

RED POWER: CONSUMMATORY RHETORIC AND THE
FUNCTIONS OF CRITICISM

by

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TO
JANNA

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In 1951, Dag Hammarskjold wrote: "We cannot afford to forget any experience, not even the most painful." With memory still fresh, I wish to acknowledge those who helped make this effort an experience, more or less painful

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R.A L.

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CHAPTER I

RED POWER: LIVING AN HISTORICAL "INDIANNESS"

If American society is so god damn great, then how come it creates social movements like this? If everything is really ducky, then how come we have things like this happening?¹

Introduction

For the American Indian, life has never been "ucky." For almost 500 years, Indians have been fighting defensively for their right to exist;² they have been called, with some justification, the most oppressed minority in American history.³ They are the only group of people in the United States ever to have been considered objects for justifiable homicide.⁴ A deadly combination of war and disease reduced an aboriginal population of 850,000 to only 250,000 by 1850; not until 1930 were noticeable

¹Stan Steiner, The New Indians, Delta Books (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), pp. 71-72.

²Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., Red Power: The American Indians' Fight for Freedom (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1971), p. 2.

³Tracey Bernstein Weiss, "Media Speaks with Forked Tongue: The Unsuccessful Rhetoric of Wounded Knee" (paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, Houston, Texas, December 27-30, 1975), p. 2.

⁴Donovan J. Ochs, "A Fallen Fortress: BIA, 1972" (paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April, 1974), p. 2.

advancements in reversing this decline evident.⁵ Even more striking has been the decline of their original homelands. Of the almost two billion acres once occupied, scarcely 56 million acres, or 2.9 percent, remain in Indian hands.⁶ Further, one-half of the Indian population today live in cities, not on the reservations which remain.⁷

The story of the American Indians' physical and cultural decimation is a long, old, and recently popular one. This study will not belabor nor bemoan that history. It is sufficient to acknowledge that, as whites progressed across the continent, the Indians' numbers were ravaged, their lands taken, and the survivors relocated and subjected to programs of enforced acculturation similar to some of the most notorious eras of religious and social totalitarianism in the modern world.⁸ As Jack Forbes observes:

Native groups were placed in concentration camps, shifted about at the whim of bureaucrats, starved, intimidated and persecuted. Their religious ceremonies were forcibly suppressed, and every effort was made to destroy their secular cultural heritage as well.⁹

⁵By 1970, the native population had climbed back to 700,000. Cf. D'Arcy McNickle, Native American Tribalism: Indian Survivals and Renewals (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 4-5.

⁶Steiner, The New Indians, p. 161.

⁷Josephy, Red Power, p. 3.

⁸Jack D. Forbes, ed., The Indian in America's Past (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 112.

⁹Ibid.

Today, the descendants of those who survived these campaigns are scattered across the United States, most living in poverty. As the following statistics indicate, American Indians today are the "poorest of the poor":¹⁰

Their average life expectancy is 63.9 years; for all other Americans, it is 70;

Their average annual income, \$1,500, is 75 percent less than the national average, and \$1,000 below that of the average black family;

Their unemployment rate is nearly 40 percent, about ten times the national average;

Fifty thousand Indian families live in grossly substandard houses, many without running water, electricity, or adequate sanitary facilities;

Their infant mortality rate after the first month of life is three times the national average;

Fifty percent of Indian school-children--double the national average--drop out before they complete high school;

The average educational level for all Indians under Federal supervision is five school years;

Only 18 percent of the students in Federal Indian schools go on to college; the national average is 50 percent;

Only three percent of Indian students who enroll in college graduate; the national average is 32 percent;

The Bureau of Indian Affairs spends only \$18 per year per child on textbooks and supplies, compared to a national average of \$40;

The suicide rate of Indian teenagers is one hundred times that of whites.

The despair born of these conditions, together with an acute awareness of the injustices of the past,¹¹ has placed

¹⁰The phrase and the statistics are taken from Josephy, Red Power, pp. 3, 159.

¹¹Upon observing this phenomenon, psychologist Erik Erikson has called the modern Indian a "compensatory neurotic," who gains his identity by having something owed to him. Cf. Erik H. Erikson, Childhood and Society, (2nd ed; New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1963), p. 119.

many Indians at odds with white society. Their discontent also has been fueled by a third factor: the continuing opposition of many Indians to the "melting pot" theory of American race relations, the rejection of assimilation into society at large, and the desire to retain cultural integrity. Stan Steiner describes the Indian position, which requires, if anything, "reverse" assimilation:

The new Indians seek "proper adaptation." But to them it means adaptation of the non-Indian society to their modern Indianness. It means rejection of the melting pot. It means, most of all, rejection of assimilation by the consuming maw of mass urban society.¹²

Many Indians, then, object to a white society which insists on conformity to its own assumptions.¹³ In 1889, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Morgan epitomized such a philosophy when he advocated the "individualization" of Indians, who would have to "conform to the White man's ways, peaceably if they will, forceably if they must . . ." ¹⁴ Of course, since 1889 such extreme demands have been moderated drastically; especially following the major civil rights struggles of the 1960's, a greater tolerance for cultural diversity within the United States emerged. Yet, many Indians still perceive a concerted effort by white society to destroy traditional Indian cultures.

¹²Steiner, The New Indians, p. 44.

¹³Forbes, The Indian in America's Past, p. 179.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 114.

The Rise of Indian Militancy

The above forces have coalesced over a period of years, fueling the development of an Indian activist movement. This movement, dubbed by militants themselves the "Red Power" movement,¹⁵ is of ultimate significance in the lives of many Indians. Russell Means, of the American Indian Movement, explains the grave consequences of one movement action, the siege of Wounded Knee: "We have bet with our lives that we could change the course of Oglala history on this reservation and history of the rest of Indian America."¹⁶ However, one does not change the course of history overnight; the modern movement has its roots in the soil of a discontent which is over thirty years old.

The first tentative step toward organizing the disparate and scattered tribes was taken in 1944, with the formation of the National Congress of American Indians.¹⁷ Steiner locates the beginning of the modern movement in 1954, in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where a group of young university students and tribal elders met in the first of a series of conferences called by the students in an attempt to bridge the cultural gap between white-dominated universities and

¹⁵The slogan originally was advanced as a tongue-in-cheek parody of "Black Power." Cf. Josephy, Red Power, p. 2.

¹⁶Quoted in Joyce Frost, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Wounded Knee II, 1973: A Conflict Perspective" (paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April 7, 1974), p. 12.

¹⁷Forbes, The Indian in America's Past, p. 179.

traditional tribal life.¹⁸ A crucial turning point was reached in the summer of 1960 at an American Indian conference held at the University of Chicago. A small group of young Indians grew impatient with the proceedings, presided over by "Uncle Tomahawks" producing great quantities of "instant anthropology," and succeeded in passing a statement of purpose which contained the first demands of a new Indian nationalism.¹⁹ "We, the majority of the Indian people of the United States of America," it began, have "the inherent right of self-government" and "the same right of sovereignty." The tribes "mean to hold to the scraps and parcels (of their lands) as earnestly as any small nation or ethnic group was ever determined to hold to identity and survival," it declared.²⁰ These same young Indians converged on Gallup, New Mexico, in August, 1960, for an intertribal ceremonial, and officially formed the National Indian Youth Council, informally known as the "Red Muslims."²¹

However, in the middle 1960's, this new Indian militancy was overshadowed by the black civil rights movement. Some Indians participated in civil rights activities, such as the 1963 March on Washington,²² but most Indian leaders viewed

¹⁸Steiner, The New Indians, p. 32.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 36-37.

²⁰Ibid., p. 37.

²¹Cf. ibid., pp. 39-47.

²²Vine Deloria, Jr., Behind the Trial of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence, Delta Books (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), p. 25.

the entire phenomenon with reserve and some suspicion.²³ The National Indian Youth Council did adopt some of the strategies of the civil rights activists, and began holding "fish-ins" in the Pacific Northwest in protest of alleged violations by state game officials of Indian hunting and fishing rights guaranteed by treaty.²⁴ The year 1966 saw the birth of the "Red Power" slogan.²⁵

By 1968, Indian militancy was gaining momentum once again. On the border between the United States and Canada, forces mounted which were to have a major impact on Indian protests. Canada had been restricting the free passage of Mohawks across the Cornwall Bridge in New York, a right which the Indians felt was guaranteed by treaty. Consequently, the Mohawks seized and barricaded the bridge. Many were arrested, but the implications of the treaty issue eventually caused the Canadian government to dismiss the charges.²⁶ The "success" of this action was not lost on other Indians.

At about the same time, a group of urban Indians in Minneapolis and St. Paul were forming the Concerned Indian Americans (CIA) in an effort to monitor and reduce local police harassment. The name of the organization soon was changed to the American Indian Movement (AIM) and, in July,

²³Cf. Deloria's discussion in Chapter Six of We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes, New Turf, Laurel Edition (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974).

²⁴ ____, Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties, pp. 25-26.

²⁵ ____, We Talk, You Listen, p. 119.

²⁶ ____, Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 35.

1968, the most well-known and one of the most militant Indian activist groups was formed.²⁷ AIM soon drew battle lines against a triumvirate of enemies of Indian people: the Christian church, said to seek the spiritual destruction of Indian religion; white-oriented education, alleged to be eroding native culture; and the Federal bureaucracy, especially the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), accused of undermining Indian self-determination and following a course of land destruction.²⁸ At one time, there were 79 chapters of AIM internationally.²⁹

The next four years saw the high-water mark of public protests by AIM and other militant groups. Three were particularly significant. In 1969, the San Francisco Indian Center burned to the ground, and in November nearly three hundred Indians landed on the abandoned Federal prison site, Alcatraz, in an effort to found a new Indian cultural center. The occupation also caused the formation of a new organization, the Indians of All Tribes.³⁰ The event received international attention and the last Indians were not removed from the property until June, 1971, 19 months later.³¹

²⁷Cf. "A.I.M.: The American Indian Movement" (St. Paul: A.I.M. National Office, date unknown).

²⁸Ibid., p. 1; see also "The IFCO Native American Consultation--A Report," Akwasasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 28.

²⁹This figure is given in "A.I.M.," p. 1. The exact number of chapters in existence at this writing is unknown.

³⁰Deloria, Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 37.

³¹Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz is Not an Island, ed. by Peter Blue Cloud (Berkeley: Wingbow Press, 1972), p. 76.

In November, 1972, a caravan of almost one thousand Indians (called the Trail of Broken Treaties) started on the West Coast and arrived in Washington, D.C., to present to the Federal government a list of Twenty Points. These Points included demands for the recognition of tribal self-determination, a return to the use of treaties in dealing with Indian tribes, the return of land, and others. Following some confusion over housing arrangements and frustration in making their demands heard, the caravan ended in the occupation of the national BIA headquarters.³²

Four months later, in March, 1973, the most famous of modern militant protests occurred. Several hundred Oglala Sioux and their supporters seized the town of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, declared the formation of an Independent Oglala Nation, and maintained their position for 71 days in a quasi-military encounter with Federal and state forces.³³ The location of this protest was significant because, in 1890, the Army's 7th Cavalry had killed nearly 300 Sioux men, women and children on the same site, in what is generally acknowledged as the last battle of the Indian wars.³⁴ Thus, Wounded Knee II was, in one sense, a symbolic notice to whites that the "Indian problem" remained to be resolved.

³²Cf. Trial of Broken Treaties: B.I.A. I'm Not Your Indian Anymore, (2nd ed; Rooseveltown, N.Y.: Akwesasne Notes, 1974).

³³Cf. Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973 (Rooseveltown, N.Y.: Akwesasne Notes, 1974).

³⁴Ibid., p. 9.

It demonstrated the militants' attempt to identify themselves with the history of their people.

The movement's sense of history is acute and highly significant. In militant eyes, the relationship between Indian and white has not changed dramatically over the years. There has been little improvement, if any:

The Indian elders have been putting up with all this crap all their lives. They have heard every promise that the last four generations of politicians have made--they've heard it all. And they know nothing has changed from the day they were born to today. The rhetoric and the promises remain the same, and the way we have to live remains the same.³⁵

Therefore, the Red Power movement is, in the eyes of the militants themselves, merely another manifestation of the struggle against assimilation which has been fought ever since Europeans arrived in the Western Hemisphere. As Vine Deloria, Jr., succinctly observes:

The modern Indian movement for national recognition thus has its roots in the tireless resistance of generations of unknown Indians who have refused to melt into the homogeneity of American life and accept American citizenship.³⁶

Statement of the Problem

It seems fair to characterize the Indian activist movement as one of the most significant social movements of the late 1960's and early 1970's. Yet, the movement has

³⁵"An Interview With John Trudell," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 23.

³⁶Deloria, Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 20.

undergone surprisingly little examination by rhetorical critics.³⁷ This study attempts to redress the imbalance between the attention Red Power has been accorded to date and the attention it warrants. For this study contends that Red Power is more than a social movement worthy of rhetorical analysis; it is, in fact, a rhetorical movement with significant implications for rhetorical and critical theory.³⁸

The unique rhetorical features of this movement stem from the relationship between the movement and Indian history. The most obvious connection between the modern movement and its historical antecedents is the professed desire of activists to preserve, rejuvenate and protect traditional tribal customs, beliefs, rituals, and forms of government. This desire in part is responsible for the formation of the movement; the latter is the articulation

³⁷Edward Streb identifies three possible reasons for this fact: (1) Red Power has not seemed serious or significant enough to merit critical attention; (2) a study of Red Power would be repetitious of the studies of confrontational techniques used in the Black Power movement; and (3) there is no such thing as "Indian rhetoric" because the complexities of inter-tribal differences preclude legitimate generalizations to Indian people as a whole. "The Alcatraz Occupation, '69-'71: A Perceived Parody of Power Movements" (paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April, 1974), p. 1.

³⁸The distinction between social and rhetorical movements is drawn, for example, by Arthur L. Smith, who argues that the latter are distinguished by dominant metaphors. "Historical and Social Movements: A Search for Boundaries" (paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, Chicago, Illinois, December 10, 1972), p. 10. Dominant Red Power metaphors are discussed in Chapters Three, Four and Six of the present work.

and organization of the former. By their nature, however, movements are opposed to something, and they generally are concerned with changing the status quo.³⁹ Hence, movements are by nature rhetorical, as they seek to change beliefs, alter existing perceptions and forms of acting in the world, and symbolically restructure reality. When one takes cognizance of this rhetorical dimension and also considers the special concern of Red Power with the preservation of specific traditions, several potential problems facing the movement arise. This study is concerned specifically with three of them.

First, if there is any real meaning to the professed desire to return to traditional ways of life (and expressions of this desire appear, in most cases, to be genuine), then one may postulate that these traditional ways should influence, not only the lives of the movement's members, but also the manner in which the movement as a whole is conducted. Specifically, tradition might dictate which of many potential demands take precedence, and perhaps place strictures on the acceptable means of expressing these demands. Consequently, one concern of this study is to inquire into the influences which traditional Indian

³⁹The word "generally" is used advisedly here, as some social scientists define a "movement" in terms that permit the inclusion of efforts to maintain threatened social institutions. Cf. Julius Gould and William L. Kalb, eds., A Dictionary of the Social Sciences (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), p. 658. For a very good summary of the various concepts of "movement," see Virgil W. Balthrop, "The Rhetoric of Social Movements: Toward a Perspective for Criticism" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Kansas, 1974), pp. 13-54.

beliefs have on the development and articulation of Red Power goals and demands.

Second, given that these traditions are alien to the majority of whites (and were rejected and subverted in Commissioner Morgan's era), what is the reaction of white society to demands that such allegedly primitive and anachronistic practices be permitted to flourish once again? Intuitively, there seems to be a major problem regarding the ability of the movement to obtain white support for its demands. Since the small number of Indians in the United States, and the even smaller number of militants, would seem to require that the movement obtain white support, a second concern of this study is with the movement's ability to do so.

Third, if the prospects for capturing white support are not bright, perhaps traditional practices suggest other means by which the movement can attain its goals. This study explores enactment as a consummatory, rather than instrumental, symbolic activity which permits militants to actualize their goals without white support.

In sum, this work assumes that the militant demand for cultural integrity is substantive and not ephemeral. It then explores the implications of cultural integrity on the movement's internal operation (the formulation and expression of demands), the resultant external response by white society, and the issues of how and in what sense the movement possibly can "succeed."

Methodology of the Study

Those critical studies which have been made of contemporary Indian activism make one common observation: white society does not take Red Power nearly as seriously as Red Power takes itself. In general, critics note, movement activities serve only to reinforce in whites nonserious, stereotypic images of Indians as "drunken," "shiftless" and "mean." For example, Edward Streb makes the most general indictment:

From its inception the movement had been burdened with an image problem; "Red Power" advocates had never been able to establish their movement as a serious social force. The very notion of "Red Power" was first advanced "as a means of putting the establishment on." As the movement continued, the Indians gave little indication that the put on had ever ended.⁴⁰

Then, in discussing the Alcatraz occupation specifically, he notes the comic effect of the militants' use of satire:

Several factors contributed to the development of the occupation's "non-serious" image. At first, the Indians were involved in the creation of a publicity oriented pseudo-event. . . . Inspired by the frivolity of the Alcatraz proclamation and the seriocomic disposition of its authors, the media treated the invasion with justifiable levity--describing the demonstration as a picnic instead of a public appeal. Later, when the Indians attempted to redefine the occupation as a serious social dramatization, they were unable to overcome the perceived pattern of their previous discourse.⁴¹

Similarly, Tracey Bernstein Weiss argues that militant

⁴⁰Streb, "The Alcatraz Occupation," p. 5.

⁴¹Ibid.

rhetoric at Wounded Knee created a comic, and therefore counterproductive, image of the militant struggle:

. . . the AIM rhetorical vision of young, brave Native Americans willing to die to bring justice to their people was not the drama that the American public took seriously. Instead, the image the media portrayed of hot-headed, irresponsible young Indians who decked themselves out in warpaint and feathers to stage a "pathetic drama" for media attention became the prevalent believable reality.⁴²

In brief, Weiss concludes:

. . . the media image of Wounded Knee became the dominant rhetorical vision for the American public. This image minimized the injustices and played up the ridiculous, silly, and unserious aspects of Wounded Knee thereby delegitimizing the Indians' fight.⁴³

From the perspective of conflict resolution, Joyce Frost arrives at the same conclusion. She notes:

. . . the actions of the Indians emerged as a parody of themselves--a reaction based on the white man's matinee stereotype of how Indians act, instead of a creative response to a present-day situation. Melodrama won over drama; thus no genuine sustained conflict could develop.⁴⁴

And Donovan Ochs, examining the BIA occupation, also acknowledges the effect of this nonserious motion picture stereotype, concluding: "In my judgment the American Indian Movement used inappropriate rhetorical symbols and failed to differentiate itself from the filmic stereotype."⁴⁵

⁴²Weiss, "Media Speaks With Forked Tongue," p. 9.

⁴³Ibid., p. 1.

⁴⁴Frost, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Wounded Knee II," p. 12.

⁴⁵Ochs, "A Fallen Fortress," p. 6.

Militants recognize that they often have not been taken seriously, and express their bewilderment at this fact:

We were again treated as a mere curiosity; an amusing diversion from the more important matters of everyday living. This was and is unfortunate. We wonder when it will be realized that our struggle is for truth and justice, for making a reality of the beautiful promises of the U.S. Constitution, and of its treaty obligations.⁴⁶

From the perspective of most critics, given current activist symbolic strategies, whites will never realize the seriousness of Red Power. Consequently, critics conclude that militant rhetoric is ineffective and counterproductive, and that the movement as a whole is largely a failure.

From a methodological point of view, this study does not disagree necessarily with the findings of other critics; it will agree that militant rhetoric is largely unpersuasive to whites. However, this study does disagree with the conclusions of other critics. Judgments of failure, it will argue, are based upon a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of militant rhetorical acts.

Rhetorical criticism has two, sometimes conflicting, purposes. Good criticism must explicate the work under study; it should help the reader understand how the work in question functions as a rhetorical act with certain effects, and contribute to the reader's grasp of the nature and scope of symbolic activity. Secondly, criticism should judge the work; its value, legitimacy, and worth as both a situation-

⁴⁶Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz, p. 75.

ally-bounded strategy and a form of symbolic action in general should be determined.

Ideally, these two purposes will be realized harmoniously. However, they may conflict when ethical judgments are made on grounds other than the effect of the act. For, as John Rathbun argues, one reasonably may find a discourse to be highly effective in terms of producing intended results and, at the same time, ethically repugnant:

When we dwell on audience response we accept the idea that the speaker, in any situation, is governed by pragmatic and prudential limitations imposed by the nature of his audience. The traditional rhetorician has to accept these limitations as part of the given circumstances of the occasion. His attention is drawn to the efficiency of the speech. . . . If the critic then moves on to a consideration of the quality of the speech, he necessarily brings in a completely new set of criteria, one which will usually be, ethically speaking, at odds with the criteria governing efficiency.⁴⁷

On the other hand, simultaneous concern with efficiency and quality may yield the opposite result; one may judge ineffectual discourse to be, nonetheless, a significant and ethically uplifting form of symbolic activity. Edwin Black recognizes this side of the coin of judgment in his attempt to evaluate the worth of John Jay Chapman's Coatesville address.⁴⁸

⁴⁷John W. Rathbun, "The Problem of Judgment and Effect in Historical Criticism: A Proposed Solution," Western Speech, 33 (Summer, 1969), pp. 149-150.

⁴⁸Edwin Black, Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), pp. 78-90, esp. 82-83. Black distinguishes between pragmatic and formalistic judgments in the same way that Rathbun distinguishes criteria of efficiency and quality. See above, pp. 60-75.

This problem arises as a result of a subtle ambiguity in the meaning of "effects." Traditionally, when one spoke of the effects of a discourse, one was referring to its ability to elicit a desired response from its immediate hearers.⁴⁹ It is in this sense that Herbert Wichelns endorses "effect" as the prime judicial criterion of rhetorical criticism:

If now we turn to rhetorical criticism . . . we find that its point of view is patently single. It is not concerned with permanence, nor yet with beauty. It is concerned with effect. It regards a speech as a communication to a specific audience, and holds its business to be the analysis and appreciation of the orator's method of imparting his ideas to his hearers.⁵⁰

As Black notes, this is the typical perspective of the neo-Aristotelian critic:

His tendency is to appraise the discourse in terms of its efficacy in fulfilling the ideological objectives of the rhetor. If the discourse has other effects, unrelated to these ideological objectives, the neo-Aristotelian critic does not take them into account.⁵¹

However, this range of "effects" does not begin to encompass all of the potential effects open to examination. To name just a few, the critic legitimately may concern himself with the effect of the discourse on later audiences; its indirect effects upon the discourses produced by these audiences; its

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 73.

⁵⁰Quoted in ibid., p. 61.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 75.

effect on the rhetor and his subsequent discourses; and, perhaps most significant, its formal (or presentational), as apart from its argumentative, effects.⁵²

Yet, "effect is not this comprehensively understood in the practice of neo-Aristotelian criticism."⁵³ As a result, critical judgments are determined partially by methodology. The explicatory phase of criticism is no longer descriptive; rather, it is prescriptive in the sense that the narrow criterion of effects determines what portions of the discourse under study are critically relevant,⁵⁴ and which discourses are worthy of criticism, thereby selectively defining the nature of the acts in question. In other words, the description and judgment of discourse is colored by the criterion of immediate effects; the methodology which employs this criterion prescribes certain critical evaluations.

This study contends that the use of this nonneutral methodology is the principal defect in critiques of Red Power to this date. Rathbun argues that a methodology should be as neutral as possible, in terms of avoiding judgments hidden in procedure. "Tools serve us," he observes, "not as a means for judgment, but as a means to gain a better insight into how a speech 'works.'"⁵⁵

⁵²Ibid., p. 74.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Traditionally, the Aristotelian canons of dispositio inventio, elocutio, memoria, and pronuntiatio.

⁵⁵Rathbun, "The Problem of Judgment and Effect," p. 148.

However, critics of Red Power are mistaken in examining militant rhetoric primarily as acts intended to produce effects in white audiences. Then, finding nonalienative effects to be few and far between, they are led necessarily to the conclusion that militant rhetoric does not "work." Hence, it is prejudged a failure by a critical methodology which demands that it aim at certain ends in order to qualify as a proper subject for criticism.⁵⁶ Without exception, the judgments of Ochs, Weiss, Streb and Frost assume that militant rhetoric attempts to persuade whites.

Militant rhetoric is a "failure" only because it does not aim at producing effects in white listeners. Its true aim will be delineated in detail in the chapters to follow; in brief, however, it will be argued that Indian rhetoric is consummatory, rather than instrumental. The effects criterion is applicable only in the much broader sense described above, removed from those experienced by a particular audience on a particular occasion. The "effects" of concern are those on the rhetors themselves, achieved at the moment of expression. Hence, to conclude that this rhetoric is a

⁵⁶This prejudgment is illustrated by the epistemological assumptions of neo-Aristotelian methodology. The latter assumes that rational demonstration is the best means of apprehending reality and making decisions, and hence is the most ethical of the means of persuasion. For the American Indian, however, experience which is neither rational nor irrational is the epistemological key. Cf. "The IFCO Native American Consultation," Notes, p. 26. Hence, the neo-Aristotelian approach would tend necessarily to fault the movement because it does not reflect this approach's assumptions about the nature of knowing.

failure because it does not produce instrumental effects in an audience is to miss the point.

This difference in perspective involves more than a disagreement over purpose. It involves the proper explication of the rhetorical act itself. Consummatory rhetoric is different in kind because it is its own purpose, and fulfills this purpose simply by being. Hence, while one may speak of an instrumental purpose, to ask what is the purpose of a consummatory act is to ask an improper question--the act is its own reason for being.

Clearly, to substantiate this contention, this study must employ a different, non-Aristotelian methodology. It is not claimed that a completely neutral methodology is possible. It is claimed, however, that prejudgments can be minimized by interpreting "effect" in its broadest sense. This permits consideration of the widest possible spectrum of symbolic acts as potentially relevant, and thus reduces the likelihood of a distorted description of the nature of these acts, based on biased information. Rathbun approaches this position when he advocates that critics "subordinate the question of efficiency to that of quality."⁵⁷

This abstract course has the very practical effect of focusing the critic's attention on the symbolic acts involved instead of on the historical responses to these acts. Clues to the nature of the acts must be sought in texts, rather than in effects. Critical methodology should arise intrin-

⁵⁷Rathbun, "The Problem of Judgment and Effect," p. 150.

sically out of the acts to be criticized. Rathbun acknowledges this when he writes: "implicit in all that I have said is the idea that the irreducible element in speech criticism is still the speech itself."⁵⁸ He goes on to explain how this procedure better reveals the way a speech "works":

But when we depart from tradition to concentrate on the text itself and for the moment suspend any concern with its effect on an actual audience, it is possible to bring analytical tools to bear on the text which can improve our understanding of how a speech can work on any audience, a fact which would seem to give this sort of inquiry intellectual priority.⁵⁹

Rathbun suggests three areas of textual analysis, two of which are directly relevant to the method employed here. First, he argues that the critic should attempt to discern the rhetor's "point of view" by examining the persona presented in the discourse. Role-playing, he argues, is a characteristic intrinsic quality of symbol-using:

For speech critics the primary problem is to spot role-playing where it exists, to perceptively handle the importance of deliberation when a persona or role has been adopted, and to appreciate the drama that inheres in deliberately complicating a situation.⁶⁰

Second, Rathbun suggests that the critic examine archetypal imagery:

. . . mythologies and literatures frequently contain patterns of meaning that

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 159.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 153.

transcend social lines. Such patterns of meaning reveal in depth the experience of man through the invocation of certain images that prompt subliminal responses that are universal, deep, and penetrating.⁶¹

This study examines the intrinsic features of point of view and imagery within a broader framework of textual analysis. An examination of militant rhetoric yields a congeries of themes concerning the value and validity of traditional Indian beliefs. Militant rhetoric advocates the adoption of a particular philosophical system. For example, the characteristic point of view taken is that of the "warrior," a persona rich in philosophical assumptions about the existence and role of the supernatural in human affairs. Similarly, a commonly employed image is that of the "battle," which evokes militarist presuppositions about human relations.⁶² The philosophical system which lies behind this persona and imagery is implicit within militant rhetoric. Hence, the explication of this system and its relationship to militant rhetoric is an intrinsic critical process based upon the scrutiny of texts.

This is the essential methodology used in this study. It employs traditional Indian presuppositions concerning being and knowing to reveal and interpret the rhetoric of Red Power. These presuppositions are intrinsic to militant rhetoric because they are assumptions about the conditions under which militant rhetors, as Indian symbol-users, find

⁶¹Ibid., pp. 157-158.

⁶²See Chapter Three.

themselves. In so doing, this study permits militant discourse itself, illuminated by its philosophical assumptions, to define which "effects" are relevant to a judgment of worth, and does not prejudge that discourse because it does not produce effects which it never was intended to produce.

Sources

Obviously, in an intrinsic methodology which relies on textual analysis, sources are of prime importance. Two basic categories of sources are used in this study.

To provide background and interpretive information, this study relies upon books in anthropology, history and religion. Some are authored by scholars; in this group, the works of Morris Opler on the Apache, Willard Park on the Paviotso, and, more generally, Ruth Underhill and the French anthropologist, Mircea Eliade, are particularly important. Others are authored by Indian holy men; most significant are discussions of traditional religion by Black Elk and Lame Deer, both Sioux medicine men.

The second category consists of those sources dealing directly with the modern Indian activist movement. A variety of secondary sources which report militant activities are used. One kind of secondary source consists of newspaper accounts, predominantly those found in the New York Times, the Minneapolis Star and Tribune, and the Kansas City Star and Times. A second consists of popular histories of Red Power; in this group, books by Stan Steiner, D'Arcy McNickle, and Indian historian Alvin Josephy, Jr., are particularly significant.

Most important are the primary sources from which textual analyses are drawn. Several kinds of primary sources are used here. First, a large body of critical material comes from pamphlets and literature provided by the national AIM office in St. Paul. Second, militant discourses in a variety of Indian newspapers have been examined. The principal newspapers are the NASC News, a publication of the St. Paul chapter of the Native American Solidarity Committee, and Akwesasne Notes, the largest native newspaper published in the United States (circulation: 81,000). Third, books written and compiled by Indians, propounding the activist perspective, provide grist for the critical mill. Most prominent among these are books recounting the Alcatraz, BIA and Wounded Knee occupations, and the prolific writings of the foremost Indian advocate, Vine Deloria, Jr.

A variety of supplementary sources are drawn upon to explain and illustrate methodological procedures, the Indian philosophical system, and critical findings. However, the sources described above play the most central role in this study.

Precis of the Chapters

This study identifies a critical perspective from which to view the Indian activist movement, examines the implications of interpreting the movement through this perspective, and implicitly advocates this perspective as a uniquely illuminating tool. As the perspective unfolds in this study, much of the criticism's success or failure depends on an

understanding not only of the contents of each chapter, but also the relationships between chapters.

The study begins with the premise, urged in this chapter, that the material to describe and the standards to judge Red Power are implicit within the traditional Indian beliefs and practices which militants profess to uphold.

Given this initial argument, Chapters Two and Three discuss what might be termed the movement's "rhetorical problem." Chapter Two examines the demands of modern Red Power advocates as an outgrowth of the traditional belief in Nature as the teacher and sustainer of Indian people. The militant issues of self-determination for Indian tribes and the return of lands, it will argue, are made issues because activists intent on returning to traditional ways of life cannot do so unless the conditions in which they live are those of their ancestors, in which the traditional life once flourished. Further, because the traditional life originates in Nature, and can survive only under certain conditions in Nature, the "scene" of human activity is crucially important in Indian metaphysics.

Chapter Three examines the roles assumed by Red Power advocates as an outgrowth of traditional beliefs in the potency and pervasiveness of supernatural force in Indians' lives. It will argue that militants assume a "warrior" persona and employ images of "war" and "battle" because, traditionally, the belief in supernatural Power also created this role as a necessary model of human life. Militants who embrace this traditional belief necessarily

also embrace this role. As a result, the possible relationships between individuals (for example, between activist and white) are defined militaristically.

Thus, these two chapters have a common task: they both explore the ways in which the adoption of traditional Indian beliefs shapes the form of the Red Power movement. Chapter Two, in discussing Red Power demands, deals with influences on the movement's content; Chapter Three, in discussing the characteristic human relationship between militant and white, deals with influences on its context. Together, they describe the symbolic circumstances in which the movement finds itself and the exigencies which it attempts to overcome.

Chapter Four is a chapter of transition. It moves from the manner in which traditional beliefs formulate activist demands to a consideration of the manner in which these beliefs promote and restrict the expression of demands. It will grant the finding of previous critics that militant rhetoric is unpersuasive to whites. However, it will argue that the epistemological importance of experience in Indian metaphysics drastically circumscribes the role of persuasion in Indian life and, therefore, in the militant movement. Consequently, the chapter is concerned with a potential rhetorical solution to the Red Power movement's exigencies. However, in finding that the Indian ability to effect this solution is limited, it notes this circumscribed theory as an additional aspect of the problem.

Rather than concluding, with other critics, that the truth of the findings in Chapter Four dooms the modern movement to failure, this study argues that militant rhetoric fulfills another purpose. In Chapters Five and Six, alternatives to the effect criterion are delineated.

Chapter Five will argue that militant rhetoric is consummatory, rather than instrumental. Its effectiveness lies not in its ability to persuade the white status quo, but in its enactment of the traditional Indian way of life and the satisfaction of the militant demands detailed in Chapter Two. It will suggest that the occupation tactic enacts the demand for land restoration, and that a variety of polarizing strategies, including the limits to the persuasive process itself, enact the demand for Indian sovereignty.

Chapter Six returns to the movement's emphasis on "scene." It will argue that the scenic concern in Indian metaphysics and the belief in a cyclical, nonlinear time cause a similar emphasis in militant rhetoric. The Parmenidean belief in an essentially unchanging reality accessible through enactment produces, in militant rhetoric, the theme of inevitable movement success. This theme is also supported by the metaphysical concern with scene which, it argues, produces a deterministic terminology. Hence, Chapter Six characterizes Red Power philosophically as a belief system in the tradition of those who hold to the permanence of reality, and rhetorically as a consummatory symbol system which, by virtue of its existence, demonstrates

that it inevitably must succeed as the most accurate reflection of this permanent reality.

CHAPTER II

SACRALITY, MOTHER EARTH, AND NATURAL RIGHTS

Living a century away, from Little Big Horn and . . .
Wounded Knee!
A generation removed from Ira Hayes, looking up
for days
Not eluded with grudges or regrets . . . Singing!
Calling themselves . . . "A.I.M.!!"
Their name imagining, Something bright, light,
feeling free! Their many voices
Hoping, yet remembering.
Communicating in the media and problems of now
Go to any reservation today. And you will Plainly see.
An honest-to-goodness ghetto, and a people who
remember . . .
When they were really free!!⁶³

Introduction

The preeminent role of nature in the life of American Indians is a well-established, almost self-evident fact. Students of anthropology, ethnography, linguistics, and theology, to name just a few, all have documented the fundamental importance of the natural world in the Indian's view of reality and style of life. Further, this view and style always has been disconcerting to Western, technological man. On one hand, Indian beliefs about nature have been characterized as "primitive," "superstitious," "savage" and "of the Devil," yet maintaining, on the other hand, a certain

⁶³Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973 (Rooseveltown, N.Y.: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), p. 9.

charm of simplicity and--of course--"naturalness." Anthropologists Dennis and Barbara Tedlock have written of this dualistic reaction to Indian beliefs in the following terms:

Those of us who are believers in material progress see our task as elevating the Indian to our level by teaching him how to make nature better serve material ends. If, on the other hand, we are suspicious of material progress, we envy the Indian and wish that we could somehow "return to nature," suspecting all the while that there is really no way to recover our own innocence.⁶⁴

This tension between differing views of nature has existed ever since the first Europeans landed in the Western Hemisphere. While undergoing changes in specific areas of conflict and in intensity, it remains today as the fundamental source of modern Indian militancy. In 1933 Chief Luther Standing Bear commented:

The white man does not understand the Indian for the reason that he does not understand America. He is too far removed from its formative processes. The roots of the tree of his life have not yet grasped the rock and soil.⁶⁵

Almost forty years later, in November, 1969, the Indian protesters who occupied the island of Alcatraz in San Francisco Bay echoed these sentiments in their account of the protest:

Each person upon this earth had ancestors who lived in close harmony with all of nature. For too many this basic tie between

⁶⁴Dennis and Barbara Tedlock, eds., Teachings From the American Earth (New York: Liveright, 1975), p. xii.

⁶⁵Luther Standing Bear, in Chronicles of American Indian Protest, ed. by Council on Interracial Books for Children (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, 1971), p. 270.

man, spirit and creation has been forgotten. The spirit, the very blood cries out for us to re-examine ourselves in relation to our environment and to one another.⁶⁶

This re-examination, which is implicit in the demands of the Red Power movement, is the subject of this chapter. To begin, certain vital characteristics of the Indian view of nature and reality will be specified. In so doing, the importance of nature will become evident. Then, Kenneth Burke's concept of the "scene" will be employed to trace the roots of movement demands to the traditional roles of nature. For nature may be said to be the scene in which Indian existence unfolds. The importance of nature suggests that scenic influences will shape this existence. Similarly, because modern militants wish to recapture this traditional existence, these same scenic influences will shape their demands. In brief, that is the thesis of this chapter. More specifically, these scenic influences will be examined in relation to the two primary demands of land restoration and self-determination, each of which will then be explicated in detail.

In so doing, one must recognize that Indian peoples are far from homogeneous; in fact, American Indians have been called "the most interesting and diverse human population on earth."⁶⁷ This diversity is well illustrated by language differences. Between 1,000 and 2,000 Indian

⁶⁶Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz is Not an Island, ed. by Peter Blue Cloud (Berkeley: Wingbow Press, 1972), p. 11.

⁶⁷Robert F. Spencer, et. al., The Native Americans. Prehistory and Ethnology of the North American Indians (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 1.

languages exist in North and South America, all of which are mutually unintelligible:⁶⁸

The Navaho sheepherder of the Southwest can no more communicate with a Blackfoot warrior than a monolingual English speaker with a monolingual Chinese. And just as languages differ, so do cultures.⁶⁹

Yet, in the midst of this diversity, there are basic similarities in the Native American Weltanschauung. Perhaps some depend on similar ways of life. Mircea Eliade, for example, suggests that a preagricultural society reliant upon hunting feels "the sacrality of Mother Earth" in a different, less intense way than one whose dependence upon cultivation caused it to develop "the symbolism and cults of Mother Earth, of human and agricultural fertility, of the sacrality of woman, and the like."⁷⁰ Perhaps some depend on the phenomenon of "psychic unity," the anthropological term for the basic similarity in all human mental structures,⁷¹ which psychologist C.G. Jung might call the "collective unconscious."⁷² In any event, it is less important to discover why such similarities exist than it

⁶⁸Gloria Levitas, Frank B. Vivelo and Jacqueline J. Vivelo, eds., American Indian Prose and Poetry (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1974), p. xxxiv.

⁶⁹Spencer, et. al., The Native Americans, p. 2.

⁷⁰Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, trans. by Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1959), p. 17.

⁷¹Levitas, Vivelo and Vivelo, Prose and Poetry, p. xxiv.

⁷²Jung develops this notion in The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious, Vol. 9, pt. 1 of Collected Works, ed. by Herbert Read, Michael Fordham and Gerhard Adler (New York: Pantheon Books, 1959).

is simply to recognize their existence and ramifications. While Eliade may be correct in his assertion that different tribes perceive the sacrality of nature in different ways, it is most important to realize that Indian tribes do in fact see nature as sacred, and in a strikingly homogeneous manner.

The Two Roles of Nature

The basis of an Indian relationship to nature is found in the functions which nature performs for man in the dual roles of teacher and sustainer.

For the American Indian, reality exists independent of man. That is, the world is an objective entity, operating in a certain manner independently of man's contribution or detracting. The paradigmatic operation of the universe is cyclical, and the metaphor of the circle commonly is used to describe this operation. The Sioux holy man, Lame Deer, writes: "To our way of thinking the Indians' symbol is the circle, the hoop. Nature wants things to be round. The bodies of human beings and animals have no corners."⁷³ The earth itself, the sun, the moon, the horizon, rainbows, all are "circles within circles, with no beginning and no end."⁷⁴

In addition, all elements of the universe, animal, plant and stone, participate in this great circle; thus,

⁷³John (Fire) Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes, Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 112.

⁷⁴Ibid.

the circle comes to symbolize the essential unity of all things. All things are one, or are of the same essence, because they are works of the Great Spirit who "is within all things: the trees, the grasses, the rivers, the mountains, and all the fourlegged animals, and the winged peoples."⁷⁵ Thus the Power that moves the universe, regardless of the name by which a particular tribe may acknowledge it, exists not only in the heavens, but actually resides in every aspect of creation on the earth. Through this Power, all things are related. Black Elk uses the terms of familial relationships in asking, "Is not the sky a father and the earth a mother, and are not all living things with feet or wings or roots their children?"⁷⁶ The circle represents this unity, the basic principle of the universe.

Other forms of existence are possible. For example, many Indian holy men suggest that the white man's reality is the square:

Square is his house, his office buildings with walls that separate people from one another. Square is the door which keeps strangers out, the dollar bill, the jail. Square are the white man's gadgets--boxes, boxes, boxes and more boxes--TV sets, radios, washing machines, computers, cars.⁷⁷

⁷⁵Joseph Epes Brown, ed., The Sacred Pipe (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1971), p. xx.

⁷⁶John Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 2.

⁷⁷Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, p. 112.

However, this principle is artificial and, in the truest sense of the word, unnatural. In the end, man's responsibility is to discover the one true principle of the universe--the circle--and then to participate in it, to actualize it in his individual and collective life.

The relevance of this principle to man's place in nature is easily illustrated. Vernon Bellecourt, former National Director of the militant American Indian Movement, describes man's proper relationship to the earth:

We Indians live life within the sacred hoop, the sacred cycle of life, in unity with all living things. A chief many years ago said that his home is where the bodies of his ancestors are. . . . When the physical remains go back to the sacred mother earth, that completes the sacred cycle of life. When the Indian killed his four-legged brother--to live on, that animal provided itself, that was its role. . . . But when we died, we went back to the earth, so that the ground could be fertilized and the grass and the flowers could grow to pollinate other things and make more living things grow. And the deer would come by and eat that grass. He ate us. That was our way, the cycle of life . . .⁷⁸

Implicit in this description is man's duty to bring the relationship into being, a duty proclaimed by certain natural signs: ". . . the rainbow is half a circle of colors in harmony as a sign from the Grandfather in the Sky that we must complete the circle by making our lives as fine as the rainbow."⁷⁹

⁷⁸Vernon Bellecourt, "Penthouse Interview," Penthouse, July, 1973, p. 62.

⁷⁹Vinson Brown, Voices of Earth and Sky (Harrisburg, Penn.: Stackpole Books, 1974), p. 24.

Modern activists take this duty seriously. The American Indian Movement, although founded in Minneapolis in 1968 to combat alleged police harassment, did not actually begin, claims one militant leader, until it began to rely on Sioux holy men for guidance, more than a year later.⁸⁰ Similarly, the Alcatraz occupiers celebrated a new realization and affirmation of the old principle of unity within the cycle of life:

The sun will rise again in the morning,
the mystery is there for all to share. The
life cycle is ours, child into man into
unborn child forever. Season into season,
we are the people, ours is the care of earth;
night into day, seed into plant into decaying
blanket of warmth for newer life, forever.⁸¹

Hence, many activists see the militant movement as a renewal of the old ways, a return to participation in the true principle of the universe. Necessarily, therefore, nature's first role is that of teacher, and the principle is one of many lessons for men to learn.

To observe the teaching role of nature is also to note man's complementary role as student. As a result, the question arises: how does one learn? For the American Indian, the dominant characteristic of all learning is that it is experiential.⁸² The principle of unity entails the belief that other living things, and even inanimate

⁸⁰Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 60.

⁸¹Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz, p. 28.

⁸²"The IFCO Native American Consultation--A Report," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 26.

objects, are "'peoples' in the same manner as the various tribes of men are peoples."⁸³ Thus, a prominent mode of learning is contact with and observation of these peoples. As Black Elk cautions, "All these people are important, for in their own way they are wise, and they can teach us two-leggeds much if we make ourselves humble before them."⁸⁴ Attention to the small details of nature, then, reveals lessons.

Such attention is highly experiential because of the potential for animation in nature. Black Elk, a Sioux, insisted that coyotes, among other animals, frequently talked with him.⁸⁵ Opler reports that, for the Apache, "any object or force of the external world is potentially animate . . ."⁸⁶ Referring to yet another tribe, Park observes:

The world in which the Paviotso live is full of animate beings unseen in a workaday experience. The spirits of animals, birds, and insects, spirits that live in certain caves in the mountains, water-babies that live in water-holes and in the lakes, the spirits of the wind, clouds and thunder, all can talk to man and assist him in his struggle to gain a living, to preserve health, and to cure sickness.⁸⁷

⁸³Vine Deloria, Jr., God is Red (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), p. 103.

⁸⁴Brown, The Sacred Pipe, p. 58.

⁸⁵Niehardt, Black Elk Speaks, p. 27.

⁸⁶Morris Edward Opler, An Apache Life-Way (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), p. 206.

⁸⁷Willard Z. Park, Shamanism in Western North America (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1938), p. 14.

Such a perspective on the world is typical. Indian myth and folklore are filled universally with stories of the time "when man and animals were not so distinguishable from each other."⁸⁸ Based on observation of the Ojibwa (Chippewa), A. Irving Hallowell underscores the experiential basis of animation:

Whereas we should never expect a stone to manifest animate properties of any kind under any circumstances, the Ojibwa recognize, a priori, potentialities for animation in certain classes of objects under certain circumstances. The Ojibwa do not perceive stones, in general, as animate, any more than we do. The crucial test is experience. Is there any personal testimony available?⁸⁹

A story told by a Wounded Knee II participant attests to the fact that this belief is still current among Indians. A group of six Indians discovered that they were lost on a hill about four miles from the town of Wounded Knee, but were led to safety by an owl. Said the storyteller, "It was really something to me, the first time I ever knew anything like that."⁹⁰ It appears that animation is a manifestation of the close relationship which obtains between student (man) and teacher (nature) when all participate in the circle of unity.

⁸⁸Jaime DeAngulo, The Unique Collection of Indian Tales (New York: Ballantine Books, Inc., 1974), p. vi.

⁸⁹A. Irving Hallowell, "Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View," in Teachings From the American Earth, ed. by Dennis and Barbara Tedlock (New York: Liveright, 1975), p. 148.

⁹⁰Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 166.

In addition to learning the lessons of nature through personal experience, knowledge may be gained in states of consciousness which Carlos Castaneda has termed "nonordinary states of reality."⁹¹ While an animated nature may not seem very "ordinary," Castaneda's phrase refers specifically to perceptions of the universe such as are induced by hallucinogenic plants. Peyote, the basic spiritual tool of the Native American Church, is a prime example in which the importance of experience is readily apparent. Don Juan rebukes his apprentice Castaneda, calling learning through conversation "a waste" and "stupidity" because "learning is the most difficult task a man could undertake"; instead, one must experience Mescalito (peyote) for oneself in order to gain knowledge of "the proper way of life," since it "talks differently to every man."⁹² Similarly, a maxim of the Native American Church is, "The only way to find out about Peyote is to take it and learn from Peyote yourself."⁹³ A Commanche member is quoted as saying, "The white man talks about Jesus; we talk to Jesus."⁹⁴

⁹¹Castaneda defines this phrase as "meaning unusual reality as opposed to the ordinary reality of everyday life. The distinction is based on the inherent meaning of the states of nonordinary reality. In the context of don Juan's knowledge they were considered as real, although their reality was differentiated from ordinary reality." Carlos Castaneda, The Teachings of Don Juan (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), p. 21.

⁹²Ibid., pp. 52-53.

⁹³J.S. Slotkin, "The Peyote Way," in American Earth, ed. by Tedlock and Tedlock, p. 100.

⁹⁴Ibid.

It may be that the use of peyote today derives from the ancient practice, followed by most of the Plains, Plateau and Eastern forest tribes, of sending out all young men (and many young women) to seek a vision.⁹⁵ But whether occurring spontaneously or through the use of a hallucinogen, the experiential nature of the vision remains constant. Vine Deloria, Jr., contrasts this way of knowing with the typical white method:

Contemporary people are more dependent on the validity of the original revelation of their religion in an educational sense than they are on their own immediate experience in a qualitative sense. For many religions this dependence means that belief replaces experience, and proofs of a logical nature are more relevant than additional revelations.⁹⁶

In contrast, after reviewing the data on Indians, J.S. Slotkin concludes that "the Peyotist, epistemologically speaking, is an individualist and empiricist; he believes only what he himself has experienced."⁹⁷ This epistemological characteristic appears to be generalizable to those outside the Native American Church. In fact, it may be reflected linguistically, as with the Wintu of California: "The Wintu never says starkly this is; if he speaks of reality which is not within his own restricting experience, he does not affirm it, he only implies it."⁹⁸

⁹⁵Brown, Voices of Earth, p. 124.

⁹⁶Deloria, God is Red, p. 80.

⁹⁷Slotkin, "The Peyote Way," p. 100.

⁹⁸Dorothy Lee, "Linguistic Reflection of Wintu Thought," in American Earth, ed. by Tedlock and Tedlock, p. 140.

In brief, the American Indian views nature as exhibiting the proper order of the universe. Hence, man's role in the world is revealed by nature and may be apprehended through personal contact with either ordinary or nonordinary reality (and frequently both). In this sense, nature's role is that of teacher, while man's is that of student/actualizer. Since knowledge so gained is of the "Original Instructions,"⁹⁹ reflecting the design of the Great Spirit, epistemology is sacred.

In addition to the teaching role, nature is viewed as the sustainer of all life. In general, feminine qualities are attributed to "the broad-bosomed earth, the ultimate mother and nurse of all living things,"¹⁰⁰ while masculine qualities are attributed to the sky. The phenomenon of rainfall links the two directly in the process necessary to sustain life.¹⁰¹ This recognition of the duality of the male and female principles in nature is similar to the Chinese doctrine of Yin and Yang,¹⁰² a similarity which may be more than coincidental given that most anthropologists agree that the ancestors of American Indians came from Asia.¹⁰³

⁹⁹"IFCO Report," Akwesasne Notes, p. 26.

¹⁰⁰Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 113.

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 149.

¹⁰²Brown, Voices of Earth, p. 67.

¹⁰³Ruth M. Underhill, Red Man's Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 10.

The role of nature as sustainer of life is reflected most clearly in the sacred regard in which certain elements of nature are held. Much has been written of the vital importance of the buffalo to the life of the Plains tribes. To these Indians, it supplied food, home, clothing, bedding, cooking utensils, and guidance in the healing of sickness.¹⁰⁴ "Because the buffalo contained all these things within himself, and for many other reasons, he was a natural symbol of the universe, the totality of all manifested forms."¹⁰⁵

The tribes who made their living by cultivation revered other sacred elements of nature:

Particularly sacred and powerful was corn. In this semi-arid country, where game and wild plant food were scarce, the grain was a real life-sustainer, whose failure might mean starvation. The Pueblos probably had it in a primitive form long before the Christian era, and over the centuries it developed into handsome cylinders in six colors . . . that were often used in relation to the six directions. . . . the new food was thought to be a gift of the Supernatural.¹⁰⁶

Similarly, pollen was recognized for its fertilizing capacities and was considered especially sacred.¹⁰⁷

Finally, the power of nature to sustain was manifested in the attributes of the points of the compass. Commonly,

¹⁰⁴Warren K. Moorehead, The American Indian in the United States: 1850-1914 (Andover, Mass.: The Andover Press, 1914), pp. 330, 337. See also David Dary, The Buffalo Book (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1974) for a general account of the role the animal played in the American West.

¹⁰⁵Brown, The Sacred Pipe, p. 6.

¹⁰⁶Underhill, Red Man's Religion, p. 207.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 231.

Indians prayed to each of the directions according to its special properties. Details of this practice varied from tribe to tribe. However, the west was generally addressed in a prayer for courage (as it was the home of the fearsome Thunder-Beings); the north (from whence came "the great white cleansing wind")¹⁰⁸ was appealed to for strength and purity; the east (wherein dwelt the morning star, bringing light out of darkness) brought wisdom; and the south (home of the summer) brought the power to grow.¹⁰⁹ These cardinal directions might also contain a wide variety of other meanings,¹¹⁰ but all illustrate the sustaining qualities of nature. The parting words of a member of the Native American Solidarity Committee accurately reflect the importance of this second role:

Mother Earth Nurtures and Sustains
Us May All Her Children Stand Together
and Be Free¹¹¹

Summarizing, certain epistemological and ontological assumptions common to the diverse groups of American Indians have been examined. The importance of nature, in its twin roles of teacher and sustainer, is clear. Nature is the giver of knowledge and of life's necessities in accordance

¹⁰⁸Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks, p. 2.

¹⁰⁹Ibid. See also Brown, The Sacred Pipe, p. 145.

¹¹⁰Cf. Hyemeyohsts Storm, Seven Arrows (New York: Random House, 1973), p. 6, in which wisdom is attributed to the north, innocence and trust to the south, introspection to the west, and illumination to the east.

¹¹¹Karen Northcott, private letter to author, April 14, 1976, p. 2.

with the principle of the circle and the unity of all things. Hence, man's duty is to learn nature's lessons, participate in the circle of sustenance of which Bellecourt speaks, and thereby fulfill this principle.

Nature as "Scene"

The ontological and epistemological importance of nature suggests that the "scene" of events may be a vital part of the American Indian worldview. The term "scene" is introduced here in the same sense as it is used by Kenneth Burke in his dramatisitic pentad of terms describing human motivation; that is, in the sense of "setting," "background" or "situation."¹¹²

Burke observes that a universal relationship exists between individuals, the actions they engage in, and the situation in which these actions occur. In A Grammar of Motives, he writes:

From the motivational point of view, there is implicit in the quality of a scene the quality of the action that is to take place within it. . . . One could not deduce the details of the action from the details of the setting, but one could deduce the quality of the action from the quality of the setting.¹¹³

Since nature and the traditional Indian perspective toward nature comprise a significant portion of the scene in which the activist movement occurs, one might expect that the

¹¹²Kenneth Burke, A Grammar of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 2, 12.

¹¹³Ibid., pp. 6-7.

qualities of this scene will determine the qualities of movement acts.¹¹⁴ Indeed, one critic analyzing the events at Wounded Knee has observed the prevalence of scenic elements in the rhetoric of Indian militants.¹¹⁵ Deloria has devoted considerably more attention to the subject in his discussion of the relative roles of space and time in Indian and white religions.¹¹⁶

Man's role as actualizer most clearly reveals the influence of scenic qualities on the character of acts and agents. When man actualizes the principles of nature, fulfilling his role in relation to an external, pre-existent reality, he achieves oneness with the universe. In this manner, self and scene are merged in a process that can be illustrated in two ways. First, the Siouan form of personal address frequently employs terms of relationship, such as "brother," "grandmother," and so on, rather than proper names.

¹¹⁴Such a relationship is idiosyncratic in the sense that different scenes may be expected to produce different acts. The majority of this work is concerned with exploring the ways in which a peculiarly Indian scene induces particular militant acts. However, Burke also speaks of "scene" in another, more universal sense. That is, the emphasis in a rhetoric upon the scene as such will color that rhetoric with overtones of determinism. This more universal scenic determinism is discussed in Chapter Six.

¹¹⁵Tracey Bernstein Weiss, "Media Speaks With Forked Tongue: The Unsuccessful Rhetoric of Wounded Knee" (paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, Houston, Texas, December 27-30, 1975), pp. 7-8. Weiss' concern is with the rhetorical possibilities of staging a demonstration on the site of the 1890 massacre.

¹¹⁶See Deloria, God is Red, especially Chapters Five through Eight.

Joseph Epes Brown explains that this practice unites individual men with the preeminent relationship of the scene:

For the Sioux, all relationships on earth are symbolic of the true and great relationship which always exists between man and . . . Earth understood in its principle. In using these terms, the Sioux thus really invoke or recall the principle . . .¹¹⁷

Second, the rite of smoking the sacred pipe (a practice observed to be common among tribes throughout North America)¹¹⁸ also merges the self with the scene. The symbolism of the pipe itself results in merger because it simultaneously represents the universe,¹¹⁹ the Indian race, and individual men.¹²⁰ Its use, therefore, unites man with the Power of the universe,¹²¹ and earth with sky.¹²²

Brown again explains this merging process:

But since the pipe is the universe, it is also man, and the one who fills a pipe should identify himself with it, thus not only establishing the center of the universe, but also his own center; he so "expands" that the six directions of space are actually brought within himself. It is by this "expansion" that a man ceases to be part, a fragment, and becomes

¹¹⁷Brown, The Sacred Pipe, p. 15.

¹¹⁸Underhill, Red Man's Religion, takes specific note of this phenomenon among tribes of the southeast (p. 163), the upper Mississippi (pp. 184, 196), the plains (p. 194), and the southwest (p. 201).

¹¹⁹Brown, The Sacred Pipe, p. 21.

¹²⁰Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, p. 250.

¹²¹Underhill, Red Man's Religion, p. 125; also ibid., p. 12.

¹²²Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, p. 12.

whole or holy; he shatters the illusion of separateness.¹²³

A more concise rendering is supplied by Lame Deer:

I point my peace pipe toward all these directions. Now we are one with the universe, with all the living things, a link in the circle which has no end.¹²⁴

The principles of unity and the circle are manifest in nature, and are therefore qualities of the scene. Insofar as Indians attempt to actualize these principles in their own lives, the merging of self and scene will occur, and qualities of the scene will transfer to the agents and their acts.

Because the modern movement proclaims a return to these traditional principles, it exhibits this scenic influence. The remainder of this chapter will examine one way in which this occurs; that is, the influence of the roles of nature on the formation of movement demands.¹²⁵

The Issue of Land Return

The first major demand of Indian activists is that a viable land base for the tribes be restored in accordance

¹²³Brown, The Sacred Pipe, p. 21.

¹²⁴Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, p. 118.

¹²⁵Introducing the ideas of Kenneth Burke has its dangers, however, and a caution is needed. What follows is not an attempt at a "Burkeian analysis" of aspects of the Red Power movement. In the sense that demands and issues are primarily ideas, and therefore examples of selected emphasis by some "agent," what follows might be described roughly as an examination of the "scene-agent ratio," or the ways in which the quality of a scene is reflected in the quality of an agent. Burke, Grammar, p. 8. However, Burke's terminology is introduced primarily for convenience.

with treaties which typically granted to Indians large areas of the continent for "as long as the sun shall rise and the rivers go down to the sea." This demand was made a prominent part of the twenty point proposal of the Trail of Broken Treaties, the caravan of Indian protesters which wound its way from the West Coast to Washington, D.C. Point Ten called for "land reform and restoration of an 110-million acre native land base," set priorities for return, advocated "consolidation of Indians' land, water, natural and economic resources," and demanded "termination of leases and condemnation of non-Indian land title."¹²⁶ The Indians who seized Alcatraz claimed the land as a place on which they could develop a center for Native American Studies.¹²⁷ Similarly, members of the Menominee Warrior Society seized the Alexian Brothers monastery in Gresham, Wisconsin, for the purpose of converting the abandoned structure into a hospital.¹²⁸

The issue of land restoration is centrally important to the modern movement's attempt at cultural and spiritual renewal. Deloria puts the issue succinctly:

The white is after Indian lands and resources. He always has been and always will be. For Indians to continue to think of their basic conflict with the white man as cultural is the height of folly. The problem is and always has been the adjustment of the legal relationship between the

¹²⁶"Our 20 Point Proposal," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1973, pp. 30-31.

¹²⁷Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz, p. 41.

¹²⁸Minneapolis Tribune, January 19, 1975, p. 1A.

Indian tribes and the federal government, between the true owners of the land and the usurpers.¹²⁹

In fact, he goes so far as to argue that no movement for social change can succeed without a land base:

No movement can sustain itself, no people can continue, no government can function, and no religion can become a reality except it be bound to a land area of its own. . . . So-called power movements are primarily the urge of peoples to find their homeland and to channel their psychic energies through their land into social and economic reality.¹³⁰

Deloria speaks as a lawyer as well as an Indian, and hence his concern for the legal aspects of the movement is understandable. However, his assertion that a categorization of the conflict as cultural is "folly" should not be interpreted to mean that the cultural struggle is not important. Rather, Deloria recognizes the "folly" of struggling to maintain cultural integrity in itself; he senses that such a struggle inevitably will fail without a prior settling of the legal questions (that is, without a substantial land base from which to launch the struggle).

Why is this so? Why is a land base a prerequisite to the success of any attempt at cultural renewal? The land is so vital to the movement's survival, and is thus so prominent an issue, because of the twin roles of nature. Given its role as sustainer of life, nature must be respected and

¹²⁹Vine Deloria, Jr., Custer Died For Your Sins (New York: The Hearst Corporation, 1970), p. 174.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 179.

thanked; to do otherwise--to destroy the earth or break the spiritual bonds between specific parcels of land and specific groups of people--is to destroy man himself. In this manner, the fate of the Plains tribes was bound up inextricably with the fate of the buffalo: "When you killed off the buffalo, you also killed the Indian--the real, natural, 'wild' Indian."¹³¹ Similarly, given nature's role as teacher, destruction of the earth or severance of these spiritual bonds inevitably cuts the Indian adrift in a chaotic, white-dominated, alien world with no epistemological grounding. The alteration of man's traditional relationship to nature would obscure or destroy nature's lessons, and thereby also destroy man himself. For the thrust of Indian religion is one's unification with all of Creation; to the extent that unity is achieved, one is susceptible, physically and spiritually, to the same forces which threaten to destroy Creation:

The creation is one--the natural human beings are one with it, so the same disease that kills off the animals and destroys the waters, air, and land, destroys the native people at the same time.¹³²

Thus, the Indian, by manifesting the principle of unity, identifies his fate with that of the land. The merging of selves into the scene inextricably binds the fates of each together. Out of this condition, modern militant demands for the protection and restoration of land are generated.

¹³¹Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, p. 130.

¹³²Gayle High Pine, "The Disease That Afflicts Creation," Akwasasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 35.

To restore a land base for the tribes would make possible the restoration of the tribes themselves, their culture and their religion. A land base is a prerequisite for the achievement of any of these other goals. This helps explain the persistence of certain California and Klamath Indians, for example, who have refused monetary settlements from the Indian Claims Commission, holding out instead for the return of land which, to whites, might seem worthless.¹³³

Hence, traditional concepts of nature dictate that issues concerning the land will be prominent among the demands of Red Power activists. Similarly, these concepts shape the specific issues which are raised.

This effect is most clearly revealed by the presence of ecological issues in the general demand for land return. Frequently, Indian conflicts with local, state and federal governments focus on natural resources and the destruction of what lands the tribes currently hold (the reservations). For example, the Quinalt of Washington State are confronted by lumbering interests;¹³⁴ the Apache have tried to fight oil and gas leases;¹³⁵ the Paiute of Nevada are concerned with the diversion of scarce water from Pyramid Lake;¹³⁶

¹³³Stephen Most, "Klamath Clings to Sacred Land," Kansas City Times, May 20, 1976, p. 2D.

¹³⁴Trail of Broken Treaties: B.I.A. I'm Not Your Indian Anymore (2nd ed.; Roosevelttown, N.Y.: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), p. 44.

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz, p. 62.

the Northern Cheyenne in Montana¹³⁷ and the Navaho of the Southwest¹³⁸ oppose coal gasification and other power plants; and there are numerous other instances.

These conditions, to a degree, are forced upon the tribes by governmental and corporate actions. Yet, militants have not been reluctant to inveigh against them. A representative leaflet of the American Indian Movement, entitled "Energy and Indian Rights," deals with the environmental problems of coal development, primarily in the northern Great Plains.¹³⁹ Gayle High Pine speaks of the "disease that afflicts creation" in terms that leave very little doubt about which race represents creation and which the disease:

It /the disease/ takes the form of dams, of logging, of stripmining, of pipelines, of superhighways, or of plantations, or of series of small encroachments on their /Indians/ lands.¹⁴⁰

Clearly, this concern with ecological issues is based upon the respect due Mother Earth in her role as sustainer of all life. As one participant at Wounded Knee II remarked: "The Indian lived off the land. Everything he had he got from the land in one way or another. It supplied the food the buffalo ate, so why tear up the land and starve yourself?"¹⁴¹

¹³⁷James Ridgeway, "The Battle of Lame Deer," Penthouse, November, 1975, p. 85.

¹³⁸"Gasification and the Death of the Land," Akwesasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976, p. 22.

¹³⁹Sakokwenonkwaw, "Energy and Indian Rights," American Indian Movement, National Office, pp. 1-6.

¹⁴⁰High Pine, "Disease," p. 35.

¹⁴¹Voices From Wounded Knee, pp. 196-197.

In other words, the prominence of environmental issues in Indian demands regarding the land reflects the traditional role of nature in Indians' lives. It seems that:

Love of nature does not explain this. The truer word is "reverence"; in the belief in the Mother Earth there is a religiosity. The intensity with which the tribal Indian expresses these emotional ties to his land has lately taken on the quality of tribal nationalism. And that has strengthened the older religious belief with a modern dimension.¹⁴²

These issues are not simply a native version of the environmental movement of the early 1970's, and Indians are not simply the "original conservationists."¹⁴³ At best, many Indians are skeptical of the ecology movement, viewing it as a panicked reaction to a bad situation, and not a movement grounded in the kind of spiritual appreciation of the land that could give it the strength to succeed.¹⁴⁴ Less charitable militants are highly suspicious of the so-called "concerned environmentalists," charging that they have ignored environmental effects on Indian tribes in their campaigns.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴²Stan Steiner, The New Indians (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), p. 168.

¹⁴³Frederick W. Turner, III, discusses the myth of the Indian as the "original ecologist" in The Portable North American Indian Reader (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), pp. 10-11.

¹⁴⁴Race Relations Information Center, "Indians in Revolt --1970," in Chronicles, ed. by Council, p. 309.

¹⁴⁵Sakokwenonkwaw, "Energy and Indian Rights," p. 5.

Undeniably, there are also other motives behind the land demand, especially economic ones. These are most clearly related to the demand for self-determination, to be discussed below, because the exploitation of resources on reservations (with profits going to huge non-tribal corporations) is said to be solvable by the enforcement of treaty rights which "will allow us to decide for ourselves what we want to do with mineral land rights."¹⁴⁶ Yet, it is significant that the spiritual motives generally are expressed together with the economic motives.

In contrast to Indians who, having been fashioned for their surroundings by the same hand that shaped those surroundings, are "of the soil,"¹⁴⁷ whites are said to be foreign and alien to the land.¹⁴⁸ Typically, this means that Indians believe they participate in nature, manifesting the principle of the unity of all life, while whites attempt to change nature, in defiance of this principle.

The actual degree of difference is problematic. Perhaps it is best phrased as a difference between conceptions of the land as subject and as object,¹⁴⁹ as something to be respectfully admired and something to be exploited for material ends. The tension between these two views springs from an historical conflict between Indian concepts of the

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁴⁷Luther Standing Bear, in Chronicles, ed. by Council, p. 270.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 271.

¹⁴⁹Deloria, God is Red, p. 70.

land as sustainer and white concepts of the land as commodity. A major barrier to white settlement of the North American continent was the fact that Indians did not view the earth as commodity. That is, the land belonged to no one, and thus could not be sold by one party to another. Yet, transfer of ownership was the purpose behind the white treaty-making process. Consequently, at least one Indian historian has argued that the means by which whites obtained practically all of the domain of the continental United States was based on a misunderstanding and constitutes a false agreement,¹⁵⁰ thereby justifying the return of the land to its rightful possessors.

The belief that land is not a commodity to be bought and sold is echoed in the current activist movement as well.¹⁵¹ One AIM leader identifies the implementation of this belief² as a goal to be achieved:

We also have to make it where no person owns the land anymore. We don't believe in ownership of land because the land is part of us--you can't own each other and you can't own land.¹⁵²

However, this goal is complicated by the fact that "free purchase and sale" was thought by whites to be "the basis of dealings between the native inhabitants of the land and the white immigrants."¹⁵³ Whites continue to view the

¹⁵⁰Dee Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1970), p. 3.

¹⁵¹Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 6.

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 246.

¹⁵³Felix S. Cohen, "Original Indian Title," Minnesota Law Review, 32 (December, 1947), p. 39.

Indian relationship to the land as one of ownership in the European tradition. Felix Cohen, the expert on Indian law, explains that the alternative construction has been expressly rejected:

. . . the "menagerie" theory of Indian title, the theory that Indians are less than human and that their relation to their lands is not the human relationship of ownership but rather something similar to the relation that animals bear to the areas in which they may be temporarily confined has been laid to rest by court cases, culminating in U.S. v. Alcea Band of Tillamooks.¹⁵⁴

However, while Indians reluctantly may have acknowledged this white viewpoint and even find it necessary and useful in their pursuit of treaty settlements (and while they undoubtedly must be grateful for their affirmed humanity), they remain opposed to ownership among themselves. The earth was made for all to use. Modern militants appear to be saying, "If whites wish to think of land as owned, then so be it. We will establish rightful Indian ownership and reclaim the land. Once we have done so, however, we will recognize once again the natural way; there will be no individual ownership of lands within the tribes." In this way, the white concept of land as commodity aptly illustrates to Indian activists the alienation of whites from nature and its principles.

Whites further reveal their alienation from the land, Indians claim, by destroying it in their exploitative pursuit of material production. This is another case in which land is treated as object rather than subject.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 58.

Reflecting their respect for Mother Earth, Indians historically have opposed the large-scale disruption of land, even to the point of opposing any kind of digging. Obviously, this was not a universal belief because a large number of tribes survived by cultivating crops; however, it was particularly strong among the Plains tribes, who generally were nomadic hunters. In any case, regardless of the specific practices of individual tribes, there was general agreement that the land was meant to be undisturbed as much as possible (an agreement which caused government agents in the 1800's great difficulty in their efforts to convert the conquered tribes to farming). This sentiment is expressed well in the following:

You ask me to plow the ground. Shall I take a knife and tear my mother's breast? Then when I die she will not take me to her bosom to rest. You ask me to dig for stone. Shall I dig under her skin for bones? Then when I die I cannot enter her body to be reborn again. You ask me to cut grass and make hay and sell it, and be rich like white men. But how dare I cut off my mother's hair?¹⁵⁵

This traditional belief finds modern expression in the above-mentioned protests over lumbering and mining operations, protests based in a different concept of land use. Historically, the conflict is implicit within the oft-expressed white rationale for the taking of Indian lands. In prior centuries, whites applied a variant of the Manifest Destiny doctrine, arguing that Indians didn't "do anything" with the land and consequently should be deprived of it, the spoils

¹⁵⁵Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz, p. 33.

going to whites who would press for "development." The Indians, meanwhile, were using the land to its fullest, given their conception of man's role in nature, by taking from it the minimum required to live.

This is the essence of the tension between views of land as object and as subject. Examination of the alleged causes of this tension is also instructive. The dominant Indian explanation indicts Christianity, citing the Genesis creation story in which God gave man "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth," with instructions to "subdue it."¹⁵⁶ In stark contrast, Indians claim that their religion grants man "no divinely ordained dominion over anything except himself. He is, or should be, simply one more part of the earth's ongoing cycle, coexisting unobtrusively with other forms of life . . ."¹⁵⁷

A more complex indictment of the relationship between Christianity and nature enlists the aid of Albert Camus

¹⁵⁶Genesis 1:28, Holy Bible (King James Version).

¹⁵⁷"Indians in Revolt," in Chronicles, ed. by Council, p. 308. This difference between Indian and white accounts of the origin of man also reflects differing epistemological assumptions. For example, while the Genesis story represents creation in a downward direction, from abstractions of the spirit to flesh, the Navaho version (which tells of the emergence of man upward through several layers of worlds) represents the process as originating in the body substance. See Sheila Moon, A Magic Dwells: A Poetic and Psychological Study of the Navaho Emergence Myth (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1970), p. 34. This is entirely consistent with the emphasis on learning as a matter of personal encounter with the natural world, rather than as reasoning from abstraction.

in its explication. Deloria quotes Camus as saying, in part:

But when the Church dissipated its Mediterranean heritage, it placed the emphasis on history to the detriment of nature, caused the Gothic to triumph over the romantic, and, destroying a limit in itself, has made increasing claims to temporal power and historical dynamism. When nature ceases to be an object of contemplation and admiration, it can be nothing more than material for an action that aims at transforming it.¹⁵⁸

Deloria wholly accepts this historical analysis and then argues that the area of ecology is precisely that in which, despite such "temporal power," Christian churches are the most helpless.¹⁵⁹ Regardless of how one reaches the conclusion that Christianity is fundamentally opposed to nature and, therefore, to the sacred hoop of the circle of life, this conclusion has caused the American Indian Movement to declare Christianity one of the three major enemies of Indian people.¹⁶⁰

Indians also offer a more secular explanation for the tension between land as subject and land as object, grounded in the white man's use of technology. Technological advances, of course, make possible the strip mining, lumbering, water diversion, and other environment-shaping actions with which Indians are concerned. But technology, to many Indians, is

¹⁵⁸Deloria, God is Red, p. 70. The original is found in Albert Camus, The Rebel, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), p. 299.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 71.

¹⁶⁰"A.I.M.: The American Indian Movement," mimeographed leaflet, p. 1.

an artificial mediator between man and nature which has prevented whites from recognizing the role of earth as teacher. As a result, whites no longer learn the lessons of nature and instead learn to fear not only the natural world, which is unfamiliar and threatening to them, but even the artificial world of their own making. Technology has resulted in alienation to such an extent that Lame Deer is enabled to observe: "I think white people are so afraid of the world they created that they don't want to see, feel, smell or hear it."¹⁶¹ Whether the Indian alternative would be to reject technological developments outright is uncertain; however, it is probable that advances would be scrutinized and subordinated to the Indian attitude toward nature.¹⁶² Erik Erikson, for example, comments that the Indians have adopted "centrifugal" (peripheral) items of white culture, like the horse and firearms, but have rejected the more "centripetal" (central) items, like farming, which are more directly inconsistent with traditional beliefs.¹⁶³ Reservation Indians also have been known to reject for spiritual reasons modern clustered dwelling units built by the BIA.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, p. 121

¹⁶²"Indians in Revolt," in Chronicles, ed. by Council, p. 306.

¹⁶³Erik H. Erikson, Childhood and Society (2nd ed.; New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1963), p. 132.

¹⁶⁴Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 18.

In summary of the land return demand, Indians offer a variety of explanations for the seemingly estranged relationship with nature which characterizes white society. The precise points at which contemporary militants take exception to white attitudes vary from group to group and even individual to individual. Yet, activists generally agree that the observed white conception of land as commodity to be bought, sold, and technologically transformed violates basic Indian spiritual beliefs in the roles of nature as teacher and sustainer. Thus, a tension arises between the competing views of land as object and land as subject, and between views of man's proper role in nature as active (transforming) and passive (accommodating).

The Red Power movement is dedicated, in part, to replenishing and sustaining the Indian view. And because of the Indian identification with nature (the merger of self and scene), it is vital to the physical and spiritual existence of the tribes that the movement succeed. In this way, qualities of scene (the sustaining and instructive qualities of nature) cause demands concerning land restoration to be formulated and voiced.

The Issue of Self-Determination

The second major Red Power demand is for tribal self-determination. This demand actually encompasses several complex issues, of which sovereignty for the tribes, restoration of the old forms of tribal government, an end to termination of services to the tribes and relocation of

their members, and the dismantling of the BIA are the most significant. The bulk of the Twenty Points dealt with these concerns.¹⁶⁵ But regardless of which particular variant is considered, the central issue involved remains the same. It is the question, say the militants, of the "freedom of a people to act and conduct affairs of its own nation,"¹⁶⁶ or of "the ability to guide our own lives."¹⁶⁷

How do scenic qualities shape this demand? Occasionally, an activist spokesman draws an organic connection between the roles of nature in Indian life and method of government, as in the following:

We've tried this white man's government and it's failed. It's degraded our people and caused the ills that have fallen upon us. So we can see that the only way to regain our relationship with the Mother Earth, is to go back to the system of government that's done so well for us for so long.¹⁶⁸

However, this passage is the exception rather than the rule. Generally, the effects of a traditional concern with nature on this demand are more indirect.

Primarily, government is identified as a property of the scene because it is held to be a gift, not an invention. The distinction is made as follows:

We have been a nation for at least a thousand years. Our government is not one

¹⁶⁵"20 Point," Akwasasne Notes, pp. 30-32.

¹⁶⁶Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 96.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 246.

¹⁶⁸Ibid.

that is made up from men's ideas--our government is something that was given to us because we needed it.¹⁶⁹

In this view, government is one means by which men can actualize the principles of nature and participate properly in the world. Consequently, scenic influences are discoverable in both the purpose and the process of government.

The sustaining role of nature shapes the belief that government should meet the needs of the people to whom it was given; government is a social institution given to Indians to help sustain them. The traditional criterion of the performance of some outstanding deed of benefit to the tribe as a prerequisite for admission into the tribal council similarly emphasizes the role of sustenance; membership is dependent upon demonstrated ability to sustain the people.

Procedurally, native government often mirrors the role of nature as teacher. Council members sit in a circle, the symbol of the unity of all things. Decision by consensus, rather than majority vote, also symbolizes unity. Passing the pipe and conducting other religious ceremonies identifies the council with the universe and its teachings. Finally, a vision or other spiritual revelation is often sought as the basis upon which to make decisions.¹⁷⁰ In these ways, government confirms and implements the material of personal experience, thereby actualizing the lessons of nature.

¹⁶⁹Oren Lyons, quoted in "IFCO Report," Akwasasne Notes, p. 27.

¹⁷⁰Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 151.

Expressed another way, Indian forms of government do not separate church and state, the sacred and the secular. All things are sacred because they both reveal and mirror the principles contained in the scene. Government is no exception.

Equally important, sovereignty is a part of the scene because it was the "natural" condition in which Indians lived prior to the coming of the white man. Contemporary activists are cognizant of this fact, and steadfastly maintain that they are still sovereign peoples because sovereignty is not conferrable, but only recognizable:

It is not within the power of the United States of America to either grant sovereignty, or to take way sovereignty. The only question is whether the United States will recognize the sovereignty which exists.¹⁷¹

In fact, this position offers a clue to the entire thrust of the movement. It may be viewed as an effort to secure natural rights, in the sense that certain conditions of life were given to the Indian by the Great Spirit and therefore are pre-existent to any conditions imposed by foreigners. Recognition of sovereignty would function in precisely the same manner as would restoration of land in that it would permit the actualization of the lessons of nature by making spiritual and cultural renewal possible. Granting these two major demands would permit Indians to reassert their traditional control over the scene by participating in nature.

¹⁷¹Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 64.

In these ways, scenic qualities find their expression in the general self-determination demand.

More specifically, when Indian activists demand self-determination, they may be demanding any combination of three distinct states: (1) tribal independence and sovereign status, (2) restoration of pre-1934 forms of tribal government, and (3) tribal control over activities on the reservations, especially in the areas of criminal justice and BIA programs. In turn, what do each of these demands involve?

The issue of sovereign status essentially involves a demand that the Federal Government return to treaty-making as the appropriate means of conducting business with the tribes. Treaties, of course, were the original means that white colonists used in dealing with the native inhabitants, and their appeal to today's activists stems in large part from the nature of the treaty relationship. That is, both (or all) parties to a treaty are presumed to be equal and separate, voluntarily committing themselves to the provisions of the agreement. Legally, such a relationship governed Indian-white dealings until 1871, when a rider was attached to the Indian Appropriations Act of that year, declaring:

No Indian nation or tribe within the territory of the United States shall be acknowledged or recognized as an independent nation, tribe or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty.¹⁷²

¹⁷²This Act is discussed in Robert W. Oliver, "The Legal Status of American Indian Tribes," Oregon Law Review, XXXVIII (April, 1959), p. 200.

This act of Congress had the effect of lowering the status of the tribes from that of quasi-independent equality to dependent subordination; thereafter, Indians were to be dealt with by legislation, like any other group subject to the sovereign authority of the United States government.

Therefore, it is not surprising that Indian militants, seeking to reestablish their centuries-old status of independence and self-government, demand the repeal of the 1871 provision, together with other Congressional and___ judicial guarantees that a treaty relationship will be sustained, with automatic relief for violations.¹⁷³ Additionally, Indian groups throughout the country frequently attempt to legitimize their demands through the citation of specific treaties or portions of treaties. The Alcatraz occupation was said to be based on a treaty allowing Indians to recover abandoned federal property. The Alexian Brothers novitiate seizure was grounded ostensibly in a similar treaty. The establishment of the Ganienkeh community in upstate New York in 1974 is said to rely on the Treaty of 1794, guaranteeing sovereignty to the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy.¹⁷⁴ And Wounded Knee II was, in part, the result of the Oglala demand that relations with the United States be based on the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³"20 Point," Akwasasne Notes, p. 30.

¹⁷⁴"Honor the Treaties!", No More Broken Treaties, Late Fall, 1975, p. 7.

¹⁷⁵Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 55.

These last two examples are notable because the 1871 Appropriations provision was not retroactive. Hence, the 1794 and 1868 treaties would seem to be still legally in effect; at least this is the claim of the militants.

The extreme importance of treaties does not mean, as one might assume, that the treaties are accepted and recognized as necessarily valid. Actually, many are dismissed as illegitimate. Frequently, the reason given is that those who signed the treaties had no authority to speak for the tribe; this is the case with a 1797 treaty upon which opponents of the Ganienkeh settlement rely.¹⁷⁶ Further, even those for which the Indians demand recognition are not necessarily viewed as having been properly negotiated and contracted. Indian support for a treaty is not meant to legitimize its history, which may have involved deceit, trickery, coercion, "firewater" and the rest. Rather, the modern attitude seems to be that, regardless of the manner in which Indians were treated at the time of contracting, the U.S. government committed itself to certain obligations which, if carried out, would benefit modern Indians. Hence the modern movement seeks to make the government fulfill the obligations which it incurred in exchange for the right to "steal" Indian land. The treaty mechanism, while flawed, is simply the white man's device which best recognizes Indian sovereignty, and is defended on this basis.

¹⁷⁶"Honor the Treaties," No More, p. 7.

Several corollaries to this demand for sovereignty exist. The first involves the issue of citizenship. All Indians born within the U.S. have been citizens since 1924, and this status has been upheld repeatedly in the courts.¹⁷⁷ Increasingly, however, militant Indians are claiming citizenship in their traditional tribes, pointing out that it is possible to maintain dual citizenship in two countries at once. Further, they take strong exception to the government's position that their status as U.S. citizens precludes the use of treaties, believing that a treaty relationship and citizenship are compatible because treaties are signed with tribes, not individual Indians.¹⁷⁸

The second corollary involves the problems of subsequent legislation, which may be best explained by example:

In *Totus v. United States* . . . seventy-one members of the Yakima Tribe sought relief from the draft under a treaty clause providing that they would never be required to make war upon any other tribe. It was held that that clause of the treaty had been abrogated by the Selective Service Act of 1949 . . . ¹⁷⁹

At issue here is the extent to which subsequent legislation by Congress may nullify the force and effect of treaties. The majority of ordinary members of the movement seem to believe that a compact between nations naturally takes precedence over domestic legislation. Those who have worked most closely in Indian law recognize that this is not the

¹⁷⁷See Oliver, "Legal Status," pp. 210-211.

¹⁷⁸Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 64.

¹⁷⁹Oliver, "Legal Status," pp. 210-211.

case. A spokesman for the Institute for the Development of Indian Law nonetheless maintains that, in international law, the Indian position is the correct one:

Congress does have the authority to do that. Treaties are placed in U.S. law on a par with Acts of Congress. In other words, if Congress passes a statute today, which is in conflict with a treaty made yesterday, the statute governs. Of course, that's entirely contrary to international law. It is never possible under international law for one nation to pass a law in its own country which abrogates its international obligations.¹⁸⁰

This position, in fact, assumes the sovereign status of the tribes. Current Congressional authority to abrogate is said to rest only on the premise that Indian tribes are subject to the laws of the U.S., a premise which places treaties on a par with legislation. However, when the tribes are accepted as independent, then international law takes precedence and treaties are elevated above legislation. Thus it is understandable that militants who view themselves as members of sovereign nations and demand that the U.S. recognize such sovereignty would argue that legislation by Congress cannot nullify its treaty obligations.

The final corollary to the demand for sovereignty concerns the legal relationship between Indian tribes and the several states. Militants maintain that state and local governments should have no jurisdiction over members of Indian nations, especially on reservations. Conversely, they maintain that white men operating on reservations should be subject to tribal jurisdiction. The legal history behind

¹⁸⁰Tim Coulter, quoted in "IFCO Report," Akwesasne Notes p. 27.

this demand is incredibly complex. Generally, no governmental unit had criminal jurisdiction over offenses solely involving Indians until the Seven Major Crimes Act of 1885 (which was subsequently expanded to twelve).¹⁸¹ This act claimed exclusive federal jurisdiction. However, the relationship changed in 1953 with the passage of Public Law 280, the effect of which was "to give certain states . . . jurisdiction over all offenses committed on reservations, and to permit the other states to assume such jurisdiction at their pleasure."¹⁸² Activists today demand the repeal of state laws enacted under P.L. 280 as the single greatest threat to Indian sovereignty and self-government.¹⁸³

In part, this demand arises out of what Indians label "racist treatment" at the hands of local officials and courts. Such an attitude is especially prevalent among the Sioux in South Dakota, the scene of the most consistently violent confrontations between Indians and whites, and among the tribes of the Pacific Northwest, where struggles with state game officials over fishing rights are particularly bitter. Additionally, the demand is voiced because state jurisdiction over Indian tribes denies the latter their sovereign status; no foreign country in the world conducts business directly with the State of Minnesota, for example, much less being bound by the force of its laws. In the meantime, the court

¹⁸¹Oliver, "Legal Status," pp. 201-202.

¹⁸²Ibid., p. 225.

¹⁸³"20 Point," Akwesasne Notes, p. 31.

battles continue unabated; the U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled that the State of Minnesota has no authority to levy a tax on the personal property of the Chippewa Indian who brought the suit.¹⁸⁴

The demand for sovereignty is in this way a part of the general demand for self-determination. It is important to notice that the activist position on the issues of citizenship, legislative nullification, and state jurisdiction all reinforce the concept that tribes must be dealt with as sovereign entities, which is implicit within the nature of a treaty relationship.

The second specific demand subsumed under the general goal of self-determination is the restoration of traditional forms of tribal government. In part, this demand grew out of a bitter and continuing battle among Indians, between the "traditionalists" and the "progressives." The former group tends to be comprised of full-bloods residing on the reservations and militants. The latter are frequently mixed-bloods, perhaps having chosen to leave the reservation and integrate into white society, perhaps remaining on the reservation in the employment of the BIA.

Generally, the progressives have controlled tribal government, at least among the Sioux. Following their military defeat, the Indians were placed on reservations policed by the Army and, later, the Department of the

¹⁸⁴Joe Blade, "Reservation Indians to Hear State, Local Taxes Ruled Out," Minneapolis Star, July 16, 1976, p. 10A.

Interior.¹⁸⁵ The early decades of reservation life were characterized by systematic murders of tribal leaders, withholding of government rations, and a variety of excruciatingly documented punishments designed to destroy their independence.¹⁸⁶ In 1934, however, as part of the refreshingly enlightened "Indian New Deal," an effort was made to give the tribes a measure of self-government. Each tribe was given the option to vote to accept a BIA-written tribal constitution, thereafter to be governed by a duly elected tribal council on the familiar Western democratic model. Virtually all tribes voted to do so.

In the thinking of many Indians, these tribal governments are institutions of the white man¹⁸⁷ which, with the aid of the BIA, turn their backs on the needs of traditionals. An interview with a Sioux woman from Wanblee, South Dakota, is revealing in this regard:

Mostly the people that are part Indian and part white get the best, but not the fullbloods. Fullbloods never get anything.

The mixedbloods benefit from the system?

Just the small number of the family that are related to the Tribal Council, or to whoever the Tribal President is at the time, are the only ones that benefit from it.

¹⁸⁵The Bureau of Indian Affairs was organized in 1834 as part of the War Department; the Interior Department assumed authority in 1868. Oliver, "Legal Status," p. 199.

¹⁸⁶Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., The Indian Heritage of America (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), p. 349.

¹⁸⁷Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 57.

How do they benefit?

By getting jobs and getting loans, things like that.¹⁸⁸

Corroboration for this negative view of current tribal politics comes from the Harvard Law Review, which, based on extensive interviews with tribal leaders around the country, concluded:

BIA paternalism, combined with the consensual tradition, has limited the experience of tribal leaders primarily to the organization of political machines and the distribution of patronage. Without jurisdiction over important policy questions, political organizations are formed primarily on personal rather than policy lines.¹⁸⁹

The frustration of attempting to deal with these "corrupt little tyrannies" and "willing accomplices of the Federal Government"¹⁹⁰ has led militants to demand the repeal of the 1934 provision. Sentiment is less than unanimous concerning what should take its place. References are generally made to "our own way," without further description; the most important feature of this "way" seems to be decision by consensus rather than majority rule. And some national Indian leaders, such as the executive director of the National Congress of American Indians, are not convinced that

¹⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 181-182.

¹⁸⁹Warren H. Cohen and Philip J. Mause, "The Indian: The Forgotten American," Harvard Law Review, 81 (June, 1968), p. 1830.

¹⁹⁰Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., "Wounded Knee and All That-- What the Indians Want," New York Times Magazine, March 18, 1974, p. 67.

the old spiritual ways and modern government are incompatible.¹⁹¹

A test of this issue currently is underway. In January, 1976, Pine Ridge reservation Tribal Chairman "Dickie" Wilson was defeated in his bid for reelection. Wilson was a hated object of attack for his operation of a private police force, known as the "goon squad," failure to call council meetings, election fraud, and sundry other acts. Several impeachment attempts against him failed during his term of office, and a major demand of the Wounded Knee militants was that he be removed from office. Thus, his defeat by a candidate generally supported by the militants may have the effect of modifying their opposition to modern tribal government.

In spite of disagreement over the best form of government, Indian activists are quite agreed as to its purpose:

If governments do not serve the people, they should not exist. If they oppress any of their people, they should not exist. And if they do anything to compromise or hurt the traditions, the religions of the people, they should not exist.¹⁹²

And, reflecting their self-perceived sovereignty, they assert that it is their right, and their right alone, to make form congruent with purpose; any other arrangement constitutes "government by permission, and that isn't self-government."¹⁹³

The perceived complicity of the Bureau of Indian Affairs in maintaining these dictatorial tribal governments is also

¹⁹¹"IFCO Report," Akwesasne Notes, p. 27.

¹⁹²Chuck Trimble, quoted in ibid.

¹⁹³Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 113.

a manifestation of the paternalism of the "Colonial Office."¹⁹⁴
 In response to alleged BIA efforts to keep Indian people subservient, the third kind of self-determination demand--tribal control over social and economic aid programs--is voiced.

A sense of despair often permeates Indian dealings with the government. To a great extent, the discontent which has fueled the movement is a result--as it is with so many social movements--of the poverty in which Indians live:

Their average family income is only \$5000. Their life expectancy is 7 to 10 years less than the national average. Their infant mortality is three times greater than the U.S. average. Their alcoholism and suicide rates are almost twice the national norm. . . . four times as many American Indians die in car wrecks than the U.S. population in general. Forty percent of the U.S. Indian population are unemployed.¹⁹⁵

Such conditions are but the average; often they are worse.¹⁹⁶
 And they persist despite an ever-increasing Bureau budget. The BIA's appropriations increased from \$243 million in 1968 (prior to Alcatraz) to more than \$530 million in 1973 (the year of Wounded Knee), and total Federal expenditures for Indians climbed from \$455 million to \$925 million during the

¹⁹⁴Steiner, New Indians, p. 254.

¹⁹⁵Donovan J. Ochs, "A Fallen Fortress: BIA, 1972" (paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April, 1974), p. 3.

¹⁹⁶For a description of the conditions on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, see "Wounded Knee: The People's Struggle," West River Times, East River Echo, August, 1975, p. 2.

same period.¹⁹⁷ Where has the money gone? For the militants and traditionalists, the answer is obvious: to pad the pockets of the BIA bureaucrats and the coopted tribal leaders. This predicament leads militants like Vernon Bellecourt to lament: "The government appropriates a billion dollars yearly for Indians. Yet our people are suffering from hunger, the worst housing conditions and ill health. . . . The bureaucracy has totally failed us."¹⁹⁸

The problem, according to the Indians, is that even well-meaning whites have no conception of what the real problems of Indian people are because of basic religious differences. Yet, whites have always presumed that they knew best. Such an a priori condemnation of Native American culture reflects a continuing theme in Indian-white relations: "Most Europeans and Euro-Americans, instead of attempting to co-exist with native groups, have sought to forcibly alter the latter's way of life . . ."¹⁹⁹

The policy manifestation of this "missionary" approach is the stranglehold which the BIA maintains over the lives of Indians. One may fairly state that no other agency of the Federal government has such direct control over the lives of individual citizens:

Although the normal expectation in American society is that a private individual or group

¹⁹⁷Josephy, "Wounded Knee," New York Times Magazine, p. 66.

¹⁹⁸Bellecourt, "Interview," p. 131.

¹⁹⁹Jack D. Forbes, ed., The Indian in America's Past (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 11.

may do anything unless it is specifically prevented by the government, it might be said that the normal expectation on the reservation is that the Indians may not do anything unless it is specifically permitted by the government.²⁰⁰

Cohen has characterized this increasingly broad interpretation of the powers of the Bureau as a shift from "the management of all Indian Affairs" to "the management of all the affairs of Indians."²⁰¹ Thus, the Secretary of the Interior may veto a proposed tribal constitution, veto a tribe's choice of legal counsel, exercise broad supervision over tribal lands and assets; Congress can restrict the sale by a tribe of its land, control expenditures of tribal funds, give the Federal courts jurisdiction over offenses on tribal lands, give this same jurisdiction to the states, and even dissolve a tribe as a legal entity.²⁰² Further, Federal power is not only applicable to the tribe, but also may operate, through literally thousands of Bureau regulations,²⁰³ on individual Indians.²⁰⁴

Indians who attempt to escape this control face a dilemma of major proportions. They must give up their claim to land title on the reservation, sever themselves from whatever services the local BIA office might provide,

²⁰⁰Cohen and Mause, "Forgotten American," p. 1820.

²⁰¹Felix S. Cohen, "The Erosion of Indian Rights, 1950-1953: A Case Study in Bureaucracy," Yale Law Journal, 62 (February, 1953), p. 352.

²⁰²Oliver, "Legal Status," p. 232.

²⁰³Cohen, "Erosion of Rights," p. 352.

²⁰⁴Oliver, "Legal Status," p. 211.

and leave the reservation; in short, they must assimilate into white society as individuals, without a land base, the very phenomenon today's movement is struggling to prevent. This accounts for the seemingly paradoxical defense of the BIA by many Indians as the best of a bad situation.²⁰⁵

This dilemma also helps explain the almost universal Indian opposition to termination. Heralded by its proponents as a kind of "Emancipation Proclamation" for Indians, termination was a policy introduced in the 1950's, the goal of which was to sever Federal services to the tribes and place them on their own. To a group demanding self-determination, this might seem an appropriate mechanism. However, Indians recognize that they are no longer capable of sustaining themselves economically (to them, a condition deliberately created by the government), and that to terminate services would be to plunge them even deeper into poverty.²⁰⁶ Furthermore, termination is a legal procedure. Its implementation means that the Federal government removes even the minimal responsibility it has assumed toward the tribes, thus dissolving even the special "trust" status of Indians, the last vestiges of their original sovereignty. As explained by Iroquois chief Oren Lyons:

²⁰⁵Our Brother's Keeper: The Indian in White America, quoted in Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., Red Power: The American Indians' Fight for Freedom (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971), pp. 131-132.

²⁰⁶Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz, p. 84.

As soon as they terminate Indians as an entity, they terminate the obligations of the United States to our people. And then these claims on land and sovereignty weaken and become something to put in a museum, safely.²⁰⁷

Consequently, Indians today demand that those statutes which terminated tribes like the Klamath, Menominee, and Senecas be repealed,²⁰⁸ as part of the overall attempt to regain sovereignty.

Complicating the entire situation have been the large-scale shifts in governmental policy toward Native Americans, from the enforced acculturation and religious persecution begun in 1870,²⁰⁹ to the generally enlightened Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, to the erosion of rights during the 1950's, to the new hope generated by promises of the early Nixon years that the government would renounce termination and meet its obligations to the tribes. Perhaps Erik Erikson was correct when he asserted:

The young and seething American democracy lost the peace with the Indians when it failed to arrive at the clear design of either conquering or colonizing, converting or liberating, and instead left the making of history to an arbitrary succession of representatives who had one or another of these objectives in mind.²¹⁰

Today's militants do perceive a "clear design" of oppression and cultural genocide; nonetheless, they would probably agree

²⁰⁷Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 96.

²⁰⁸"20 Point," Akwesasne Notes, p. 31. This demand has been partially met, with the passage of the Menominee Restoration Act on December 23, 1973.

²⁰⁹Forbes, America's Past, p. 112.

²¹⁰Erikson, Childhood, p. 117.

with Erikson's conclusion that such inconsistency in policy was seen to demonstrate insecurity and bad conscience.²¹¹ Uncertainty over future policy, manifested in the failure of the Nixon promises to materialize, created widespread disillusionment in Indian country, giving added impetus to the movement. By 1972, the administration was seen as another in a long line of oppressive bureaucracies:

The paternalism of the White House response becomes more and more clear-- to have Washington officials say what is or is not misleading to Indian people, for them to define the "real problems," for them to say what are the needs and solutions, without offering to correct the base of the problems; that is paternalism at its worst.²¹²

Thus, the administration in power at the height of Indian protests, despite its campaign pledges, was viewed as echoing the old belief that whites knew best what was good for Indians, a belief sanctioned by the Supreme Court in 1903 when it declared that "Congress had plenary power to manage Indian tribal property for the benefit of the Indians, and that the decision of Congress as to what was beneficial for the Indians would not be overthrown."²¹³ To the Indians, this attitude precludes the efficacy of half-way measures:

The White House apparently means that self-government is merely "program

²¹¹Ibid.

²¹²Trial of Broken Treaties, p. 70.

²¹³Felix S. Cohen, "Indian Rights and the Federal Courts," Minnesota Law Review, 24 (January, 1940), p. 71.

operation"--but native peoples are talking about their sovereignty--not their administration. To have people administering the same programs under the same regulations as was done with the BIA is even a step backwards, for it is no improvement and adds insult to injury.²¹⁴

Thus, the BIA must be abolished; alternative means which treat the tribes as sovereign entities must be found by which the government can fulfill its treaty obligations.²¹⁵

Taken together, these three issues--sovereignty, governmental form, and program control--comprise the self-determination demand voiced by Indian activists. Of these, sovereignty is clearly the cornerstone, without which the other two become practically moot.

Conclusion

To summarize, nature has always assumed two vital roles for Indians: those of sustainer and teacher. Man's place in the world is to treat Mother Earth with respect, in appreciation for sustenance, and to actualize the lessons of nature in his daily life. These requirements in effect dictate that the issues of land and self-determination will be prominent among militant demands, and shape the specific points of contention of which these issues are composed. Ecological and other issues concerning the land are vital to the movement because the traditional identification between

²¹⁴Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 83.

²¹⁵These alternative means are outlined in the Twenty Points. See "20 Point," Akwesasne Notes, pp. 30-32.

man and nature (or agent and scene) links the fates of each together. Similarly, the traditional belief in government as a gift meant to reflect the lessons of Creation identifies government as a scenic component. Hence, the militant articulation of these demands is a necessary effort to protect and guarantee the physical and spiritual survival of the movement and Indian people in general. Without a land base, governed by traditional tribal means, Indians as Indians will cease to be, and the movement therefore will die as well.

These two demands are interdependent. The absence of land and self-government are considered mutually causative factors in the conditions of Indian life; poverty is said to be a consequence both of BIA ineffectiveness and of the loss of land.²¹⁶ The termination "solution" is opposed both because it ends whatever legal claim the tribes might still have to land and because it places Indians under the jurisdiction of state governments, thereby undermining the quasi-independent legal status which they now enjoy. As a result, the achievement of a satisfactory solution to one demand without the other would accomplish very little. This dual importance is reflected in such phrases as "Oglala control of Oglala land"²¹⁷ and "Land and Unity."²¹⁸

²¹⁶Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 12.

²¹⁷"A Glimpse of Civil Rights 1984 as the Wounded Knee Legal Campaign Continues," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 14.

²¹⁸"Sovereignty," NASC News, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 1.

A satisfactory solution to both also is required because both demands involve natural rights. They are natural in the sense that they reflect nature's lessons, and Creation's intentions, regarding the proper way for men to live. They are natural also in the sense that these lessons were revealed to Indians by the Great Spirit centuries before the white man arrived; as aliens to this land and these lessons, whites have no right to abrogate them. A partial solution would only partially permit Indians to actualize these lessons in their tribal and personal lives; to the degree they remain alienated, like whites, their physical and spiritual survival as Indians will remain in jeopardy.

Of course, whether natural or otherwise, these rights have been abrogated and Indian survival is problematic, according to the activists. This is why the modern movement is needed. Generally speaking, the next chapter will examine the ways in which qualities of the scene have constructed a framework of Indian-white relations within which these militant demands are promulgated and expressed.

CHAPTER III

RED POWER AND WHITE POWER

Whenever we finish talking to ourselves the world is always as it should be. We renew it, we kindle it with life, we uphold it with our internal talk. . . . The world is such-and-such or so-and-so only because we tell ourselves that that is the way it is. If we stop telling ourselves that the world is so-and-so, the world will stop being so-and-so.²¹⁹

Introduction

One characteristic of the natural world of utmost importance in most Native American belief systems was touched on tangentially in the previous chapter. It was noted that man's primary role in the world is to actualize in his own individual and tribal life the principles revealed by nature. Praying to the cardinal directions was cited as one example of an act through which this role may be fulfilled. When employed, this act invokes certain properties found in the natural world; thus, courage is obtained by praying to the west, wisdom by praying to the east, and so on. Animals, meteorological phenomena and plants also are thought to possess special properties. Yet, in manifesting the ultimate unity of all things, the

²¹⁹Carlos Castaneda, A Separate Reality, Pocket Books (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 219.

Indian sees these properties, while distinct, as being part of a single Property, or Power.

This concept of Power is the subject of this chapter. First, the nature, functions, and acquisition of Power will be examined. Second, the role which the relationship between man and Power requires will be characterized as that of the "warrior." Then, using the warrior role as a starting point, the ways in which the modern movement emphasizes its relationship to Power will be explored. These include the development of modern warrior societies and the prevalence of military themes in militant rhetoric. Fourth, the demystification of White Power will be discussed. This difference between the historical and modern concepts of the relationship between man and Power is significant because it alters the conditions and chances for movement success. Finally, the defensive qualities of the military theme will be examined. In the end, to fight a defensive, rather than offensive, war with whites permits militants to characterize their movement as an essentially conservative, rather than revolutionary, struggle.

The Nature of Power

"Power" is the term used by Indians to describe supernatural force. Anthropologists term it mana, which has been described as roughly equivalent to the New Testament pneuma (translated as the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost).²²⁰ Codrington,

²²⁰J.S. Slotkin, "The Peyote Way," in Teachings From the American Earth, ed. by Dennis and Barbara Tedlock (New York: Liveright, 1975), p. 99.

who first observed it in the beliefs of Pacific Islanders, describes it as:

. . . what works to effect everything which is beyond the ordinary power of men, outside the common processes of nature; it is present in the atmosphere of life, attaches itself to persons and to things, and is manifested by results which can only be ascribed to its operation.²²¹

Since this discovery, something akin to mana has been found among most "primitive" peoples throughout the world, identified by a wide variety of names. Among the North American Indians, the Sioux denote its presence by the term wakan:

All life is wakan. So also is everything which exhibits power, whether in action, as the winds and drifting clouds, or in passive endurance, as the boulder by the wayside. For even the commonest sticks and stones have a spiritual essence which must be revered as a manifestation of the all-pervading mysterious power that fills the universe.²²²

Clearly, Power is a pervasive supernatural force in the natural world. Not all creatures and objects are endowed with equal powers. This may vary both on a general level (e.g., the power of a buffalo is greater than that of a stone) and on a personal level (e.g., the buffalo has power for one individual but not another). Hence, for the Iroquois, for example, "the orenda power was different for each plant, animal, man, or spirit, just as brains and muscles were

²²¹R.H. Codrington, The Melanesians (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1891), pp. 118-119.

²²²Francis LaFlesche, "The Osage Tribe: Rite of Vigil," 39th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1925), p. 186.

different."²²³ Yet all things--animals, birds, plants, rocks, water, celestial bodies, meteorological phenomena, active bodies, stationary objects--potentially have power. Thus supernatural Power in the largest sense is "the animating principle of the universe."²²⁴

In a curious sense, Power is both personal and impersonal. It is personal in two ways. First, it is personal as to object, in that the power of an eagle to give clear vision differs from the power of a bear to make one a healer or medicine man.²²⁵ Second, Power is personal as to receiver, in that the same power may reveal somewhat different qualities to different persons and, once a person has encountered Power, its teachings are his alone.²²⁶ Yet, Power is completely impersonal in the sense that the individual powers are actually one Power.²²⁷ Moreover, while teachings are individual, almost anyone may learn, which is to say, acquire a power.²²⁸

²²³Ruth M. Underhill, Red Man's Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 21.

²²⁴Morris Edward Opler, An Apache Life-Way (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), p. 205.

²²⁵For a discussion of the different manifestations of Power, see John (Fire) Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes, Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions, Touchstone Books (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), especially Chapter 9.

²²⁶Willard Z. Park, Shamanism in Western North America (Evanston: Northwestern University, 1938), p. 21.

²²⁷John Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks, Pocket Books (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 201.

²²⁸Park, Shamanism, p. 92.

A crucial characteristic of Power is its ambivalence. While pneuma is thought to be generally beneficent, mana is neither good nor evil; instead, Power works benefit or misfortune according to how it is used. Underhill reports that ". . .with Indians all power was one, and the distinction was in the way it was used. The same man calling on the same power, could work evil or good according to his desire."²²⁹ Park finds that "the belief that shamanistic power is both beneficent and malevolent is found throughout western North America."²³⁰ This ambivalence is illustrated by the dream phenomenon, which is a common means of acquiring Power but is also a common cause of illness.²³¹

Power, then, is not benign. When power is acquired, the individual suffers, and throughout his life he is constantly threatened not only with sickness but with death as well. He is endangered not only by his own acts, but also by either deliberate or thoughtless behavior of others.²³²

Castaneda's accounts contain numerous illustrations of this principle. Don Juan's caution concerning the "little smoke" are typical:

The pipe will feel the strain of being handled by someone else; and if one of us makes a mistake there won't be any way to prevent the pipe from busting open by its own force, or escaping from our hands to shatter,

²²⁹Underhill, Religion, p. 5.

²³⁰Park, Shamanism, p. 87.

²³¹Ibid., p. 38.

²³²Ibid., p. 33.

even if it falls on a pile of straw. If that ever happens it would mean the end of us both. Particularly of me. The smoke would turn against me in unbelievable ways.²³³

Because of this capacity of Power to turn on its user, it must be handled with great caution. Whether the procedure for using a power is the practice of a certain rite, the construction of a medicine bag, the singing of a song, or some other activity, this procedure must be carried out correctly. "The ritual details are important not because they cure in themselves but because once the proper procedure has been carried out the power . . . is expected to recognize its own songs and prayers and to honor its pledges to act at the individual's bidding."²³⁴ In general, it is not accurate to say that Power is fickle (although don Juan does use this term to describe the power of the jimson weed). As long as the proper rites are observed, and barring outside interference, the power should cooperate with the individual. However, should power objects be handled carelessly, songs or prayers recited incorrectly, or false claims to the possession of power made, the power will turn against the person guilty of these offenses.

These, then, are the principle characteristics of Power: it is pervasive, both personal and impersonal, both good and evil. Power is present in all aspects of nature. As such,

²³³Carlos Castaneda, The Teachings of Don Juan, Pocket Books (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), p. 69.

²³⁴Opler, Apache, p. 207.

it is the supernatural property in which all things share; thus, all things are one, are united, in Power. Furthermore, because Power is the manifestation of the supernatural in the natural world, its presence in all aspects of the world makes each and every aspect sacred. Eliade comments:

. . . a sacred stone is venerated because it is sacred, not because it is a stone; it is the sacrality manifested through the mode of being of the stone that reveals its true essence. This is why we cannot speak of naturism or of natural religion in the sense that the nineteenth century gave to those terms; for it is "supernature" that the religious man apprehends through the natural aspects of the world.²³⁵

The Functions of Power

Because it is such an integral part of existence, Power is essential for living. It maintains a person both physically and spiritually. Physically, power promotes health, keeps one safe when danger threatens, and may be used to help secure the physical necessities of life, e.g., food. Spiritually, Power provides the knowledge of how to live one's life properly.²³⁶ Castaneda reports that, in the teachings of don Juan, an "ally" was:

. . . a power a man can bring into his life to help him, advise him, and give him the strength necessary to perform acts, whether big or small, right or wrong. This ally is necessary to enhance a man's life, guide his

²³⁵Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, trans. by Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1959), p. 118.

²³⁶Slotkin, "The Peyote Way," p. 99.

acts, and further his knowledge. In fact, an ally is the indispensable aid to knowing.²³⁷

Once a man gains such knowledge, he shares in and becomes part of the sacred unity of all things in Power:

The Indian actually identifies himself with, or becomes, the quality or principle of the being or thing . . . whether it be a beast, a bird, one of the elements, or really any aspect of creation. In order that this "power" may never leave him, he always carries with him some material form representing the animal or object from which he has received his "power."²³⁸

Hence, metaphysically, Power is that phenomenon in which all things may share, which invests all things with sacrality, and thereby unites all in a single "substance." Such a spiritual unity of man, nature and supernature is paralleled in the physical realm by transformation. The ability of a person to become an animal or bird affirms the essential unity of each while denying the notion that forms of life are unalterably separate. "The capacity for metamorphosis is one of the features which links human beings with the other-than-human persons in their behavioral environment."²³⁹ Yet, transformation is not simply an act of will; it is possible only with certain kinds of Power. Power is thus the agency of unification in the realms of the physical and metaphysical.

²³⁷Castaneda, Teachings, p. 51.

²³⁸Joseph Epes Brown, ed., The Sacred Pipe (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1971), p. 45.

²³⁹A. Irving Hallowell, "Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View," in Teachings From the American Earth, ed. by Dennis and Barbara Tedlock (New York: Liveright, 1975), p. 163.

The Acquisition of Power

Since Power is indispensable for living, efforts to acquire it are advisable. In fact, the pursuit of Power is a duty because, through Power, one can fulfill his human role by actualizing the unity of all things.

There are three methods of acquiring Power: the dream, the vision quest, and, to a lesser extent, inheritance.²⁴⁰ In the first, Power incarnated in some animal, bird, or other being appears to an individual during sleep. The power performs certain actions or creates certain pictures in the dream which become the means by which it may be recalled later. For example, the power may sing a song which the individual then must repeat each time he calls the power when he is awake.

The vision quest is similar to the dream. The major difference appears to be that the dream is an involuntary acquisition of Power, while the vision is purposefully sought. Consequently, special preparations are made for a vision quest: an isolated location is selected, eventualities are planned for, and the individual purifies himself before beginning the quest. However, since a dream may be the avenue by which Power is acquired during a vision, the dream and the vision are often functionally equivalent. Both are states of consciousness in which Power may be received. They may occur spontaneously or be induced through fasting, the performance of rituals, or, as in the case of the Native

²⁴⁰Opler, Apache, pp. 108-109.

American Church, by the use of aids such as hallucinogenic plants.

It is important to realize that the Indian does not dichotomize the world into those waking moments which reveal "reality" and other states of perception which are "fantasy." Dreams and visions are not fabrications of the mind, products of the unconscious, or other subjective creations. Rather, the experience is an encounter with an external, objective entity. Power initiates the encounter, seeking the proper person through which to work;²⁴¹ the individual may only prepare himself for the event through purification and supplication. Generally, the "real" is not distinguished from the "imaginary." And in extreme cases, as with the Apache, dreams are classified as the former:

. . . dreams of the acquisition of power are not classified with ordinary dreams and, indeed, are not interpreted as dreams at all. . . If a person is asleep when supernatural power attempts to contact him, he considers that the power awakens him and that what follows is a real occurrence.²⁴²

Thus, if anything, the world seen in dreams and visions may be more real than the world of ordinary perception. Black Elk affirms this, and echoes Plato's description of life in the cave, when he comments: "That is the real world that is behind this one, and everything we see here is something

²⁴¹Ibid., p. 202.

²⁴²Ibid., p. 204.

like a shadow from that world."²⁴³ Power is an ultimate and final reality. Nonordinary states of consciousness are themselves proof of the presence of Power. Hence, the world of dreams and visions, in which direct apprehension of Power is possible, is more real than the waking world which can only provide indirect contact with the supernatural.

Inheritance is the third means of acquiring Power. It is not clear specifically how this is done. One fact which seems certain is that the inheritance is not automatic; the power, of its own volition, may refuse to accept the man's son or nephew, for example. Consequently the extent to which Power may be acquired simply by learning the appropriate rites, without a vision-like experience, is uncertain. The cultivating tribes are more permissive in this regard; their cultures emphasize the role of a priest who obtains his position by learning tribal rituals and ceremonies which can be performed without a special vision.²⁴⁴ On the other hand, hunt-

²⁴³Neihardt, Black Elk, p. 71. Man's predicament, as Black Elk describes it, is remarkably similar to Plato's characterization of the world as a cave in which men can only see the shadows of reality, not reality itself. The principle difference between these two descriptions lies in the means of escaping the predicament; while Black Elk believes that the vision permits one to apprehend reality directly, Plato grants this ability to dialectic. For Plato's metaphor of the cave, see Republic, trans. by Paul Shorey, Bk. VII, esp. 514-532, in Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds., Plato: The Collected Dialogues, Bollingen Series LXXI (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 747-764.

²⁴⁴Underhill, Religion, p. 82.

ing and gathering tribes are more restrictive; their cultures emphasize the shaman who obtains his power through the personal vision experience.²⁴⁵

The epistemological emphasis on experience also limits the scope of inheritance because it suggests that Power must be encountered personally. In fact, Power has been described as "a force that is experienced: the powerful man is the man whose power one feels; one trembles, feels abashed . . ." ²⁴⁶ Experience is the only certain means of knowing that Power has been acquired. Castaneda, in relating don Juan's insistence that he find for himself his "good spot" on the ground, explains:

He said that while I remained rooted to my "good spot" nothing could cause me bodily harm, because I had the assurance that at that particular spot I was at my very best. I had the power to shove off anything that might be harmful to me. If, however, he had told me where it was, I would never have had the confidence needed to claim it as true knowledge. Thus knowledge was indeed power.²⁴⁷

It may be added that experience is, therefore, also power.

What is it about the dream/vision experience which makes one "powerful"? Power is generally acquired when one understands the meaning of the dream or vision. The encounter may be a picture of something--usually the relationship between

²⁴⁵Ibid.

²⁴⁶Bryan R. Wilson, The Noble Savages (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), p. 23.

²⁴⁷Castaneda, Teachings, p. 53.

the power and the individual--and "the power is in the meaning."²⁴⁸ This meaning is then recalled and invoked when the picture is re-created (actualized) in the ordinary world. Thus, the realm of Power and the supernatural is open to what Martin Heidegger has termed "contemplative" as opposed to "calculative" thought, or "thinking that is oriented toward meaning as opposed to thinking that is oriented toward results."²⁴⁹ If the meaning is understood, the power itself will achieve whatever results are desired.

Once returned from the encounter with Power, the individual has changed. "Having seen for himself the reality of the other world, he now has what William Blake called 'the double vision,' as opposed to 'the single vision' of Newton."²⁵⁰ He recognizes that both realities are equally valid and interpenetrating. His experience in the dream/vision has established a link between himself and Power which may be drawn on in the waking world, through reenactment, for purposes of protecting or destroying, healing or making sick, guaranteeing a successful harvest or hunt, and so forth. Eliade summarizes the process when he notes: "'Reality' unveils itself and admits of being constructed from a 'transcendent'

²⁴⁸Neihardt, Black Elk, p. 175.

²⁴⁹Dennis and Barbara Tedlock, eds., Teachings From the American Earth (New York: Liveright, 1975), p. xiii.

²⁵⁰Ibid., p. xx. Don Juan also refers to this phenomenon; see Castaneda, Separate, p. 37.

level, but this 'transcendence' can be ritually experienced and finally becomes an integral part of human life."²⁵¹

This transcendent reality becomes so integral that, once a person has obtained a power, the relationship tends to color every realm of interest and activity in the person's life:

One man, who has a ceremony from Lightning, tends to interpret everything possible in terms of it. He even sees a lightning symbol in the zigzag lacing of the child's cradle, a point that no one else seems willing to concede.²⁵²

The Role of Warrior

Historically, the Indian world was far from edenic; it was highly dangerous. Numerous folk tales²⁵³ and oral histories²⁵⁴ emphasize the prevalence of death and other, lesser threats to existence. The close proximity to and accessibility of the supernatural greatly heightened these dangers, because the powers were mysterious as well as merely potent. They might work evil as well as good; they might destroy a man as well as protect him. Don Juan underscores these hazards: "The world is indeed full of frightening things and we are helpless creatures surrounded by forces that are inexplicable and unbending."²⁵⁵

²⁵¹Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality, trans. by Willard R. Trask, Harper Torchbooks (Evanston: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968), p. 140.

²⁵²Opler, Apache, p. 208.

²⁵³Cf. Frederick W. Turner, III, ed., The Portable North American Indian Reader (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), p. 30.

²⁵⁴Ibid., p. 135.

²⁵⁵Castaneda, Separate, p. 214.

Hence, both the natural and supernatural realms of the world posed dangers. To survive under such conditions required that an individual have certain qualities and live a certain kind of life. Of paramount importance were the virtues of courage (the willingness to face these dangers) and self-sacrifice (for the greater good and survival of the tribe).

The social role which developed in response to these requirements was that of the "warrior." Courage and self-sacrifice were required in the provision of the physical necessities of life. The warrior was called upon to face the dangers of the hunt in providing food, and the dangers of war in defending the tribe's security; each situation required courage in the face of the very real possibility that one's life would be sacrificed. These virtues were also manifested in the give-away, the practice of giving away to other tribal members (especially the less fortunate) all of one's material possessions on virtually any occasion.²⁵⁶

Further, courage and self-sacrifice were demanded in the provision of the spiritual necessities of life. The warrior was expected to obtain a power and harness it for the benefit of the tribe. In fact, since power was a highly volatile force which was a constant threat to its possessor, courage

²⁵⁶This demonstration of self-sacrifice served the very pragmatic purpose of equalizing wealth within the tribes and maintaining the poor, while at the same time re-creating the original give-away of the Great Spirit. Erik Erikson discusses the give-away among the Sioux in Childhood and Society, (2nd ed: New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1963), p. 140.

and the willingness to sacrifice one's life were needed in the ongoing contact between the warrior and his power.²⁵⁷ "Only as a warrior can one survive the path of knowledge,"²⁵⁸ warns don Juan, which is to say, only when one lives as a warrior can self and tribe survive in the face of the harsh dangers in nature and supernature.

In dramatic terms, the warrior is a persona, a role or character created, in this case, by the conditions of the dramatic scene (the presence of supernatural Power in nature). As a persona of Power, the "warrior" is a potentiality which can be actualized by the fulfillment of the role. Created by the scene, the persona is, in Burkeian terms, an example of the scene-agent ratio, whereby the qualities of agents may be deduced or derived from the qualities of the scene. For, historically, the actualization of the warrior role had two highly significant meanings. First, by becoming a warrior and acquiring Power,²⁵⁹ one "opened oneself" to the influence of Power, became an instrument, and thereby became united with the supernatural order of things. In other words, Power was the agency through which self and scene were merged,

²⁵⁷For example, in seeking a guiding vision, it might be necessary to inflict self-torture, as in the Sun Dance of the Sioux. Cf. ibid., p. 114.

²⁵⁸Castaneda, Separate, p. 214.

²⁵⁹The warrior persona is predominately a male persona. To what extent women may fulfill it is problematic. Women may obtain Power; furthermore, many militants today speak of the warrior as a role which can be filled by either male or female. The extent to which this was permissible, historically, is uncertain.

and this occurred when the persona of Power was actualized in an individual life. Second, once Power was acquired, the warrior persona normally required that it be used for the higher welfare of the tribe. Consequently, to correctly actualize the persona was also to enact, in an individual life, the functions of nature as teacher and sustainer of the tribe.²⁶⁰

Today the same persona presents itself for fulfillment, with the same consequences, to those who accept the traditional concepts of the role of the supernatural. The next concern of this chapter is to specify the ways in which the persona of Power is presented and utilized in the rhetoric of modern militants.

Indian Militants and the Persona of Power

The concept of the warrior is a key to understanding much of the rhetoric of the modern Indian activist movement. As noted, it places great value on the virtues of selflessness and courage. At the same time, it incorporates the militaristic connotations of a fighter in the natural world with the metaphysical connotations of a fighter in the supernatural world, thereby making the world a "battlefield" with

²⁶⁰By fulfilling this persona, the individual adopts toward his tribe the same roles as teach and sustainer that nature is said to perform for man in general. Insofar as man's purpose is to actualize the lessons of nature, therefore, this is the most "perfect" persona. While there were other personas in tribal life (e.g., the heyoka, or clown, who does everything backwards), the warrior was by far the dominant one.

natural and supernatural dimensions.²⁶¹ In this light, Morris Opler's comments concerning the typical encounter between an Apache shaman (a practitioner of good medicine) and a witch (or sorcerer, a practitioner of evil medicine) are significant; they reveal the interpenetration of these two forms of battle:

The entire contest between the shaman and the witch is phrased in terms of warfare. The sorcerer is said to "shoot" his victim with "arrows" (the witchcraft objects). Consequently to intercept these arrows is literally to disarm the witch, and this is what the shaman tries to do. Then, with his good power, he attempts to shoot the arrows back into the witch. But if the shaman is not "strong" enough to accomplish this, he himself may fall ill, because the very witchcraft objects which he has extracted from his patients are now "sticking in him."²⁶²

Historically, the relations between Indian and white have been laced throughout with this militaristic concept of Power. The collapse of aboriginal cultures when faced with superior technology has been well-documented. Initially, the white man's inventions were mysterious and unfathomable. They were seen as examples of the great powers given the white race by

²⁶¹Probably, it would be impossible to determine whether a metaphysical analogy was drawn from the military field of battle, or vice versa. It is more important to realize that a "battle" takes place on both levels at once; in fact, since these levels are so inter-twined, the two forms of battle are different aspects of a single battle. Proof that the Indian believed this to be so can be found in the medicine bags and, later, the Ghost Shirts, which warriors trusted would supernaturally protect them in a very real fight. See Warren K. Moorehead, The American Indian in the United States: 1850-1914 (Andover: The Andover Press, 1914), p. 179.

²⁶²Opler, Apache, pp. 248-249.

the Great Spirit.²⁶³ There was Power in the firearm, and in the horse which, when introduced to the Plains tribes, was called "holy dog." There was Power in the "whispering wires" --the telegraph-- and the "iron horse." There was power in alcohol, which the Sioux still call mni wakan, or "holy water," for its ability to produce effects first thought to be like those of a dream or vision.²⁶⁴ There was even Power strong enough to kill (later identified as smallpox) in the blankets furnished by white traders and soldiers. Finally, there was Power in sheer numbers; so many whites were sweeping west that this was taken to indicate the high favor in which the Great Spirit²⁶⁵ held his white children.

It is significant that, throughout this process of white immigration and settlement, a dominant form of contact between the races was the Army fort and the traders who frequented it. Thus, contact with these strange new powers of the white man, combined with the presence of the Army, required the services of the Indian warrior in the fullest sense described above. The Indian was called upon to do battle simultaneously with the U.S. Cavalry and the Power of the white man's ways. Thus, traveling among the whites in the east, perhaps to attend the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania,

²⁶³Turner, Portable, p. 247.

²⁶⁴Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, p. 77.

²⁶⁵or the white God--Indians disagreed about whether or not both races shared the same deity.

was viewed by some young Indians as an opportunity to demonstrate bravery in the face of the enemy.²⁶⁶

As relations between the Indians and the whites gradually deteriorated, a gradation of opinions about the white man emerged. At one extreme were those who, like the Potawatomi named Senachwine, felt the natural/supernatural battle had been lost:

Resistance to the aggression of the whites is useless; war is wicked and must result in our ruin. . . . The time is near when our race will become extinct, and nothing left to show the world that we ever did exist . . .²⁶⁷

Similarly, Chief Seattle, a Delaware, observed in 1854:

Your God makes your people strong every day. Soon they will fill the land. Our people are ebbing away like a rapidly receding tide that will never return.²⁶⁸

At the other extreme were those who vowed to continue the fight until death, such as the Hunkpapa Sioux, Sitting Bull: "God Almighty made me; God Almighty did not make me an agency Indian, and I'll fight and die fighting before any white man can make me an agency Indian."²⁶⁹

The military battle ended, seemingly, with the massacre of nearly 300 Sioux at Wounded Knee Creek in South Dakota, on a winter day in 1890. Black Elk thought it was the end

²⁶⁶Luther Standing Bear, My People the Sioux, ed. by E.A. Brininstool, Bison Books (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), p. 124.

²⁶⁷Turner, Portable, pp. 250-251.

²⁶⁸Ibid., p. 252.

²⁶⁹Moorehead, American Indian, p. 180.

of the spiritual and cultural battles as well:

When I look back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see the butchered women and children lying heaped and scattered all along the crooked gulch as plain as when I saw them with eyes still young. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud, and was buried in the blizzard. A people's dream died there. It was a beautiful dream.

. . . the nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer, and the sacred tree is dead.²⁷⁰

However, the contemporary militant movement, proclaimed as a mending of the hoop and a reflowering of the sacred tree,²⁷¹ attests to the fact that these battles have not ended. The military and metaphysical roles of the warrior as a persona of Power again are being emphasized, the powers of the white man are still being tested, and the divided opinion among Indians as to the nature of the battle remains.

At Wounded Knee II, it was particularly evident that the warrior persona was still (or had become once again) important to militant Indians. Young men painted themselves and prepared their personal medicines (the outward symbols of their individual relationships with Power) for combat, as they had done in Washington, D.C.²⁷² The American Indian

²⁷⁰Neihardt, Black Elk, p. 230.

²⁷¹Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973 (Roosevelt town, N.Y.: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), p. 109.

²⁷²Tracey Bernstein Weiss, "Media Speaks With Forked Tongue: The Unsuccessful Rhetoric of Wounded Knee" (paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, Houston, Texas, December 27-30, 1975), p. 9.

Movement called itself a new warrior society for Indian people, the meaning of which is spelled out in the following terms:

Warrior society to them means the men and women of the nation who have dedicated themselves to give everything that they have to the people. A warrior should be the first one to go hungry or the last one to eat. He should be the first one to give away his moccasins and the last one to get new ones. . . . He, is ready to defend his family in time of war--to hold off any enemy, and is perfectly willing to sacrifice himself to the good of his tribe and his people. That's what a warrior society is to Indian people, and that's what we envision ourselves as, what we idealistically try to be.²⁷³

Clearly, the historical emphasis on the virtues of courage and self-sacrifice in supporting and defending the tribe is echoed here. Additionally, the traditional concern with the supernatural can be found in efforts to determine the nature of the medicine for the warrior society as a whole.²⁷⁴

The renewal of the warrior societies is seen as essential to combat the threat of a 20th century cavalry. Militant literature is replete with militaristic terms, phrasings and references.²⁷⁵ For example, activists cast the government presence at Wounded Knee, especially the Special Operations Group (described as "a 65-man contingent of the U.S. Marshal Service's version of SWAT"),²⁷⁶ in heavily militaristic terms:

²⁷³Voices From Wounded Knee, pp. 61-62.

²⁷⁴Ibid., p. 76.

²⁷⁵Cf. Joyce Frost, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Wounded Knee II, 1973," paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April, 1974.

²⁷⁶"Garden Plot--'Flowers of Evil,'" Akwasasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 6.

As the plans were being developed and debated by the Justice and Defense Departments, the size of the Justice Department Task Force was growing daily. On March 5 there were 243 Federal officers in sight. By the 12th of March, there were over 300. Army material loans by the middle of March were staggering--over 130 M-16 rifles with 100,000 rounds of ammunition, 75 high-powered sniper rifles (M-14s, M-1s, and Springfields, all with scopes and ammunition); helmets, flak vests, signal flares, mine detectors, C-rations, jeeps, trucks, and maintenance technicians for the APCs (Armored Personnel Carriers) were all in possession of the Marshals and the FBI. The equipment, coupled with the manpower of the Marshals and the advice of the military, gave the government exactly what they wanted at Wounded Knee--a clandestine army.²⁷⁷

To the Indians, Wounded Knee was merely the most obvious case of military confrontation and oppression. It was the case where the military got caught; charges against several Wounded Knee defendants were eventually dismissed when Federal judge Fred Nichol ruled in St. Paul that the FBI had "so polluted the waters of justice" with illegal activities that a fair trial was impossible.²⁷⁸ However, as the militants later observed, the government was to learn from its mistakes. Another, subtler manifestation of the same militaristic policy, in their view, was the confrontation at the Alexian Brothers monastery; there, "as at Wounded Knee, there was really a war going on."²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷Ibid., p. 7.

²⁷⁸"Judge in AIM Trial Cites US Misconduct," Minneapolis Star, October 10, 1974, p. 15C.

²⁷⁹"Menominee Defense," Spirit of the People, March, 1976 p. 1.

Hence, while the scope of the U.S. military involvement has broadened beyond the cavalry, militants allege that the essential role of the "armed forces" in Indian-white relations continues unchanged. From the Garden Plot plan coordinating Army, National Guard and local police in the suppression of domestic protest, and its "Cable Splicer" offspring covering four western states under the direction of the U.S. Sixth Army,²⁸⁰ to the CIA's "Operation CHAOS" (a domestic spying operation with undercover ties to local police forces), to government infiltration of AIM through paid informers,²⁸¹ to actions by local police and vigilantes which allegedly include rape, murder, and official refusals to investigate, the militants paint a black picture of armed violence and repression. The FBI and CIA, the Army, the National Guard, the U.S. Marshals, state police and Fish and Game wardens, local police and county sheriffs, white vigilantes, and Indian groups backed by the BIA police (e.g., Wilson's goon squad) are viewed as partners in a concerted, armed effort to destroy the movement. Such attacks, activists claim, continue to this day:

In the aftermath of Wounded Knee, nearly 200 AIM members have been arrested. At least a dozen unsolved murders, knifings, shootings, suspicious accidents and suicides have claimed the lives of AIM members. A number of AIM women have been raped. And AIM members say Pedro Bissonette was assassinated

²⁸⁰"Bringing Vietnam Home," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 4.

²⁸¹"Anatomy of an Informer--Part 2," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 10.

by two Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) policemen on the Pine Ridge Reservation.²⁸²

Federal and state judiciaries are condemned as partners in this campaign of violent disruption. Grand jury proceedings are said to be guilty of complicity because they have become instruments of inquisition rather than investigation.²⁸³ Similarly, local courts are condemned for permitting and encouraging a pattern of unequal law enforcement.²⁸⁴ Moreover, the news media is portrayed alternately as hopelessly coopted by government forces, reporting only the lies which it is fed, and as an active participant in covering up the government's criminal activities.

It is clear that contemporary militants--warriors--find themselves still engaged in battle, in a war which "combines a struggle against colonialism with religious and political war,"²⁸⁵ in "an on-going conflict that we must continually address to maintain our individuality and our sovereignty."²⁸⁶ Parallels constantly are drawn between the Indian situation today and the situation of one or two hundred years ago. Militants in prison and local jails are, as they were in the days of the cavalry, "prisoners of war."²⁸⁷ Crow Dog, after

²⁸²American Indian Movement, ed., "Pine Ridge, June 1975," St. Paul, p. 14.

²⁸³Cf. Native American Solidarity Committee, untitled leaflet concerning grand juries, St. Paul, date unknown.

²⁸⁴AIM, "Pine Ridge," p. 17.

²⁸⁵Ibid., p. 18.

²⁸⁶Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 97.

²⁸⁷NASC News, Vol. 1, No. 2, date unknown, p. 5.

being imprisoned in Leavenworth, wrote: "When they were taking me away to prison in handcuffs, I was thinking: 'Will they kill me like they killed Crazy Horse?'"²⁸⁸

Wounded Knee II stimulated many such comments. This account by one participant recalls the story of the Ghost Shirts which warriors at the original Wounded Knee believed would protect them from bodily harm. It is significant, moreover, because it echoes one of the roles of Power in the contemporary battle--physical protection:

We ran through a hail of bullets one night from that little church. Bullets were whizzing all over us--past us, over our heads, past our feet. But that must be the Great Spirit's doing, to guide us out of the way of the white man's bullet--the pig's bullet--is what I call it.²⁸⁹

Also, the major stumbling block to negotiation at Wounded Knee II was the government's demand that the Indians first disarm and then talk. However, the militants refused, not only because they considered their weapons the only means to negotiate from strength, but also because, in 1890, Big Foot's band had surrendered their arms just prior to the massacre.²⁹⁰ Russell Means draws the historical parallel in general terms:

The white man says that the 1890 massacre was the end of the wars with the Indian, that it was the end of the Indian, the end of the Ghost Dance. Yet here we are at war, we're

²⁸⁸"Crow Dog From Prison," Akwesasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976, p. 14.

²⁸⁹Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 32.

²⁹⁰Ibid., p. 148.

still Indians, and we're Ghost Dancing again. And the spirits of Big Foot and his people are all around us.²⁹¹

In addition to the natural and supernatural powers of the white man being tested in military/metaphysical battle, the historical differences among Indians concerning what, if anything, can or should be done in influencing the outcome of the battle remain. There are modern Senachwines as well as contemporary Sitting Bulls. In discussing the issue of self-determination, and particularly the restoration of tribal governments, the antagonisms between full- and mixed-bloods, between elected tribal leaders and traditionals, were noted. This conflict between "Uncle Tomahawks" and activists is intensely bitter. Its significance for this chapter lies in the fact that its roots may be traced to a supernatural battle between the powers of Indian and white ways.

The central issues in this conflict may be summarized briefly. The so-called Uncle Tomahawks, usually elected tribal officials and Indian employees of the BIA, charge that the activists are "renegades," a "splinter group" which does not represent the feelings of the majority of Indians nationwide.²⁹² They stress the urban origins of AIM in contending that it does not speak for reservation Indians. The condemnation of the BIA occupation by the president of

²⁹¹Ibid., p. 89.

²⁹²Trail of Broken Treaties: B.I.A. I'm Not Your Indian Anymore (2nd ed.; Roosevelttown, NY: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), p. 22.

the Arizona Intertribal Council is representative, although blunt. He charges that the occupation force did

. . . the Indians of America more harm by their action than anything that has been done in the past century. . . . They don't represent the bulk of American Indians any more than Benedict Arnold represented the American colonists.²⁹³

The militants level numerous charges in return. Generally, they accuse the progressives of having been coopted by the BIA and other governmental structures, making them more concerned for their own wellbeing than for the welfare of their people; or, in Deloria's words, making them "supporters of federal policy rather than independent critics of its lethargy."²⁹⁴ More bluntly, progressives are accused of participating in the conspiratorial propaganda campaign being waged by the government and public relations firms representing the huge industrial companies which are after Indian land.²⁹⁵ Activists note that in South Dakota, for example, over 80 percent of tribal lands that are sold, are sold to persons of less than one-half Indian ancestry,²⁹⁶ and Dickie Wilson has been labelled pejoratively as "a real estate agent for the United States government."²⁹⁷ The

²⁹³Ibid.

²⁹⁴Vine Deloria, Jr., "Federal Neglect of Indians Continues to be Far From Benign," Minneapolis Star, August 18, 1975, p. 4A.

²⁹⁵Trail of Broken Treaties, pp. 22-23.

²⁹⁶"Pine Ridge--1976," Akwesasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976 p. 9.

²⁹⁷"Bear Runner Assails Wilson," NASC News, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 3.

militants deny that AIM is only an urban movement,²⁹⁸ and they charge tribal leaders with conspiring with the BIA to perpetrate election fraud, thereby maintaining their grip on tribal government.²⁹⁹ Finally, activists contend that representative government itself is a concept foreign to traditional Indian ways. The tribal councils do not represent Indian people as a whole any more than AIM itself does, because each man is responsible for his own voice, and one man cannot "represent" another.³⁰⁰

The last contention most clearly illustrates the differences among Indians over how the battle should be waged. To the progressives, the adoption of the process of elections, representatives, and the basic mechanisms of the white man's democracy symbolizes their verbalized goal of accommodation (if not assimilation) with whites. In contrast, the emphasis by militants on old tribal principles of government is a symbolic affirmation of independence. AIM does not claim to speak for all Indians, or even all activists; their avowed procedure is to enter a dispute or conflict only when asked to do so by specific groups.³⁰¹ Hence, the clash is ideological, with each position presuming the values of the form of government (and, more broadly, the implicit way of life) it supports.

²⁹⁸Voices From Wounded Knee, pp. 60-61.

²⁹⁹"The Rosebud Election Conspiracy," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 19.

³⁰⁰Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 22.

³⁰¹"Statement by Russell Means," NASC News, Vol. 1, No. 2, p. 3.

However, because the traditional way of life is infused with the supernatural, to militants the clash is more than ideological. Since Power may be used both benevolently and malevolently, men are presented with choice in action. The Uncle Tomahawks have chosen to align themselves with the white man's uses of Power, while the militants defend traditional ways.

Each group believes that it has made the proper choice. This is understandable when one acknowledges experience as the basis of knowledge, it is as natural for the progressives to choose the path which has benefitted them as it is for traditionalists to reject the same path on the grounds that it is injurious. The difference, as the militants see it, is that the progressives' choice abandons the warrior role, the persona of Power, of which the rejection of traditional forms of government is symptomatic. By presuming to represent others, tribal officials have abandoned the warrior role. For, to "speak for" another is, in a sense, to take away his voice and appropriate it for oneself. From here it is but a step to the appropriation of other things for one's personal use and benefit and, thus, to the substitution of the perverse white values of personal gain, greed and corruption for the warrior virtue of self-sacrifice. Unfortunately, say the activists, the division of Indians in this manner, both historically and currently, is an inherent result of contact with the Power of whites, giving further impetus to militant demands for autonomy as the

only means of cultural survival.³⁰²

In brief recapitulation, this section has argued that the traditional concept of supernatural Power demands the existence of the warrior, a person who will face the dangers of contact with Power courageously, obtain one, and put it to work in the natural world for the benefit of the tribe. In militant rhetoric, the warrior is evoked as a persona of Power. Two dominant aspects of this persona were examined here. First, the description of the current movement in military terms attempts to fulfill the persona (or role) by characterizing militants as warriors engaged in armed conflict with the modern white "cavalry", with the physical existence of the tribes at stake. This conflict involves both a natural battle between armies and a supernatural battle between powers; hence, it is both military and metaphysical.

Of course, because Power is a quality of the scene, a battle between powers is impersonal, a competition between scenes rather than individuals. Hence, while militants may speak of a conspiracy to destroy Native Americans, they may mean more a conspiracy of situation than of individuals. For example, one writer speaks of a conspiracy in which government, industry, greed, prejudice, Christianity, education, technology and other white institutions combine, without conscious intent by the majority of whites, to destroy native peoples:

³⁰²Vine Deloria, Jr., Custer Died For Your Sins, Avon Books (New York: The Hearst Corporation, 1970), p. 188.

. . . despite the emergence of such things as Garden Plot and Cable Splicer, there seems to be no coordinated conspiracy. Indeed, there doesn't need to be one. Oppression arises today as a cultural phenomenon of the time automatically and without need of instigators or leaders.³⁰³

In effect, the causes of oppression are generalized and located in the scene created by white existence, and not necessarily in individual agents.

Second, the bitterly divisive battle between militant and progressive Indians over the role of the movement is a conflict involving the survival of traditional Indian ways. Since the belief in Power and the warrior persona are both aspects of traditional belief, their validity is ultimately at stake in this aspect of the military/metaphysical battle. Militants attempt to live as warriors and thereby fulfill the persona of Power, while, activists claim, progressives abandon the warrior virtues of courage and self-sacrifice and thereby deny the legitimacy of this persona. Hence, in one sense, the supernatural battle between powers is a battle for the survival of Power itself. To be only slightly facetious, this is a metaphysical battle between Red Power and White Power, the outcome of which is of ultimate significance.³⁰⁴

³⁰³"Western Peoples, Natural Peoples," Akwesasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976, p. 34.

³⁰⁴There is a parallel, on the tribal level, to this battle between Powers among individuals. Just as the individual warrior must observe carefully prescribed procedures in order to ensure that Power will remain beneficent, the tribe as a whole must not forsake its traditional ways if Power is to guarantee its survival (see Turner, Portable, p. 164; and Wilson, Noble, p. 42). Both individual and tribal destruction are consequences of the abandonment of the proper ways of Power.

Of course, the majority of whites have held that the outcome was determined with the settling of the American West. Historically, this view has been corroborated by Indian prophets who forecast that the choice of some Indians to abandon traditional ways for those of the white man would destroy Indian people as a whole. As noted, Black Elk thought Wounded Knee to be the final destruction. And, because militants constantly draw parallels between the historical and the modern struggle, one might predict that this alleged similarity will mean, if anything, that today's movement against the BIA and other white institutions will suffer the same fate as the original confrontation. However, such a prediction must maintain that Indian activists would begin a movement even though its outcome is pre-determined against them. This is a dubious claim, and so it is reasonable to expect that there is some critical point at which the historical parallel breaks down. Indeed, there is such a point. For today's militant, White Power has lost its power.

The Demystification of White Power

Prior to this century, Indians were struck by the mysterious nature of the white man's "powers," as represented in firearms, liquor, the railroad, and other technological advances. Quite naturally, they attributed to these objects the same supernatural Power which they attributed to virtually all objects in their world. These unfamiliar inventions became additional "hierophanies," to use Eliade's

term: manifestations of the sacred in concrete objects.³⁰⁵ For the white man, on the other hand, the technological devices with which he worked on a day-to-day basis were not hierophanic. At most, they were inspired by God; their creation, however, was at man's hand, and they certainly were not considered to hold within them the power of the Holy Ghost or other supernatural force. The world in which whites lived was (and remains) "desacralized."³⁰⁶

In drawing this distinction somewhat differently, Eliade emphasizes the paradox inherent in hierophanies: "By manifesting the sacred, any object becomes something else, yet it continues to remain itself, for it continues to participate in its surrounding cultural milieu."³⁰⁷ Thus objects are what they are and, at the same time, something more than what they are. This "something more" is the manifestation of the sacred, of Power. Recognizing it both requires and endows one with "double vision." Whites, living in a desacralized world, have only single vision.

Consequently, once the West was pacified and the government's official policy of assimilation had begun, it was only a matter of time until contact with whites made clear to Indians that the former did not consider their devices to be imbued with supernatural Power. This is the point at which the parallel between historical and contemporary battles breaks down.

³⁰⁵Eliade, Sacred, p. 11.

³⁰⁶Ibid., p. 13.

³⁰⁷Ibid., p. 12.

This is not to say that, in Indian eyes, whites no longer have "power." On the contrary, while culture is recognized to be highly destructive of other cultures;³⁰⁸ the Army and other paramilitary forces can certainly destroy Indian property and lives, Christianity and white education can destroy the Indian spiritual and cultural heritage, and government bureaucracy can destroy the sense of self-reliance and pride. No, the white man still possesses powerful forces, the active wielding of which makes the modern activist movement necessary. However, these forces are no longer supernatural; even if they were, the white man does not consider them to be so, and hence does not know how to invoke their Power. The Indian militant, on the other hand, claims to be in touch with the powers which are supernatural by participating in traditional Indian rites and ceremonies and fulfilling the warrior persona.

This shift in the Indian perception of White Power is well illustrated in a work entitled Seven Arrows. The bulk of the work is a fictionalized account, from the Indian viewpoint, of the winning of the West by the white man. In the course of relating numerous experiences of the two major characters, the author reveals and reinforces traditional Indian beliefs, e.g., that Power may be used for good or ill.³⁰⁹ Additionally, the point is strongly made that the

³⁰⁸Deloria, Custer, p. 188.

³⁰⁹Hyemeyohsts Storm, Seven Arrows, Ballantine Books (New York: Random House, Inc., 1973), pp. 125-126.

"Medicine Way" need not and should not be defended against the attacks of other (white) ways; as a gift to man from the Great Spirit, it will always remain a gift and will defend itself.³¹⁰ Thus, the ultimate strength of Power is affirmed.

Then, in two short pages at the conclusion, the scene shifts, presumably to a modern reservation. An old man begins to tell his grandchildren the story of the Seven Arrows and the Medicine Way, prodded by a comment that the white man's schooling and religion are "really a mess, man."³¹¹ A revised tale of Snow White is told. Via the symbolism of the apple, Christianity is made the wicked old witch. Snow White herself represents the Medicine Way:

You see the child of this old woman's marriage was poisoned by the apple and has been asleep. She is a beautiful young maiden waiting for the spirit of peace that is in each of us to kiss her. . . . she is the symbol of the way, the new lodge, like in the story of the buffalo wives.³¹²

The message of the story, and of the book, is unmistakable. Indians will survive and ultimately triumph because of their superior spiritual strength, which needs no protection and which will always remain accessible through periods of death and rebirth. The two major characters in the historical account were killed at the hands of whites; yet the Medicine Way lived on and holds the key to victory for young Indians today. In contrast, the educational and religious

³¹⁰Ibid., pp. 161-163.

³¹¹Ibid., p. 371.

³¹²Ibid.

practices of whites are weak and have no Power. Hence, the American Indian Movement, which thinks of itself as fostering the spiritual rebirth of Indian people, could become the vehicle through which this victory is achieved; activists may draw upon this reinvigorated spiritual Power with the knowledge that whites have no such resource.

This knowledge differentiates the contemporary movement from the historical struggle and makes possible a different, successful outcome. One such outcome is envisioned by Grace Black Elk:

And they even stopped the food and they even stopped our fuel, but now the Great Spirit's gonna punish them by stopping most of the fuel, so they're running short on fuel. And pretty soon. . . there's gonna be starvation coming to the white people. And since we've already been in poverty we know what to do to get by. . . . And then the electricity, that's where our sacred eagle comes in, he controls the weather, and he's gonna see to it that pretty soon there won't be any electricity for the white people And one of these days they're gonna realize how they hurted us. They're gonna be hurt by it too.³¹³

Quite clearly, this is no longer a battle between supernatural forces. It is a battle between the supernatural Power of Indian ways and the merely natural, albeit destructive, "power" of white culture. Thus, the nature of the confrontation between Red Power and White Power has been altered, and necessarily so if the modern movement is to escape the fate of its precursors.

³¹³Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 239.

The Vietnam Analogy

In light of the preceding discussion of the military and metaphysical aspects of the warrior persona, one analogy frequently drawn by Indian activists encapsulates the findings of this chapter.

Militants often compare themselves to the Vietnamese. The possibility of such identification was foreseen by Erik Erikson in 1968:

The worldwide fate of postcolonial and colored identities is hard to predict in view of the clash of new national interests in Africa and Asia. Here one cannot ignore the possible complications of continued American action in Vietnam for a world-wide identification of colored people with the naked heroism of the Vietcong revolutionaries. The very demand that North Vietnam give in (even if it were nearly on her own terms) to be superorganized assault by a superfluity of lethal weapons may simply be too reminiscent of the function of firepower in colonial expansion in general, of police power in particular; and of a certain (implicit contemptuous) attitude which assumes that "natives" will give in to pressures to which the master races would consider themselves impervious (vide the British in the blitz).³¹⁴

Erikson suggests that a confrontation with military force may be the catalytic agent permitting such identification. And indeed, the military parallels are those most often emphasized by militant Indians. Activists point to the use of M-16s, Armored Personnel Carriers, and other Vietnam-era weapons on the reservations.³¹⁵ The commitment of massive firepower to quell militant activities is compared to the similar commit-

³¹⁴Erik H. Erikson, Identity Youth and Crisis (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1968), p. 319.

³¹⁵"Flowers of Evil," Akwesasne Notes, p. 6.

ment made by the U.S. in Vietnam to avoid appearing like a "helpless giant."³¹⁶ The police actions of FBI agents and other government officers in search of alleged criminals are compared to the Army's "search and destroy" missions. It is also interesting to note that, of the practices of the Army in Vietnam, one singled out for specific criticism is defoliation.³¹⁷ This might be expected from a people for whom nature is so important; its equivalent at Wounded Knee II was the Army's allegedly deliberate setting of grass fires with flares.

The analogy is also drawn in other areas. Activists see the Vietnamese as another native people, attached by farming to their land and way of live, and fighting to keep both against a foreign, colonial, imperialist power.³¹⁸ Further, this power engages in indiscriminate killing of women and children, resorts to provocation in order to justify massive counterattacks, and upholds a front by supporting a puppet government. In the Indian experience, indiscriminate killing and provocation are said to characterize Indian-white relations up to the present. The puppet governments are quite clearly the BIA-supported tribal governments.³¹⁹ Those, both Indian and white, who currently support the Indian rights movement (some of whom are Vietnam veterans) suggest:

The peace movement grew out of the indignation of people over the illegitimate actions of the government and the military in Vietnam and was strengthened by an understanding of solidarity with the legitimate

³¹⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

³¹⁷ Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 77.

³¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 195-197

³¹⁹ Ibid.

struggle of the Vietnamese people for their national liberation. THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE NATIVE AMERICAN STRUGGLE ARE THE SAME.³²⁰

In the end, the issues are self-determination and freedom from outside rule for the Vietnamese, the American Indian, and other native peoples throughout the world. Deloria's characterization of the conflict between Indians and whites as a battle between the legitimate owners of the land and the usurpers appears to be the common ground of identification for the American Indians and other native people, from the Mapuches of Chile³²¹ to Guatemalans³²² to Paraguayan Indians³²³ to the Vietnamese.

Importantly, now that United States involvement in Vietnam has ended, Indian activists are able to assess the results. The failure of the U.S. to secure a victory in Southeast Asia is looked upon as a sign that native struggles against foreign powers will succeed. And, while no direct evidence was found, it seems fair to speculate that, for American Indians, success may be attributed to spiritual Power overcoming vastly "superior," but only desacralized, military might.

³²⁰Spirit of the People, Vol. 1, No. 4, April, 1976, p. 4.

³²¹"Mapuches Continue Their Struggle," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, pp. 38-39.

³²²"Native People in Guatemala Need Our Help!," Akwesasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976, pp. 3-5.

³²³"Urgent Call to Action Around Miguel Chas Sardi," publisher unknown, March 29, 1976 (mimeographed).

One document, published in an early edition of the newspaper No More Broken Treaties (obtained through the St. Paul office of the Native American Solidarity Committee), so captures the perceived parallels between Vietnamese and Indian circumstances and describes the military and spiritual aspects of the warrior persona--in short, so illustrates the ideas with which this chapter has been concerned--that it is reprinted in full:

VIETNAM

NATIVE AMERICA

Armed Forces Establishes and Maintains Colonial Rule

Colonial rule established through the use of armed forces (French and U.S. armies), supplied with the most modern weapons, and maintained under the lie of "protecting" the population.

Native Americans robbed of lands throughout 18th and 19th centuries by armed force--especially U.S. Cavalry. BIA, FBI, Parks and Conservation Department forces armed with the most sophisticated weapons, helicopters, APCs, MIGs, maintained on reservations to "protect" against "outsiders and internal militants."

Genocide

Vietnamese viewed as "Commie gooks," My Lai massacres, the use of anti-personnel bombs, napalm, herbicides, the depopulation of countryside, relocation camps all part of genocidal policies against Vietnamese.

Massacres of Native Americans have been and are justified by calling them "savages," "blood-thirsty," and capable of "ambushing and riddling FBI bodies with bullets." The only good Indian is a dead Indian. Sterilization of Native American women, poor health care and high suicide rates as a result of reservation life are also part of genocidal policies against Native Americans.

Robbed of Land and Economic Self-Sufficiency

Control of land passes to the colonial power and through it to Western companies who turn the peasants' land into plantations and mines for the extraction of wealth for the colonizer. Peasants forced to become slave wage laborers on the land of their birth.

Native Americans robbed of their land and confined to poorest, driest areas where it is impossible to live and they are dependent on Government. U.S. companies allowed to take Indian land for mines, parks, factories and Native Americans are landless and unemployed in the land of their birth.

Attempt to Destroy Culture

Missionaries try to spread Western culture and educational system, attempt to assimilate the Vietnamese into French Empire. U.S. destruction of traditional life in countryside and promotion of prostitution, corruption, drugs, and Western luxury items for the few.

Christian missionaries disrupt traditional way of life, help impose foreign system of elective government, establish Western-type schools, where Native Americans are forbidden to speak their own language. U.S. government promotes alcoholism and the cultural destruction of Native Americans.

Political Control

U.S. supports puppet dictators like Thieu, installed through phony elections. Peace Corps and AID programs introduced in attempt to offset political effect of massive military presence.

U.S. supports corrupt puppets like Dick Wilson of Pine Ridge, installed through rigged election, who uses terror to maintain his position while ceding land to U.S. Vista programs introduced in reservation to show "good will" of government.

Struggle for Sovereignty

Vietnamese people defeat French and U.S. forces after more than 30 years of struggle.

Increasing cases of land reclamations and sovereignty demands by Native Americans.³²⁴

Thus, the situations of Vietnamese and Indians are seen as parallel in a variety of respects; most significant is the

³²⁴No More Broken Treaties, Vol. 1, No. 2, Late Fall, 1975, pp. 4-5.

suggested possibility that militants eventually will triumph, just as the Vietnamese did. The complexities of this analogy are reduced to, and contained within, a slogan such as: "If you understand Vietnam, you can understand Wounded Knee."³²⁵

Militancy as Conservatism

This analogy, and the discussion which has preceded it, reveals one major characteristic of the role which activists assume in this battle. This characteristic is grounded in the belief that the U.S. Government, whether in Southeast Asia or North America, is foreign. The belief that whites are foreign intruders on the continent, that the modern movement must renew (and therefore defend) traditional ways of life, that white ways are destructive of the lessons taught by nature, and that government military actions are aggressive while Indian responses are made in defense of their homelands³²⁶ all suggest that the activist movement is a conservative one. That is, its aim is to uphold an order in the face of forces which would overthrow it. In this sense, the movement is said to be "not revolutionary, but consistent."³²⁷ There are a variety of expressions of this position. For example:

³²⁵D.C. Wounded Knee Defense Committee, West River Times, East River Echo, Vol. 1, No. 1, August, 1975, p. 1.

³²⁶"Rainbow People," Vol. 3, in Chronicles of American Indian Protest, ed. by The Council on Interracial Books for Children (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1971), p. 317.

³²⁷Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 97.

We haven't demanded any radical changes here, only that the United States Government live up to its own laws. It is precedent-setting that a group of "radicals", who in the minds of some are acting outside the law, are just in turn asking the law to live up to its own.³²⁸

We are not seeking to destroy the U.S. government. We are not seeking to overthrow the U.S. government. We are seeking to change that which must be changed.³²⁹

Self-government is not a new or radical idea. Rather, it is one of the oldest staple ingredients of the American way of life.³³⁰

We are not radicals. We are not trying to revolutionize society. If society would leave us alone, we would leave it alone.³³¹

We, the Native People have NEVER been a part of your society, therefore our acts are not of the revolutionists; rather a separate People seeking to regain what is rightfully and morally ours.³³²

Of course, this characterization is highly problematic to whites. While Indians may see their demands as only reasonable in upholding the traditional order, it nonetheless remains true that white society was never a part of this order (as the activists themselves argue), and its maintenance would require drastic changes in the dominant

³²⁸Ibid., p. 139.

³²⁹Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz is Not an Island, ed. by Peter Blue Cloud (Berkeley: Wingbow Press, 1972), p. 68.

³³⁰Felix S. Cohen, "Indian Self-Government," in Red Power: The American Indians' Fight For Freedom, ed. by Alvin M. Josephy, Jr. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971), p. 18.

³³¹Stan Steiner, The New Indians, Delta Books (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), p. 70.

³³²"Rainbow People", Chronicles, p. 317.

white order. Thus, to whites, the movement may be perceived as highly revolutionary while, to militants, it seems very conservative.

Conclusion

This chapter is the last of those concerned with describing what Lloyd Bitzer might term the "rhetorical situation,"³³³ or what Burke might call the "scene." Essentially, Chapters Two and Three have outlined the obstacles which militant Indians perceive; obstacles which have given rise to the Indian activist movement, and which form the setting or situation within which the movement unfolds.³³⁴ Chapter Two discussed the influence of this "scene" upon the two major demands of the movement: land restoration and self-determination.

This chapter has examined supernatural Power (in traditional Indians beliefs, the animating principle of the universe) as the animating principle of this "scene." First, the nature of Power was discussed. It was found to be a pervasive supernatural force potentially present in any object in the natural world. Its most critical quality is its

³³³Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 1 (January, 1968), pp. 1-14.

³³⁴Bitzer speaks of an exigence in a situation giving rise to and actually calling a certain form of discourse into existence. In this sense, these chapters have attempted to delineate the exigencies which face militant Indians. See ibid.

ambivalence; Power itself is neutral, and may be used for either good or ill. Because it is such a pervasive aspect of existence, Power is essential for living. Obtaining a power through a dream, vision, or inheritance thus is very important.

Second, the influence of Power upon a man's relationship to others and to the supernatural was discussed. The nature of Power demands that individuals courageously face the dangers inherent in contact with it and selflessly harness it for the greater benefit of the tribe. In this way, the role of "warrior," a persona of Power, is created and demands fulfillment by individuals.

Third, the modern activists' use of this persona was examined. Fundamentally, the prevalence of the militaristic in militant rhetoric reflects the activists' attempt to play the role of warrior. The formation of warrior societies, the description of Indian-white confrontations as "battles" in an on-going "war," the division among Indians as to the legitimacy of the movement, and the analogy between Native Americans and the Vietnamese which frequently is drawn are all a part of the modern attempts to fulfill this traditional persona. In fact, the division between progressive and traditional Indians, insofar as it reflects the former's abandonment of the ways of Power, is a struggle over the legitimacy of this persona.

Fourth, the demystification of White Power was discussed. The fact that the "powers" of the white man are no longer considered supernatural by Indians is a crucial realization

because it breaks down the parallel between historical and modern Indian-white battles. This parallel is frequently drawn by militants. However, its partial disruption is necessary if the modern movement is to escape the fate of its predecessor, i.e., failure. The demystification of White Power holds out new possibilities for success.

Finally, the characterization of the movement as non-revolutionary was noted. Employment of the warrior persona on behalf of an allegedly conservative cause also improves the prospects for success because it harnesses the inertia of the status quo and makes this inertia a defender of the movement, rather than an obstacle to it.

Hence, the scene of the modern movement has been constructed rhetorically so that eventual success by the activists is possible. However, this thesis has not yet considered the means by which such a triumph may be attempted. Even more fundamentally, the requisite conditions for a declaration of victory have not been outlined.

In the remaining chapters, these issues are addressed. With Chapter Four, this work moves away from a description of the scene and the obstacles it contains and begins to consider potential means by which the obstacles may be overcome and success achieved. Initially, one can reasonably hypothesize that success will hinge on the ability of activists to persuade the white power structure to change. Hence, the next chapter will examine the characteristic forms of address which activists use, their intent and effects, and particularly the implicit theory of persuasion which constrains their use.

CHAPTER IV

THE PARAMETERS OF PERSUASION

Indians are probably invisible because of the tremendous amount of misinformation about them. Most books about Indians cover some abstract and esoteric topic of the last century. Contemporary books are predominantly by whites trying to solve the "Indian problem." Between the two extremes lives a dynamic people in a social structure of their own, asking only to be freed from cultural oppression. The future does not look bright for the attainment of such freedom because the white does not understand the Indian and the Indian does not wish to understand the white.³³⁵

Introduction

In social movement theory, the concept that a movement must eventually reach beyond itself if it is to succeed is virtually axiomatic. A movement, it is said, must obtain converts to its cause, increase its following beyond that group which originally formed it, and either overthrow the status quo or locate sympathizers within the status quo who will cause that system to become more closely aligned with the movement's goals. Simons refers to this axiom as the need of social movements to "secure adoption of their pro-

³³⁵Vine Deloria, Jr., Custer Died For Your Sins, Avon Books (New York: The Hearst Corporation, 1970), p. 20.

duct by the larger structure."³³⁶ Ochs agrees, and particularly stresses the importance of capturing the attention of the mass media, since promulgation of demands must naturally precede their acceptance.³³⁷

AIM and its supporters, as a social movement, would seem to be no exception to this rule. Chapter Two discussed the demands which modern Indian activists articulate. These demands, by their nature, are addressed hopefully to an external audience which is able to meet them. For this reason, the Twenty Points of the Trail of Broken Treaties were addressed to the White House, the Congress, and the American public.

It seems obvious that whether or not these demands are met depends upon the process of persuasion, in the traditional sense of convincing another to believe or do something. Indian activists profess that they do not want to overthrow the government, but rather wish simply to be left alone. Further, as "independent nations," most disdain participation in the government as it exists. For example, AIM member Sid Mills, part of the Indian protest caravan which followed the Bicentennial Freedom Train across the

³³⁶Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 56 (February, 1970), p. 2.

³³⁷Donovan J. Ochs, "A Fallen Fortress: BIA, 1972" (paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April, 1974), p. 1.

country, explained that the militants had no intention of taking part in either of the national party conventions held during 1976 because this would be just as improper as it would for England or the Soviet Union to do so.³³⁸ Consequently, any changes in governmental structure and policy which would implement the militants' demands will not result from the militants themselves rising to a position of power within the government. This path is explicitly rejected.³³⁹ Instead, the changes must result from altered attitudes and beliefs on the part of those whites already in positions of power.

In this way, persuasion assumes a central role in determining the success of the movement. However, this chapter contends that traditional Indian beliefs prescribe a certain role for the process of persuasion, just as they were found to shape movement demands. In other words, not only do the traditional ways promoted by activists shape the nature of demands; they also shape the expression of these demands. In this chapter, this contention will be examined in detail, and the parameters of an American Indian theory of persuasion, as presented in militant rhetoric, will be explored.

³³⁸Sid Mills, statement made on KCMO-TV news program, May 20, 1976.

³³⁹As might be expected given the diverse nature of the Indian movement, there are exceptions to this stance. For example, in 1972, Eddie Benton, head of the St. Paul chapter of AIM, ran unsuccessfully for mayor in that city. See Minneapolis Tribune, February 3, 1972, p. 6C.

Limits to Persuasibility: The Nature of "Sharing" and Agents of Change

Not surprisingly, the key to a theory of persuasion is the epistemological importance of personal experience. As noted, Indians believe the primary means of knowing to be personal encounter. Further, in disputes over "truth," "reality" or the "nature of things," experience plays the determining role. This suggests that the role of persuasion in Indian rhetoric may be quite circumscribed, that, in fact, persuasion may be possible only to the extent that experience is shared.

The ways in which rhetoric involves an element of "sharing" is a phenomenon frequently noted. Kenneth Burke, for example, stresses "identification" as the key term in rhetoric:

Here is perhaps the simplest case of persuasion. You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his.³⁴⁰

The complementary aspect of identification as described in this manner appears to be "participation." That is, in identifying one's ways with those of another, the other may participate in the symbolic presentation of these ways. In this sense, rhetoric has a reflexive property through which both parties may share experience. This sharing of symbols in the persuasive process approximates the meaning of "consubstantiality," Burke's term for the way in which, through

³⁴⁰Kenneth Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), p. 55.

identification, Person A becomes "substantially one with" Person B.³⁴¹

Interestingly, American Indian rituals involve a similar kind of sharing. The rituals have as their goal the unification or identification of the participants and all other elements of the Creation. In Burke's terminology, the attainment of this goal makes the individual consubstantial with nature, or the scene. Expressed another way, the individual is invested with "sacrality." Eliade discusses the paradox of hierophanies, in which a sacred object is itself and yet is also more than itself. Burke notes that this is also true of his principle of consubstantiality:

In being identified with B, A is "substantially one" with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once a distant substance and consubstantial with another.³⁴²

Thus, insofar as traditional Indian rituals cause their participants to become consubstantial with others and the universe, they may be said to have a unifying, rhetorical function.

How is consubstantiality possible? For Burke, there are diverse, perhaps innumerable ways in which identification (or persuasion) may occur, all of which are linguistic in the sense that they hinge on the unique capacity of man to manipu-

³⁴¹Ibid., p. 21.

³⁴²Ibid.

late and respond to symbols.³⁴³ This is also true of ritual because the accoutrements and procedures involved are symbolic representations of the universe and the process of becoming unified. However, the symbols of ritual have meaning, and thus Power, only for those who understand them, which is to say, have the shared experiences which endow them with meaning. For the contemporary Indian movement, these necessary experiences appear to be the cultural heritage and traditions within which the rituals become integrated and understandable.

In terms of the potential for persuasion, then, the movement is faced immediately with a problem of sizeable proportions. Whites obviously do not share in this cultural heritage. Rather, their Occidental tradition confronts a heritage with many Oriental influences. Moreover, the movement has chosen to accentuate rather than minimize these differences, as evidenced by its demand for separatism. Thus both the epistemological importance of personal experience and the movement's emphasis on cultural integrity limit the potential for identification and persuasion by limiting the grounds upon which Indian and white may share substance.

The significance of personal experience results in the view that men are not meant to be the primary agents of change in the world. As expressed by Gayle High Pine:

Since it is not of the instructions of human beings to try to force the will of one upon another, or to try to force another people to change, it is not for us to force

³⁴³Ibid., p. 43.

the white people to become what they truly are to be.³⁴⁴

In part, this may be in recognition of the limits of language, "for language is concerned, at its best, with trying to say What Is, and the attempt is always doomed either to fragmentation . . . or to partial frustration and vagueness."³⁴⁵ The Wintu, for example, do not speak directly of What Is unless it has been personally experienced by the speaker.

This attitude toward agents of change is reflected in the conduct of the modern warrior societies in regard to discipline. Militants claim to operate their societies in the traditional manner, "working on a basis of trust, not corporal or disciplinary punishment."³⁴⁶ Stan Holder, head of Wounded Knee Security, explains:

There's no discipline in this warrior society except self-discipline. I don't raise my voice at the men that I supposedly command because I don't command them. We haven't had any trouble at all with this, because people realize the need for this, they realize that once there is a breakdown in this trust we have, that there will be no Independent Oglala Nation.³⁴⁷

In effect, militants expect that each will recognize for himself the job that needs doing, and take appropriate action without prodding from others. The belief that "commanders" do not really command reflects the principle of unity and the

³⁴⁴Gayle High Pine, "Last Chance for Survival . . .," Akwasasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976, p. 31.

³⁴⁵Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 130.

³⁴⁶Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973 (Roosevelt, NY: Akwasasne Notes, 1974), p. 76.

³⁴⁷Ibid.

circle of life, in which no one is ahead or behind anyone else.³⁴⁸ At Wounded Knee, this mode of operation was said to extend beyond military operations to other facets of more ordinary life:

You could do things you felt like doing instead of by somebody's clock or time schedule. You didn't have to eat three meals a day at certain hours--get up when somebody told you to get up. You go on bunker duty because you want to.³⁴⁹

Of course, it is virtually impossible to verify the actual operation of this more relaxed procedure, in which the strictures on behavior which do exist have been internalized as instructions of the Great Spirit and in which other, external limitations are at a minimum. It is sufficient that the procedure is valued, for it indicates that men are not viewed as the primary determiners and enforcers of proper behavior. Erik Erikson found such laxity to be characteristic of the Sioux attitude toward discipline in child-rearing,³⁵⁰ and consequently it appears to be deeply rooted. It reflects an attitude of passivity toward other people which is similar to the Indian attitude of passivity toward nature in general.

If men are not the primary agents of change, what is the alternative? The answer is apparent. The importance of a personal encounter with Power means that the supernatural is the primary agent, an agent which initiates contact and

³⁴⁸Ibid., p. 174.

³⁴⁹Ibid., p. 170.

³⁵⁰Erik H. Erikson, Childhood and Society (2nd ed.; New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1963), p. 154.

works through the chosen individual; in short, assuming the active role in contrast to the passive role of the individual. Human beings should not attempt to force others to be what they were meant to be; rather, such instruction is the task of Power in the world. For white society, which does not consciously recognize the existence of Power except as personalized and internal (and subject to the other limitations discussed in Chapter Three), it is only natural that individuals should be viewed as agents. However, in the Indian view, Power may be encountered everywhere in the external world. Power is an active force in its own right, initiating contact with people and transforming their lives. In this sense, Power is clearly the primary agent of change in the world. Indeed, humans acting in this role may actually interfere with the natural process.

Thus, if Indian rituals and culture are to be persuasive to whites--if, that is, identification is to occur--this must result from white encounters with Power in experiencing these rituals, and not from what militants might say or do. This conviction concerning the nature of persuasion is expressed by a young activist in the middle of the Wounded Knee siege:

I'd love for some of those people in those APC's out there to come out of their skins just enough to come down here and sit with us in a peyote ceremony one night. To feel what it is to get to know some people. And not feel you have to destroy them just because they are different.³⁵¹

³⁵¹Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 199.

Experiencing traditional ceremonies is the way to a changed outlook. Traditional practices are thus rhetorical and, in concert with the epistemological emphasis on experience, help define and delimit the persuasive process.

The current emphasis on cultural renewal as an attempt to preserve these traditions also limits persuasion insofar as it results in efforts to maintain cultural purity. Such efforts range from tourist boycotts of South Dakota in protest of alleged white exploitation of the native crafts industry and disrespect for the Indian dead³⁵² to a variety of attacks on white attempts to imitate Indian ways. These attacks include protests over the imitation of traditional Indian dress,³⁵³ exploitation of Indian spiritual leaders by young white dropouts,³⁵⁴ and a sentimental return by some whites to the rural countryside.³⁵⁵ The Indian attitude toward these activities parallels their attitude toward the environmental movement; both are thought to lack a necessary spiritual dimension. These imitative acts are viewed with derision as cases of whites mimicking and secularizing rituals without the proper background by which to understand and interpret them, and derive any power from their meaning. Hence, it seems that persuasion depends on more than whites simply

³⁵²Wounded Knee Defense Committee, "Tourist Boycott," St. Paul, April, 1975. (Mimeographed.)

³⁵³Stan Steiner, "The White Indians," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1976, pp. 38-41.

³⁵⁴Nani Sheppard, "The Natural World is Not a Free World," ibid., p. 29.

³⁵⁵Steiner, ibid., pp. 38-41.

experiencing Indian practices; it also requires that whites unlearn their own attitudes before these experiences will have meaning.³⁵⁶

Limits to Persuasibility: Competing Scenes

The polarization and competition between ways of life limit the possibilities that whites and progressives may share experience with activists, and thus sharply reduce the bases for persuasion, as argued above. A second limitation derives more directly from the role of Power in this competition.

Power, as the animating principle of the universe (as the primary agent of change) is a quality of the scene. Therefore, the polarization between ways of life, insofar as it is a battle between Red Power and White Power, is actually a battle between competing scenes.³⁵⁷ The effect of such a description is to depersonalize this battle. The enemy is an entire way of life, a set of assumptions and beliefs about the nature of the world, rather than white men as a group or specific whites as individual agents.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁶Sheppard, ibid., p. 29.

³⁵⁷This is not inconsistent with the description of Power as an agent of change. While Power is an agent in the sense that it is an active force, it is not an agent in the same way that an individual is an agent. For, while there may be numerous specific powers, each of which are different, all these individual powers are really one universal Power. Power in this sense is a characteristic of scene, albeit a characteristic which may be individuated in many specific agents.

³⁵⁸One expression of the impersonal nature of the battle was cited in Chapter Three: "Oppression arises today as a cultural phenomenon of the time automatically and without need of instigators or leaders." Sotsisowah, "Western Peoples, Natural Peoples," Akwasasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976, p. 34.

This finding is consistent with the curious fact that, within the Indian movement, there do not appear to be any derogatory terms applied consistently to white "enemies" as individuals. There are, in other words, no equivalents among Indian activists for expressions like "whitey" or "honky," which may indicate the relatively minor role that individual antagonists (agents) are believed to play.³⁵⁹

The effect of such depersonalization on the possibilities for persuasion is clear. If the antagonism is between competing scenes, and not between agents, then persuasive efforts directed at individuals are, at best, of secondary importance. If persuasive efforts are to be made at all, they must be directed toward scenes, not persons. But what does it mean to persuade one's surroundings, the conditions under which one lives? How does one influence what normally is considered as given? No answer to these questions will be attempted until the next chapter. For present purposes, it is sufficient to note that traditional persuasion theory assumes a symbolic interchange between agents; when the interchange involves a scene or scenes, one's intuitive concepts of the persuasive process may be inapplicable, or at least require drastic alteration. Hence, the depersonalization of the militant battle with whites into a struggle

³⁵⁹This appears true only of expressions about whites. Militants have coined phrases for progressive Indians, e.g., "Uncle Tomahawks" and "apples" (meaning someone who, while red on the outside, is really white on the inside).

between competing scenes limits the degree to which persuasion (as commonly conceived) may be effectively used to gain militant ends.

Limits to Persuasibility: The Despoiling of Language

Persuasion is necessarily a symbolic process. A third source of limitations on persuasion is found on the linguistic level, the level of specifically language symbols. That is, Indian perceptions of the way whites traditionally have employed words in dealing with Indians also restrict the persuasive process.

In discussing the process of persuasion, one normally thinks of language symbols as being the most important and immediately relevant. In a primarily oral culture, this fact assumes added significance. Numerous authors have commented on the vital importance and "sanctity" of the spoken word to preliterate societies. Steiner, for example, suggests that, historically, tribal Indians spoke truthfully because "in a society without written languages, without signed agreements, and without licenses a man's word had to be his bond. There was no other. If men lied, tribal society would not function."³⁶⁰ Similarly, words were to be spoken religiously, since the wrong word used in a ceremony or ritual would produce failure.³⁶¹

In contrast, Indians claim that the invention of written language and its use by European peoples caused "a blind

³⁶⁰Stan Steiner, The New Indians, Delta Books (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), p. 82.

³⁶¹Ibid.

worship of written history, of books, of the written word, that has denuded the spoken word of its power and sacredness."³⁶² Standing Bear writes of the result:

The written word became established as a criterion of the superior man--a symbol of emotional fineness. The man who could write his name on a piece of paper, whether or not he possessed the spiritual fineness to honor those words in speech, was by some miraculous formula a more highly developed and sensitized person than the one who had never had a pen in hand, but whose spoken word was inviolable and whose sense of honor and truth was paramount.³⁶³

Indians have always interpreted their dealings with the white man in this light. The verbal and written promises in the negotiation and signing of treaties were so often forgotten, overlooked, or sacrificed to expediency³⁶⁴ that Indians soon came to mistrust the white man's words. In 1787, a Delaware chief commented:

There is no faith to be placed in their words. . . . They will say to an Indian, "My friend; my brother." They will take him by the hand, and, at the same moment, destroy him.³⁶⁵

Such mistrust remains as strong as ever today. Militants view

³⁶²Luther Standing Bear, Land of the Spotted Eagle, in Chronicles of American Indian Protest, ed. by The Council on Interracial Books for Children (Greenwich, Conn: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1971), p. 271.

³⁶³Ibid., pp. 271-2.

³⁶⁴For the most popular chronicle of government treaty-breaking, see Dee Brown, Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1970).

³⁶⁵Pachgantschilias, in The Portable North American Indian Reader, ed. by Frederick W. Turner, III (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), p. 245.

the white man's words, from the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution to the promises of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, as everywhere belied by his actions.³⁶⁶ A modern, rather wry expression of this sentiment, recorded during negotiations over the BIA occupation, is voiced by Ralph Ware, an Oklahoma Kiowa:

I can see what our tribal chairman went through a long, long time ago. These white people are so foxy and so smart with words. They're liars, really. They use candy and money. They steal too. And if you're with them long enough, they smell bad.³⁶⁷

Ultimately, therefore, the process of persuasion is constrained by an inability to talk with whites, who have destroyed the sanctity of the Word and cannot be trusted to speak the truth. In fact, the contact between Indian and white which any attempt at persuasion requires risks the contamination of "pure" Indian culture and reverence for the truth by the corrupting influence of destructive white culture and lies. Hence, in addition to the fact that persuasion is of only limited utility to militants, the contact between Indian and white required for limited persuasive efforts may cause intolerable contamination of the Indian way of life.

Some evidence suggests that this requisite contact between the races, even to the limited degree discussed here, is highly threatening to many Indian militants. Whether the

³⁶⁶Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 86.

³⁶⁷Trail of Broken Treaties: B.I.A. I'm Not Your Indian Anymore (2nd. ed.; Roosevelttown, NY: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), p. 13.

threat is of specifically linguistic contamination³⁶⁸ or, more generally, concerns the danger of becoming somehow less "Indian," activist appeals for separatism, for example, are a de facto recognition of this threat. Streb notes that this fear of contact affects even the militants' choice of civil rights demonstration tactics:

The Indian radical, believing that the use of white artifacts threatens his heritage, is likely to reject or, at best, half-heartedly apply what he considers "non-Indian" confrontational techniques. The Indian is faced with a serious dilemma; he must either surrender his identity and use the "white man's methods of persuasion," or forego such methods, postpone his cultural annihilation, but fail in his quest for "Red Power."³⁶⁹

Chapter Five will reveal that the most frequently chosen confrontational technique is the occupation. Even here one finds among Indians the belief that the act of occupation is itself a violation of the cultural traditions which it seeks to preserve.³⁷⁰

Such are the paradoxes of a constrained persuasive process that requires contact between Indian activist and white, and yet threatens to contaminate Indian culture, including traditional beliefs about the process itself, through such contact. Postponing until the next chapter the question of how militants have "escaped" this dilemma, it seems reasonable to conclude

³⁶⁸High Pine, "Last Chance," p. 30.

³⁶⁹Edward J. Streb, "The Alcatraz Occupation, '69-'71: A Perceived Parody of Power Movements" (paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April, 1974), p. 3.

³⁷⁰Cf. Rupert Costo, "Alcatraz," The Indian Historian, 3 (Winter, 1970), pp. 4-12.

that, for many Indians, whites have despoiled the Word as well as other important aspects of traditional life and have rendered the persuasive process both ineffectual and dangerous. It is ineffectual because the truth of words cannot be guaranteed; it is dangerous because to engage in it is to permit falsity and thereby undermine the social bonds of traditional, preliterate society.

The Effect of Limits: Polarization and Self-Address

The practical effect of these limits on persuasion is to restrict severely the potential of the movement to "secure adoption of (its) product by the larger structure." It is unlikely that white members of the dominant society will ever have the requisite experiences on any mass level, especially when Indian militants attempting to maintain a viable culture demand separation and discourage such contact. It is even less likely that the dominant society will abandon its historical triumph over Indian society and adopt Indian attitudes.

What, then, is the proper posture for militants to adopt towards whites? This view of persuasion suggests one of teacher and student. Insofar as experience is both the dominant mode of learning and a prerequisite for persuasion, the relationship follows easily. Moreover, it is an appropriate relationship in several ways. First, because nature is a teacher, it is appropriate that the people supposedly most closely attuned to and representative of nature should assume a teaching posture toward other peoples.³⁷¹ Second, as an alternative

³⁷¹High Pine takes this position in "Last Chance," p. 31.

to the reverse condition (in which whites are teachers and Indians are students), it is appropriate given the militant belief that white educational oppression is one of the three major enemies of traditional Indian people;³⁷² this relationship reverses this situation and symbolically places Indians in control of the educational process.³⁷³ Third, the teaching role connotes the accumulated wisdom of the past, tradition, the established order and the status quo, and thus is wholly consistent with the militants' view of themselves as a conservative movement. Fourth, the traditional duty of each individual to discover and adopt in his/her own life the lessons which nature reveals is paralleled in the burden on

³⁷²"A.I.M.: The American Indian Movement" (St. Paul: A.I.M. National Office, date unknown), p. 1.

³⁷³Parenthetically, it is instructive to note two additional examples of role reversals on the part of Indian militants. The first, an article entitled "Why the U.S. Never Fought the Indians," by Vine Deloria, Jr., Christian Century, January 7-14, 1976, pp. 9-12, is a fictional visualization of what American history would have been had white settlers listened to and learned from the Indian occupants. It is, then, a visualization of the effects of this teacher-student role reversal.

In a different vein, some militants have attempted to reverse the roles of criminal and judge, aligning the movement with the role of the judge whose duty it is to try the criminal white society. Cf. Dennis Banks, Minneapolis Tribune, July 5, 1975, p. 10C. This is a particularly interesting reversal given the importance of criminal trials in the day-to-day lives of militants and the injustices allegedly received at the hands of a racist court system.

In both instances, a perverse system which oppresses Native Americans is transformed by a switch in roles into a new system in which the Indians have the upper hand.

whites to discover and adopt the lessons revealed by the Indian way of life. Finally, just as supernatural Power may refuse to reveal itself to those seeking its aid, so traditional Indians and activists, through separatism and the ridicule of white imitation, may deny whites access to these lessons.

However, the teacher-student relationship is misleading in one respect. One cannot have teachers without students; each role is defined in terms of the other. Militants continually eschew their minority status and speak of themselves as possessing the superior way of life to which whites should (and eventually must) aspire. In doing so, they assume the teaching role, as expressed in the comment by a Wounded Knee participant that "Indians have always had a lot to say. The question was if the Europeans had any desire or ability to listen."³⁷⁴ But, as suggested above, few whites have listened, which is to say, few assume the role of student. There has been much imitation, but little learning. This has caused much frustration among those sympathetic to the Indian cause:

We have tried the cultural bit. We have tried to counter the stereotype image of the Indian as a Noble Savage, or a drunken, lazy good-for-nothing, or as the song-and-dance man, by acquainting White America with the Indian reality, the beauty of the Indian way of life, the wonder of Indian art. . . . The result of our endeavors was to create Indian fashions for rich white women, to make a few sellers of Indian artifacts wealthy, to create new industries harmful to native peoples . . . We have

³⁷⁴Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 62.

sought to combat the narrow-minded zeal for Christianizing missionaries, by depicting Indian spirituality in word and image. The result has often been the destruction of native holy men and spiritual leaders . . .³⁷⁵

The end result of this frustration is despair over the persuasive process and a recognition that the limits of persuasion render the teaching role ineffective:

I used to think that documenting certain Indian rituals would lead to their preservation and to a better understanding. I think so no longer. Beliefs and rituals come out of the soil, the earth, the plants and animals among whom a people live. They grow out of the language from thousands of years back.³⁷⁶

In other words, the barriers of personal experience are insurmountable.

Therefore, the activist emphasis on cultural integrity and renewal does not function to teach whites the Indian way of life; instead, it emphasizes irreconcilable differences, separating and polarizing Indian and white. This polarization is not strictly racial. The ambivalence of Power and the presence of Uncle Tomahawks are reminders of the existence of both good and bad Indians; similarly, the participation of whites in the movement, especially in providing legal assistance, is a reminder that there are also good and bad whites. To a degree, the difference is one of attitude

³⁷⁵Richard Erdoes, "Crow Dog's Third Trial," Akwesasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976, p. 14.

³⁷⁶Ibid.

rather than race, grounded in the experiencing of tribal society from the inside.³⁷⁷

However, considerations of race contribute substantially to this polarization. Differences in attitude and way of life are conditions of race in that, according to Indians, they were given to each race by the Great Spirit; since it was His design to separate peoples in this manner, Indian and white cultures should not intermix today. This position has a long history, from the 18th century teachings of Pontiac that Indians had to learn to live without "any intercourse with white people,"³⁷⁸ to modern statements like that of Onondaga chief Lloyd Elm:

I have a wampum belt with me that is part of our understanding . . . It represents the white man's government, as one row. It represents the Indian government --the way the creator gave to us, our way of life--as the other row. They never come together. The creator didn't mean us to come together. He gave us our way, and when we deviate from that, we become weak.³⁷⁹

Thus, the respective ways are distinct and meant to remain separate, and race is inevitably a part of this separation. Neither race has the duty to convince the other to adopt its ways. Instead, whites need Indians "only to remind them of what they themselves truly are, so they may try to teach

³⁷⁷Vine Deloria, Jr., We Talk, You Listen. New Tribes, New Turf, Laurel Edition (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), p. 10.

³⁷⁸Bryan R. Wilson, The Noble Savages (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), p. 42.

³⁷⁹Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 257.

their own people how to live a natural life on this land."³⁸⁰

The limits on persuasion, then, polarize Indian and white along predominantly racial lines. However, as implied above, the boundaries between Indian and white are not sharp and distinct. There are still the occasional comments that some form of understanding is possible; whites still participate in the movement in some capacities. The teacher-student analogy is inadequate; is there another which more adequately reflects this polarization? One which seems flexible enough to encompass the militants' own disagreements over the degree of polarization is their characterization of sympathetic whites as "buffers."

One prominent train of thought among militants argues that even whites dedicated to the Indian cause can only participate on the outer fringes of the movement because, in the final analysis, they can never become Indians themselves. The potential for identification is not that great. Therefore, perhaps the best which sympathetic whites may do is to serve as a buffer between native and non-native people, protecting the former from the destructive influences of the latter. Activists suggest that whites sympathetic to the Indian struggle for liberation can be much more effective "if they will engage in the struggle within the ranks of white people, rather than coming over to the Indian front."³⁸¹

Further:

³⁸⁰High Pine, "Last Chance," p. 31.

³⁸¹"On Becoming Human Again . . . ," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 31.

People who know that they are too poisoned to ever become natural people can at least protect the natural people. They can serve as interpreters for them. They can help them in many ways in dealing with the unnatural world, and in that way, allow the natural people to remain natural.³⁸²

In the terminology of Chapter Three, this role can be characterized as maintaining a sort of demilitarized zone between the two parties. Moreover, acting as intermediary between Indians and the white world is precisely the relationship inherent in the representation of militant defendants by the Wounded Knee Legal Offense/Defense Committee and others in the white court system. Thus, the role of buffer or intermediary, so much a part of the everyday contact between militants and whites, is particularly appropriate because the degree of contact it allows is inherently circumscribed; there remains an unbridgeable gap between activist and non-activist.

The net effect of such polarization is self-address. The destructive effects of interaction not only cause today's activists to demand sovereignty and separatism, but also affect the persuasive process itself. Since even the contact required for persuasive efforts may cause intolerable contamination of the militants' ideology and lifestyle, militant persuasive efforts assume two forms. First, whites are warned of the imminent destruction of Indian culture in attempts to cause them to withdraw their destructive influence voluntarily. But second, and more importantly, whites are simply ignored,

³⁸²Sheppard, "The Natural World is Not a Free World," p. 29.

for activists often do not wish to risk contact. Instead, militant rhetoric is addressed to the militants themselves as they attempt to invoke a positive Indian self-image and build solidarity among themselves in the face of opposition from both whites and progressives. In their account of the Alcatraz occupation, for example, the Indians of All Tribes write:

We are a proud people! We are Indians!
 We have observed and rejected much of what
 so-called civilization offers. We are Indians!
 We will preserve our traditions and ways of
 life by educating our own children. We are
 Indians! We will join hands in a unity never
 before put into practice. We are Indians!
 Our earth Mother awaits our voices.³⁸³

This passage is significant because the unity among Indians which it invokes arises directly out of the polarization between "Indians" and "so-called civilization"; the activists are able to affirm the former by rejecting the latter. In this way, self-address is the characteristic result of the polarization created by the limits to persuasion.

The Disease Metaphor

In light of this examination of the parameters of the persuasive process, the common militant practice of referring to white society as a disease³⁸⁴ illustrates well the findings of this chapter.

³⁸³Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz is Not an Island, ed. by Peter Blue Cloud (Berkeley: Wingbow Press, 1972), p. 43.

³⁸⁴Cf. Gayle High Pine, "The Disease That Afflicts Creation," Akwasasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, pp. 34-5.

Traditionally, it will be remembered, disease is thought to be a manifestation of Power which is curable through the efforts of another, more potent form of Power. Thus, the characterization of white society as a disease is highly appropriate. Just as the shaman battles the disease, so, analogously, the militant battles the disease of white society. Further, this characterization identifies whites as being what, historically, they are said to have used in subduing the tribes, i.e., a disease (such as smallpox). Finally, if whites are a disease, this suggests a possible curing or healing of traditional Indians through the medicine of traditional practices.

This identification of white society with disease most clearly illustrates the limits of persuasion in the fact that disease is not an object of persuasion.³⁸⁵ Curing is not a process of cajoling the disease to leave the body; rather, it is forcefully removed and cast aside by the correct enactment of a prescribed ritual. This strongly suggests not only the limited role that persuasion can play in dealing with the disease of white society, but also an end state of separation in which the disease is not destroyed, but is isolated from individuals. The parallel to political and cultural separatism is obvious.

Specific diseases to which white society is compared reveal further implications of this metaphor. Often, no

³⁸⁵This is not to say that said disease cannot be conquered; only that doing so requires more radical techniques than those afforded by traditional persuasive practices.

specific disease at all is indicated. However, white society is described frequently as a kind of cancer,³⁸⁶ invoking all the connotations of insidiousness, deadliness, and mysterious power which this disease has for most Americans.³⁸⁷

White society is also compared to alcoholism.³⁸⁸ This is a significant comparison because the abuse of alcohol among Indians has long been recognized as a very serious health problem, which militants charge was introduced by white settlers as a weapon of cultural destruction and a tool with which to grease the land theft skids. The transformation from a single implement of destruction to a generalized metaphor of cultural conflict is easily made. In this case, the limits of persuasion are reflected in the emphasis placed by militants on the therapeutic principle that an alcoholic must recognize his own disease and resolve to help himself.³⁸⁹

Rabies is a third disease to which white society is compared.³⁹⁰ The two are likened in terms of the symptoms which signal the outbreak of the disease:

A wild animal with rabies suddenly becomes tame and meek, even friendly,

"

³⁸⁶Cf. Deloria, Custer, p. 188; also High Pine, "The Disease That Afflicts Creation," p. 34.

³⁸⁷In a different context, the rhetorical power of "cancer" as a metaphor has been discussed by Edwin Black, "The Second Persona," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 56 (April, 1970), pp. 109-119.

³⁸⁸Sotsisowah, "Western Peoples, Natural Peoples," p. 35.

³⁸⁹Ibid.

³⁹⁰Ibid., p. 34.

and will approach in such a manner that most people will be totally off guard. Still, it bites or scratches its victim.³⁹¹

An element of deception is portrayed here which, in the animal, is unintentional. However, were militants to comment explicitly on this, it seems probable that they would find the deception and two-facedness of whites intentional.

White society and rabies also are analogous, it is said, because both diseases are infectious:

While the disease is fatal to the carrier, the newly-infected victim repeats the process and will go on to bit (sic) another and another and in this way the disease spreads, making carriers of all who are victims, and victims of all who come in contact with carriers.³⁹²

Further, the two are said to be similar in their severity, which is "the most destructive . . . ever to appear on the face of the Earth."³⁹³ Significantly, the destruction is of natural creatures (e.g., whales and the elephant bird) and natural peoples (e.g., those present in the Pequot Wars, Wounded Knee, and My Lai, Vietnam); in this manner diverse elements of the Creation are joined against an "unnatural" disease (i.e., white society).³⁹⁴

Finally, the comparison is drawn in terms of helpful preventive procedures in a way which clearly illustrates the limited possibilities for persuasion:

³⁹¹Ibid.

³⁹²Ibid.

³⁹³Ibid.

³⁹⁴Ibid.

When a rabies epidemic is rampant, there is only one way to avoid the infection--avoid contact with all animals, including loyal pets. There is a similar analogy with native contact with Western peoples--since it is impossible to know who has credibility and who does not, some peoples have chosen to avoid dealing with any Western contacts.³⁹⁵

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the relationship between militants and white society and the parameters within which persuasion may occur. It argued that the central importance of personal experience in Indian epistemology restricts the potential for persuasion on the part of the modern movement. The role of experience makes Power the primary agent of change in the world and dictates for humans a passive stance toward the actions of others. The shared experiences of culture which might make identification possible are unknown or rejected by the vast majority of whites, and forgotten or ignored by progressive Indians. The depersonalization of the current battle into one between competing scenes renders traditional concepts of persuasion between agents inapplicable. And persuasion is also limited because the words of the white man cannot be trusted.

Consequently, success in persuasion is sporadic. The primary effect of these limitations is to polarize Indian and white; even the contact necessary for a persuasive attempt is threatening to many activists. As a result, the movement frequently engages in self-address, which is not subject to

³⁹⁵Ibid.

these limitations or dangers.

The restricted nature of the persuasive process suggests that the axiom regarding the need of social movements to reach beyond themselves may go unfulfilled in the case of the Red Power movement. Ordinarily, this would mean that the movement could be considered a failure, as virtually doomed from the start or, at best, with only marginal chances for success.

However, if one adopts this approach, a vast number of rhetorical events are inexplicable. If Wounded Knee II, Alcatraz, the Trail of Broken Treaties, the Trail of Self-Determination, and so on, are destined to have no effect upon whites or progressive Indians, then why were they staged? Perhaps there is an alternative approach to determining success and failure, employing different criteria and thereby incorporating these events in its judgment, rather than ignoring them.

The starting point for such an alternative basis for judgment is found in one implication of the disease metaphor. It was observed that the curative process is less a persuasive act than the enactment of a ritual. When one remembers that the militant emphasis on cultural renewal involves the practice of traditional rituals, one sees such practice as another kind of curing, accomplishing in macrocosm what specific healing rituals accomplish in microcosm. Consequently, the next chapter will examine the modern enactment of traditional practices as a form of self-address whereby modern Indians hope to effect a "cure" of the "disease" of white

society. Enactment, it will be argued, is a rhetorical function of ritual which provides an alternative to and escape from the parameters of persuasion. In addition, it more adequately accounts for a plethora of rhetorical events, and thus permits a more complete theory of the Indian activist movement.

CHAPTER V

ENACTMENT: INDIAN ACTUALIZATION AND WHITE ALIENATION

There is a prophecy in our Ojibway religion, that one day we would all stand together. All tribes would hook arms in brotherhood and unite. I am elated because I lived to see this happen. Brothers and sisters from all over this continent were united in a single cause. That is the greatest significance to Indian people --not what happened or what yet may happen as a result of our actions.³⁹⁶

Introduction

White commentators on the contemporary Indian activist movement seem unconsciously to adopt the axiom of the necessity for external appeal as an implicit criterion for their evaluations. That is, they almost universally find fault with the tactics of AIM and other militant groups on the grounds that such tactics alienate white society. For example, renowned Indian historian Wilcomb Washburn, director of the Office of American Studies for the Smithsonian Institution, "believes Indian radicals have hindered efforts in behalf of the Indians and that ultimately Indian Power depends

³⁹⁶Trail of Broken Treaties: B.I.A. I'm Not Your Indian Anymore (2nd. ed.; Roosevelt, NY: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), p. 1.

not on number of guns, but on the support of whites."³⁹⁷ A perusal of the editorials appearing in newspapers throughout the country during the BIA building occupation reveals the same attitude in numerous cases. The Washington Evening Star wrote:

Through the years there has been a deep reservoir of public sympathy for the American Indians, but it is bound to be diminished by the atrocious spectacle staged here in recent days. It could be dried up almost totally if there are more such dangerous and destructive capers by Indian extremists.³⁹⁸

The Syracuse Post-Standard commented that the militants' actions would do "damage to their image as a responsible people with a just cause for protest,"³⁹⁹ and the Dallas Times-Herald agreed that:

The inherent dignity of the American Indian--in common with the sensibilities of ordinary whites and blacks--is affronted by stunts such as the red militants pulled in Washington.⁴⁰⁰

The associate editor of the Washington Star News opined:

The tragedy is that the stupid and barbaric behavior of a few hundred militants, who probably do not represent the aspirations and needs of the great mass of the Indians, could serve to obscure the real problems and legitimate hopes of their people . . .⁴⁰¹

³⁹⁷"'New Indian' Struggle Traced," Kansas City Times, April 27, 1976, p. 14B.

³⁹⁸Quoted in Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 48.

³⁹⁹Quoted in ibid., p. 25.

⁴⁰⁰Quoted in ibid.

⁴⁰¹Quoted in ibid.

Similar reactions to Wounded Knee II were expressed. Donald Parman, for example, asserted that the occupation aroused less public sympathy than either Alcatraz or the BIA takeover, and resulted in "virtually no real gains," because the militants were not viewed as "doomed heroes fighting oppression" but, rather, as "urban toughs out for power and ego gratification."⁴⁰²

Critical analyses generated by members of the speech discipline also assume the need for the movement to capture white support. Ochs' evaluation of the BIA takeover concludes: "Considered as an instrumental, symbolic attempt to change attitudes, the militant take-over accomplished very little for the Indian cause."⁴⁰³ Two reasons are given: first, that the tactic of occupation served to align the militants with the "by-then stale image" of angry college students and sit-ins of the 1960s, and second, that it reinforced the Hollywood stereotype of Indians as wanton evil-doers.⁴⁰⁴ Weiss' examination of the Wounded Knee occupation arrives at essentially the same conclusion, referring to "The Unsuccessful Rhetoric of Wounded Knee."⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰²Kansas City Times, April 27, 1976, p. 14B.

⁴⁰³Donovan J. Ochs, "A Fallen Fortress: BIA, 1972" (paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April, 1974), p. 6.

⁴⁰⁴Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵Tracey Bernstein Weiss, "Media Speaks With Forked Tongue: The Unsuccessful Rhetoric of Wounded Knee" (paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, Houston, Texas, December 27-30, 1975), p. 12.

Such judgments are valid only if one assumes that white support is a prerequisite for success. This assumption is even implicit in descriptions of basic civil rights protest strategies. Sit-ins and other mass protest activities are methods for working upon the system from without. As such, they depend heavily on the ability to cause a desired response within the system. Whether their goal is to force the system into a vulnerable position where it will acquiesce, to create disruptions on such a mass scale that the government cannot afford to ignore them,⁴⁰⁶ or to provoke a general public outcry, any effect is dependent upon some degree of accommodation by whites.

Yet many militants reject the assumption that white support is necessary:

Our power (which is increasing) has never, I repeat, never depended on the support of the white people or any other group except ourselves, various Indian groups, especially the A.I.M. and beautiful people like Russell Means and Dennis Banks.⁴⁰⁷

Assertions such as this give one pause. If white support is not important, then how can Red Power increase? If Red Power can increase without the benefit of white support, then, clearly, traditional measures of "success" are no longer adequate. This chapter will propose and illustrate an alternative function of activist rhetorical strategies which

⁴⁰⁶Cf. ibid., p. 13.

⁴⁰⁷"Support Unnecessary," Kansas City Star, May 2, 1976, p. 3G.

will assist in re-defining the nature of success for the Indian movement and in accounting for the apparent alienation of large segments of white society.

The Traditional Role of Enactment

Once again, the basis for an alternative function is found in the locus of traditional Indian spiritual beliefs, specifically, the significance of ritual enactment of the lessons of nature. Eliade introduces this function in describing man's relationship to a world in which sacrality is manifested everywhere:

He (religious man) further believes that life has a sacred origin and that human existence realizes all of its potentialities in proportion as it is religious --that is, participates in reality.⁴⁰⁸

Participation is achieved through the enactment of rites, the powers of which are harnessed thereby. Tedlock observes that this principle is the basis of pilgrimages to holy places and the vision quests of Native Americans.⁴⁰⁹ Black Elk confirms that "a man who has a vision is not able to use the power of it until after he has performed the vision on earth for the people to see."⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁸Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion, translated by Willard R. Trask, Harvest Books (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1959), p. 202.

⁴⁰⁹Dennis and Barbara Tedlock, eds., Teachings From the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy (New York: Liveright, 1975), p. xviii.

⁴¹⁰John Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks, Pocket Books (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 173.

This principle is similar to elements of Platonic philosophy. There is a rough parallel between Plato's conception of true knowledge as the soul's recollection of the Forms of which it was part prior to being trapped in corporeal substance⁴¹¹ and the Indian conception of knowledge which is harnessed through the reenactment of the paradigmatic principles of nature. In both cases, knowledge is gained through participation in the transcendent world of Principles, Lessons or Forms. No historical or organic relation between these two conceptions is implied; the comparison is noted simply for illustrative purposes.

The enactment of universal principles through ritual is important on both an individual and a collective level. Enactment serves two general functions on each level. First, and most obviously, enactment is necessary to harness supernatural Power and thereby to ensure the continuing well-being of the individual and his society. Second, enactment maintains contact with one's personal and societal history. Here the object of enactment is the retention of an individual and collective identity through memory. In her study of the Navaho creation myth, Sheila Moon comments on the urgency of this need to retain an individual identity:

Memory, whether recognition or recall, is our relationship to our past and to our own evolving structure. Not to remember, as in states of amnesia or psychosis, is a horror

⁴¹¹G.M.A. Grube, "Rhetoric and Literary Theory in Platonism," in Dictionary of the History of Ideas, ed. by Philip P. Wiener, Vol. III (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), p. 500.

and shatters us to our core because not to remember is, from the viewpoint of consciousness, not to be, not to have identity. Child and animal, living in the mother substance of immediacy, do not need to remember much. We must. The whole continuity of our consciousness depends on our remembering.⁴¹²

The need for a collective identity is suggested in the works of rhetorical theorist Richard Weaver. In Visions of Order he notes:

(C)ultural life depends upon the remembrance of acknowledged values, and for this reason any sign of a prejudice against memory is a signal of danger.⁴¹³

Weaver is well-known as a Platonic idealist. As Plato believed in Forms or essences, Weaver believes in "natural laws, or intrinsic principles undergirding the transactions of the world"⁴¹⁴ which can be perceived through retrospect. Memory is the device which permits historical study and thus helps reveal these natural rules.⁴¹⁵

Socially, then, memory provides cohesiveness and direction, permitting bonds of heritage.⁴¹⁶ This function is

⁴¹²Sheila Moon, A Magic Dwells: A Poetic and Psychological Study of the Navaho Emergence Myth (Middletown, CO: Wesleyan University Press, 1970), p. 28.

⁴¹³Richard M. Weaver, Visions of Order: The Cultural Crisis of Our Time (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), p. 40.

⁴¹⁴Clark T. Irwin, Jr., "Rhetoric Remembers: Richard Weaver on Memory and Culture," Today's Speech, 21 (Spring, 1973), p. 23.

⁴¹⁵Ibid.

⁴¹⁶Ibid.

similar to the Platonic concept of anemnesis⁴¹⁷ in that, in both cases, "truths" or "essences" are revealed, rather than mere events of the past.⁴¹⁸

How is this discussion of individual and collective memory related to the militant Indian movement? Mircea Eliade applies the process of recollection to a fundamental archaic method of preserving and recounting history--the myth. He notes that anemnesis is comparable to myth in that both recall "the structures of the real," and the "paradigmatic modes established by Supernatural Beings."⁴¹⁹ Further, he echoes Weaver's sentiments concerning the importance of recollection:

Not to know or to forget the contents of the "collective memory" constituted by tradition is equivalent to a retrogression to the "natural" state (the acultural condition of the child), or to a "sin," or to a disaster.⁴²⁰

Yet, myth is not the only device which functions in this manner; the same may be said of all traditional rites. In addition to accomplishing their immediate purpose, e.g., teaching, healing, or purifying, they also invoke the heritage of which they are part, and thus contribute to a renewed sense of self, a strengthened identity.

⁴¹⁷Most accurately translated as "recollection." Mircea Eliade, Myth and Reality, translated by Willard R. Trask, Harper Torchbooks (Evanston, IL: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968), p. 119.

⁴¹⁸Cf. ibid., p. 125. See also Irwin, "Rhetoric Remembers," p. 21.

⁴¹⁹Eliade, Myth and Reality, p. 125.

⁴²⁰Ibid.

Against this background, the stress placed by militants on the traditional ways of life becomes intelligible. For the individual, enactment of this life creates a present in which Power works; it also establishes a link with the past, with one's ancestors, thereby strengthening one's sense of identity. For the movement as a whole, the same two functions are fulfilled. Enactment creates a present in which the well-being of the group is assured, as well as strengthening the movement by identifying it with the ancestral ways.

The implications of this discussion for judgments based on the assumption of requisite white support are clear. The process of recollection, its obligations and benefits, is one to which white support appears irrelevant. The purpose of enactment is not to generate outside sympathy or support, but to unify its practitioners with the supernatural, with each other, with their cultural history, and with the transcendent essence of "Indianness." In short, enactment is an end in itself, rather than an instrumental, symbolic activity meant to persuade others.⁴²¹

This distinction has been drawn in various ways by other writers. David Berlo speaks of a continuum of communication purposes, bounded at one end by "consummatory purpose" and

⁴²¹Streb, for example, comments that the Alcatraz occupation was an event which makes the Indian movement unique among social movements, not because of the strategic choices which it evinced, but because of the motivations behind these choices. He indicates that there was at least an equal concern for means and ends. Edward J. Streb, "The Alcatraz Occupation, '69-'71: A Perceived Parody of Power Movements" (paper presented at the Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, April, 1974), pp. 3-4.

at the other by "instrumental purpose":

Position along this continuum is determined by the answer to the following question: To what extent is the purpose of this message accomplished entirely at the moment of its consumption, or to what extent is its consumption only instrumental in producing further behavior?⁴²²

In Berlo's terminology, enactment, as an end in itself, is consummatory.

Burke comments on the same phenomenon in his discussion of rhetoric as addressed to the individual soul.⁴²³ In describing self-persuasion, the manner in which one can be an audience to oneself, he writes:

A man can be his own audience, insofar as he, even in his secret thoughts, cultivates certain ideas or images for the effect he hopes they may have upon him; he is here what Mead would call "an 'I' addressing its 'me'"; and in this respect he is being rhetorical quite as though he were using pleasant imagery to influence an outside audience rather than one within.⁴²⁴

It appears that self-persuasion may be either consummatory or instrumental.⁴²⁵ Enactment is highly consummatory when

⁴²²David K. Berlo, The Process of Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Practice (Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1960), pp. 17-8.

⁴²³This is the title of the relevant section in Kenneth Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 37-9.

⁴²⁴Ibid., p. 38.

⁴²⁵This statement is meant to indicate that there is no neat, one-to-one relationship between self-address and consummatory purpose on the one hand and address to others and instrumental purpose on the other. It derives from the musical example used by Berlo in which both kinds of address are said to be consummatory. Cf. The Process of Communication, p. 18.

it evokes an essential Indianness. On the other hand, enactment might be instrumental if one considered Power to be an audience to be ritually persuaded. However, including the supernatural in a category otherwise composed only of natural audiences is problematic.⁴²⁶ Perhaps this is why Burke seems to include the magical and supernatural as variants of a consummatory self-persuasion; at one point, he describes self-persuasion as "any ideas or images privately addressed to the individual self for . . . incantatory purposes."⁴²⁷ Hence, enactment is a form of self-persuasion, and self-persuasion tends toward the consummatory end of the continuum of purposes.

Richard Gregg, in an article entitled "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," applies the concept of consummatory expression directly to the kinds of phenomena under study here. Gregg argues that the characteristic appeal of protest rhetoric is not to an external audience, but to the protestors themselves. He writes:

The usual view of rhetorical communication expected the entreaties, appeals, arguments, and exhortations of those asking for change to speak somehow to the basic reasoning and feeling capacities of those in authority. But contemporary public protest does not make this kind of appeal. . . . I shall argue that the primary appeal of the rhetoric of protest is to

⁴²⁶If one wishes to consider Power as an external audience, there is a sense in which enactment then becomes an attempt to "persuade" Power, which is equivalent to saying that enactment is the method whereby an agent influences the scene. Such influence would be instrumental.

⁴²⁷Burke, Rhetoric of Motives, pp. 38-9.

the protestors themselves, who feel the need for psychological refurbishing and affirmation.⁴²⁸

This study argues that, in the specific instance of the Indian activist movement, the felt need is not merely psychological, but the weight of an entire philosophical system. Nonetheless, symbolic enactment of this system is a case in which the primary appeal is to the participants. Thus, Gregg's formulation, with qualifications, is useful.

Gregg identifies an advantage of consummatory rhetoric which is particularly relevant. He suggests that:

It aids in the protestor's definition of situation, and definition helps give one symbolic control. The reflexive aspect of protest rhetoric, in this sense, cannot be overestimated.⁴²⁹

This reflexive principle lies at the heart of enactment. Casting the Red Power movement in the philosophical framework outlined here is an act of definition. As such, it identifies the nature of the conflict between Indian and white, and simultaneously provides militants with the framework's symbolic resources for engaging in the conflict. This chapter argues that one such resource is enactment, which actualizes the philosophical system from which it derives.⁴³⁰

⁴²⁸Richard B. Gregg, "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 4 (Spring, 1971), pp. 73,74.

⁴²⁹Ibid., p. 87.

⁴³⁰A second resource, discussed in Chapter Six, is the rhetorical manipulation of time.

Enactment, then, is a rhetorical device which does not depend for success on its appeal to an external audience. The remainder of this chapter will examine three forms of enactment employed in the Indian activist movement.

The Enactment of Indianness

Given the importance to militants of cultural integrity and the preservation of traditional ways, one might expect the activists to attempt to follow the traditional ways of life. Indeed, this is the case. Traditional practices which militants take pains to follow include: acknowledging and giving thanks to all things of the Creation;⁴³¹ wearing personal medicine pouches and painting one's face in preparation for battle⁴³² relying on the visionary experience for guidance in living and dealing with whites;⁴³³ and participating in rituals such as the smoking of the pipe and the sweat lodge.⁴³⁴

⁴³¹Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 19.

⁴³²Cf. ibid., p. 13, and Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973 (Rooseveltown, NY: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), p. 51.

⁴³³Voices From Wounded Knee, pp. 76, 151.

⁴³⁴Ibid., pp. 56, 109. Parenthetically, the sweat lodge ceremony is especially significant. Its purpose is to cleanse the individual, physically and spiritually, in preparation for any effort to approach the Great Spirit for guidance. Because white society is considered a disease, and contact with whites is contaminating, the purification ceremony is able to effect a cure, and is simultaneously a symbol of victory over and separation from whites. Akwesasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976, p. 18. Further, the ceremony is seen as a test of moral courage. Cases of white fear at the prospect of entering the sweat lodge are cited as indications that whites are alienated from the natural ways and are afraid to face the truth of their guilt. Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 11.

The maintenance of traditional practices extends to organizational structure⁴³⁵ and operation. One striking characteristic of the modern movement is the plethora of diverse groups which comprise it, from AIM (now an umbrella organization incorporating a number of formerly distinct groups scattered nationwide) to a variety of highly localized activist groups such as the Menominee Warrior Society, white support groups and legal defense/offense committees. Even at Wounded Knee, with relatively few parties involved, such polycephalous⁴³⁶ organization was to frustrate negotiations and lead government spokesman Rogers Morton to complain, "They do not represent a constituted group with whom the Government can contract or serve . . ."437 Yet such wide diversity is consistent with the Indian belief that, in government, one can represent oneself and only oneself; it follows that no one organization could represent the entire Indian movement. Conducting meetings in a circle⁴³⁸ and decision by unanimous consent illustrate the influence of traditional practices on organizational operation.

⁴³⁵Stan Steiner, The New Indians, Delta Books (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), p. 40.

⁴³⁶The concept of "polycephalous" organization is developed by Luther P. Gerlach, "Movements of Revolutionary Change: Some Structural Characteristics," American Behavioral Scientist, Vol. 14, No. 6, pp. 812-36.

⁴³⁷Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 114.

⁴³⁸Ibid., p. 174.

Another traditional practice followed today is the ever-present drum and dancing at Indian gatherings.⁴³⁹ This is the best example of the first form of enactment, the actualization of an archetype of Indianness. Steiner notes that the purpose of dancing is to unify the dancers with each other and with their history, thus creating "an individual, contemporary, and living Indianness as they dance."⁴⁴⁰ The collective actualization of a "living Indianness" is well-illustrated in this account by the Alcatraz occupiers:

We join the dance and feel the magic which is passing from hand to hand. All tribes and unity are the words of the drum and all tribes in unity are the dancers. The vast distances separating our many tribes are forgotten, as are the man-made boundaries. . . . We dance on our turtle island and draw strength from one another and from the past.⁴⁴¹

These examples are sufficient to indicate the numerous ways in which the movement employs traditional Indian practices, and to illustrate how such use recalls, and thereby actualizes, an essential Indianness. In fact, these practices enact the verbalized militant demand for cultural integrity.

The Enactment of the Demand for Land Return

The demand that the traditional and holy lands of the Indian peoples be returned to them was discussed in Chapter

⁴³⁹Steiner, The New Indians, p. 157.

⁴⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 69, 158.

⁴⁴¹Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz is Not an Island, ed. by Peter Blue Cloud (Berkeley, CA: Wingbow Press, 1972), pp. 20-1.

Two. Significant examples of this demand being met are noteworthy. Native Americans have successfully recovered some tribal lands: the sacred Blue Lake area of New Mexico was returned to the Taos Pueblo in 1971;⁴⁴² the Yakima Indians of the State of Washington and the Warm Springs Indians of Oregon have received similar favorable settlements,⁴⁴³ as has a group of Alaska natives.⁴⁴⁴ These successes have encouraged other Indian tribes throughout North America to press for similar recoveries. The Chippewa in Mole Lake, Wisconsin,⁴⁴⁵ the Pit River Nation in northern California, and the Eskimos in northern Canada⁴⁴⁶ are but three of the tribes currently seeking the return of land lost with the coming of white settlers.

However, these successes have generally involved relatively small claims of land, the return of which entails minimal dislocation of white interests. Demands by Indian militants for the return of vast acreages and famous tracts, such as the Black Hills, have been scoffed at by the government and other segments of white society. The limited ability of Indians to persuade this society suggests that an alter-

⁴⁴²D'Arcy McNickle, Native American Tribalism: Indian Survivals and Renewals (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 169.

⁴⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴⁴Ibid., p. 158.

⁴⁴⁵"Indian Band Seeks Land of Its Legends," Milwaukee Journal, July 18, 1976, Part 2, pp. 1,15.

⁴⁴⁶"Eskimos Tell Canada of Vast Land Claims," Kansas City Times, February 28, 1976, p. 16A.

native means of achieving the goal of land return may exist. The strategy of occupation is such an alternative. The occupation of property may be a symbolic act of protest addressed to the property's owners and designed to paralyze its normal use. However, occupation may also be viewed as the enactment of the militant demand for land return.

The strategy of occupation has been a dominant force in the modern Indian activist movement since the movement first burst upon the public's consciousness in 1969. In November of that year, young Indians landed on Alcatraz Island and began an occupation which was to last for nineteen months.⁴⁴⁷ The tactic soon spread and became one of the predominant strategies of the movement. In March, 1970, some of the militants responsible for the Alcatraz occupation staged another takeover, this time at Fort Lawton in Seattle, Washington.⁴⁴⁸ By June, Pit River Indians and their supporters had taken over a site at the Four Corners area of California, in what was to become a year-long protest of alleged exploitation of Pit River lands by the Pacific Gas and Electric utility company.⁴⁴⁹ Also in 1970, local BIA offices across the country became targets, as the occupation of the local office at Littleton, Colorado, ignited similar activities in Chicago, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Albuquerque, Los Angeles, and Alameda, California.⁴⁵⁰ In Michigan, over

⁴⁴⁷Streb, "The Alcatraz Occupation," p. 11.

⁴⁴⁸Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz is Not an Island, p. 56.

⁴⁴⁹Ibid., p. 90.

⁴⁵⁰Ibid., p. 57.

250 Chippewas laid claim to a lighthouse and acreage along Lake Superior.⁴⁵¹

The occupation of land continued as a dominant tactic in 1971. In May, Pomo Indians and their supporters took over a surplus Army radio-transmitter base near Middletown, California.⁴⁵² The South Dakota Sioux and others protested the "theft" of the Black Hills by camping atop the giant faces at Mount Rushmore in June.⁴⁵³ Also in June, more members of the Indians of All Tribes entered and occupied an abandoned Nike missile base in the Berkeley Hills, overlooking San Francisco Bay.⁴⁵⁴ Chippewa militants occupied a Wisconsin dam site owned by the Northern States Power Company in August.⁴⁵⁵

Eleven months later, in what Ochs terms a "rehearsal" for the famous BIA office takeover in Washington, D.C., forty Indians seized a BIA office in Oklahoma.⁴⁵⁶ Then, in November, 1972, the Trial of Broken Treaties caravan reached Washington and the headquarters of the Bureau of

⁴⁵¹Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., ed., Red Power: The American Indians' Fight For Freedom (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971), p. 232.

⁴⁵²Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz is Not an Island, p. 88.

⁴⁵³Josephy, Red Power, p. 231.

⁴⁵⁴Indians of All Tribes, Alcatraz is Not an Island, p. 75.

⁴⁵⁵"NSP Dam in Wisconsin is Occupied by Indians," Minneapolis Star, August 2, 1971, p. 13A.

⁴⁵⁶Ochs, "A Fallen Fortress," p. 5.

Indian Affairs was forcibly occupied.⁴⁵⁷ Sit-ins in support of the Washington occupation took place at local BIA offices in Seattle and Everett, Washington,⁴⁵⁸ at a museum in Fort Robinson, Nebraska,⁴⁵⁹ and in San Diego, San Francisco, Missoula, Montana, Pine Ridge, South Dakota, and Phoenix, Arizona.⁴⁶⁰

Three months later, in March, 1973, the most famous of the Indian protest occupations occurred, as several hundred members of AIM and other organizations seized the town of Wounded Knee, South Dakota, and held out against Federal Marshals and FBI agents for seventy-one days.⁴⁶¹

In May, 1974, the occupation tactic was still in use, at a place called Ganienkeh in the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York.⁴⁶² Members of the Menominee Warrior Society seized the vacated Alexian Brothers' novitiate in Gresham, Wisconsin, in January, 1975.⁴⁶³ In March of that year, a protest over the firing of Navaho employees led to the occupation of the Fairchild Camera and Instrument Cor-

⁴⁵⁷Cf. Vine Deloria, Jr., Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence, Delta Books (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), p. xi.

⁴⁵⁸Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 28.

⁴⁵⁹Ibid., p. 34.

⁴⁶⁰Ibid., p. 29.

⁴⁶¹Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 2.

⁴⁶²No More Broken Treaties, Vol. 1, No. 2, Late Fall, 1975, p. 1.

⁴⁶³Cf. Minneapolis Tribune, January 19, 1975, p. 1A.

poration in Shiprock, New Mexico.⁴⁶⁴ The local BIA office in Horton, Kansas, was occupied in April.⁴⁶⁵ In May, some Sioux militants took over the Yankton Pork Plant in Yankton, South Dakota.⁴⁶⁶ And in July, Mohawks staged a takeover of Moss Lake, New York.⁴⁶⁷ Also in the summer of 1975, the Abenaki Indians reclaimed a small piece of tribal land in Vermont.⁴⁶⁸

These examples illustrate the frequency with which the tactic of occupation has been used by contemporary Indian activists. While some of the occupations, especially those of BIA offices, appear to be instrumental protests like those of civil rights workers and students in the 1960s, many more defy characterization as a "sit-in." The occupations of Alcatraz, Fort Lawton, Middletown, Mount Rushmore, Wounded Knee, Ganienkah and Gresham, for example, were not designed to paralyze white institutions and to force further concessions. Their purpose was more consummatory: once occupied, the land was again Indian land, and could be put to use for schools, medical facilities, cultural centers, or any other facility in which the traditional Indian life could flourish once again.

⁴⁶⁴New York Times, March 2, 1975, p. 45.

⁴⁶⁵New York Times, April 11, 1975, p. 38.

⁴⁶⁶New York Times, May 3, 1975, p. 10.

⁴⁶⁷New York Times, July 6, 1975, p. 34.

⁴⁶⁸NASC News, Vol. 1, No. 3, date unknown, p. 7.

The view that occupation is not an instrumental tactic is reinforced by the fact that many of the objects for occupation have been abandoned and isolated properties. These would seem to be the least appropriate objects for a seizure whose purpose was to create a highly visible, disruptive protest situation. Streb, for example, makes this point about the Alcatraz occupation:

Moreover, the island's isolated location made it difficult for any demonstration to become a public nuisance. For most Americans, Alcatraz Island was so mentally and physically remote that its occupation would not possibly have seemed threatening or particularly annoying.⁴⁶⁹

However, rather than dismissing this fact as rhetorical naivete, the interpretation of occupations as consummatory provides a more plausible explanation for so widespread a strategy. To a group striving for cultural regeneration, an isolated location uncontaminated by the presence of whites would be ideal.

Of course, both instrumental and consummatory purposes may be present to varying degrees in any occupation; this discussion only underscores the importance of enactment. Viewing occupation as a protest symbol addressed to white society leads easily to a condemnation of the tactic as ineffective and alienating. Ochs, for example, terms it a "cliched symbol," and concludes that "no agitation movement can afford to use cliched symbols especially when the movement must attract and recruit . . . new members sympathetic

⁴⁶⁹Streb, "The Alcatraz Occupation," p. 2.

to the cause."⁴⁷⁰ Similarly, Streb suggests that isolated location precludes the creation and sustenance of a militant-status quo tension such as traditional nonviolent demonstrations have tried to provoke.⁴⁷¹ Consequently, he declares the Alcatraz occupation to be a failure, partly because of the island's "strategical insignificance."⁴⁷²

Both authors are addressing the rhetorical problem of using what Philip Wheelwright calls "steno-symbols;" symbols whose meanings have become standardized and hardened either through stipulation or through human inertia and lack of creativity.⁴⁷³ If the concept of steno-symbols is extended beyond Wheelwright's initial formulation to include non-linguistic symbols, its relation to the modern Indian movement is apparent. Ochs criticizes the BIA occupation for employing a hardened, "stale" image rather than eliciting or inventing new symbols which have "life."

The use of steno-symbols is a problem, however, only if one is concerned about how an external audience will respond to them. While the strategy of occupation may reinforce in whites derogatory symbolic images of the Indian cause,⁴⁷⁴ at

⁴⁷⁰Ochs, "A Fallen Fortress," p. 6.

⁴⁷¹Streb, "The Alcatraz Occupation," p. 2.

⁴⁷²Ibid.

⁴⁷³Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 94.

⁴⁷⁴Recall Ochs' argument that this "cliched symbol" aligns militants with the "stale image of angry college students" and reinforces "the Hollywood version of the Indian as wanton evildoers." "A Fallen Fortress," p. 6.

the same time it reinforces in Indians complimentary images of themselves as warriors in the tradition of their ancestors, defending the lands which are rightfully theirs. The strategy may have a negative effect upon whites because whites view the use of steno-symbols negatively. But this does not matter to a consummatory strategy. Enactment through occupation has a positive effect upon Indians because Indians view the use of steno-symbols positively. That is, standardized, generally understood meanings are essential to ritual enactment and, therefore, may actually contribute to the militants' sense of identification and continuity with the Indian past.

In sum, occupation is the enactment of the demand for land return. Its principle effect is to bring about the physical return of land, at least temporarily. Secondly, it assists in the enactment of Indianness because it is carried out through actions which actualize traditional warrior virtues. Both effects are principally consummatory.

The Enactment of the Demand for Self-Determination

The militant demand for self-determination also was discussed in Chapter Two. The third form of enactment found in the movement actualizes this demand.

The use of any strategy which polarizes and separates white from Indian may be considered to enact the demand for sovereignty and self-determination. Reference to some of these tactics has been made already. For example, maintenance of Survival Schools as a necessary alternative to white education reflects the belief that only Indians can properly

instruct Indian children in the right ways, and thereby reinforces the values of self-reliance and separatism.⁴⁷⁵

The explicit rejection of the melting pot theory and the refusal to "be pushed into the mainstream of American life" also serve this purpose.⁴⁷⁶ The importance of the reservation is illustrative. Reservations are not only isolated enclaves separated, geographically or physically, from white, urban society. As the last strongholds of the old ways, they are also separated spiritually. Consequently, the militant emphasis on these differences⁴⁷⁷ and the movement of urban Indians back to the reservations for periodic spiritual renewal actualize the concept of separatism and maintain a concrete alternative to the melting pot.⁴⁷⁸

A state of independence is also implicit in descriptions of the relationship between tribes and other governments. First, the tribal position often is compared to that of other nations generally recognized as sovereign states, e.g., Vietnam. A further example is the analogy drawn between termination and the Arab-Israeli situation, an analogy which receives its force from the mutually independent status of the Israelis and the Palestinians:

⁴⁷⁵Cf. "Heart of the Earth Survival School" (Minneapolis: Longie Printing Co., date unknown).

⁴⁷⁶Josephy, Red Power, p. 55.

⁴⁷⁷Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 61.

⁴⁷⁸Warren H. Cohen and Philip J. Mause, "The Indian: The Forgotten American," Harvard Law Review, 81 (June, 1968), p. 1839.

If the Arab States of present Mid-East could comparably presume the same authority over the State of Israel (as the Federal Government presumes over the tribes), they could eliminate Israel by the purchase or by declaring it an Arab State or subdivision thereof; on the one hand, evicting the Israelis from the newly-acquired Arab lands, or on the other, allowing the Israelis to remain as part of the larger Arab Nation . . . Such an unacceptable outrage to American people would quickly succeed to World War III --except when such actions are factually taken against Menominees, Klamaths, Senecas, Utes, and threatened against many other landed nations of Indian peoples.⁴⁷⁹

Even the characterization of Indian/white relations as one of white colonialism implies its opposite, the natural independent status of the Indians.⁴⁸⁰ Statements recalling Indian history prior to the white man's coming also imply the natural independence of the original inhabitants.⁴⁸¹

Second, refusal to accept the jurisdiction of the several states over tribal matters⁴⁸² or to participate in the white political process actualizes an implicit separatism.

Third, identification of Indian rights with those of other native people across the globe, and the establishment of relations with those in Paraguay,⁴⁸³ Guatemala,⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁷⁹Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 77.

⁴⁸⁰Josephy, Red Power, p. 7.

⁴⁸¹Cf. West River Times, East River Echo, Vol. 1, No. 1, August, 1975, p. 3.

⁴⁸²Josephy, Red Power, p. 139.

⁴⁸³"Urgent Call to Action Around Miguel Chase Sardi," March 29, 1976. (Mimeographed.)

⁴⁸⁴"Native People in Guatemala Need Our Help!", Akwesasne Notes, Early Spring, 1976, pp. 3-5.

Chile,⁴⁸⁵ and those of the First International Conference of Indigenous Peoples,⁴⁸⁶ polarizes the conflict between native and non-native, forging a bond between native forces which seemingly is beyond the jurisdiction or control of any single non-native government. For example, the Northern Cheyenne have threatened to enlist the aid of the Shah of Iran and other Arab countries in an effort to halt coal strip-mining on their land.⁴⁸⁷

The militant emphasis on treaty commitments and the description of Indian/white conflict as "war" also implicitly polarize. The nature of the treaty relationship implies the mutual autonomy of the contracting parties. The label of "war"⁴⁸⁸ necessarily grants the existence of an "enemy" who is apart from oneself, thereby emphasizing a division between Indian and white.⁴⁸⁹ Analogously, the characterization of white culture as a disease evokes an end state of separation resulting from the curative process.

⁴⁸⁵"Mapuches Continue Their Struggle," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, pp. 38-9.

⁴⁸⁶Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 34.

⁴⁸⁷James Ridgeway, "The Battle of Lame Deer," Penthouse, 8 (November, 1975), p. 144.

⁴⁸⁸Cf. Weiss, "Media Speaks With Forked Tongue," p. 8; also Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 13.

⁴⁸⁹The war label also recalls the historical wars among the tribes and with whites, thereby invoking tribal history to aid in forging a new Indianness, much as the practice of traditional rites does. Frederick W. Turner, III, comments on this phenomenon in The Portable North American Indian Reader (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), p. 12.

Sovereignty is also invoked by cries of persecution at the hands of whites. In explanation, Deloria argues:

In order to validate the persecution of a group, the persecutors must in effect recognize the right of that group to be different. . . . Implicit in the sufferings of each group is the acknowledgement of the sovereignty of the group.⁴⁹⁰

Thus, through claims of persecution and suffering, militants are able to evoke this implicit acknowledgement and affirm their own sovereignty through an emphasis on "the positive side of discriminatory concepts."⁴⁹¹

The clearest example of enactment of the demand for self-determination is the March 11, 1973, declaration that the Indians at Wounded Knee had formed an Independent Oglala Nation,⁴⁹² intending to revive the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, to send a delegation to the United Nations, and to request formal recognition by the Six Nation Confederacy of the Iroquois. The attempt to gain admission to the U.N. on the same sovereign basis as all other members is longstanding.⁴⁹³ Alternatively, the formation of an Indian United Nations also has been suggested.⁴⁹⁴ In either case, the condition of

⁴⁹⁰Vine Deloria, Jr., We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes, New Turf, Laurel Edition (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), pp. 122-3.

⁴⁹¹Ibid.

⁴⁹²Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 55.

⁴⁹³Deloria, Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 78.

⁴⁹⁴Vernon Bellecourt, "Penthouse Interview," ed. by Richard Ballard, Penthouse, 4 (July, 1973), p. 132.

sovereignty is assumed; in fact, the Declaration establishes it.⁴⁹⁵ As such, it is a paradigm of consummatory expression.

In short, many of the verbal and non-verbal strategies employed by militant Indians invoke themes of separation and thereby enact the demand for sovereignty and self-determination. Their goal is the unification of Indians through an accentuation of similarities among activists and differences from whites.

This polarization is so pronounced that its ultimate effect may be to leave self-determination for Indians as the only possible white solution to a continuing confrontation of values. Because militant tactics (which are required in order to maintain cultural integrity) implicitly separate Indian from white, granting sovereignty may be the only way to render these tactics unnecessary and, hence, the only way to defuse the movement.⁴⁹⁶ In fact, the circumscribed nature of persuasion also separates Indian from white, evoking the concepts of independence and sovereignty.⁴⁹⁷ Therefore, the militants' rejection of both the white system's means of

⁴⁹⁵This is, in fact, the nature of a performative utterance. For one discussion of this concept, see James Benjamin, "Performatives as a Rhetorical Construct," Philosophy and Rhetoric, 9 (Spring, 1976), pp. 84-95.

⁴⁹⁶This is more than simply saying that the movement will not die until its demands are met. In this case the tactics actualize these demands, thus maintaining friction with whites.

⁴⁹⁷Gregg recognizes this fact, noting that one advantage of consummatory rhetoric addressed to the self is that it encourages the maintenance of distance from an adversary, aiding in the process of "identifying self by identifying against others." "The Ego-Function," p. 87.

political change and its means of persuasion serves to actualize the principle of self-determination. In Chapter Four, these limitations were seen to minimize the movement's prospects for success (as traditionally measured). This discussion of enactment, however, suggests that, paradoxically, these limits may actually increase the chances for success (i.e., actualization).

Just as the demands for land return and self-determination were found to be inextricably related, so the methods by which these demands are enacted are intertwined. The occupation of property enacts the recovery of a land base, while the isolated location of much of this property simultaneously actualizes the demand for separatism. Both forms of enactment occurred at Wounded Knee;⁴⁹⁸ militants were aware of its remoteness, pointing out:

Because of its isolated geographical location, the seizure and holding of Wounded Knee poses no threat to the Nation, to the State of South Dakota, or the Pine Ridge Reservation itself.⁴⁹⁹

Here the occupation serves the purpose of capturing and holding land, but to the additional end of providing a place where Indians may isolate themselves from whites.

⁴⁹⁸Actually, all three forms discussed in this chapter took place there. However, the topic here concerns only the interrelationship between the forms of enactment of the two demands.

⁴⁹⁹"Garden Plot--'Flowers of Evil,'" Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 6.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the primary purpose of the symbolic strategies employed by Indian activists is self-creation through self-address. Three classes of strategies enact the goals of militants while, at the same time, they alienate whites. First, the modern practice of traditional rites enacts history and thus actualizes an archetype of Indianness with which the militants can identify. Second, the strategy of occupation enacts the militant demand for the return of tribal lands; in addition, it requires that participants exhibit qualities vital to a warrior society, thus further actualizing this archetype. Third, a multiplicity of devices separate and polarize Indian from white, enacting the demand for self-determination. In fact, the limitations placed on persuasion function in this way, to separate Indian speakers from white audiences with minimal chance for the former to persuade the latter.

As a result, the concept of success requires redefinition. It appears that the characterization of success as a condition extrinsic to militant tactics, achieved only if whites respond favorably, is inappropriate. Instead, success is intrinsic to the tactics themselves; enactment simply is successful.

But, one is immediately tempted to protest, if success is redefined this way, surely Indian militants have achieved a hollow victory at best. The concept of extrinsic success has not been completely banished. It is inaccurate to extrapolate from this chapter the conclusion that, in the minds of

its participants, the Red Power movement already has achieved its full measure of success. Activists clearly assert that the conditions which originally gave birth to the movement have not changed appreciably. Further, while these tactics may indeed possess intrinsic, consummatory value, many militants nonetheless profess the importance of at least one extrinsic, instrumental value: drawing attention to the Indian condition.

Thus, the issue of success is a curious problem. As most critics would agree, success in compelling white society to change its structure and outlook has been minimal. Yet most militants seem to desire extrinsic success provided that it is not obtained at the expense of enactment.

Rather than content itself with intrinsic success and resign itself to extrinsic failure, the movement has employed one other resource which the enactment of its philosophical system makes available. This strategy, the rhetorical manipulation of time, is the subject of the final chapter.

CHAPTER VI

DIMENSIONS OF TIME: A RHETORIC OF PERMANENCE

That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.⁵⁰⁰

Introduction

Success, traditionally conceived, is inapplicable to enactment, in which principles simply are fulfilled. This is true because success is normally defined in terms of extrinsic effects, whereas enactment is an intrinsic process. Hence, although Chapter Five discussed enactment as a procedure whereby the Indian activist movement can "succeed" by fulfilling traditional Indian principles, this intrinsic "success" is irrelevant to the extrinsic obstacles which traditional concepts of success dictate that the movement overcome. Enactment does not eliminate the realities of the Indian condition: abject poverty, poor relations with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and cultural tensions with whites. Thus, an additional complementary procedure is needed which will address directly the problems of extrinsic success.

The mechanism discussed in this final chapter originated

⁵⁰⁰Ecclesiastes 3:15, Holy Bible (King James Version).

in the controversy between Parmenides and Heraclitus concerning whether reality is a permanent entity or, instead, is in constant flux and change. However, before examining this mechanism, I shall summarize preceding chapters to clarify the relationships between this mechanism and earlier findings.

Initial Summary

This study is grounded in a single observation: the essential thrust of the Red Power movement is toward the recovery of the traditional Indian way of life. In the areas of economics, government, and religion, militants reject the assimilation of white beliefs and practices and attempt to revitalize the old ways.

Given this fact, the conclusions of this study spring from a central argument: in a variety of ways, these traditional beliefs and practices shape the movement itself. Traditionally, man's role in the universe has been to actualize the principles revealed by nature; thus, the scene creates those principles which persons, as agents, should fulfill through enactment. In fact, insofar as persons fulfill their roles as actualizers, the principles which they simultaneously embody necessarily will be limited to those found in the scene.

Chapter Two examined the ways in which these principles shape movement demands. Nature (the scene) performs two functions for man: (1) providing physical and spiritual sustenance, and (2) through example, teaching man the proper

way of life. The militant demand for restoration of a tribal land base derives from these functions. Without land, Indians are denied the source of food, clothing and shelter and their religious principles; they are estranged, epistemologically, from the source of all knowledge; as a result, they are prevented from fulfilling even the role of actualizer. The militant demand for self-determination also derives from these functions. If tribal forms of government which acknowledge Indian sovereignty are absent, then Indians will lack a vital component of the proper way of life and similarly will be prevented from actualizing themselves.

Chapter Three examined the kind of relationship between Indian and white which scenic principles construct. Supernatural Power, a quality of nature, is both potent and dangerous, requiring individuals to live as "warriors," portraying the virtues of courage and self-sacrifice. For militants attempting to fulfill traditional roles, the "warrior" becomes an appropriate persona. Because white beliefs and practices are analogized to evil uses of Power, the warrior persona comes to typify Indian-white relations. As a result, militant rhetoric is characterized by terms appropriate to a warrior: confrontations with whites are "battles" which are extensions of the "Indian wars" of the past century; jailed activists are "prisoners of war"; and the position of the militants and Vietnamese are comparable. However, there is one significant change in this modern scenic construction: unlike the past, activists now recognize that White Power is not supernatural, and therefore is inferior to Red Power because

it does not combine military and metaphysical elements.

Chapter Four examined the linguistic possibilities for resolving this "war." In other words, it specified the implicit theory of persuasion contained within scenic principles, and the implications of this theory for movement success. The epistemological importance of experience limits the degree to which men are agents of change in the world. Persuasion depends upon shared experience; however, whites do not share in the cultural experiences of traditional tribal life. As a consequence, the militant emphasis upon the validity of this experience has a polarizing, rather than unifying effect. The use of "steno-symbols" provides no grounds for identification between Indian and white; in fact, to the extent that these symbols do have meaning for whites, they characteristically evoke derogatory, rather than favorable, images of traditional Indian life and militant activities. Hence, the rhetorical acts called for by scenic principles would seem to be self-defeating.

Chapter Five examined a solution to this apparent conundrum. Militant rhetoric is self-defeating only if one applies standards of extrinsic success (its effects on white audiences). Consequently, this chapter proposed that militant rhetoric may best be understood as a form of self-address whose goals are predominately intrinsic. Specifically, the scenic principle of actualization, when applied to militant rhetoric, yields an intrinsic process--enactment. The activist strategy of occupation enacts the militant demand for land restoration. Similarly, militant rhetoric enacts the demand for

self-determination by polarizing Indian and white positions. In so doing, militants enact the warrior persona, harness the supernatural Power available to those who do so, and thereby fulfill the traditional role of man as actualizer of scenic principles.

However, as noted above, while enactment provides an alternative to the measurement of success based on extrinsic effects, it does not provide a substitute; extrinsic failures remain. And this chapter is concerned with identifying a rhetorical strategy designed to cope with this problem.

First, significant differences between Indian and white conceptions of time will be explored. Essentially, this involves differences between cyclical and linear forms of time, respectively. General as well as specific comparisons will be drawn between linear and cyclical interpretations of history and linear and cyclical versions of the concept of inevitability. Then an examination of the cyclical interpretations implicit in activist rhetoric will be made; the forms which the cyclical theme takes, its functions, and its implications for movement success will be specified.

This chapter attempts to characterize the Red Power movement as a phenomenon solidly within the philosophical tradition of "permanence." Hence, the chapter introduces a new concept. However, this is also a transcendent concept, and so the chapter will close with a reinterpretation of major findings of this thesis, a summary on a new level.

Linear and Cyclical Time

One consequence of the Einsteinian revolution was the demonstration that even time is relative. Reflecting this principle, different cultures hold different assumptions about the nature of time.⁵⁰¹ At the risk of oversimplification, one may postulate two tendencies. On the one hand, some civilizations perceive the basic nature of the world as in flux. Generally, the change exhibited is chronological; hence, time is linear, with the present becoming the historical past as life progresses toward a qualitatively altered future. On the other hand, some perceive the world's basic nature as stable; hence, time is cyclical, rather than progressive. The temporal process moves in cycles, often with a preconceived pattern, so that the same order of events perpetually repeats itself.⁵⁰² The linear concept is Occidental; the cyclical concept is Oriental.⁵⁰³

Eliade differentiates these concepts as "profane" and "sacred" time, respectively.⁵⁰⁴ He associates the latter

⁵⁰¹Cf. Edward T. Hall, The Silent Language (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1959), pp. 15-30, 128-145.

⁵⁰²S.G.F. Brandon, History, Time and Deity (New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1965), p. 4.

⁵⁰³Ibid.

⁵⁰⁴Cf. Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion, trans. by Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1959), pp. 68-113; and _____, Myth and Reality, trans. by Willard R. Trask (Evanston: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1968), pp. 75-91.

with "primitive" and "archaic" societies, and the former with modern "nonreligious" civilizations.⁵⁰⁵

The principle characteristic of sacred time is that it is part of the realm of myth.⁵⁰⁶ Eliade explains that, as a result, time becomes reversible:

. . . by its very nature sacred time is reversible in the sense that, properly speaking, it is a primordial mythical time made present. . . . Hence sacred time is indefinitely recoverable, indefinitely repeatable. From one point of view it could be said that it does not "pass," that it does not constitute an irreversible duration. It is an ontological, Parmenidean time; it always remains equal to itself, it neither changes nor is exhausted.⁵⁰⁷

Profane (chronological) time can be arrested, and sacred (mythical) time recovered, through the enactment of ritual.⁵⁰⁸ By participating in ritual, one enacts mythical events; one is present thereby at their original occurrence in a mythical time made present at each enactment, removed from chronological sequence and historicity:⁵⁰⁹

. . . the man of the archaic societies is not only obliged to remember mythical history but also to re-enact a large part of it periodically. . . . The sacred time periodically reactualized in pre-Christian religions (especially in the archaic religions)

⁵⁰⁵Of course, the distinction between "archaic" and "modern" societies itself makes assumptions about the nature of time. In the linear view, the distinction is valid. In the cyclical view, it is meaningless.

⁵⁰⁶Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane, p. 72.

⁵⁰⁷Ibid., pp. 68-69.

⁵⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 71-72; _____, Myth and Reality, p. 78.

⁵⁰⁹The example Eliade uses to illustrate this phenomenon is the creation myth. Cf. esp. The Sacred and the Profane, p. 79.

is a mythical time, that is, a primordial time, not to be found in the historical past, an original time, in the sense that it came into existence all at once, that it was not preceded by another time, because no time could exist before the appearance of the reality narrated in the myth.⁵¹⁰

Furthermore, the recreation of mythic reality implicitly links time with space. Frequently, terms for "world" or "cosmos" also are used in the sense of "year." Hence, one might speak of "the world having passed" and mean that a year had gone by.⁵¹¹ Such a vocabulary reveals an intimate connection between the world and sacred, mythical time; the earth is seen as a living entity which is born, develops over the course of a year, and then dies, only to be reborn on the first day of the new year. This connection is religious in nature: "the cosmos is homologizable to cosmic time (=the Year) because they are both sacred realities, divine creations."⁵¹² In effect, it makes the natural cycles of earth a paradigmatic example of sacred time at work.

In contrast, profane time is historical and irreversible,⁵¹³ and is typified by the Christian liturgy which affirms the historicity of the person of Christ.⁵¹⁴

⁵¹⁰ _____, Myth and Reality, p. 13, and ibid., p. 72.

⁵¹¹ _____, The Sacred and the Profane, p. 73.

⁵¹² Ibid.

⁵¹³ _____, Myth and Reality, p. 13.

⁵¹⁴ _____, The Sacred and the Profane, p. 72. Eliade does not discuss Christian communion ceremonies which involve the transubstantiation of elements. These ceremonies are an exception to his conclusions.

Each version of the nature of time represents the ever-present human attempt to find meaning in a world of otherwise random events. Most modern civilizations assume that time is linear and historical. However, the echoes of ancestral beliefs in a cyclical process still stir in men's hearts as they contemplate their own life cycles. S.G.F. Brandon observes:

The aspect concerned derives from the basic intuition that, if the pattern of existence is cyclic, human life must have this form, so that birth, growth, decay and death are successive stages in a recurrent process. This intuition has found expression in many forms, both primitive and sophisticated, and it has, understandably, a great intrinsic interest for most people.⁵¹⁵

In fact, Sheila Moon argues that ritual enactment may satisfy a psychic need to understand, finally, the tensions in life between permanence and change:

Even as the tolling of bells marks the crossing of time into eternity, so participation in ritual mysteries marks the merging of meaning with seemingly fortuitous life events. . . . Such expressions of mystery, incorporated into ritual acts, seem to be essential for a final understanding of the nature of changelessness and change; because the need to unify and separate and unify again leads to the enunciation of rhythm itself as a meaningful mystery.⁵¹⁶

Thus, two competing versions of the nature of time--the linear and the cyclical--reflect man's attempt to order the

⁵¹⁵Brandon, History, Time and Deity, p. 75.

⁵¹⁶Sheila Moon, A Magic Dwells: A Poetic and Psychological Study of the Navaho Emergence Myth (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1970), p. 136.

universe. The next section will examine the ways in which specific Indian beliefs and practices manifest the cyclical pattern.

American Indians and Sacred Time

As befits their Oriental heritage, traditional American Indian beliefs presume the validity of sacred time. A broad spectrum of beliefs and practices are unified by a common element which directly invokes cyclical concepts. Chapter Two discussed the importance of the circle in the symbolism of Indian ritual. A circle, of course, has no beginning or end; no matter where one starts, one always returns to the same spot. Thus, when used to represent a temporal dimension, the circle very naturally implies a quality of "repeatability" and therefore of "timelessness." The use of the circle in ritual unites one with the cosmos, a world unchanging and ahistoric, "as it was in the beginning."⁵¹⁷ Thus the symbolism of the circle merges self and scene in sacred time.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁷This phrase is part of the "Gloria Patri," a protestant hymn. The entire phrase is: "As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be." While Christian hymns and Bible verses often allude to cyclical history (e.g., the verse from Ecclesiastes quoted at the beginning of this chapter), this does not appear to play a significant role in relations with Indians.

⁵¹⁸As noted in Chapter Two, the pipe ceremony performs this function: "I point my peace pipe toward all these directions. Now we are one with the Universe, with all the living things, a link in the circle which has no end." John (Fire) Lamé Deer and Richard Erdoes, Lame Deer Seeker of Visions: The Life of a Sioux Medicine Man (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 118.

In contrast, the symbols of white men--squares--are made of lines which have beginning and end points. Consequently, their symbols trap whites into historical time; sacred time is inaccessible.

There is a second way in which traditional Indian beliefs presume the validity of sacred time; it is commonly held that the natural cycles of earth are a paradigm of sacred time. James Mooney finds the belief "that the earth becomes old and decrepit, and requires that its youth be renewed at the end of certain great cycles" to be common to a number of Indian tribes.⁵¹⁹ While the sign of the end of each cycle may vary,⁵²⁰ the pattern of cosmic birth, aging, death and rebirth is a recurrent one.⁵²¹ The Sioux, for example, speak of the world as coming, passing away, and returning in a continuous series of four phases: the rock, bow, fire and pipe ages.⁵²² Joseph Epes Brown explains this cycle:

⁵¹⁹James Mooney, "The Doctrine of the Ghost Dance," in Teachings From the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy, ed. by Dennis and Barbara Tedlock (New York: Liveright, 1975), p. 87.

⁵²⁰For example, the Sioux believe it will be the reappearance of the White Buffalo Cow Woman. Joseph Epes Brown, ed., The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala Sioux (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1971), p. xx. The Iroquois believe that thunder will appear from the east rather than the west. Frederick W. Turner, III, ed., The Portable North American Indian Reader (New York: The Viking Press, 1974), p. 75.

⁵²¹This cosmic pattern is analogous to the life cycle of the individual.

⁵²²Brown, The Sacred Pipe, p. 100. Microcosmically, these ages may refer also to the phases of a man's life, from birth to death.

According to Siouan mythology, it is believed that at the beginning of the cycle a buffalo was placed at the west in order to hold back the waters. Every year this buffalo loses one hair, and every age he loses one leg. When all his hair and all four legs are gone, then the waters rush in once again, and the cycle comes to an end.⁵²³

In this way, "history" becomes ahistorical (that is, non-linear) and repetitive.

This cyclical interpretation is highly relevant to the relationship between Indian and white, in two ways. Historically, Indians desiring to sustain their traditional way of life have interpreted the cyclical rebirth of the earth as a positive aid to this cause. Recoverable time has been a source of hope for Indians wishing to vanquish the white man and reestablish their once-dominant position to the hemisphere. The prime example of this is the spreading of the Ghost Dance religion in the late 1880's, and the resultant Sioux outbreak of 1890 which culminated at Wounded Knee. The Ghost Dance religion taught that, soon, the earth would roll up upon itself and bury all of white civilization, while Indians would be lifted up into the air and then set down upon the freshly turned soil, free to live the traditional life again without white interference.⁵²⁴ Mooney reports that the cyclical view is implicit in this expectation of regeneration. He writes:

⁵²³Ibid., p. 9.

⁵²⁴For one account of the Ghost Dance religion, see Paul Bailey, Wovoka: The Indian Messiah (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1957).

The great underlying principle of the Ghost Dance doctrine is that the time will come when the whole Indian race, living and dead, will be reunited upon a regenerated earth, to live a life of aboriginal happiness, forever free from death, disease, and misery. . . . The white race, being alien and secondary and hardly real, has no part in this scheme of aboriginal regeneration, and will be left behind with the other things of earth that have served their temporary purpose, or else will cease entirely to exist.⁵²⁵

Occasionally, the Ghost Dance religion was embellished with certain aspects of Christianity. For example, Black Elk reports that some of his people believed that an Indian messiah, perhaps Christ himself, would appear at this time:

. . . people said it was really the Son of the Great Spirit who was out there; that when he came to the Wasichus a long time ago, they had killed him; but he was coming to the Indians this time, and there would not be any Wasichus in the new world that would come like a cloud in a whirl-wind and crush out the old earth that was dying.⁵²⁶

But regardless of details, the belief in a cyclical succession of ages which will reestablish the preeminent position of Native Americans on the continent has been widely adopted.

The cyclical interpretation of time is also relevant to the relationship between Indian and white in a second way. It determines more than the content of Indian beliefs; it also affects one's capacity for evaluating these beliefs and the criteria which may be applied. The noted anthropologist Paul Radin suggests that whites will never understand Indian

⁵²⁵Mooney, "The Doctrine of the Ghost Dance," in Teachings, ed. by Tedlock, pp. 75-76.

⁵²⁶John Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 199.

religions unless they abandon the belief that religion itself is developmental, or evolutionary, and instead entertain the notion that some religious concepts are ultimate for man.⁵²⁷ In other words, Radin is arguing that a chronological, historical orientation toward the genesis of religion must be rejected in favor of a cosmic, ahistorical perspective if cosmic religions themselves are ever to be interpretable.

The historical orientation implies that superiority rests with those religions which dominate the world at present, because these have demonstrated an ability to survive, and because the linear view of time implies qualitative evolution and improvement as time passes. In this view, the dominance of Christianity over any Native American religion is prima facie proof of the former's superiority and the latter's primitiveness.

Most Indian religions, on the other hand, reject this evolutionary view. They hold that, to the extent any religion is superior to another, the primacy of a religion, rather than its recency, will indicate this superiority. Just as the original ceremony is the paradigm for all subsequent rituals, so the original religions are the models upon which subsequent religions are based. The superiority of the original religions, in this view, is based on their longevity.

⁵²⁷Dennis and Barbara Tedlock, eds., Teachings From the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy (New York: Liveright, 1975), p. xiii.

In brief, American Indian religious beliefs presume the circularity of time. The ritual symbol of the circle and the natural cycles of earth are examples. However, circularity affects more than the content of Indian religions; it is also relevant to beliefs about the patterns of religious development.

Circularity is, of course, a principle of the scene because it is a principle of nature. The following four sections will examine two critical themes in militant rhetoric which this principle produces. These are the themes of "rebirth" and "inevitability."

Red Power and Rebirth

It is quite clear that the contemporary movement considers itself the heir to the historical struggle between Indian and white. As one militant has said:

Our revolution never ended. A lot of the old people on the reservations remember the time when they bore arms against white people. This has been passed right down to their children and now their grandchildren.⁵²⁸

A cyclical history provides a ready justification for this belief. Just as the years and the earth go through periodic stages of birth, growth, decay, death and rebirth, so, it is asserted, does Indian resistance to white oppression. The Ghost Dance phenomenon, noted above, was one such rebirth. AIM activist Eddie Benton speaks of the Chippewa prophecy that one day all tribes would stand together in united brother-

⁵²⁸Voices From Wounded Knee, 1973 (Rooseveltown, N.Y.: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), p. 246.

hood, and comments, "I am elated because I lived to see this happen."⁵²⁹ Deloria associates the movement most closely with religious beliefs in the passage of an age when he writes:

The awakening of the tribes is just beginning. Traditionalists see the movement as fulfillment of ancient Hopi and Iroquois religious predictions of the end of white domination of the continent.⁵³⁰

Modern activists voice their ties to history, and thereby assert its repeatability, in three interrelated ways. First, the conditions in which Indians live is said to have remained essentially unchanged;⁵³¹ the poverty of reservation life continues, and the issues of land and sovereignty are still primary.

Second, relations with whites are said to remain the same. Whites still make the same unfulfilled promises as they did generations ago,⁵³² while continuing to oppress Indian people. An eyewitness to the large Federal military presence on the Pine Ridge reservation following the 1975 killing of two FBI agents even describes present white activities as a "repetition" of the past:

⁵²⁹Trail of Broken Treaties: B.I.A., I'm Not Your Indian Anymore (2nd ed.; Roosevelttown, N.Y.: Akwesasne Notes, 1974), p. 1.

⁵³⁰Vine Deloria, Jr., Custer Died For Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto (New York: The Hearst Corporation, 1970), p. 242.

⁵³¹"An Interview With John Trudell," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 23.

⁵³²Ibid.

That's what they've been doing here all the time--torturing us mentally, and physically if they can. It's just a repetition of what happened years and years ago.⁵³³

Third, militant responses to these conditions and relations make use of historical responses. The regeneration of warrior societies, discussed in Chapter Three, is one such response. Another is the periodic return of urban Indians to the reservations, allegedly to reawaken the traditional ways within themselves. Deloria makes a significant observation when he notes that, on the reservations, sacred time still prevails and the past and present are one. Concerning reservations as places of preservation, he writes:

Above all, Indian people have the possibility of total withdrawal from American society because of their special legal status. They can, when necessary, return to a recognized homeland where time is static and the world becomes a psychic unity again.⁵³⁴

A third modern response which recalls the past is storytelling. Steiner discusses the telling, in present tense, of stories about historical Indian-white relations by tribal elders, and observes that it unifies the past and present, permitting the participants literally to "relive" history. He notes:

History as such did not exist for tribal man. In the old Indian's words

⁵³³"S.D. Indians say: 'FBI off our land!'," The Militant, July 11, 1975, reprinted in American Indian Movement, ed., "Pine Ridge, June 1975" (St. Paul: A.I.M. National Office, June, 1975), p. 11.

⁵³⁴Deloria, Custer, p. 194.

the past was as alive as though he had experienced it himself. The past had never ended. When he told of what had happened to his forefathers, whether in realistic detail or in mythic abstraction, he did not merely recite it. He relived it.⁵³⁵

This observation corroborates Eliade's view that the recollection of past events is one method of overcoming the ravages of historical time.⁵³⁶ The frequent reference by activists to historical events thus evokes sacred time. For the militant, then, the distant past is not so distant; the past may be yesterday,⁵³⁷ or even today, as chronological time is overcome by recurrent time. The historical merges with the contemporary; or so Indian militants would have it.

While Indian presuppositions about time cause activists to view Red Power as a rebirth, alternate presuppositions cause whites to view it as anachronistic. A linear view of time places whites squarely at odds with Indians over the antecedents of the activist movement because history is understood sequentially rather than holistically.

Philosophically, the linear view treats historical conditions and relations between Indian and white as "strictly" historical; that is, without the potential to be relived and become part of the present. Consequently, the white concept of time, by rejecting the merger of past and present, denies the very basis for the modern movement which the Indian concept of time provides.

⁵³⁵Stan Steiner, The New Indians (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), p. 119.

⁵³⁶Eliade, Myth and Reality, p. 89.

⁵³⁷Steiner, The New Indians, p. 87.

This philosophical opposition is manifested rhetorically in a different expression of the relevance of history. In opposition to militant expressions which evoke historical antecedents, whites generally dissociate the historical from the contemporary, thereby rendering the former irrelevant to the latter.

This dissociation functions as a "let bygones be bygones" strategy and is used in a wide variety of circumstances. On one level, it asserts that the past is passed and cannot be changed. Deloria grants that this phenomenon is widespread when he laments that most Americans believe the problems of Indian tribes to be "facts of American history, not problems of the present."⁵³⁸ However, this belief has its advantages; past wrongs may be admitted without any implication that steps need be taken to redress them. For example, an editorial appearing in the Springfield, Massachusetts, Republican following the BIA occupation dissociates past mistreatment by whites from the potential for modern Indian progress:

There's no doubt about it: the American Indians have been badly treated. So have lots of other people, for that matter. From coast to coast, the country is full of folks--red, white, blacks, brown and yellow--who have had some hard knocks or whose ancestors were cruelly misused, by somebody, sometime, somewhere. But most Americans are inclined to accomplish something for themselves right now--never mind what happened yesterday--or three centuries ago.⁵³⁹

⁵³⁸Vine Deloria, Jr., God is Red (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1975), p. 7

⁵³⁹Reprinted in Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 37.

Similarly, during the Wounded Knee confrontation, then-Secretary of the Interior Rogers Morton adopted the official position that the past could not be undone and, therefore, did not enter into current negotiations:

There is no way that I or any other Secretary can undo the events of the past. If it was wrong for the European to move on to this continent and settle it by pioneerism and combat, it was wrong. But it happened and here we are . . .⁵⁴⁰

Thus, dissociation can make past wrongs irrelevant. It accomplishes this by separating the past and present in temporal sequence; in so doing, it relegates the past to the realm of historical certainty and inalterability, insulated from the contentions of the more uncertain present.

On another level, the historical and the present may remain associated. However, since linear time is sequential and progressive, association may have the perverse effect of making current issues appear as outdated as the historical events which they parallel. Within a linear framework, association between the past and present easily may cause the present to be moved into the past, rather than vice versa. Brooks Atkinson observes this tendency in an editorial concerning the Kinzua Dam and Seneca treaty rights. The situation he describes is one in which present wrongs are admitted, but dismissed nonetheless because they deal with issues of the past:

Everything about the situation is complex except the moral problem. For no one disputes the fact that the United States is breaking a treaty. But people are tired of the moral prob-

⁵⁴⁰Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 114.

lem, which seems to them petty and obsolete. "Well, now, really, in this day and age," they say in effect, "why all this fuss over some Indians?"⁵⁴¹

Hence, a linear view of time, by placing events in a discrete temporal sequence, isolates historical from contemporary events, thereby permitting whites to deny the relevance of and their responsibility for the historical. Moreover, to the extent that the historical and contemporary are associated, a linear view may simply taint the contemporary with the connotations of outdatedness and inalterability which it implies of the historical. A cyclical view, on the other hand, postulates that history is reversible and relevant, since history itself is repetitive and since both past and present are constituted by ritual action. The result of these differing presuppositions is dialectically opposed white and Indian notions of the relevance of history to the modern activist movement.

How is this opposition to be resolved? Given the degree of opposition, no final resolution may be possible. However, one avenue remains to be explored: the respective versions of the theme of "inevitability" which each position entails.

Indians and Inevitability

The militant theme of inevitability is an expression of the conviction that, eventually, the movement will succeed; in fact, it must succeed of necessity. At base, this convic-

⁵⁴¹Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, April, 1963, in Jack D. Forbes, ed., The Indian in America's Past (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 138.

tion is grounded in the belief that "time decides." Herbert Blatchford explains what this means:

When something has to be decided it is good to wait. If you act too quickly then you do not give time a chance to act. We believe that time will help the decision to be made.⁵⁴²

This is not to say that time gives men a chance to decide, but rather, that time decides by itself. Blatchford explains that waiting is all that is required:

When the Youth Council meets that's what happens. They sit around for four days and everybody talks. Everybody listens. It seems like nothing is happening. Then on the fourth day, though nobody says so, the decision has been made, and it is decided without further talk. Now, what has happened? Time has decided. It's not something you can see, that you can hear, but it's there.⁵⁴³

Hence, the capacity to wait is an important trait. Former Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier observed that the Indian had such a capacity, "which was of ancient man" and "bestows the power to endure . . . to outlast." The Indian, he noted, still retains "the capacity to wait, to endure, to possess things that seem gone . . ."⁵⁴⁴

When time decides, longevity is an indication that time is favorable. Today, the fact that segments of the traditional Indian population have survived and remained relatively autonomous indicates to militants that time has tested Indian

⁵⁴²Steiner, The New Indians, p. 120.

⁵⁴³Ibid., pp. 120-121.

⁵⁴⁴Ibid., p. 121.

ways of life and has found them fit. Philip Deere, a Creek medicine man, makes this general claim:

Our Indian way of life has been tested for thousands of years, and we still have it. What has been given to us since the dawn of Creation we are willing to stand up and die for.⁵⁴⁵

More specifically, Federal recognition of the Tigua tribe in April, 1968, for example, confirmed in the eyes of many Indians that time was on their side:

If, many Indian people thought, the Tiguas has survived for three centuries in the middle of El Paso, might not their own tribe also survive somehow? Once accepting the idea that tribes were really entities that had no beginning or end, Indians began to view their problems in a new light. The basic operating assumption of tribes changed from that of preserving the tribal estate for an eventual distribution to the idea that tribes would always manage to survive, that present difficulties were not insurmountable, and that perhaps the Indian community was nationally much larger than people had imagined.⁵⁴⁶

In this way, the longevity of the tribal group is a significant sign of the favorability of time.

The longevity of the individual, on the other hand, is relatively immaterial; Indians recognize that time may take longer than a lifetime--perhaps even generations--to decide. Years ago, Black Elk observed that "if a man or woman or child dies, it does not matter long, for the nation lives on."⁵⁴⁷ Deloria contrasts this emphasis on group survival

⁵⁴⁵"The IFCO Native American Consultation--A Report," Akwesasne Notes, Early Winter, 1975, p. 26.

⁵⁴⁶Deloria, Custer, p. 241.

⁵⁴⁷Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks, p. 151.

with the Christian concept of personal salvation, and argues that the former renders chronological time irrelevant to the achievement of goals. He writes:

Group salvation has certain philosophical overtones which cannot be denied. In the scheme of individual salvation, time is of the essence. One has only one lifetime to harvest the goodies of the world. It is therefore imperative that one use the most direct methods to amass wealth, prestige, and power. With a group-tribalistic approach to life, time is meaningless. If we do not accomplish the task in our lifetimes, someone else will do so in time.⁵⁴⁸

In this way of thinking, success need not be immediate; rather, long-term goals may be set with every expectation that they will be achieved in the indeterminate future. Contemporary militants also recognize that time probably will not decide in their own lifetimes. A Wounded Knee participant observes:

Everything will have to be a slow and on-going process. And it's going to be a process that most of us won't even be around to see. We will be gone before we're able to live like we want to live, but our children will be able to, or maybe our grandchildren or great-grandchildren, and that's what we're going to be building for.⁵⁴⁹

Yet time will decide, eventually. And the fact that the tribes have survived to this date is taken as proof that, when time decides, it will decide in the Indians' favor. Thus, it is argued, Indian success is inevitable, albeit indeterminate.

⁵⁴⁸Vine Deloria, Jr., We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes, New Turf (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), p. 83.

⁵⁴⁹Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 248.

So militant Indians can appear confident that they will outlast whites. The belief in sacred time enables them to deny the effects of chronological time. If time is permanent and recurrent, then those who participate in sacred time may be imbued with similar qualities. One participates through ritual enactment, and Lame Deer explains that participation in the pipe ceremony, for example, imbues Indians with the quality of permanence:

It means we were here long before the first white man came, we are here now, we will still be here at the end of time-- Indian Time. We will live!"⁵⁵⁰

Further, those who do not ritually participate in sacred time are viewed merely as transitory phenomena.⁵⁵¹ Deloria observes:

In many areas whites are regarded as a temporary aspect of tribal life and there is unshakable belief that the tribe will survive the domination of the white man and once again rule the continent.⁵⁵²

In fact, even measured chronologically, a tribal existence has comprised the bulk of history, and therefore is considered superior by virtue of longevity, while the white way of life is dismissed almost as a passing fad. Cherokee anthropologist Robert Thomas notes:

⁵⁵⁰Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, p. 118.

⁵⁵¹Vine Deloria, Jr., Behind the Trail of Broken Treaties: An Indian Declaration of Independence (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), p. 2.

⁵⁵²_____, We Talk, You Listen, p. 11.

Men have been tribal for hundreds of thousands of years. Men have been technological for barely four hundred years. Do you really think that the history of tribal man can be wiped out by laws?⁵⁵³

The formative effect of ritual enactment upon the militant theme of inevitable success can also be seen in another way. Traditionally, ritual unifies the individual with nature, merging self and scene. However, the scene in this case is semi-permanent. The face of the land has a seemingly unchanging character which outlasts the lifetimes of many individuals. Hence, in becoming one with the earth through ritual, one may also partake of its qualities, e.g., the permanence of stone.⁵⁵⁴ Permanence means survival, and survival means inevitable success. An elderly Papago, for example, identifies the fate of his tribe with the fate of his land:

They were like, he told me, the old mountain in the distance. The Spanish had come and dominated them for 300 years and then left. The Mexicans had come and ruled them for a century, but they also left. "The Americans," he said, "have been here only about 80 years. They too, will vanish but the Papagos and the mountain will always be here."⁵⁵⁵

Identification with the enduring quality of the scene helps explain the comparison which militants draw between

⁵⁵³Steiner, The New Indians, p. 152.

⁵⁵⁴This is a fundamental property of totemism.

⁵⁵⁵Vine Deloria, Jr., "This Country Was a Lot Better Off When the Indians Were Running It," The New York Times Magazine, March 8, 1970, reprinted in Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., Red Power: The American Indians' Fight for Freedom (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971), p. 246.

the tribes and Middle Eastern Jews. This is a favorite example of Deloria's, who notes that both Jews and Indians have survived hundreds of years of cultural oppression:

The only people in the modern world comparable to the Hebrews that I could see were the Indian tribes. Like the Hebrews they had been shunted aside by more powerful people and made to taste the bitter dregs of an alien culture. Yet, like the four-hundred-year sojourn in Egypt, Indians had managed to maintain their culture and basic social life.⁵⁵⁶

Moreover, Deloria argues, both groups are proof that the permanence of the earth and its rightful occupants will inevitably survive the temporary presence of those who do not belong. He comments:

Intruders may hold sway for centuries but they will eventually be pushed from the land or the land itself will destroy them. The Holy Land, having been periodically conquered and beaten into submission by a multitude of invaders, today remains the land which God gave to Abraham and his descendants. So will America return to the red man.⁵⁵⁷

Hence, it is not surprising that, when tribalism and technology are incompatible and the issues of the Red Power movement are joined, militants express such optimism concerning their resolution. In militant eyes, the twin forces of ahistorical time and the unchanging face of the land and its

⁵⁵⁶Deloria, Custer, p. 264.

⁵⁵⁷Ibid., p. 178.

people combine to determine the inevitable solution. Deloria's conclusion is the most insistent. He declares his conviction that success is inevitable:

As Indians we will never have the efficient organization that gains great concessions from society in the marketplace. We will never have a powerful lobby or be a smashing political force. But we will have the intangible unity which has carried us through four centuries of persecution and we will survive. We will survive because we are a people unified by our humanity; not a pressure group unified for conquest. And from our greater strength we shall wear down the white man and finally outlast him. But above all, and this our strongest affirmation, we SHALL ENDURE as a people.⁵⁵⁸

Deloria's conviction is based upon the argument that there is really only one way of life open to individuals, whether Indian or white. Neither really has any choice except to adopt Indian ways:

The only answer will be to adopt Indian ways to survive. For the white man even to exist, he must adopt a total Indian way of life. That is really what he had to do when he came to this land. It is what he will have to do before he leaves it once again.⁵⁵⁹

Why is there only one alternative? In a lengthy but significant commentary, Deloria argues that the land determines what is possible and concludes that, because Indians are living according to the land's dictates already, the movement really already has succeeded:

⁵⁵⁸Ibid., p. 221.

⁵⁵⁹_____, We Talk, You Listen, p. 208.

Over a period of four hundred years the white man has completely changed the land. But the land has not given up its powers. Today society is almost completely industrialized and the land is almost completely settled. Yet the wealth of natural resources and technological innovations have created a type of society in which it will not require tedious work and everyone will be forced to live in small tribal groups because that will be the only way to survive.

Thus whether the land is developed or not, and whether the people desire it or not, the land determines the forms by which societies are able to live on this continent. An undeveloped land created tribes and a fully developed land is creating tribes. In essence Indians have really won the battle for cultural survival. It remains only for years to go by and the rise of youth to continue, and everyone will be in the real mainstream of American life--the tribe.⁵⁶⁰

Thus, Deloria acknowledges the validity of the central argument of this thesis, that the scene determines the kinds of acts and agents that are possible. He concludes from this that Indians eventually must succeed because they most accurately fulfill the scenic possibility.

Whites and Inevitability

The militant theme of inevitable success is opposed by a different version of this theme, grounded in white beliefs. Potentially, one may argue for the inevitability of change rather than permanence. In this form, the ability to endure change is viewed with disfavor because change is the natural order of things. That which endures is considered anachronistic because the chronological progression of time dictates that the old pass away, to be supplanted by the new.

⁵⁶⁰Ibid., p. 190.

Such a competitor to the Indian rhetoric of permanence appears in fact to have developed. It is typically expressed in the theme of the "vanishing red man." The belief that primitive Indian societies would and, indeed, should give way before the tide of a vastly superior civilization, either to be swallowed up or destroyed, has a long history among whites. Count Alexis de Tocqueville was moved to remark in 1831, "The Indians have been ruined by a competition which they had not the means of sustaining."⁵⁶¹ A century ago, a West Point cadet named George Armstrong Custer lamented the passing of the Indian in a term paper for his ethics class: .

The red man is alone in his misery.
We behold him now on the verge of extinction,
standing on his last foothold . . .
and soon he will be talked of as a noble
race who once existed but have passed
away.⁵⁶²

The same theme was sounded by friend and foe alike. In 1911, Franz Boas noted that the proportion of people with Indian blood "is so insignificant that it may well be disregarded," for the Indian population had "vanished comparatively rapidly."⁵⁶³ Three years later, Warren Moorehead wrote that "we have brought about the extinction of tribal and communistic life among the Indians . . ."⁵⁶⁴ D'Arcy McNickle reports

⁵⁶¹D'Arcy McNickle, Native American Tribalism: Indian Survivals and Renewals (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 3.

⁵⁶²Steiner, The New Indians, p. x.

⁵⁶³Ibid., p. xi.

⁵⁶⁴Warren K. Moorehead, The American Indian in the United States: 1850-1914 (Andover, Mass.: The Andover Press, 1914), p. 10.

that a belief in the inevitable death of Indian civilization pervaded white thought at the time:

The notion grew stronger as the settlers waxed in numbers and the demand for living room accelerated. Reference to "the vanishing red man" became a common theme in song and story. James E. Fraser's equestrian statue, "The End of the Trail," first shown at the San Francisco Exposition in 1915, captured the note of inevitable doom.⁵⁶⁵

This theme continued to be voiced in subsequent years. In his 1932 chronicle, The Passing American, Frank Linderman observed that even the Indian had forgotten the Indian: "The young Indians know next to nothing about their people . . . and now it is too late to learn."⁵⁶⁶ Journalist John Keats echoed these sentiments in 1964, asking: "But, who speaks for the Indian? Amazingly his cause is almost without rebels to support it."⁵⁶⁷ Similarly, the theme of inevitable defeat is voiced in the last line of Paul Radin's The Story of the American Indian: "The white man had triumphed . . . the Indians were crushed. Broken, disorganized, externally and internally they gave up the fight."⁵⁶⁸ And even Mircea Eliade, the meticulous chronicler of "mythical behavior" and other aspects of so-called "archaic" religions, is led to the conclusion that, "in all probability, phenomena of this kind

⁵⁶⁵McNickle, Native American Tribalism, p. 3.

⁵⁶⁶Steiner, The New Indians, p. xi.

⁵⁶⁷Ibid.

⁵⁶⁸Ibid.

will become more and more uncommon."⁵⁶⁹ Hence, the theme of the vanishing red man refers to the disappearance of both the Indian way of life and Indians as a race. Implicitly, it illustrates the chronological, evolutionary view that time marches on.

Conveniently, the story of the vanishing Indian quickly became a self-fulfilling prophecy:

The idea of the "vanishing red man," so long as it dominated public thought and policy, easily excused actions which encroached upon the physical boundaries and personal liberties of a people who were to be displaced.⁵⁷⁰

Its utility made it a popular account of events. As Indians vanished from the real world, they were relegated to life in the world of literature. As Steiner notes, somewhat bitterly:

Since those halcyon days of conquest the Indian has been hopefully, by eulogies of logical doomsdays, dispatched to his cultural obliteration by his would-be conquerors. His land was taken from him and his people were all but destroyed by ingenious genocides. He should have died. For the nation's peace of mind it was best that the ghost of the Indian be extinguished from the public consciousness. And this was done, until, in modern times, the reality of Indian life was cast beyond the pale of knowledgeable truth into romantic myth.⁵⁷¹

The "romantic myth" of which Steiner speaks is that of the "noble savage," an image largely created and sustained by literature and, more recently, motion pictures and other mass media. Some have argued that, unfortunately, the

⁵⁶⁹Eliade, Myth and Reality, p. 3.

⁵⁷⁰McNickle, Native American Tribalism, p. 62.

⁵⁷¹Steiner, The New Indians, pp. x-xi.

attitudes of most white Americans are determined by such media images.⁵⁷² The effect of this kind of attitude formation is to reinforce the theme of the vanishing red man by creating images which are mythic and seldom, if ever, applied to a living Indian.⁵⁷³ Real Indians have vanished, indeed, it is argued, and have been replaced by stereotypic images.

The theme of the vanishing red man, who has survived only in the myth of the noble savage, is the white version of the inevitability theme. In dialectical opposition to the militant version, it claims that Indians inevitably must fail; in fact, they already have failed.

Employment of this theme by whites confronts Indian activists with their own nonexistence. For if Indians vanished years ago, there can be no movement today. This problem is acknowledged, for example, by one participant in the Trail of Broken Treaties caravan, who remarks: "The myth has been perpetuated that we don't exist anymore--that's the hardest thing we have to fight against."⁵⁷⁴ Moreover, while this myth is a predominately white theme, it is not used exclusively by whites; it also has been adopted by many nontraditional, progressive Indians. Hence, militants must combat the belief in their inexorable, inevitable demise

⁵⁷²Forbes, The Indian in America's Past, p. 13. See also Ralph and Natasha Friar, The Only Good Indian . . . The Hollywood Gospel (New York: Drama Book Specialists, 1972).

⁵⁷³Ibid.

⁵⁷⁴Trail of Broken Treaties, p. 18.

among whites, other Indians, and even themselves. For this reason, the discovery and support of tribal groups that have managed to survive relatively intact (such as the Tiguas) is highly significant; these groups provide tangible evidence that the evolutionary view of history and change is incorrect, and reaffirm the essential permanence of traditional tribal existence.

The Themes of Inevitability in Comparison

In sum, Indian and white presuppositions about the nature of time result in competing terminologies. The former evinces a rhetoric of permanence based on the unchanging essence of the universe. The latter evinces a rhetoric of inevitability grounded in the inexorable chronological passage of events. Both terminologies are, to a certain extent, self-contained. That is, once the presuppositions of each are accepted, their implications follow naturally. Each employs its presuppositions to define and predict eventual success for itself. Ultimately, both claims for success are grounded in the conviction that one of the competing systems more accurately reflects and enacts the nature of things.⁵⁷⁵

Consequently, the critical question is whether or not the terminologies are so mutually exclusive that no judgment of relative adequacy can be made. Of course, the conflict between permanence and change is an ancient, and probably unresolvable, one. Nonetheless, in the specific context of

^{575A} A recent attempt to turn the tables on the white system by encompassing it within the Indian is Stan Steiner's new book, The Vanishing White Man (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1976).

the Indian activist movement, there are grounds for comparison, and for concluding that the white terminology is comparatively imperfect. The reason is that a rhetoric of permanence can postpone indefinitely its success without contradicting its essential validity as a philosophy, while each delay in the triumph of the rhetoric of change is a setback to the very thesis of this philosophical position.

The example of the Tigua tribe may help illustrate this point. The rejuvenation of tribal entities like the Tiguas does not constitute ultimate success for the Indian activist movement. However, it is a necessary beginning, and holds out the potential for greater future success by empirically contradicting the thesis that the time for tribal existence has passed irretrievably. Every such example can be interpreted to reinforce the militant belief in eventual success by introducing a discontinuous, and thereby disrupting, element into the pattern of chronological change. In so doing, it imposes no temporal constraints on its own fulfillment, save those imposed on it by impatient individuals. Strictly as a philosophical system, it sets no deadlines for success--success may come tomorrow, next year, or generations from now.

The terminology of change, on the other hand, of necessity must set deadlines of some form. If there are no deadlines for any increment of success, then the underlying evolutionary thesis of the philosophical position itself is called into question. Consequently, this terminology requires that setbacks such as the Tiguas be accounted for in some way; dead-

lines must be readjusted. This can be done. However, the Indian rhetoric of permanence is a more perfect terminology inasmuch as it sets no temporal constraints and requires much less empirical evidence of success to sustain itself.

Inevitability and Determinism

The Indian theme of inevitability is meant to address the problems of extrinsic success. Beyond the success of enactment, it argues that the movement must overcome white opposition eventually because of the cyclical nature of history. But, as in the case of enactment, success will not result from the persuasion of white audiences. The movement of time does not wait for, or depend upon, such persuasion.

This is fortunate, in the respect that the militant theme has little impact on whites, who have their own version of the inevitability theme rooted in their own philosophical beliefs. Because they are so deeply rooted, any argument between these positions will be inconclusive at best, and impossible at worst.⁵⁷⁶ The hope of success which the militant theme offers comforts only those who voice it; whites are alienated because the theme rejects their system of beliefs.

Hence, like enactment, the primary purpose of the Indian inevitability theme is self-address. It is a valuable rhetorical

⁵⁷⁶This is not to say that "philosophical argumentation" in the Johnstonian sense (i.e., challenging another's philosophical position on grounds of internal inconsistency) is not possible. Cf. Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., Philosophy and Argument (State College, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1959). However, argument of this type between Indian and white is very rare, at best.

resource for the reasons which Gregg suggests, principally that it aids in the definition of situation and thereby helps give protestors symbolic control over that situation. However, Gregg writes as if protestors are free to define the conflict in any manner they desire and, presumably, may adopt any one of a number of means of symbolic control. However, Indian activists do not have this freedom. Their philosophical system will predetermine, to a large extent, what means are available.

The reason is that this system emphasizes the "scene." In the terminology of Kenneth Burke, the scene is the "featured term" in the rhetoric of Indian activism. The Burkeian principle that "the nature of acts and agents should be consistent with the nature of the scene" is the basis for much of this study, and has been noted since Chapter Two. While the relationship between scene and act is idiosyncratic, with different scenes producing different kinds of acts, the featuring of the scene in rhetoric is a sign of determinism. "Determinism is the general philosophical thesis which states that for everything that ever happens there are conditions such that, given them, nothing else could happen."⁵⁷⁷ In other words, determinism is the strongest expression of the principle that conditions dictate events. Consequently, a rhetoric which features the scene is characterized by determinism. Burke's example of this phenomenon is the philoso-

⁵⁷⁷Richard Taylor, "Determinism," in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. by Paul Edwards, II (New York: The Macmillan Company and the Free Press, 1967), p. 359.

phical school of materialism, in which purposive action is reduced to inevitable motion.⁵⁷⁸

Of course, nonchronological time is a quality of the scene, and its featuring in the theme of inevitability is an example of historical determinism. W. H. Dray explains that the cyclical pattern is one form that historical inevitability may take:

In this conception, the course of history has a necessary over-all direction, whether it be attributed to an active but impersonal "force," a nisus toward some ultimate goal, or a "dynamic" law of development. The necessary direction of history has been variously conceived by various philosophers. Thus the Greeks tended to envisage it as cyclical and repetitive, while most philosophers of the Enlightenment found an equally simple but linear pattern of inevitable progress.⁵⁷⁹

The only choice available to those who wish to escape this necessary direction is to reject the scenic qualities of time which cause it. This is the option which Gregg holds out to protestors--to define the situation in another way. However, this is not an option for Indian militants. To reject these assumptions would be to reject the traditional Indian life, the role of man as actualizer, and, therefore, the movement itself. The choice cannot be exercised if Indian activists are to remain Indian activists.

⁵⁷⁸Kenneth Burke, A Grammar of Motives (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 127-170.

⁵⁷⁹W. H. Dray, "Determinism in History," in Encyclopedia, ed. by Edwards, p. 374.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined another scenic influence in Indian protest rhetoric. The belief in cyclical, recoverable, "sacred" time, exemplified by the natural cycles of nature, was found to create a deterministic theory of history and provide the philosophical basis for the militant theme of inevitable success. Success is guaranteed to the movement by the inexorable pattern of history and by the ability to recover, through ritual enactment, the time when Indians lived according to traditional tribal dictates.

Hence, this chapter has addressed the central problem of success from yet another perspective, by introducing a new concept. Yet, this concept of time is also a transcendent concept, permitting one to reinterpret and capsulize the other issues of success which this study has considered. More specifically, previous findings now may be seen also to substantiate the characterization of Red Power as a rhetoric of permanence. With this reinterpretation, this study will end. First, the constraints upon traditional forms of persuasion will be reconsidered. Second, the intrinsic consummatory purpose of the alternative forms of persuasion employed by activists will be reexamined. Finally, this study will project Indian life and the role of the modern movement after its inevitable success has been achieved.

The key to cyclical time as a transcendent concept is the fact that, as Dray observes, time is considered an active, dynamic force in itself. As a quality of the scene, it reinforces the belief that the scene is an active force behind

events, influencing what does and does not occur. This corroborates the findings of previous chapters. In Chapter Two, the Indian belief in man's essentially passive relationship to nature was noted. Hence, the roles of man and nature are complementary, with nature being the active force.⁵⁸⁰ In Chapter Three, the principal active force in nature, supernatural Power, was discussed. Again, man's passive role was observed. In this case, passivity characterized man's relationship to other men, because Power, and not man, is believed to be the primary agent of change in the world. And Chapter Four examined the restricted role which traditional Indian beliefs permit persuasion to play in the affairs of men. Clearly, man's passive role is one restriction, for persuasion is an active attempt to influence another.

As an active part of the scene, time also restricts persuasive attempts, demanding this passivity of men. In fact, the necessary path traveled by history does more than restrict the role of persuasion; it renders such active efforts by men superfluous. In a deterministic system where events are the necessary result of certain conditions, there simply is no room for persuasion. The ability or inability of Indian activists to persuade whites to change has no effect on the course of events, because these events are caused by scenic conditions; men are not agents of change.

Because time will pass as it will, influencing events and rendering persuasion superfluous, it does not matter

⁵⁸⁰These complimentary roles are illustrated in the finding that time, and not man, decides.

that militants characteristically employ "steno-symbols" in their efforts to persuade whites. It does not matter that these steno-symbols are old and stale and carry minimal persuasive impact for whites, because this impact is superfluous. In fact, steno-symbols reinforce the Indian concept of time. Because their meanings are old, conventional and well-known, steno-symbols manifest, linguistically, the belief in an essentially unchanging universe. They are, therefore, perfect symbols for use in a rhetoric of permanence.

The paradigm of steno-symbols is the symbols used in ritual, where meanings are prescribed by tradition. Ritual is the key to understanding the alternative, consummatory purpose of Indian rhetoric. For, if the scene is the true determiner of events, then, metaphorically, one must "persuade" the scene, rather than other men, if one is to influence these events. And ritual is the means whereby one addresses the scene.

Again, man's role in nature is not active and creative; rather, his role is to fulfill the conditions which nature has created, to actualize the principles of nature in his own life.⁵⁸¹ In ritual, one actualizes these principles and fulfills one's role. Actualization is consummatory; it is an end in itself. It is instrumental in the sense that, by fulfilling one's role, one becomes part of the pattern of events and helps bring them about.⁵⁸² However, the reason

⁵⁸¹See Chapter Two.

⁵⁸²This is what is meant by "persuading" the scene and thereby affecting the course of events.

that one should desire to participate in this pattern is simply that this is one's role. Hence, actualization is consummatory; one does it because it is what one is supposed to do as a human being.

This traditional principle of actualization has its parallel in militant Indian rhetoric. For militants, the traditional Indian way of life reflects the principles of nature to be actualized. Hence, the movement enacts this way of life. Through ritual and other means, militants enact the traditional warrior role, the recovery of a tribal land base, tribal sovereignty, and, ultimately, the role of man as actualizer.⁵⁸³ In so doing, they participate in the traditional pattern of life and help bring it about. Further, just as participants in ritual participate in sacred, non-linear time, militants who enact the traditional life recover the ahistorical time when this life flourished, and thereby enact their theme of inevitable triumph. By adopting the traditional philosophical system, the rhetorical resources of that system, i.e., determinism and inevitability, are made available to them. Enactment is also consummatory; militants enact the traditional life because that is the life they are meant to lead.

Hence, while cyclical time renders traditional forms of persuasion superfluous, it makes enactment central. For there are competing forms of time; the chronological, profane form pervades white life. Thus, in order to participate in ahistorical, sacred time, and therefore in the inevitable

⁵⁸³See Chapter Five.

cycle of events which will cause Indians to triumph, one must enact the way of life and philosophy of which the belief in sacred time is part. Once enacted, "success" is guaranteed because "success" now means the fulfillment of traditional Indian principles, and enactment is this fulfillment.

Enactment of this philosophical system in nonchronological time explains why militants consider themselves to be a conservative movement.⁵⁸⁴ Philosophically, traditional beliefs hold that the essential nature of the universe is unchanging; that there exist essences and truths concerning the way in which men should live; that each individual is obliged to discover these truths and actualize them in his own life; and that, in so doing, the individual participates in, becomes part of, the unchanging essence of Creation. That is, through enactment, the individual can become one with a permanent, timeless reality. For militants, the truths of this reality are found in the principles of traditional life. Therefore, by enacting these principles, the movement defends the permanent, enduring nature of things, and is truly a conservative, rather than revolutionary, force. Insofar as militants enact the traditional life, the movement as a whole will reflect these presuppositions, it actualizes the permanent nature of the cosmos and is, in fact, the antithesis of revolution. Hence, Red Power is a conservative force and symbolically actualizes this conservatism in a rhetoric of permanence.

⁵⁸⁴See Chapter Three.

The final question to be posed is, what will the world be like when the inevitable triumph is achieved in full? Of course, any answer to this question must be highly speculative. Nonetheless, one is already emerging. It appears that, as the movement "succeeds" intrinsically, it will begin to dissolve. Insofar as militants are successful in enacting the traditional Indian way of life, the need for national political organizations such as AIM will diminish; ultimately, a return to tradition would dissolve the fragile intertribal unity which activists strive for today, as the tribes gradually were separated by their own cultural differences. The movement would become fragmented, variegated and decentralized, reshaped by the demands of individual tribes.

There is some evidence that this is happening today. Currently, the organization of AIM appears to be in a shambles. Much of its leadership has been imprisoned or forced underground, and the organization's energies have been consumed in combating over 150 court cases.⁵⁸⁵ Russell Means and Dennis Banks, AIM's prime movers, are reported to be divided over their future roles, and Means was the target of an assassination attempt in 1976, allegedly instigated by a rival AIM faction.⁵⁸⁶ Nonetheless, the movement continues, albeit in visibly different form:

⁵⁸⁵Andrew Ross and Stephen Most, "A.I.M. Seeking New Strength in Spiritual Roots of the Indians," Kansas City Times, September 2, 1976, p. 10C.

⁵⁸⁶Ibid.

But given the continuing series of critical A.I.M. setbacks, a curious phenomenon remains: What began as a small band of urban, politically minded reformers has been transformed into a pervasive, decentralized spiritual movement woven into the fabric of traditional Indian culture. As such, A.I.M. has ignited what one Indian leader calls "the spiritual rebirth of our nation."⁵⁸⁷

Spiritual rebirth is what one might expect from a social movement whose principal strategy is the enactment of traditional Indian ways. Lame Deer once wrote: "Life to us is a symbol to be lived."⁵⁸⁸ Contemporary activists have chosen to live the symbols of their forefathers, confident that these symbols ultimately must triumph as the accurate representation of the proper way of life. This triumph, when it comes, will mend the nation's hoop, the sacred circle which Black Elk saw broken in the bloody mud that cold, wintry day in 1890.

Wallace Black Elk predicts:

The hoop, the sacred hoop was broken here at Wounded Knee, and it will come back again. The stake here that represents the tree of life, the tree will bloom, it will flower again, and all the people will rejoin and come back to the sacred road, the red road.⁵⁸⁹

As to whether Red Power will triumph, Indian and white have differing opinions. But on one fact they may both agree: Time will tell.

⁵⁸⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸⁸Lame Deer and Erdoes, Lame Deer, p. 118.

⁵⁸⁹Voices From Wounded Knee, p. 109.

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