably, in all four texts, even though the nature and numbers of the plants differ, corn always grows from the breasts, sharing the honors with the beans in only one case. This is also true for the corn texts from the Winnebago: "From one of the two breasts of Mother Earth sprang a plant which grew and bore fruit—the corn plant to nourish the Indian with its ears of corn. From the other breast sprang the tobacco plant used by the Indian as a sacred offering to greater and lesser deities" (Brown 1940:22; see also Dieterle, Encyclopedia of Hotcâk Mythology: "Maize Comes to the Hotcagara," "Maize Origin Myth," and "Maize [Wa]"). Here the informant identifies the dead woman as Mother Earth rather than as the Corn-Woman. It should also be noted that despite the change of sex, the texts of the Potawatomi River-Boy, the Mondamin narratives, and the Southwestern texts that include corn from graves have this burial motif.

Simplest of the Southeastern texts is a note by E. A. Hitchcock in his early account of the Creeks shortly after the Removal. It is terse to the point of useless-

ness for comparative purposes, but it shows that the Creeks knew the episode. "A woman, supposed to be an angel, died and was buried by the side of a large hill and from her grave a stalk of corn sprung up. It was seen and watched and attended to and finally the ear that was formed was gathered and shelled and then they had corn" (Hitchcock 1930:125). This strange text probably suffers from Hitchcock's filtering, but his source was an important one, for he claimed to have collected his data from "Tukabahtchi Micco" (i.e., the chief of the town of Tukabahchee). Since Hitchcock was also informed that tobacco grew from the rib of a woman under the same circumstances, it may be that this text expresses an adaptation of a myth that portrayed the origin of plants from the body of a woman.

However, other Creek narratives of the story include further important details. Tuggle's Creek text, collected in 1881, has the grandson return with his wife to visit his former home. But "all was changed. The house was gone. Where it had stood were some tall green stalks. The old woman was not there" (in Swanton 1929:17, Creek #8). The missing house is a clue to the nature of the motif, for in another Creek text the grandmother tells the boy to lock her up in the log cabin, set fire to it, and return to it later. He did so and found corn and beans growing there. "So the corn was a person, that old woman" (Swanton 1929:10–13, Creek #6; see Creek #7 for another similar text).

In addition to the Creek mention of burning, in both of the Natchez corn episodes the boy is careful to kill the old woman before burning her body. It is curious that one text has him kill "Corn-woman" and burn the house "down to a bed of coals" before he leaves, but fails to have him return, making the episode pointless (Swanton 1929:231, Natchez #8). The other text features the two girls who "killed Corn-woman and burned her body and when summer came corn, beans and pumpkins sprang up" (Swanton 1929:230, Natchez #7). The image of the sacrificial burning of the grandmother was apparently a popular one in the Southeast, leading Hatt to characterize the death-motif generally as "immolation."

In the texts thus far discussed, the key concept appears to be the likening of the corn-person, whether male or female, human or buffalo, to seed corn. It is a truism that the nature of agriculture tends to generate the religious concept of death-and-rebirth, a cultural pattern so widely found that no diffusionist explanation is needed. Further, the practices of agriculture lend themselves to mythic description also: the burning of the fields might be reflected in the burning of the house and body, the planting of the seed may be coded as a burial, and the fresh shoot may be seen as rebirth. Independent invention by farmers everywhere is not hard to envision, so these motifs do not demand explanation. The origin of maize from the grave of a corn-person is no surprise. However, the motifs do not necessarily travel as a group in a single plot, and it seems important to examine them in context to determine whether there was a single myth of the dying old woman.

As we have seen, stories of the origin of corn were widely collected in the Southeast. In addition to texts from the Creeks, it is "the most ubiquitous of all Cherokee myths" (Kilpatrick 1966:391). As a matter of fact, however, despite Hatt's references to the death of the Corn Mother as a common tale in the Southeast, the Creek and Cherokee myths are quite different. Both have the corn episode and both have the "blood clot" motif, but there the resemblance ends. The Creek version places the corn episode in the context of a recognizable "Grandson" tale, while the Cherokees put it into the "Lodge-Boy and Thrown-Away" myth. The curious fact that the corn episode is found in two different contexts must be more closely examined. Here is a brief summary of each.

> Creek: An old woman discovered blood (dripping from the roof of a house or lying on the ground) that overnight became a baby, and soon a boy. The youth learned hunting lore and provided game, while the old woman provided corn foods by shaking them from her body. Once the youth had looked beyond the mountain, despite his "grandmother's" warnings not to do so, he wished to leave. The old woman made him special garments made of live birds and rattlesnakes and gave him a flute. After following her instructions to kill her, drag her over the ground and burn the remains, he left. He had a swimming contest with Rabbit, who stole his special garments, but the youth recovered them when the living garments betrayed the thief. After marrying, the youth had a series of competitions with Rabbit (fishing, duplicating his wife by hitting her with an ax) in which Rabbit was made to look foolish. The youth returned to his former home and his grandmother's field, where he found corn growing. [Swanton 1929:10–17, Creek #6, #7, #8]

> Cherokee: A couple ("Kanati" [Hunter] and "Selu" [Corn]) and their son discovered another youth had grown in a river from blood washed off dead game by Selu. He was trapped and domesticated. Following their father to a cave in which all the animals were kept, the boys released the game, incurring the anger of their father for making hunting difficult. When they discovered that their mother produced corn from her body, they killed her, following her instructions to drag her body over the ground. Their father fled to the Wolf people, who were killed by the boys when they attacked. After several "dreadnaughts" adventures, such as killing the swamp-panther and some cannibals, the boys joined their parents in the sky. [Mooney 1900:242–249, #3]

Coding of the episodes of these two narratives graphically illustrates the differences between them (read down).

| CREEK | CHEROKEE |
| --- | --- |
| Blood clot | Blood clot/LBTA (var.) |
| | + |
| | Hoarded game |
| + | |
| Taboo: Mountain | |
| + | + |
| Corn: body source/death | Corn: body source/death |
| + | |
| Garments | |
| + | |
| Rabbit | |
| | + |
| | Father flees |
| | + |
| | Adventures |

Now, since the blood-clot motif (the birth of a child from a blood clot of various origins: motif T541.1, Thompson 1929:322, note 165) is not normally found in the LBTA cycle, and since it certainly seems extraneous in the Cherokee narrative, we may suspect immediately that it is intrusive there. It appears to be more integral to the Creek text, but that bears closer examination. Bert Gerow has already done a distribution study of the blood-clot motif, and M. L. Sumner did a similar one for the LBTA episode, which greatly facilitates this examination of the two complexes and their Southeastern corn episode (Gerow 1950; Sumner 1951). As Gerow's collection of texts shows, similarities of episodes show that the Creek texts belong with the Grandson texts found among the Dakota, Ponca, and Iowa (Gerow 1950:109). The Creek text thus does not stand alone, since it bears close resemblance to the Plains Siouan texts and should be grouped with them. The opening episode, the blood-clot motif, is also found as a link to the same group, for the Ponca (Dorsey 1890:48), Iowa (Skinner 1925:450–456, #5), and Skidi Pawnee (Dorsey 1904d:80–88, #24) all have the blood-clot motif and an episode in which the boy kills the oppressive bear, as well as yet other episodes related to the Creek tale—but they do not include the maize myth as an episode. The grandmother whose body becomes the origin of maize thus appears to be a Southeastern episode added to a Plains Siouan version of the Grandson myth with the blood-clot motif.

The Cherokee LBTA myth in which the maize origin myth is found is also widely told (Sumner 1951). In the Southeast there is a separate Creek text of LBTA, and the Cherokee and Creek texts share two episodes, LBTA and hoarded game. The remainder of the two texts, however, is not shared, suggesting two different

mythic traditions. In the Southeast, then, the full LBTA myth is represented only by the Creek and Cherokee texts, and they differ from each other. The Cherokee text stands alone in the Southeast, but there are fairly close cognates from the Seneca (Curtin and Hewitt 1918:176–180, #34), Micmac (Rand 1894:62), Ojibwa (Radin 1915a:81), Menomini (Skinner and Satterlee 1915:332–341), and Pawnee (Dorsey 1906:142–155, #39). The affinity is shown by the cannibal and wolf-ballgame episodes. The Creek affinities—on the basis of the episodes of "Burr-woman" (who sticks on a boy's back until removed by the father) and "Thunderbird-nest" (in which the boys steal or destroy eggs or fledglings in a nest) are with the Iowa (Skinner 1925:427), Omaha (Dorsey 1890:215), and Sauk (Sac) and Fox (Lasley 1902:176).

The contextual situation of the maize-woman myth in the Southeast, when subjected to this sort of comparative examination, seems more complex than Hatt recognized, although he argued that "[t]he Corn Mother tales are most complex in the southeastern area in North America—although the Corn Mother concept seems to have no ritual or religious significance in that area . . . the Corn Mother myth is probably preserved there in its oldest form" (Hatt 1951:906–907). This comparative analysis, however, points to a more modest conclusion. The Cherokees did not have the Grandson myth, but the Creeks did, and their texts show affinities with the northern Siouans. To that Grandson myth the Creeks attached the maize-woman episodes. Both Creeks and Cherokees told variants of the Twins/LBTA myth, but their affinities were to different clusters: Iroquois and Central Algonkians for the Cherokees, and, again, Plains Siouans for the Creeks. Moreover, it was to this myth that the Cherokees added the maize-woman episode, one not shared by their affinity group. The conclusion seems clear: even though the maize-woman episode does not appear in an independent rendition, it should be considered a separate myth, a free-floating story that was known in the Southeast, but was inserted into two different *nonmaize* myth frameworks by the Creeks and Cherokees.

### *The Corn-Woman's Body Is Dragged*

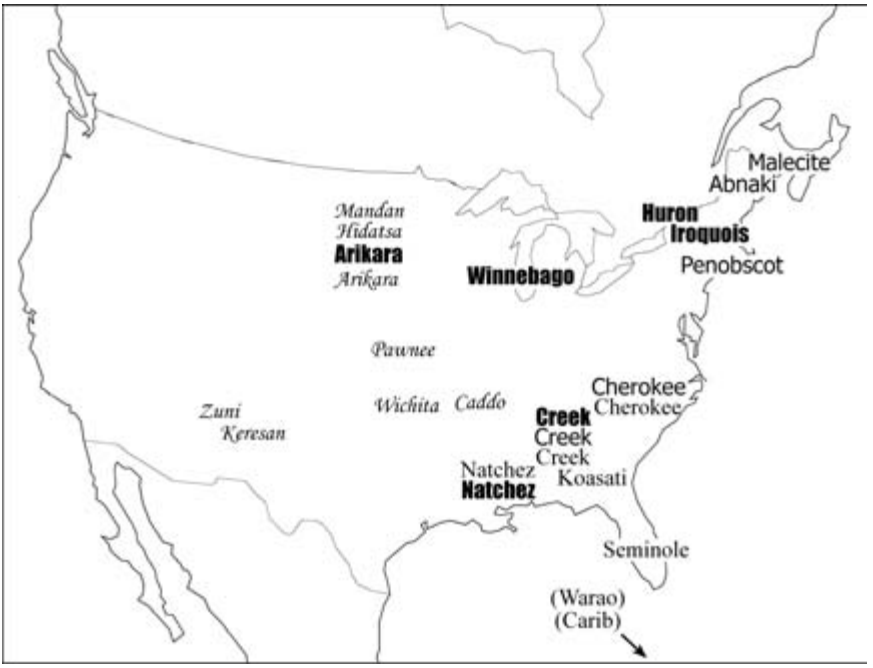
What appears to be a special group within the corn-from-grave motif-complex involves the dragging of the body of the Corn-Woman over the ground before her burial in it (see Figure 2.3). The detail is also found in a small group of Algonkian tribes in the Northeast. An Abnaki (Wabanaki) text has the woman appear to a hunter, who begs her to stay with him. She grants his request by telling him to drag her over burned ground by her hair, which is then identified with the corn silk (Brown 1890:214). A text from the Malecite has a man marry the beautiful daughter of a chief; when they are old and she is ready to die, he begs her not to leave. The rest is the same as the Abnaki version, with the addition of a specific seven times that he is to drag her body around the field (Mechling 1914:87–88).

The same detail is present in both Penobscot texts, even though they are not

identical. One is largely the same as the preceding, being a tale of a long and happy marriage that ends in the dragging instructions. The number seven appears in the form of the seven moons that must pass before the corn is ripe. An additional specification is that her bones must be buried in the middle of the field; the reason becomes clear when corn springs from the dragged-off flesh and tobacco grows from the bones (Nicolar 1893:58ff.). Frank Speck collected an interesting variant from the same tribe; the dragging motif is the same as Nicolar's text, but it serves as the conclusion to the widely known tale of the "Snake-Paramour." The details are the same, with the exception of a growth period of only seven days (rather than months) for the corn and tobacco (Speck 1935a:75).

Both of the Penobscot texts account for the origin of tobacco as well as corn with this legend. An important detail appears in both corn texts: "he beheld something trailing behind her right foot which appeared like a long green blade. Upon reaching the shore she stooped down and with her right hand picked it off the trail, cast it into the water and the thing floated away" (Nicolar 1893:58). "Clinging to her ankle was a long green blade of a plant resembling grass" (Speck 1935a:75). It will be recalled that this precise detail appeared in the two texts from the Dakota discussed above. The very insignificance of the detail in relation to the plot suggests its significance for comparative purposes. It links two areas together, the Northeast and the northern Plains (or northern Mississippi Valley). It also links—at least in part—two motif-groupings, the dragging texts and the simpler appearance motif. The actual meaning of the detail of the green streamer is obscure, as examination of the four texts shows, but its very existence is useful for this study. The Penobscot linking of Snake-Paramour and the streamer and one Dakota identification of the streamer as a snake may indicate an earlier plot significance of the detail, but that is speculative at best, since no informant now seems to know more about it than the datum itself.

The only Creek text that has the specification of the dragged body is Creek #7. This one compromises with the burning tradition by including both: "take me and drag me all around over that place and burn me up, and after three months come over and look at me." The compromise seems to be with the Cherokee tradition, for the dragged-body motif appears to be standard in all the texts except one (the Moravian text) in which the dragging motif was clearly simply omitted (Baillou 1961:100–101). Burning of the body is absent in all texts. While there are variations in the contexts of the five other texts, the corn episode seems firm. Mooney's texts include the detail of dragging her body around the field seven times, but add that the boys did it only twice, "which is the reason why the Indians still work their crop but twice" (Mooney 1900:242ff. = Mooney 1888:97ff.; Mooney claimed to have collected this text several times and treated it as standard knowledge among the Eastern Cherokees). Corn sprang up overnight from the drops of blood, but the emphasis on seven is carried through an episode in which seven grains of corn




2.3. Distribution of Corn-Woman motifs: *Corn Mother,* body source, **death,** dragging.

are given to a visiting tribe with the injunction to plant the corn daily with constant watching for seven days. The strangers fell asleep the sixth night, and "ever since the corn must be watched and tended through half the year, which before would grow and ripen in a night." This episode is also included in the most recent version, which, however, has both corn and beans springing from the drops of blood (Traveller Bird 1974:28ff.). The other two Cherokee texts do not add any significant information, both being content with the statement that she was dragged and that the corn grew up overnight (Kilpatrick 1966:187ff., 391).

## Summary and Conclusions

This completes the survey of major maize myths of eastern North America. While there are undoubtedly some texts that escaped detection, it seems safe to consider these as indicative of the various groups of corn myths. Those texts have been categorized in three groups: maize as a commodity, primary myths, and secondary myths, with subcategories in each. Where has this survey taken us?

The major difficulty of splitter-oriented analysis is that it is tedious and long,

both for the researcher and for the reader, because many texts must be read and placed in appropriate categories. The upside of this approach is that it should produce several different distribution patterns. Those, in turn, may lead to some hypotheses about origins and directions of prehistoric diffusion of myths and motifs.

What insights has this study produced? Several things seem clear at this point, even though the utilized database is almost certainly not exhaustive, and there are inevitable gaps in the coverage.

- There are several female maize traditions. One widespread group of myths features a woman who is portrayed as an owner of plants, including maize. She may be originally an Earth Mother figure who has been portrayed both as a hoarder of plants and as a giver of seeds. The myths are best described as stories of human attainment of various commodities by several different methods: theft, winning by contest, petition, direct encounter, and unsought gift. When maize is included as one of the commodities, it seems to be an adaptation of the original tradition. One strong expression of this Earth Mother tradition is the Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies of the northern Siouans.
- Variants of this maize-as-a-gift tradition include birds, humans, and buffalo as agents of the gift.
- A Corn Mother appears, largely in the Southwest and Caddoan myths, as an embodiment of maize in ritual. This is also shown as a corollary group of Corn Maidens. The secondary maize myth of the gift by filling of a corncrib may be associated primarily with this tradition.
- Another Corn-Woman tradition of embodiment of maize is seen primarily in the Southeast, with extensions into other areas of the Eastern Woodlands. This mythic cluster may have been influenced by the Southwestern Corn Mother, but there is a distinctive set of motifs surrounding this figure: her body as a source of maize, her death, burning or dragging of her body, and growth of corn plants from her grave. These motifs are similar to ones that are found in the northern part of South America (Carib and Warao), where they describe the source of manioc, the local staple crop. That the death-and-rebirth agricultural metaphor is a separate emphasis is demonstrated in the incorporation of it in different—and probably preexisting—myths by the Creeks and Cherokees, as well as by the appearance of it in some of the Corn-Boy myths.
- There is a Corn-Boy origin tradition, coupled with a marriage contest that mostly features a male corn figure. It is found largely in the Great Lakes region. It has parallels that may be directly related to it, found now in the Southwest (Hopi, Cochiti, and other Southwestern groups), in Florida (Seminole), and in Mesoamerica (Maya and other groups).

These groupings make it clear that adaptation of existing myths to include maize was an important technique in many different areas. The existence of an Earth Mother/Grandmother figure appears to have preceded the arrival of maize, a hypothesis that should not be surprising in view of the antiquity of plant gathering and the "Owner of Nature" principle.

In regard to specific maize divinities, there appear to be three major focal points. (1) A Corn Mother seems rooted in the Southwestern emergence tradition and appears to have produced little diffusion to the east. (2) A separate female maize figure seems native to the Southeast, with confusing scatters of diffusion in the Eastern Woodlands. Even in the Southeast, however, there is not really a single maize figure. Hatt assumed they were the same because the Cherokee and Muskhogean females, although drawn from different older myths, possess several characteristic agricultural motifs that seem to have been derived from the South American tradition of the Manioc Grandmother. Their rooting in different North American mythic frameworks, however, reveals this situation to be the diffusion and adaptation of those special motifs, not a divinity. (3) The third maize figure is the diminutive male figure focused in the Great Lakes region, but found in other locations such as the Southwest and Florida. Parallels found in southern Mexico suggest that the origin of this figure may be in Mesoamerica. This cluster of maize myths thus constitutes important evidence for inclusion in the ongoing discussion of Mesoamerican connections to the Eastern Woodlands.

Conclusion: there are three different kinds of maize figures, different mythic biographies, and different geographic locations. Several complicated divinities, but no single goddess with a single mythic corpus.

This list of different maize traditions is the result of a splitting analysis. How does this compare to the results of Hatt's lumping approach? Where Hatt found a single Corn Mother in different mythic variations, this study finds stories of maize divinities who appear to be separate figures. Hatt's focus on that single divinity tended to de-emphasize the differences in details, a generalizing process that then permitted the equation of the Corn-Woman with the Manioc-Mother of South America by dismissing the change of plants (maize versus manioc). That same procedure enabled him to connect the "New World" Corn Mother with a rice divinity in Southeast Asia. These comparisons make it clear that the common features—the most likely diffused traits—are the body-source motif and the standard vegetation motif of death and rebirth. It thus seems difficult to conclude more than a diffusion of these two ideas rather than specific divinities.

The splitting approach results in a more complicated picture of multiple collisions of motifs and themes through time and across space in North America. Although the original roots of the myths, one of which must be some sort of Earth Mother tradition, cannot be clearly identified and sourced, a limited sense of the

diffusion of particular motifs in recent centuries is gained from comparison of the multiple traditions identified.

Contrary to Gudmund Hatt's conclusion, this approach argues that what he traced was not a goddess, but an agricultural motif of death-and-rebirth. His response might be that the splitting approach has divided the corpus in ways that create artificial separations in what is really a single story of a goddess told in many variations. Which is correct? The answer to that question probably should be sought more in the philosophical issues embedded in inductive versus deductive reasoning than in the corpus of maize myths.

# II
# LOOKING FOR LOST RITUALS

# 3
# Red and White

> According to Tal Mutcasi, the medicine maker of Asilanabi and Thlathlogalga, seven selected men were putting the four logs together to make a foundation, and, as they were making the foundation, "there was a fire built" and it was said of the four main sticks: "They shall be the white path. There shall be peace and harmony."
>
> —Swanton 1929:547

The ethnographic materials on the Southeastern Native American peoples make it clear that this reference to a white path in an origin myth is much more than a colorful metaphor for the occasion. "Red" and "white" are thought to capture a dualistic vision of reality that was applied to individuals, clans, towns, political structure, nations, and the cosmos. Like all metaphors, the two-color scheme refers to many different shades of signification and is thus inherently ambiguous. To an unusual degree, however, the colors red and white have been attributed in many different realms of human reality, by ethnographers if not by the original people who used the metaphor, to an array of applications so bewilderingly broad that it greatly heightens the ambiguity. Red and white dualism appears so pervasive in Southeastern Native American thought, and seems to mean so many things, that it is in danger of becoming meaningless.

This chapter has as its goal a clarification of the basic symbolic concept of red and white. On the surface, that would seem a simple task, for many definitions and clarifications have been offered through the years, all of them revolving around the basic dualism of war and peace. Those various extensions of the root idea, however, are not obviously coherent, and the concept is not clear unless each application of the metaphor is also clear. Each application must therefore be examined for its own peculiar twist on the meaning of the metaphor, which is made difficult by two factors in particular. First, many of the ancient applications no longer exist in contemporary Native American cultures, whether in the Southeast or in Oklahoma, thanks to the continuing change in cultural institutions before and since the forced Removal of the 1830s. There is, therefore, limited assistance that can be given by the current generation that, nonetheless, still knows and uses the basic

metaphor. Second, the ancient applications of the color dualism are now known only from historical documents, and those observations are subject to ethnohistorical analysis. Simply because a European made a comment does not make it so, and the interpretations of later scholars are subject to reinterpretation. Examination of red and white thus entails a consideration of the historical evidence, a weighing of the scholarly interpretations, the drawing of inferences from anthropological models where possible, and some speculation.

It seems important to recognize a preliminary assumption of this chapter. Examination of other ideational material of the Southeast, particularly legends and visual iconography, has demonstrated that there is a two-fold aspect to much of it (Lankford 1987; 2007b). On the one hand there is a wide distribution of the same or similar ideas, themes, and images, but on the other hand there is local adaptation of them to the particular conditions and preexisting worldview of a given people. The student of symbolic constructs is therefore constantly caught in the tension between the general and the specific, between the overall pattern and the twists on it in the concrete manifestations. To reduce the danger of creating a synthetic construct that never existed in reality, the examination will be focused on the Muskogee, often referred to as Creeks, with limited borrowing of interpretive concepts from studies of other peoples. Observations of other Southeastern peoples' applications of the red and white metaphor will be used sparingly for comparison and confirmation. The applications themselves seem best examined by structural level: personal, *talwa,* clan, and cosmos.

Southeastern peoples—indeed, Native Americans in general—have always impressed European observers with their fondness for their children, an affectionate attitude that seemed to the discipline-oriented outsiders to have resulted in indulgence to the point of irresponsibility. (Most of the early reporters commented on the practice of scratching children's legs to make them bleed, but they also noted that the "punishment" was a routine training technique that had several different purposes.) There may have been more discipline than they saw, however, because in a matrilineal society, uncles, not fathers, are likely to be charged with the teaching of the young males, and some of the European comments could have arisen from the observation of indulgent fathers at play with their children. We do know that the elders of the clan—every child, male or female, was born into its mother's clan—chastised the young who did not seem to be behaving in a proper manner. "In every clan in each town there was one man (a pawa, 'maternal uncle') looked to keep his eye on the young people in his clan, lecture them at the annual busk [green corn ceremony] and at other times, and if necessary chastise them" (Swanton 1928a:365).

It seems significant, however, that the discipline of the young was predicated on an assumption that the young will find their route into socialization by way of enculturation—they will learn to behave correctly by absorbing the correct mental

outlook from those around them. The elders did not appear concerned with "training" the young into the proper path, especially not by coercion or punishment (except, perhaps, for those older youths who did not seem ready for warrior status). For the young person, this is an important educational concept; it means that the responsibility for growth and discipline is personal, not social, and that the battle for self-control is internal, rather than external. As a young Muskogee male confronted the universal reality of the drive for self-gratification, he was made to see that his task was not obedience to the other people, but the finding of internal resources that made him master of his own emotions and thoughts. It was surely not coincidental that the male society he saw around him was a model of that internal reality.[1] His first major goal in becoming an adult was to achieve success in war. Only an achievement in courage and violence could give him the necessary public recognition to secure for him a war-name and a place among the warriors. John Swanton observed that "young men remain in a kind of disgrace, and are obliged to light pipes, bring wood, and help cook black-drink for the warriors, and perform all the menial services of the public square, until they shall have performed some warlike exploit that may procure them a war-name, and a seat in the square at the black-drink" (Swanton 1928a:366). Until he reached that point, he was a child, regardless of his age or knowledge. When he became a warrior, however, he reached a new plateau, signified by his taking a seat in the "red" section of the council house or square ground. Other grades of warrior stretched out before the young man—each new accomplishment brought new names, titles, and prestige—but they were all on that same red plateau.

Beyond that plateau of the world of the warrior was another plateau, designated "white." That world was inhabited by men who were generally older, most of them made white by public acclaim and recognition of certain qualities in their personalities. Political leaders inhabited the white world, and there were several different ranks of them, just as there were in the warriors' world. More important than the similarity, however, was the important difference that warriors could participate in white activities such as thinking through the political needs of the people and planning for the future—the council's tasks—but the "white" men were forbidden to participate in the activities of the warriors, whether planning a raid or the violence of war.

That structure, which will be discussed more fully below, carried a message about the Muskogee vision of the growth of male personality that must surely have been interpreted for the young early in their lives. Men begin in the red world of courage, violence, death, war, and all the emotions that go with them, but they can develop the internal self-control that moves them, as individuals, beyond those activities and emotions into a realm in which the characteristics are calmness, harmony, thought, clear reason, order—in a word, control. The social structure of the Muskogee male world embodied a further message: all men can be "red," but only

a few can be "white," and that whiteness lies beyond all red achievements, no matter how great.

From these two realms of male identity and adult self-awareness emerges a lifelong personal use of the red/white metaphor. Not only is one's long-term identity as a male in society either red or white, one is also red or white at any given moment. If one is experiencing anger or other hostile feelings, one is in the red mode, but if one is calm, reasoning, dispassionate, one is white. Feelings and mental states thus tend to become dichotomized—one is either red or white most of the time. From this use of the metaphor to assess one's current state comes a logical extension—personal relationships. When one finds that a hostile relationship exists with another person—either or both wish the other harm, expect harm from the other, and live in a state of readiness for hostile acts—then one is on the "red path" or "red road" in relation to the other person.[2] In this case the metaphor expresses a long-term relationship. To be on the red path with one person does not influence other relationships; one could well be on the white path with everyone else. And reconciliation with the hostile person could change that relationship from red to white. In this case, it should be noted, the metaphor differs from its meaning as a personal assessment in that the person on a red path need not necessarily be experiencing the violent emotions or thoughts at any particular moment. It is the relationship that is red, and it is thus possible for redness to be dispassionate without losing its metaphoric value.

White/red dualism as expressed in personal relationships is also evident in the political context. The basic political unit of the Muskogee world was the *talwa* (*idalwa, i:dalwa, talwu*), usually poorly translated as "town." It was a group of people united in having a single square ground and a single sacred fire kept in the center of the square. "Town" is not a helpful translation for two reasons. Through fusion or adoption it was possible for people living in another location to claim to be of the same talwa, accepting the one square ground and fire, and thus a single governmental council; in fact, the phrase "to be of one fire" became a metaphor expressing this unity. The second problem with "town" is that it fails to convey the significance of the talwa in the lives of Muskogees; far more than just a municipal locality, it was more like a nation in its sovereignty. It is significant that the major governmental form larger than the talwa through the 18th century was a confederacy, which is the best unifying compromise that can be reached with a group of participants who will not yield their sovereignty. Historical events through that period show that talwas could go to war or refuse to go to war, unilaterally, and there was no higher coercive power.

The talwa was thus the most important form of political structure in the Muskogee world. As already observed, it was governed by a council of males divided into two groups, the red and the white. Swanton gathered all of the available evi-

dence about this council in his ethnographic classic, but the information was so contradictory that he was never able to construct a single coherent system of it that applied across the board to all talwas (Swanton 1928a:1–427). Even so, it is possible to sketch the outlines, as has been done by several scholars of the Southeast, especially Charles Hudson (1976).

Let us begin with the red side, even though it was subordinate to the white. From the viewpoint of the maturing Muskogee male, the red side came first. The newly created warrior probably had little more to his credit than having accompanied a raid in which horses or women were stolen, or a man killed. That was enough, however, to propel the youth into the council, where he sat among the young warriors, the *tasikayalgi.* Warriors who had achieved prestige by valorous deeds were tattooed with their honors and raised to the ranks of the *imathlas.* Above the imathlas were the "war chiefs," the *tastanagalgi:* those distinguished warriors who led in battle, were trusted by the lesser warriors as leaders, and who spoke authoritatively as the council deliberated on the issues before the talwa. They were headed by the war chief (*tastanagi thlako*), an assistant war chief, and a war speaker (*hothlibonaya*), a major orator who articulated the views of the war chief in council deliberations (Swanton 1928a:296–302). All of these men comprised the red side of the council, which was characterized by personal achievement. The red side thus constituted a meritocracy in which any male (and possibly exceptional females) could rise in rank and prestige simply by his own feats.

The white side was composed of the primary leaders of the council. The head chief, or *miko,* appears to have been chosen from a particular clan, even though the clan differed from talwa to talwa. Swanton found that the most popular clan for mikos among the Muskogee was the Bear clan, found as chief clan in eight talwas (Swanton 1928a:194–196). The miko was but one of a group of mikos who sat together in council. He also had an assistant called a *heniha,* who was himself one of a group of second-level leaders, the *henihalgi.* He was apparently much like a "chief of staff" who saw to it that all the administrative work was done. He was especially charged to see that the rituals in the square ground were well organized. Moreover, the head miko had a *yatika,* a speaker who was expected to be gifted in the prized Native American art of oratory and who expressed the views of the miko on issues before the council (Swanton 1928a:276–295). The white side of the council also included the retired elderly men who had spent their active adult lives as warriors—on the red side. When they were no longer able physically to go to war, they became *isti atcacagi,* "beloved men," and they changed their color from red to white and moved to a new "bed" in the square ground (Swanton 1928a:303). David H. Corkran says there are only two recorded instances of women who reached this status of "beloved woman," but the existence of the possibility indicates that even the sexual exclusiveness of the square ground was not absolute (Corkran 1967:30).

Remarking on the uncertain and perhaps changing nature of the office of miko,

head chief, Swanton quotes Stiggins's description of the ritual of institution of a miko:

> When it is thought necessary for the principal men or committee of townsmen to make a new mic co, they proceed very ceremoniously in their rude way to his inauguration, to wit without his being previously consulted on the subject, when they have made the determination to effect it, and at their townhouse assembly they advance up to him, and call him at the same time in a loud, long, and shrill tone by a name that he is thereafter to go by with the addition of mic co, for instance such as yo holo micco or Ispocoga mic co, etc.; and at the same time they smear his face all over with white clay, a ceremony imitating in importance the accolade of knighthood and Sir. [in Swanton 1928a:292]

This observation is worthy of note on several counts. For one thing, the rite of passage employs a very dramatic visual form—the chief is literally made "white" with clay. The nature of his selection, however, suggests that he is not being *made* white; his whiteness is but being recognized. Stiggins makes it clear that the new miko did not seek the office or campaign for it; in fact, he was not even consulted. It is likely that he was already among the *mikalgi,* and thus was already white, but he was not privy to the choice. Since it was possible for a miko to resign, it was probably also possible for him to refuse the position to begin with, but we have no information on this. It is clear, however, that the personal qualities that make a good miko were identified by his peers, and he was chosen in a way that was not overtly political. This parallels the process of selecting a man to move into the white realm from the red; Swanton says that "vacancies in the row of mikos were filled by the remaining mikos in consultation with the tastanagis, who were called over to the Chiefs' bed to confer about the matter. The man selected was escorted to his seat by another miko or by a tastanagi" (Swanton 1928a:284).

This process fits well with the general Native American attitude toward self-promotion. It is normally the case that the man of worth will not be found pointing it out to others. Instead, his virtues are to be identified by others, and when public office is at issue, no one worthy of filling it will seek it, because that is clearly a form of arrogance.[3] Because of this custom, it is all the more surprising to discover that the Southeastern peoples indulged in a boasting ritual called "striking the post." After returning from a raid, all of the warriors who had participated took turns striking a post near the complex of public buildings; each told his version of the battle, highlighting his role in it and tallying his coups and kills. On reflection, however, this exception to the rule of humility is not difficult to understand. In a warrior system in which prestige and rank are dependent on prowess, it is important to make sure that military achievements are accurately recorded in memory.

In a nonliterate society it becomes even more important that it be done very publicly, since the only record of what happened will be the oral tradition and the tattoos on the body of the warrior. "Striking the post" can therefore be understood as the debriefing of the warriors to reconstruct what happened, and it provides the warriors a chance to dispute events until they arrive at a "negotiated history." Outside of that particular ritual and its repetitions, it is likely that a warrior never mentioned his own accomplishments, leaving it to his fellows to speak on his behalf if it ever became necessary.

It is possible to see in this custom of humility a reflection of the deeper meaning of leadership in the Native American tradition. Plains tribes have been very forthright in identifying as the major quality of a chief his unselfish attitude of concern for the group, and that virtue is identified early in such acts as his giving of meat and hides to widows and orphans. That quality of submerging personal need beneath the group's needs was almost certainly also part of the Southeastern vision of the role of chief. Even though that vision may now be but a historical memory, it is not far-fetched to see it reflected in the process by which the miko was chosen. The virtue of unselfishness or identification with the entire talwa may well be an important clue to the understanding of the nature of whiteness.

Two other classes of males in Muskogee society are not referred to in the materials dealing with the red and white divisions. There is little direct evidence of berdaches, whether understood as homosexuals or transvestites, in the Muskogee literature, but they were amply documented among the 16-century Timucua, and there is no reason to doubt their existence in Muskogee life. Since the Timucua classed them with the women, or in an intermediate realm between men and women, it is likely that they had the same status among the Muskogee, and thus they would have been exempt from classification as red or white, just as were the women.

The case of the priests, however, is not so easily dealt with. They were clearly present in Muskogee life in significant numbers: at least one for each talwa to preside over important rituals, each one with several students, and perhaps several more who accompanied war parties and led the appropriate rituals for the warriors. James Adair, author of *History of the American Indians,* referred to "high priests," but the ethnographic data about them is vague. None of the observers of Southeastern communities seem to have made the time-honored anthropological distinction between priests who lead in community ritual and shamans who specialize in healing and other personal services, but both functions were accomplished, and it seems likely that internal distinctions were made among religious practitioners (see chapter 1). Our problem is whether they were red or white—which is to say, how did they fit in the political structure of the talwa?

In light of the lack of evidence, only a speculation is possible: they were neither white nor red. It does not seem likely that they would have been active in warfare (their powers would have been more important than their military prowess), but

it must be noted that a religious practitioner accompanied warriors and performed the appropriate rituals; that priest could have been considered red. It seems clear, though, that the leading priest was focused on the white activities of the square ground, particularly the building of the annual new fire, the "white path" referred to in the opening quotation. On that occasion, and perhaps on others, he wore a ritual outfit of white leather and feathers. If he and his compatriots were not accorded white status, then they, including the priests who dealt in war, were probably considered in a category beyond the red/white division. There are references to their places of honor in the council, sitting near the miko in the "white bed" ("bed" being a term often used for the banks of seats facing the sacred fire in the center). Then, too, it may not be coincidental that priests-in-training were identified by the white deerskins they wore (Swanton 1928b:617–628)

Excluding the berdaches, priests, and uninitiated children from the council's red and white divisions, the system incorporated all of the males of the talwa. Given the exclusion of women from this political process, those who gathered in the square ground formed a fairly democratic basis for talwa decision-making. This group adopted the red/white metaphor to describe their organization. What does the use of that metaphor say about the nature of the organization? For one thing, it makes it clear that two divisions are intended, an observation that may seem obvious until the importance of quadripartite divisions in Native American thought is considered. The square ground itself had four houses facing the fire in the center. The more obvious organization would be to distinguish four groups, but the metaphor points out only two, which then makes the square ground seating plan a bit less orderly than it might have been. The red and white divisions must therefore express some important understanding of the nature of the talwa or the decision-making process.

Raymond D. Fogelson has suggested in regard to the Cherokee that the division was basically a separation of the old men from the young (Fogelson 1977:185–194). In that all the old men are "white," it seems the Muskogee system does that, but it presumes that all men in the white division are old, which is not a given if some positions are based on ascribed rather than achieved status. The basic meaning of red and white (basic in the sense that it is always supplied as part of the definition) is that they refer to war and peace, and that reality is certainly expressed in the warrior structure of the red division. The warriors were inevitably defined as a group, both by the process of becoming a warrior (initiation and trial) and by the common experiences of going to war together. Moreover, they were defined in a sacred way, since the process of going to war was looked upon as a special kind of activity, one that was not part of normal life. This was indicated by the use of ritual before and after a war party to set off the event; the rituals included purification of the men in order to participate and transformation of the returning men by moving them to higher rank or honor. Joel Martin has summarized the process succinctly:

> Muskogees prepared for war by holding special council meetings, drinking purifying tea, and consulting diviners. If the latter discerned favorable signs, a war party, rarely more than a few dozen men, was organized. While on an excursion, warriors sang special songs in camp, adorned themselves with paints, talismans, and accoutrements, and fed themselves by hunting their enemies' game or slaughtering their livestock. After a swift raid on the enemy, the band of warriors returned home and underwent a period of purification. Because they were still considered ritually charged and dangerous, their movements and activities in the village space were carefully regulated. [Martin 1991:187]

The nature of the entire experience as a rite of passage makes it clear that to be a part of that group was a major part of one's personal growth. Moreover, whether as cause or effect, the military ranking system and the prestige accompanying rank were linked to self-knowledge and self-esteem for each individual. These were the stages of adulthood for most males, so important to each man that Ross Hassig has even suggested that the loss of warfare as a means of gaining prestige was a major cause of the Creek War of 1814, a rebellion of the young warriors against the sustained peace of their elders—or possibly a rebellion of red against white (Hassig 1974:251–271). The red division was therefore an internally coherent and well-defined one, quite apart from any contrast with the whites. Whether a man was a warrior was not ambiguous—a man knew his rank and bore it upon his chest.

The clarity of the red membership argues that the white should have been equally well defined. While it would be theoretically possible to conceive of it as the leftovers, those who were not red (and the presence of the retired red, the beloved men, could argue for that), there are several reasons for thinking that the white was as selective and defined a group as the red. For one thing, as has been mentioned, there was a selection process. Some men, formerly red, were chosen to become white. There is also evidence that in at least some talwas the leading men of particular clans were white. V. J. Knight Jr. has offered a study of Southeastern hereditary leadership in which he demonstrates that ranked exogamous matrilineal clans could have produced the sorts of stratified political system described for the Natchez and Timucua in particular, and he has suggested that this sort of clan basis for the chiefly class may have once been true for the Muskogee (Knight 1990:1–23). Swanton found good evidence for clan "ownership" of the miko and other roles in the talwa, as noted above. Clan control of offices argues that at least some of the whites were in that division by ascribed status rather than achievement, while all reds were in their ranks by achievement. It also suggests that all whites were not necessarily elderly; the miko could very well be a young man quite capable of being a good warrior. Another defining characteristic of the white division was the existence of ritual behavior (such as painting with white clay) to iden-

tify whites, which demonstrates that public recognition of a man's entry into the white realm was considered important. It is provocative to reflect on the archaeological discovery that the troughs on the fronts of the clay seats in the Okmulgee earth lodge were filled with dried white clay, a possible indication that Muskogee council members were painting their bodies or faces white with regularity as far back as the 12th century A.D.

Another indication of the careful separate defining of the white side was the existence of taboos for them, the most important of them being a prohibition against their involvement in violence. Thomas Nairne noted in 1708 that the miko "was not to be guilty of shedding the Least Blood" (Nairne 1988:38). The meaning of this in personal terms is clear: a "white" man could not be part of the red division's martial activities—white could not be red.

Just as there was behavior that was not appropriate for a white, there was also some idea of what was expected in their lives as a replacement for warrior activity. Whites were to meet frequently in council, of which they were the leaders, and there may have been a daily informal council meeting in which whites gathered in the public buildings, whether square ground, lodge, or open plaza, to talk about talwa concerns. Whites were to see to it that appropriate rituals surrounded council activities, especially the use of "white drink," ritual regalia, and the annual busk, the green corn ceremony of world renewal. Those rituals were white, and the major portions of the busk, the most important single festival of the year, were enacted as a central part of the very architecture of the square ground. The building of the new fire with four logs in the center was the "white path," and it was received *ab origine* and reenacted annually on the "white day."

Probably the single most important fact of the red/white structure is that the white miko was the overall chief who presided in council and sat in the place of honor in the white bed that in most towns was located in the center of the western side. When an issue was to be discussed, the miko (or his yatika) began it; the speech making went by rank through the white division, then moved to the red side, where it proceeded by rank (Swanton 1928b:558). It thus seems fair to say that the institution of the male talwa council and the buildings that went with it composed a white enterprise. The major political decisions of the talwa were made by council, which was a white institution. In at least this sense, then, white was predominant in Muskogee life.

How, then, should we interpret the red presence in council? How are the red and white related? Which is to ask, what is the nature of this dual organization? It may be important that the red side went into a war mode by a definite ritual process. One of the consequences of that process is that the warriors—when meeting in council—were not at war. They sat in seats colored red and bore their red identity, but they were not ritually participants in war status. This could indicate that they were not really red except when at war, but it surely means that they were able to participate in a white activity, however their status was understood. In short, their

presence and participation in council means the red could penetrate the white—the two divisions were not mutually exclusive.

This is borne out by some ethnographic observations that peace embassies were sent by council, but that the red division usually made up the embassy itself. Reds were thus the implementers of a white act, another confusion of the separateness of the two. White makes some penetration of the red, as well. It seems a bit paradoxical that war can only be declared by the council—only white can turn affairs over to the red. At the same time, the council will later have to declare peace, which means that the council must continue to meet and function even though the talwa is at war. The white thus continues to exist simultaneously with the red, and the red activities are circumscribed by the white. Then, too, it is interesting to speculate on what might be the behavior of a "white" male who found himself one of the few defenders of the village in the absence of the warriors. If there were a surprise attack, would he remain white or would he become red for the occasion by necessity?

In classic studies of the fluid nature of social structure, Fred Gearing analyzed the "structural poses" of the Cherokee village (Gearing 1958; 1962). He found that both the organizational structure and the individual social role varied throughout the year according to the task to be accomplished. Gearing identified four poses routinely taken by the village: an aggregate of households, an aggregate of clans, an elder/clan council, and a war organization (see his chart, Gearing 1958:1151). In regard to the last two, he pointed out the interpenetration of the two poses: "A Cherokee young man, as he moved back and forth from the structural pose for war activities to the pose for village councils, shifted his loyalties and his relative status. Most importantly, he shifted from coercion-tinged war relationships, in which he feared the wrath of the prominent war leaders and perhaps was feared by warriors in ranks beneath him, to noncoercive deferential relations with gentle clan elders and village priest officials" (Gearing 1958:1155).

This very helpful corrective to the constraints of a traditional understanding of social institutions as fixed structures seems to apply well to the Muskogee talwa as well as the Cherokee village. Gearing manages to maintain the complexities inherent in the individual's participation in multiple structural poses, and those same problems are visible in the Creek world, particularly in the red/white dualism. Despite the complex interpenetrations, however, the emphasis appeared to the European observers to be one of separating the functions of war and peace. Nairne provided an early observation of Muskogee and Chickasaw practices; he noted that in 1708 the head miko of the Chickasaw was in disrepute because he had failed to observe the rules:

> The kings own mismanagement brought his Authority to be disregarded, and that engaging himselfe in such Actions as were by the constitutions of their Government contrary to the Duties of his place, for by Law the kings

> power was Limetted to matters relating to peace. He was not to be guilty of sheding the Least Blood, was to opose all projects of Distroying, was Vigorously to harrangue the Warriers, to keep firme to the Treaties of Peace with the Freinds and Neighbours, was not so much as to be present at the Execution of an enemy, and might save hime let the desire of revenge be ever so great. In short his Duty obliged him by all wayes and means to promote peace and quiet, and to be a Counterpoise to the fury of the Warriors. [Nairne 1988:38]

Almost a century later Benjamin Hawkins indicated the same radical opposition of the functions of the red and white sides among the Muskogee: "This is always determined on by the Great Warrior. When the Micco and counsellors are of opinion that the town has been injured, he lifts the war hatchet against the nation which has injured them. But as soon as it is taken up, the Micco and counselors may interpose, and by their prudent councils, stop it, and proceed to adjust the misunderstanding by negotiation. If the Great Warrior persists and goes out, he is followed by all who are for war. It is seldom a town is unanimous" (Hawkins 1848:72).

These two observations, separated by almost a century, indicate that the red and white officials within the talwa were frequently in great tension. The power of the tastanagi to declare war seems almost autonomous, and the role of the miko and other white chiefs appears to have been ameliorative or dissuasive. War, in other words, seemed to the European observers to have been a force that erupted from the red side, and the white side was expected to do its best to calm the eruption, to stop the war, to avoid violence. Hawkins even observed that the red side was not under the complete control of the white: "If the Great Warrior persists . . ." This seems a chilling vision of a political process that can go out of control, a dualism that can fail to maintain its balance. As if to make sure his readers grasped the point, Hawkins reiterated: "In some cases, where the resentment of the warriors has run high, the Micco and council have been much embarrassed" (Hawkins 1848:72). This insight into the volatile dynamics of the red/white relationship serves to support the earlier suggestion of the psychological parallel with the necessity of the maturing male to learn to control his passionate and potentially violent responses to external stimuli. If each man is a tension of red and white forces, then the talwa is the larger, external dramatization of the same process. The tension between red and white in the talwa also reveals that the Muskogee had a high tolerance for disagreement. Their system honored both red and white voices and viewpoints, thus sacrificing a unity based on coercion for a flexible structure that could endure transitory stresses.

When the red and white metaphor is utilized in the political structure at a yet higher political level, the complexity and confusion grow. The dualism that can

be used to help individuals understand themselves and their roles in the talwa, and that can be employed to help the talwa characterize a mechanism for achieving a balance of views and policies, is not quite the same dualism at the national level. There, it is the talwa itself that must be brought into functioning relationship with other talwas, and individual warriors are no longer the focus.

It appears that the 18th-century Muskogee talwas were all identified by one of the colors—each talwa was either red or white. Since each talwa was technically white, in that the miko and other white men were the official leaders, the designation of a whole talwa as red or white could not have been related to the internal use of the metaphor. Since the system effectively divided the Muskogee confederacy into two different groups of talwas—and, by extension from the meaning of the metaphor at the talwa level, ranged them against each other in a dualistic opposition—it is crucial to identify the functions of the two groups.

Only two major uses for this separation appear in the historical literature. One was the use of white talwas as "sanctuary" towns. People who broke the law, including murderers and adulterers, if they could flee successfully to a white town, were safe from their pursuers, since there seems to have been a sense of nonviolence that pertained in those talwas. The degree to which this practice, so reminiscent of the European tradition of Christian churches, was observed in reality is another question. In 1813, one of the inflammatory events leading up to the outbreak of the Redstick War was the violation of sanctuary—an accused man was shot even as he sat in the white miko's bed in the square ground of a white talwa (Martin 1991:125).

The other major appearance of the red and white division of the talwas in the historical accounts is in the organization of the ball games. Games were played on an irregular schedule, because they were totally dependent on a challenge by one talwa of another, and they had to be of opposite color. When the challenge was received, the local council was free to turn down the invitation, depending on whether they thought they could make a good match of it. If they agreed, the date and place were set, and the players of the talwas went into serious athletic training. The ball game was not only demanding in terms of endurance and athletic skill, it was also brutal in its cost in injuries and, sometimes, death. Swanton labored long trying to make sense out of which talwas were white and which were red. Reasonably sure that there was an underlying principle, he gathered the data from all sources and sought the principle, only to discover that some towns were called both white and red in the sources (Swanton 1928a:123ff.). It was not until after Swanton's major ethnographic writing was complete that Mary Haas realized that the ball game itself was an important key to understanding the system—the loser of the ball game (or three in succession) changed its color to that of its conqueror (Haas 1940:479–489). The meaning of the color was therefore not inherently connected with the nature of the talwa—a talwa could be either red or white, depending, perhaps, on historical accident.

The ball game was clearly an important institution in Southeastern life. It was practiced by everyone, apparently, and iconographic representations from Southeastern Ceremonial Complex material suggest it had considerable antiquity. It was sometimes referred to as the "little brother of war," a term that, when coupled with the consequence of a change of color by the loser (conquest and captivity?), is reminiscent of the Aztec "flower war" and the ritualistic ball game of Mesoamerica, other "games" that carried both religious significance and social consequences. That sense of similarity is heightened by awareness that cosmic symbols were incorporated in the Southeastern ball game. Even though they could not (or would not) understand its esoteric meaning, the Spanish missionaries declared it unacceptable in Apalachee in the 17th century, and it was virtually extinct there by the time of the English massacres of the missions early in the next century (Bushnell 1978:1–19). Due to the lack of detailed information, the full meaning of the ball game in the Southeast will probably never be known, but it seems a safe assumption that it represented far more than merely "secular" athletics in Southeastern life.

Seen from this perspective, the application of the red and white metaphor to the opposing sides seems more important than the fairly trivial use of the colors to designate athletic teams. Swanton's search for the underlying principle of the ball game use of the metaphor led him to an important conclusion, that the red and white designations were useful in bringing new talwas into the confederacy, the old "mother towns" being white and the newcomers red. This seems a good suggestion, and the changing of the color as a result of the ball game fits nicely with that possibility, since it would explain both the changing of colors through time and the ball game as a path for newcomers to win their way to a more important role in the life of the Muskogee confederacy.[4] Even so, the need for a mechanism to bring new talwas into the confederacy cannot explain the red and white in the ball game, because both the metaphor and the ball game surely antedate the confederacy, which may be an institution that appeared only in the 18th century, depending on how it is defined. It does seem likely that the ball game would have provided an excellent means for hostilities and grievances between talwas to be enacted and drained off short of warfare, and that may have been its primary historic function.

Even though it does not appear in the historical materials in an obvious way, there was probably a third use of the red/white metaphor at the national level, perhaps the most important of all. It seems a reasonable assumption that the practical politics of the confederacy—decision-making by the leaders of a large number of autonomous talwas—would have demanded some mechanism by which all viewpoints and interests could be accommodated harmoniously within the larger structure without coercion or fission. The talwa council already provided a model for that mechanism—red and white factions that were charged with the duty of representing and speaking for two opposing viewpoints. While little is known about the

constitution of the confederacy council, it surely changed through time, since the continuing importance of the talwa as the basic political unit would have made the superordinate structure weak and easily responsive to the political realities of the moment—powerful talwas, strong clans, gifted individuals. A likely model for that council would be the artificial designation of each talwa as white or red, with the responsibility laid on each representative to work together with the mikalgi and tastanagalgi of other talwas of the same color to fill the same functions at the national level that those colors did at the talwa level.

If this was the primary use of the metaphor in the confederacy, then it is not difficult to see the extension of the identification to include the sanctuary concept, particularly among those talwas that had been assiduous in pursuing the white viewpoint over many years—their role as "white towns" would have become legendary. So, too, the political role of red or white could easily become one of the elements in the structure of the ball game, regardless of how ancient the game itself was in the region. One point that should be noted, however, is that this national use of the red and white carries with it an automatic confusion factor. Individual chiefs who were red or white in their talwas would also have an identity and role that could be just the opposite at the higher structural level. A tastanagi of a white town, for example, would find himself espousing white causes when at the confederacy council, even though he might be forced to oppose the peaceful conclusion of that council when he returned home to discuss the talwa's response to the national-level decision. Any given male could thus find himself in the position of having both to support and oppose war, depending on where he was; presumably he was able to distinguish the demands of the different levels of organization and maintain clarity as to his duties. How his personal viewpoint fitted into this political complexity was yet another problem.

Thus far we have seen the use of the dualistic metaphor at three levels of organization—individual, talwa, and confederacy. Complex as the shifts in meaning and function might be as the metaphor traveled across the levels, it seems a fairly coherent system. The great confusion enters the picture as we turn to a consideration of the role of clans in this political structure.

Swanton diligently collected every bit of data he could extract from the memories of his informants—how many clans were in your talwa? what were their names? what were their roles in the square ground? and so on. He ended up with an enormous compilation of data, more than fifty clans scattered in an almost random way across the talwas of the Muskogee confederacy. He concluded that the clans were originally separated into red and white opposing groups (called moieties by anthropologists), but that the system was by the beginning of the 20th century in such decadence that the details could not be reconstructed (Swanton 1928a:107–241). As he put it, "The whole subject of clanship is not, however, entirely clear even yet, and some features of it probably never can be understood, owing to the death of

those persons who were familiar with them and the breakdown of the entire institution" (Swanton 1928a:114).

The existence of red and white clan moieties, unfortunately, adds dimensions of such complexity that the metaphor becomes almost impossible to interpret. Let us examine some of the problems with Swanton's claim that there were red and white moieties, even though the path may seem to lead us away from the problem of the red and white metaphor itself. First, Muskogee society was matrilineal, organized in clans. Practically every European observer attested to this structure. Matrilineality groups the Muskogee with a minority of the known peoples of the world, patrilineality being the descent used by 70 percent of the societies, over against the 11 percent that are matrilineal (Divale 1984:21). There are three basic characteristics of matrilineal descent groups: "first, women are responsible for the care of children, with every child being the primary responsibility of one woman; second, adult men have authority over women and children; and third, descent-group exogamy is required" (Schneider 1961:5). In the case of the Muskogee, all three are the case, as attested to by almost every observer through the years. The Muskogee, then, were part of the minority of the world's societies that traced descent through the maternal line and not through the paternal. Every child, male or female, "belonged" to its mother, and it automatically inherited its mother's clan designation, which was unchangeable throughout life. Each person also "belonged" to his or her clan and thus had privileges and responsibilities connected with clan membership.

In addition, scholars have traditionally considered the Muskogees matrilocal, which means that upon marriage the man moves away from his mother's home and his clan, into the domain of his new wife and her clan. I have not found unambiguous evidence to the presence of that pattern among the Muskogee, the closest reference being Bartram's: "As soon as the wedding is over, the town [her talwa?] is convened, and the council orders or recommends a new habitation to be constructed for the accommodation of the new family; every man in the town joins in the work, which is begun and finished in a day's time" (in Swanton 1928a:371).[5] If Bartram can be taken literally, then it should be noted that marriage residence was a concern of the talwa council, whereas normally the clan might be expected to be in complete charge of the affair.

Collateral evidence appears in two other cases, although both are inferential.

When Benjamin Hawkins was an Indian agent at the turn of the 19th century, a woman from Tukabatchee suggested they marry, and then "When you go to Tookaubatche you will have a home" (Martin 1991:100–101). Her assumption seems to be a matrilocal one, that men are expected to be absent from the marital home for long periods for hunting and war, as well as for visits to their maternal homes. Even so, she might have been offering Hawkins a special arrangement fitting his office. Other evidence is seen in the practice of creating the new fire at the annual busk. The women of the talwa extinguish all home fires and go to the square

ground to receive the new fire, with which they then reestablish their home fires. This is an indirect argument, but the women seem to have been treated even ritually as the owners of the homes.[6] Countering this evidence is a flat statement that keeps the issue ambiguous: in the middle of the 19th century Hitchcock was told by Tukabatchee Miko that they were patrilocal.[7]

Even without the firm sort of documentary evidence that would clarify the issue definitively, the scholarly assumption is probably correct, for matrilocality or uxorilocality (residence near the wife's mother without the presence of her clan relations) frequently accompanies matrilineality. Even so, cross-cultural surveys have shown that while matrilocality never occurs with patrilineal descent, it may or may not occur with matrilineality, so its presence among the matrilineal Muskogee is not a given. Avunculocality, for example, is frequently found in matrilineal societies (Keegan and Maclachlan 1989:613–630).

This is a matter of no small concern, because there is a problem inherent in matrilineality and matrilocality that has been termed the "matrilineal puzzle." Unilineal descent systems can be either through the father or through the mother, and the resulting social patterns are mirror images of each other with one crucial exception. Since there is no known society in which women exercise political control, the men will be the political leaders of the society even in a matrilineal system.[8] In patriliny both authority and descent are through the male. The man is born and reared in his father's clan, which is also his, and when he marries, his wife comes to live with him, leaving her clan. His clan and village are thus the same for life, and the men with whom he grew up are also his closest kin and are the same people with whom he will join in running the village. Some scholars call this the "fraternal interest group" (Thoden van Velzen and van Wetering 1960:169–200). He will have little conflict between his duty to his clan and his duty to his village; loyalty to one is nearly always loyalty to the other.

In matrilineal societies, however, the man's authority and descent run through different groups, and if matrilocality is the rule of residence, he may even be a complete newcomer in his village. He has duties to his clan or lineage, but that could be in another talwa altogether. At the same time, he has responsibilities for his family, which entail exercising civil and military authority in the town. Given the double line of duty, a man could be caught in the tension of having to support both sides in a dispute, his clan and his town. The danger of divided loyalties is not insuperable, but the matrilineal puzzle does indicate that the matrilineal/matrilocal society has some problems to solve in order to achieve a successful social harmony.

One task before the society is to make it relatively easy for males to accomplish their clan duties, which, Robin Fox suggested, involved at least three strategies: (1) to have limited clan duties for males; (2) to see to it that males can easily reach their clans, either via horse or river, or by the creation of compact towns with many clans, thus encouraging marriage within the same town; and (3) to make sure the

women own the property and the men are charged to spend their time hunting or raiding away from the home (Fox 1967:103). The documents for the Muskogee make it clear that the clan took responsibility for teaching and chastising the children, which almost certainly means that each male was expected to assume some child-rearing duties within his clan. The degree of expectation for each male in clan affairs is not clear, but it may be significant that one source spoke of the children in a group being taught by an older male of their clan, possibly indicating that clans organized even the rearing in such a way that many young uncles' duties were light, allowing them to spend more time with their own children. That same clan organization may have similarly freed many of the males from the time-consuming tasks and limited their investment of time in clan council considerations. In regard to Fox's second suggestion, Muskogee men could easily reach their lineage homes, because it is clear from Swanton's work that the talwas were fairly close together on the major rivers and that each talwa contained many clans.

There was likely to be in every talwa a mixture of men who had (1) married into a clan in the same talwa; (2) married into a clan from another talwa, but having membership in a clan represented in the new talwa; and (3) married into a clan from another talwa and having no local clan membership. Fox's first two requirements for a successful matrilocal society were thus met by the Muskogee, and his third requirement, female ownership of the home and male occupation with hunting and war, was clearly the case in the Muskogee world.

Beyond the task of enabling men to fulfill their clan duties easily is the larger challenge of reducing the chances of clan conflict, particularly those conflicts that could lead to feuding and internal war. The sort of endless revenge-seeking that becomes a permanent feud, for example, had to be brought under talwa control, and that was a very visible fact of Muskogee life, often commented upon: a death, even an accidental one, was followed by a death or indemnity, whichever was acceptable to the aggrieved clan, and the matter was ended for good. There was a conceptual dimension of that arrangement, in that everyone needed to accept the idea that the *lex talionis* was needed to restore a cosmic balance and a clan balance. That concept was frequently commented on as Europeans saw clan members who were not guilty of a death give up their lives to satisfy the debt and restore the balance. The effect of this understanding was to limit every situation with a potential for war to a simple response, and presumably the sanction was the displeasure of all the other clans as focused in the talwa government.

Even in marriage, to give another example, the clan's grasp was weak; we have already seen that the talwa was involved in the process at least as early as the 1770s. Adultery was punished by the offended party's clan, but even in those cases, there were limits on what the penalties were. Again, the explosive situation was contained by talwa-level understandings that almost had the force of law. In short, the

talwa or the larger aggregation of clans established limits on the activities of clans against one another.

These strategies—limiting male involvement in clan duties and limiting the powers of clans in town life—are ways of reducing the loyalty of men to their clans. The society will need to seek more positive ways of accomplishing this end, particularly by increasing their solidarity with structures apart from the clan. These strategies must work, because a cross-cultural study of matrilocal societies found that there is a strong correlation between matrilocality and the lack of internal warfare and feuding: after two cross-cultural tests the researchers found that "it appears that whether a society has prevailingly matrilocal or patrilocal residence can be predicted quite handily and reliably from whether it has a pattern of purely external warfare" (Ember and Ember 1971:571–594). Carol Ember and Melvin Ember's interpretation of this correlation was that the limitation of male identification with clans in matrilocality allowed the town to set up alternate structures to force the men's military/political concerns outward, away from clan concerns and toward external enemies.

This line of reasoning meshes well with the Muskogee reality. The males were pulled into talwa warrior structure and council membership, with an apparent loyalty to the talwa that was only infrequently challenged by clan loyalties. The welfare of the talwa depended upon the male leadership's creating a political structure that would (1) bond the men together for both military and peacetime activities on behalf of the whole talwa, (2) supersede the clan in dominant loyalties, and (3) reduce internal strife such as clan feuds and violence within the talwa. We have already seen how the talwa council was composed, utilizing clan structure in ways to ensure participation, but emphasizing a male life-path that essentially creates a warrior sodality in which he can place his loyalty and experience solidarity with other males of the talwa across clan lines. Moreover, that male solidarity was intensified by creating their own territory in the talwa—the square ground was yet another "home" for all the males, even to serving as a dormitory when needed. And that area was set aside ritually. The center of that pan-clan area was the sacred fire, and the busk was the major rite of intensification for the entire talwa. In short, the talwa council—the red and white structure—was set up to compete with the clans for male loyalty, and in the historic period it seems clear that the system worked quite well. The council's authority seems to have been consistently superior to clan authority, with male solidarity accomplished beyond clan lines. The subordination of clans to the talwa structure enabled the Muskogee to handle external threat, to bond males into functioning military and political units, and to reduce internal violence and tension.

An even higher challenge faced them, though: the Muskogee had to create a "nation" (whether paramount chiefdom or state) on the basis of autonomous talwas

(chiefdoms) that were themselves composed of various clans. William Divale has suggested that need for a larger political structure is a major reason why matrilineal systems initially develop. He hypothesizes that matrilocality is an adaptive response by a society facing an external military threat rooted in competition for scarce resources (Divale 1974; 1984). Clan exogamy can be structured on the one hand so as to encourage marriage across talwa lines and movement of males from one town to another, and on the other hand to make it possible for some males to remain in their talwas to provide continuity and clan leadership. This successful pattern of male solidarity at the talwa level thus becomes a model for the higher confederacy system. If the external threat is great, then the talwas will need to be brought into some relationship with one another in a higher council. It is conceivable that the clans could do this, but weakening them at the talwa level would make it difficult for them to reassert strength in a confederacy. The more likely path in the creation of a confederacy would be to create a "super-talwa," a structure similar to the local talwa council that permits virtually no clan structure of significance, thus reducing competition for loyalty to talwa interests. A dual organization of talwas would work, but clan-based moieties would be a problem, because they would tend to be a major structural system for the society. In short, in order for the society to be a successful competitor in a military world, the all-male structures have to be emphasized at the expense of competitors, the major one being the clan system. The cross-cultural surveys have offered data to show that this is what seems to happen in matrilocal societies, and it seems reasonable to think that this model describes the Muskogee situation. The clan system in the 18th century was fairly limited in scope, many mechanisms were set up to minimize internal tension and violence, and the talwa system incorporated clans at the same time that male identity with them was minimized. The Muskogee use of the red/white metaphor in personal, talwa, and confederacy realms thus fits the model well.

Over against this expectation there is Swanton's claim that the clan system was extended through the Muskogee nation in red and white moieties. Viewed with a skeptical eye, his evidence for this claim seems slender indeed. He found an identification of some clans by some of his informants that used the terms Hathagalgi and Tcilokogalgi, roughly meaning "white people" and "people of a different speech." Swanton interpreted them as "white" and "red," and concluded that they referred to clan moieties. His identification of a "dual division of clans" quickly became "two moieties," and the majority of future references to the phenomenon became simply "white clans" and "red clans," even to the extent of leaving the impression that his informants were using the metaphor (Swanton 1928a:156–167). As with the clans themselves, Swanton presented the data he had collected about the designations of clans as red or white. In the five-page compilation, a curious fact emerges—the colors often change from talwa to talwa. The Bird clan, for example, was white in Abihkutci, but *tciloki* in Kan-tcati. The most reasonable conclusion from this fact

is that whatever the meaning of Hathagalgi and Tcilokogalgi, the division does not extend through the Muskogee confederacy as a unified system. Swanton admitted, "Just as the linking of clans disagrees in different towns, so does the line of division between these two sets of clans differ" (Swanton 1928a:157). In a true moiety system, one would expect that a clan, which is beyond the talwa in scope, would belong to the same division regardless of its talwa location, but among the Muskogee, according to Swanton's evidence, the dual division seems linked to some internal talwa meaning. It is probably a reflection of this limitation that Swanton's informants also disagreed about which division a clan belonged in (Swanton 1928a:164).

Further, it might be expected that a clan-based moiety system, even if restricted to the talwa level, would fulfill the task of identifying the eligible marriage mates by moiety exogamy. Among the Muskogee, however, that was not the case. "These two divisions have not had anything to do with marriage regulations, at least in recent times." There seems to have been a clear taboo on marriage into the mother's clan (i.e., one's own clan), regardless of talwa location, and "marriage into the father's clan was also held in disfavor" (Swanton 1928a:165–166). What, then, might have been the function of this dual division of clans? Swanton was able to identify only two tasks for it. The division of clans specified which ones would fill certain roles in ritual dances: "in the tcitahaia or 'feather dance' eagle and buzzard feathers were carried by the Tciloki dancers and white crane feathers by those from White clans" (Swanton 1928a:166). Beyond that, the division was helpful in organizing sides when the talwa males wished to have a practice ball game. Since the actual ball game was played between talwas of opposing color, that could not have occurred within a talwa, so it would have been necessary to have a way of choosing up sides. It seems possible, since a practice game would carry little heavy meaning, that the terms might have been equivalent to "Home" and "Visitors," or, more flippantly, "cops" and "robbers." It is not difficult to suggest a method of designation for this purpose—the clans of the mikos and henihas would naturally be designated white, and everyone else could be either white or tciloki, according to the number of players available from the various clans. In short, it is possible to see this function as a very weak reflection of the talwa red and white system, used for very limited functions. Both the ball game and the dances, it should be noted, are ritual functions and not part of the actual political structure.

This interpretation suggests that there was no clan-based moiety system, at least in historic times, but merely a minor designation of two groupings of clans within each talwa for limited ritual purposes. And it is important that the terms for the two are, as Swanton admitted, white and "people of a different speech," and not white and red. Nonetheless, Swanton argued: "The White clans undoubtedly had to do with peace, while the others were 'bearers of the red sticks' and hence were war clans, but the terms 'peace and war' are not given to them as names, nor is the

adjective red usually coupled with the Tciloki. There is reason to believe that this dual division had something to do with the dual division of towns to be considered presently, but it is now difficult to make out just what that connection was" (Swanton 1928a:165).

This red and white clan-moiety system nonetheless became Swanton's consistent assumption through the rest of his ethnographic studies of the Muskogee.[9] It seems a much more acceptable conclusion, both because of the paucity of evidence and because of the theoretical model, that there was no clan-based moiety system in place among the Muskogee, the functions of such a system being filled either by the individual clans or the talwa political system. Instead of moieties, therefore, the Muskogee had the red and white dual political structure, the clans having faded into the background. This system seems to have been unique among the Southeastern peoples, but a comparative examination and interpretation of how such a system developed must wait for a later study.

The removal of the red and white metaphor from clan usage removed a significant amount of confusion from the task of understanding of the metaphor itself. One of the most troubling aspects of the notion of red and white clan moieties lies in the fact that clans structurally represent the female side of the social organization in a matrilineal society. The political system is, so to speak, the male equivalent, even though males form the leadership of the female-centered clans. Discovering that the red and white metaphor was applied exclusively to the male side of the organizational system thus immediately reduces the confusion, for now we do not have to explain the meaning of war and peace designations as applied to female descent groups.[10]

Red and white appear to be applicable to the individual male in social rank, to the talwa in political (male) organization, and to the confederacy in talwa moieties comprising a national council. What nuances of meaning, then, enable the metaphor to be used in these slightly differing applications?

The ritualistic dimension of the ball game has been mentioned above, along with some speculations that there were cosmological meanings imbedded in it. That possibility, when coupled with the use of the red and white metaphor in it as well as in regard to the basic structural elements of the political system, suggests that we should not be surprised to find that the red and white metaphor is part of a much larger symbol system. Charles Hudson offered a provocative suggestion in the course of a study of the practice of the regurgitation of the white drink. "The polarity in Southeastern Indian thinking was symbolized in the opposition of the colors red and white. Red was the color of social divisiveness, white, the color of social cohesion. One is tempted to conclude that in the Southeastern Indian belief system blood was opposed to saliva as the color red was opposed to the color white" (Hudson 1975:98).

Hudson was a bit tentative about the connections, probably because of the apparent reversal of red and white in the full series of relationships—white represents the Upper World and red represents the Lower World. That connection, despite the enigma, would clarify the red/white metaphor greatly, because it opens up a much larger series of relationships: "The most fundamental [polar opposite] was the opposition between the Upper World, which existed above the vault of the sky and was associated with continuity, order, and structure, and the Under World, which existed beneath the earth and the waters and was associated with disorder, fertility, madness, and change. The Southeastern Indians believed that they themselves lived in This World, between the Upper World and the Under World, trying to strike a balance as they lived out their lives" (Hudson 1975:95). In his major ethnological study of the Southeastern peoples he expanded the possibilities even more. "The Upper World represented structure, expectableness, boundaries, limits, periodicity, order, stability, and past time. The Under World represented inversions, madness, invention, fertility, disorder, change, and future time" (Hudson 1976:127).

Hudson has thus offered us a series of oppositions as the heart of the structural metaphor of red and white, and he roots them all in the basic cosmological dualism of Southeastern thought. This connection of social structure and cosmology has a close parallel among the Siouan peoples of the Plains, where the moiety system is understood to relate to Sky and Earth as opposing categories.[11] Making the same identification for the Southeastern peoples is helpful, because it broadens the scope of the oppositions. These qualities Hudson identified as the characteristics of the two sides have a certain connectedness in meaning, which may well derive from the nature of the cosmological basis. The Upper World is easily distinguished by the regularity of the celestial phenomena; anything that is cyclical and predictable in human life could easily be connected with the order of the heavens. The Under World, by contrast, is the realm of surprising phenomena—earthquakes, floods, agricultural growth or lack of it; simply viewed in a naturalistic way, the Under World seems opposite the Upper in its lack of orderliness and predictability. Yet these oppositions carry with them no sense of moral dualism—the Under World is not evil, nor is the Upper World good. They just are. It is worth making that point frequently in the discussion of non-Western conceptual polarities, for it is an easy error for those reared in the Zoroastrian-Judeo-Christian tradition to supply ethical categories unconsciously.[12]

As seems to be true of most dual oppositional thought, the goal is to maintain a workable balance between the opposing forces or worlds. The opposition is not one that is envisioned as temporary, with one to become a victor over the other, but is a permanent tension of opposites that need to be kept in balance. If the Upper World's characteristics were to rule completely, the result would be stasis—no change, total predictability, and, ultimately, meaninglessness for human life. If the

Under World were to govern, change would be everything—continual flux, complete unpredictability, humanity at the mercy of next unexpected disaster. Balance is all.

This vision of the nature of the world fits nicely with the application of the red and white to political structure. The white chiefs represent order, calm, and reason, and they are charged to seek peace and maintain the structures of society in an orderly way. The red side espouses innovation and seeks danger; their desire for war invokes the volatile passions and opens the door to death and destruction of social structures. The white side insists on stability; the red calls for change.

This interpretation of the meanings of the red and white also makes understandable the use of the metaphor in a personal way. Both sides, seen in this light, are part of the makeup of the human personality. It is not difficult to conceive of an understanding of human nature that sees the task of maturing into adulthood to be one of learning how to maintain the balance of the two sides—order and change, stability and creativity, habit and imagination. Moreover, the important addition of the concept of balance to the dualistic vision helps us understand how individuals can solve the tensions that come with having to represent both red and white sides on a given political issue because of their structural roles—if one really believes that balance is the desired outcome and that the entire dualistic system is larger than the self, then one's personal viewpoint is relatively unimportant in the larger structure. Like lawyers, the representatives of the red and white must espouse their sworn positions, knowing that they contribute to the larger solution by fitting harmoniously into the dualistic confrontation. The point is not to be red *or* white, but to be red *and* white.

## Notes

1. I am indebted to LeAnne Howe for pointing out the connection between child-rearing practices and the red/white concept.

2. I am grateful to Scott Morrison for clarifying this dimension of the meaning of the red/white metaphor. She assures me that this insight is drawn from personal experience and is well understood by her Choctaw friends.

3. I am indebted to Scott Morrison and LeAnne Howe for helping me see this connection.

4. J. Leitch Wright Jr. attempted to follow this lead by suggesting that there was an even later replacement moiety system based on ethnic identity (Muskogees and non-Muskogees), but there is no evidence to support his speculation. See Wright 1986:18–20. That the mechanisms of the Creek confederacy functioned successfully to bring in outside talwas seems quite clear; the question is what those mechanisms were. The dual organization under discussion seems to have been adequate for the task.

5. Note the comment by William S. Willis Jr.: "Moreover, we have found no evi-

dence of matrilocal residence in the 18th century documents [of Muskogee life]" (Willis 1963:261).

6. I am indebted to Joel Martin for pointing out both this and the preceding illustrations.

7. I am grateful to Michael Green for this important counterevidence.

8. See Fox 1967 for fuller treatment of the problems of matrilineality, especially chapter 4.

9. It is instructive to note that his conclusions were already firm at an early date, for his 1915 article, "The Social Significance of the Creek Confederacy," espoused the same view ultimately published in his 1928 ethnography.

10. Raymond Fogelson commented that the Cherokee had "female replicate Red and White organizations [which] consisted of both War Women and older, beloved or 'Pretty' women who were permitted to speak in council" (Fogelson 1971:332). I have found no indications of such a structure in the Muskogee materials.

11. See Sabo 1991 for a discussion of this conceptual approach to social organization. See also Lévi-Strauss 1963:132–163.

12. See, for example, Thomas Emerson's comment (1989:59): "This Underworld has two aspects: it is the dwelling place of monsters, danger, and evil; but conversely it is also the source of water, fertility, and power against evil."

# 4
# Saying Hello in *La Florida*

When he posed the question "What do you say after you say 'hello'?" Eric Berne played a trick on his readers. After a lengthy analysis of the process of encounters between people, with all the psychological and social ramifications inherent, he answered his question almost as an afterthought by saying that those who have learned how to "say hello" don't need any help for the next step (Berne 1972). In the following years several scholars probed that complicated "hello" process in various contexts, and the dimensions they found in greeting behavior illustrate and buttress Berne's insight on the importance of learning to say "hello" (Firth 1972; Goody 1972; Irvine 1974; Salmond 1974; Youssouf et al. 1976).

Greetings are highly ritualized forms of dialogue in which many different kinds of social tasks are accomplished. In circumstances when friends or acquaintances meet, the major function of a greeting ritual may be to "affirm and support the social relationship" between the two (Goffman 1971). If they are strangers, then the focus of the greeting may be on identification (is this an enemy?) or information gathering (what survival lore should be exchanged?) (Youssouf et al. 1976). Judith T. Irvine found that in a society in which "the principle of social inequality is fundamental to the organization of social life," the major function of the greeting may be to clarify the status of individuals relative to each other, while Anne Salmond has argued that where competitiveness and warfare are dominant social themes, greeting encounters may be used "as a finely balanced mechanism for keeping the peace and allowing competition to proceed without bloodshed" (Irvine 1974:167; Salmond 1974:194).

These studies have concentrated on greeting rituals observed in contemporary societies in which all parties involved know the rules—the "protocol"—and are

more or less adept at using them. In this context the task of the researcher is largely one of careful observation of the events and extrapolation of the rules in order to evaluate individual players in their "game of status and power manipulation within the rules" (Firth 1972:6, 32; also Irvine 1974).

It is often the case, however, that strangers representing alien cultural traditions encounter each other in contexts in which a "hello" must be said, but neither knows the other's protocol. The stakes become even higher when one or both parties are ambassadors—representatives of larger social units that are symbolically but not physically present. In that situation the formality of the greeting should be expected to increase along with the stress.

It is the intention of this chapter to reconstruct an example of that sort of encounter protocol. In the lengthy scholarly discussions of the complexities of the relationships between Europeans and Native Americans, little attention has been paid to the sine qua non of such relationships, the initial greeting encounters. The obvious exception to this statement is the calumet ceremony, which has been the focus of important articles by William Fenton and other scholars (Fenton 1953; Blakeslee 1975; Turnbaugh 1979). The ample descriptions of the calumet in the contemporary literature, largely French, ensured that attention would be paid to that particular form of ambassadorial greeting. The equivalent ceremonies for peacemaking between strangers in other regions of the Eastern Woodlands are little known.

This study will focus on that unknown area, more particularly on the international protocol used on the Southeastern coastal plain in the contact period. It is assumed, of course, that there was one, since there is ample archaeological evidence of exchange networks in that area in several periods of prehistory (e.g., Milanich and Fairbanks 1980:85, 203). The extent and use of such an international protocol is not known, but it is beyond the scope of this chapter to address that problem. Tasks that will be undertaken here include the following: (1) to reconstruct the rules of behavior governing the greeting rituals used by natives in the Southeast in the 16th century; (2) to suggest some cognitive/symbolic dimensions incorporated in that international protocol; and (3) to offer an assessment of French awareness of the native protocol in the 16th century and the changes—intentional or accidental—they introduced into it. Because of the nature of the ethnohistoric data—skewed partial observations by one side—detailed analysis of protocol behavior is not possible in the same degree as in the aforementioned ethnographic studies of observed ritual. An outline seems all that is possible.

## The Story

In 1562 there was no permanent European settlement in the Eastern Woodlands of North America. Lucas Vásquez de Ayllón had tried at Santa Elena on the Caro-

lina coast in 1526–27, but had failed. Pánfilo de Narváez's expedition had entered at Tampa Bay in 1528, and the few survivors had circumnavigated the Gulf coast by the time they emerged to the European eye in New Spain (Cabeza de Vaca 1961). Hernando de Soto's army had also entered at Tampa Bay, in 1539, and they had made the first exploration of the terrain of the interior, away from the Gulf and Atlantic coasts. The survivors added much to the European store of knowledge about North America, both by publication and by oral tradition (Clayton et al. 1993; Delanglez 1945; Weddle 1985; Hoffman 1990). In 1558 Tristan de Luna had led his party of a thousand toward the inland "province" of Coosa, but in 1560, after hardship, death, and virtually no contact with the inhabitants, the expedition withdrew (Priestley 1928).

Just two years later France made her move into what had been the exclusive strategic playground of the Spanish and Portuguese. As Charles E. Bennett put it, "this monopoly was a throwback to medieval canonical law and therefore had no chance of being respected in a Europe about to break out into the Renaissance and the Reformation" (in Laudonnière 1975:xv). Charles IX sent Jean Ribaut to establish a French settlement on the Atlantic coast and to mark with specially made stone columns the boundaries of the claimed territory. Ribaut went directly to the task; landing at the St. Johns River on May 1, 1562, he sailed north as far as the Pee Dee River, mapping as he went. At the Pee Dee he assessed the stretch of coast with the markers at each end and decided to place the settlement itself at "Port Royal," the Edisto. There, Charlesfort was built. The whole operation took only six weeks, and on June 11 Ribaut returned to France for more men, supplies, and orders, leaving thirty men at Charlesfort. His memoirs of the six weeks were published in Paris the next April, probably as the next move in the international chess game. Complications rooted in the Protestant-Catholic tension in France and Queen Elizabeth's plans to involve England in the French adventure delayed Ribaut's return, so his garrison built ships and fled Charlesfort in 1563 (Gorman 1965; Lorant 1946; Bennett 1964, 1968).

The king chose René Laudonnière, who had been on the first voyage, to lead the replacement expedition. Giving up on Charlesfort, Laudonnière began Fort Caroline at St. Johns River on June 19, 1564. He reestablished good relations with the local chief Saturiwa, even enlisting his aid in building Fort Caroline. As the French learned more about the surrounding peoples, Laudonnière tried to establish a French-imposed peace throughout the area, but he only succeeded in alienating all sides. As the hunger of the French grew during the winter and spring of 1565, so did the hostilities with the inhabitants. The timely visit of English entrepreneur John Hawkins in July ameliorated a tense situation, but the arrival of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés in September ended it with the massacre of the French at Fort Caroline. Near his new settlement at St. Augustine the Spanish governor executed the rest of the French, including the recently returned Ribaut. Laudonnière and a

few others lived to tell the story, but further developments of the European conflict did not alter the fact that *La Florida* was again solely Spanish and would remain so for the rest of the century, despite a short-lived English experiment under Sir Walter Raleigh at Roanoke (Quinn 1985).

Brief as the French presence was—a year at Port Royal, a little more than a year at the St. Johns—it produced lengthy reports by Ribaut and Laudonnière, briefer ones by others in the French party, a set of watercolors and descriptions of native life, two contemporary biographies of Menéndez, and a series of Spanish reports. The reasons for the surprisingly ample documentation include the strategic importance of the French settlement and the acrimony over Menéndez's bloody solution to the French intrusion. One result was the conservation of a great deal of ethnographic data about native life on the Atlantic coast of *La Florida.*

## The Timucua Meet the French

First encounter: 1562. The French made initial contacts at the mouths of three rivers: the St. Johns, the Ogeechee, and the Edisto. The inhabitants on the first river were various towns of the Timucua, encountered only for three days in 1562. Guale (= "Oade") was briefly met by the French in exploration of the Ogeechee from Charlesfort after Ribaut's departure. The Edisto (= "Audusta") and others near Port Royal were the major hosts of the French in 1562–63.

Despite the northern focus of the first expedition, there were useful observations recorded from the three-day Timucua encounter (see Swanton 1922; Milanich and Proctor 1978). Ribaut and Laudonnière, who were both there, have some disagreements regarding the sequence of visits. Ribaut's scheme is followed here.

The French arrived by ship. They visited the north bank first, where many natives, both men and women, greeted them. Ribaut passed out some trinkets, and one of the natives, identified as the chief's brother, ran to tell the chief, who sent Ribaut his "Girdell" made of red leather. When the chief arrived he received Ribaut "gentlye and reysed after there manner" (Ribaut 1964:67). Ribaut thereupon led his men in a prayer service, while the chief watched silently from his bed of bay boughs spread by his people (Laudonnière called them "green magnolia and palmetto leaves" [1975:20]). Trying to communicate across the language barrier, since there was no interpreter, Ribaut pointed to the sky with one finger; the chief responded with two. The women and children arrived, and Ribaut and his men were seated on their own special bed of bay branches about 12 feet from the chief's, "for it is their mannour to parle and bargayn sitting, and the chef of them to be aparte from the meaner sorte" (Ribaut 1964:69). Laudonnière adds that the chief gave Ribaut "a plume of egret feathers, dyed red, and a basket made from palm fiber, very artfully constructed, together with a great skin drawn upon and painted with pictures of various wild beasts, so vividly represented that they seemed almost

alive" (Laudonnière 1975:20). When Ribaut indicated his intention to cross to the south bank for a visit, his host "showed himself to be very displeased about this," but they gave the French many fish from their weirs as a parting gift (Laudonnière 1975:20).

On the south bank there was a slightly cooler reception. The natives looked pretty much the same as those on the north bank, but there were only men present. The chief, feathered, painted, and seated upon his leafy bed with bow and arrows, sat under an "arbor" (Laudonnière 1975:21). He was flanked by his two brothers (sons?), who were wearing around their hair some red fur "gathered and wrought together with great cunyng, and wrethed and facioned after the forme of a diedeme." One of them was wearing as a gorget "a lettell round plate of redd copper well pollishedd, with an other lesser of silver in the midst of it." At his ear was a little copper plate used for scraping sweat from the body (Ribaut 1964:80). "The two sons received our captain graciously, but their father, the king, showed great solemness and did nothing but slightly move his head. When the captain [Ribaut] came up to salute him, the king retained such a grave dignity that he seemed indeed to know how to judge this deportment and thought that the king might be jealous because we went first to the other side of the river, or perhaps that he was not very happy about the stone marker that we had erected" (Laudonnière 1975:21). They exchanged gifts and attempted to converse. The chief drank with them and asked for the French cup, which was given to him. Laudonnière said that the French went for a walk, and when they returned, the chief had vanished (1975:21). The French withdrew to their ship at sundown (Ribaut 1964:75). The next morning the French, apparently without permission, erected a stone boundary marker on the south bank. They then crossed the river and spent some time trading with the natives there, receiving painted and unpainted deerskins, corn meal, small cakes, water, roots (kunti?), and red paints (Ribaut 1964:79). Ribaut and his men crossed again to the south bank to find their host as before, but apparently only a final exchange of gifts occurred before the Europeans set sail and headed north.

Inherent problems in this situation obscure what happened. The sequence of events is not clear, and there is a lack of detail about the attempts at communication. The paramount problem, of course, was the linguistic chasm—there was no interpreter. That reduced all communication to nonverbal modes, and the chroniclers tell us little more than the material objects they saw and remembered. Those items alone are helpful, however, even though uninterpreted, because they can suggest some preliminary rules of the greeting protocol.

1. A chief and his immediate followers sit upon a leafy ground cover, whether bay, cedar, magnolia, or palmetto.
2. The host chief may also have a specially built "arbor" under which he sits.
3. A visitor also is provided with a leafy mat about 12 feet from the host.

4. Food is given by the host, and possibly exchanged by both; corn, mulberries, and fish were mentioned here.
5. Gifts are exchanged; the hosts' gifts included deerskins, painted deerskins, a basket, a red egret-feather plume, and a "red girdle" (a belt or sash).
6. Women and children may or may not be present, depending on some as yet undetermined principle.
7. Chiefs go to meet the guests in some circumstances; guests do not enter the host town directly.
8. Silence may have a positive role in the protocol (but communication difficulties may have been responsible for the chief's silence in this case).

This list provides us with the rudiments of a set of protocol rules, and it can be checked explicitly against the accounts of the later encounters of these men.

One problem that remains unexplained, but may not have seemed significant to the French, is the behavior of the two chieftains. It is clear from the accounts that there were two separate social units involved here, one on the north bank of the St. Johns, and one on the south bank. When the French went from north to south, the chief of the north was interpreted as being displeased, and Laudonnière read the southern chief's silence as an indication of their displeasure with them for visiting the north bank first. Since we know from the later accounts that the southern chief was Saturiwa and the other was lower in rank than he, the chief on the north bank was probably pleased to receive the attention of the powerful Europeans before his superior across the river; when Ribaut caught on to his error (if he did) and indicated that he would cross the river, his host was displeased, but he could do nothing about it. Saturiwa on the south bank could only sit wondering about this man who could neither speak the language nor discriminate one chief from another.

The stone column is another sort of problem. There is no indication in the texts that Ribaut either asked or received permission from Saturiwa to erect the boundary marker. Laudonnière betrays nervousness over their having presented their host with a *fait accompli;* he suspected that Saturiwa's solemnity indicated that "he was not very happy about the stone marker that we had erected." Actually, Saturiwa was not displeased about the stone at all, as later events showed, but Laudonnière's reading of him reinforced the suggestion that the French were aware they had been aggressive to the point of risk in planting their stone without permission.

They left the St. Johns with no further interaction, however, and they sailed north to their fiasco at Charlesfort.

Second encounter: 1564. It was not until June of 1564, more than two years later, that the French returned to the St. Johns area. They first landed near the future site of St. Augustine, where natives met them.

> They cried out with a loud voice in their native language "Antipola bonnassou," which means "brother," "friend," or something like that. After they had made much of us, they introduced their paraousti, or king or chief, to whom I presented certain trinkets. This pleased him immensely . . .
>
> Though they endeavored by every means to make us trade with them and explained by signs that they wanted to give us some presents, nevertheless for various good reasons I decided not to stay. Excusing myself from all their offered presents, I re-embarked and went toward my ships. [Laudonnière 1975:59–60]

Sailing on to the mouth of the St. Johns River, they were greeted by Saturiwa, who also called out "'Antipola, antipola,' and showed such enthusiasm that he almost lost his composure" (Laudonnière 1975:61). One member of this expedition wrote home a letter that has survived. In it the anonymous author said that the Timucua approached "'Amy Thypola Panassoon!,' which is to say 'brother and friend'" (Gaffarel 1875:407). The French had thus learned the Timucuan words of peaceful greeting and the word for chief, "paraousti."

Saturiwa immediately took Laudonnière to see the stone marker, now sporting garlands and baskets of corn. "They kissed the stone on their arrival with great reverence and asked us to do the same. As a matter of friendship we could not refuse, and when this was done the chief took me by the hand as if he had a great secret to tell me, and showed me by signs how far up the river his dominion lay" (Laudonnière 1975:61). Saturiwa had one of his sons give a "slab of silver" to the Frenchman (because he was admiring it?). The French returned to their ship for the night, pleased at their reception.

On the next day Saturiwa received them more formally. "He waited for us at the same place where we had talked to him the day before. We found him in the shade of an arbor, accompanied by eighty Indians. He was clothed in a great deerskin, dressed out like chamois and painted in strange designs of various colors" (Laudonnière 1975:63). When Laudonnière told him that he was going to explore upriver, Saturiwa gave him his painted deerskin robe. Laudonnière told him he would pick it up later. The French spent most of the day sailing up the river and back; an encounter on their exploration, discussed separately below, unwittingly laid the groundwork for the location of Fort Caroline there several days later. Back at the mouth of the river, Saturiwa gave Laudonnière his painted robe and told him that the piece of silver his son had given him came from the Timucua, "their most ancient and natural enemies." (The name "Timucua" used by Saturiwa in a local sense has become the term now generally used for the larger cultural group of the region [see Milanich 1996 for an excellent survey of these people].) The Frenchman, "to increase his friendship," promised to go to battle with him against the Timucua (Laudonnière 1975:66).

The anonymous letter writer left a slightly different account.

> Seigneur de Laudonnière debarked to reconnoitre the area, taking with him only twelve soldiers. As soon as they set foot on land, three kings with more than 400 savages came to greet Seigneur de Laudonnière after their manner, stroking him as if they were adoring an image. After doing that, the kings led him a little farther, about a bow-shot away, where there was a beautiful laurel arbor. When everyone was seated there, they made signs of their great joy at our arrival and also made signs (toward Sr. de Laudonnière and the Sun), saying that he was the brother of the Sun and that he would go to war with them against their enemies, whome they called Tymangoua [Timucua], indicating by three gestures that they were a three-day journey away. Sr. de Laudonnière promised that he would go with them, after which they each, one after the other, rose and thanked him.
>
> [They then visited the stone marker erected by Ribaut on his previous visit. The savages decked it with garlands and embraced it, crying "Tymangoua"] . . . indicating that they would have victory over their enemies and that the Sun had brought Sr. de Laudonnière, his brother, to avenge them. After giving them some presents, Sr. de Laudonnière ordered us back aboard the ship, leaving the poor savages weeping at our departure. [Gaffarel 1875: 404–405]

The two accounts of the second new encounter are essentially in agreement, and they provide new data concerning the protocol involved in Timucua greetings. For one thing, there may have been a standard salutation for use in identifying allies before violence could break out. The meaning of the Timucuan word is not clear; Laudonnière seems to have been guessing; "anta/amita" ("brother") seems close (Swanton 1922:365; Granberry 1993:115). That translation is supported by the one supplied in the letter—"brother and friend." In view of the fact that the English some years later were greeted with "Bonny" by Siouan-speaking peoples up the coast, it is tempting to speculate that by "antipola bonnasou" the Timucua were trying the equivalent salutation in both languages on the strangers (Salley 1911:117).

The natives used kissing as some sort of respect sign, as shown by their kissing of the stone marker. The comment that the chief took his hand suggests that Laudonnière experienced it as a special act; perhaps a ritual of hands should be added to the list of possibilities in the protocol. The arbor trait already noted is seen again in this narrative, and the chief's painted robe is prominent. The exchange of alliance promises is made explicit for the first time, although such are implicit in any ritual of making peace and establishing solidarity between peoples. Each side, of course, must establish with clarity the limits of the new alliance if there are to be no future altercations, but there is no sign that the French did so in this encounter.

After a quick sea voyage a few leagues to the north, the French returned to the St. Johns and decided to build their fort on the bank where they had met the local

chief a few days earlier. That young chief guided them around, Laudonnière said, but he never made any reference to the purchase or gift of this land to the French either by the local chief or by Saturiwa. Laudonnière did record that Saturiwa came for a visit while they were building the fort. "During this time Chief Satouriona, our nearest neighbor and on whose ground we built our fort, visited us, usually accompanied by his two sons and by a number of Indians, offering to be of service" (Laudonnière 1975:72). The offer was accepted; the Timucua made the palmetto roofs of the buildings for their new neighbors.

Jacques LeMoyne was present on this voyage, and he lived through the massacre. Twenty years later his account was published along with the engravings based upon his paintings; how early it was actually written is unknown. His report poses difficulties, for he has the French received with gifts of goods by local people first and greeted formally by Saturiwa only some days later after the building of Fort Caroline had begun. According to LeMoyne, that visit by Saturiwa was his first to meet the Europeans, whereas Laudonnière reported them as two separate encounters. Whether later reconstructed or not, LeMoyne produced a detailed account of his arrival:

> The chieftain announced the approach of his King and ordered the men to build a shelter for him. Using branches of laurel, mastic, and other sweet-smelling trees, they put up a hut on a nearby knoll . . .
>
> As our commander had once before visited this place with Ribaut, he had already met Saturiba, had learned a few words of the native language, and was familiar with the ceremony with which the chief expected to be received . . .
>
> Chief Saturiba came with seven or eight hundred handsome, strong, and well-built men, the best-trained and swiftest of his tribe, all armed as if on the warpath. In the van marched fifty youths with javelins and spears; behind these, and next to the chief, came twenty pipers making the wildest kind of noise, without any harmony or rhythm, each blowing with all his might as if to see who could blow the loudest. Their instruments were thick reeds, like organ pipes or whistles, with only two openings. They blew into the top hole, while the sound came out the other end. On the King's right hand limped his soothsayer, and on his left walked his chief counselor; Saturiba never made a decision without asking the opinion of these two.
>
> The chief entered the place especially prepared for him and sat down in the Indian fashion, that is, he squatted on the ground like an ape. Then after a long look around and seeing our little force drawn up in line of battle, he ordered M. de Laudonnière and Ottigni to be invited into his tabernacle, where he delivered a long oration, most of which was unintelligible to them. But they understood enough to know that Saturiba was asking who we were and what our purpose was in landing on his territory.

4.1. Preliminary list of traits in the Timucua protocol

| Laudonnière | LeMoyne | Anonymous |
|---|---|---|
| salutation | — | — |
| arbor | arbor | arbor |
| 80 men | 800 men | 400 men |
| — | flutes | — |
| — | — | caressing |
| painted deerskin robe | — | — |
| gift of painted robe | — | — |
| handclasp | — | — |
| exchange of promises | exchange of promises | exchange of promises |

> M. de Laudonnière, using Captain La Caille as his interpreter, replied that he had been sent by a most powerful ruler, called the King of France, to offer a treaty to him by which the King of France would become Saturiba's friend, and the friend of his allies, and an enemy to their enemies. The chief was greatly pleased . . . [we] exchanged gifts in pledge of our perpetual friendship. . . [in Lorant 1946:38, 40]

Again there is the reference to the arbor constructed for the chief on a nearby knoll. LeMoyne's description of the retinue is certainly more impressive than what Laudonnière had reported—800 warriors, 20 youths playing flutes, a soothsayer, and a chief counselor. The chief summoned the French leaders and asked their intentions, which led Laudonnière to suggest a full alliance. It is legitimate to wonder what suddenly made it possible for Captain La Caille to serve as interpreter. Since LeMoyne remembered him in that role, it was one that he must certainly have filled during the year to come, but his presence in this narrative indicates the conflated nature of this memorate, and probably a late date for its inscription.

It is curious that there does not seem to be a set memory of the primary meeting with Saturiwa. Laudonnière's contribution is worth comparing with LeMoyne's composite and the brief anonymous source, as shown in Table 4.1.

To the trait list may be added some new ones. The "stroking" of Laudonnière is mentioned only in the letter, but it is far from being unique in the region. Two decades later, on the Carolina coast the English were greeted by a chief "first striking his own head and breast and then ours" (Lorant 1946:127). The same thing occurred in Virginia in 1608 and 1650 (Hawke 1970:55; Alvord and Bidgood 1912:122). The stroking caress is revealed to be a truly international gesture when the inland references are compared; it was experienced by the French among the Mascouten, Iowa, Bayogoula, Akansea, and Pascagoula, among others (Blair 1911, vol. 1:324, 367; French 1976[1875], vol. 2:47, 62; Shea 1861:70; Higginbotham 1967:31). Ap-

parently the cosmic salute (the blessings of the Sun are conferred on the visitor by caressing?) was a widespread one, possibly throughout the Eastern Woodlands. We should therefore have no qualms at accepting it as part of the Timucua greeting, even though only one observer mentioned it.

Whether Saturiwa was surrounded by a retinue of 80 or 800 fully armed warriors, the effect on the visitor was obvious; the power of the chieftain was impressive, and that was surely the message of the retinue. The second trait is the playing of flutes by part of the retinue. Swanton expressed some surprise at Powhatan's playing the flute as he came to meet the English, for he considered it a nonritual trait, but there are other references to the same practice (Swanton 1928b:703). Narváez was met by a Florida chief this way: "There appeared in front of us a chief in a painted deerskin riding the back of another Indian, musicians playing reed flutes walking before, and a train of many subjects attending him" (Cabeza de Vaca 1961:37). Soto found the same trait both in Florida and inland as far as Coosa (Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 1:82, 92, 236, 278, 284).

Yet another source of information needs to be presented. When the French made their first visit up the St. Johns they experienced another greeting. They sailed only about nine miles upstream, but it was far enough for the outing to give the French another encounter with the inhabitants. Laudonnière wrote the account, but he was not there; it happened to his lieutenant, Ottigni, and some others. They walked some way back from the river, where they met a small group of natives, four of them "lifting the deerskin" of the chief. "Some of our company went toward him and indicated their friendship and pointed out M. d'Ottigni, the lieutenant, for whom they had made an arbor of magnolia and palm in the Indian fashion so that the savages would know by these acts that our Frenchmen had associations with such as they in previous times." The chief gave Ottigni his deerskin robe and invited them to his house. "The chief and M. Ottigni and certain others of our Frenchmen were carried over the marshes on the backs of Indians."

> From the chief's dwelling about fifty Indians came out to welcome our Frenchmen and to feast them according to their means. After that they brought in a great clay bowl which was curiously made and full of excellent, clear spring water. This bowl was carried by an Indian and there was another young Indian who carried this same kind of water in a little vessel of wood. He presented it for drinking to each one in turn, following a certain order of rank among them as they were invited to drink . . .
>
> After he had finished talking, he gave an order that our Frenchmen be given two young eagles which were pets in his house. Also he gave our Frenchmen little palm baskets full of red and blue gourds. In return for these gifts he was satisfied with some French trinkets. [Laudonnière 1975:63–65]

They returned to the ship, where they reported to Laudonnière.

There are some unusual features to this account. First, there is the vague reference to the lifting of the chief's robes by other natives; the royal gesture seems to be the very sort of thing that European monarchists would see and report. LeMoyne painted this ritual behavior (Lorant 1946:113). At the least, the note seems to indicate a special status for the robe. The chief gave that robe to Ottigni.

The French leaders were taken to the chief's house physically, on the backs of natives, a maneuver that was almost certainly ritual in nature rather than dictated by necessity or even wisdom. A century later and several hundred miles to the northwest, Fr. Saint-Cosme was given the same treatment by the Akansea, but the going was so awkward he compromised with his bearer by walking alone to the vicinity of the chief's cabin, then regaining his seat on his new friend's back (Shea 1861:70).

This seems to have been a trait of widespread distribution in the Eastern Woodlands—the carrying of persons of high rank on ceremonial occasions. Sometimes it took the form of a litter or chair, sometimes a skin, sometimes just a back. It is recorded from 1527 to the 1700s, and since it was part of the calumet ceremony, it had a very wide distribution inland (see chapter 6 for further discussion of this trait).

There was also a ritual drinking of water involving a clay pot and a wooden vessel (gourd dipper?); the drinking apparently proceeded by rank. If the water had been *cassina* (the black drink), this behavior would be recognizable instantly as the universal Southeastern trait of ritual drinking and vomiting of cassina at the beginning of councils and other ritual occasions (Hudson 1979). The trait was certainly present for the Timucua, for LeMoyne even painted the cassina ceremony (Lorant 1946:93). What is the meaning of this observation, then? Could the Timucua have intended a companion ceremony that used only water? There were ritual uses for water in the Southeast. Jason B. Jackson noted for the Yuchi that "washing is perhaps the most basic Yuchi ritual act. All participants in ceremonial ground activities, even the youngest children, are expected to wash when visiting the grounds for the first time each year. . . . Washing removes any harmful spiritual forces accumulated during the winter, which is spent away from the beneficial effects of ceremonial ground practices, and it ensures that the ground will be maintained in a pure state" (Jackson 2003:120). That sort of act could have been intended by the Timucua but subverted by the French. Or perhaps the local people were simply out of cassina; that is not inconceivable, since the Europeans showed up totally unexpectedly. Or did they sense that the Europeans would have no idea what to do with cassina and should be protected by gracious hosts from making fools of themselves? Whatever the meaning, the trait list seems to include a ranked drinking or washing ceremony.

The final note worth special observance in this account is the description of the gifts bestowed upon the Frenchmen. In addition to the chief's robe, they were given

"little palm baskets full of red and blue gourds" and "two young eagles who were pets in the house." The latter was by any standard an extraordinary gift. Eagles had their own cosmic symbol complex throughout North America, sometimes differing in detail from group to group, but universally reflecting a high status for the bird. Eagle feathers were used ritually almost everywhere, and they were part of the commodities traded in the network (Blakeslee 1975:passim). No elements of the eagle complex were recorded for the Timucua, but eagle feathers were highly regarded among the Creeks (Swanton 1928b:495). Across much of the northern sweep of the Eastern Woodlands, even the process of catching eagles was a highly ritualized and complicated affair of cosmic dimensions (Fenton 1953). For this local Timucua chief to have two eagles as pets—domesticated to his house!—must have been a wonder. For him to give them to the European visitor must have been an honor virtually without parallel.

We have seen that the Timucua were accepting the French leaders as chiefs in the symbolism of status treatment and the giving of chiefly gifts. The clue that brings all of this behavior into a coherent pattern is not present in the French documents (apart from the enigmatic "antipola"), because they apparently did not recognize the basic concept. After the massacre, in 1566, the Spanish recorded the missing datum: Macoya, one of the Timucua chiefs, sent a message to Menéndez "that he was his friend and held him to be his elder brother, which is all the obedience the caciques of Florida can give" (Solís de Merás 1964:207). The numerous references to the "elder brother" relationship between Menéndez and the various chiefs make it clear that this was the kinship metaphor that established the quality and terms of the relationship between them (Barrientos 1965:117–120 and passim). Chief Utina "then declared he wanted to adopt the Adelantado as Elder Brother" and completed the picture (Barrientos 1965:119).

The French experienced the greeting ritual in the form of an adoption ceremony. There may have been other forms, but they saw only the one in which the French leader was adopted as elder brother of the chief. There are no data regarding an adoption among the Timucua, but the practice in the Mississippi Valley may be relevant here: an adopted individual was given a set of clothes appropriate to his new status, and the ritual act indicating his adoption was the covering of the new son or brother with a robe (see, for example, Radisson's adoption in the Sioux calumet ceremony, Scull 1885:211–217). The Native American tradition of extending their kinship system as a means of organizing their larger world is well known, and it seems that the greeting ritual is an expression of that concept in international relations (see Galloway 1989a for a specialized use of adoption this way). The private adoption of an individual became the metaphor for defining the power relationship and obligations accepted between nations.

Other elements of the ritual take on new meaning in the light of this concept. When the subordinate chief adopted Ribaut, he gave him his red girdle (breech-

clout or belt?), a red plume, and a painted robe, clothing appropriate for the elder brother of a chief. Curiously, neither of the observers mentioned any gifts from Saturiwa, possibly because there was nothing left for him to give. The handclasp may have been one appropriate for brothers, and the salutation "antipola" was possibly the very term "elder brother." Feasting and dancing were, of course, the welcome given to a new member of the family.

What was expected of an elder brother among the Timucua is not known, but it was probably equivalent to the views of other Southeastern peoples. In return for the deference given to his high status, an elder brother would be a generous provider, concerned with the welfare of his larger family, and would be expected to defend them with his abilities as a warrior.

The elements of behavior that have been extracted from the documents, coupled with the larger framework for understanding them, should permit a hypothetical reconstruction of the rules of protocol for meeting strangers. By way of summary, here is the final reconstituted list, together with a few further comments.

1. There should be a standardized, internationally known sign of peaceful intention that can be used by strangers coming upon each other as a means of averting violence. "Antipola" was used by the Timucua.
2. Strangers should announce their presence before reaching the chief's town, for entry there is a matter of inspection and permission.
3. That being the case, there must be at least one preliminary encounter; either the host chief or his emissaries will evaluate the visitors away from the town. Said chief or representative should bear emblems of their status so as to indicate to the visitors the rank and power of those with whom he seeks an arrangement.
4. Status signs for use by at least the Timucua chiefs include large retinues of warriors in full regalia, flute players, the wearing of a painted deerskin robe, and possibly specific rank emblems not recognized as such by the French, such as copper gorgets.
5. Any Timucua chief when confronting a visitor away from the town will be supplied with an artificial lodge for the occasion; among the Timucua this will look like a green arbor of branches. He will be provided with a soft "bed" of leaves for sitting under the arbor.
6. It is anticipated that visitors seeking alliances will hold rank as warrior or chief; they should dress and carry themselves so as to indicate their status.
7. If the host grants such chiefly status to the emissary, he will be treated according to that rank. He may be given his own arbor, or at least his own leafy bed for sitting. If the host invites him to the town or his own lodge, the visitor may be physically carried on the backs of his hosts or by some other method of elevation.

8. There must be some sort of exchange of food, even if neither is actually hungry. Probably simple rules of hospitality dictate this, but it may assume even larger proportions in a formal treaty context.
9. There may be a ritual purification ceremony participated in by all parties, such as drinking of cassina or washing with water.
10. Both sides will present speeches in which they clarify their desires and the advantages that will accrue to all if those desires are met.
11. Through various negotiations the new kinship relationship between parties will be agreed upon.
12. Gifts will be exchanged between the parties, and the gifts given will reflect the new status of the various participants. The adopted one, in particular, will be given clothing appropriate to his new role in the family.
13. Whether in the speech making or in a separate act, each party should make clear the limits of their commitment to the other. This should especially include identification of reservations concerning enemies who cannot be treated as such by both parties; obviously any preexisting peace or war relationships must be taken into account in the new alliance.

## The French Meet the Timucua

While there must inevitably be some reservations about a hypothetical reconstruction based largely on partial data, this greeting protocol nonetheless suggests what the Timucua thought they were doing when they met the French. What did the French think?

The basic problem in the situation, of course, was the ignorance of the French. The Timucua knew the protocol; they didn't know European protocol, but the Europeans had come to Florida, so Florida protocol was in control. At the first meeting, the French spoke no native tongue, so there was total dependence on nonverbal communication. Also, it must be remembered that the techniques of empire (e.g., how does the explorer go about learning unwritten tongues?) were just being developed. By 1700 Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville and Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne de Bienville could exhibit impressive skills in dealing with Native Americans, but those skills were the result of many decades of the accretion of such knowledge. The fumbling of Ribaut and Laudonnière was the beginning of that process.

1. Arrival by ship was the first French innovation. Strangers might arrive by pirogue, but whole towns in floating forts could hardly have been foreseen. The Timucua responded easily, however, by having the chiefs advance to the shore, thus forcing the French to send emissaries and stopping the visitors from proceeding directly to the town and the women and children. Those ships

must have been a fascination to the Timucua. The Sewee people up the Atlantic coast were said to have been virtually destroyed by their attempt to visit the Europeans to return the trading favors—their pirogues were all lost in the trans-Atlantic crossing (Salley 1911).

2. The French always went back on board their ships rather than accept the hospitality of their new brothers. They also made it clear that the reason was a lack of trust.
3. The French broke protocol from ignorance on first encountering the Timucua. They approached with gifts a subordinate chief in full view of Saturiwa. He seems to have been willing to overlook the slight, particularly since it was unintended and the French gifts were so attractive. When the French returned two years later, Saturiwa himself waved and shouted from the beach, just in case his new "brother" still couldn't tell rank properly.
4. The only clear attempt by the French to use the protocol was Ottigni's construction of an arbor under which he sat to await natives. He (and maybe his superiors) had perceived that the arbor was some sort of status sign and was eager to demonstrate to unmet inhabitants that the French did understand something of the protocol. It worked, too, for he was quickly ushered into the full greeting ritual.
5. It was probably an error for the French to be so nonchalant about the robes the various chiefs gave them. The act of a chief's giving his own robe to his guest seems to have been a sign of personal commitment (his *own* robe), adoption (his *robe*), and a ratification of rank (his *chiefly* robe). The recipient's response to it was probably the climactic point of the entire greeting ritual. Putting on the robe would probably have been the most important sign of acceptance of the relationship, while simply taking the robe might ratify the relationship but indicate that something was wrong and called for further negotiation. How would Saturiwa have interpreted Laudonnière's casual suggestion that Saturiwa keep it for him until later?
6. The French documents reveal no awareness of their adoption. At least Ribaut, Laudonnière, and Ottigni were made "elder brothers." If their place in the kinship pattern was known to them, then they would surely have sought more understanding of the meaning of "elder brother," but there is no sign that they were aware of family structure or familial obligations in the Timucua world.

This failure in understanding was a foreshadowing, if not the root, of all their later problems. The list of French acts that were not appropriate for an elder brother is impressive. They refused to go to war with their younger brother (Saturiwa) against his enemy (Utina) after promising to do so. They demanded that the little brother give them his prisoners (personal property), then they took them by force.

They aggressively took food from the little brother. Astoundingly, the French even become the elder brother of little brother's enemy, thus turning the war into an explicit (to the Timucua) fratricidal affair (Laudonnière 1975:82–83, 86, 140, 91–92).

Another incident that reflects the French obliviousness to the obligations of elder brother status was the lie told by a French detachment to one of Saturiwa's chiefs. Afraid to reveal that they had made peace rather than war with Utina, the Frenchman boasted of battle and allowed the chief to go through an elaborate warriors' victory ritual (Laudonnière 1975:78). Although no further comment appears in the record, it is not difficult to envision the shock that went through the Timucua world when the truth was known—the French had lied about war exploits. The Southeastern natives took few things as seriously as the verification of the battle record, for it was the basis of personal status in the warrior system. At the frequent opportunities to recite one's personal achievements (the "striking-the-post" ceremony), any warrior who lied earned ashes and universal contempt; in tribes in which the exploits were tattooed on the body, the relevant portion of the liar's skin was ripped off (Hudson 1976:203). What could be made of the French performance?

These various offenses by the French were not subtle infractions, of course. Even with no special knowledge of Timucua practices, the French should have sensed that their behavior was unacceptable. Their acts must be explained in another way; one scholar has suggested that gold lust was to blame, and a case can be made for that interpretation (Gorman 1965). Whatever the explanation of the French actions, the outcome was dismal. When Ribaut finally returned in August of 1565, he found the colony at an end—starving, abandoned by all their native allies, kept by threats of violence close to their collapsing Fort Caroline, and aware they were yet another of the European failures in North America. Menéndez's arrival there three weeks later was simply the violent end of a terminally ill patient. Later ages can only wonder how the story would have come out had Laudonnière's diplomacy been more sensitive, maintaining the original concern displayed by Saturiwa's people for the well-being of the elder brother. What would have happened if the French had said a proper "hello"?

*Note:* since this article was first published, Marvin Smith and David Hally have tested the protocol hypothesized in this chapter in their excellent study of the encounters of the Hernando de Soto expedition with various Indian groups across the Southeast in 1539–41. It seems to hold up well in regard to the documents of that expedition (see Smith and Hally 1992).

# 5
# Saying Hello in the Mississippi Valley

After the failure of the French colonization of the coast of *La Florida* in the 1560s, the attention of the French shifted to the northern area of the continent, and the English colonies began to take root in the area north of the Spanish posts. As the French worked their way up the St. Lawrence River toward the interior of North America in the 17th century, they encountered a succession of native groups—speakers of Algonkian, Iroquoian, and Siouan. By the time they had reached the Great Lakes, the explorers had become fairly adept at meeting the new peoples and entering into permanent relations with them. One discovery was in their favor: the basic rules of relationship appeared to be universal, transcending linguistic and cultural barriers.

The pathway into the center of the continent had been paved for the French by centuries of trading and intertribal communication throughout the Eastern Woodlands and beyond. The people the French encountered were by no means isolated people unaccustomed to dealing with unknown visitors. There is good archaeological evidence, in fact, that widespread trade networks had existed in eastern North America for well over two millennia by the time of the arrival of the French.

The newcomers were thus simply the latest visitors in a long time, and their task, like their predecessors', was to learn how to use the established protocol for well-mannered visits to establish and maintain peaceful relations. The French found that their earlier experiences of the greeting protocol with the Timucua were useful in their new arena (see chapter 4). In the interior of the continent, however, they soon discovered a new element—the key to the protocol was a set of ritual behaviors focused on the use of a special pipe the French soon dubbed the "calumet,"

from the French word for reed ("chalumeau"), which usually served as the pipe stem (Thwaites 1900, vol. 65:124).

Father Marquette has left the best description of the calumet rites, apparently generalized from his experiences among the Illinois and the Akansea (Arkansas) in 1673.

> [The calumet] has but to be carried upon one's person, and displayed, to enable one to walk safely through the midst of enemies—who, in the hottest of the fight, lay down their arms when it is shown. For that reason, the Illinois gave me one, to serve as a safeguard among all the nations through whom I had to pass during my voyage.
>
> There is a calumet for peace, and one for war, which are distinguished solely by the color of the feathers with which they are adorned; red is a sign of war. They also use it to put an end to their disputes, to strengthen their alliances, and to speak to strangers. . . . The calumet dance, which is very famous among these peoples, is performed solely for important reasons; sometimes to strengthen peace, or to unite themselves for some great war; at other times, for public rejoicing. Sometimes they thus do honor to a nation who are invited to be present; sometimes it is danced at the reception of some important personage, as if they wished to give him the diversion of a ball or comedy.
>
> In winter, the ceremony takes place in a cabin; in summer, in the open fields. When the spot is selected, it is completely surrounded by trees, so that all may sit in the shade afforded by their leaves, in order to be protected from the heat of the sun.
>
> A large mat of rushes, painted in various colors, is spread in the middle of the place, and serves as a carpet upon which to place with honor the god of the person who gives the dance; for each has his own god, which they call their "manitou." This is a serpent, a bird, or other similar thing, of which they have dreamed while sleeping, and in which they place all their confidence for the success of their war, their fishing, and their hunting. Near this manitou, and at its right, is placed the calumet in honor of which the feast is given; and all around it a sort of trophy is made, and the weapons used by the warriors of those nations are spread, namely: clubs, war-hatchets, bows, quivers, and arrows. Everything being thus arranged, and the hour of the dance drawing near, those who have been appointed to sing take the most honorable place under the branches; these are the men and women who are gifted with the best voices, and who sing together in perfect harmony.
>
> Afterward, all come to take their seats in a circle under the branches; but each one, on arriving, must salute the manitou. This he does by inhaling the

smoke, and blowing it from his mouth upon the manitou, as if he were offering to it incense.

Every one, at the outset, takes the calumet in a very respectful manner, and, supporting it with both hands, causes it to dance in cadence, keeping good time with the air of the songs. He makes it execute many differing figures; sometimes he shows it to the whole assembly, turning himself from one side to the other. After that, he who is to begin the dance appears in the middle of the assembly, and at once continues this. Sometimes he offers it to the sun, as if he wished the latter to smoke it; sometimes he inclines it toward the earth; again, he makes it spread its wings, as if about to fly; at other times, he puts it near the mouths of those present, that they may smoke. The whole is done in cadence; and this is, as it were, the first scene of a ballet.

The second consists of a combat carried on to the sound of a kind of drum, which succeeds the songs, or even unites with them, harmonizing very well together. The dancer makes a sign to some warrior to come to take the arms which lie upon the mat, and invites him to fight to the sound of the drums. The latter approaches, takes up the bow and arrows, and the war-hatchet, and begins the duel with the other, whose sole defense is the calumet. This spectacle is very pleasing, especially as all is done in cadence; for one attacks, the other defends himself; one strikes blows, the other parries them; one takes to flight, the other pursues; and then he who was fleeing faces about, and causes his adversary to flee. This is done so well—with slow and measured steps, and to the rhythmic sound of the voices and drums—that it might pass for a very fine opening of a ballet in France.

The third scene consists of a lofty discourse, delivered by him who holds the calumet; for, when the combat is ended without bloodshed, he recounts the battles at which he has been present, the victories that he has won, the names of the nations, the places, and the captives whom he has made.

And, to reward him, he who presides at the dance makes him a present of a fine robe of beaver-skins, or some other article. Then, having received it, he hands the calumet to another, the latter to a third, and so on with all the others, until every one has done his duty.

Then the president presents the calumet itself to the nation that has been invited to the ceremony, as a token of the everlasting peace that is to exist between the two peoples. [Marquette, in Thwaites 1900, vol. 59:131–137]

Father Marquette's somewhat breathless description of the calumet ceremony makes it clear that he saw the object itself as the center of attention, and there is good reason why he should have been impressed with it. When he and his party of Illinois approached the bank of the Mississippi toward the Arkansas, they were

almost killed by arrows before the upheld calumet was perceived in the dimness. The calumet was thus his personal protector in a dramatic way, and its powers must have seemed almost magical. As Marquette's description makes clear, however, there was much more involved in these events than just the utilization of the calumet, a view that is confirmed by other accounts of greeting ceremonies between strangers in the Mississippi Valley (for accounts and careful analysis of them, see especially Sabo 1995).

As nearly as can be reconstructed from the multiple accounts (listed in Table 5.1), an ideal encounter between strangers in the Mississippi Valley would have gone something like this.

*The Approach.* The visitors approach the living area of the hosts. If their arrival has not already been detected, they halt and send forward a small party with a calumet to announce their arrival. The hosts emerge from their town to parley with the emissaries. They caress them and offer them food. The visitors in turn offer some gifts. They speak of the peaceful arrival of the full party of visitors, and the vanguard become the leaders of the emissaries of the hosts who return as a body to the waiting visitors.

*Preliminary Council.* When the hosts meet the visitors they advance in an impressive parade of warriors and chiefs. Someone advances in ritual posture to present the calumet. The visitors are "censed" with the smoke of the calumet and caressed by the hands of the hosts. An arbor is quickly erected, and a "bed" of canes and boughs covered by woven mats or animal skins is created under it. There are exchanges of gifts, and the hosts offer food. Then the visitors explain the purpose of their visit and ask for hospitality. If the hosts accept the explanation, the entire party then moves to the main town, with at least the leaders of the visiting group carried on the shoulders of the hosts or in a skin carried by the hosts.

*Main Council.* In the town the visitors are carried either to the council house or to an outdoor arbor, depending on the weather or season. There they are seated on mats or skins while the calumet dance is performed. The calumet is smoked by all, with complex ritual sequences: puffs of the sacred tobacco(?) smoke for the sun, earth, cardinal directions, and other powers. The visitors are censed with the sacred smoke. Then the hosts take turns dancing the calumet. The dance is basically an individual one by a warrior using eaglelike movements with the calumet in hand, the conclusion of which is the "striking-the-post" ritual in which the warrior briefly recounts his achievements in war, thereby introducing himself to the visitors. Since that takes a long time, especially if all the warriors elect to "strike-the-post," the visitors are simultaneously feasted. The leader of the visitors may be adopted into the host people or one of the host families. If this step is

taken, special rites of adoption are incorporated in the evening events, such as feeding the adoptee and rocking him as if he were a child newly born.

All of this took time, and the full ritual might stretch to several days in length. The French soon found themselves bored with the lengthy rituals and learned to take turns as the symbolic visitor while the hosts did their best to understand their visitors' behavior. Despite their impatience, the French understood that the greeting rituals were important, especially since a failure to observe them was easily taken by Native Americans as an indication of hostility or an intention to be hostile in the future. There were several famous violations of the greeting ceremony in French times, cases in which the calumet ceremony was used as a cloak for a sneak attack upon host or visitor, but they were famous precisely because of the horror of the violation of the international protocol.

In this brief survey of events in the greeting ritual, several items bear closer notice as well attested motifs of the rite:

*Status Indicators.* The ranking official is the one who goes forth to greet the newcomers. In many cases a large band of warriors accompanied that person. In some cases the Europeans recorded that men played upon flutes during the procession. On Pierre Radisson's fourth expedition, at Lake Superior, the entourage that greeted the French consisted of armed young men (warriors) followed by the major chiefs. "The Elders came with great gravity and modesty, covered with buff[alo] coats which hung down to the ground. Every one had in his hand a pipe of Councell set with precious jewels." They were in turn followed by the women carrying food (Radisson, in Scull 1885:212). Such displays of organization by rank impressed the French who could see resemblances to the Parisian court.

Even more impressive to them was the tradition of showing high status by literal physical elevation. As they penetrated farther into the center of the continent, the French became accustomed to their enthusiastic hosts' desire to carry them into the towns. (See chapter 6 for further discussion of this trait and its meaning.)

*Caressing.* Another widely used practice was the stroking or caressing of the visitors. The leading chief of the Mascouten "rubbed with his hands Perot's head, back, legs, and feet, and sometimes his own body" (La Potherie, in Blair 1911, vol. 1:328). The Iowas combined the caressing with copious weeping; they rubbed the heads, faces, and garments of the French with their tears, a practice the visitors found disgusting (La Potherie, in Blair 1911, vol. 1:369). By two decades later the French had become accustomed to the caressing symbol in its variety of forms. Saint-Cosme in 1698 simply noted of the Arkansas that "they rubbed us when we came up and then rubbed themselves, a mark of esteem among the Indians" (in Shea 1861:71). In 1699 Iberville encountered the Bayogoula in the Lower Mississippi Valley. "We embraced them after their manner, by rubbing their stomach" (French 1976, vol. 2:48). Their close Muskhogean relatives, the Mugulasha, "came singing their song of

5.1. Traits of the greeting protocol

| | 1564 Timucua | 1667 Mascouten | 1673 Illinois | 1700 Natchez |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| STATUS: | | | | |
| Retinue | • | • | • | • |
| Regalia | • | • | • | • |
| Mat | • | • | • | • |
| Carrying | • | • | | • |
| Flutes | • | • | | |
| Robe | • | | • | |
| Arbor | • | | • | |
| APPROACH: | | | | |
| Warning | • | • | • | • |
| Food | • | • | • | • |
| Gifts | • | • | • | • |
| Carrying | • | • | • | • |
| COUNCIL: | | | | |
| Caress | • | • | | • |
| Mat | • | • | • | • |
| Food | • | • | • | • |
| Gifts | • | • | • | • |
| Speeches | • | • | • | • |
| Pipe | | • | • | • |
| Dances | | • | • | • |

peace, extending their hands towards the sun and rubbing their stomachs, as a sign of admiration and joy. After joining us they placed their hands upon their breasts, and extended their arms over our heads as a mark of friendship" (French 1976, vol. 2:49, 62). The French seem to have grasped the symbolic reference of the caress of these Native Americans. Iberville "was received by them in the usual manner. They began by elevating their arms towards the sun, as in admiration, then passed their hands over his breast, which is a peculiar form of endearment among them" (French 1976, vol. 2:69). In the light of the known solar worship of the Southeastern peoples, the French interpretation seems plausible: the hosts were absorbing the power (blessing?) of the sun's rays with their hands, then rubbing it upon their own bodies and those of their guests. Farther north in the Mississippi Valley, that same

concept was embodied in their form of the caress, which also involved censing the guests with smoke from the calumet.

*Arbor and Mat.* When the visitors were met at a distance from the town, which appears to have been preferable to the defensive-minded hosts, one of the first acts was to construct a leafy arbor to provide some shade for the visitors during the initial rites of the encounter. Then the visitors were seated upon a mat of woven rushes or a buffalo or bear skin, whatever was appropriate for that people. When the initial rites and assurances were concluded, the visitors were carried to the town itself. Marquette noted that in the winter the group moved inside the council house, but in the summer, to an arbor in the open. The mats were used both for seating and for the placing of the powerful objects and totems, possibly from sacred bundles, as well as the calumet. Once this sequence of events in the complex ritual of greeting strangers is grasped, it is easy to see the pattern in the narratives. Even more interesting, perhaps, are the ways in which the basic pattern is adapted for special use. Since all peoples who were likely to be wandering in mid-continent were expected to know the basic protocol, nuances of adaptation became nuances of language. The traditional formula, like most folklore, was used to communicate different situations and needs in changing contexts. Here, as an example of this adaptive quality, is the narrative of an Iowa group. Having fallen upon hard times, they determined in 1680 that their main chance lay in a close alliance with the wealthy and powerful French in the person of Nicolas Perrot, who had just established a lone outpost west of the Mississippi.

> [S]ome deputies came in behalf of the Iowas, who gave notice that [the people from] their village were approaching, with the intention of settling near the French. The interview with these newcomers was held in so peculiar a manner that it furnished cause for laughter. They approached the Frenchman [Perrot], weeping hot tears, which they let fall into their hands along with saliva, and with other filth which issued from their noses with which they rubbed the heads, faces, and garments of the French; all these caresses made their stomachs revolt. On the part of those savages there were only shouts and yells, which were quieted by giving them some knives and awls. At last, after having made a great commotion, in order to make themselves understood—which they could not do, not having an interpreter—they went back [to their people]. Four others of their men came, at the end of a few days, of whom there was one who spoke Illinois; this man said that their village was nine leagues [approximately 27 miles] distant, on the bank of the river, and the French went there to find them. At their arrival the women fled; some gained the hills, and others rushed into the woods which extended along the river, weeping, and raising their hands toward the sun.

Twenty prominent men presented the calumet to Perrot, and carried him upon a buffalo-skin into the cabin of the chief, who walked at the head of this procession. When they had taken their places on the mat, this chief began to weep over Perrot's head, bathing it with his tears, and with moisture that dripped from his mouth and nose; and those who carried the guest did the same to him. These tears ended, the calumet was again presented to him; and the chief caused a great earthen pot, which was filled with tongues of buffaloes, to be placed over the fire. These were taken out as soon as they began to boil, and were cut into small pieces, of which the chief took one and placed it in his guest's mouth; Perrot tried to take one for himself, but the chief refused until he had given it to him, for it is their custom to place the morsels in the guest's mouth, when he is a captain, until the third time, before they offer the dish. He could not forbear spitting out this morsel, which was still all bloody (those same tongues were cooked that night in an iron pot); immediately some men, in great surprise, took their calumet, and perfumed them with tobacco-smoke. Never in the world were seen greater weepers than those peoples; their approach is accompanied with tears, and their adieu is the same. . . .

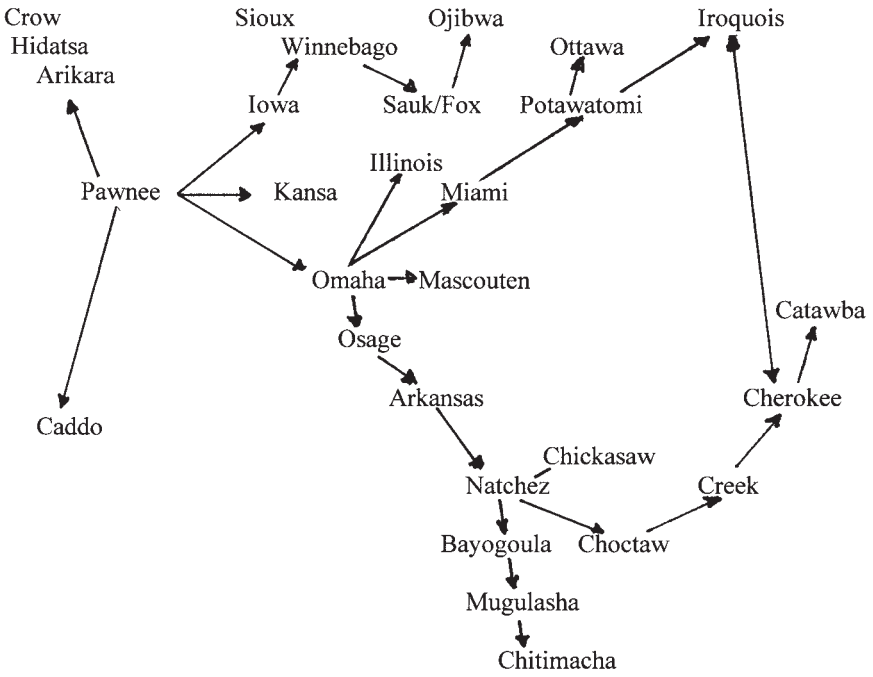
[Some time later.] After they had ended their hunt forty Iowas came to trade at the French fort; and Perrot returned with them to their village, where he was hospitably received. The chief asked him if he were willing to accept the calumet, which they wished to sing for him; to this he consented. This is an honor which is granted only to those whom they regard as great captains. He sat down on a handsome buffalo-skin, and three Iowas stood behind him who held his body; meanwhile other persons sang, holding calumets in their hands, and keeping these in motion to the cadence of their songs. The man who held Perrot in his arms also performed in the same manner, and they spent a great part of the night in singing the calumet. They also told him that they were going to pass the rest of the winter in hunting beaver, hoping to go in the spring to visit him at his fort; and at the same time they chose him, by the calumet which they left with him, for the chief of all the tribe. [The Mascoutens] told him that they were surprised that he should doubt his own children; that he was their father, and the Iowas their younger brothers, and therefore the latter could not strike them without striking him also, since he laid them in his bosom; and that they had sucked the same milk which they desired again to suck. They entreated him to give them in return some arms and munitions. The Frenchman, having no answer to give them, had them smoke in his calumet, and told them that this was his breast which he had always presented to them to give them nourishment . . . [La Potherie, in Blair 1911, vol. 1:367–372]

Once the basic elements of the calumet ceremony have been identified, they are easily discerned in accounts such as this one from the Iowa. At the same time, however, differences also become apparent. The calumet ceremony, as an international ritual, was a basic pattern that, like all oral traditions, was adapted to local patterns and meanings. Just as the calumet itself, with its symbolic additions of feathers, fur, skins, and colors, was expressive of the symbols appropriate to the given society, the movements of the ritual were also adapted to local traditions and needs of the occasion.

Some years ago William Fenton set out to clarify the background of the Iroquois eagle dance. His conclusions are significant for understanding the calumet ceremony. By comparing traits, he was quickly able to determine that the eagle dance was an Iroquoian version of the calumet ritual (Fenton 1953; see also Blakeslee 1975 and Turnbaugh 1979). Further, by carefully sifting through the historic accounts of the calumet rites (most of which are listed in Table 5.2), he identified the hearth of the calumet tradition as the middle and upper Mississippi Valley. He focused on the use of catlinite derived from the pipestone quarry in Minnesota as a determinative indicator of the source area for the ritual, and he suggested that the 13th century archaeological complex known as the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex included elements that constituted an early manifestation of the calumet ritual. Even more precisely, he pointed to the Pawnee as the source of the calumet/eagle dance and attempted to trace the diffusion eastward from them through several centuries. Fenton concluded that the references to pipes and smoking on the east coast were not references to the calumet and that the few real calumet examples from the east demonstrated the lateness of the diffusion of the ceremony to those peoples. He suggested that the French themselves in the 18th century were agents of diffusion down the Mississippi Valley and eastward across the Southeast.

While some of Fenton's interpretations of the brief documentary references are debatable, his general conclusions appear to have stood the test of time. If we accept his presentation as the total picture, however, we end up with a slightly skewed interpretation of the growth and development of an even more widespread international greeting protocol in the entire Eastern Woodlands. By focusing almost exclusively on the eagle dance, Fenton was able to identify and study the calumet complex of the Mississippi Valley and the Plains, but that is only one particular form of the international peace protocol. The calumet/eagle dance identified one subgroup, but Fenton's focus thereby led him to ignore the rest of the greeting tradition—the forms that did not include the calumet.

In the first part of this study, the international protocol of the east coast was examined by analysis of the documentary evidence from Spanish and French conflict in the world of the Timucua of Florida in the late 16th century (see chapter 4 of this volume). As can be seen from the chart of comparative rituals (Table 5.1),




5.1. Fenton's interpretation of the flow of the calumet dance.

the traits and rules for the Timucua greeting ceremony are closely parallel to those of the calumet ceremony of the Mississippi Valley, but there is one significant exception: the protocol of the east coast did not include the calumet/eagle dance. Fenton's argument that the calumet ceremony diffused to the east at a late date thus opens up an alternate interpretation of the larger picture. In the terminology of the discipline of folklore, the calumet ceremony appears to be an oicotype, or a cluster of forms that indicates a local special development of a larger phenomenon. In this case, the larger phenomenon is a greeting ceremony known throughout the Eastern Woodlands, one that received a special development in the Mississippi Valley by the addition of the calumet ceremony and the ritual use of the pipe. The point is that the calumet ceremony seems to be an addition to a preexisting ceremonial complex.

If we accept Fenton's suggestion that the calumet ceremony is rooted in the explosion of art and iconography of Mississippian times (as archaeologists often refer to the last few centuries before European contact), then another suggestion appears plausible, though unprovable. The precalumet international protocol in Florida seems embedded in the western calumet protocol, an indication that the eastern version represents the earlier form and that it was known at least as far as the Mis-

5.2. Sources for the greeting protocol

| Year | People | Explorer(s) | Reference |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1661 | Sioux? | Radisson | Scull 1885:211–217 |
| 1665 | Sioux | Perrot | Blair 1911, vol. 1:182–187 |
| 1667 | Mascouten | La Potherie | Blair 1911, vol. 1:323–331 |
| 1667 | Miami | Allouez | Thwaites 1900, vol. 51:47–49 |
| 1670? | Sioux | Marquette | Thwaites 1900, vol. 54:191ff. |
| 1673 | General | Marquette | Thwaites 1900, vol. 59:131–137 |
| 1673 | Peoria | Marquette | Thwaites 1900, vol. 59:115–123 |
| 1673 | Mosopelea | Marquette | Thwaites 1900, vol. 59:147ff. |
| 1673 | Mitchigamea | Marquette | Thwaites 1900, vol. 59:151 |
| 1673 | Arkansas | Marquette | Thwaites 1900, vol. 59:153–159 |
| 1675 | Miami/Masc. | La Potherie | Blair 1911, vol. 1:350 |
| 1680 | Iowa | Perrot/La Potherie | Blair 1911, vol. 1: 367–372 |
| 1683 | Potawatomi | La Potherie | Blair 1911, vol. 1:309–310 |
| 1683 | Menomini | La Potherie | Blair 1911, vol. 1:311ff. |
| 1684 | Iroquois | LeMoyne | Lahonton 1970, vol. 1:75–76 |
| 1684 | Iroq./General | Radisson | Lahonton 1970, vol. 2:423ff., 508ff. |
| 1687 | Arkansas | La Salle/Joutel | Margry 1878, vol. 3:444ff. |
| 1687 | Caddo/Ceni | La Salle | Shea 1861:34ff. |
| 1690 | Illinois | De Gannes | Pease and Werner 1934:389ff. |
| 1698 | Arkansas | Saint-Cosme | Shea 1861:70ff. |
| 1699 | Sioux | Le Sueur | Shea 1861:107 |
| 1699 | Biloxi | Iberville | McWilliams 1981:44 |
| 1699 | Bayagoula | Iberville | French 1976, vol. 2:47ff., 71 |
| 1699 | Mugulasha | Iberville | French 1976, vol. 2:62–75 |
| 1699 | Houma | Iberville | French 1976, vol. 2:80–87 |
| 1700 | General | Gravier | Thwaites 1900, vol. 65:124–125 |
| 1700 | Yuchi | Gravier | Thwaites 1900, vol. 65:116 |
| 1700 | Arkansas | Gravier | Thwaites 1900, vol. 65:121–122 |
| 1700 | Houma | Gravier | Thwaites 1900, vol. 65:148–149 |
| 1700 | Bayagoula | Du Ru | Butler 1934:18–19 |
| 1700 | Chitimacha/B. | Du Ru | Butler 1934:49–51 |
| 1700 | Natchez | Charlevoix et al. | Swanton 1911:123–138 |
| 1709 | Iroquois | Raudot | Kinietz 1940:346–348 |
| 1854 | Siouan | Denig | Denig 1928–29:446ff. |

sissippi Valley. The hypothesis that stems from this conclusion is that the basic protocol developed in Hopewellian times (300 B.C. to A.D. 300), or even earlier. The eras from the Archaic period through the expansion of the Hopewell sphere to the Mississippian period are known to archaeologists for evidence of large and long-standing international trade networks involving exotic materials from the Pacific to the Atlantic. Such an extensive communication and exchange system virtually demands some sort of international protocol to facilitate peaceful contact between strangers. The greeting ritual, as found in both the Timucua materials and the calumet ceremony, is a reasonable candidate for such a protocol, and it likely covered much of the Eastern Woodlands. In the Mississippi Valley in later centuries, it underwent a special development by addition of the calumet ceremony. The use of catlinite for the pipe itself, a tradition linked to Minnesota, may have been an even later diffusion, a specification of the preferred material for a pipe and its ceremony that were already known in the Mississippi Valley.

If the general structure of the international protocol was truly ancient, then the addition of the calumet and eagle dance in the upper Mississippi Valley seems plausibly identified as a late prehistoric development, as Fenton argued. Rather than a complete innovation, however, the calumet dance was an addition to a much older ceremony. The calumet's late diffusion to the east was thus a reflex movement of a new version back against its earlier form, but there appears to have been little reason for the peoples of the Eastern Woodlands to replace their ancient protocol with the new form centered on catlinite pipes.

However the developmental sequence is envisioned, the general protocol was probably known for centuries or millennia from the east coast to the Rockies. The usefulness of such an international ritual did not lessen with the arrival of the Europeans. By the middle of the 19th century, the westward movement of Native Americans, many displaced from the old calumet hearth of the Mississippi Valley, carried the calumet ceremony westward. Apparently innocent of all the documentary evidence from the French period, one observer of the Sioux in 1854 accurately surmised that, "Councils between two nations for a peace, deputations of both being present, are very solemn and take a long time. It is likely these ceremonies are very ancient, being nearly the same among all the roving tribes" (Denig 1928–29).

# 6
# "Reysed After There Manner"

The Jacques LeMoyne paintings of the Timucua in 1564 were the first visual images of the people north of Mexico that the Europeans had received. Among the many spectacular scenes was an astonishing vision of a beautiful woman riding on a litter carried by warriors—the "queen" being carried to her wedding (Figure 6.1). So classical is the pose and the theme, so Renaissance is the art, that skepticism about its authenticity is inevitable.

There is corroborative evidence for the practice, however. Jean Ribaut recorded that when he first met the Timucua on the St. Johns River in 1562, the chief received him "gently and reysed after there manner," as the Hakluyt translation put it (Ribaut 1964:67). A later translator of the same passage had trouble with the notion of "raising" Ribaut, so the word was changed to "modestly" (French 1976, vol. 2:170). Hakluyt had it right, though, as is clear from the other written testimony of the French on that ill-fated expedition.

Moreover, Hernando de Soto and his Spanish army more than a decade earlier had reported several experiences of the same phenomenon. When the Europeans arrived at Cofitachequi in present South Carolina, according to their chroniclers, they were confronted by a female emissary of the female chief, and she was carried on a litter. "Shortly thereafter, the cacica came from the town in a carrying chair in which certain principal Indians carried her to the river" (Elvas, in Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 1:82). "The next day the Governor arrived at the crossing in front of the town, and principal came with gifts, and the cacica, ruler of that land, came, whom the principal [Indians] brought with much prestige on a litter covered in white (with thin linen) and on their shoulders, and they crossed in the canoes, and

6.1. The Timucua "queen" taken to her husband (in Swanton 1946:plate 85).

she spoke to the Governor with much grace and self-assurance" (Ranjel, in Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 1:278).

The same expedition of 1539–42 through the Southeast noted several other instances of the same phenomenon, but it was males who were being treated in this manner. De Soto's army met the chief of Coosa the same way: "The cacique came out to welcome him two crossbow flights from the town in a carrying chair borne on the shoulders of his principal men, seated on a cushion, and covered with a robe of marten skins of the form and size of a woman's shawl. He wore a crown of feathers on his head; and around about him were many Indians playing and singing" (Elvas, in Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 1:92). "[T]the cacique came forth to receive the Governor on a litter, covered with white blankets of the land. Sixty or seventy of his principal Indians carried the litter on their shoulders, and none was an Indian of the plebeians or commoners, and those that carried him took turns from time to time, with great ceremony in their manner" (Ranjel, in Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 1:284).

The Europeans of the day were no doubt titillated by the depiction of yet more New World inhabitants who revealed concepts of rank and royalty, hallmarks of civilized people. People accustomed to the sedan chair and the elevation of princes would have found an easy interpretation of the natives in litters—they were lifted above others to indicate their exalted station in life. A world in which nobility vied for the right to help a king get out of bed in the morning and to dress him, was a

world that would have little difficulty interpreting the motives of the "principal men" who bore the litter on their shoulders.

Anthropologists concur when they speak of the elevation of Southeastern chiefs as a sign of the paramount chieftainship. The few early observations of the natives in their unaltered state make it clear that the Southeastern peoples had moved to some sort of ranking system that made it possible for one chief to have hegemony over many chiefs and towns. If the carrying of the paramount chiefs on litters were indeed one of the perquisites of the office, then the original European interpretation was not far from the mark. "High" rank was reflected in physical "highness," which even became an attribute of European monarchs, their Highnesses. If the litters of the Southeast reflect the ranking, then they belong to that metaphorical tradition that goes back to the ancient Near East and beyond, the tradition that envisions even the invisible god Yahweh as "seated on a throne, high and lifted up" (Isaiah 6:1).

There is another way to read this practice, however. It is possible that the carrying of chiefs on litters is a symbol with a quite different meaning, referring to a symbolic world that is not primarily one of rank and status, but of domains of cosmic power held in balance. Two major lines of thought support this interpretation: (1) the ritual nature of this behavior, and (2) the widespread observation of this practice through both space and time.

The fact that the Europeans rarely saw the litters, and then always at the beginning of their acquaintances with the native people, suggests that this is ritual behavior. I have argued in other studies that the early ethnographic accounts of the Southeast give enough clues to reconstruct an international protocol for the greeting of strangers, and that argument need not be rehearsed here (see previous two chapters). The greeting ritual was necessitated by the existence of extensive trade networks, and it may have existed throughout the many centuries of those international activities. In the Southeast, one of the elements of that ceremonial protocol, but just one of many, was the elevation of the chief. It is interesting that the elevation did not have to be by litter only. Cabeza de Vaca recorded a memory of the Timucua in Florida from the Narváez expedition of 1527, the earliest European observation of the practice: "Then on this [June] 17th, there appeared in front of us a chief in a painted deerskin riding the back of another Indian, musicians playing reed flutes walking before, and a train of many subjects attending him. He dismounted where the Governor stood and stayed an hour" (Cabeza de Vaca 1961:7).

Carrying a chief on the back of a single man seems to have been functionally equivalent to carrying him on a litter, if the later observations among the Timucua are any guide. De Soto saw the same thing among the Chickasaw: "The Cacique came and brought many Indians, who carried him on their shoulders. He brought us some deerskins and little dogs" (Biedma, in Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 1:236).

In 1567, Captain Juan Pardo, exploring *La Florida* for the new Spanish governor,

visited Juada in the southern Appalachians, near which his sergeant Moyano had build a fort. "A great number of Indians came out four and six leagues to meet the Captain, and carried him in a chair until he reached the town. There they brought him all the clothing needed for his company; also corn and venison and poultry and fish, and the Indian who did not reach the Captain's chair considered himself slighted" (Martinez, in Ketcham 1954:77).

After a century of limited ethnographic information during a period of presumed alteration in native population and social structure, contacts in the interior of North America by the French brought more insights into aboriginal practices. In 1667, Nicolas Per[r]ot was the first to visit the Mascouten south of Lake Michigan. "The savages thought that it was their duty to carry the French guests; but the latter informed the Maskoutechs that, as they could shape the iron, they had strength to walk, so they were left at liberty. . . . A war chief raised Per[r]ot upon his shoulders, and, accompanied by all the musicians, conducted him to the village" (La Potherie, in Blair 1911, vol. 1:327, 330).

Pushing farther west, Perrot discovered the same behavior among the Iowa and Potawatomi: in 1680, "Twenty prominent men presented the calumet to Perot, and carried him upon a buffalo skin into the cabin of the chief, who walked at the head of the procession"; and in 1683, "When he left the room, they insisted on carrying him upon their shoulders; the way over which he passed was made clear; they did [not] dare look in his face; and the women and children watched him from a distance" (La Potherie, in Blair 1911, vol. 1:368, 310). Apparently Perrot tired of this ritual behavior and refused to participate in this portion of the greeting ceremony; when he visited the Menomini in Illinois in that same year of 1683, this occurred: "The calumet was presented to him; and, when he was ready to proceed to the village, one of the savages stooped down in order to carry Perot upon his shoulders; but his interpreter assured him that he had refused such honors among many tribes. He was escorted with assiduous attentions; they vied with one another in clearing the path, and in breaking off the branches of trees which hung in the way" (La Potherie, in Blair 1911, vol. 1:311ff.).

Back on the Carolina coast, in 1670, Nicholas Carteret found the same practice among the Sewee: "The Governor and severall others walking a little distance from the watter side came to the Hutt Pallace of his Majesty of the place, who meeteing us tooke the Goverr on his shoulders and carried in imto the house in token of his chearfull entertainment" (Carteret, in Salley 1911:117ff.).

Among the Caddoans the French found the same sort of greeting. René Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle recorded his treatment among the Cenis in 1687: "On the 9th, after a crowd of young men had danced a dance of joy in our cabin, we were taken to that of the prince, for whom they have all possible veneration, submission, and respect; for when he went abroad he was borne by eight men on a platform, all the tribe ranged in two lines, both hands on the forehead, uttering a cry of joy or

humility; if he went on foot, very clean mats were spread wherever he was to pass" (La Salle, in Shea 1861:41).

The French grew accustomed to this greeting ritual, and fewer comments about it began to be recorded, an indication that the protocol of the calumet greeting ceremony was virtually ubiquitous in the Mississippi Valley. Perrot was not the only one who grew tired of being elevated when he entered a town, however. Fr. Saint-Cosme negotiated a deal with his hosts when he visited the Akansea (Arkansas) in 1698: "They took us on their shoulders and carried us to a chief's cabin. There was a hill of potter's clay to get up and the one that carried sank under his burden. I was afraid that he would let me fall and so I got down in spite of him and went up the hill, but as soon as I got to the top I had absolutely to get on his back and be carried to the cabin" (Saint-Cosme, in Shea 1861:70ff.).

Fr. Paul Du Ru left an ethnographic note from his visit among the Bayogoula of the lower Mississippi Valley that demonstrates that his treatment was not reserved or created for the French. He recorded the greeting accorded to a Chitimacha chief upon arriving at the Bayogoula town. "The Ouga of Chitimachas came in at two o'clock. A man carried him on his back and took him around the square after which he went and put him down in the portico of the temple where our Ougas awaited him" (Du Ru, in Butler 1934:49).

The ritual nature of this elevation of people on litters, skins, or backs is made plain in the latest of the recorded observations of the trait; unfortunately there is some question about the historical validity of the account of Le Clerc Milfort, a French resident among the Creeks who claimed to have been made a war chief by them in 1780. If this later European-published account of his experiences can be credited, the elevation of Milfort was accorded to a man who was no stranger, nor was he greeting the people among whom he lived; instead, the elevation is part of a *rite de passage,* the creation of a chief. Charles Hudson summarized the lengthy account this way:

> It began with a delegation of men coming to get Milfort at the house in which he lived. They placed him on a litter covered with a bearskin and borne by four men. The procession was led by two men, one shaking a rattle and the other beating time on a drum. They were followed by several young warriors who carried eagle tails attached to wands and danced along shouting terrifying cries. Old war chiefs walked before, behind and on both sides of the litter, each carrying in his hand an eagle tail, half of which was painted red. At the rear of the processions were six priests wearing loose deerskin garments about their shoulders, each carrying a white bird's wing in one hand and in the other hand a sprig of the herb they used to make their war medicine.
>
> The procession halted when they approached the square ground. [They took war medicine.] Then the war chiefs went back to the square ground and

6.1. Types and sources of elevation occurrences

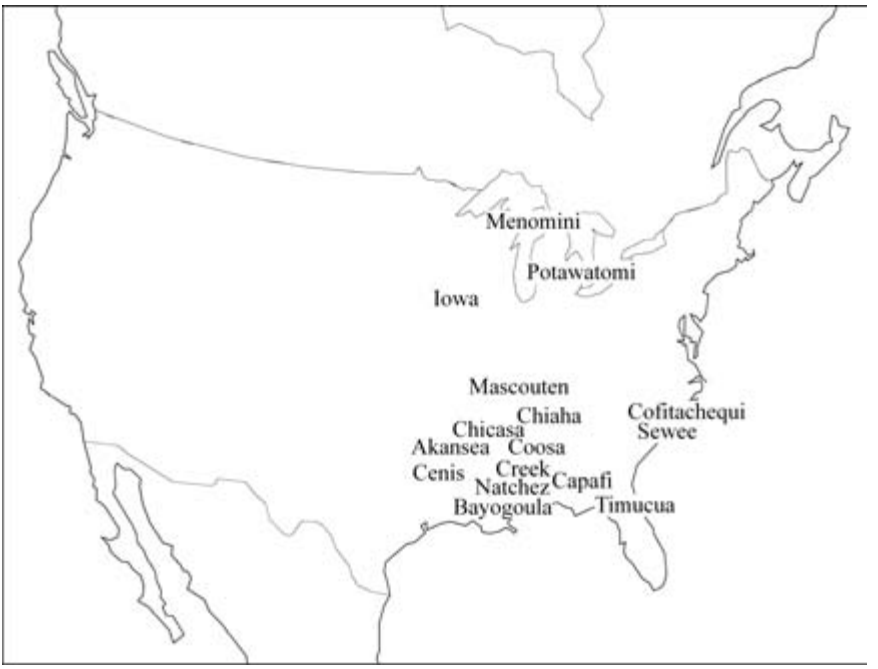
| Year | People | Method | Reference |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1527 | Timucua | Back | Cabeza de Vaca 1961:31 |
| 1540 | Capafi | Litter | Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 2:213 |
| 1540 | Cofitachequi | Litter | Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 1:82, 278 |
| 1540 | Coosa | Litter | Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 1:92, 284 |
| 1540 | Chicasa | Shoulders | Clayton et al. 1993, vol. 1:236 |
| 1564 | Timucua | Litter | Swanton 1922:372 |
| 1567 | Chiaha | Litter | Ketcham 1954:77 |
| 1667 | Mascouten | Shoulders | Blair 1911, vol. 1:330 |
| 1670 | Sewee | Shoulders | Salley 1911:117–118 |
| 1680 | Iowa | Skin | Blair 1911, vol. 1:368 |
| 1683 | Potawatomi | Shoulders | Blair 1911, vol. 1:310 |
| 1683 | Menomini | Shoulders | Blair 1911, vol. 1:311ff. |
| 1687 | Cenis | Litter | Shea 1861:41 |
| 1698 | Akansea | Shoulders | Shea 1861:70 |
| 1700 | Bayogoula | Back | Butler 1934:49 |
| 1728 | Natchez | Litter | Swanton 1911:114, 118 |
| 1780 | Creek | Litter | Hudson 1976:326 |

> the whole procession followed. . . . [They drank black drink for 24 hours, then sweat bath, feasting, and dancing.]
>
> The ceremony lasted three days, during which time none of the men were allowed to leave the square ground and none, including Milfort, were allowed to sleep. When Milfort became drowsy, they would splash cold water on his face. In the end he was carried back to his house on the litter . . . [Hudson 1976:326ff.]

These observations of the elevation of individuals cross many decades and cover a wide area, as shown in Table 6.1.

In the Southeast the occurrences range from 1527 to 1780 and span from the Timucua to the Caddo. The practice seems to have been widespread throughout the Mississippi Valley, with reports through the French period. If the data are logged on a map, the distribution is impressive (Figure 6.2). It is readily seen that the mode of elevation may well be a geographic phenomenon.

The use of a litter seems restricted to the Southeast, with other modes—carrying on shoulders or in a skin—used farther north. The very fact that there are different forms of this practice is also instructive. The litters may have been fairly elegant, as suggested by the LeMoyne painting, but the carrying of an important personage




6.2. Distribution of recorded examples of elevation of humans in litters, skins, or on backs.

on a back seems at least unbalanced, if not undignified, if those are not ethnocentric judgments. Both Perrot and Fr. Saint-Cosme found being carried on someone's back an unpleasant ritual act—how did Fr. Saint-Cosme manage it in his robe? The awkwardness of the practice argues for its functional nature—that the elevation of chiefs or visitors was so important, for whatever reason, that ease, style, and dignity were minor issues. The question is thus one of identifying and clarifying that important ritual function. What did they accomplish by elevating these few people on these few occasions?

Hudson, in his major study of Southeastern ethnology, pointed the way to seeking an understanding. "The interrelated structure of the Southeastern Indian belief system is the key to understanding their almost obsessive concern with purity and pollution . . . most of their rituals and ceremonies were means of keeping their categories pure and of ridding them of pollution after it occurred" (Hudson 1976:121).

He interpreted the Southeastern cosmos as a three-story universe, with Upper and Lower World bracketing the world of humans. "The Upper World epitomized order and expectableness, while the Under World epitomized disorder and change, and This World stood somewhere between perfect order and complete

chaos" (Hudson 1976:121–122). If these ideas are put together, the result is provocative: "the Southeastern Indians believed that if a person mixed things from opposed categories, the result was sure to be some form of chaos" (Hudson 1976:148). It may be that the opposing categories here are the Under World lying just beneath the earth on which humans walk and the Upper World as represented in the specialized cultural floor of public zones, such as council houses and square grounds. In that case, ritual actors might need to be elevated in order to remove them from polluting proximity to the Under World. They would be carried by humans who could endure the pollution, carried through the Upper World to a space within it where they would be deposited in purity.

The basic theory offered here is that the elevation of people in ritual activities is designed to assist them in the transformation necessary to move from a position astride both opposing worlds—Hudson's This World—to total participation in the Upper World. When we add another ethnographic detail—that some of these rituals took place on the summits of platform mounds, which were usually the location of public architecture—the theory takes on a new dimension. V. J. Knight Jr. has studied the meaning of the platform mounds so prevalent throughout the area in which elevation was practiced, and he has concluded that the frequent destruction of the public buildings on the mounds, followed by "capping" of the mounds by new mantles of midden and clay before the construction of new buildings on the enlarged mound, reflects the symbolic world of the Native Americans (Knight 1981). He conceives the basic tension as "Earth" versus "Society," with the mound representing Earth and the mantle serving as the mediator between it and the public zone above.

There is not a great difference between this view and the three "Worlds" of Hudson. In fact, they work together very well, for if the cultural cosmos, "Society," is equivalent to the Upper World, then the symbols of the sun, birds, and other celestial phenomena become the insignia of the Southeastern political system, the council of "beloved men." The top of the mound and the buildings on it become the Upper World, while the ordinary earth at the foot of the mound represents the Under World. The elevation of an individual in the latter area would then indicate the change of worlds for that person, who is then "flown" to the Upper World (for a recent connection of this practice with the celestial world, see Lankford 2007b:152–157).

Such a chain of symbolic equivalences may seem strained, but similar patterns have been observed in nearby areas. George Sabo has utilized the ethnographic explanation of an Omaha symbolic pattern to interpret Quapaw ritual (Sabo 1991: 105–130). That pattern is strikingly similar to the Southeastern one of Hudson and Knight. The Omaha divided their cosmos into the Above, which was masculine, and the Below, which was feminine. Those two divisions then corresponded with their two moieties, which were in turn represented physically in the "camp-

ing circle" for Omaha ceremonial occasions. These carefully worked out symbol equivalences find numerous polarities: Sky/Earth, male/female, left/right, north/south, Above/Below. Concern for the ritual purity of the two poles would seem to follow from such a cosmic layout. Since the Siouans of the Mississippi Valley were almost certainly participants in the late Mississippian symbolic sphere that extended through the Southeast, it is not farfetched to see this Omaha system as but one local version of a more widespread pattern that is visible in the elevation of chiefs on ritual occasions.

Such elevation expressed quite different ideas to the Europeans and the Native Americans. To the latter, the lifting of the guests was a way of assisting them to undergo transformation from their dual state into people ritually purified for entrance into the celestial world of order, peace, social structure, and so on. To the Europeans their treatment was a mode of honoring them—elevation to give recognition of their "higher" status. In a secondary sense, the Europeans may have understood correctly, since they were indeed being accorded treatment appropriate for persons of high status, but the elevation itself was not intended to make that announcement.

The elevation, in short, was cosmic, not cosmetic, and the participants happily misunderstood one another in their appreciation of this common symbol from their different worlds. Despite the European interpretation, it seems likely that the visitors were not actually "high and lifted up, seated on a throne," but merely "reysed after there manner."

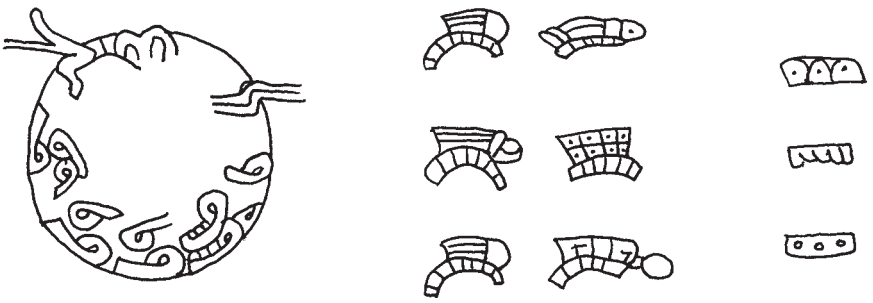
# III
# LOOKING AT LOST ART

# 7
# Riders in the Sky

In 1975, Florida archaeologists learned that one of the seven mounds at the Lake Jackson site (8Le1) was being leveled, and that burials had been found in it. The site was known to be important, because it has long been recognized as a major center of the prehistoric Fort Walton culture and is thought to be the ancestor of the Apalachee town of Inihayca, which by the 17th century was located a few miles to the south where modern Tallahassee now stands (Hann 1988:96–97). Negotiations with the landowner led to salvage excavations on the remainder of Mound 3 under the leadership of B. Calvin Jones (Jones 1982, 1994). The mound proved to have 11 levels in which were 25 burials. Located in the summit, emanating from level 1 or an eroded level above it, were three burials that contained the only three shell gorgets found at the Lake Jackson site (Figure 7.1). Curiously, they were all of the same design style, which has long borne the whimsical label of "spaghetti" style because of the characteristic linear elements, whorls, and fenestrations that comprise a large portion of the engraved area. They have been categorized stylistically as part of the "Williams Island" style (Muller 1991), but for this chapter's analysis, the "spaghetti" label has been retained, since it is this particular thematic construct that is under examination.

As the existence of a prior category and label indicates, the design was not a new one. It had been known for more than a century from examples unearthed in the Tennessee Valley, and the discovery of the three gorgets at Lake Jackson only added to the corpus. The "spaghetti" label has been employed for so many years that the most recent study of shell gorgets employed the traditional name without dispute, but the authors did use the more descriptive term "strapwork" when talking about the design element (Figure 7.2) (Brain and Phillips 1996:62–67).

7.1. The three shell gorgets from the Lake Jackson site (8Le1): #2, #16, #17.

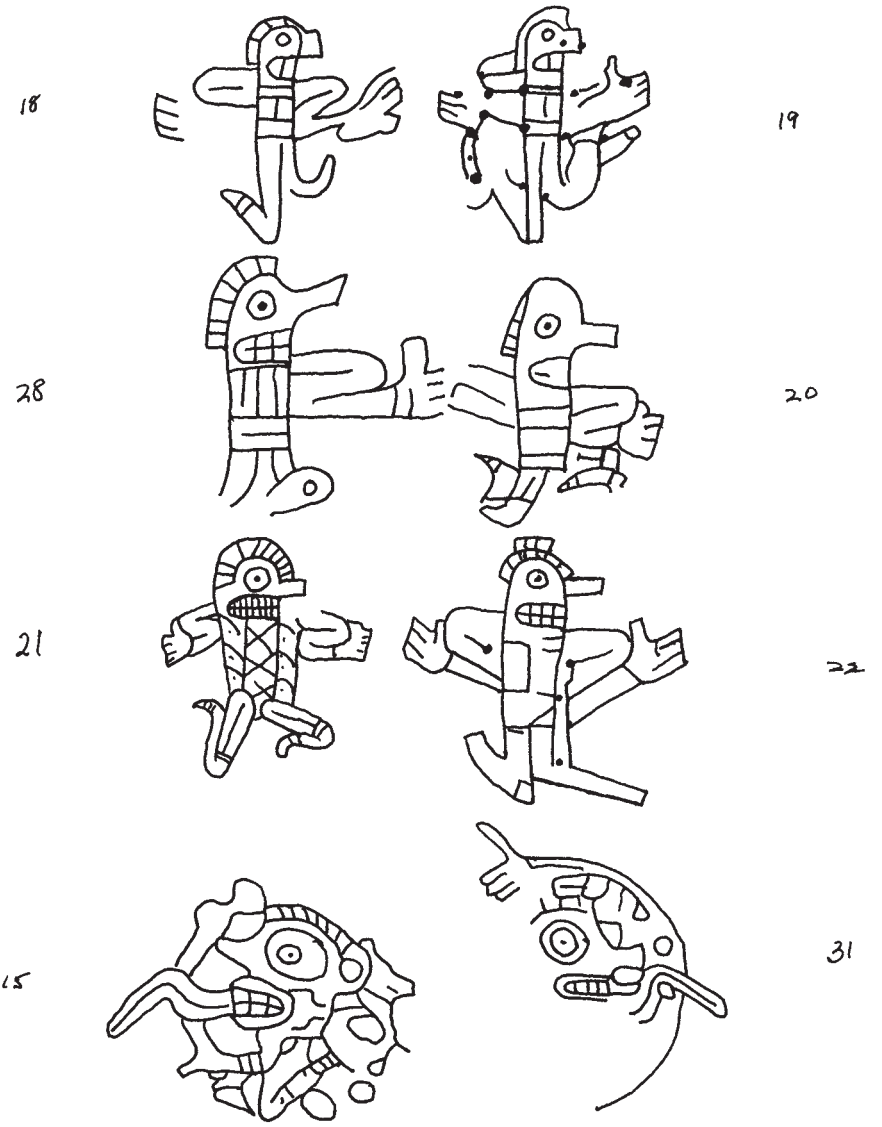


7.2. Examples of the "spaghetti" strapwork (#1), headdresses, and belts on the gorgets.

The three Apalachee gorgets, as isolated specimens in the corpus, provide a good point from which to examine the design style, especially since the three are not identical, but individually distinctive in their own right (#2, #16, #17). With Ryan Wheeler's recent rediscovery of a spaghetti gorget found decades ago in Jackson County, Florida (Wheeler 2001), the total in the corpus is 34, which is a large enough collection to make comparative examination worthwhile. This chapter will survey the collection and place the gorgets in appropriate groups by similarities of motifs. The comparisons yield some insights that will be stated as propositions arising from the empirical observation of the gorgets. Those propositions will then be linked with ethnographic and mythic information that will permit a hypothesis as to the identity of the figures in the design and the original function of the gorgets.

## Grouping the Gorgets

The complete list of known examples of the design style is contained in Table 7.1 (see p. 160), to which the reader will want to refer frequently. The gorgets are each




7.3. Figures on engraved shell gorgets: (Group B) #18, #19, #28, #20, #21, #22; (C) #15, #31.

assigned a number (#) peculiar to this study; the number sequence is without inherent meaning and only reflects the need for a shorthand way to identify which gorget is being discussed. Referring to the gorgets by number also has the benefit of helping the examination stay focused on the design alone, without bias by location or other details.


7.4. Figures on engraved shell gorgets: (Group D1) #9, #14; (D2) #8, #11; (D3) #34; (F) #4.

In their brief summary of the gorgets of the spaghetti style, Jeffrey Brain and Philip Phillips created a set of categories (Classic, Ovoid, Degenerate, and Additional) that served their purpose at the time, but those groupings seem too basic for this more detailed study. Here is a list of groupings primarily based on motif similarities.

Group A: *Illegibles.* These gorgets probably fit into other categories, but their content is not readable. Brain and Phillips were able to assign many of them to their categories on the basis of a few motifs, but that does not seem useful for the present study. They are therefore relegated to the "what a shame" category on the basis of erosion of the surface and actual destruction of significant portions of the disk. These are #23, #24, #29, #30, #32, and #33. The first two, from Crenshaw and Moundville in Alabama, are so abstract that it is only with a shrug that they can

even be assigned to the spaghetti style. The other four—from Polecat Ford and Etowah in the Coosa drainage, from Williams Island nearby in the Tennessee Valley, and from the Lamar site in central Georgia—more clearly belong in the group, but they are so fragmentary that it is only on the basis of single motifs that Brain could attempt to assign them to subgroups. It is a sounder procedure to remove all six from the corpus. With the removal of these gorgets from consideration, the remaining corpus numbers 28.

Group B: *Tubular.* Brain and Phillips based a category on the ovoid shape of some of the disks, easily distinguishable from the circular disks. They placed in their ovoid category #18, #21, and #28. The figures on those gorgets are all characterized by a tubular body that is a downward extension of the head. By focusing on the shape of the figure rather than the disk, it has been possible to add three more gorgets to those three, bringing the list to: #18, #19, #20, #21, #22, #28 (see Figure 7.3).

The first two (#18, #19) are from the Alabama junction—Thirty-Acre Field and Connelly Cemetery. They are so similar that only careful comparison can reveal that they are not the same gorget, a situation that makes a single artist almost a certain conclusion, as Brain and Phillips noted (Brain and Phillips 1996:65). The other four are from three different sites in the Tennessee Valley: Holliston Mills (#20) and two unidentified mounds on the Hiwassee River (#21, #22, #28).

One tubular gorget from the Hiwassee (#21) is unique in two ways. The design of the figure has a texture on the body that no other gorget bears: the ventral portion has large Xs, and that area is flanked by columns of scalelike panels that contain incised dots. This unique quality suggests that this artist created none of the other spaghetti gorgets. The other unique feature of this gorget is that it is a two-sided creation. On the convex side is a Chicamauga style mask. It would be useful to know which of the two creations came first. The lack of perforations on the spaghetti side may be the decisive clue. Many of the incised dots in the design are precisely the points at which on most other spaghetti gorgets the artist would have drilled a hole. The only holes on this gorget—other than the suspension holes at the top—are the three that clearly belong to the Chicamauga mask as eyes and mouth. If the shell had been blank when the spaghetti design was carved, it seems likely that the artist would have drilled the holes as needed. If the mask were already on the convex side, with holes, the artist would be likely to respect the integrity (and power?) of the mask by altering the spaghetti tradition so as to make no additional perforations. Brain and Phillips drew the opposite conclusion: "Note that there are three drilled holes in the figure, but they are randomly placed vis-à-vis the design. . . . This cavalier treatment of the Spaghetti decoration would indicate that the mask was a later creation" (Brain and Phillips 1996:165). Curiously, they also supported the alternate conclusion—that the mask was earlier (1996: 206). That interpretation seems more likely, because the three holes are not very intrusive in the spaghetti design, the central one even appearing navel-like. The rea-

soning offered earlier seems persuasive—the artist has respected the mask design by changing the spaghetti canon calling for perforations and has demonstrated his(?) skill by creating an excellent version of the spaghetti design within the unusual constraints.

If this is correct, there are additional conclusions that may be drawn. First, since some mask gorgets have been found in historic contexts, the tubular forms may be chronologically late (Brain and Phillips 1996:72–82, 395). Second, the mask was still important to the owner or artist, or perhaps both. Its destruction or disfigurement was not acceptable at the time of the creation of the spaghetti design. Third, the respect of the mask shows that the placement of the new design on the concave side does not necessarily indicate the obsolescence of the mask and recycling of the shell, but perhaps an *additional* use. The second design was not a replacement, but an addition. Fourth, if the two gorget designs have personal or social meanings—if they are indicative of status or power, rather than random decoration—then the owner of this gorget was a person with the right to wear both the mask gorget and the spaghetti gorget, whatever they signified. Fifth, since both designs cannot be seen at once, there is at least a hint that the designs have functions beyond decoration. If a person had the right to wear both designs, then the creation of a double-design gorget is an efficient way to have them worn simultaneously (avoiding clanking and chipping), but not be seen simultaneously. However, a two-sided gorget would make it possible for both of them to be at hand for any additional function the owner might need. Sixth, the existence of a double gorget also indicates that two designs—*at least these two specific designs*—could coexist on the same shell without symbolic conflict or pollution. In the Muskhogean world such concerns were not to be taken lightly. These considerations will come up again in the discussion of functional aspects of spaghetti gorgets.

The separation of Group B leaves the unassigned corpus at 22, three of which are the Lake Jackson gorgets.

Group C: *Naturalistic Heads.* This group consists of four similar gorget designs that are different enough in design that they might be considered a different style, especially since they do not even manifest a significant amount of "spaghetti" (see Figure 7.3: #15 and #31). The heads are virtually alone. There is no hint of body or torso, and the legs are missing. Hands are present in two, and they may be there in all four of the examples. These four figures are a separate group simply because they appear to be short (i.e., nontubular) and thus are designated "heads" at the same time that the details appear somewhat naturalistic. The result is that some of the gorgets present a somewhat startling picture of a head with arms and legs, but since this figure is clearly not intended to be a realistic human anyhow, that is not too great a visual leap.

One curious disagreement within the group is that two (#15 and #26) face to the left, while the other two face to the right. The former duo are also closely matched in design, for the hand holds something, and in front of the nose is an object that

might be a beaded forelock so well known from other human figural designs in Mississippian art.

The two gorgets that are so similar (#15 and #26) are both from the Thirty-Acre Field site near the Alabama junction. The other two are far-flung: #25 is from Moundville, while #31 is from the Garden Creek site in western North Carolina, east of the Tennessee Valley (Figure 7.5). Removing this group of four leaves the remainder at 18.

Group D: *Roller skates.* This largest subgroup of the spaghetti style corpus consists of heads and appendages. The tubular form (B) was set apart primarily by the shape of the head/body. The key motif in determining the shape of the figure is a horizontal belt that usually consists of four or five blocks (see Figures 7.2c and 7.4: #8, #9, #11, #34). Leg appendages on most gorgets descend from this "belt." The belt, however, can be construed either as a waistband or as a necklace. Whether the major portion of the figure above the belt is a head or a head-and-torso is ultimately a judgment call, since the proportions seem to vary with the gorget. The determinations made here create a group of 12 specimens.

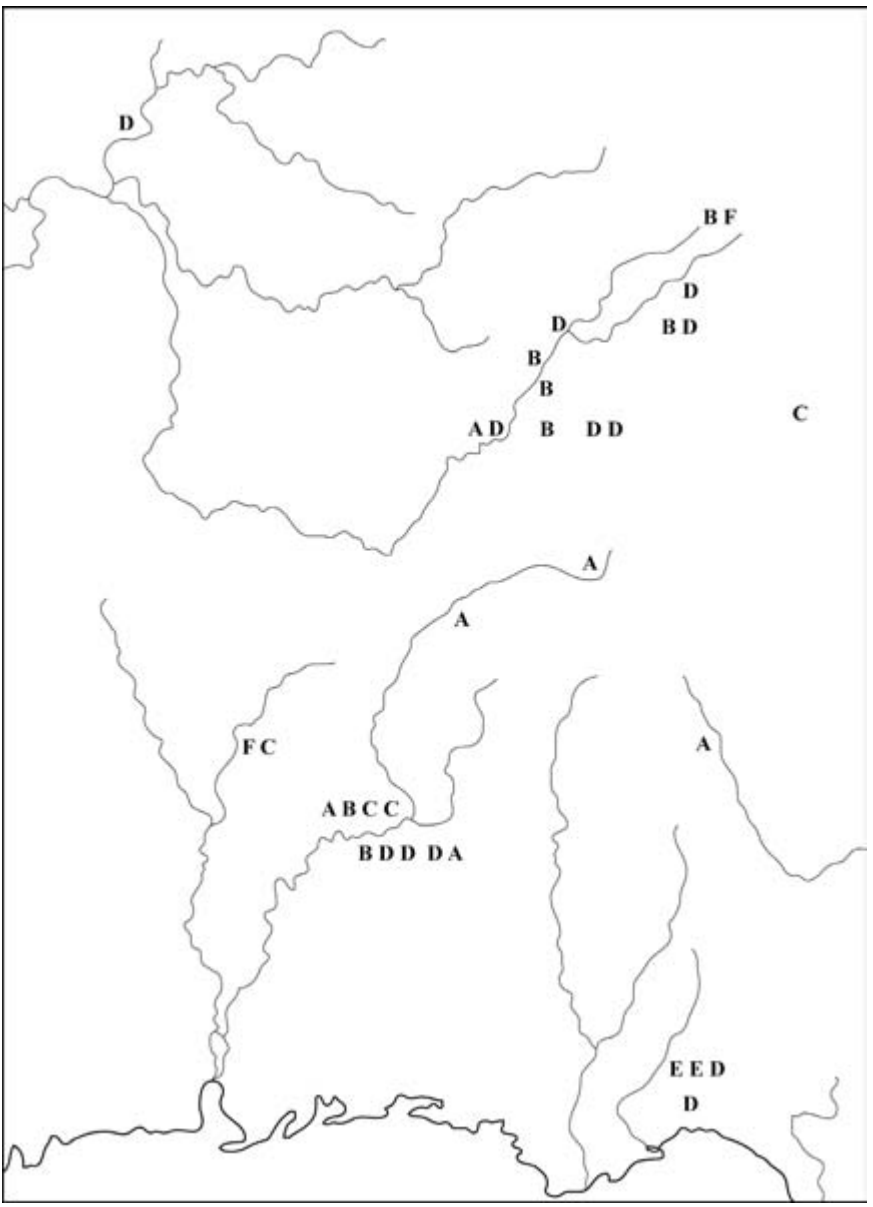
Comparative examination of Group D gorgets quickly provides subgroupings.

Group D1: One subgroup is based upon two characteristics: (1) the thighs of the rudimentary legs are decorated with a horizontal band from which rises a U-shaped element, and (2) the straps are organized in an identifiable pattern. The way the artist portrayed the "strapwork" (to use the term of Brain and Phillips) is a useful motif for finding affinities.

The strapwork features on the left side a whorl with three lines, and it is placed so that it could be part of the figure, such as a bustle, or as an elaboration of the simpler forms of straps. Five of these gorgets comprise Group D1: #9, #10, #12, #14, and #17 (see Figures 7.4 and 7.6). These five gorgets are very close in design, united by the panel thighs and the three-line whorls. The latter were not randomly placed. In every case the lower leg runs into the whorl, almost as if the foot were donning a shoe. Further, the foot is flanked by two circular areas, fenestrations or dots. This peculiar design element—in conformity with the lightheartedness of the "spaghetti" label—might be termed the "roller skate" motif.

The locations of the five gorgets of Group D1 are not tightly bunched. The two (#9 and #10) that bear the closest resemblance, so close that it seems likely they were made by the same hand, are also from the same site, the Davis Farm in the Tennessee Valley. Two others (#12 and #14) were found at the Alabama River junction area, one from the Shine site and the other from the Crenshaw site. The differences between them in execution argue for different artists, although they share the panel thighs and the roller skate motif. The Shine gorget, the only one from the site, was found in the grave of "a large infant or a small child" (personal communication, Kent Reilly, 2003; for a study of the Shine gorget in its relation to the spaghetti corpus, see Wesson et al. 2001).

The fifth gorget in the group (#17) is from Lake Jackson, and it differs from the




7.5. Map showing the distribution of gorgets, indicated by group.

7.6. Three examples of the "roller skate" motif (#6, #10, and #12).

others in presenting a smaller figure in the center of the gorget. Even so, the figure has panel thighs, and the roller skate motif is present. Conceptually, it clearly belongs with the Davis Farm and Alabama junction examples, although it is classified with Group E, since it is a double-figure gorget.

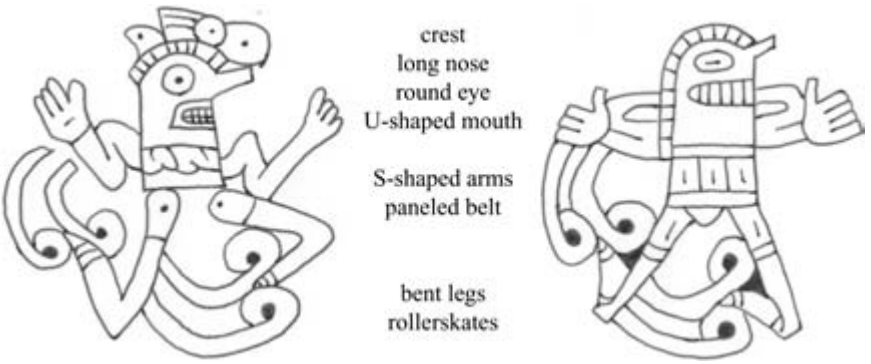
This distinctive design is found on these five gorgets that are also connected by their use of the panel thighs. However, there are other examples of the "roller skates." Once the eye is sensitized to the roller skate motif, it becomes recognizable in other gorget designs that are not part of the small three-line whorl group.

Group D2. One gorget (#11) lacks the panel thigh (a line replaces the panel) and the three-line whorl is ambiguous, but its similarity to the design suggests that it serves as an example of the appearance a conventionalization of the D1 image can take. Another gorget (#27) follows #11 in using lines instead of panels on the thighs, and it takes yet another step away from the three-line gorgets of E1 and into an extended cluster of roller skate-motif gorgets. Upon examination, #5, #6, #7, and #8 can also be perceived as having variants of the roller skate motif.

The D2 examples of the roller skate motif also come from different locations. There are two that share the line-thighs: #11 is from the Dreyspring Place site in the Alabama junction area, while #27 is, regrettably, of unknown provenience. There is a Tennessee cluster: #5 is from the DeArmond site, #6 is from the McMahan Mound, and #8 is from Williams Island. The exception is #7, which came from an unidentified site in Gallatin County in southern Illinois (Olson 1970). The representation of the head is closer to the heads of another group of gorgets to be discussed (E4), but the spindly legs are once again in the roller skate motif.

Group D3. Two more gorgets could fit into this general "D" grouping, but they have been given another subgroup designation simply because they have the peculiarity of decorating the thigh with a large circle. Those gorgets are #13 and #34. Except for the dotted thighs, they belong to Group D2, with the standard key identifiers and roller skates.

One (#13) is from Fain's Island in the Tennessee Valley, while the other (#34) is from an unknown site in Jackson County, Florida, only about 40 miles from the




7.7. Two examples of figures with key identifiers (#6 and #27).

Lake Jackson site. They both are unexceptional members of Group D, except that they have the thigh-joint indicated by a circle/dot. The same dotted thigh motif is also shared by #16 from Lake Jackson. Although it has been damaged, one roller skate is clear, and the dotted thigh is unmistakable. The separation of the gorgets in the subgroups of Group D leaves the remaining corpus at five.

The similarity of the images of Group D seems significant. As in most iconography, a few key signifiers seem to be of paramount importance, the notion being that as long as the artist provides the viewers with a few of the key visual cues so the subject matter can be identified, the artist is free to exercise artistic innovation on the remainder (Figure 7.7). On these figures, the key signifiers seem to be a crest on the top of the head, a long rectangular nose, a circular eye (usually with a dot), a U-shaped mouth with vertical teeth, the paneled belt, and one or two S-shaped arms with a three-fingered hand. There is also in most cases a couple of small, spindly legs that seem incapable of carrying the weight of the enormous head, but most have "roller skates," as if to compensate.

Groups E and F: *Doubles.* These five gorgets are obviously groupable, because they each bear two humanoid figures, as opposed to the standard single figure. They are placed in two groups because there are two quite different designs—E contains #1 (from Tennessee), #2, and #17 (two of the Lake Jackson gorgets), and F is comprised of #3 and #4. Group E can readily be considered a variant of the spaghetti style, since it consists of a doubling of the figure within the same design. Group F, however, probably should be classified as a separate style, for the two gorgets in the group do not participate in the spaghetti style design or details, as will be seen.

Group E. The survey of the spaghetti gorgets has demonstrated a remarkable sameness throughout the corpus. The figures, while done in a variety of artistic ways, are very similar in their key identifiers and their posture. The roller skates are

almost ubiquitous, suggesting that they are either additional key identifiers of the figure or key to this gorget style. The design of the gorgets is extraordinarily similar, and it seems clear that the single figure gorgets break into three general groups: the tubular forms (Group B), the naturalistic heads (Group C), and the roller skate figures (Groups D1, D2, D3). Yet the doubled figure calls for special consideration.

The group, represented by three gorgets (#1, #2, and #17), consists of the same sort of design as the roller skate figures of Group D, but there are two humanoid figures instead of only one. #1 was found in the temple mound at the Dallas site in the Tennessee Valley (Unit 8, Burial 136). Since it is one of the few spaghetti style gorgets that come with good burial data, it is important to take note of what is known. It came from the pit burial of a partly flexed juvenile female, and it was accompanied by another shell gorget, a Nashville II style (Tenn-Hm-D1 in Brain and Phillips 1996). Also in the grave were two knobbed shell ear plugs, a plain bowl with spouts, a Dallas incised jar, a celt, and turtle shell rattles (Lewis and Lewis 1995, vol. 1:186). The two figures on the spaghetti gorget appear identical, and they each have all of the key identifiers found in Group D, including roller skates. The heads face to their left, just as in Group E. The minor changes in the strapwork and the hands may result from the spatial difficulties of squeezing two figures into the space usually allotted to one, but on the whole the gorget is remarkably similar to Group D gorgets, the only major change being the doubling of the figure.

By contrast, the second double-figure gorget (#2), from Lake Jackson, bears several unique features. Certainty of the design is not attainable, because the gorget was broken badly in recovery, and some of the pieces are missing. The two published photographs have shown different reconstructions, and a third was the outcome of my attempt to put the jigsaw puzzle together (see Figure 7.1a). The two figures face away from each other, whereas #1 had them both facing to their left. The bodies are somewhat elongated, raising the question of whether they have affinity with Group B. The legs—or at least one of each figure—are shaped like bird claws, a feature seen in no other spaghetti gorget. Even so, there were at least two of the usual banded legs with roller skates. The two figures do not have the usual crest, but they do wear something reminiscent of a feather wing fan on the tops of their heads. The band that normally is forked on one end and S-shaped and rounded on the other appears here as simply a continuous band across the gorget behind the heads. The loops of the strapwork bear small lines on the interior circles, as if the artist has made an attempt at modeling the straps. There are hands, although the situation of them is difficult to make out. However, the overlapping half-circles of the inner arms resembles the treatment of them in #1.

This gorget bears many details that place it in the company of gorgets from Group E. The deviations, however, make it a truly unique creation. It came from the group of burials on Floor 1 of Mound 3, the highest and most recent level extant. The grave was Burial 5K, the "K" indicating that it was dug by avocational

explorer Conrad Kidd before the arrival of the archaeological team under the direction of Calvin Jones (Jones 1982; 1994). In fact, all three of the spaghetti gorgets at Lake Jackson were dug by Kidd; the other two gorgets were in B2K and B4K. Brain and Phillips offered a caveat about the Kidd burial information ("the assignment of a particular artifact to a specific grave is not always certain" [1996:177]), but Jones betrayed no such misgivings. He listed as the burial information for B5K the following: semiflexed on the left side with a pottery vessel and possibly some shell beads (Jones 1982:tables 1 and 2).

The third double-figure gorget is also from Lake Jackson—B4K (#17). It has been mentioned in the discussion of Group D1, to which it belongs by virtue of the panel legs and three-line whorl, but it has an extra leg. Despite the fragmentary nature of the gorget, the third leg reveals that this is another double-figure design. It is unfortunate that the rest is so eroded, because the little that remains of the heads hints that they might have fallen in yet another group, C, for the nose seems to be similar to that on gorget #15. Like its companion double gorget from Lake Jackson, this one seems to have the figures facing away from each other. Since the rest of the design is missing, it is impossible to say more.

Jones assigned B5K (#2) to the highest status for burials, presumably on the basis of the presence of the gorget. This burial, however, contrasts greatly with the other two in Mound 3 containing gorgets. B4K, with the fragmentary double-figure gorget #17, also held shell cups, a copper ax, a clay elbow pipe, and shell and pearl beads. B2K included small stone cups, cloth, shell cups, preserved leather, sandstone pebbles, a copper ax, copper symbol badges, copper plumes, other copper ornaments, feathers, human hair, human-teeth spangles(?), shell and pearl beads, and a univalve shell pendant. Compared with these two burials, B5K seems unimpressive, since it has only the double gorget (#2) to distinguish it. This situation will be discussed further below.

It seems fruitless to compare #2 and #17 with #1, other than to point out at least conceptual affinity, since their basic design is the same—a doubling of the figure. The unique artistic details of #2, however, make it impossible to assert any closer relationship.

Group F. The two gorgets of this group (#3, possibly from Citico, and #4, from Moundville; see Figures 7.4 and 7.8a) are also related in concept. They are apparently the same figure shown in Group D, distinguished by the mouth, the streamer coming from or behind it, the crest, and the strapwork/perforations. Otherwise, they are deviant. They consist of two heads joined at the neck in "court card symmetry," as the design has come to be called. There is little to say about these two gorgets. Like the Group E doubles, they must be related in that the unusual design and the abstract nature of the execution argue for at least a common conceptual origin, but the artistic details of the two are so different that there must have been two different artists. The distance between the proveniences—Hamilton County in the Tennessee Valley and Moundville—only adds to the mystery. The one con-

7.8. Comparisons: two forms of court card symmetry, #3 from Tennessee and an engraved ceramic design from Moundville; a Group D spaghetti figure (#13) with a Long-Nosed God mask from the Gahagan site in Louisiana; and a C-group image (#15) with a Crested Bird from Moundville ceramics (after Moore 1907:figure 38).

tribution made by the existence of these gorgets is the design itself, because the concept of court card symmetry was used on pottery at Moundville several times, where the subject portrayed was the Crested Bird. More will be said about this below.

## Observations and Propositions

During this lengthy survey of the primary evidence in this study, the 34 known examples of the spaghetti style gorgets, several observations have been made and left

unexplored. By way of summary and refocusing, some observations about the corpus are listed here along with propositions that are offered as steps toward an interpretation of this style.

1. These gorgets are the work of many artists. Only a few examples can safely be attributed to the same hand. While it may be argued that artists have a fondness for experimenting with different ways of expressing the same content, it seems safer to respect the artistic differences by treating visually different gorgets as discrete productions.
2. The geographic distribution seems consistent with the notion of many artists. There are about 25 different proveniences for the 34 gorgets, which would be an astonishing fact if only a few artists had produced the corpus. In that case an interpretation of a significant diffusion mechanism would be called for. Since there were many artists, though, then the creation of the gorgets can be understood to have taken place in many of the places where they were found, by local artists, and the significant problem is then stimulus diffusion—how did the artists get the idea of the gorget design? Was there a core group of gorgets that were diffused from a single site and then became models for other artists?
3. The number of sites producing these gorgets is greatest in the Tennessee River area and the Alabama junction area, and there were multiple examples of Group B (tubulars) and Group D (roller skate/heads) in both areas. The outliers (#7 near Angel Mounds, #31 from Garden Creek, #32 from Lamar, #30 from Etowah, and even Lake Jackson) probably should be treated as just that—outliers that did not participate fully in the spaghetti style hearth but were still related to it in some way.
4. Group C, the four naturalistic heads, may be an early phenomenon, a precursor of the development of the standard conventionalized design of Group D. The distribution is suggestive, for one is from Moundville and one is from Garden Creek, two outlier sites that did not participate in the conventionalized gorgets. The other two are from Thirty-Acre Field, which did have two other spaghetti gorgets (#18 and #24), neither of which is from Group D. This is a provocative possibility, for it presents a picture of two Alabama sites that may not have participated in the profusion of "standard" spaghetti gorgets because they were no longer in operation. The D sites offer reason to think of them as late Mississippian/protohistoric, and some of them have historic artifacts, although not in association with spaghetti gorgets. Thus Group C may be an ancestral form of the spaghetti style.
5. As already discussed, there are reasons to suspect that the tubular gorgets (B) are late productions, perhaps in the protohistoric period. Groups C and B thus may be the temporal bookends, with Group D falling between them, with overlaps.

6. The major spaghetti tradition is focused on the Tennessee Valley and the Alabama junction, but it seems impossible to point to chronological sequences. The two distinctive subgroups of the tradition, Group B (tubular) and Group D1 (three-line whorl) have representatives in both areas. Moreover, the roller skate motif of D can be seen in some of the Group B examples, which suggests that Group B should be interpreted as a late variant of the major tradition rather than a precursor or descendant.
7. The major tradition has one outstanding characteristic: it is a single design with only minor variants. The variants are found in both locations, so there was ongoing communication between the polities in the two areas. That relationship may point to an ancestral unity and migration, but it surely implies alliances, intermarriages, and possibly even a common language. The sense of affiliation between the two areas is heightened by the fact that there were polities in the intervening area—the Coosa and Tallapoosa valleys—whose sites have not produced spaghetti gorgets.
8. The function of the gorgets is not known, but if sheer random decoration were ruled out as the reason for their existence, then they would most likely have served as either indicators of achieved status (such as warrior ranking) or as emblems of ascribed status (such as clan or lineage). Since the few data on burial characteristics include infants, adolescents, and females, the latter seems the most likely. Both early and recent investigators of the spaghetti gorgets have followed this interpretive path (Lewis and Lewis 1995:20; Wesson et al. 2001:144–146), and this study concurs in the plausibility of the explanation. The hypothesis that the spaghetti gorgets were clan indicators seems consistent with two other observations. If they served as military distinctions, it might be anticipated that there would be far more of them in the many sites, because more warriors would have collected them than are indicated by the small number found. Further, if they were clan emblems worn by the leaders of lineages in the local town, the distribution would be similar to the known pattern—only a few gorgets passed from lineage head to lineage head in each town, finally being buried with an owner for historical reasons, such as the end of a lineage or as a special honor to a great lineage leader.
9. Although at present little can be said about the meaning of the distribution pattern of the gorgets, it is possible that the significance of the pattern will yet yield insights into the affiliations and political interaction of the several polities. To this end, comparison of this pattern with those of other distributions, such as linguistic relationships, may open new hypotheses. Along this line, one scholar has pointed out that "Three Muskogean languages, Alabama, Koasati, and Apalachee are a very tightly related set, almost dialects of the same language," suggesting that this affiliation may be important in understanding these gorget relationships (V. J. Knight Jr., personal communication, 2003).

## Iconography of the Spaghetti Style

This list of propositions is buttressed by other observations and insights drawn from the designs themselves. In the same fashion, propositions can be advanced to help interpret the meaning of the gorgets.

1. The strapwork is the major characteristic of this style, as indicated by the fact that it was seized upon for the inelegant "spaghetti" label. William Holmes thought they might be plumes (1883:278), and others, probably influenced by Mesoamerican iconography, have suggested they were speech scrolls. The latter notion seems to point to the correct realm of meaning, because the best interpretation seems to be that they are puffs of air—wind or cloud. In the design they are used as filler around the figure, but as has been shown, the major role of the "straps" is at the feet of the figure. There are two wind/cloud-signs at each foot—the "roller skates"—and the four of them in Group D gorgets thus take up most of the available space. As wind-signs, they serve as the symbolic equivalent of the wings on Mercury's sandals—he flies through the air. Since the figure flies, there is no need for his legs to be more impressive than the wispy little things they are on most of these gorgets. The additional wind-signs are then added in to fill the remaining holes. The figures are thus portrayed as riders on the wind or in the clouds.
2. Unmentioned in this study thus far is one of the ubiquitous features of this design, the additional "strap," the one that breaks the circle, usually on both sides. One end of the streamer is usually forked. It enters the circle and goes behind the head of the figure, emerging from the mouth or from behind it, and leaves the circle on the right. If the other straps are wind/cloud-signs, then the streamer almost interprets itself—lightning. The fork is a strong clue, but the confusing motif has always been that the other end is usually rounded, allowing the streamer to resemble a tongue. Since on some of the gorgets the streamer does not exactly fit the mouth area, the streamer need not represent the figure's tongue, but is instead a tool he possesses. As lightning, it can be thrown or spit by the figure. The enormous power of the lightning bolt is suggested by the artistic fact that it alone is allowed to break the boundary of the circle. Everything else is contained, but the lightning is beyond the rules.
3. With the wind and lightning identified as the background of the gorget design, it becomes probable that the figure who wields the lightning and whose feet are wind and cloud is the master of the storm. He rides upon the clouds and is hidden within them. His long nose and round eyes are two of his key identifiers, and they relate this gorget image to the Long-Nosed God mask of other areas (Williams and Goggin 1956). The crest, which is another of the key identifiers,

can be seen in the Long-Nosed God mask as the horizontal bar across the top of the image (see Figure 7.8b).

4. Those three key identifiers—crest, long nose, and round eyes—also relate this figure to the Crested Bird of the Cox Mound Style gorgets and other media, for those are precisely the key identifiers of the Crested Bird, which has also been identified as a weather power (Lankford 2004; 2007a). What has led to the understanding of them as two different personages is the humanoid body of the spaghetti style and the birdlike characteristics of the Crested Bird. One of the latter is a sharp beak; close examination of the spaghetti figure, however, reveals that the long nose terminates at the edge of the lightning tongue or behind it. It seems quite possible that the nose was understood to continue to a point, but in this design can be seen only in the mind's eye (see Figure 7.8c).

   This situation is an excellent demonstration of the role of key identifiers. As pointed out earlier, if the artist provides the commonly understood key identifiers of a particular figure, then the artist is free to employ artistic license in the rest of the image. A corollary of that rule is that the figure can be moved into another standardized image or other media and still be recognized. Yet another aspect of the rule is that the key identifiers make it possible to move artistically from one function or role of the figure to another by changing some of the other details. The keys allow the viewer to recognize the figure, while the details provide new information and suggest the aspect of the figure's life and power that is intended in that particular artistic representation.

   This artistic system of permanent motifs elaborated by changing some attached motifs, allows an important religious belief to be portrayed in the art. When one of the major characteristics of the powerful divinities of Native America is the ability to change shape, then the image of the figure has to have the same quality. That a floating head with atrophied legs, a crested bird, and a copper flat face with protruding nose can all represent the same divinity may seem strange, but it is no stranger than the multiple qualities and roles of the divinity himself.

5. If this divinity of the spaghetti style, this rider in the storm clouds, is correctly identified, then he should be present in the mythic lore of the descendants of the people who made the gorgets. Is there any such figure?

   Yes, there is one in the myths of the Southeast. On the basis of the identification of the role of the spaghetti figure—lord of the storm—one would tend to look for the well-known figure of the Eastern Woodlands and Plains who fills that role, the Thunderbird. The mythological collections are replete with the stories of the eternal struggle between the Thunderbird of the sky realm and the Great Serpent of the beneath realm, as well as tales of encounters between humans and the Thunderbirds. That familiar figure, however, does not appear in the Southeastern myths. Not as the Thunderbird, at any rate.

As already noted, it seems almost certain that the polities of the Tennessee River valley, the Alabama junction area, and Lake Jackson were speakers of Muskhogean languages, so it is in that group of descendants that the mythic background of the storm figure should be sought. One of the questions that seems important in the search has not yet been asked in this study, but it needs to be raised. How is it reasonable for an artist to double a known figure in an art form, as was done in the doubles of Group E, and possibly Group F as well? Is there any figure in Muskhogean myth who can be either single or double, and who rules the storm?

When the question is asked that way, the answer is obvious. The myth of the Twins, particularly in its form as "Lodge-Boy and Thrown-Away" (LBTA), is known throughout the continent. Paul Radin considered it so important in Native American traditions that he called it "the basic myth of the North American Indians" (Radin 1949). Those two names are not universal, but among students of myth they have become the general designation for the widespread story of the death of a pregnant woman, whose children are reared separately, one by the father and one by the underwater creatures. Thrown-Away, reared by the animals, becomes very powerful, and after he reveals his existence by playing with his twin brother, their father catches him. In order to domesticate him, their father performs some act on him, such as forcing him to vomit up the food of the water world (Creek), cutting off his long nose (Caddo), or breaking out his animal fangs (Pawnee). Once domesticated, the boys go on adventures in which TA usually leads LB into dangerous disobedience to their father, but his power always enables them to triumph. After a number of those episodes, their father tries to discipline them, but finds them too powerful. Finally they conquer even their father, who flees (the ending varies widely). The boys are transformed into some other kind of power, such as stars or weather powers, where they still are to this day (See Lankford 1987: chapter 8).

One of the peculiarities of Southeastern myth texts is that whereas in Siouan and Algonkian groups, especially in the Plains, the Twins have an antagonistic adventure with the Thunderbirds; in the Southeast the episode is either missing, as in the Caddo, Natchez, and Cherokee versions, or so attenuated as to be almost unrecognizable, as in a Creek version. The reason appears to be the lack of belief in the Thunderbird as the person in charge of storms. The Caddo on the western end of the Southeast named the boys "Lightning boy" and "Thunder boy." In the end of the story, "They went up in the sky, and now when the clouds gather together for a storm Lightning and Thunder, which are these two boys who once lived on the earth and killed the monsters that lived here, are seen in their midst" (Dorsey 1905:31–36). The Cherokee LBTA text identifies the father, Kanati, as "Thunder" and his sons as "the Thunder Boys." "The boys stayed with their parents seven days and then went on toward the Darkening land, where they are now. We call them Anisga'ya Tsunsdi' (The Little Men), and when they talk to each other we

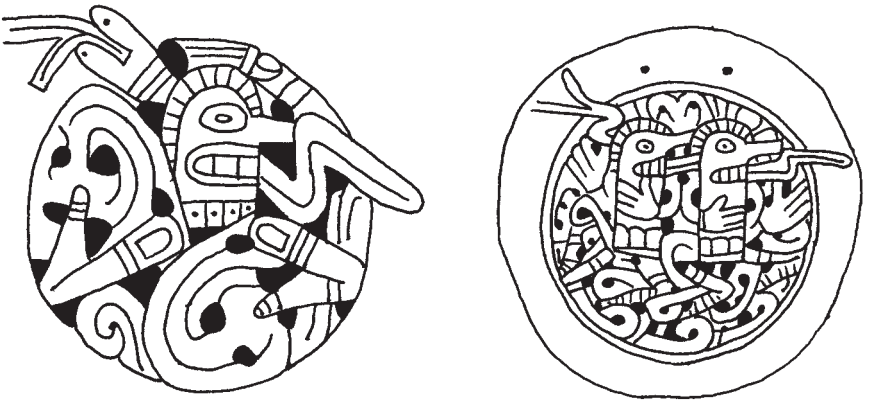
hear low rolling thunder in the west" (Mooney 1900:247–248). A Natchez text of LBTA doesn't name them, but it says the boys separated and went to the east and west to live: "They made it thunder and lighten. A cloud separated them" (Swanton 1929:230). A Creek version also fails to identify them directly, but they agreed to go to the east and the west, "and whenever you see a red cloud in the west you will know that I am there" (Swanton 1929:7).

This distinction between the Southeastern vision of the thunder powers and the widespread belief in the Thunderbird is borne out by other comments about Southeastern beliefs, such as Creek references to a "God of Thunder and Lightning and of Rain" and Tuggle's note that "The Muskogee say of lightning that a little man rides a yellow horse, and when he shoots his arrows, it thunders" (Swanton 1928b:485–487). A widespread myth in other areas tells of a man who gained thunder and lightning powers by assisting a Thunderbird in a fight with a water serpent. The Creek version only speaks of "Thunder," with no description of the figure, while the Cherokee myth speaks of a man in that role (Swanton 1929:7–9; Mooney 1900:300–301). Then, too, there is the 1676 text of the Apalachee ball game charter myth, in which the young hero is understood to be "Lightning" (Hann 1988:81–85).

If the riders in the sky of the gorgets were one or both of the Thunder Boys, then they were easily recognized by native viewers of the gorgets. One of the artistic motifs that was probably an additional clue to the identity of the rider in the clouds was the peculiar headdress element. It is not present on all spaghetti gorgets, but it is there on virtually all of Group D. When it is present, it sits above the crest (which is always present), and it usually consists of several parts. It takes various forms.

On some of the gorgets (especially #2, #6, #9, #10, #12) the motif resembles a feathered wing fan (see Figure 7.2b). The other forms may just be artistic variations of that same object, or the different representations may reflect the headdress in vogue for ritual actors at the time of the creation of the gorget. Thus the headdress elements may all symbolize the same concept. It is a common characteristic of LBTA that the Twins can fly, either by shooting themselves as arrows or by transforming themselves into feathers that float wherever they need to go. The feather motif on the head of the figure may represent that capability, especially since the boys are shown in the spaghetti style in their flying storm mode.

The Twins can thus either stand together, as in the double spaghetti gorgets, or can be represented singly by the more powerful of the two boys, the wild one, Thrown-Away. In either form in the Southeast, they represent the storm powers, and it is probably in their role as violent wielders of weapons that they become associated with warfare (see Marceaux and Dye 2007). With LBTA identified as the riders in the clouds on the spaghetti gorgets, it is possible to make a speculation about the curious toothy smile of the figure. Although the particular motif is missing from the Southeastern collections, if the domestication method now found in



7.9. Riders in the sky: Thunder powers on gorgets (#6 and #1).

some Plains versions of LBTA had been known in the prehistoric Southeast, the teeth might make some sense. In that motif, the wild boy was domesticated by his father's using a stone to break the animal fangs that are symbolic of the boy's having been raised by nonhumans. His having ordinary human teeth then becomes a mark of his humanness and his benign attitude toward humans. This explanation would gloss the mouth treatment of the gorgets—which looks so peculiar to modern eyes—as a symbol of benevolent relationship between humans and the Thunder powers.

## A Last Look at Apalachee

At the Lake Jackson site there are only three shell gorgets, all of them spaghetti style. In the light of this interpretation of the iconographic content of the spaghetti gorgets, it is possible to offer a speculative explanation for the unusual pattern at the Florida site. The gorgets were found in three graves at the top of Mound 3, and thus were probably not separated greatly in time. Two of the gorgets were from burials of high status people who were likely males, even though the sex was not ascertained. The grave goods were characteristic of warrior burials, with copper badges and plumes, and especially copper axes, which appear to be indicators of high status male leadership at Moundville and Etowah, although the existence of female warriors cannot be ruled out. In a matrilineal descent system the two men, in addition to indicators of their high political and military ranking, would also have worn their clan symbol, especially since they would probably have been the lineage heads in their generation. Their having been buried with their gorgets may be a reminder that their children, who would not have been members of the same clan, could not have inherited them. The other grave, the provenience of a

double gorget (#2) and a pot, may have been a female, judging by the absence of warrior grave goods. She may have served as lineage head in her time, and the two spaghetti men may have been her sons. Their inclusion in graves may indicate the cessation or dwindling of the clan in the Lake Jackson polity.

Although it is only one of several possible explanations, here is a scenario to illustrate this hypothesis: The Apalachee town at Lake Jackson arranged for one of their chiefs to marry a high-ranking woman from another polity, perhaps in the Tennessee Valley. Although their matrilineal world would normally have gone by rules of matrilocality, at the highest political level alliance-making by marriage would rise above the rule, allowing a woman from afar to come to a new polity. As wife of the chief, she would be a person of importance in the town, but she would also be head of a lineage that had brought a new clan to the town. Her children would be the only members of the lineage and the clan in the town, but they would have many clan relations in the Tennessee and Alabama river polities. As sons of the chief, they would have significant roles in the talwa, and they could achieve high warrior status by their abilities. Her sons may have been given clan gorgets by visiting kin from the north. When her husband died, her son would not become chief. He would be clan leader, and if he died early, perhaps his brother would replace him. If the woman bore no daughters, when she and the second son died, the lineage and the clan would vanish from Lake Jackson, unless a new arrangement was made with those far-off polities for another marriage.

This is speculative, to be sure, but it is consistent with the social rules and the archaeological evidence. A similar scenario has been offered to explain the presence of the spaghetti style gorget (#12) at the Shine site in central Alabama. In an excellent study, Cameron Wesson and his colleagues said, "we believe that the Spaghetti style gorgets are related to the creation of marriage alliances between a paramount center and polities along its periphery. . . . [W]e believe the spatial clustering of Spaghetti style gorgets represents efforts by the lords of Coosa to pacify their frontier and stabilize their sociopolitical boundaries" (Wesson et al. 2001:145–146). From this viewpoint, the presence of the spaghetti gorgets at Shine and at Lake Jackson is the result of brief historical events that came to an early end. At the Apalachee polity the gorgets are relics of a new clan that arrived and died out in a short time period, a few generations at most.

What clan might have been symbolized by the spaghetti style gorgets? The Thunder Boy(s) image suggests that the clan might be a Thunder clan, or weather-related totem. One important clan in the Muskogee world in historic times was the Wind clan, a designation that could easily be a reference to the Thunder powers. Alexander McGillivray was a member of the Wind clan, inherited through his mother Sehoy. Swanton learned that the Wind clan "enjoyed privileges like those of a superior caste," and that "women of this clan were called 'grandmothers' by the other people" (Swanton 1928a:157, 169). It may be that the prestige of the line-

7.1. Known "spaghetti" style gorgets

| # | B&P Designation | Gp. | Provenience | Location | Reference |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Tenn-Hm-D2 | E | Dallas site | FHMM | Lewis and Kneberg Lewis 1995:186; Kneberg 1959:18; Brose et al. 1985: #138 |
| 2 | Fla-Le-LJ6 | E | Lake Jackson Mound 3 | AHRM | Jones 1982:18ff. |
| 3 | Tenn-Hm-X11 | F | Hamilton County | | Kneberg 1959:F35 |
| 4 | Ala-Tu-M143 | F | Moundville | NMAI | F&F 1957:41 |
| 5 | Tenn-Ra-DA2 | D | DeArmond | FHMM | B&P 1996 |
| 6 | Tenn-Se-MM2 | D | McMahan Mound | | Kneberg 1959:F36 |
| 7 | Ill-Ga-X1 | D | Gallatin Co. | ASSL | Olson 1970:176 |
| 8 | Tenn-Hm-WI 27 | D | Williams Island | NMNH | B&P 1996:64 |
| 9 | Tenn-Po-DF2 | D | Davis Farm | Feldler Coll., PA | B&P 1996:64 |
| 10 | Tenn-Po-DF3 | D | Davis Farm | Feldler Coll., PA | B&P 1996:64 |
| 11 | Ala-Mt-D1 | D | Dreyspring Place | Burke Coll., AL | F&F 1957:42 |
| 12 | Ala-Mt6 | D | Shine site | | Wesson et al. 2001 |
| 13 | Tenn-Je-Fl 3 | D | Fain's Island | FHMM | Kneberg 1959:F38 |
| 14 | Ala-Mt-Cr1 | D | Crenshaw | Jones Coll., AL | Arr. 2:5:(1921):89 |
| 15 | Ala-Mt-TA3 | C | Thirty-Acre Field | | Moore 1899: #54 |
| 16 | Fla-Le-LJ4 | D | Lake Jackson Mound 3 | AHRM | Jones 1982:18f. |
| 17 | Fla-Le-LJ5 | D/E | Lake Jackson Mound 3 | AHRM | Jones 1982:18f. |
| 18 | Ala-Mt-TA7 | B | Thirty-Acre Field | | |
| 19 | Ala-Mt-C01 | B | Connelly Cemetery | Graves Coll., AL | Arr. 1:2(1920):6 |
| 20 | Tenn-Se-MM3 | B | McMahan Mound | NMNH | Holmes 1883:71 |
| 21 | Tenn-Me-X1 | B | Meigs County, TN | PM | Holmes 1883:72 |
| 22 | Tenn-Hw-HM2 | B | Holliston Mills | | Quimby 1976 |
| 23 | Ala-Mt-Cr2 | A | Crenshaw | Jones Coll., AL | Arr. 3:4(1921):88 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 24 | Ala-Mt-TA2 | A | Thirty-Acre Field | NMAI | B&P 1996:68 |
| 25 | Ala-Tu-M158 | C | Moundville | MSM | B&P 1996 |
| 26 | Ala-Mt-TA12 | C | Thirty-Acre Field | ADAH | |
| 27 | SE-X1 | D | unknown | FMNH | |
| 28 | Tenn-Br-C1 | B | Charleston, Bradley Co. | WUM | MacCurdy 1917 |
| 29 | Ala-Ce-PF7 | A | Polecat Ford | MSM? | B&P 1996:66 |
| 30 | Ga-Brt-E136 | A | Etowah | GHC | B&P 1996:173 |
| 31 | NC-Hy-GC3 | C | Garden Creek | RLA | B&P 1996 |
| 32 | Ga-Bi-L2 | A | Lamar | ONM | B&P 1996:66 |
| 33 | Tenn-Hm-WI 39 | A | Williams Island | MHS | B&P 1996:66 |
| 34 | Fla-Ja-X | D | | FMNH | Wheeler 2001 |

Abbreviations:
These abbreviations for locations of gorgets are taken from Brain and Phillips 1996, which is the source of most of the data about the gorgets, including the designations.

| | |
|---|---|
| ADAH | Alabama Deptartment of Archives and History, Montgomery |
| AHRM | Division of Archives, History and Records Management, Florida Department of State, Tallahassee |
| ASSL | Academy of Science, St. Louis |
| FHMM | Frank H. McClung Museum, University of Tennessee, Knoxville |
| FMNH | Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago |
| GHC | Georgia Historical Commission |
| MHS | Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul |
| MSM | Mound State Monument, Moundville, Alabama |
| NMAI | National Museum of the American Indian, New York |
| NMNH | National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution |
| ONM | Ocmulgee National Monument, Macon, Georgia |
| PM | Peabody Museum, Harvard University |
| RLA | Research Labs of Anthropology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill |
| WUM | Wesleyan University Museum, Middletown, Connecticut |

| | |
|---|---|
| Arr. | Arrowpoints: Journal of the Alabama Archaeological Society |
| B&P | Brain and Phillips |
| F&F | Fundaburk and Foreman |

ages of the Wind clan went back centuries in the Southeast, which would add plausibility to the hypothesis that the Wind gorgets came to Lake Jackson via a woman from what would become known as the Upper Creeks—a woman whose clan and lineage made her an attractive wife for an Apalachee chief, even though her lineage males would not be invited to provide successors for the chiefdom.

As to which polity might have sent the "Wind woman" to Apalachee, there seems no way to tell from the gorgets (#2, #16, #17). It is difficult to accept the judgment of Brain and Phillips that "almost certainly the same hand made all of them" (1996:178). On the contrary, they have been placed by this study in three different affinity groups—Groups E, D3, and D1/E. Each of those groups provides a cluster of sites that are related by the similarities in the gorgets, and there is no single site that is highlighted as a source. It seems a safer conclusion about the provenience of the Lake Jackson gorgets to say—in view of the hypothesis—that the Wind woman brought her gorget with her and that she maintained contact with her lineage through the years. As her sons were born she may have received the two additional gorgets as gifts from members of her clan or lineage far to the north. Thus the three types of spaghetti design on the Apalachee gorgets may even reflect the subtle artistic changes in the design of the clan emblem within the space of just a few years.

Little more can be derived from these gorgets at the present time, but as the chronology of the shell gorgets in general is refined—a task undertaken by Madeline Kneberg so long ago and still pursued by scholars—it may be possible to use the Apalachee gorgets to help assign specific dates to Mound 3. The prehistoric "riders in the sky" may yet shed more light on the relationship between polities in the prehistoric Southeast.

# 8
# Heads and Tales

Six decades ago the most prominent American practitioner of the historic-geographic school of folkloristics observed that the Southwest tends to be fairly isolated from influence from adjacent areas. Stith Thompson noted that, "In general, the folklore of the Southwestern tribes has maintained considerable independence from that of the neighboring Plains and Plateau. But even here there is no real lack of such borrowings. One example of a tale which Southwestern tribes have apparently taken over from the Plateau is that of The Conquering Gambler, in which we see how a bankrupt gambler acquires supernatural power and wins back even more than he has lost. This story appears over the entire western half of the continent" (Thompson 1946:362).

His judgment was based on the distribution of that myth text as it had been collected and published by the time of his book. The basic bibliography of the corpus had been published years earlier, however, in his 1929 classic sourcebook for North American Indian texts (Thompson 1929:194, #73, and note 276 on "The conquering gambler," Motif N1). That list included references to texts from tribes in the Plateau, North Pacific Coast, Mackenzie River, California, Southwest, and Plains areas. By doing a separate listing for Motif N2 and N2.1 (Lives wagered; note 277), he was able to add to the list, notably Iroquois and Cherokee references.

In her 1951 Type Index for Indian myths, Remedios Wycoco included the motif as a tale type. She catalogued Thompson's listing as "1037. The conquering gambler. A bankrupt gambler is cast off by his relatives. He acquires magic power through supernatural aid and wins back his fortune and his wife (whom he had also wagered and lost)" (Wycoco 1951:171). Her bibliography merely repeats Thomp-

son's short list: texts from tribes in the Plateau (4), North Pacific (4), Mackenzie (1), California (1), the Southwest (4), and the Plains (Wichita and Crow). That was too simple, because there are more related texts from the Eastern Woodlands, and this single grouping appears to contain *two* myth plots about gamblers, or one story in two different subtypes. A sense of the difference between the two narratives can be gained by contrasting two plot summaries. The first comes from the Tahltan of the Northwest Coast.

> A boy was addicted to the stick-game, in which the players try to pick the correct stick out of a group. He had good luck and nearly always won, so he became wealthy. When a stranger arrived in town to play, though, he lost everything, including his slaves, his father and mother, and everyone in the village. Distraught, he was pitied by a mouse, who taught him to take a certain herb and use the advice of Golden-Eyed Duck. He then challenged the previous winner, who had used trickery, and won back his parents, relatives, and all the people and goods. "*This is why plants are used as charms to obtain good luck in gambling* at the present day and also *this is why it is bad for young people to gamble too much.*" [summary of Teit 1921:233–234]

This narrative catches the simple plot structure as outlined by Thompson and Wycoco: a boy gambles successfully, then loses to a better gambler. After he learns how to gain power in gambling, he is able to play again and recover his belongings. The narrator helpfully supplied the cultural wisdom as etiological tags attached to the story.

By contrast, a Gambler myth collected by Washington Matthews from the Navaho has a very different flavor.

> A gambler divinity named Noqoìlpi, a son of the Sun, whose talisman was "a great piece of turquoise," arrived among the Pueblo people, and he soon, by various games and contests, had won most their belongings and some of the people. He put them to work building a great house for him, and soon he had won enough additional men as slaves that the house was quickly built. The beneficent god Qastceyalçi arrived among the Navaho and informed them that one Pueblo town had gambled away to Noqoìlpi two great shells that the Sun requested from Noqoìlpi, but had been refused. The visiting god invited a young Navaho to attend a council of some of the gods to be held in twelve days, which he did. "All night the gods danced and sang, and performed their mystic rites, for the purpose of giving to the son of Qastceqogan powers as a gambler equal to those of Noqoìlpi."
>
> The young man challenged Noqoìlpi, putting up two friends disguised

> as his wives against the two wives of the gambler. They played the game of chips (thirteen objects with different marks on both sides, thrown like dice), and with Bat's help the Navaho won. They played the hoop and pole game, and with Snake's help the Navaho won again. They engaged in a tree-pulling contest, and the young man won again, thanks to Gopher's severing of the roots. The final game, on which Noqoìlpi bet the last of his slaves and himself, was throwing a ball for distance. With a bird's help the contest was won by the Navaho, who gave the two great shells to the Sun and the remaining beads and shells to the other gods. Noqoìlpi was shot like an arrow to the home of the Moon-bearer, who created the Mexican people for him to rule over. [summary of Matthews 1889]

In his introduction to this story, Matthews warned that it was only an episode in the much longer creation myth of the Navaho. He demonstrated that by publishing the complete narrative five years later. The myth of the Gambler was recounted exactly the same way, except for some spelling changes in the names, but it was presented in its context as an episode in the long (97 pages) and complex Navaho Origin Legend (Matthews 1897:82–87). Both by placement in the origin myth and by the identities of the characters—divinities of all sorts—the Navaho Gambler story takes on an aura of much greater importance than the more prosaic presentation of the Tahltan Gambler.

Several things are noteworthy about this Navaho narrative. First, the Gambler's power, far from being merely good luck or trickery, must be derived from his being a son of the Sun. That power is strong enough to demand a conspiracy of the other divinities to make the Navaho hero a worthy competitor. Second, at least two of the four major contests were well known far beyond the Southwest. The dice game, in many variations, was almost ubiquitous in North America (DeBoer 2001), and almost the same can be said of the hoop and pole game (DeBoer 1993). The long-distance throwing of a ball seems fairly pedestrian, but the pulling of a mature tree from the ground sounds like a Herculean contest reserved for myth instead of real life. Although the focus of the myth seems to be on gambling and its consequences, the secondary issue is the nature of the games. It is a curious feature of this Navaho narrative that the Gambler almost seems to be, if not the inventor of the games, the creator of a casino: his enslaved Puebloans were put to work constructing a "great house." "They were also busy making a race-track, and preparing for all kinds of games of chance and skill" (Matthews 1889:90. For other Southwestern texts of the Gambler, see Opler 1938:128–136; Cushing 1896:385ff.; Stevenson 1894:59–63).

An older text from the Southeast seems to be a version of the Southwestern "Children of the Sun" myth. The story was recorded in 1676 by Fr. Juan Paiva from his Apalachee informants on the Florida Gulf Coast, and it has been exam-

ined closely in recent decades (Bushnell 1978; Hann 1988:331–343; Keyes 1994). Although the gambler is disguised as "Lightning" (Ochuna Nicoguadca), the structure reveals a relationship between the "Children of the Sun" and this version.

> A woman became pregnant by the Sun, and her son was reared by a panther, a bear, and a blue jay, apparently to avoid the threat from Ochuna Nicoguadca, who feared a prophecy that he would be killed by a son of the Sun. When the boy grew up, he visited his father, where he was subjected to deadly tests to prove his descent: to bring flints from a sinkhole, cane from a snake den, and fledgling eagles from a treetop nest. Aided by various creatures, he survived and was recognized by the Sun. He was then challenged to wager his life against O.N.'s life in a ball game and a game of chunkey. When the boy won, O.N. fled, but the boy tracked him down and killed him. Assuming the dead gambler's name and role [and power?], the boy became chief. [summary of Hann 1988:331–343]

In the Navaho creation myth the Gambler and the Children of the Sun are separate stories, but in the Jicarilla Apache version the Gambler's opponent is the Monster Slayer, son of the Sun (Opler 1938:128–136). So, too, the Apalachee version appears to have conflated them, so that the first "monster" slain by the hero is the Gambler rather than the Giant (of the Navaho/Pueblo Sun myths). The conflation was easily done, since all three figures—boy, giant, and gambler—were understood to be descended from the Sun.

Among the Apalachee this text has served as a charter myth for the ball game (or chunkey), just as the Apache text incorporated the charter myth elements for the creation of the hoop and pole game. Recent analysis of the Apalachee story by Keyes has shown that its details have changed from early historic times to recent years to reflect the political structure of the tribe (Keyes 1994).

A remarkable parallel text of the Gambler myth was collected from the Cherokees by James Mooney. Thompson did not list it as an example of the "Conquering gambler" motif, but he did include it as a representative of Motif N2, "Lives wagered" (Thompson 1929: note 277). The plot of this Cherokee version can be quickly sketched.

> A boy was born in the east who was reputed to be the son of Thunder. He determined to travel west to ask Thunder the truth of the matter. On his journey he visited Untsaiyi, a famous gambler who lived on the Tennessee River. He usually won his matches, but he had shape-shifting power, so even when he bet his own life and lost, he could escape the consequences. He was known as the inventor of the chunkey game, the Southeastern version of the hoop and pole game that uses a stone disk instead of a wooden hoop. Untsaiyi

challenged the boy to play with him, but his guest only promised to return after he had seen Thunder. The boy went on to Thunder's place, where he was asked to sit on a bed of honey locust thorns. When he was not harmed, Thunder acknowledged him as his son and agreed to heal him of his skin disease. After doing so by boiling him in an herb bath, he gave him new clothing: a buckskin suit, with belt and headdress, a rattlesnake necklace, four copperhead bracelets and anklets, and a war club. The boy then "played" against his two brothers, the Thunder boys, and learned that he himself had lightning power. His father prepared him to compete with Untsaiyi by giving him a "gourd with a hole bored through the neck, and tied it on the boy's wrist." It contained an endless string of beads for betting. When the boy returned to Untsaiyi's place, they played chunkey until the Gambler had lost everything and was forced to bet his life. He fled, but the boy got his brothers and their "dog," the horned green beetle, to follow him. The beetle detected Untsaiyi beneath his disguise as an old woman, an old man, and other forms, by bumping into him, revealing the metal beneath the mask, which explains why that beetle has a shiny yellow spot on its head ("Untsaiyi" means "brass"). Since Untsaiyi cannot die, the boys tied him and staked him down to the ocean floor beneath the western waters, where he lies to this day. [summary of Mooney 1900:311–315, #63]

This text accounts for the origin of the widely known chunkey game that seems to have been a widespread Southeastern version of the hoop and pole game throughout the prehistoric Mississippian era, for the "chunk stones" have been found archaeologically from Oklahoma to the Atlantic (DeBoer 1993). The myth, however, is far more complex than is needed for that etiological task. No particular divine connection is assigned to the Gambler here, but he clearly is more than human, since he is a shape-shifter and is immortal. His antagonist is also more than human, for he is a son of Thunder. The paternity-recognition test that his father gives him, sitting on the thorns, is a motif known primarily from Northwestern and Southwestern myths; in the Southwest that test is passed by the Children of the Sun (Motif H1531: Spine test; see Thompson 1929:note 168). The whole paternity episode in this Cherokee myth makes the construction appear—like the Apalachee myth—a conflation of two separate Southwestern episodes, the Gambler and the Children of the Sun. In the Cherokee version, perhaps because their sun is female, the two competitors become the Gambler and the son of Thunder, and the garbing of the recognized son by the father includes not only the special elements appropriate to Thunder but also the bead-container that prepares him to confront, not a monster or a giant (as in the Children of the Sun), but the Gambler.

The Cherokee Gambler myth stands almost alone in the Southeast. Gambling appears in myths from the Alabama and Koasati people, but the story seems brief

and a strange variation of the Gambler myth, at best. The Alabama narrative names the moccasin game, but the Koasati equivalent does not even specify, leaving it at "gambling." The major episode, however, is the same in both. "A 'man' lost everything gambling and finally wagered the water. It was lost and 'shut up' in a cane. The world lived in drought until a small woodpecker pecked a hole in the cane, releasing the water for everyone's use" (summary of Swanton 1929:123–124, 168). This brief story has the earmarks of a major myth, featuring an event of the primordial era in which a Gambler won the world's water, but was opposed by a bird who saved the creatures. Unfortunately, it has the reduced, terse form of so many of the Muskogean myths, lacking details that could give clarity. The great debt of the world to the small woodpecker is clear, but the significance of the bird (a divinity?) is left unmentioned. The gambling aspect is very vague, and the reader is left to wonder who had the power to wager the world's water to begin with, as well as who could win it and impound it. The silence is all the more frustrating when the enthusiasm of the Southeastern peoples for gambling is considered. Although John Swanton was uncharacteristically silent on gambling in the region, James Mooney observed that "The Indian was a passionate gambler and there was absolutely no limit to the risks which he was willing to take, even to the loss of liberty, if not of life. Says Lawson: 'They game very much and often strip one another of all they have in the world; and what is more, I have known several of them play themselves away, so that they have remained the winners' servants till their relations or themselves could pay the money to redeem them'" (Mooney 1900:465, quoting Lawson 1967[1709]). Thus gambling appears to have been a major activity in the Southeast, along with the passion for games, but the Cherokees seem to have the only recorded major Gambler myth.

In a situation like the Cherokee myth's isolation in the region, when there is a reasonable suspicion of unusual diffusion of myth between them and others, it is helpful to consult the myth collections from their fellow speakers of the Iroquoian tongues. There is, after all, the possibility that the Gambler myth was part of the ancient Iroquoian heritage, continued in both tribal groups despite the separation of centuries.

An examination of the massive Curtin and Hewitt collection of Iroquois narratives, however, reveals no text that seems very close to the Cherokee Gambler myth. As an episode, the competition between a gambler and an adventurer who bet their lives appears in ten myths, but it never seems to be more than just another adventure, even when it appears multiple times in a single narrative. Table 8.1 lists the episodic occurrences, organized by similarity of competition.

The ball game, playing dice, and foot racing are the most frequently encountered competitions, but there are six activities listed in the group, and there seems to be no pattern of co-occurrence. Nor is there a single myth type that is the occa-

8.1. Iroquois gambling episodes (Curtin and Hewitt 1918)

| # | Ball game | Dice | Foot race | Race on ice | Hide & seek | Kicking |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 34 | • | • | | | | • |
| 35 | • | • | | • | | |
| 68 | • | • | | | | |
| 46 | • | | • | | | |
| 58 | • | | • | | | |
| 60 | | • | • | | • | |
| 41 | | • | | | • | |
| 86 | | | • | | | |
| 89 | | | | | • | |
| 117 | | | | • | | |

sion for the gambling episodes. A brief description of each narrative will make it clear that the episodes occur in an apparently random fashion.

34. "The Potent Boy" is a Lodge-Boy and Thrown-Away variant. As is usual in this type, the boys had a series of adventures. In this text, the adventures include three competitions with lives as the stakes: kicking, dice, and ballgame. The losers were beheaded.

35. "The Faithless Wife and Three Old Men" begins as an "animal paramour" story, but the son of the adulterous woman had a series of adventures, including three fatal gambles (dice, ball game, and a race on ice) before saving his father and sister from his mother.

68. "Hinon Hohawaqk and His Grandmother" is a story about a son of Thunder who encountered an old woman and her son who gambled for lives. Their challenges to him to play dice and ball met with defeat, and they were beheaded before he returned to create his own family.

46. "The Woman Who Became a Maneater through the Orenda of Her Husband's Dogs" is a story of a woman who became a cannibal, ate her daughter, and chased her husband and his dogs. They fled to a village where the chief challenged him to a foot race and a ball game; the dogs substituted for the man and won the competitions. The chief was beheaded.

58. "Doonongaes and Tsodiqgwadon" is a long (45 pages) saga of a two-horned serpent who was sent to all areas of the world to invite all the powers to a council meeting to choose a chief. In his adventures he was challenged to a race and a ball game by two old men. They lost and were beheaded.

60. "Grandmother and Her Grandson" is a "grandson" story in which he dis-

obeyed orders not to explore to the north. He had a series of encounters with old men who challenged him to race, play hide-and-seek, and play dice. He won all the contests and beheaded the men. The story ends tragically, for when his grandmother broke a taboo by looking at him, he was killed.

41. "Hodadenon and Yenyent'hwus" is another long story about a boy's quest for chestnuts and tobacco. He played dice and beheaded the old man who challenged him. He won at hide-and-seek and beheaded the cannibal women. After gaining the chestnuts and tobacco, he rescued his brother from wizards and killed them. The compound myth ends with the familiar story of the boy marooned by his uncle.

86. "Genonsgwa" (giant) tells of a Stone Giant who married his daughter to an Indian. A disappointed giant suitor, however, challenged the new husband to a foot race. The giant lost and was beheaded.

89. This "Genonsgwa" story is another Twins variant. In their adventures to kill the man-eaters, the two boys visited a lodge where an old man challenged them to hide-and-seek. They won and beheaded him.

117. "Legend of Hodadenon and His Elder Sister" is a story about a boy and his sister who were the only survivors of sorcerers' attack on their village. The boy went on a quest for tobacco. In the process he was challenged to a race on the ice. He won and beheaded all the sorcerers, then resuscitated the bones of people whom he took home to repopulate the village.

This list makes it clear that there is no single myth type involved here. The common characteristic of most of the narratives is that they are about heroes who have a series of adventures. Only two break this pattern: #46, in which a victim fled to a village where he was challenged, and #86, in which a new husband was forced to gamble his life to resist a disappointed suitor. It seems a fair conclusion that for the Iroquois tellers the episode of gambling for one's own head was understood to be an acceptable addition to any list of adventures by heroic young men. If there was any ancestral myth of a divine Gambler who had to be defeated, it had vanished by the time of the collection of these texts. Only the first three narratives give any hint of a known place for the lethal gambling. In #34 there is a reference to the "land of gambling" to the southwest; in #35 the three gamblers had lodges in a line to the west; and in #68 the old woman and her son lived in a house and field that sound like an arena for gambling. Even in those three narratives, however, there is no further sense of any special identity of the gamblers as related to the divinities. It thus appears unlikely that the "Conquering Gambler" of the Cherokees stemmed from their Iroquoian heritage. The search for other examples must turn in different directions.

A Shawnee version of a Gambler myth was collected in the 1820s. It opens with a unique premise—a blind man was wandering about in the wilderness, seeking hu-

mans with whom he could live. The narrator offered no explanation either for his blindness or for the three small birds attached at each of his ears. By their chirping they guided him and enabled him to stay alive as a successful hunter. The man finally found people who adopted him as elder brother.

> "They then informed him that at a village near by there was a man, the Chief of the village, who was a great gambler, and who enticed persons from distant villages to come and play with him and after having beaten them, caused them to be killed." They explained to the blind man that he could not hope to win either of the two contests the gambler insisted on: "If he cannot overcome you in a foot race, and he was never beaten, he will propose to you to shoot at a white squirrel which he keeps in a tree before his door." Confident in his own power and in the aid of his birds, the man challenged the gambler. His new family then warned him of a third danger: "But said they, altho' it is understood that the winner is to have the head of him who loses, and succeeds him in his office, yet the risk is great, for if you should ever win of him in shooting and running, he will ask you for leave to smoke. You cannot refuse a request so reasonable, and he will bring forth a large pipe, whose bowl will be shaped exactly like his head, and when he has smoked you will not be able to distinguish the smoker from the pipe, so that you will be as likely to cut off the head of the pipe as that of the gambler." Aided by the birds, the blind man shot the squirrel, and he won the race by riding upon an invisible Elk and an invisible Bear. Mindful of the warning, when the gambler asked permission "to smoke a little before I die, for you are to have all my power," the blind man beheaded him and released all his slaves, transforming some of them into "Deer, geese, swans, etc." in accordance with their wishes. "The winner and his brothers were distinguished as great gamblers ever afterwards, and even at this day there are many whose conduct would induce the opinion that his powers and inclinations were faithfully transmitted." [summary of Schorer 1964]

The etiological tag at the end leaves the impression that this story merely explains why some people are successful gamblers, but there are clues that such a reading is deceptively simple. The missing introduction would likely explain who the blind man was and how he came to have both his extraordinary powers and the aid of the birds. The abilities of the man calls to mind the conspiracy of the Navaho gods to empower a man to defeat the gambler—but the Shawnee equivalent episode is missing. Even so, the blind man has the shamanlike ability to resuscitate animal skins and ride upon the invisible animal spirits. He also has the power to transform the freed slaves of the gambler into animals. And there are those birds. Clearly this myth is a story of some importance, and its etiological power is greater

than to explain mere gambling success. The story would be more complete if the gambler were identified. The reader is given only the facts that he was extraordinarily successful at gambling; that he was able to do a pipe trick to save himself if he should lose; and that his defeat would transfer all his power to the winner, who would "succeed him in his office." An important concept of the relationship of gambling power and political power lies just beneath the surface of this Shawnee myth of the Gambler. The statement that "the winner is to have the head of him who loses, and succeeds him in office" hints at a connection between the contest and an institutional role in society, strikingly similar to the Apalachee narrative.

In Paul Radin's collection of Winnebago myths there are some texts that contain related episodes. The plot of the episode may be loosely termed "Contests with the Giants," for the action consists of a series of games, tests of both prowess and chance, between one or more heroes and one or more cannibal giants. As with the Iroquois material, there is a range of variation, and the episodes do not appear consistently in a single myth type. Table 8.2 charts the Winnebago texts containing "Contests with the Giants," drawn from the online corpus (Dieterle, Encyclopedia of Hotcâk Mythology).

In order to become aware of the range of variation in the full plots within which the "Contests" episodes appear, it is necessary to examine an extremely brief summary of the plot sequences, all derived from the Winnebago online encyclopedia (Dieterle). It should be borne in mind that many of these narratives are far more lengthy and complex than is indicated in this summary.

## Plot A

Green Man: A man (Black Rocks) killed a man who looked just like him and replaced him in his family, freeing the wives who were held by coercion. Then a gambler seized his wife and his sister. Black Rocks took his robe and a pipe, thus looking like the gambler, and recovered the women. He then went to the gambling lodge, where he found Turtle, Trickster, Redhorn, and Hare playing against One-Legged One and four others. He joined them, and they won in five contests. The gambler (OLO) had earlier won many of the plants of the world, and they were released. Black Rocks located the external heart of the gambler, which enabled him to kill him (he turned into crickets). Black Rocks also straightened up the bent-over backs of all the freed prisoners, people who had lost to the gambler (Paul Radin, [unpublished], Winnebago Notebooks #55; Freeman #3858, Winnebago IV, #5: 4–16, American Philosophical Society).

Spirit of Gambling: Earthmaker's first creation had defects, so he was tossed away to the north (this identifies him as "One-Legged One" or "Herecgûnina," Richard Dieterle, personal communication 2007). He became a traveling gambler and won all the humans' possessions. At his suggestion they then wagered "maize,

8.2. Contests with the giants

| Name | Plot | Woman | race | ball | arrow | dice | wrestle | kick | water | jump | ice | eat | load |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Green Man | A | | •• | | | | | | earth | • | | | |
| Spirit of Gambling | A | | | | | § | | | | | | | |
| Sun & Big Eater | B | | •••• | | | | | | | | | | |
| Big Eater | B | | • | | | | | | | | | | |
| Grandfather's Two Families | B | | •••• | | | | | | | | | | |
| Redhorn Cycle | C | • | | L | • | D | • | | • | | | | |
| Redhorn's Sons | C | • | | L | • | D | | | • | | | | |
| Iowa HHE | C | bear | | L | | | • | | | | | | |
| MS & Friend | C | • | • | L | | | • | | • | | | | |
| Young Man & Naked One | C | • | | LL | | | | | | | | | |
| Hotc. Contest | C | • | | L | | | | | | | | | |
| Spear Shaft & Lac. | C | | | L | • | CD | | | | | | • | • |
| The Roaster | C | • | • | L | | C? | | | | • | | | |
| Young Man Gambles Often | | • | • | T | • | | • | ••• | | | | | |
| White Wolf | | • | • | | • | | • | | | | • | | |
| Reincarnated Grizzly | | • | | | | | • | • | | | | | |
| Shaggy Man | | | • | T | | | | • | • | | | | |
| Old Man & Giants | | | • | | | | • | | | | | | |
| Origins of M. Way | | | •? | | •? | | •? | | • | | | | |
| Human Head | | | | | •• | D? | • | | | | | | |

T = tree ball; L = lacrosse; § = aberrant games: Jack Pines, stare, peg

beans, and vegetables; they staked the fruit of the trees; and finally they bet every kind of animal that was good for food. All these they lost." They also lost all the women. The good spirits sent Hare, Turtle, Thunder, Hecutcka (Redhorn), and Trickster to rectify the situation. In the contests (Jack Pines, stare, peg) the Gambler was beaten by trickery and lost all of the things he had won (LaMere and Shinn 1928:75–86).

## Plot B

Sun and Big Eater: An old man and woman had a son who devoured enormous amounts of food. When a food taboo was broken, the old man lost his success as a hunter and they began to starve. The old man fled to the lodge of ten brothers, survivors of former contests with giants. When the giants again challenged them, the old man engaged in four races with them. He won them all, and the giants were beheaded. The narrator identified the old man and woman as Sun and Moon, their son as a horse, and the ten brothers as two stars, four nightspirits, one thunderbird, and three wolves (Paul Radin [unpublished], Winnebago IV, #7L, Freeman #3860: 1–9 [= 78–86, = 978–96], American Philosophical Society).

Big Eater: Very similar to the previous (Frank Ewing, in Paul Radin [unpublished], Winnebago Notes, Freeman #3892, Winnebago III, #11b, Story XI: 61–63; Notebooks, Freeman #3899 [1254], Winnebago III, #19, Story 19c [2]: 9–14, American Philosophical Society).

Grandfather's Two Families: Ten sons try to feed their ravenous father. When the giants challenge them, the old man wins the races and beheads them. The narrator identifies the players as Sun, Moon, Red Star, Morning Star, and eight animals (Paul Radin [unpublished], Winnebago Notebooks #8: 1–93, American Philosophical Society).

## Plot C

The Roaster: An orphan revealed to the village chief that his son was a bear who was eating women. When he killed the bear, the boy was adopted by the chief and named the next chief. The boy took a group of men to challenge a group of cannibal Giants to gamble their lives. Four men ("White Clouds" and "Winners") were the players in lacrosse, dice, a foot race, lacrosse [*sic*], and jumping. They won them all and killed and burned the giants. The young chief, who was really a comet-meteor, married a woman giant. Later the couple and their son ascended to the sky (Paul Radin, "The Roaster," [unpublished) Winnebago Notebooks #2, American Philosophical Society Library).

Hotcâgara Contest the Giants: The giants came to a Winnebago village to challenge them to lacrosse. At Turtle's urging, the Indians accepted. The giants were

led by a woman with red-yellow hair. After the Winnebago won four games, all the giants were killed, except for the woman, who became part of the tribe (Little Decorah, in Thomas Foster, Foster's Indian Record and Historical Data [Washington, DC: 1876–77], 1: #3: p. 3, col. 1).

Young Man and Naked One: An old woman taught her grandson, "Young Man," how to hunt and play lacrosse. She dressed him in finery and sent him off to find a wife. He met a naked man who had run away from his nine brothers, and after sharing knowledge about food, naked man dressed the same as Young Man, after which they were almost identical. They went to a village where they met another young man, whom they dressed the same as themselves. The trio married three women of the town and demonstrated their ability at hunting. Giants came to challenge the town to gamble their lives. Turtle, Curly Hair, Trickster, and the trio played against the giants and their sons-in-law. After Young Man revealed his living human-head earrings, causing the giants to lose focus, the village won and killed the wagered giants. The giants lost again the next day, and the day after that, Turtle and his friends chased down the giants and killed them all except two. Young Man returned home with his wife, child, and the giant woman. After cleansing her of the ice that caused her cannibalism, he married her and they later had a son named "Redhorn." Young Man then ascended to the sky (McKern 1929).

Morning Star and His Friend: "Wrapped in Blankets" came to awareness and met a man (Turtle) who invited him to visit. After being blessed by four Herok'a, he went to his friend's home, where he found him with his wife and baby. The two of them went to another town and he married an old woman's daughter, with whom he had a son. Some cannibal giants came and challenged them to a ball game. The four goals were made by Wolf, Black Hawk, Otter, and Man Faces as Earbobs; in the last goal the point was won by Earbobs's making a giant woman smile and lose her concentration. The giants wagered were killed. Turtle and Otter were the winners in "Diving Endurance." Wrapped in Blankets won the wrestling contest, and he and Turtle won the foot race. All of the giants except two were killed. Wrapped in Blankets is the Great Star (John Harrison, translated by Oliver La Mere, in Paul Radin, Notebooks, Winnebago III, #11a, Freeman Number 3892, Story 8: 92–117, American Philosophical Society).

Redhorn Cycle, episode 4: Giants challenged an Indian village to play lacrosse for lives. Despite her ability, the giant woman with red hair was undone by laughing at Redhorn's human-head earrings. The team of Turtle, Redhorn, Wolf, Otter, and Storms-as-He-Walks (thunderbird) won the game. They arranged the giants into four circles, and Storms killed them all with lightning. Other giants came; their messenger with a gourd at his belt challenged them to games. They played shooting arrows, dice, staying underwater, and wrestling. The giants lost all except the last game, after which Turtle and his friends were killed (Radin 1948:123–129).

Redhorn's Sons: Redhorn, Turtle, Wolf, Storms as He Walks, and other war-

riors were invited to a feast. In the course of it they were asked to eat with an old woman's grandson and give him their blessings. Redhorn married a woman there. The spirit-heroes, plus the grandson, set out on a war party against Waterspirits. They brought back war honors. Otter also led a successful war party. Giants arrived to challenge them to games. Turtle played dice with a bear and won. The thunderbird killed the wagered giants with lightning. The heroes won also in shooting arrows, in long diving, and in a ball game. The giants were killed, but the woman giant was taken by Redhorn as his wife. Both his wives bore him sons. Later a war party came to fight, and the heroes were all captured and beheaded. Of Redhorn's boys, one was like his father, and the other "had the man faces on his shoulders." They went to the enemies' home and seized the four heads, then escaped the flood-waves sent after them. The boys resuscitated the heads, and the enemies fled through a hole in the ground. The heroes followed them below to a village where they slaughtered all the Bad Waterspirits. Turtle and Thunder gave their weapons to the boys. "Then Redhorn also went back to his home up above. 'Without Horns' (Herok'a), they call certain beings. He was their chief; his sons were the chiefs of beings called 'Childish People,' they say" (Paul Radin, Notebooks, Freeman #3860, Winnebago IV, #7a: 1–16, American Philosophical Society).

Iowa Human-Head Earrings: Ten brothers lived in a town that accepted a challenge from a party of giants. The youngest brother, who wore human-head earbobs, won the race and killed the giants, assisted by his friends Turtle and Blackhawk. The trio went to another place where they played some bears in lacrosse on the ice. In the game the human-head earbobs made a she-bear lose her focus, and the bears lost the game and their lives. Years later another party of giants came to play, and the trio lost the game and were beheaded. The son of Human-Head Earrings, who had a tiny head in the middle of his chest, and the son of Blackhawk journeyed to the giants' village, where they killed the giants by magic. They resuscitated the three heads, who all departed after leaving their sons their gifts. (Skinner 1925:456–458. This text is included in the Winnebago list simply because of its similarity.)

Spear Shaft and Lacrosse: Turtle befriended a village weakened by enemy attacks. He led a successful war party and became the chief's son-in-law, then was made chief of the village. He prepared a feast and sent out messengers with invitations. After the feast, the giants sent a messenger with a gourd rattle to challenge them to a game of dice. Turtle won and killed the wagered giants. The next day Turtle played "chips" against them, and again won the lives of some giants. The next game was arrow shooting, and again Turtle and a friend won. So went the contests of fast eating, foot racing, wading across the lake, and carrying big loads. Finally, Turtle and his friends won a ball game. All of the giants but two were killed. Then all the friends went home, except for the arrow, spear shaft, and lacrosse stick,

who stayed with the Indians (Paul Radin, [unpublished] Winnebago Notebooks #36, 1–81, American Philosophical Society).

## Miscellaneous

White Wolf: Two brothers, one a wolf, lived well until a broken food taboo led to the loss of success in hunting. They were challenged by the giants, and wolf had his brother kill him and keep a bracelet from his skin. The giants lost contests until the brother left off his bracelet, when he was killed. The wolf brother emerged from the bracelet and resuscitated his brother, and they finished the giants. Then the victims of the giants were resuscitated (Paul Radin [unpublished], Winnebago Notebooks #10: 1–64, American Philosophical Society).

Young Man Gambles Often: A young man, the last of twenty children of a chief, was an inveterate gambler, but he was made the peace chief of a town. After an opening sequence of his ritual activities as chief in relation to war parties, the story focuses on his leadership in a sequence of contests with a band of giant cannibals (Dieterle says that "all such giants are cannibals," personal communication 2007). The structure is a sequence of contests between selected individuals, with the stakes, at the insistence of the cannibal giants, raised from ordinary wagers of goods to lives of the competitors. The young chief managed to get the giants to agree to four-to-one odds. Then the sequence of seven contests (kicking, shooting arrows, kicking, racing, kicking, ball, and wrestling) began. The final outcome was the destruction of the giants, except for two representatives. ("Young Man Shoots for Them Often," in Paul Radin, Notebooks, Freeman #3861 [3891], American Philosophical Society, pre-1830; Winnebago IV, #8s: 1–23. The original text is found as "Young Man Gambles Often [Hotcitciwaki'uk'ega]," in Paul Radin, Notebooks, Winnebago V, #22: 1–173.) (This myth is discussed in detail below.)

Reincarnated Grizzly: In a family of eight brothers, the youngest was an inveterate gambler who was made chief. When the giants challenged them, he accepted, and the others joined in. The chief became a bear, killed the remaining giants, and married a giant woman (Paul Radin, Notebooks, Winnebago IV, #7, Freeman #3860, Story 7k: 1015–1020, American Philosophical Society).

Shaggy Man: In a chief's family there were nine boys and a girl. Eight of the boys resented the youngest and tried to kill him. The boy was taken by waterspirits. Another episode tells of a Bear-spirit who marries the girl; their son resuscitates the brother. The contests were with "long-legged Bears," all of whom were killed (Paul Radin [unpublished], Winnebago Notebooks #9: 1–89, American Philosophical Society).

Old Man and the Giants: In a contest with the giants, most of the people of a

village were killed, except for an old man and two of his sons. Additional episodes include the Stolen Boy, his marriage and testing by his father-in-law (similar to Twins episodes), the domestication of the brother and the resuscitation of the town (Charlie Houghton, in Paul Radin, Notebooks, Freeman 3894, Winnebago III, #9, Story 31: 163–182, American Philosophical Society).

Origins of the Milky Way: One of the divinities attempted to destroy humans by means of contests with the giants. In the diving competition the Milky Way was created by accident as the competitors dived too deep (Paul Radin, Notebooks, Freeman #3862, Winnebago I, #3, 105, 107b, American Philosophical Society).

Human Head: The opening episode of this compound myth is the widespread story of four women fleeing a Rolling Skull. In the next episode a young man married the daughter of a couple with ten brothers. In another episode a man awakened, was befriended by four Herok'a, and became a friend of the young man. In the contest with the giants, the men won. The young man was identified as the spirit chief of lice, and his friend the Strong Man as the big star (Morning Star) (Paul Radin, [unpublished], Winnebago Notebooks #51, American Philosophical Society).

These texts demonstrate variation in the total plot structure as well as within structural groupings. The three overall plot types suggested above (A, B, and C) are only a way of identifying texts with structural similarity. In addition to the three identifiable basic plot types, there are others ("Miscellaneous") that defy inclusion in a group. Even within a group—C, for instance—the narratives have different episodes, details, and even personae. The plots can change drastically, as when the usual human victory over the giants is postponed and the heroes are slain by the giants (Redhorn Cycle). The villains who challenge the humans to a contest are usually giants, but they may also be bears (Shaggy Man). The choice of games changes from one narrative to another, seemingly at random (see Table 8.2), a fact that suggests the Contest with the Giants is not linked to a particular athletic or other type of betting game. This variation leads to an obvious hypothesis: that the Contest with the Giants episodes describe a known (to the Winnebago, at least) primordial event such as the defeat of the Gambler or the destruction of the Giants, or both. A companion speculation is that the episode has been known in the tribal group for centuries, long enough for it to have proliferated in multiform and become linked to various other episodes and plot types.

One of the advantages of having so many different narrations of the episode is that enough details were recorded to permit the recognition of minor details that surely represent the ethnographic reality known to the narrators. For example, a hint of a social protocol is observed between groups when a contest is contemplated. In a number of the Winnebago texts the contest is introduced by the advent of a giant messenger who arrives to issue the challenge to the humans. There

is a reference to his having a black-painted face, a detail that may indicate a standard identification marker. There are multiple mentions of the messenger's wearing a gourd rattle at his belt. Such an item would rattle as the person moved, attracting attention to himself and hinting at magical power surrounding (and protecting?) the emissary. Its presence may also be a visible marker indicating that he is in the special role of ambassador. The conversations between the emissary and the chiefs and warriors with whom he speaks also give information about the process of setting the rules for the contests—how many players, which games, and the details of the wagers for the players and the audiences. Those wagers, the myths say, range from shell wampum and other jewelry to clothing, to wives, and even to servitude or death of the bettors.

## Gambling as a Cultural Institution

Such insights lead to reflection on the nature of the institution of gambling among prehistoric and historic Native Americans, for both the myths and the ethnographic knowledge of the addictive behavior suggest that the international nature of the process necessitated a widely known protocol with a common set of symbols related to the activity. To examine this notion, it is instructive to look closely at one text that seems to catch up some of the details of the gambling aspect of Winnebago culture.

The narrative "Young Man Gambles Often" is a fairly lengthy story about gambling. It has a double emphasis on gaming, for before the Contest with the Giants, there is an introduction that describes the Young Man's addiction to gambling within his village. After he becomes chief, his gambling is set aside, but his passion returns when the challenge from the giants occurs. From the first contest on, there are intriguing details added to the narrative. Here is the relevant material.

> [The young chief participated in a kicking match with a giant, with the lives of a quartet of giants bet against the chief's own life and other quartets against the lives of some of his men. When the chief succeeded in killing his opponent, he gave orders.]
>
> "Shoot them with the arrows and kill your own men [i.e., opponents]," he said. "I too will also kill my own man," he said. He shot all four of them with arrows and killed his own men. All the rest did that. Then he did it. He cut off all four heads. He took the heads, all four of them. "You also must do in this way to your own men," he said. So they all did it. Then he said to them, "When you get home, hang them above the fireplace. In the morning, you may break them open. Do not do so prematurely." . . .
>
> Those human heads that they first took home, when they broke them open in the morning, others unexpectedly contained white wampum. Again, oth-

> ers contained white wampum. Then again this time they knew what would be in them. So when they got them home, immediately he hung them above the fireplace. And again the next morning they broke them open and they got a lot of wampum.

This beheading and hanging of the heads over the fireplace, followed by the discovery that they were filled with white wampum the next morning, became the standard procedure for the long series of seven gambling contests between the humans and the giants. One result was a large amount of wampum from the decapitated heads that accrued to the victorious warriors. The overall outcome was the reduction of the race of giants to two representatives.

This remarkable narrative suggests some provocative hypotheses about ritual practices that may be encoded in this myth. Since each is debatable, they will be presented as a series of specific propositions.

*1. This myth provides a charter for a special type of gambling, one based on athletic contests.*

Despite its humanistic tone, with a large family, village politics, and male warfare, this narrative belongs to a broad cluster of myth texts, not historical legend. The central episode is "Contest with the Giants," a much-replicated story in the Winnebago corpus. Such repetition, especially in a variety of surrounding narrative frames and differing personae, is a good indication of the importance of the episode in the cultural tradition. Its apparent etiological function is to explain the removal of the dangerous cannibal giants from the world stage, which places the time of the episode in the formative period of cosmic history. In that kind of setting, it is to be anticipated that additional etiological archetypes will be incorporated in the development of the plot.

One such is seen in the description of the ball game, the sixth event of the Contest series. In Radin's terse description of the historic game as explained to him by his informants, there is no hint of more than basic game procedure: "Tree game.—Two trees are selected about 20 feet apart, one having a branch about 15 feet from the ground. A number of people stand ready at the side of this tree and the one whose turn it is to play tries to hit the branch. When he succeeds in doing so all run toward the other tree. As soon as the player gets the ball he tries to hit the runners. If successful in this before the others have reached the tree he wins: otherwise they are 'safe' and he must try again" (Radin 1923:75). This description, found in the "Games and Amusements" section of Radin's ethnography, gives no hint of the symbolic level portrayed in the "Young Man" myth, in which a player, after being hit with the ball, "becomes the 'ghost-carrier.'" "The one who gets the most ghost-carriers is the winner." The myth's game is followed by the beheading of the losers and the appearance of shell beads in the heads.

The "kicking game" appears three times in this narrative. Radin's description of it is blunt: "This was a very rough sport in which men only took part. Two men took turns in kicking each other as hard as they could, the one who held out the longer being the winner" (Radin 1923:73). He did not go to the extent of the narrative's details of broken bones and death. It is difficult to know what weight should be placed on this narrator's emphasis on the kicking game and the tree game, because the majority tradition in the Contest with the Giants texts focuses on foot races and the lacrosse game.

The concluding episode of the myth, after the Contest is over, tells of the transformation of Young Man into "a large and very white animal" whose murderous rampage against the villagers was halted only by the Giant woman he had married during the Contest. "Then the Giantess was going towards him. She had a doll and four eagle feathers, the tobacco, she took that much and went there. There she threw the doll at him. Then the tobacco and the four feathers of eagles, these she threw to him there. He licked the doll. Then the woman sat downwind from him. She sat naked. He licked the doll. Next he then went and licked the woman. Finally, he laid down then and there and began to bring forth the water. He sweat[ed] very much. He breathed as if he were dying. His body began to return to human form. Finally, now all of him was now what it used to be." This account sounds like a description of ritual behavior, another indication of the myth's role as a charter of cultural practice. The Winnebago ritual to which the description applied is unknown.

Other examples of etiological messages are included in the details of the political and military behavior of the actors, but the point is clear. This text is a myth about the primordial era with an etiological tone throughout. The fact that the narrator has provided two separate accounts of gambling—an opening episode of the addiction of Young Man and others to their standard gambling pastime as contrasted with the Contest with the Giants, when the stakes become lethal—is a final indication that the story is focused on an archetypal explanation of a special form of a modern practice, one with ritualistic connections. The variability of the games from text to text suggests that the focus is on the gambling rather than on the specific games.

2. *The archetype includes the beheading of the loser, with the head belonging to the winner. This may reflect an actual Winnebago practice at some time in the past.*

Richard Dieterle has observed in connection with another text about beheading that Paul Radin "often translated what in the text is 'head' (nasura) as 'scalp.' The Winnebago were 'head hunters'" (Dieterle, personal communication 2006). That affirmation seems borne out by the presence of beheading as a distinctive feature of the texts of the Bluehorn myth, in which a man(?) has a contest, usually smoking (or magic), in which the loser is beheaded and the winner takes the head away

with him (see "Bluehorn" texts in Encyclopedia of Hotcâk Mythology). And the beheading of losers is told in the other narratives far distant from the Winnebago, as has been seen—Iroquois and Cherokee.

That detail raises an important issue, whether the beheading of losers was an ethnographic reality or merely a symbolic reference to victory in the myths. If this is a reflection of the cultural practice, then archaeology should be able to affirm that massive numbers of crania and headless skeletons have been uncovered in 150 years of fieldwork. It appears that no such affirmation can be made. Although skulls have occasionally been found in burials, and some caches of crania are known, there do not seem to be enough to argue for widespread decapitation of losers in the ball game. If this had indeed been a general practice, the ethnographic reality of the popularity of athletic gambling should be matched either by additional crania in almost every male grave or special graves of massed crania. They do not seem to exist, at least not in the numbers necessary to support the notion that beheading in gambling was a routine practice.

This insight is supported by the myth itself. In many of the texts of the Contest with the Giants the point is implicit that the normal gambling stakes are objects, and that the beheading of the winners (and eating by the cannibal giants, if they were victorious) was at the insistence of the giants. Since that confrontation is understood to be a primordial situation, then the beheading is not presented in the myth as the normal practice.

*3. The trophy heads are found to contain "white wampum," or shell beads, a way to connect the beheading theme with the normal gambling practice of using shell beads as the medium of exchange.*

One of the characteristics of the Mississippian world is the expansion of the art forms created and sponsored by the elite segments of ranked societies. In the explosion of ceramic art, engraved shell imagery, stone sculpture, and other complex decorative items, one of the popular art forms tends to be overlooked because of its relative simplicity. The creation of plain white beads from shell was a widespread practice, involving a variety of shell species, both fresh and saltwater types. Depictions of human(?) figures on engraved shell show bands of white shells as necklaces and bands on arms and legs. The not infrequent archaeological discovery of large numbers of such beads accompanying single burials, sometimes as deposits rather than as adornment, argues that this "wampum" was more than just art as decor or markers of elite status. Large collections of shell beads in the possession of a single person look very much like a bank account—if not as money, then as trophies of an elite sumptuary economic system.

This supposition receives some support from the popularity of the "bead-spitter" theme in mythology. In one myth type there is a celebrated young man who has the ability to spit beads from his mouth (Motifs D1001, D1456), and in

another narrative a young man is tortured to make him shed tears that are shell beads (Motifs D1004, D1457) (see Thompson 1929:329, notes 190, 190b). In yet another example, a young man's excrement is wampum ("Human Head" in Dieterle, Encyclopedia of Hotcâk Mythology). In the light of this interest in shell beads, a burial such as one found at the prehistoric Winnebago site of Aztalan in Wisconsin is not surprising. The fact that hundreds of shell beads were placed on the body of a woman emphasizes the importance of the beads as a rank indicator, and the number of beads reinforces the notion that the collecting of them was an elite trait (Barrett 1960:16). James Brown made the same point in his account of the impressive number of shell beads recovered at Spiro, along with the many other shell artifacts. He suggested that this was the property of one ruling family, one "great lord" (Brown 1973:15, 23).

*4. If the Contest with the Giants myth reflects an actual practice of beheading of the losers, the wampum connection may have indicated the "selling" of the head back to the owner's family or village for proper burial, with the price set in shell beads. Or, if the beheading was considered too final, the equation of head with wampum might have indicated a ransom for the life of the loser.*

The motif of a decapitated head producing wampum when it was destroyed reflects a simple equation: head = wampum. If this was taken literally, then the loser's head was an object to be redeemed by the family, and the purchase of it by wampum is not difficult to conceive. It is also possible, however, that the head was not removed from the body of the loser, and the equation reflects merely the holding of the loser until his family could purchase his freedom. As John Lawson pointed out, that was an actual practice in the world of the Southeastern Cherokees: the gambling servitude of a man forced his family to pay the indemnity. Whether his actual life was at stake is a question that cannot now be answered, but the myth puts it in just such simple terms.

The practice of equating human life with payment was played out in Muskogee life in connection with the legal system. When a killing occurred, regardless of the circumstances, a death was owed to the lineage of the victim. The Creeks, however, did not insist on the actual death of the person responsible. Depending on the motivation and details of the event, there was room for negotiation between the lineages, and in some cases a payment in something other than human life was acceptable (Swanton 1928a:343). Thus the society avoided both unreasonable legalism and wasteful loss of life. The mythic equation of head = wampum may be that sort of practical metaphor.

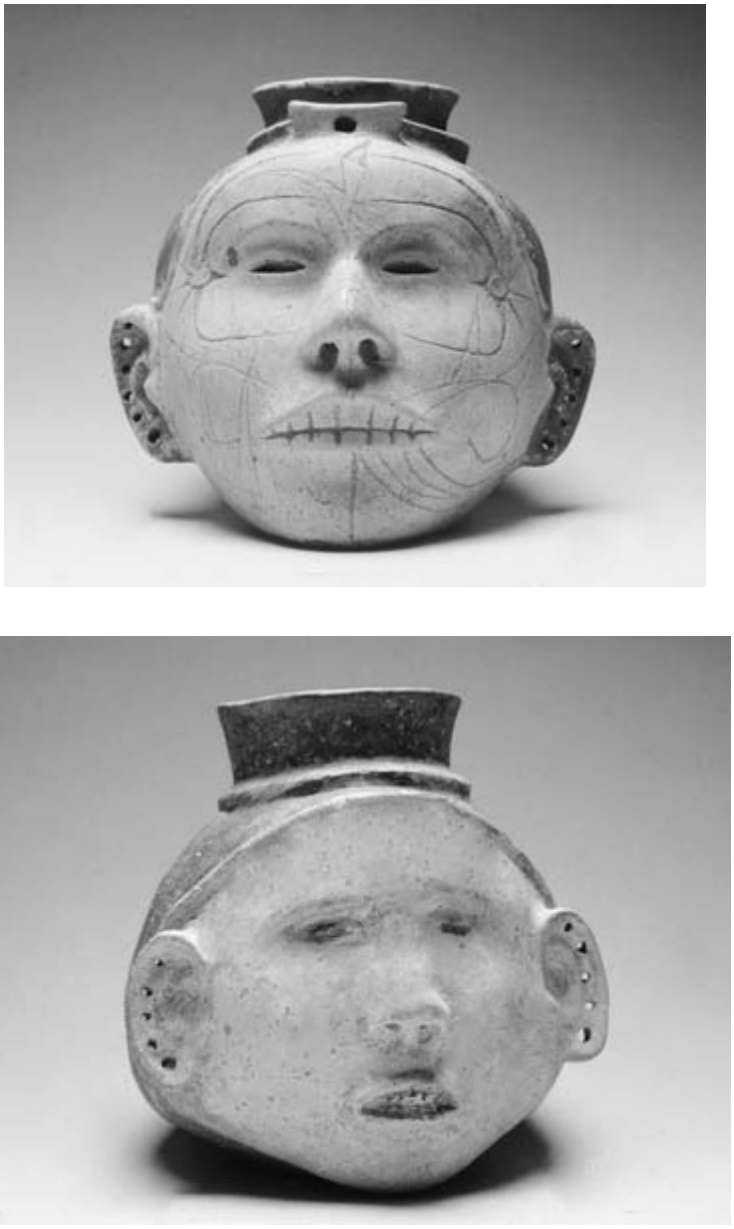
These considerations lead to an unexpected hypothesis. This metaphoric equation may provide an explanation of the function of a famous art form of the Central Mississippi Valley—the "head pot." Before the hypothesis is pursued, it would be helpful to summarize what is known about this unique ceramic tradition.


8.1. An early map of the distribution of head pots (Mills 1968, courtesy of *The Missouri Archaeologist*).

In the Central Mississippi Valley (CMV) (Figure 8.1) many Mississippian-era sites have yielded, among other grave goods, ceramic vessels in the shape of human heads.

Although there are some head bottles, the majority are in the form of jars, because their wide mouths open out of the top of the heads, and the interior is smoothed as if to hold material of some sort. The CMV head pots have become world famous, largely because they are interesting art, and they are numerous, but found in a localized area. Moreover, they have excited an unusual amount of speculation, because they do not appear to be generic heads and faces. On the contrary, each is distinctive enough, with a variety of face decoration, that they could even be portraits of actual human beings (Figure 8.2).

What they were created for is unknown, because there was no historic continuation of the ceramic head pot tradition. It was a cultural phenomenon that was limited in both time and space, a prehistoric episode that calls for interpretation, but has yet to receive it. William H. Holmes noted the possibility that the head pots



8.2. Two of the head pots from northeast Arkansas (courtesy of Dr. David Dye, University of Memphis, and Dr. James F. Cherry, Fayetteville, Arkansas).

were portraits, and his observation of their function was terse: "So unusual is the shape that we are justified in assuming that the vessels were made exclusively for mortuary use and consignment to the tomb. They are too small to have contained bones, and we can only surmise that they were intended to contain food, drink, or other kinds of offerings" (Holmes 1992:41).

Other scholars mentioned the head pots from time to time, but they had little to add to Holmes's speculation about function. In 1951, Natalie Benson did a major study of 58 head vessels, attempting to create a typology. As to functional interpretation, she speculated that they were symbolic representations of trophy heads created for burial use. She suggested that their circumscribed historic-geographic range was due to a Mesoamerican cultural intrusion into the CMV that failed to diffuse in a wider pattern (Benson 1951). At almost the same time, James B. Griffin published a brief article on six ceramic types from the CMV that seemed to him to argue for Mesoamerican influence, although he was careful to mention Southwestern analogues. One of the six types he mentioned was the "head vase." Despite his major theme of Mesoamerican connection, in this case Griffin was led to conclude that "there are no good connecting links available whereas strong connections can be seen to the head decorations of some of the human effigy bottle forms. This suggests the head vase developed locally in northeastern Arkansas" (Griffin 1952:137).

A few years later Lawrence Mills published another study of the head vessels based upon 63 examples. He created a different typology, with detailed discussion of stylistic characteristics. He was reluctant to offer functional explanations, though: "Without contemporary documentation, we can only speculate as to their function and representation" (Mills 1968:11–12). Equally reluctant to speculate, Michael J. O'Brien in 1994 was content to suggest that the "100-plus head pots from the region" are prime candidates for source analysis "to develop a clear picture of which groups were exchanging vessels with which other groups" (O'Brien 1994:365).

The most recent study of the head pots was done by Chester Walker in 2000. He reduced the study corpus to 46 vessels with facial decorations, for his project was an analysis of the tattoos and paintings that are on the head pots. He created a typology of the facial designs, then compared them to both the shell imagery from the Spiro site and to the facial markings recorded in historic paintings of Indians. He concluded that there was actually little correlation of the three, although he found distinct pattern groups within the head pot corpus. In all of this, he was careful to avoid speculating about the function of the pots, allowing them to remain simply the canvases on which art forms appear (Walker 2000).

Thus, even after more than a century of sporadic academic attention, the function of the head pots remains unknown. While there is unlikely to be any definitive interpretation, due to the lack of incontrovertible ethnographic evidence, it is not the case that nothing useful can be said at all on the subject. The ethnographic record, at least in myths, is not completely silent. The Contest with the Giants nar-

ratives were collected from the late 19th century to the early decades of the 20th century, which raises the issue of the 600-year time gap between the text and the creation of head pots. There is also the problem of whether Winnebago traditions are relevant in interpreting the practices of their more southerly Siouan-speaking kin, likely makers of the CMV head pots. The possibility that the traditions of both northern and southern Siouan speakers were rooted in the old Mississippian world centered on Cahokia, however, makes this speculative hypothesis at least worth considering.

*5. If the Contest with the Giants myth was known more widely, particularly among Siouan speakers, the same chartering of gambling on athletic games may have been known in the Central Mississippi Valley. In time, gambling practices as institutionalized in the Central Mississippi Valley may have evolved locally into the ownership of personal ceramic heads by major players, the "stars" of their generation. While the featured athletic contest would have been the center of a complex of betting by everyone, the competitors themselves may have offered their own bets in the form of their head pots—their "heads"—filled with wampum.*

The development of a substitution for actual heads seems almost inevitable. The problem of actual sacrifice of losers is the loss of heroic people to the society. Such a wasteful system might work quite well as long as the competitors in lethal games are from opposing or enemy societies. That sort of organization is familiar from Mesoamerican societies in which the sacrifice of prisoners became ritualized and the taking of captives was done in order to feed the sacrificial system. It has never seemed reasonable that any society would long tolerate the sacrifice of its own best warriors in internal games, however. Such a practice, to be workable, would have to be restricted to a few infrequent ritual occasions in which an individual would pay a cosmic price for the community.

In gambling, even where there was a tradition of the wagering of lives, the substitution of ceramics for crania would be a reasonable societal step. In order for the contests to have spoils for the victor, though, something needs to be wagered. With the social recognition of shell beads and other such luxury items as prizes worth the gamble, a clay head filled with wampum would be a reasonable personal bet on the outcome of one's own contest. In the Central Mississippi Valley, such a substitution apparently occurred in a visible manner—vessels that look like heads—but the process may have occurred over a much broader area with items indistinguishable from other collections of material goods.

It may be that there was an intermediate step in this proposed evolution. It will be recalled that one of the characteristics of the challenger of the giant in the Winnebago myths was his wearing a gourd rattle at his belt. It could be that such a "rattle" was not a dance rattle so well known from other ethnographic materials, but was instead a container for wampum. In that case, it would have served

as a public symbol that the wearer was an athlete and gambler. It may not be coincidental that the son of Thunder in the Cherokee myth was made ready to confront the Gambler by the gift of a gourd filled with wampum to be worn tied at his wrist. If these hints from the myths reflect a general cultural practice of an emblematic tool of the serious gambler, then the wampum-filled gourd may have also been an additional part of the equation: gourd = head = wampum. From there it is but a single step for some innovative potter to add to it: gourd = head = head pot = wampum.

Additional support for this hypothesis comes from the 1971 discovery of a cache of 1,400 shell beads in a Neeley's Ferry Plain bottle at the 3P0213 site just north of the Hazel site in northeast Arkansas (Morse 1972). Although Dan Morse interpreted the cache as evidence that the site was the locus of a bead-manufacturing operation, the fact of the storage of shell beads in a ceramic vessel is a striking coincidental trait, especially since the find was in the very area of head pot production.

In the light of this hypothesis, what would be the correct interpretation of the archaeological recovery of a head vessel from a grave? It appears that there are three clear possibilities, and it does not seem possible to decide which of them is correct on the basis of either the myth or on archaeological data.

- A head pot from a grave could indicate that the deceased was the winner of a contest and that he had kept the loser's effigy, perhaps for years, as a trophy of his major victory.
- However, the head pot could have been his own image, and its inclusion in his grave could have been an indication that he was undefeated in life—no one was ever able to take his head (pot).
- If the effigy itself did not change hands at the conclusion of a contest, but only the shell beads contained in it, then the presence of a head pot in a grave would have indicated merely that the deceased, buried with his own head pot, was a star player in his lifetime.

This hypothesis leaves other important questions unanswered. A significant problem is who merited a head pot. Even the "100 plus" figure for recovered head pots in no way equals the likely number of warriors and gamblers in the CMV in Mississippian times. If this proposed gaming system was in operation, then only a small number of the players had head pots, even though it seems likely that the betting was widespread through the population. Who owned the head pots? Was it by their achievements, or was it by their rank in the social order? Or was the gambling institution independent of other institutions in Mississippian society? In the Winnebago myth the contests were not open to just any of the warriors; in all of the Contest with the Giants narratives there is discussion leading to the selection of which heroes will engage the enemy, and the criterion seems to be their specific

8.3. Shell gorget from Eddyville, Tennessee, bearing image of chunkey player (Philip Phillips and James A. Brown, *Pre-Columbian Shell Engravings from the Craig Mound at Spiro, Oklahoma,* Vol. 1. Peabody Museum Press. Copyright 1975 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College).

skills, already demonstrated and recognized. This observation, of course, does not answer the question, because the major figure in the Winnebago myth was both a powerful warrior and a chief, the son of a chief, thus qualifying for both achieved and ascribed status. There does not seem to be more that can be said, other than to acknowledge the problem.

Even so, other art forms raise the same issues, such as the "chunkey player" imagery of roughly the same time period. This artistic emphasis on the chunkey game recalls that some of the myth texts (specifically the Apache and Cherokee) present the chartering elements for chunkey or the hoop-and-pole game, and it raises the question of a connection (Figure 8.3). Are those portraits of the same heroic figures who were offering their heads or head pots as wagers on their prowess? What role in the gambling institution was played by these gorget illustrations? Do these rare gorgets represent the politicization of the chunkey game by Mississippian elites, as Warren DeBoer argued (1993)? The questions await further attention from researchers.

For now, it is enough to summarize the arguments in this presentation. The presence of a significant gambling charter myth in such widely separated locations as the Navahos and other Southwestern tribes, the Cherokees, the Shawnees, the Winnebagos, and possibly the Iroquois raises important issues of diffusion and prehistoric contact. Some such relationship between the Southwest and the Southeast has recently been argued on separate evidence, and this present study adds another dimension to the discussion (Lankford 2006). The myths examined in this chapter suggest that there was a protocol dealing with gambling events, challenges within and across tribal and village boundaries. The issue of decapitation as a regular motif of the myths has led to a hypothesis that a small area of the CMV produced a special ceramic version of heads as a symbolic tool connected with the gambling games. As Lawrence Mills commented about the head pots, "Without contemporary documentation, we can only speculate as to their function and representation" (Mills 1968:11–12). That is correct, of course, but continuing archaeology and further myth analysis may help support or reject this set of hypotheses about the prehistoric cultural institution of gambling and its charter myths.

# 9
# A Hero's Life

One of the most intriguing unsolved mysteries of prehistoric North America is the nature of an explosion of graphic art that occurred in various locations in the Eastern Woodlands from about A.D. 1000 to 1500. The artistic florescence had a predecessor a millennium earlier in the Hopewell art centered in the Ohio Valley, and that surely was an important part of the seedbed from which sprang the new designs on ceramics, shell, copper, wood, and stone. The art of the Mississippian era, as archaeologists designate the second cultural time period, had complex roots, though, including social developments that could produce mound clusters at the center of clusters of living sites, hierarchical social structures, and international networks of communication and exchange of commodities.

Possibly driven by cultural energy generated at the megasite of Cahokia in the thickly populated Mississippi Valley near present St. Louis, the arts flourished in many different areas of the Eastern Woodlands for those extraordinary centuries of aesthetic innovation. The regions were linked by diffusion of art forms and some artistic themes and motifs, but the creators were also reinterpreters of the art they received and originators of art of their own. Some of the graphic designs seem to be elaborations of the decorative arts that had been traditional in their ceramics and other objects through the centuries. Other images, however, strike the modern viewer as depictions of scenes and collections of iconographic symbols that must have had more than aesthetic power for its creators and contemporary beholders. A small selection of those art forms even seems to portray sequences of scenes, giving the impression that they are illustrations of stories. Examples of this special group include images on cave walls, such as Gottschall Rock Shelter in Wisconsin (Salzer and Rajnovich 2001) and Picture Cave in Missouri (Duncan and Diaz-

Granados 2000), both Mississippi Valley sites; stone tablets in the Cumberland Valley (Steponaitis et al. n.d.); several series of shell engravings from the extraordinary Spiro site in the Arkansas River Valley (Phillips and Brown 1984) and multiple sites in the Tennessee Valley (Brain and Phillips 1996); and various complex designs on ceramics and copper found in a wide distribution.

These complex art forms are of great interest to anthropologists, archaeologists, art historians, and iconographers because they offer the possibility that they might be unusual windows into the cultural mind of the artists and their societies. When pursuit of that hope is restricted to art analysis, though, the possible outcomes are limited, because cultural meaning is unlikely to be revealed through the process. The probable connections to ritual are worth pursuing, but the likelihood of change in ritual over centuries and the lack of detailed ethnographic description of historic rituals place limits on the possibilities of success. Because of the impression that the images are illustrations of stories, there is the possibility of determining what myths or legends might be the subject of the art. Some scholars have argued that the subject matter of much of this complex art is the deeds and personages of myth (Knight et al. 2001), and it thus seems a path worth following, even if the outcome cannot be more than reasoned, plausible speculation (see Steponaitis et al. n.d. for an example of this procedure).

The problems in this approach are quickly apparent to practitioners: the art can rarely be tied to specific historical ethnic groups, the literature of myth is intimidatingly massive, and there is almost the certainty that the historical collections of myth are significantly altered versions of the myths told a millennium ago. In a now classic article, Greg Keyes examined a myth text from the 17th-century Apalachee. He concluded that the impressive differences between the Apalachee society of 1676 and the reconstructed ancestral society from Mississippian times suggest that an equally great gulf must have existed between the myth versions (Keyes 1994). Is there any way to get around these problems in the attempt to link myth and art, or is the prospect hopeless?

Some rules of thumb would reduce the pitfalls. One is to de-emphasize or ignore the details of a text. It is clear that narrators tend to adopt the visual elements of the lifestyle of their own lifetime in telling a story, and the possibility of the continuation of "relic" descriptions of items and practices in myth after they have vanished in real life is very slender when the time span is centuries. Another rule is to focus on the plot. There is reason to believe that what is remembered about a myth through time is the story line—what actions occur in the progress of the plot. Another is to be sensitive to the known variables in myth through time: persons can be replaced in plots (for example, one hero or villain can be replaced by a different one and the plot structure can remain unchanged), and one functional element of a plot can be filled by any one of a number of equivalent actions without harming the basic plot. For example, if a hero has to escape detection, he can become

invisible or small enough to hide behind a splinter or transformed into a feather, animal, or a stump—all are functional equivalents in the plot. In stories about heroes, the episodes of particular adventures are especially liable to be changed from one text to another. As Robert Lowie noted about the fluidity of the Twins episodes, "Nothing, of course, is easier than to transfer any deed of derring-do to a popular hero, even though it was originally attached to a different character" (Lowie 1942:12).

In most of the Native American myth collections there are multiple examples of heroes, villains, fools, charlatans, and tricksters, and they vary in name and description (and even plot) when the focus moves from group to group. The adventures of the heroes and heroines tend to be stock episodes, and they seem to be the activities of many different heroes. The result is that an adventure episode, when identified in an illustration, does not automatically identify the hero in that portrayal. Lowie illustrated the plot confusion rooted in this fact: "The sucking-monster . . . has been derived from the same source as that of the indeterminate Osage boy, the Menomini Michabozo, Ponca Rabbit, Crow twins, Dakota Star Boy, and Hopi war-gods" (Lowie 1908:121).

Despite the seeming multiplicity, however, in North American myth there really is a limit to the number of heroic figures and the plot episodes that describe their adventures. Here, for example, is a brief listing of the major heroes found in multiple tribal myth collections, together with the type numbers assigned by Remedios Wycoco in her type index (1951).

Single Hero:
- Mudjikiwis (Wycoco 801)
- Blood-Clot Boy (Wycoco 1102)
- Manabozho (Wycoco 1108; Woodland Central)
- Glooscap (Wycoco 1109; Woodland Northeast only)
- Transformer (Wycoco 1106; North Pacific and Plateau only)
- Raven (Wycoco 1110; Northwest only)
- Mink (Wycoco 1111; Northwest only)
- Son-in-law (Testing of hero) (Wycoco 901)
  - Jealous Uncle (Wycoco 901B)
  - Regional variants (Wycoco 901C, 901D, 901E, 901F)
- (A series of tests in northern Pacific Coast mythology were treated by Franz Boas under the rubric "The Sun Tests his Son-In-Law" [1916:794–816].)
- Orphan/Grandson
  - Star-Boy

Twins:
- Lodge-Boy and Thrown-Away (Wycoco 1101)
  - Children of the Sun (Wycoco 1104)

This listing gives a good idea of the number of heroic figures in North America, and there are many more that are specific to individual tribes.

If the above rules of thumb are followed and these heroic myths are examined, the chances of linking well-known episodes in myth to portrayals of heroic action or encounters in art are increased. Such a linkage may not provide the full myth or complete plot sequence, and it certainly will not offer the societal background of the myth, but it may help delimit the arena within which the story behind the art takes place in the timeless world of mythic archetypes.

Locating the heroic episodes for examination is one of the greatest stumbling blocks for anyone who decides to use this approach to interpreting graphic images that seem to be illustrations of narratives. Fortunately, the process is not as difficult as it appears, because folklorists have already done much of the work. Stith Thompson, a faculty member at Indiana University and one of the pioneers in the development of the American academic discipline of folklore, put together a useful finder for myths and motifs. His long-term projects were the production of a type index (Aarne and Thompson 1964) and a six-volume motif index (Thompson 1956–60) for locating European folktale data. Aware that Franz Boas and other anthropologists had made a start on doing the same kind of indexing for North American Indian texts (Boas 1916; 1918), Thompson decided to take on that project, and in 1929 he published a volume to serve as a retrieval tool, basing it primarily on motifs and episodes (Thompson 1929). Years later, in 1951, one of his students, Remedios Wycoco, wrote her Ph.D. dissertation as an index of the plot types of those myths, with additions drawn from collections that had occurred in the interim. Together the two volumes can quickly provide a long list of published episode and motif resources.

Although Thompson's work has been almost continuously in print, Wycoco's has never been published, though it is available in dissertation form. The inaccessibility and the difficulty of use by those with no experience with these indexes has inspired the specialized index, adapted from their work, that constitutes the rest of this chapter.

In this listing I have attempted to augment the references with other examples of occurrences that have appeared in the intervening years since the creation of the Thompson and Wycoco indexes, but the list is not exhaustive. There are more adventures than are listed here; I have selected the most frequently occurring ones, but any prehistoric graphic image might be an illustration of a detail, motif, or episode that is not listed here. In selecting the topics listed, I have used a subjective rule of identifiability. That is, I have envisioned how motifs and episodes in myths might be portrayed visually and have selected only those that seem to be identifiable in artistic portrayal. Further, since the focus of this study is on Eastern Woodlands and Plains art, with possible Southwestern connections, only those bibliographic references are given here. The more western tribes that have provided

related myths are named here, but the scholar desiring to consult those texts will find the complete references in the indexes already mentioned. To aid in picturing each episode, I have quoted or summarized a particular example of that plot (in English) as it was collected from an informant. Given these subjective constraints, this brief compilation is offered as a service to those who wish to add researching mythic archetypes to their repertoire of iconographic techniques.

The organization of the entries may seem a bit confusing at first glance. Thompson broke North America (above Mexico) into regions for his listings; the tribes he included in those regions are listed in his volume, together with his primary sources for each region (Thompson 1929:368–370). Here is a brief key to those regions: Eskimo (ESK), Mackenzie (MACK), Plateau (PLAT), North Pacific Coast (NPAC), California (CAL), Plains (PLNS), Woodland Area—Central (WDL. CENT), Woodland Area—Northeast (WDL.NE), Woodland Area—Iroquois (WDL.IROQ), Southeastern (SE), Southwestern (SW).

1. Attack on the Giant Elk.

Sources: Wycoco 1951, #951; Thompson 1929, #43, note 144; Thompson 1946, 338–339.

> A giant elk was too dangerous to approach, but a rodent tunneled beneath the animal and gnawed off hair around its heart (see Thompson 1929, note 147). The Gopher told the Hero "to go through the hole which he had made and shoot the Elk. Four times the Son of the Sun tried to enter the hole before he succeeded. When he reached the Elk, he saw the great heart beating above him, and easily pierced it with his arrows; four times his bow was drawn before he turned to escape through the tunnel which the Gopher had been preparing for him. This hole extended far to the eastward, but the Elk soon discovered it, and thrusting his antler into it, followed in pursuit. The Elk ploughed up the earth with such violence that the present mountains were formed, which extend from east to west. The black spider closed the hole with a strong web, but the Elk broke through it and ran southward, forming the mountain chains which trend north and south. In the south the Elk was checked by the web of the blue spider, in the west by that of the yellow spider, while in the north the web of the many-colored spider resisted his attacks until he fell dying from exhaustion and wounds." [Jicarilla Apache: Russell 1898b]

| | |
|---|---|
| MACK | Kaska, Beaver |
| PLAT | Kutenai, Pend d'Oreilles |
| PLNS | Cree: Clay 1938:68–70 |
| | So. Paiute: Lowie 1909:123, #10 |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Mandan: Bowers 1950:202, 286–289 |
| | Kiowa: Parsons 1929:4 (buffalo) |
| SW | Navaho: Matthews 1897:117 |
| | Jicarilla Apache: Russell 1898:255; Mooney 1898b:204; Goddard 1911:197 |
| | San Carlos Apache: Goddard 1918:15, 34 |
| | Mohave Apache: Gould 1921:319 |
| CAL | Mono: Gifford and Block 1930:96–97 |

2. Attack on the Monster Fish. (Motif K952. Monster killed from within. Thompson 1929, note 159; Wycoco 1951: #961). (Motif F913. Victims rescued when swallower is killed. Thompson 1929, note 159a).

Plot: Giant monster devours victims. Hero devoured, but slashes organs with flint and monster dies. Hero rescues victims.

2a. Sucking-monster. (Motif G332. Sucking monster. Thompson 1929, note 158; Reichard 1922:270, 273)

Plot: Giant, or giant hill or cave, sucks in victims.

An incident in #901, 1108, 1110, 1104, 1111.

> "Grandmother said, 'The people are about to die of thirst. All who go for water come not back again.' The star-born said, 'My friend, take a kettle; we will go for water.' [They were swallowed.] Behold there was a long house which was extended, and it was full of young men and young women. Some of them were dead and some were in the agonies of death. 'How did you come here?' he said. They replied, 'What do you mean? We came for water and something swallowed us up.'
>
> "Then on the head of the young man something kept striking. 'What is this?' he said. 'Get away,' they replied, 'that is the heart.' So he drew out his knife and cut it to pieces. Suddenly something made a great noise. In the great body these were swallowed up, but when the heart was cut to pieces and died death came to the body. So he punched a hole in the side and came out, bringing the young men and the young women. So the people were very thankful and gave him two maidens." [Dakota: Riggs 1893:91]

Sources: Waterman 1914:44, 45, 49; Boas 1916:611–612, 659, 687, 718, 868; Boas 1918:288; Teit 1917:17, 117, 148; Carroll 1992.

| | |
|---|---|
| SIBERIA | |
| ESK | Greenland, Baffin Land, Alaska |
| NPAC | Tlingit, Haida, Bella Coola, Rivers Inlet, Chinook, Coos, Nass, Takelma, Tahltan, Tsimsian, Songish |

| | |
|---|---|
| MACK | Anvik, Loucheux |
| PLAT | Chilcotin, Utamqt, Wishram, Wasco, Shuswap, Lillooet, Thompson, Sahaptin, Pend d'Oreille, Flathead, Nez Percé, Kutenai, Coeur d'Alène |
| CAL | Shasta, Joshua, Achomawi |
| PLNS | Uintah Ute: Mason 1910:335 |
| | No. Shoshone: Lowie 1909:281 |
| | Osage: Dorsey 1904d:42, #34 |
| | Ponca: Dorsey 1890:30, 34 |
| | Dakota: Riggs 1893:91, 140; Beckwith 1930:434–436 |
| | Cheyenne: Grinnell 1921:308, 310 |
| | Pawnee: Dorsey 1906:493–494, #40, #41 (LBTA) |
| | Wichita: Dorsey 1904c:88, 101, 160 (LBTA) |
| | Hidatsa: Matthews 1877:63, 68; Beckwith 1930:43 (LBTA) |
| | Crow: Lowie 1918:52–74, 90–91, 95–96; Linderman 1931:208; Simms 1903:305 (LBTA) |
| | Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:345, 353, 368, 381 |
| | Gros Ventre: Kroeber 1907:85, #20 |
| | Blackfoot: Wissler and Duvall 1908:56–57; Grinnell 1892:36; Uhlenbeck 1911, vol. 12:47 |
| | Omaha |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:429–430, 497–498 |
| WDL.CENT | Ojibwa: Schoolcraft 1856:21, 23; Carson 1917:492; de Jong 1913:10–11; Jones and Michelson 1919, vol. 1:201, 207, 467; Skinner 1919:290; Radin 1914:81 |
| | Menomini: Skinner and Satterlee 1915:272; Hoffman 1896:89, 125; Bloomfield 1928:185 |
| | Ottawa: Blackbird 1887:55 |
| | Cree: Skinner 1911:101; Russell 1898a:312; Bell 1897:1 |
| | Saulteaux: Young 1903:169 |
| | Winnebago: Burlin 1907:248; Radin 1948:103–104 |
| WDL.IROQ | Seneca: Curtin and Hewitt 1918:182, #35 |
| WDL.NE | Montagnais, Naskapi: see Fisher 1946:239–40 |
| SW | Jicarilla Apache: Mooney 1898b:200–202; Voth 1905:217, #83 |
| | Hopi: Voth 1905:83, #19 |
| | Tusayan: Fewkes 1895 |
| | Navaho: Parsons 1923:368, #1 |
| | Pima: Russell 1908:246 |
| SE | Cherokee: Mooney 1900:242, 320 |
| | Seminole: Greenlee 1945:142 |
| | Natchez: Swanton 1929 (LBTA) |
| | Alabama: Swanton 1929 (LBTA) |

3. Attack on the Bear. (Wycoco 1951: #952; detached from Grandson [#1104])
Hero kills or captures bear (or buffalo) with bow and arrows.

> "The next day [Grandson] went out hunting again and went quite a long distance from his grandmother's lodge to the edge of the woods. A large bear came out after him. The little boy said, 'Stop or I will kill you,' so the bear stopped. In those days bears had very sharp teeth, but the little boy thought that they shouldn't have such teeth. He set to work with a stone and filed down the bear's teeth. He said to the bear, 'Take me to my grandmother's lodge,' and the bear did.
>
> "He called his grandmother and she came. 'See here,' he said, 'I have a servant for you who is strong and can pack heavy loads.'
>
> "The boy had also taken up some dirt and put in the bear's eyes. Since then the bears haven't been able to see as well as they used to. The grandmother was very surprised to see the boy on the bear's back. She said that she was very glad to have a big dog. After the little boy went into the house she told the bear to leave and turned him loose." [Mandan: Bowers 1950:202]

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|---|---|
| PLAT | Kutenai: Boas 1918:290 |
| CAL | Yokuts, Western Mono |
| PLNS | Mandan: Bowers 1950:201–205 |
| | Hidatsa: Beckwith 1932 |
| | Crow: Lowie 1918: #74, #81, #19; Linderman 1931:208 |
| | Arikara: Parks 1991:144–145, 799–800 (bear) (LBTA) |
| | Ponca: Dorsey 1890:34 |
| | Pawnee: Dorsey 1906: #41; Dorsey 1904b: #25 (LBTA) |
| WDL.CENT | Winnebago: Radin 1948:98–99 |
| SW | Isleta Pueblo: Lummis 1920:213–214 |
| | Laguna Pueblo: Boas 1928:49–51, 249–250 |
| | Hopi: Voth 1905:89–90 |
| | Zuni: Benedict 1935, vol. 1:61, 86 |
| | Jicarilla Apache: Mooney 1898:201 |
| | San Carlos Apache: Goddard 1918:38 |

4. Attack on the Stone Giant.

Plot: The hero must kill a giant who is made of stone or is covered with stone. In some cases this figure is the first created, who has become dangerous to humans.

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| PLNS | Oglala: Beckwith 1930:430–431 |
| WDL.CENT | Winnebago: Meeker 1901:161–162 |
| IROQUOIS | Onondaga: Beauchamp 1889:160; 1892, 227–228; Curtin and Hewitt 1918 |

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| SE | Cherokee: ten Kate 1889:54; Terrell 1892; Mooney 1900 |
| SW | Navaho: Matthews 1897:114–116 |

5. Hero rids earth of snakes. (Wycoco 1951:956, episode in #1101; Lowie 1942:1–28)

5a. Rectum-snakes. (Motif G328. Rectum snakes. Thompson 1929, note 161)

Source: Reichard 1922:334, 270, 273.

Plot: Snakes enter hero's body through rectum, killing him. Hero is resuscitated, and he domesticates the snakes.

> Jack-rabbit told Grandson "to take a flat stone and sit on it whenever he wanted to sit down. . . . When the boy came to the snake lodge, the snakes were lying in a circle around their fire and had their heads resting on sticks. He came in and sat down. One of them went underground and was going into his anus. It struck against the stone and went back again. . . . Before the snakes had said they were going to tell only two stories and while they were telling the two stories, the boy was asleep. At the last word of the second story he woke up and told the snakes that *he* was going to tell a story. He said, '*iké*.' Some were already asleep, other said, 'Yes!' All had gone to sleep except four. He began as follows: 'When out hunting in the mountains, when we have killed buffalo or deer toward evening and build a fire and cook, while we are cooking it grows dark. We are very tired. We take our cooked food and eat it. Rain comes and when we lie down to sleep, we sleep right away. All of you must be that way.' They were all asleep. Just when he was through he got up, went to the door, and cut the snakes' heads off, except for one that woke up and went into the ground, saying, 'Ka'ricbapi'tua, don't do that four times. Don't sleep in the daytime.'" [Crow: Lowie 1925:62]

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|---|---|
| PLNS. | Hidatsa: Beckwith 1932:117–141 |
| | Crow: Lowie 1925: #74, #85, #19; Simms 1903:305 |
| | Mandan: Maximilian 1843:2, 150 |
| | Arikara: Dorsey 1904a:14 |
| | Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:321 (LBTA) |
| | Gros Ventre: Kroeber 1907:93, #21 |
| | Blackfoot: Wissler and Duvall 1908:40 (LBTA) |
| | Omaha: Dorsey 1890:27 (LBTA) |
| | Pawnee: Dorsey 1906: #39, 41; 1904b: #25 (LBTA) |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:429 (LBTA) |
| | Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:341, #139 (LBTA) |
| | Kiowa: Parsons 1929:4, #1 (LBTA) |
| WDL.CENT | Winnebago: Radin 1948:140–41 (LBTA) |
| | Sauk and Fox: Lasley 1902:176 (LBTA) |
| | Menomini: Skinner and Satterlee 1915:337 |

SW Zuni: Benedict 1935, vol. 1:54
Pueblo: Stevenson 1894:157

6. Attack on the Water Serpent to save Thunder.
Plot: The hero, on behalf of the thunderbirds, kills the giant Water Serpent.

"A boy went along on a hunting party with three of his uncles. While they were away from camp he took charge of it, prepared sofki for them and did any other work that was necessary. The camp was on a small stream and one day he heard a kind of roaring in this stream. He went in the direction of the sound and saw something standing up over the water, part way up which another creature had wrapped itself. The latter was white about the neck. The thing it was wrapped about was quivering and making a thundering noise. This was "Thunder and the creature coiled about it was a Tie-Snake or Strong-snake (Stahwanaia). Each of the contestants asked the boy to help him, saying, 'My friend, help me.'

"The boy did not know at first which being to assist, but finally he aimed an arrow at the white neck and pierced it, whereupon the snake loosened its coils and fell into the water dead. Then Thunder said, 'You are just a boy, but you shall always be my friend.'" [Creek: Swanton 1929:8–9]

PLNS Arikara: Parks 1991:605–607, 620–623, 711–714, 731–733; 1996:209–213; Dorsey 1904a:73–78
Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:145–146, 150–151; Voth 1912:47–48
Assiniboine: Lowie 1910:181–183
Cheyenne: Grinnell 1923, vol. 2:97; Grinnell 1926:154–157
Crow: Lowie 1918:144–149, cf. 152–156, 169–171, 214–216; Simms 1903:295–297
Gros Ventre: Kroeber 1907:115–116
Hidatsa: Beckwith 1937:92–95; Bowers 1963:360–362; Maximilian 1843:380–382
Kiowa: McAllister 1949:101–104
Mandan: Bowers 1950:198–200; Maximilian 1843, vol. 2: 338–339
Pawnee: Dorsey 1904b:57–59, 167–168, 293–294; Grinnell 1889:171–181
Ponca: Dorsey 1890:317–323
Dakota: Beckwith 1930:417–418; Deloria 1932:235–238; McLaughlin 1916:23–28
Wichita: Curtis 1907:30, 19, 104

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| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:432–435 (LBTA var.) |
| WDL.CENT | Menomini: Skinner and Satterlee 1915:342–350 |
| SE | Creek: Swanton 1929:7–8, #3, 8–9, #4 |
| | Cherokee: Mooney 1900:52 |

7. Attack on the Giant Bird. (Motif B31.1: Roc [Giant Bird]. Thompson 1929, note 151; Wycoco 1951, #971)

Standard in #1104 and as sequel to #951.

Plot: "The hero is carried to a cliff by a giant bird. Here, with the aid of the young birds, he kills the giant bird. With the help of bat he reaches ground" (Thompson 1929, note 151).

> "While he was walking along he heard a tremendous rushing sound overhead, like the sound of a whirlwind, and, looking up, he saw a creature of great size, something like an eagle in form, flying toward him from the east . . . the monster seized him in his talons and bore him off to Tsé'bitai. . . . [When he was dropped on a ledge, his life "was preserved by the life-feather, the gift of Spider Woman." He hid in the nest with the young birds.] He had not waited long when drops of rain began to fall, the thunder rolled, lightning flashed, the male Tse'na'hale returned and perched on the rock which the young had pointed out. Then [he] hurled a lightning arrow and the monster tumbled to the foot of Winged Rock dead. . . . [When the female monster arrived,] she glided down, and was just about to light on her favorite crag, when [he] hurled another lightning arrow and sent her body down to the plain to join that of her mate." [He transformed the elder fledgling into an eagle to] "furnish plumes for men to use in their rites, and bones for whistles." [The younger became an owl:] "In the days to come men will listen to your voice to know what will be their future: sometimes you will tell the truth; sometimes you will lie." [The Bat Woman took the hero from the crag in her carrying-basket hung on strings of spider web.] [Monster-Slayer: (Navaho) Matthews 1897:119–121]
>
> Sources: Boas 1918:286, note 1; Thompson 1946:339; Lowie 1908:120.

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| MACK | Beaver, Hare, Chipewyan, Kaska, Dog Rib |
| PLAT | Chilcotin, Shuswap, Thompson, Okanagon, Sanpoil, Kutenai |
| PLNS | Shoshone: Lowie 1909:295 |
| | Uintah Ute: Mason 1910:318 |
| | Ponca: Dorsey 1890:12 |
| | Assiniboine: Lowie 1910:170 |
| | Arikara: Parks 1991:145, 797–799 (LBTA) |

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| | Crow: Lowie 1918:9, 26, 36, 144, 147 (also refers to Hidatsa, Arikara) |
| | So. Paiute: Lowie 1924:187, #19, and 164, #4 |
| | Shivwits: Lowie 1924:112, #6 |
| SW | Sia: Stevenson 1894:44 |
| | Jicarilla Apache: Mooney 1898:201; Russell 1898b:257 |
| | Navaho: Matthews 1897:119 |
| | San Carlos Apache: Goddard 1918:17–18, 40–41 |
| | White Mtn. Apache: Goddard 1918:132 |
| | Tusayan: Fewkes 1895:132–135 |
| | Zuni: Cushing 1896:83; Benedict 1935, vol. 1:52, 56–57, 68–71, 74–75 |
| SE | Natchez: Swanton 1929:246–267 |
| | Alabama: Swanton 1929:154 |
| | Koasati: Swanton 1929:193–194 |
| | Hitchiti: Swanton 1929:90–191 |
| | Apalachee: Hann 1988:82, 332 |
| WDL.CNT | Winnebago: Radin 1948:94–95 |
| WDL.IROQ | Huron-Wyandot: Barbeau 1915:98–102 |

7a. Killing of the Thunderbirds (subtype of Giant Bird). (Motif A284.2. Thunderbird. Thompson 1929, note 151c)

Plot: Hero(es) climbs tree to nest, kills parent birds and kills or takes chicks.

> "Now the twins went to the tree and Wahre'dua climbed up into it and there he found a nest containing four little winged men. 'Oh, I say, my brother, these are cute little fellows,' he called to Dore. He picked up one and asked it, 'What is your name?' [They reply 'Thunder-man,' 'Lightning-man,' 'Rain-man,' and 'Little-god.' The last sang for help to the great Thunder spirits.] But if the Thunder spirits had power, Wahre'dua and Dore had more. A great cloud came up immediately, rain fell, and there was much lightning. Dore had a piece of flint and hid under it, but Wahre'dua turned himself into a wren and flew around the trees so that the thunder and lightning could not harm him. When the storm was over, the twins came back and took home the little beings. [They played with them, causing thunder, lightning, and rain.] Even at a distance their father could tell by these disturbances what they had done, and he came home. The boys were sure that he would be proud of their performance, but when he saw what they had done, he ordered them to take the four little beings back, and this they did." [Iowa: Skinner 1925:433–444]

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| PLNS | Pawnee: Dorsey 1906: #39 (LBTA) |
| | Wichita: Dorsey 1904c: #12 (LBTA), 102, #13, and 120, #16 |
| | Crow: Simms 1903:306 (LBTA) |
| | Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:383, #139, 387, #140 (LBTA) |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:433–434 (LBTA) |
| | Sauk and Fox: Lasley 1902:176 (LBTA) |
| | Omaha: Dorsey 1890:215, #30 (LBTA) |
| | Kiowa: Parsons 1929:3 (LBTA) |
| | Gros Ventre: Kroeber 1907:88 |
| WDL.CNT | Ojibwa: Smith 1906:219; Laidlaw 1915–16, vol. 27:72 and vol. 28:90; Laidlaw 1918: (reprint) 60; Jones and Michelson 1919, vol. 2:191, #18; Schoolcraft 1856:205; Radin 1914:81 |
| | Cree: Russell 1898:203 |
| | Winnebago: Radin 1909:288, #1; Radin 1948:142–144 (LBTA) |
| | Menomini: Skinner and Satterlee 1915:488 |
| WDL.NE | Passamaquoddy: Fewkes 1890:265; Leland 1884:263, 266 |
| | Micmac: (see Reichard 1922 [LBTA]) |
| WDL.IROQ | Seneca: Curtin and Hewitt 1918:177, #34 (LBTA) |
| | Huron: Thwaites 1900, vol. 6:225 |
| SE | Cherokee: Mooney 1900:315 |
| | Creek: Swanton 1929: #2 (LBTA) |
| | Yuchi: Wagner 1931:100 |

8. Vagina Dentata (F547.1. Vagina dentata [toothed vagina]. Thompson 1929, note 115. Wycoco 1951: #1011). Frequently an episode in #1032, 1104, 1111, 1105, and 901.

Plot: Encounter with a dangerous woman who killed all her lovers by means of her toothed vagina. The hero ground off the teeth with a stone or hard wooden club.

> "Then the Fox-Woman said, 'Carry that stone with you, you may need it.' So the boy took the stone. Soon they came to a wigwam where lived two women who guarded the way. These women had sharp teeth set in their vulva, with which they killed anybody who cohabited with them. This every one had to do before he could pass them. The Fox-Woman told the boy that he would have to cohabit with these women, but to use the stone. So that night, when they intended to kill him, he used the long stone on them, and broke all the teeth in their vulvas. Then he cohabited with them, and afterward passed safely on." [Naskapi: Speck 1915:73]

Sources: Boas 1916:773, 809–810; Waterman 1914:49–50; Opler and French 1942:70, 109.

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| SIBERIA | |
| MACK | Chipewyan, Beaver, Ts'ets'aut, Kaska |
| NPAC | Haida, Bella Coola, Kwakiutl, Newettee, Comox, Chehalis, Alsea, Kalapuya, Molala, Takelma |
| PLAT | Chilcotin, Thompson, Utamqt, Shuswap, Lillooet, Okanagon, Sahaptin, Wishram |
| CAL | Maidu, Wappo, Yokuts, Paviotso |
| PLNS | Wichita: Dorsey 1904c:130 |
| | Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:260 |
| | Shoshone: Lowie 1909:238 |
| | Dakota: Wissler 1907:198 |
| | Pawnee: Dorsey 1904b:33, 35; 1906:38, 41 |
| | Wichita: Dorsey 1904c:144 |
| | So. Paiute: Lowie 1924:103, #2, and 104, #3; 158, #1; 10, #5 |
| | Plains Ojibwa: Skinner 1919:297, #6 |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:461 (LBTA) |
| WDL.NE | Naskapi: Speck 1915:73 |
| WDL.IROQ | Seneca: Curtin and Hewitt 1918:228, #43, and 270, #51 |
| SW | San Carlos Apache: Goddard 1918:14–15 |
| | Jicarilla Apache: Mooney 1898b:203 |
| | Zuni: Benedict 1935, vol. 1:53–54, 168; vol. 2:114 |

9. Sharp-elbowed women. (Motif G341. Sharp-elbowed women. Wycoco 1951: #1012; Thompson 1929, note 181)

(Episode of Wycoco #1108 [Manabozho], 901 [Son-in-Law], 1109 [Glooscap].)

"These strange people were very queer-looking. They had sharp elbows. On all their joints were long spines sticking out. At their heels also there were long spines. They had big eyes, and when they turned around the woman noticed that they also had another eye in the back part of their heads, so that these people really had three eyes—two eyes in front and one behind. . . . [They killed the woman, who was the mother of the twins (LBTA). The boys later visited the killers.] All the while the sharp-elbow people were touching one another to indicate that they were to jump upon the boys, kill them, cut them up, and put them into the kettle. When they were ready to jump on to the boys the strange boy knew it. He touched his brother and they both arose and said, 'Grandfathers, we will now go home.' The two boys stood up and placed their feet upon the rim of the kettle, and the sharp-elbow people

ran to them, but the boys disappeared. The sharp-elbow people began to stick the sharp points of themselves into one another. The kettle overflowed with the hot water, so that when the sharp-elbow people fell down they were scalded. [The boys turned them into spined locust trees.]." [Pawnee: Dorsey 1904b:144, 152]

Independent occurrences:

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|---|---|
| NPAC | Tahltan: Teit 1921:241 |
| PLNS | Shoshone: St. Clair and Lowie 1909:267, #4 |
| | Assiniboine: Lowie 1910:183 |
| | Pawnee: Dorsey 1906: #39 |
| | Dakota: Riggs 1893:140 |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:427, 435–436 |
| | Chipewyan: Bell 1903:84 |
| WDL.CENT | Ojibwa: Jones 1916:378; Jones and Michelson 1919, vol. 2:391, #47; Speck 1915a:62 |
| | Menomini: Skinner 1913:64; Skinner and Satterlee 1915:314 |
| | Cree: Skinner 1909:94 |
| | Winnebago: Radin 1948:96–98 |
| WDL.IROQ | Seneca: Curtin and Hewitt 1918:554 |
| WDL.NE | Micmac: Michelson 1925:52 |

10. Two-faces. (No motif listed by Thompson or Wycoco)

"After-birth-Boy asked his brother to come and go to the caves, where something that killed their mother was living, where their father had forbidden them to go. The boys started on to this place, and they traveled all around the rough places, and finally came to the caves. There they found some young Double-Faced Monsters. Upon entering the place the young ones tried to scratch them. When they scratched After-birth-boy these young ones broke off their claws. When they scratched the other boy they would leave some blood streaks and such their claws. The boys then noticed some things hanging in the cave. They asked what these things were. The young Double-Faced-Monsters said that they were their lungs and that if anything attacked their father and mother they would come out safe, for there were no lungs in them. After-birth-Boy then took one of his arrows and stuck one of the lungs with the point of an arrow. These were the largest ones, and when he stuck one the other one began to move, and the young ones said that that was their father's lungs. Then he stuck another of the largest ones, and as soon as he had done so it stopped moving around. Then he commenced on the little ones, and whenever he stuck one, one of the young ones would fall to the

ground. He kept on until he had killed every one of them but one, and this one they saved for their father for a pet." [Wichita: Dorsey 1904c:99]

Source: Miller 1952.

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|---|---|
| NPAC | Tahltan: Teit 1921:349–355 |
| | Makah: Miller 1952:36 |
| PLNS | Pawnee: Dorsey 1906: #39 (LBTA) |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:427, 434–436 (LBTA), 472–474 |
| | Dakota: Beckwith 1930:436 |
| | Sauk and Fox: Lasley 1902:176 (LBTA) |
| | Omaha: Dorsey 1888:76–77; 1894:27 (LBTA) |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:472 |
| | Crow: Lowie 1918: #85 (LBTA) |
| | Wichita: Dorsey 1902:221; 1904c:88–102, #12 (LBTA) |
| | Cheyenne: Kroeber 1900:184–186 |
| WDL.CENT | Winnebago: Radin 1948:146–147 (LBTA—killer of mother) |
| | Menomini: Skinner and Satterlee 1915:340 (LBTA) |

11. Burr-woman. (Motif G311. Burr-woman. Wycoco 1951:1013; Thompson 1929, note 191e)

"One day the man said to his two sons, 'If the canoe is on your side of stream and someone shouts to you to ferry them across, it will not be I. Do not do it. A wicked old woman ate your mother, and that is the one who will shout. So do not go for her.' . . .

"When they got to the place where the old woman was standing she said, 'People always carry me on their backs and put me into the canoe,' so Fatcasigo brought her down on his back. When she got into the canoe she said, 'They always keep me on their backs while I am in the canoe.' And when they landed on the other side she said, 'They always take me out on their backs.' But when Fatcasigo stood on land with her she began to shout 'Kolowa, Kolowa' and stuck fast to him.

"At that Fatcasigo became angry and punched her, but his fist stuck fast. He hit her with his other fist and that also stuck. He kicked her with one of his feet and that stuck. He fell down on the ground and kicked her with the other foot but that stuck. Then he ground and kicked her with the other foot but that stuck. Then he butted her with his head and that stuck. His brother got sticks and beat her with them but they merely stuck to her, so that he finally became angry and struck her with his fists, whereupon he too became stuck to her like his brother.

"Presently the boy's father came home and shouted from the other side of the stream to be taken across. When he found that he was unable to arouse anyone he swam over. Seeing the fix into which his two sons had gotten, he said, 'Did not I tell you not to take the canoe across? Now I expect you will get some sense into your heads.' He went into the house, prepared his dinner and then heated a quantity of water which he poured over the old woman. The boys were melted loose and the old woman flew away shouting 'Kolowai, Kolowai.'" [Creek: Swanton 1929:4–5, #2]

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| PLAT | Sanpoil: Boas 1917:106 |
| PLNS | Assiniboine: Lowie 1910:180, 251 |
| | Cree: Bloomfield 1930, 17: 99–120; 22: 194–218 |
| | Wichita: Dorsey 1904c:188, #26 |
| | Ponca: Dorsey 1894:217 |
| | Pawnee: Weltfish 1937:64; Dorsey 1904b:87, #24; 302–303 |
| (LBTA) | |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:430–431 (LBTA) |
| | Dakota: Beckwith 1930:387–389 |
| | Crow: Simms 1903:294 |
| WDL.CENT | Sauk and Fox: Lasley 1902:177 (LBTA) |
| WDL.IROQ | Seneca: Curtin and Hewitt 1918:481, #104; 369, #67; 677–679, #129 |
| SE | Creek: Swanton 1929: #2 (LBTA) |
| | Natchez: Swanton 1929: #6 (LBTA) |
| | Alabama: Swanton 1929: #16 (LBTA) |

12. Pot-tilter. (Motif G331. Pot-tilter. Thompson 1929, note 157)
Plot: Old Woman points pot at people; they are sucked in. Hero turns it on her.

"'By the place where you killed the man with the long knife there is a creek, and by the creek an old woman with a bucket. No matter how far anything is, when she puts the opening of the bucket towards it, it will float in.' Next morning he started for this old woman. At noon when she slept, he came on the east side of her while the wind was blowing the other way. He came to her and just as he picked up the bucket she woke up and said, 'My child, give me my bucket, that's what I eat with.' 'Grandmother, I want to use it for a while.' Just then some ducks were flying overhead and the boy put the opening of the bucket towards them, and the ducks came flying in. He laid the bucket on the ground and the birds commenced to boil. He told the old woman to stay behind and she did. When the ducks were cooked, he took the bucket and poured the contents on the ground. The old woman said, 'Do not make

the bucket face this way.' He made it face towards the woman and she flew into the bucket. The boy laid it on the ground and she commenced to boil. He took his arrows and shot the bucket till it was all in pieces and said to it: 'Buckets ought not to cook without fire.' " [Crow: Lowie 1918:61–62]

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| PLNS | Hidatsa: Bowers 1963:305–306 (LBTA); Matthews 1877:63 |
| | Crow: Reichard 1921:270, 273; Lowie 1918:61–62; Simms 1903:74, 303; Linderman 1931:208 (LBTA) |
| | Gros Ventre: Kroeber 1907:85, #20 |

13. Fire-moccasins. (Motif G345. Fire-moccasins. Thompson 1929, note 164)
Source: Reichard 1921:271, 273, 306–307.
Plot: An ogre has moccasins that set fire to everything he walks around.

"The mother warned the two boys not to go near Man-with-Fire-Around-his-Ankles but they visited him, borrowed his moccasins, ran around him, and thus destroyed him with his own moccasins. They burned his lodge as was customary after a successful battle." [Hidatsa: Bowers 1965:305]

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| PLAT | Kutenai: Boas 1918:298 |
| PLNS | Crow: Lowie 1918: #74, 85, 19 (LBTA); Simms 1903:306 |
| | Hidatsa: Matthews 1877:64; Bowers 1965:305 |
| | Arikara: Parks 1991:480–481, 143 (LBTA) |

14. Cliff-ogre. (Motif G321. Cliff ogre. Thompson 1929, note 163)
Source: Waterman 1914:43.
Plot: A monster kicks people over a cliff, where they are eaten by her brood. Hero kicks monster off cliff.

"This anáye [He Who Kicks (People) Down the Cliff] lived on the side of a high cliff, a trail passed at his feet, and when travelers went that way he kicked them down to the bottom of the precipice. . . Soon he came in sight of his enemy, who had a form much like that of a man. The monster reclined quietly against the rock, as if he meditated no harm, and Nayénezgani advanced as if he feared no danger, yet watching his adversary closely. As he passed the latter kicked at him, but he dodged the kick and asked: 'Why did you kick at me?' 'Oh, my grandchild,' said the anáye, 'I was weary lying thus, and I only stretched out my leg to rest myself.' Four times did Nayénezgani pass him, and four times did the monster kick at him in vain. Then the hero struck his enemy with his great stone knife over the eyes. . . . When he cut the hair, the body tumbled down out of sight. The moment it fell a great clamor of voices came up from below. . . . 'Ah!' thought Nayénezgani, 'these are the children quarrelling over their father's corpse.' " [Navaho: Matthews 1897:122]

| | |
|---|---|
| MACK | Kaska, Beaver |
| PLAT | Chilcotin, Pend d'Oreille, Sahaptin |
| NPAC | Chinook |
| CAL | Wintun |
| PLNS | Shoshone: Lowie 1909:260, 262 |
| | Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:302 |
| | Blackfoot: Grinnell 1892:37 |
| | Pawnee: Dorsey 1906: #41 (LBTA) |
| | Skidi Pawnee: Dorsey 1904b: #25 (LBTA) |
| | Crow: Simms 1903:306, #19 (LBTA), and 310, #21; Curtis 1907–30, vol. 4:117 |
| | Kiowa: Parsons 1929:3 (LBTA) |
| WDL.NE | Micmac: see Rand 1894:90, #9 |
| SW | Navaho: Matthews 1897:107, 122 |
| | Jicarilla Apache: Goddard 1911:203 |
| | San Carlos Apache: Goddard 1918:12, 34 |
| | Sia: Stevenson 1894:46 |
| | Tusayan: Fewkes 1895:136 |
| | Zuni: Cushing 1901:76, 373 |

15. Smoking test. (Motifs H1511, H1511.3. Smoking test. Thompson 1929, note 191d) Substitute smoker. (Motif K528.1. Substitute smoker. Thompson 1929, note 191c)

Plot: Hero is compelled to smoke a fatal pipe, but a helpful insect smokes the pipe for him.

> As the boys were about to enter the door they heard a voice whispering in their ears: 'St! Look at the ground.' They looked down and beheld a spiny caterpillar called Wasekede, who, as they looked, spat out two blue spits on the ground. 'Take each of you one of these,' said Wind, 'and put it in your mouth, but do not swallow it. There is one more trial for you,—a trial by smoking.' When they entered the house Tsóhanoai took down a pipe of turquoise that hung on the eastern wall and filled it with tobacco. 'This is the tobacco he kills with,' whispered Ni'ltsi to the boys. Tsóhanoai held the pipe up to the sun that hung on the wall, lit it, and gave it to the boys to smoke. They smoked it, and passed it from one to another till it was finished. They said it tasted sweet, but it did them no harm. When the pipe was smoked out and Tsóhanoai saw the boys were not killed by it, he was satisfied." [Navaho: Matthews 1897:112–13]

Source: Boas 1916:808–809.

| | |
|---|---|
| PLAT | Thompson, Wishram |
| NPAC | Chinook |

| | |
|---|---|
| CAL | Wintun, Yana |
| SW | Navaho: Matthews 1897:112, 177 |
| | Hopi: Voth 1905:31, #6; Fewkes 1894:106 |
| | Tusayan: Fewkes 1895:134 |
| | San Carlos Apache: Goddard 1918:11, 35, 10, 37 |
| | White Mtn. Apache: Goddard 1918:94, 117 |
| | Kiowa: Parsons 1929:3 (LBTA) |
| WDL.NE | Malecite: Mechling 1914:33 |
| | Passamaquoddy: Prince 1921:35, #6; 37, #7 |

16. Sharp spikes. (Motif H1531. Spine Test. Thompson 1929, note 168)
Plot: The hero is to be killed by throwing him on a sharp spike or spine.

"The news came to Thunder that a boy was looking for him who claimed to be his son. Said Thunder, 'I have traveled in many lands and have many children. Bring him here and we shall soon know.' So they brought in the boy, and Thunder showed him a seat and told him to sit down. Under the blanket on the seat were long, sharp thorns of the honey locust, with the points all sticking up, but when the boy sat down they did not hurt him, and then Thunder knew that it was his son." [Cherokee: Mooney 1900:312]

Sources: Teit 1917b:430; Boas 1916:799, 803; 1895:39, 66, 111, 118, 136, 171, 198.

| | |
|---|---|
| MACK | Loucheux, Kaska, Ts'ets'aut |
| NPAC | Nass, Tlingit, Newettee, Kwakiutl, Nootka, Comox, Chehalis, Squamish |
| SE | Cherokee: Mooney 1900:312, #63, and 346, #84 |
| SW | Navaho: Matthews 1897:111 |
| | White Mtn. Apache: Goddard 1918:96–97 |

17. Swinging test. (Motif K1618. Swinging contest. Thompson 1929, note 169). (Motif K855. Swing breaks on command. Thompson 1929, note 262).
Plot: Hero challenged to swing on vine or rope that is to break.

"Two handsome girls lived on a mountain. They were cannibals who used to eat human flesh. But above all they preferred the flesh of young men. They had a swing which swung out over a deep pit in one place. When the victim was invited to swing, the girls would whirl him so high that he would fall into the hole and die. This hole was covered deeply at the bottom with the bones of young men who had been slain by these girls. . . . As [Tcicapis] wished to free the world of cannibals, he went one time to their mountain and there

met them. . . So he mounted the swing and they started to send him high. When finally they were about to turn him clear over and cause him to drop into the hole, he jumped free and landed on the mountain. Thereby he saved himself. Then said he, 'Indeed, it is great fun. Now let me swing you.' They could not refuse. . . . They mounted the swing and he began. He swung them right over in a circle so that they fell out into the hole and were both killed. They did not eat any more people." [Montagnais: Speck 1925:15]

Source: Boas 1918:307.

| | |
|---|---|
| PLAT | Thompson, Lillooet, Kutenai, Sechelt |
| NPAC | Chinook, Quinault |
| CAL | Modoc, Yana, Western Mono |
| PLNS | Shoshone |
| | Osage: Dorsey 1904d:26, #22 |
| | Ponca: Dorsey 1890:161 |
| | Pawnee: Dorsey 1890: 179, 474 |
| | Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:11, #5 |
| | Gros Ventre: Kroeber 1907:87 |
| | Blackfoot: Wissler and Duvall 1908:57 |
| | Assiniboin: Lowie 1910:157 |
| WDL.CENT | Cree: Russell 1898a:205 |
| | Fox: Jones 1907:101 |
| | Ojibwa: Schoolcraft 1845:116 |
| WDL.NE | Montagnais: Speck 1925:15 |
| SW | Jicarilla Apache: Mooney 1898b:210 |

18. Kills-with-eyes. (Motif D2064. Death-giving glance. Thompson 1929, note 242)

Plot: Person or animal kills by looking. Incident frequently appears in "The Deserted Children."

"The younger girl was very hungry. She said to her sister. 'Look at that deer.' The older girl looked at the deer, and it fell down dead as if shot. So they ate of it." [Cheyenne: Kroeber 1900:185]

Source: Teit 1919:218.

| | |
|---|---|
| MACK | Kaska, Ts'ets'aut |
| PLAT | Thompson, Shuswap |
| NPAC | Tahltan, Tualati |
| CAL | Hupa, Paviotso |
| PLNS | Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:289, #127 |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Cheyenne: Kroeber 1900:185, #22 |
| | Gros Ventre: Curtis 1907–30, vol. 5:127; Kroeber 1907:104, #26 |
| | Pawnee: Dorsey 1906:155, #39 |
| SW | San Carlos Apache: Goddard 1918:13, 33 |
| | Navaho: Matthews 1897:108, 123 |
| | Pima: Russell 1908:241 |

19. Rolling head/skull. (Motif R261. Pursuit by rolling head. Thompson 1929, note 238a)

Plot: Woman caught in adultery with snake and beheaded. Head or skull chases family.

> "He cooked his wife, and the children unknowingly ate their mother. . . . And he went away. . . . Then their mother's head came rolling up to them; and it said, 'I am very sorry that my children have eaten me up.' The two children ran away, but the head pursued them. At last they were worn out, but their mother's head still rolled after them. Then the older girl drew a line or mark across on the ground and so deep a hole opened that the head could not cross." [Cheyenne: Kroeber 1900:185]

Source: Boas 1918:304, note 1.

| | |
|---|---|
| ESK | Baffin Land |
| MACK | Carrier, Chipewyan, Petitot, Thompson, d'Alène, Wasco |
| NPAC | Takelma |
| CAL | Modoc, Maidu, Paviotso |
| PLNS | Blackfoot: Wissler and Duvall 1908:154 |
| | Assiniboin: Lowie 1910:177 |
| | Osage: Dorsey 1904d:21 #17 |
| | Pawnee: Dorsey 1904b:115; 1906:121, 447 |
| | Cheyenne: Kroeber 1900:185 |
| | Dakota: Wissler 1907:195 |
| | Arikara: Parks 1991:162–166, 787–792 |
| | Omaha: Kercheval 1893:201 |
| | Gros Ventre: Kroeber 1907:65, #4 |
| | Arapaho: Dorsey and Kroeber 1903:8, 13, 278 |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925:476–477 (var.) |
| WDL.CENT | Cree: MacLean 1896:71; Russell 1898a:202 |
| | Ojibwa: Jones and Michelson 1919, vol. 2:45, #3; 405, #49; Laidlaw 1915–16:74 |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Fox: Jones 1907:93 |
| | Menomini: Skinner and Satterlee 1915:429 |
| WDL.NE | Penobscot: Leland 1885:126 |
| | Passamaquoddy: Prince 1921:35, #6 |
| WDL.IROQ | Seneca: Curtin and Hewitt 1918:487, #105 (= Curtin, *Seneca Indian Myths:* 485) |
| SE | Yuchi: Wagner 1931:100 |

20. Clashing rocks. (Motif 1553. Symplegades. Thompson 1929, note 15). (Motif F791. Rising and Falling Sky. Thompson 1929, note 15a).

Plot: Rocks or caves or sky vault that alternately opens and closes.

> "They found that the sky was an arch or vault of solid rock hung above the earth and was always swinging up and down, so that when it went up there was an open place like a door between the sky and ground, and when it swung back the door was shut." [Cherokee: Mooney 1900:256]

Sources: Boas 1916:797–798; Lankford 2007b:226–229.

| | |
|---|---|
| ESK | Greenland, Cumberland Sound |
| NPAC | Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, Bella Coola, Bella Bella, Kwakiutl, Newettee, Comox, Tillamook, Tsimshian, Puyallup, Snuqualmi, Quinault |
| CAL | Miwok, South Sierra Miwok, Cahuilla |
| PLNS | Shoshone: Lowie 1909:64 |
| | Crow: Simms 1903:315, #25 |
| | Assiniboin: Lowie 1910:151 |
| | Iowa: Skinner 1925 |
| NE | Passamaquoddy: Fewkes 1890:265 |
| WDL.IROQ | Seneca: Curtin and Hewitt 1918:121, #18 (= Curtin, *Seneca Indian Myths:* 372) |
| SE | Cherokee: Mooney 1888:105; Mooney 1900:256, #7 |
| | Yuchi: Speck 1909:145, #8 |
| SW | Navaho: Matthews 1897:109 |
| | Tusayan: Fewkes 1895:136 |
| | White Mtn. Apache: Goddard 1918:116 |

21. Heat test. (Motifs H1511. Heat test; and D1841.3. Burning magically evaded. Thompson 1929, note 120)

Plot: Hero magically survives being placed in fire, boiling pot, or overheated sweat lodge.

"Then Sun threw them in a room full of fire. Their feet and hands were tied before they were put in. When Sun opened the room the boys were still living.

"There was a room of boiling water. Into this the boys were next thrown. But Child-of-the-Water could stand any kind of water and so both came out unharmed.

"In the last room was the heat of the Sun. They were thrown into this, but when the room was opened they were still living," [Jicarilla Apache: Opler 1938:54]

Source: Boas 1916:806–808.

| | |
|---|---|
| SIBERIA | |
| MACK | Ts'ets'aut, Kaska |
| PLAT | Chilcotin, Thompson, Utamqt, Lillooet, Wishram |
| NPAC | Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian, Nass, Kwakiutl, Newettee, Nootka, Quinault, Chinook, Tillamook |
| CAL | Wintun, Luiseño |
| PLNS | So. Ute: Lowie 1924:77, #48 |
| | Uintah Ute: Mason 1910:326 |
| | Wichita: Dorsey 1904c:96 |
| | Assiniboin: Lowie 1910:211 |
| | Ponca: Dorsey 1890:60 |
| | Kiowa: Parsons 1929:3 (LBTA) |
| WDL.CENT | Menomini: Hoffman 1896:227 |
| WDL.NE | Micmac: Rand 1894:71 |
| WDL.IROQ | Seneca: Curtin and Hewitt 1918:428, #79, and 604, #118 |
| SE | Cherokee: Mooney 1888:105; 1900:312, #63 |
| SW | Navaho: Matthews 1897:112 |
| | Jicarilla Apache: Goddard 1911:197, #3; Mooney 1898b:201; Opler 1938:54–56 |
| | White Mtn. Apache: Goddard 1918:97, 117 |
| | San Carlos Apache: Goddard 1918:11 |
| | Tusayan: Fewkes 1895:132, 136 |
| | Sia: Stevenson 1894:44 |

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Abbreviations: AMNH-AP = American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers; BAEB = Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin; BAEAR = Bureau of American Ethnology Annual Report; JAF = Journal of American Folklore; MAFLS = Memoirs of the American Folklore Society; PAES = Publications of the American Ethnological Society.


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