

**WE'WHA AND KLAH
THE AMERICAN INDIAN BERDACHE AS ARTIST
AND PRIEST**

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A COMPARISON OF THE CAREERS of the Zuni We'wha (c. 1849–1896) and the Navajo Hastiin Klah (1867–1937)—well known figures in their day—casts both men in new light. As religious leaders and accomplished artists, both became envoys to the white world and both met American presidents. Both were anthropological informants, and both helped adapt traditional crafts for commercial markets, contributing to the economic development of their tribes. Finally, both We'wha and Klah were *berdaches*—the term used by anthropologists for those American Indians, in tribes across the continent, whose lifestyles bridged men's and women's social roles. At Zuni they were called *lhamana*, among the Navajo, *nadle*. Berdaches often, but not always, cross-dressed or wore a mixture of men's and women's clothing. They combined social, economic, and religious activities of both sexes along with responsibilities unique to berdache status. Many of the accomplishments of We'wha and Klah were only possible because, as berdaches, they bridged genders.

While gay or homosexual people in the white world today are defined primarily in terms of sexuality, the Indian berdache was viewed in terms of gender-mixing. This does not exclude sexuality—berdaches typically formed relationships with non-berdache members of their own sex—but gives it a different priority. A comparison of We'wha and Klah offers a new perspective on the berdache role. Spanning a critical period in American Indian history, their lives illustrate the changes berdache status underwent in the transition from traditional to contemporary Indian life.¹

The contributions of We'wha and Klah have lasted because of the insight each gained into the value of Western technologies of memory. According to Reichard, Klah “valued our technical devices for preservation—writing, painting in water color, phonograph recording—and not only cooperated with recorders but even urged that the teaching be made permanent.”² Indeed, Donald Sandner claims that “Hosteen Klah himself did more than anyone else to make Navaho religion available to outsiders.”³ Ahead of their peers and years before Native American studies and tribally-sponsored cultural programs, We'wha and Klah sought to preserve and promulgate traditional ways.

While We'wha and Klah were traditionalists, they were also innovators, willing to take risks to pursue their projects. Among the Zunis, tribal members who became anthropological informants were suspected of "selling secrets" and sometimes accused of being witches. Among the Navajo, it was feared that recording images or words from ceremonies would bring sickness and ill-fortune to the recorder and the tribe. But innovating and taking risks were endeavors Klah and We'wha pursued all their lives, beginning with the choice to enter the special status of the berdache.

WE'WHA: POTTER AND WEAVER

By any standards, We'wha (pronounced *WEE-wah*) was an important figure in his time. Matilda Coxe Stevenson considered him "the strongest character and the most intelligent of the Zuni tribe."⁴ George Wharton James described him as "one of the most noted and prominent" members of the tribe.⁵ And Robert Bunker, an employee of the Indian Service at Zuni in the 1940s, referred to him as "that man of enormous strength who lived a woman's daily life in woman's dress, but remained a power in his Pueblo's gravest councils."⁶ In the 1960s, elders still recalled stories about We'wha for the anthropologist Triloki Pandey.⁷

The Federal government's Bureau of Ethnology had just been founded in 1879 when it sent its first expedition, under the direction of James Stevenson, to Zuni. Accompanying Stevenson was his wife, Matilda, who would take over his studies after his death in 1888.

Mrs. Stevenson and We'wha met soon after the expedition's arrival and began a friendship that extended over the next fifteen years.⁸ According to Stevenson, We'wha was "the tallest person in Zuni; certainly the strongest." He had "an indomitable will and an insatiable thirst for knowledge."⁹ In fact, We'wha became a principal informant for Mrs. Stevenson's exhaustive report on the Zunis, published in 1904.

Although We'wha wore female clothing, his masculine features seem obvious to us today. Nonetheless, for some years Stevenson believed We'wha to be a woman. We'wha's true sex was no secret, however. As James noted, "It was the comments of her own friends, Zunis, that first made me 'wise' to the situation as to her sex."¹⁰ Even when Stevenson did discover the truth, she wrote, "As the writer could never think of her faithful and devoted friend in any other light, she will continue to use the feminine gender when referring to We'wha."¹¹

But the Zunis never ignored the fact that We'wha was male—and for this reason I use male pronouns when writing of him.¹² As

Stevenson herself observed, the Zunis referred to *lhamanas* by saying, "'She is a man'; which is certainly misleading to one not familiar with Indian thought."¹³ In fact, Zuni berdaches underwent one of two male initiation rites and participated in the all-male kachina societies responsible for sacred masked dances. They were referred to with male kinship terms and, at death, they were buried on the male side of the cemetery.¹⁴ Cushing's 1881 census of the tribe lists We'wha's occupations as "Farmer; Weaver; Potter; Housekeeper"—the first two are men's activities, the last two women's.¹⁵

What seemed paradoxical to Stevenson was a logical extension of Zuni beliefs about gender. In their world view, the social roles of men and women were not biologically determined but acquired through life experience and shaped through a series of initiations. The Zunis referred to this socialization process metaphorically. Individuals were born "raw." To become useful adults they had to be "cooked." For the Zunis, gender was a part of being "cooked"—a social construction.¹⁶

The rites observed at We'wha's death, as described by Stevenson, best reveal the Zuni view of the *lhamana*. To prepare the body for burial, We'wha was dressed in new female clothes. But beneath the dress, a pair of pants was slipped on—symbolizing the fact that, while *born* male, We'wha had *learned* the traits and skills of women.¹⁷ The Zunis did not entertain the social fiction that We'wha had crossed sexes to become female. Rather, they viewed *lhamanas* as occupying a *third* gender status, one that combined both men's and women's traits—an unusual but possible configuration given Zuni beliefs about the construction of gender identity.

It was We'wha's skills in native arts, however, that first brought him to the attention of white visitors to Zuni. We'wha was expert in the two ancient crafts which were mainstays of Pueblo culture—weaving and pottery. According to Stevenson, he was one of the most accomplished artists of the tribe.¹⁸

We know of We'wha's mastery of weaving from the comments of the popular writer and lecturer George Wharton James and from a striking series of documentary photographs in the National Anthropological Archives at the Smithsonian Institution. We'wha was adept with both the waist loom, for weaving belts and sashes, and the blanket loom.

James was a self-styled expert on Indian weaving. Regarding We'wha he wrote, "Proud indeed is that collector who can boast of one of her weave among his valued treasures." We'wha's blankets and dresses were "exquisitely woven . . . with a delicate perception of colour-values that delighted the eye of a connoisseur. Her sashes, too, were the finest I ever saw."¹⁹ In the late nineteenth century, We'wha was among the few Zuni weavers who sold textiles to outsiders.²⁰

The production of native textiles in the Southwest has been dated back to A.D. 800, when the Pueblos' ancestors—the Anasazi—began weaving on upright, blanket looms.²¹ In We'wha's day, wool had largely replaced native cotton but the Pueblo loom still produced mantas (worn by women), shoulder blankets, shirts, kilts, breechcloths, belts, garters, headbands, and sashes.

In general, Pueblo men were the weavers—women specialized in pottery. This seems to have been the traditional division of crafts inherited from the Anasazi. Among the Navajo, however, the women were weavers. Zuni was unique. Both men *and* women wove, at least in historical times.²² As a Zuni man told Ruth Bunzel, "The men and the women themselves made their clothing."²³

We'wha was equally accomplished in ceramic arts. In 1879, Stevenson commissioned pots from We'wha for the National Museum, and in her report she described some of his techniques.²⁴

Among the Pueblos, pottery had not only functional and aesthetic value, but religious significance as well. Clay was referred to as the "flesh" of Mother Earth. Pots were fed wafer bread before firing and believed to acquire consciousness and a personal existence.²⁵ Completed pots were called "made beings" (i.e., taxonomically synonymous with human beings). Pottery decoration also expressed religious sentiments. Women conceived of their designs as prayers for rain, like the feathered offerings made by men. As one potter told Bunzel, "Women do not prepare prayersticks, and that is why we always put feathers on the jars."²⁶

Prehistoric Southwest pottery developed in tandem with weaving. By providing storage and transportation for foodstuffs, pottery played a critical role in the evolution of Pueblo culture. In the traditional technique, coils of clay were built up by hand and surfaces carefully finished and polished. The Anasazi painted their pots with nonfigurative and geometrically rational designs. Drawing from these conventions, the stylistic evolution of Zuni pottery has been dated back to A.D. 1300.²⁷

We'wha shared the attitudes of the traditional Pueblo potter. On one occasion, the Stevensons accompanied We'wha to a nearby mesa to gather clay:

On passing a stone heap she picked up a small stone in her left hand, and spitting upon it, carried the hand around her head and threw the stone over one shoulder upon the stone heap in order that her strength might not go from her when carrying the heavy load down the mesa. She then visited the shrine at the base of the mother rock and tearing off a bit of her blanket deposited it in one of the tiny pits in the rock as an offering to the mother rock. When she drew near to the clay bed

she indicated to Mr. Stevenson that he must remain behind, as men never approached the spot. Proceeding a short distance the party reached a point where We'wha requested the writer to remain perfectly quiet and not talk, saying: "Should we talk, my pottery would crack in the baking, and unless I pray constantly the clay will not appear to me." She applied the hoe vigorously to the hard soil, all the while murmuring prayers to Mother Earth. Nine-tenths of the clay was rejected, every lump being tested between the fingers as to its texture. After gathering about 150 pounds in a blanket, which she carried on her back, with the ends of the blanket tied around her forehead, We'wha descended the steep mesa, apparently unconscious of the weight.²⁸

In 1886, We'wha traveled with the Stevensons to Washington, D.C. and spent six months in the Stevenson home.

While Indian visits to the national capital were frequent in the nineteenth century, few Indians stayed as long or maintained as high a profile as the Zuni berdache We'wha. According to Stevenson, he "came in contact only with the highest conditions of culture, dining and receiving with some of the most distinguished women of the national capital."²⁹ We'wha met John Carlisle, Speaker of the House, and other dignitaries. In May, he appeared at the National Theatre in an amateur theatrical event sponsored by local society women to benefit charity. According to a newspaper account, We'wha received "deafening" applause from an audience that included senators, congressmen, diplomats and Supreme Court justices.³⁰ In June, We'wha called on President Cleveland and presented him with gift of his "handiwork."³¹

We'wha's behavior in Washington conformed to established patterns of Zuni diplomacy. Over the years, Zuni leaders had skillfully cultivated good relations with the American government. In 1882, six Zunis met President Arthur; a year later, Arthur signed an executive order protecting the boundaries of the Zuni reservation.³²

While in Washington, We'wha worked with Stevenson and other Bureau of Ethnology anthropologists to record his knowledge.³³ In an early use of photography to document native arts, a series of pictures was taken while We'wha demonstrated Zuni weaving techniques—spinning wool, stringing warp onto a loom, and, with the loom suspended from the branch of a tree in the mall in front of the Smithsonian, displaying its operation. A newspaper reporter who described this scene noted that:

Folks who have formed poetic ideals of Indian maidens, after the pattern of Pocahontas or Minnehaha, might be disappointed in Wa-Wah on first sight. Her features, and especially her mouth, are rather large; her figure and carriage rather masculine. . . . Wa-Wah, who speaks a little English,

and whose manner is very gentle, said that it took her six days to weave the blanket she wears.³⁴

Despite his easy adaptation to Washington society, We'wha seems to have remained unchanged. His attitude is conveyed in a story that Edmund Wilson heard when he visited Zuni in the 1940s:

When he returned to the pueblo, he assured his compatriots that the white women were mostly frauds, for he had seen them, in the ladies' rooms, taking out their false teeth and the 'rats' from their hair.³⁵

We'wha borrowed selectively from the white world. When Stevenson decided to introduce soap into the pueblo, she selected We'wha as her pupil. We'wha adopted this practice wholeheartedly, and, with his own apparel as advertisement, went into business doing laundry for local whites.³⁶

We'wha played a special role in the religious life of his tribe as well. He was a member of the men's kachina society—in fact, the participation of *lhamana* was essential in at least one Zuni ceremony, in which the berdache kachina, Ko'lhamana, appears. We'wha regularly danced this part. According to Stevenson, We'wha was also "especially versed in their ancient lore" and was "called upon . . . whenever a long prayer had to be repeated or grace was to be offered over a feast. In fact she was the chief personage on many occasions." We'wha also belonged to a curing or medicine society.³⁷

Two of the myths published in Stevenson's report are attributed to We'wha.³⁸ In fact, the source for much of the material Stevenson used in her version of the Zuni origin myth may have been We'wha. One segment of this version has long been questioned.³⁹ It includes details on the berdache kachina which other accounts do not have. Perhaps this can be explained if Stevenson took her version from the berdache We'wha.

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We'wha's early death in 1896 was regarded by his tribe as a calamity. In his lifetime, the entry of Americans into the Southwest had brought government agents, teachers, missionaries, traders, and anthropologists, and all posed threats to Zuni culture. But We'wha had shown how white society could be accommodated without abandoning traditional Zuni values.

The twentieth century has seen a surprising renewal in Pueblo arts. Today, there are both fine art and commercial markets for native ceramics, and in the past decade women in several Rio Grande pueblos have begun to revive weaving. According to a recent observer, some Zuni men are also re-learning this ancient art.⁴⁰

At Zuni, neither weaving nor pottery became commercial crafts, although silversmithing did. Even so, We'wha's specialization in crafts production, his efforts to document craft techniques and foster interest in native arts through his travels and contacts in the white world, and his early sales of pottery and weaving all prefigure developments which were crucial in the twentieth century revival.

Today, native ceramics are a source of ethnic pride among the Zunis—a part of their tribal identity. According to Hardin, "Zuni people value their pottery as much for its many connections with Zuni life and belief as for its beauty." In the 1980s, pottery-making was taught at the Zuni High School and some Zuni men became accomplished potters.⁴¹

We'wha prefigured this development, too—one hundred years ago he made craftsmanship a prominent aspect of his public identity. Taking advantage of the universal appreciation of the arts, he built a bridge to the white world. We'wha would no doubt be pleased by the renaissance in pottery now flourishing at Zuni and the renewal of interest in Pueblo weaving.

KLAH: MEDICINE MAN AND ARTIST

The cultural distance between the Zuni We'wha and the Navajo Klah⁴² is much greater than that suggested by the one hundred miles that separated their homes in New Mexico. Yet, despite the social differences between their tribes—once bitter enemies—there are significant similarities in the lives of these two berdaches.

Klah's life spanned a period that brought changes for the Navajos as dramatic as those faced by the Zunis in We'wha's time. Klah's mother had made the infamous "Long Walk," a forced march from Arizona to the Bosque Redondo in New Mexico under the U.S. army in 1864. After that, the Navajos, once a proud, nomadic people, abandoned armed resistance and began adapting to reservation life. Unlike We'wha, however, Klah lived well into the twentieth century when major changes occurred in the production of native arts and the role of berdaches.

At the time of his death in 1937, Klah could count among his friends such well-known figures as Mary Cabot Wheelwright, a wealthy Bostonian who encouraged Navajo artists; Gladys Reichard, a widely published anthropologist; and Franc Newcomb, wife of the trader who took over the post near Klah's home in 1914. Judging from their accounts, Klah inspired both trust and admiration. Wheelwright wrote:

I grew to respect and love him for his real goodness, generosity—and holiness, for there is no other word for it. He never had married, having

spent twenty-five years studying not only the ceremonies he gave, but all the medicine lore of the tribe. . . . When I knew him he never kept anything for himself. It was hard to see him almost in rags at his ceremonies, but what was given him he seldom kept, passing it on to someone who needed it. . . . Our civilization and miracles he took simply without much wonder, as his mind was occupied with his religion and helping his people. . . . Everything was the outward form of the spirit world that was very real to him.⁴³

Gladys Reichard considered Klah "one of the most remarkable persons I ever knew":

He dressed in men's clothes at least in recent years and there was nothing feminine about him unless an indescribable gentleness be so called. . . . He was a person of many facets. One became instantly acquainted with him, one constantly found in him depths not easily plumbed, uncanny intuition, capacity for quiet and bubbling humor, a sure stability and, at the same time, a wide even experimental tolerance. His voice was gentle and low, though interesting, his actions never impulsive, but energetic and swift, his principles and convictions unshakable. . . . His was an intuitive, speculative, imaginative mind, far from conservative, though he remained orthodox. He was always ready to examine new ideas, he harbored certain notions probably held by no other Navaho, unless taught by him.⁴⁴

Newcomb, above all, enjoyed Klah's confidence and, like Stevenson, accompanied her Indian friend on both public and private religious occasions:

One day Klah and I rode up the mountain as far as the car could go and then walked some distance up a steep slope to the base of a huge mass of rock that capped the eminence. Here Klah placed his open palms flat against the smooth surface of the rock and muttered a low prayer that took about five minutes. Then he opened his pollen bag and sprinkled pollen up and down the rock, also in a circle, which indicated a blessing for the whole mountain and everything on it. After this he began his search for the things he wished to take home. It seemed to me that he asked permission to gather the herbs and branches, at the same time thanking the mountain spirit for its gifts.⁴⁵

Newcomb dedicated one of her books to Klah and later wrote his biography.⁴⁶

Born in 1867, Klah grew up in the Tunicha Valley in western New Mexico. His family spent summers in the mountains behind Toadlena and wintered near Sheep Springs. Klah's uncle was a medicine man and Klah received his first religious training from him. His aunt shared an extensive knowledge of native plants.

The religious practice Klah learned centered around ceremonies called "chants" or "sings." These were curing rites, often several days in length, which incorporated songs, myths, dance, medicinal plants, and ritual procedures, coordinated by a medicine man and his assistants for the benefit of a patient. Central to most rites were the impermanent dry paintings made on the floor of the ceremonial hut from sand, ground stones, and shells in a variety of colors. These sandpaintings were often several feet in diameter and served as temporary altars for ritual actions. They were considered accurate depictions of Navajo gods and mythological events. Klah showed a remarkable aptitude for memorizing the songs and sandpaintings of these rites; by the age of ten he had mastered his first ceremony.

While in his teens, Klah suffered a serious horse-riding accident. In the long convalescence which followed, his status as a *nadle* or berdache was confirmed. As Newcomb wrote, Klah entered a "very special category":

The Navahos believed him to be honored by the gods and to possess unusual mental capacity combining both male and female attributes. He was expected to master all the knowledge, skill, and leadership of a man and also all of the skills, ability, and intuition of a woman. Klah during his lifetime lived up to these expectations in every way.⁴⁷

During this same period, however, the customs of the Navajo berdache were changing. This is most apparent in the fact that Klah, unlike We'wha, did not cross-dress. According to Reichard, "The reasons the Navajo called him 'one-who-has-been-changed' [i.e., *nadle*] were chiefly that he wove blankets and was not interested in women."⁴⁸ Elsewhere she reported that *nadle* wore either male or female clothing.⁴⁹

But Matthews, writing just forty years earlier, had stated flatly that *nadle* "dress as women."⁵⁰ At least one reason for this change is suggested in reports from Leighton and Kluckhohn, and Hill. In the 1930s and '40s, these authors cited changing attitudes towards berdaches, and white ridicule in particular, as the reason why *nadle* no longer cross-dressed.⁵¹ In the absence of cross-dressing, one finds *nadle* described simply as "bachelors" or men "not interested" in women.⁵² Only Haile has been forthcoming regarding the sexuality of the *nadle*. "A name," he reported, "which implies that the man is proficient not only in feminine accomplishments, but also practices pederasty."⁵³ More recently, *nadle* has been defined as "transvestite, homosexual."⁵⁴

But in the twentieth century, Klah did not have to cross-dress to signify his status. He combined traits of both genders in his character, occupation, religious practice, and philosophical outlook and so was considered a *nadle* by himself and other Navajos.

Once his berdache status had been confirmed, Klah was "expected to assist" his mother and sister in their weaving—an important source of income for the family. During the 1880s, Klah mastered the skills which would later make him famous, learning to weave smooth, finely patterned rugs.⁵⁵

Like We'wha, Klah's talents in native arts led to contacts with white collectors and traders. In 1893, the World's Columbian Exposition opened in Chicago. The Territory of New Mexico planned an exhibit featuring Navajo artisans, but the organizers wanted to include only men. They looked for a male weaver—apparently unaware that such a man would have to be, in Navajo terms, a *nadle*. They were referred to a young man named Klah. According to Newcomb, the blanket Klah made in Chicago was the first he completed entirely on his own.⁵⁶

Navajo women may have learned the art of weaving from one of We'wha's Zuni ancestors some three hundred years ago.⁵⁷ By the early eighteenth century, Navajos traded their blankets to the Spanish settlers of New Mexico and other Indian tribes as far away as the Great Plains. Weaving became a means of expression as integral to traditional Navajo culture as pottery to the Pueblos. Like ceramics, it was an art practiced by the majority of women, a part of their life cycle. Spider Woman was the mythical teacher of weaving and the weaver's source of inspiration; spider webs were rubbed on the hands and arms of female infants to ensure strength and endurance for weaving. Women made prayer-offerings to their weaving tools and passed them on to their daughters.⁵⁸

Navajo blankets were a basic article of clothing. They protected the wearer from the elements and at night provided warm, watertight bedding. They were utilitarian and, like Pueblo pottery, expressive of individual and tribal identity. As Berlant and Kahlenberg explain:

Draped like a cape and brought forward, pulled together across the arms, the blanket reveals its essential design concept as half units meet to form whole units. Elements break at just the right place, often following the lines of the arms. . . . A Navajo blanket expressed the character of its wearer and gave him a kind of permanent gesture.⁵⁹

Weaving continues to play an important role in Navajo life, as a vehicle for expressing such central values as self-control and self-esteem, creativity and beauty, and the integration of the world of animals and plants (symbolized by the fibers and dyes) and the world of humans.⁶⁰

Klah began his career as a weaver at a time of great change in Navajo crafts production. After an artistic and technical peak in the mid-nineteenth century, Navajo weaving had declined. The arrival of

the railroad in 1882 brought cheap manufactured clothing and blankets, which displaced handmade items. At the same time, it brought an influx of traders. That Klah's family and others continued to weave was partly due to the efforts of these businessmen.

Traders encouraged weavers in a variety of ways. They provided dyes, yarns, and even pictures of the designs they considered desirable. By the 1890s, two-thirds of the items woven by Navajo women were for non-tribal use, and white buyers were beginning to use blankets as rugs. As Berlant and Kahlenberg note, "If the transition from blanket to rug marked the end of an art form, it also established a basis for continued economic and social stability."⁶¹ In the twentieth century, however, Navajo weaving would re-emerge as an art form and command handsome prices in fine art markets.

Klah appears to have participated in the movement to revive and commercialize Navajo weaving from its inception. According to Erna Fergusson, he was friends with Richard Wetherill—one of the first traders east of the Chuska Mountains to develop the commercial potential of native textiles.⁶²

Wetherill had arrived at Chaco Canyon in 1896 with the Hyde Exploring Expedition. Although the Expedition's goal was to excavate Pueblo Bonito, its impact on Navajo weaving was, in the end, as significant as its archaeological findings. In late 1897, Wetherill opened a trading post to supplement and, in part, finance the Expedition's work. After just a few months in business, he could claim that "all the blankets in the region come to us."⁶³ In 1901, the scope of these trading activities was dramatically expanded. Before the Expedition disbanded in 1903, some twelve posts throughout the Southwest shipped thousands of blankets to outlets on the East Coast.⁶⁴

Wetherill had entered business the same year that J. B. Moore established his post at Crystal, in the Chuska Mountains. As pioneer traders, both men fostered stylistic developments in which Klah—who lived about equal distance from the two posts—later participated. From Crystal came a new, bordered style with intricate linear designs and this sparked, in turn, the Two Grey Hills style that Klah followed in the 1910s.⁶⁵ At the same time, the first rugs with sandpainting designs were being woven in the Chaco, apparently at the request of members of the Hyde Exploring Expedition.⁶⁶

Whether or not they were friends, as Fergusson reports, it is quite likely that Klah's family traded with Richard Wetherill in the years before Wetherill's death in 1910. According to Newcomb, the Expedition investigated Klah's Tunicha Valley area in 1897.⁶⁷ Aleš Hrdlička, reporting on research he conducted with the support of the Hyde brothers, refers to Klah as "one of the medicine-men about Chaco canyon."⁶⁸

In fact, Newcomb reports that Klah had been commissioned to weave a copy of a blanket fragment found by the Hyde Expedition.⁶⁹

Klah did not begin weaving sandpainting designs, however, until he completed the "final initiation" of his training as a medicine man by leading a nine-day Yeibichai ceremony. This occurred in 1917, when Klah was forty-nine. "I am sure," wrote Newcomb, "that this ceremony was the equal of those held in the days of Narbona's chieftaincy when the Navaho people were called 'The Lords of the Soil.'" ⁷⁰

[Klah] told Arthur [Newcomb] that he had conferred with and compared ceremonies with every Yeibichai chanter in the Navaho tribe—there were none he had not contacted. He had learned something from each one, and now there was nothing more for him to learn. He said, 'This fall I will hold the greatest Yeibichai that has ever been held on the Reservation since before the Navajos were taken to the Bosque Redondo, and I will ask everyone to come and criticize. If there is any mistake or omission, I will start studying all over again.'⁷¹

Newcomb estimated attendance at two thousand. The climax of the event was a great "give-away" in which Klah distributed goods and sheep representing one-third of his worldly wealth, announcing his intention to devote the rest of his life to spiritual concerns.

Klah's great-grandfather was the famous chieftain Narbona. If Klah's Yeibichai was indeed the largest gathering of Navajos since Narbona's time, it was also of a different order. Narbona was a war chief, while in Klah's day the Navajo were at peace, facing a hard accommodation to reservation life. Klah contributed in two ways to this accommodation—by expanding the artistic and market potentials of Navajo art and by seeking a synthesis of Navajo ideology. The first of these had an economic impact, the second social and political.

As a weaver, Klah made a radical break with tradition when he began to weave sacred images in 1919. Although he was not the first to do so, he was the most successful. This new content made his work rare, esoteric, and desirable in the eyes of white collectors. And when Klah's "rugs" became "tapestries," to be displayed on the walls of museums and in wealthy collector's homes, Navajo weaving became a "fine art."

For most Navajos, the portrayal of sandpainting designs in permanent media was (and is) sacrilegious. As Reichard explains:

If one can realize even fractionally how deeply religious belief, of which the sandpainting is only a small part, influences the behavior of the Navajo, he can begin to comprehend what it means to them to depict these things in a permanent medium like paper or tapestry. One can exert his mind even further and attempt to realize what it meant to the first person who broke the taboo of evanescence.⁷²

Even so, by the turn of the century Navajo medicine men were cooperating with anthropologists to record the chants and sandpaintings of their ceremonies. In fact, two of Klah's instructors had been informants for Washington Matthews.⁷³

Klah created a stir in 1916 when he wove a blanket with Yeibichai figures (the masked dancers who appear during the Yeibichai ceremony) and sold it to Ed Davies at Two Grey Hills. According to Newcomb, "When other medicine men and Navahos found out about this rug, there was quite a furor, and they demanded that Klah hold an 'evil-expelling' rite and that the rug be destroyed." The excitement did not subside until the rug left the reservation.⁷⁴

The interest of white buyers in religious content created a market for such items, but traditional sentiment barred its exploitation. According to Nancy Parezo, religious images had to be "secularized" before they could be "commercialized." From the Navajo point of view, artists had to demonstrate that these images could be depicted in permanent media and sold without bringing harm to themselves and the community. Parezo credits two groups with overcoming these problems: Navajo singers and white scholars interested in preserving Navajo culture; and traders and artisans interested in exploiting the market for Navajo crafts.⁷⁵

Franc Newcomb and Hastiin Klah represented both groups. They made the Newcomb trading post the locus for an art movement whose influence radiated into both Navajo and American cultural life.

Klah first invited Newcomb to attend his ceremonies in 1917. Newcomb was fascinated by the proceedings, especially the impermanent sandpaintings that Klah created, and she expressed interest in reproducing them. With Klah's assistance, she developed a remarkable skill for drawing from memory and eventually recorded hundreds of these images. In 1919, Newcomb asked Klah why he did not weave a rug with a ceremonial design. "I assured him that a blanket of this type would never be used on the floor but would be hung on the wall of some museum."⁷⁶

After consulting with his family, Klah decided to weave a sandpainting from the Yeibichai ceremony. According to Marian Rodee:

His personal style was distinctive from the beginning. He used only backgrounds of tan undyed wool from the bellies of brown sheep. His dyes were carefully prepared from local plants and indigo and cochineal, although later he would come to use commercial dyes. He wove exceptionally large rugs, about twelve feet by twelve or thirteen, on specially constructed looms.⁷⁷

The care Klah took because of his special subject matter resulted in new standards of excellence for Navajo weaving. The return to

native dyes, in particular, became an important element of the twentieth century revival. Still, rumors of Klah's project frightened and angered other Navajos. Arthur Newcomb hired a guard to watch over the tapestry until it was completed. It was purchased while still on the loom by a wealthy art patron.

Klah received more orders for sandpainting tapestries than he could fill. He held ceremonies to protect his two nieces who were also weavers and gave them each large looms like he had been using while he built himself an even larger one. In the midst of the Depression, these weavings sold for as much as five thousand dollars.⁷⁸ They were all purchased by wealthy collectors and most are now in museums.

According to Newcomb, "After a few years had passed and neither Klah or the girls had suffered ill effects, many weavers decided to make 'figure blankets,' which were beautiful and brought high prices, but no one else dared make an exact copy of a ceremonial sand painting."⁷⁹ The tapestries made by Klah and his nieces remained unique. According to Rodee, "Many weavers specializing in ceremonial patterns now do so in spite of great personal discomfort. They think they are performing a sacrilegious act, incurring the dislike and resentment of their neighbors."⁸⁰

The lasting precedent established by Klah's tapestries proved not to be their content, but the status they earned as objects of art. Single-handedly, Klah had drawn the attention of the international art world to the weavers of his reservation.

The use of religious designs did become an important feature of another art form, however. In the 1930s and '40s, Navajo artists began to make permanent sandpaintings with pulverized materials glued on wood. The pioneer of this technique was related to Klah. According to Parezo, Fred Stevens "used Hosteen Klah, his father's clan brother, as his model, employing Klah's arguments and techniques to prevent supernatural displeasure."⁸¹ A tourist market for these items emerged in the 1960s and '70s, and today the production of sandpaintings is an important source of income for many Navajos.

After purchasing one of Klah's sandpainting tapestries in 1921, Mary Cabot Wheelwright became a frequent visitor to the Newcomb trading post. As her interest in Navajo religion grew, she offered to help Klah record his knowledge. When he warned her of the supernatural danger involved in such a project she replied, "I am not afraid."⁸²

As a practicing medicine man, Klah maintained an extensive repertoire of songs, sandpaintings, myths, and tribal history. From 1927 until his death, Wheelwright transcribed hundreds of Klah's songs and myths, often in cooperation with Newcomb, who drew the

corresponding sandpaintings. Gladys Reichard also worked with Klah, recording the Hail Chant myth, and, in 1929, Harry Hoiyer made wax recordings of Klah's chants from the Navajo origin myth.⁸³

In 1928, Klah traveled with the Newcombs to Wheelwright's home on the Maine coast. The white world must have puzzled Klah, for along the way his dark face led local businesses to deny the travelers food and accommodations. Yet, when they finally arrived in Maine, Klah became the guest of honor at a reception attended by some of the wealthiest and most influential people of the day. Through all this Klah remained perfectly at ease. He took long walks in the nearby woods and told Wheelwright that "he was sure that Bego chidii [a berdache deity] . . . was in Maine because it smelled so sweet."⁸⁴

Klah spent a lifetime mastering the cultural forms of his people. His career had been carefully nurtured by his family, who recognized his talent early. He was certainly the most famous, perhaps the most knowledgeable medicine man on the reservation. He was the last qualified to perform several important ceremonies.

Klah had begun to train a successor before 1917. The untimely death of this assistant in 1931 must have been a bitter disappointment. There was no time to train another. That autumn, Wheelwright asked Klah if he would be willing to place his ceremonial paraphernalia and records of his knowledge in a place where they would be preserved and could be studied. Klah agreed—he was already beginning to dream of his own death.⁸⁵

The Museum of Navajo Ceremonial Art in Santa Fe was dedicated in 1937, shortly after Klah's death. Known today as the Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, its stated goal was "to perpetuate, for the general public, for research students, and for the Indians themselves, this great example of a primitive people's spiritual culture." Klah's artifacts and sandpainting tapestries became the core of the museum's holdings.

In 1934, Klah was asked to return to Chicago to demonstrate sandpainting and display his tapestries at the Century of Progress Exhibition. He was sixty-seven years old. In the course of a hot, dry, crowd-filled summer, Hastiin Klah became the second American Indian berdache to meet an American president. According to Newcomb, Klah kept a guestbook at his exhibit. When he returned to New Mexico it included the signature of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The book was one of Klah's "prized possessions."⁸⁶

Klah shared his impressions of Chicago with a Gallup newspaper:

The Americans hurry too much! All the time they hurry and worry as to how they are going to hurry and worry some more. They go through

life so fast they have no time to see beauty or think deep thoughts. I am happier than white people because I don't have all those things to worry about . . . when some possessions worry me, I give them away.⁸⁷

The second of Klah's contributions to his tribe is perhaps less concrete than his artistic output but just as significant.

Klah became a synthesizer of Navajo culture. His familiarity with so many ceremonies led him to seek the continuity of this traditionally decentralized system of knowledge. As Reichard put it, "He rationalized many phases of religion and was much more aware of consistency in our sense than any other Navaho I ever met."⁸⁸ Yet, from another perspective, Klah simply actualized the discursive potentials of a principle already inherent in Navajo aesthetics, weaving in particular, which Gary Witherspoon describes as "creative synthesis, . . . bringing together elements of diverse characteristics into a single, balanced, and harmonious whole."⁸⁹

Reichard and others have commented on the unique versions of certain myths told by Klah. It appears that Klah promoted the *nadle* god, Bego chidii, into a supreme being. According to Reichard this may have been a consequence of Klah's desire for consistency:

After hours of thought and discussion scattered through a lifetime he had come to the conclusion that the ultimate in Navajo attainment was 'universal harmony,' a state of being with no tangibility. This is a notion of oneness and in it all elements in the universe are submerged.⁹⁰

Klah described Bego chidii as blue-eyed, with blond or red hair, and dressed like a woman.⁹¹ As a god who combined opposites, Bego chidii was an appropriate figure of oneness. Sandner, a Jungian analyst who has worked with contemporary Navajo medicine men, considers Bego chidii:

a reconciling symbol which brings together good and bad, high and low, pure and impure, male and female, and as such he is one of the most daring intuitive concepts of American Indian religion—an ingenious attempt to express the basically paradoxical nature of man in the image of a god.⁹²

At the same time, Klah, like We'wha, used the vehicle of oral literature to express existential truths from his own life as a berdache.

Beyond the content of Klah's mythological variants are the social and political implications of such a synthesis. Prior to the reservation period, the Navajos were a dispersed, nomadic people. The extended family was the largest political and economic unit of the tribe. Except in times of war, family rivalries mitigated social and cultural integration. But the political realities of reservation life called for inte-

gration. The "Navajos" were a tribe as far as the American government was concerned, and their success in responding to the government depended on their ability to present a united front. But at this point in their history, they lacked social and political institutions which could generate tribal consensus.

Navajo religion, however, had the potential for becoming a vehicle of unity and this was Klah's great insight. From his research, Klah derived the essential values that might be considered "Navajo," through his religious practice he promulgated these principles within the tribe, and through his art he promoted understanding of them in the white world. Most importantly, Klah's "Navajo way" provided a point around which a sense of Navajo identity could coalesce. Such a goal was implied by his extravagant give-away. Family interests were largely material in nature. By stepping outside economic and social rivalries, Klah qualified himself to serve the tribe as a whole.⁹³

Today the tribe calls itself the "Navajo Nation"—the largest in America. Navajo religion has provided the basis for this tribal identity—much as Zuni religion and arts do for that tribe. Klah's efforts to synthesize and preserve this religion qualify him for recognition as a pioneer of Navajo nationalism.

CONCLUSIONS: THE BERDACHE TRADITION OF WE'WHA AND KLAH

In the Zuni origin myth, the berdache kachina, Ko'lhamana, appears as a go-between in a crucial episode. The Zuni gods, portrayed as farmers, start a war with enemy gods, who are great hunters. When the battle reaches a stalemate, Ko'lhamana is captured by the hunters whose leader, a warrior woman, gives him a dress to wear. This transformation symbolizes the final outcome of the conflict: the two people merge, effecting the balance of growing and hunting, which, in traditional times, were the two means of survival at Zuni. When Ko'lhamana is portrayed in a quadrennial ceremony commemorating this event, he carries symbols of male and female, hunting and growing—he bridges opposites and this helps unify society.⁹⁴

In the Navajo origin stories, a mythological *nadle* also bridges opposites which threaten to divide society. At one point, the men and women quarrel and decide to live on separate sides of a river. The men summon *nadle* to their council for his advice. They ask what he has to contribute should he join the men. *Nadle* responds with a veritable inventory of Navajo arts and industries:

"I myself (can) plant, I myself make millstones, that's settled," he said.

"I myself make baking stones. I make pots myself and earthen bowls;

gourds I plant myself. I (can) make water jugs," he said, "and stirring sticks and brooms," he said.⁹⁵

Because *nadle* agrees to join them, the men outlast the women. When a reconciliation is proposed, the men again seek *nadle's* advice and he endorses the reunion.

* * *

As berdache artists and priests, both We'wha and Klah were innovators. But their innovations followed mythological precedents. Indeed, their contributions in art, religion, and social relations were directly related to their third gender status.

Both combined specializations in the arts which tribal custom normally divided between men and women. We'wha was expert in weaving (men's work) and pottery (women); Klah excelled at weaving (women) and ceremonial arts (men). As berdaches, they were expected to bridge gender roles; in so doing, they released bold and creative energies. Because no stigma attached to "women's work" in their tribes, their social status was enhanced, not diminished, by their variation.

Mythology not only sanctioned berdache status, it lent to it a supernatural aura. It was expected that such individuals would apply their endowments to religious endeavor. Without immediate family dependents, We'wha and Klah could devote far more time to spiritual practice than other men. Like their specialization in crafts, their intensive study of religion had benefits for their communities.

The relationships We'wha and Klah formed with the white world also reflected their berdache status. Their lasting friendships with white women were remarkable in a time when social proprieties restricted contact between men and women of different races. Surely this was related to the fact that, as berdaches, their relationships with women lacked sexual overtones. Beyond this, they both showed extraordinary independence and self-assurance, traveling widely in the white world when few members of their tribes ever left their reservations.

Finally, the willingness of We'wha and Klah to cooperate as anthropological informants also reflects their berdache status. Both lacked direct descendants. To prevent the extinction of their knowledge, they turned to Western arts of inscription.

Their legacies are cherished today. Maxwell observed, "Some medicine men regularly visit the Museum of Navajo Ceremonial Art in Santa Fe to study Klah's drawings on display there."⁹⁶ And Robert McCoy noted in a 1985 reprint of Stevenson's report, for which We'wha

served as a principal informant, "The nearby Zuñi Pueblo residents cherish this book so much that the multiple copies purchased by the Gallup Library . . . are all badly worn and need replacement."⁹⁷

* * *

In traditional Zuni and Navajo society, individuals who occupied third gender roles had a place in the cosmic order—and, therefore, responsibilities to the common good. As the lives of We'wha and Klah show, this tolerance gained for tribal society outstanding service and invention.

In the twentieth century, Indian tolerance and white intransigence towards variance in sex and gender have often clashed. But thanks in part to the efforts of We'wha and Klah, the artistic and spiritual insights afforded by the special social position of the berdache have been saved—for contemporary Indians who are tracing the continuity of their traditions and for non-Indians whose own society does not allow for such a position and who might not otherwise know of the social vistas it offers.

NOTES

For their specific comments and general support the author acknowledges Harry Hay, Bradley Rose, and Evelyn Blackwood, along with Randy Burns and Erna Pahe of Gay American Indians of San Francisco.

1. For accounts of Navajo and Zuni berdache roles, see Elsie Clews Parsons, "The Zuñi La' mana," *American Anthropologist* 18 (1916): 521–28, and Willard W. Hill, "The Status of the Hermaphrodite and Transvestite in Navaho Culture," *American Anthropologist* 37 (1935): 273–79. For current discussions of berdaches, see Charles Callender and Lee M. Kochems, "The North American Berdache," *Current Anthropology* 24, no. 4 (1983): 443–70; Walter L. Williams, *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986); and Will Roscoe, "A Bibliography of Berdache and Alternative Gender Roles Among North American Indians," *Journal of Homosexuality* 14, no. 3/4 (1987): 81–171.

2. Gladys A. Reichard, "Individualism and Mythological Style," *Journal of American Folklore* 57 (1944): 24.

3. Donald Sandner, *Navaho Symbols of Healing* (New York: Harvest/Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 7.

4. Matilda Coxé Stevenson, "The Zuñi Indians: Their Mythology, Esoteric Fraternities, and Ceremonies," *Twenty-third Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1901–1902* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904), p. 20.

5. George Wharton James, "Zuñi and 2 Modern Witchcraft Trials," typescript, Carton 8, George Wharton James Collection, Southwest Museum, Los Angeles.

6. Robert Bunker, *Other Men's Skies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), pp. 99–100. John Adair also heard stories about We'wha in this period (personal communication, 29 September 1986).

7. Triloki Pandey, personal communication, 17 April 1985.

8. We'wha appears in a photo of Rev. Taylor Ealy's school, taken by the expedition (Neg. No. 2251-d-2, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution). Mrs. Ealy's diary mentions "We-Wa" (Norman J. Bender, ed., *Missionaries, Outlaws, and*

Indians: Taylor F. Ealy at Lincoln and Zuni, 1878-1881 [Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984], p. 153).

9. Stevenson, "Zuñi Indians," p. 310. We'wha and the Zuni *Ihamana* are the subjects of a slide-lecture program compiled by the author, "The Zuni Man-Woman: An Alternative Gender Role."

10. George Wharton James, *New Mexico: The Land of the Delight Makers* (Boston: The Page Co., 1920), pp. 63-64.

11. Stevenson, "Zuñi Indians," p. 310.

12. The issue here is one of translation. In English, "he" and "him" used in reference to persons connotes male biological sex. Since the Zunis acknowledged We'wha's biological sex, I use male pronouns to convey, in English, the same understanding Zunis had—that We'wha was biologically male. A somewhat closer approximation might be achieved in writing (and verbal inflection) by placing terms within quotation marks. We'wha could be referred to with "she" and "her," if those terms were always placed in quotation marks.

13. Stevenson, "Zuñi Indians," p. 37.

14. Parsons, "The Zuñi La'mana," p. 527, 528. For the use of male terms in reference to We'wha, see Ruth Bunzel, "Zuni Texts," *Publications of the American Ethnological Society* 15 (1933): 49.

15. Frank H. Cushing, "Nominal and Numerical Census of the Gentes of the Ashivi or Zuni Indians," ms. 3915, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. Weaving was a men's activity among most Pueblo Indians, although less strictly so at Zuni—see the discussion that follows.

16. For the "raw" and "cooked" in Zuni thought, see Dennis Tedlock, "Zuni Religion and World View," in *Handbook of North American Indians* vol. 9, ed. Alfonso Ortiz, (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1979), pp. 499-508. The extension of these concepts to gender is my own.

17. Stevenson, "Zuñi Indians," pp. 310-13.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

19. James, *New Mexico*, p. 64.

20. Nancy Fox, personal communication, 24 October 1986.

21. Nancy Fox, *Pueblo Weaving and Textile Arts* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico, 1978), pp. 8-10. See also Kate Peck Kent, *Pueblo Indian Textiles: A Living Tradition* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1983).

22. Fox, *Pueblo Weaving*, p. 17; Kent, *Pueblo Indian Textiles*, p. 12; Leslie Spier, "Zuñi Weaving Technique," *American Anthropologist* 26 (1924): 78-79.

23. Bunzel, "Zuni Texts," p. 29.

24. Cushing to Col. Stevenson, 15 October 1879, Envelope 69, Hodge-Cushing Collection, Southwest Museum, Los Angeles.

25. Margaret Ann Hardin, *Gifts of Mother Earth: Ceramics in the Zuni Tradition* (Phoenix: The Heard Museum, 1983), p. 33; Stevenson, *The Zuñi Indians*, p. 376.

26. Ruth L. Bunzel, *The Pueblo Potter: A Study of Creative Imagination in Primitive Art* (New York: Dover Publications, 1972 [1929]), p. 106. See also Hardin, pp. 32-33.

27. Hardin, p. 14.

28. Stevenson, "Zuñi Indians," p. 374.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

30. *Evening Star* (Washington), 15 May 1886.

31. Stevenson to Daniel S. Lamont, 18 June 1886, Grover Cleveland Papers, Library of Congress.

32. See Triloki Nath Pandey, "Anthropologists at Zuni," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 116, no. 4 (1972): 321-37 for a full account. On Zuni diplomacy, see E. Richard Hart, "Zuni Relations with the United States and the Zuni Land Claim," in *Zuni History* (Zuni History Project, 1983), pp. 29-32, and "A Brief History of the Zuni Nation," in *Zuni El Morro Past and Present* (Santa Fe: School of American Research, 1983), pp. 19-24.

33. For example, the linguist Gatschet, who collected a list of clans, and, possibly, Cushing (A. S. Gatschet, "Notes on Clans," ms. 895, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC).

34. *Evening Star* (Washington), 12 June 1886.
35. Edmund Wilson, *Red, Black, Blond and Olive* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 20.
36. Stevenson, "Zuñi Indians," p. 380.
37. *Ibid.*, pp. 37, 311; Triloki Pandey, personal communication, 17 April 1985.
38. Stevenson, "Zuñi Indians," pp. 135–37, 480.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 37. See also Matilda Coxé Stevenson, "The Religious Life of the Zuñi Child," *Fifth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1883–1884* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1887), pp. 540–55. For comments, see Parsons, "The Zuñi La'mana," pp. 524–25; Ruth L. Bunzel, "Zuñi Katcinas: An Analytical Study," *Forty-seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1929–1930* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1932), pp. 1011–12; and Ruth Benedict, "Zuni Mythology," vol. 1, *Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology* 21 (1935):260.
40. Fox, *Pueblo Weaving*, p. 17.
41. Hardin, pp. 4, 37, 45.
42. "Klah" means "Lefthanded," a descriptive name with no reference to berdache status. It is more accurately transcribed as *tl'ah*. "Hastiin" is the Navajo "Mr." or "Sir" (Leland C. Wyman, *Southwest Indian Drypainting* [Santa Fe and Albuquerque: School of American Research and University of New Mexico, 1983], p. 295).
43. Hasteen Klah, *Navajo Creation Myth: The Story of the Emergence*, comp. Mary C. Wheelwright (Santa Fe: Museum of Navaho Ceremonial Art, Navajo Religion Series, vol. 1, 1942), pp. 11–13.
44. Reichard, "Individualism," pp. 19, 23.
45. Franc Johnson Newcomb, Stanley Fishler, and Mary C. Wheelwright, "A Study of Navajo Symbolism," *Papers of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology* 8, no. 3: 38.
46. Franc Johnson Newcomb, *Navajo Omens and Taboos* (Santa Fe: Rydal Press, 1940). Newcomb's biography is the primary source of data on Klah's life: *Hosteen Klah: Navaho Medicine Man and Sand Painter* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964). See also Newcomb, *Navaho Neighbors* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966).
47. Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, p. 97. According to Newcomb, the accident was the occasion for the "discovery" that Klah was a morphological hermaphrodite. But it seems unlikely that such a condition would not have been discovered sooner. Apparently, Klah provided an entirely different account to Reichard, who reported that he was emasculated as an infant by Ute Indians when the family was returning from Bosque Redondo (Gladys A. Reichard, *Navaho Religion: A Study of Symbolism*, [Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1983], p. 141.) However, Klah was born *after* this return. In any case, infant emasculation seems unlikely since there is no indication that Klah lacked secondary sex characteristics. Recent writers perpetuate the confusion (see, for example, Susan Brown McGreevy in *Woven Holy People: Navajo Sandpainting Textiles* [Santa Fe: Wheelwright Museum of the American Indian, 1982], p. [11]; Wyman, *Southwest Indian Drypainting*, pp. 264, 295; and Frederick J. Dockstader, *The Song of the Loom: New Traditions in Navajo Weaving* [New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1987], p. 24). As Haile noted, "Outsiders may wonder why [*nadle*] should designate the real, congenital *hermaphrodite*, as well as our *transvestite*, *pederast*, and *sodomite*" (Berard Haile, *A Stem Vocabulary of the Navaho Language*, vol. 1 [St. Michaels, AZ: St. Michaels Press, 1950], pp. 137–38). The answer is that Navajo terminology and mythology conflate physical hermaphroditism with the *nadle* social role, and that Klah desired to align himself with the "ideal" *nadle* of mythology—where the physical condition mirrors the metaphysical. It is interesting to note that Klah's injury, healing, and subsequent devotion to religious life correspond with the hero pattern of Navajo mythology. See Katherine Spencer, "Mythology and Values: An Analysis of Navaho Chantway Myths," *Memoirs of the American Folklore Society* 48 (1957).
48. Reichard, "Individualism," p. 19.
49. Gladys A. Reichard, *Social Life of the Navajo Indians* (New York: AMS Press, 1969 [1928]), p. 150.

50. Washington Matthews, "Navaho Legends," *Memoirs of the American Folklore Society* 5 (1897): 217.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 274; Dorothea Leighton and Clyde Kluckhohn, *Children of the People* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), p. 78. The significance of this development is lost on observers who cling to the idea that berdaches necessarily cross-dressed. In 1935, for example, Hill published the incongruous comment that "transvestites wear the garb of either sex" ("Status," p. 275). A similar transition occurred at Zuni (John Adair, personal communication, 29 September 1986). See also Elsie Clews Parsons, "The Last Zuñi Transvestite," *American Anthropologist* 41 (1939): 338-40.

52. Leighton and Kluckhohn, *Children of the People*, p. 78; Willard W. Hill, *Navaho Humor*, General Series in Anthropology 9 (Menasha, WI: George Banta, 1943), p. 12; Gladys A. Reichard, *Navajo Shepherd and Weaver* (Glorieta, NM: Rio Grande Press, 1968 [1936]), p. 161.

53. Berard Haile, "Navaho Games of Chance and Taboo," *Primitive Man* 6, no. 2:39.

54. Robert W. Young and William Morgan, *The Navajo Language: A Grammar and Colloquial Dictionary* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1980), p. 525.

55. Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, p. 103.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 113. The fair provided a forum for anthropologists and archaeologists to popularize their work, and a variety of exhibits featured native culture and actual natives (see Reid Badger, *The Great American Fair: The World's Columbian Exposition and American Culture* [Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1979], pp. 104-5). Interestingly, I found among Cushing's papers a description of the Bureau of Ethnology's exhibits, which included "a portrait of one of the most celebrated blanket-makers in the Navajo tribe." A footnote adds, "While costumed as a woman, this figure really represents a man belonging to a peculiar class of 'women-men'" ("Monthly Report of Frank Hamilton Cushing, September, 1893," Envelope #38, Hodge-Cushing Collection, Southwest Museum, Los Angeles).

57. Joe Ben Wheat, "Documentary Basis for Material Changes and Design Styles in Navajo Blanket Weaving," in Irene Emery Roundtable on *Museum Textiles 1976 Proceedings: Ethnographic Textiles of the Western Hemisphere*, ed. Irene Emery and Patricia Fiske (Washington: The Textile Museum, 1977), p. 424.

58. Anthony Berlant and Mary Hunt Kahlenberg, *Walk in Beauty: The Navajo and Their Blankets* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1977), pp. 4-5, 41, 148.

59. *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3, 147.

60. Gary Witherspoon, "Self-Esteem and Self-Expression in Navajo Weaving," in *Tension and Harmony: The Navajo Rug, Plateau* 52, no. 4 (1981): 28-32.

61. Berlant and Kahlenberg, pp. 141, 145.

62. Erna Fergusson, *New Mexico: A Pageant of Three Peoples* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951), p. 81.

63. Wetherill to B. T. B. Hyde, 3 July 1898, Accession 1897-45, American Museum of Natural History, New York.

64. Frank McNitt, *Richard Wetherill: Anasazi* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1957), pp. 173, 181, 191-92, 199. See also Charles Avery Amsden, *Navaho Weaving: Its Technic and History* (Chicago: Rio Grande Press, 1964), pp. 193-94 and David M. Brugge, *A History of the Chaco Navajos* (Albuquerque: National Park Service, Division of Chaco Research, Reports of the Chaco Center 4, 1980), Chapters 4 and 5.

65. Kate Peck Kent, *Navajo Weaving: Three Centuries of Change* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1985), p. 90; Marian E. Rodee, "Navajo Ceremonial-Pattern Weaving and its Relationship to Drypainting," in *Navaho Religion and Culture: Selected Views*, ed. David M. Brugge and Charlotte J. Frisbie (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Papers in Anthropology 17, 1982), p. 70.

66. Wheat cites a 1923 manuscript by George Pepper at the Museum of the American Indian that reports sandpainting rugs woven at Chaco in 1896 and again in 1897 (Joe Ben Wheat, "Spanish-American and Navajo Weaving, 1600 to Now," in *Collected Papers in Honor of Marjorie Ferguson Lambert*, Papers of the Archaeological Society of New Mexico 3, ed. Albert H. Schroeder [Albuquerque: Albuquerque Archaeological Society

Press, 1976], pp. 220, 223). Elsewhere Wheat, followed by Parezo, reports sandpainting rugs from Two Grey Hills, Ganado, and Lukachukai—all prior to Klah's first tapestry in 1919—but sources are not documented (Joe Ben Wheat, "Weaving," in *Arizona Highways Indian Arts and Crafts*, ed. Clara Lee Tanner [Phoenix: Arizona Highways, 1976], p. 48; Nancy J. Parezo, *Navajo Sandpainting: From Religious Act to Commercial Art* [Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1983], p. 46). McNitt documents a 1902 sandpainting rug woven by a medicine man's wife and sold to Win Wetherill at Two Grey Hills, quoting a 1904 letter by Fred Hyde which describes the rug (*Richard Wetherill*, pp. 249–51). This appears to be the source of Maxwell's reference to a 1904 rug, although he gives the date, subject matter, and provenance incorrectly (Gilbert S. Maxwell, *Navajo Rugs: Past, Present and Future*, rev. ed. [Santa Fe: Heritage Art, 1984], p. 48).

67. Newcomb, *Navaho Neighbors*, p. 138.

68. Aleš Hrdlička, "Physiological and Medical Observations Among the Indians of Southwestern United States and Northern Mexico," *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin* 34: 238–39. Brugge identifies Hrdlička's "Klai" as Newcomb's "Klah" (*History of the Chaco Navajos*, p. 166). Hrdlička conducted studies in the Chaco in 1899 (Putnam to Boas, 10 August 1899, Accession 1899–65, American Museum of Natural History, New York).

69. Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, p. 115. According to Newcomb, the fragment was copied in 1910. However, the Hyde Expedition disbanded in 1903 and Wetherill was killed in July 1910. Perhaps her date is wrong, or a different organization had requested the weaving. The Coolidges also report Klah copying an ancient blanket, but at a much earlier date, which Newcomb disputes (Dane and Mary Roberts Coolidge, *The Navajo Indians* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930], p. 106).

70. Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, p. 135.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

72. Reichard, *Navaho Shepherd and Weaver*, pp. 158–59.

73. Newcomb, et al., "A Study of Navajo Symbolism," p. 41; Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, p. 111.

74. Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, p. 115. According to the Coolidges, this occurred in 1910 (pp. 104, 106). Rugs with Yeibichai figures are distinct from sandpainting rugs. The earliest recorded examples are the four rugs by Yanapah woven near Farmington between 1900 and 1912, and a rug reportedly woven at the behest of John Wetherill in 1904 (Frank McNitt, *The Indian Traders* [Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1962], p. 298; Clara Lee Tanner, *Southwest Indian Craft Arts* [Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1968], p. 80). The American Museum of Natural History has a Yeibichai blanket dated to 1905 described as "an imitation of the sand painting of the Corn God" (cat. no. 50.1/4373). It was woven at the San Juan Agency at the request of a white woman ("The U.S. Hollister Collection of Navajo Blankets, Denver, Colorado, July 26, 1910," Accession 1911–6, American Museum of Natural History, New York).

75. Parezo, *Navajo Sandpainting*, p. 22; see also Nancy J. Parezo, "Navajo Singers: Keepers of Tradition, Agents of Change," in *Woven Holy People*.

76. Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, p. 157.

77. Marian E. Rodee, *Old Navajo Rugs: Their Development from 1900 to 1940* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1981), p. 103.

78. Rodee, "Navajo Ceremonial-Pattern Weaving," p. 73.

79. Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, p. 162; Parezo, "Navajo Singers," p. [22]. After Klah's death, one of these nieces continued weaving sandpaintings while the other returned to the Two Gray Hills style. For an account of their careers, see Wyman, *Southwest Indian Drypainting*, Appendix B. Wyman located 65 sandpainting tapestries attributed to Klah's group. He believes 22 of these were woven by Klah himself.

80. Rodee, *Old Navajo Rugs*, p. 104.

81. Parezo, *Navajo Sandpainting*, p. 110.

82. Wheelwright in Newcomb et al., "Navajo Symbolism," p. 3; Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, pp. 159–62, 167; Rain Parrish, "Hosteen Klah and Mary Cabot Wheelwright: The Founders, the Founding," in *Woven Holy People*, p. [5].

83. Gladys A. Reichard, *The Story of the Navajo Hail Chant* (New York: Gladys A. Reichard, 1944); Harry Hoijer, trans., Mary C. Wheelwright, and David P. McAllester, *Texts of the Navajo Creation Chant* (Cambridge: Peabody Museum of Harvard University, 1950).
84. Parrish, p. [7].
85. Jackson Steward Lincoln, *The Dream in Primitive Cultures* (New York: Johnson Reprint, 1970), p. 214.
86. Newcomb, *Hosteen Klah*, pp. 193–94; Wyman, *Southwest Indian Drypainting*, p. 267.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 197.
88. Reichard, *Navaho Religion*, p. 142.
89. Witherspoon, p. 30.
90. Reichard, "Individualism," p. 24. See also Hill, "Status," p. 279; Flora L. Bailey, "Review of *Navajo Creation Myth*," *American Anthropologist* 45 (1943): 125–26; Leland C. Wyman, "Review of *Hail Chant and Water Chant*," *American Anthropologist* 49 (1947): 633–37; and Clyde Kluckhohn, "Myths and Rituals: A General Theory," in *Reader in Comparative Religion*, ed. William A. Lessa and Evon Z. Vogt (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), p. 72.
91. Reichard, *Navaho Religion*, p. 387.
92. Sandner, p. 78. Some forty years after Klah's death, Sandner found medicine men who attributed to Bego chidii the same status Klah had presumably innovated (p. 38).
93. "In the absence of a codified law and of an authoritarian chief, it is only through the myth-ritual system that the Navahos can present a unified front" (Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton, *The Navajo*, rev. ed. [Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1962], p. 240).
94. This synopsis is based on Stevenson, "Zuñi Indians," pp. 36–39, 217–226; Elsie Clews Parsons, "The Origin Myth of Zuñi," *Journal of American Folklore* 36 (1923): 142; and Benedict, pp. 6–8, 262–63.
95. Berard Haile, *Women versus Men: A Conflict of Navajo Emergence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), p. 19. I have found this episode in most versions of the Navajo origin myth. For abstracts see Katherine Spencer, "Reflection of Social Life in the Navaho Origin Myth," *University of New Mexico Publications in Anthropology* 3 (1947).
96. Maxwell, *Navajo Rugs*, p. 48.
97. Robert B. McCoy, "Publisher's Preface," in *Twenty-third Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1901–1902* (Glorieta, NM: Rio Grande Press, 1985), p. [iv].