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UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

CEREMONY IN MINIATURE: KIOWA ORAL STORYTELLING AND NARRATIVE EVENT

A Dissertation

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

GUS PALMER, JR.
Norman, Oklahoma
2001

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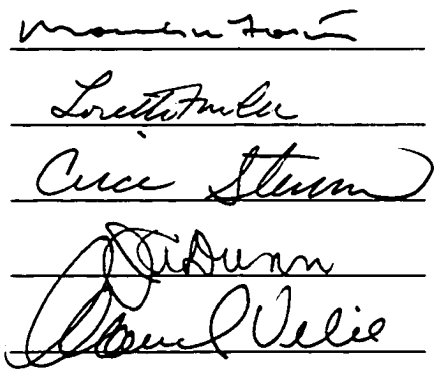
A Dissertation APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

BY



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ABSTRACT

Everytime Kiowas tell stories they invoke a cultural and tribal framework their audience(s) can relate to in a meaningful way. Like any cultural group, Kiowas recontextualize ideas and themes from earlier contexts that symbolically reproduce and reinforce their way of life everytime they tell stories. In this study, I utilize an ethnographic approach of observation and participation and fundamental anthropological linguistic concepts and theories to understand contemporary Kiowa oral storytelling. I apply a loosely structured narrative as a means of revealing the narratives as a whole, but even more so to allow the consultants to speak their minds freely and move about as they might in every day life. In this way, I believe it is easier to enter the world of Kiowa oral storytelling. Furthermore, it clarifies the process by which Kiowas tell stories and enables one to raise other pertinent questions regarding oral storytelling for its appreciation and understanding.

FOREWORD

Contemporary Kiowa storytelling is accomplished when small, intimate groups of relatives and close friends come together. While many of the stories concern family members, most of the tales told tend to be informative and entertaining. Joking and teasing are at once one of the chief features in Kiowa storytelling. Principally told in English, these contemporary tales are products of storytellers who do not easily fit into the definition of *storyteller*. Indeed, Kiowa storytellers might be characterized as anomalies by modern standards.

While it is not easy to categorize Kiowa storytellers, it is even more difficult to explain how storytelling is achieved. I have already pointed out one way. That is, Kiowas tell stories in small, intimate groups of people who know each other. This is done for several reasons. First of all, it is easier for a storyteller to discourse and frame a story with people he or she knows. Secondly, Kiowas, as a rule, do not care to share details about intimate tribal matters with someone outside their own circle. Kiowas tend to tell stories that other Kiowas can respond to and with whom they can dialogue. Because Kiowa storytelling is a highly dialogic event, no one but a Kiowa would be able to participate spontaneously as one is required to in storytelling. Non-participation in storytelling renders storytelling nil. To share details concerning family, relatives, and tribal values and themes with strangers is as serious an affront, by Kiowa standards, say, as high treason. By and large, Kiowas like and want to entertain one another and not someone outside of their fold. In my experience, Kiowas will refrain from telling stories at all to a stranger, because it is just not

becoming a Kiowa person.

What I have prepared in this dissertation is a discourse of how Kiowas tell stories. Chapter one is an overview of Kiowa oral storytelling. The second chapter is the storytelling tradition of Kiowas as we have come to know it. Contemporary oral storytelling constitutes chapter three and the remaining six chapters constitute a body of storytelling texts and discourses assembled over two and a half years of fieldwork. While most of these chapters are on the surface conversational and dialogic, they have as their concern, in the main, to understand how Kiowas accomplish storytelling. Furthermore, they comprise what analytic and interpretive considerations I have tried to bring to bear upon the subject of Kiowa storytelling.

I should also like to mention that during the course of the fieldwork, sadly, two of my storytelling consultants died, one in 1999 and the other in 2000, and may account for the sometimes somber tone in later sections. But even so, the work overall is sustained by the dignity and high order storytellers bring to Kiowa storytelling. My hope is that storytelling of this kind will persist as an integral part of Kiowa tribal life even as it has over the years.

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS ORAL STORYTELLING?

Songs are thoughts, sung out with the breath when people are moved by great forces and ordinary speech is no longer enough. Man is moved just like the ice floe sailing here and there in the current. His thoughts are driven by a flowing force when he feels joy, when he feels fear, when he feels sorrow. Thoughts can wash over him like a flood, making his breath come in gasps and his heart throb. Something like a break in the weather will keep him thawed up. And then it will happen that we who always think we are small, will feel still smaller. And we will fear to use words. But it will happen that the words we need will come of themselves. When the words we want to use shoot up of themselves-- we get a new song.

--Orpingalik, Eskimo Shaman of the Netsilik

Terms that attempt to define, clarify or explain oral production are many. We hear such terms as verbal performance (Tedlock), oral poetry (Finnegan), ethnopoetics (Rothenberg), oral traditions (Momaday), oral verse or versifying, and many others. I prefer oral storytelling. I choose this term because it is based on both the oral delivery and social context where oral stories and poetry occur. Because storytelling has from its inception been a 'telling' rather than written, storytelling is itself a live performance. This distinguishes it from written forms of literature. Storytelling also occurs in a social context because it requires, insists upon, a listener or audience. Listeners more or less participate in the telling of a story. They do this by nodding their heads or by giving some external sign, verbal or not, that they follow what is being said and give tacit approval. Other times a listener will often participate by simply replying hau *yes*. In any case, oral storytelling is a live performance and therefore is immediate and generally unrehearsed. In societies where there is no writing, storytelling may be one of the only

means of live entertainment and teaching (Rubin 1999; Foley 1997; Ong 1982).

Because storytelling is a performative event, it relies on language features that distinguish it from ordinary speech (Finnegan 1977; Tedlock 1983; Hymes 1974; Sarris 1993). Such features include rhyme, alliteration, parallelism, and formulaic openings and closings, rhythm, song, story framing, intertextualizatioin, verisimilitude, and knowing when to tell a story in the midst of ordinary conversation. Because oral storytelling is a process of language, it is found in most human societies. To understand how different people produce or perform storytelling, one has to go out into the field where storytelling takes place (Hymes 1972; Finnegan 1977; Ong 1982; Tedlock 1983; Foley 1997; Sarris 1993). It is here where one can hear storytelling firsthand and participate in it socially.

Oral storytelling is a cultural phenomenon. It draws heavily on the customs and traditions found in speech communities. In order to follow a story well, the people in the storytelling event need to be familiar with the themes and values inherent in storytelling. At best, storytelling consists in a kind of cultural give and take. That is, both storyteller and listener have an equal share in the responsibilities of making storytelling a completed human performative event. Each brings to storytelling some oftentimes commonly held beliefs and practices which make that event meaningful and understood (Hymes, Tedlock, Sarris). Because storytelling is by and large a product of a close encounter between the storyteller and listener, storytelling should therefore be viewed as a significant human event and worthwhile.

Oral literature is as vital to Kiowa civilization as the Bible and the Homeric verses are to their literatures (Foley 1986). In America, Native American oral storytelling or poetics must also be included in this group. Ong (1992) and Havelock (1963) maintain that oral cultures are by no means "primitive" or "savage" constructs. This argument has given rise to new ways of studying oral performance. Foley (1986) suggests that scholars "like the Chadwicks and Ruth Finnegan have shown, often using evidence gathered from first-hand experience of fieldwork in oral societies, this is indisputably a general phenomenon; no matter where one looks in the world, we find traces of an oral tradition that preceded (and in some cases still subsists alongside) written traditions or an ongoing oral tradition still very much alive" (2). For our sake, I hope these forms of narrative performances continue.

In a talk at Princeton in 1970, N. Scott Momaday suggested that "oral storytelling involves an oral dimension which is based markedly upon such considerations as memorization, intonation, inflection, precision of statement, brevity, rhythm, pace, and dramatic effect" (56). Although many native storytellers do not prescribe to many of these "literary" considerations, they may do so unwittingly. It seems that in every case someone or another of the features that help storytellers perform is definitely at work. To make stories memorable and worthwhile, therefore, a conscientious storyteller will try to refine his or her art. Because it is an oral account the storyteller will try to make the story *sound* right, for example. There will have to be the right choice of image or allusion to bring out such subtle aspects that are necessary to

drive the narrative from beginning to end and that appeal to the listener's or listeners' sensibilities. In much Native American storytelling, stories continually open and close, making a kind of communicative or dialogic two-way street between the storyteller and listener. For Kiowa storytelling, whose audience consists of close friends or relatives in small, intimate groups, this dialogic dynamic predominates. This storytelling conclave will most certainly consist of persons well-acquainted with the storyteller and who share a great deal in the culture and cultural setting.

To be sure, cultural commonality or cultural bonding is the engine behind the dialogic nature of storytelling. But even so, there are other facets in storytelling that are shared but which are confined to the story proper itself. John Foley (1986), for instance, maintains that stories

-are universal; that is, they appear in all present cultures and past cultures that have been studied.

-are fixed only within the accuracy of human memory.

-exist in genres; that is, they appear in restricted, coherent form.

-are transmitted in a special situation, such as a performance or ritual.

-are entertaining by modern literary standards, though this is not always the primary traditional function.

-are considered a special speech, either art or ritual.

-transmit useful cultural information or increase group cohesion.

-are poetic, using rhyme, alliteration, assonance, or some repetition

or sound pattern.

-are rhythmic.

-are sung.

-are narratives.

-are high in imagery, both spatial and descriptive.

Clearly, no matter who tells a story he or she will invariably draw from a deep reservoir of storytelling features in the performative realm (Foley 1997; Rubin 1999; Bauman 1986; Niles). True, certain storytelling rules apply in almost all stories told. Yet, they are not ones which would impede the performative process. Full individual artistry is thus allowed. Foley (1990, 1993) suggests that "not all properties hold for all traditions, and some properties follow directly from the working definition of an oral tradition as a genre of literature transmitted for long periods of time with minimal use of external memory aids. No one property, " he goes on, "is a defining feature, and the differences among genres are so great as to make general statements like these vague" (19).

CHAPTER II

TALKING STORIES

Origin myths are among the oldest stories Kiowas tell. Narratives of how the Kiowa people emerged from a subterranean region into a sunlit world, these oral accounts comprise what might be called "classical" Kiowa oral literature. Every Kiowa alive can remember many of these early stories. Although Kiowas can still recount some of these stories, many stories through attrition have been forgotten. This is because spoken Kiowa is in decline. Where once the old stories were told all the time, there is often now silence. Older Kiowas who told stories the old way were grandparents like my grandfather, his brothers, sisters, and cousins. In the home where my grandparents lived, many relatives came to visit. They spoke Kiowa with aplomb and with the greatest of ease. For these harbingers of an old world order, words came easily, as did the accompanying mannerisms that distinguished them as Kiowas. They could of course speak English, but it was spoken Kiowa that they were most at home with. The meals my grandmother prepared and served were elaborate affairs that consisted of meats, stews, breads and desserts. There was always plenty of good things to eat, and everybody ate to their heart's content and joined in the casual talk and animated storytelling that occurred without fanfare or elaborate introduction.

Part of the skill of telling Kiowa stories is preparation: to know when and how to tell stories. To sit on the edge of conversation until something suggests a story. Thus, a story will seemingly pop up out of nowhere. This ability to tell stories without

warning is something I observed many times while doing fieldwork among Kiowas. I have to admit that even though I grew up hearing Kiowas tell stories, I had not paid much attention to how it happened. As time went along, however, I began to notice that Kiowas were indeed talking and narrating stories at almost the same time. At first, it seemed ordinary enough. I'd seen English speakers do the same thing. This time, however, I could see that Kiowas had developed a keen ability of introducing stories almost simultaneously while talking of ordinary things. Kiowas knew how to tell stories this way because they had seen other Kiowas do it. They had listened to how other Kiowas told stories and appropriated from them the skills on how to do it themselves. They too wanted to occupy a place beside those who had occupied it before them. In time, they began to use both Kiowa and English. When I was a boy most storytelling done by Kiowas was accomplished in Kiowa. It seems only recently that Kiowa storytelling has had to rely on English to be achieved. And that is pretty much where Kiowa oral storytelling is today.

One cannot talk about early Kiowa oral storytelling without mentioning the Kiowa trickster, Séndé. Séndé, or Saynday, is in some ways the equivalent of the Greek god Hermes. Paul Radin (1956, 1969), perhaps the best trickster scholar, notes that the "overwhelming majority of all so-called trickster myths in North America give an account of the creator of the earth, or at least the transforming of the world, and have a hero who is always wandering, who is always hungry, who is not guided by normal conceptions of good or evil, who is either playing tricks on people or having them played

on him and who is highly sexed" (1969:155). Elsewhere Radin writes that the "two-fold function of benefactor and buffoon...is the outstanding characteristic of the overwhelming majority of trickster heroes wherever they are encountered in aboriginal America (124). In Radin's book *The Trickster*, the Greek scholar Paul Kerenyi has noted that the "Dionysian ecstasy had the same function as the trickster myth; it abolished the boundaries, not least the boundaries of sex. Trickster's metamorphosis into a mother reaches down into the comic depths of the Dionysian realm, and its ultimate basis is to be found in the mystery of Priapus; he too, was not exclusively masculine" (188). That the trickster could transform into any character of his choice is well-known. His was a world exclusively run on his own terms.

Alice Marriott (1947), who has written extensively about the Kiowas and Kiowa folklore, gives an account of the Kiowa Sende trickster this way: "Kiowa Indian people believe and tell about how things got started and came to be." She continues:

> Saynday was the one, they say, who got lots of things in our world started and going. Some of them were good, and some of them were bad, but all of them were things that make the world the way it is.
>
> Saynday is gone now. He lived a long time ago, and all these things happened a long way back. When he was here on the earth, he was a funny-looking man. He was tall and thin, and he had a little thin mustache that drooped down over his mouth. The muscles of his arms and legs bulged out big and then pulled in tight, as if somebody had tied strings around them. He had a funny, high, whiny voice, and he talked his own language. His language was enough like other people's so they could understand it, but it was his own way of talking, too.
>
> Because Saynday got things started in the world, he could make the rules for the way these stories were going to be told. These are the rules that Saynday made, and if you didn't keep them he could cut off your nose:
>
> Always tell my stories in the winter, when the outdoors work is

finished. (7)

I heard Séndé stories as a small boy. The stories were all narrated in Kiowa. The English versions that I have read, including the ones in the Marriott collection are a problem because they are inferior compared to the original Kiowa. The translation of words itself does little justice to the exact meaning of Kiowa words. Figurative terms and metaphors get lost in the jumble of complicated, abstract or dead English, while sharp or penetrating turns of phrases strike the ear and jar the senses like the sound of gravel in a tin can.

Another problem: Every translated Séndé story that I have ever read, as a rule, reads like an Aesop fable. In the main, the subject matter of many, if not most, Séndé stories, is racy. We have to remember that Séndé or any trickster, by his own nature, is a rogue in every sense of the word. Whether Kiowa or other tribe, the trickster is no cute fellow like we find described by people like Alice Marriott. What I call the true Kiowa Séndé stories treat the kind of subjects one might find in The Star or the National Enquirer. Sex, bestiality, adultery, fornication, adultery, and lying are familiar subjects of a Séndé story. In a real Séndé story you might find the trickster having sex with a rabbit. He will assume any form he wants so he can play tricks on people and animals, "and is [even] the victim of tricks; he is amoral and has strong appetites...is footloose, irresponsible and callous" (Velie 1993), just like Shakespeare's Falstaff. It's hard to see why trickster stories are not treated as quality literature.

But that's another problem. Who determines what is serious literature?

Western minded readers cannot appreciate Indian texts per se (Vizenor, Blaezer, Sarris). This is due in part to the fact that Westerners have been trained to read only certain kinds of texts that are regarded as "literature." This is not confined to fiction. It includes poetry and other kinds of imaginative writing. What we have learned in school is that there are certain kinds of writing that are literature. We are given texts that contain these writings and we grow up learning that this is what real literature is. Anything short of this is not literature by definition (Ong). We are also given lists of so-called serious literature. This in turn becomes a canon of important works that was produced by American writers and includes such names as Emerson, Whitman, Melville, Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck, Fitzgerald, and Poe, to name a few. In modern times the list has grown and includes names with which most of us are familiar, including writers like Momaday, Erdrich, and Welch. When we compare this list to people we know who tell stories or recite long involved imaginative things that have been translated into English, we find ourselves disappointed because the list we are provided reads nothing like the one given to us by our teachers. We suddenly realize there is something wrong. Our list contains people who often cannot speak the English language well, much less write it. These people are people we know, many of whom have little or no formal education but tell stories the Kiowa way. Furthermore, nobody cares to listen to their stories and understand what they may have to offer.

When we hear the stories our own people tell, they are just as funny and informative as Faulkner and Twain are for English readers. Our stories have all kinds of

characters. They speak, harangue, cheat, steal, fight, fall in love, die. They say funny things in interesting ways. There is a plot and action in our stories. But none of these stories has been included in the canon of American literature. Maybe it is because many have not been translated and written down. Even in this late development of postmodern literature it is difficult to find any indigenous or any so-called minority literatures included in any "respectable" or "serious" group. If stories written by Native Americans, for example, are collected at all they usually end up in an anthology devoted to "Native American literature." I do not mean contemporary writers like Louise Erdrich, Scott Momaday, or James Welch. I am referring to traditional and contemporary Indian storytellers, who speak their native languages more than not and tell stories their own tribal way. There is an ongoing problem with imaginative works done by tribal peoples. One of the problems is semantics. That is, "What exactly is Indian literature?"

At a regional symposium on Indian literature some time back, Kimberly Blaeser discussed the existing body of American Indian writing in America. One of her main concerns, a concern shared by many who are interested in Indian literature, was "What exactly constitutes Indian literature?" Does it have to be written? Or can it be oral? Either way, does the writer or storyteller have to be Indian? Or does the text only have to deal with Indian subject matter or be populated by Indians and have an Indian theme?

Some years ago the same sort of questions arose regarding Indian art. Apparently there were artists painting Indians and Indian subject matter who were passing themselves off as Indian artists and many of them were not "Indian artists" in the

sense that they belonged to or were members of an Indian tribe. It was easy to see why artists who were enrolled members of a tribe would be incensed. This controversy was enough for the so-called Indian artists to make art galleries start scrutinizing all the "Indian" art shows they hosted to make sure that artists who claimed to be Indian were indeed Indians by showing documents just like most Indian artists had to at some art functions.

It is easy to see how confusing these kinds of issues can be regarding authenticity in the arts and literature. In Indian literature, the question always arises whether one is an Indian or non-Indian writing literature about Indians and/or Indian life.

"Indian literature" seems to be fair game for anybody who wants to write so-called "Indian" poetry or stories these days. The controversy here, about the same as the one in the art, is, *What constitutes Indian literature to some does not necessarily constitute what is Indian literature to others.* (So the argument goes.) Most questions seem more or less fair in light of the kinds of misrepresentations that have occurred regarding Indians over the years. My point is: Indians and other well-meaning folks interested in Indians have the right to question if something is authentically Indian or not, but we do not always know exactly how we are to proceed at defining much of it.

For me, it is so much easier to see what constitutes oral Indian literature because it insists on the use of native language. To locate literature that is oral, for instance, one need only go out into the field with recorder in hand and collect as many different examples as one can in the original language. These would then be transcribed in a

writing system that is readable and/or at least understood by someone who wants to examine the text(s). This, in my opinion, is what constitutes Indian literature which happens to be oral, and the question of authenticity is nil. This, it seems, is oral "Indian literature."

Everything else aside, what I have been trying to do here is show how much easier it is to define what is "Indian literature" when it is spoken rather than written. Defining written "Indian literature," like identifying authentic Indian art, has always been a tenuous undertaking and will perhaps be for a long time. There does not appear to be any real solutions at this time. I cannot speak for Indian art as I can for Indian literature, but the problems are just as important and in need of more study and clarification. I think what is at stake here is a question of fairness. No one seriously in pursuit of the understanding and appreciation of literatures wants to think that literature should be identifiably "Indian," I believe, because literature brings into question literary quality and aesthetic concerns which are difficult in and of themselves. Bringing into consideration such matters as "whose aesthetic standards apply or should apply to Native American works" (Blaeser, 10) finally becomes caught up in kind of literary suicide because we finally end up groping blindly at resolving questions that are not the original ones we set out to answer but ones which we have often manufactured ourselves. The issues that Blaeser raised concerning, "What do we include and what exclude in the canon of Indian literature? Is Indian literature a) any literature about Indians, b) any literature by Indians, or c) literature by Indians about Indians?" (10) can very often belie resolutions and put

us on other frustrating quests that are difficult and not easily resolved.

I have mentioned the enormous problem of translation elsewhere. Can Native American literary oral art be translated so that it meets the expectations of intelligent readers? What is the best way to do this? If we confront something literary, on whose aesthetic principles are we going to stand? When I started collecting and transcribing Kiowa stories, I had little trouble. It was when I started to translate the Kiowa into English that difficulties arose. First of all, it was hard to find the equivalent words. Then there was the problem of making sense out of things that didn't require exact words but inferences that you couldn't explain well enough to get points across. For instance, when Kiowas say "Séndé ą̂hêl" 'Sende (reportedly) came along' how do you explain the hearsay or storytelling mode without putting the word 'reportedly' into the text itself? If you leave it out all you have is a past indicative mode of the verb "came along" and that does not sound Kiowa enough. There were many instances where I fretted over translation. If you make a point or develop a kind of dramatic ending to Kiowa stories, they don't always come off that way. It's always safest to make an almost word-for-word translation so the English reader can get some sense of the meaning in the stories. If you don't, there will be misunderstanding and a plain resistance on the part of a reader to continue reading Indian stories.

Whether written or unwritten, many of the things that happen in Kiowa stories are natural. When English readers run across what they consider a bizzare incident, they

call it fantastic, unbelievable, or worse, supernatural.

> In most works of Native American literature, what is called supernatural is not super or above our experience, it is natural. Ideas of transformation, dreams, and visions are readily accepted and repeated as being true. This also connects with the whole idea of time as a continuum. In much Native American writing the traditional oral literature informs or becomes part of the written literature. (Blaeser 1991:11)

I can think of one story my late uncle Oscar told that I am sure most non-Indians would be hard pressed to understand. It had no title when it was told to me in the summer of 1998, the first time I heard it. I later gave it a title that it now bears: "The Mother Deer, Her Song." It is the story, or, rather, a story within a story told to him by his grandfather Tenadooah long ago. It happened after a lengthy conversation. Unlike all the other stories he told that day, this one he provided with special story framing. It was what most Western readers would describe as a "real" story. This is because he stopped talking and told me that he was now going to tell me a story. I thought that everything up to then must have not been story in the sense that we are accustomed. What he had been doing all afternoon was telling stories in the Kiowa sense of storytelling, and he must have wondered if I realized this at all. Finally, when our visit had almost come to the end he must have thought he should stop and just tell a plain old story like anybody else would.

As I said, up to that point, stories occurred anytime in the midst of ordinary conversation. There was no special preparation for telling a story. Whenever a speaker wanted to tell a story it came all at once and all of a piece. The listener had to just be

ready for it. When I asked later if this was the case, I was told that indeed it must be.

"You have to just listen and you can hear a story," John Tofpi pointed out. "Stories kind of happen," he laughed.

I was pretty convinced by that time, and it was about a year after I'd visited with Oscar at my mother's home. By then, Oscar had died and everything I had recorded and asked him regarding Kiowa stories was all I was going to get from this very traditional Kiowa man, stories I wasn't going to hear quite as I had before. This is why Oscar told me he was going to tell me that one story that hot day right at the end of our visit, in 1998, at my mother's home. He might have been prepared to tell me this one story a long time before that day. Maybe he had decided to wait. Perhaps he thought that we should exhaust everything we needed to before he opened that beautiful story I have in my possession to show off to my friends and colleagues. I have referred to it time and time again, because it is so fascinating, and so Kiowa. I'd heard such stories as a boy. The tone of his voice rang with true Kiowa knowing and authority. When he uttered the words I came immediately into the presence of that long ago time, far out on the prairie where Kiowas lived. I knew as soon as he told the story that I must journey with him in my imagination to a very special place. That was the kind of story he told and the kind I'd remembered from my childhood. I somehow instinctively knew that I should never hear a story like this again. This story was actually a story within a story, told to him long ago by his old grandfather Tenadooah. I am not sure how it was framed in the original. Perhaps there were other tales or even singing that framed it. It could have

been a story invoked by some special signs like a recital of charms. Perhaps it was just told right out like any story. Since it is supposed to be a real-life experience, any Kiowa listener is expected to take it on its own terms. Most non-Indians could not venture beyond this since they are not culturally prepared for such things. Yet many of them believe in the Bible stories and other so-called fantastic or unbelievable events in real life. Kiowas, whether they hear old oral myths or real-life stories, are prepared to enter into the story texts and appreciate everything the storyteller tells them.

Here is the story Oscar recounted in the summer of 1998:

1 He said the Kiowas were camping.

2 He said that.

3 They built a human corral, he said.

4 That's the way they used to kill deer around here.

5 They must have chased them thereabouts.

6 And then they chased them this way (towards the human corral).

7 The deer were exhausted.

8 Suddenly one of the deer began to sing, grandpa said.

9 The deer sang, he said.

10 And he said they ran it just right along there.

11 And then they chased it this way, he said....

Oscar paused right here. He left the story hanging in the air between us. He looked at me.

"You know we always tell stories this way because of our children," he said. The story was still open. Nothing seemed amiss. The Kiowa thing was you just stopped the telling and waited for somebody to make a remark, interject something. I imagine he wanted me to say what I felt about the singing or make a direct response to his statement about children. In the Kiowa way, he wanted to be absolutely sure that I was getting the main point of his story. Throughout the afternoon he and my father had been talking back and forth, one telling a lengthy story and pausing occasionally so the other could come in and say something. They were constantly opening up the conversation for impromptu storytelling. They rarely asked questions of each other or anybody around the table. They made comments, some short, others long and complex. After a comment was made they would go on talking. Many times during these pauses, they interjected what seemed totally unrelated remarks about people, usually their own relatives, or they added some other "prior texts," as William Foley (1997) called those past anecdotes or narratives that keep showing up in newer contexts. These anecdotes are what M.M. Bakhtin called "intertextualizations."[1]

In any event, Oscar was telling me what he thought was going on in the story at this point. He presented to me its main themes, particularly the survival of the Kiowa generations, that even animals are aware of their place in the world and their continuity as a species, that without this there is no purpose to living and life. A man or animal may live but a short space on earth and then it is all over. When a man or animal has a special purpose or some special service to render in the short span of its life then that is a well-

deserved life. This is what he was trying to get at as he told the story, or at least I thought this was what he was doing. He explained this more after the story's completion. After he finished he came back to this theme of survival, of life being worthwhile, and living a long life and in the right way, and serving some special purpose being the end goal of life generally. His commentary was so skillfully interjected that it formed an understandable and natural part of the story. Later I thought this hiatus that contained the comments or asides was really central to the story as a whole. That is, it mattered in a significant way, that the story was dependent upon it perhaps and not the other way around. The story was just a vehicle perhaps. I don't know for sure. I wished I had asked him more about that now that I can reflect back on it. I know he would have talked for hours. He was just that kind of a storyteller. A true Kiowa storyteller, like his uncle the old man Tenadooah. He would have elaborated on it like the old man and would have told me how great life really is, that we humans are not only lucky to be alive but that we and the animals serve some important useful end too, if we only knew, but that alas we don't always know. I thought, no wonder animals could speak Kiowa long ago. How could they not? No wonder Kiowas could make buffalo, eagles, bears, mountain boomers, snapping turtles, waterbirds, and swift hawks special partners in this life and not just material for clothing or dwellings or food. Animals could impart powers to doctor and heal. I know this because my grandfather was himself a doctor. The magpie and waterbird were his devoted aide and all of us whom he had doctored at one time or another owed so much to the existence of these worldly

creatures. We recovered from the trauma of serious illnesses and lived!

You tell stories for the sake of your children.

The deer sang, he said.

I heard it.

They were delivering the deer right up here, he said.

And so here it came, the Mother deer cantering along, he said.

And it was singing! He said.

And it sang:

He-ye-ya! He-ye-ya! He-ye-ya!

He-ye-yo! He-ye-ye-ye!

Here it approached, he said.

And the deer's tongue was hanging out of its mouth, he said.

And its child followed the rear.

And then she uttered song words, he said.

Hey! You all listen!

Listen up!

Right along there it was coming along. Singing!

Right along here it is singing! He said.

He-yeya! He-ye-ya! He-ye-ya!

He-ye-yo! He-ye-ye-ye!

Would that I had died instead!

32 *I lament!*

33 *I lament that my child is going die!*

34 *This is my song!*

35 *He-ye-ye-ye!*

36 The Mother deer sang, he said.

37 And it was there that I heard.

Kiowa Version

1 Jógà, á cîl.

2 Jógà.

3 [Human corral] á àu:mè, jógà.

4 É àn hábêkò àn tháp chólhàu ét hótjàu.

5 Óp háyá máun ét á:lé.

6 Nègáu tàuchò ét á:lé.

7 Hègàu è káundàu.

8 Nègàu tháp án dáu:áun, jógà kòjè.

9 Tháp án dáu:áun, jógà.

10 Gìgáu jógà, Óp á á:lé.

11 Nègáu óp tàuchò á á:lé," jógà.

12 Ìfé:dò ém óbáui hè:jètjàu.

13 Tháp èm dáu:vâigàu, jógà.

14 À tháu:dáu, jógà.

15 Í:dè hègáu á àlhòtbàu, jógà.

16 Nègáu í:dè á hègáu cháumà dáu:à, jógà.

17 Gìgáu èm dáu:vâigáu! jógà.

18 Gìgáu dáu:gá hâfê:

19 *He-ye-ya! He-ye-ya! He-ye-ya!*

20 *He-ye-yo! He-ye-ye-ye!*

21 Égàu hègáu chángá, jógà.

22 Gàu thàp dén á dóyà, jógà.

23 Nègáu á ì:jè gôm dáu:á.

24 Nègáu gà dáu:káum, jógà.

25 Hé! Bé tháu:hál!

26 Bé tháu:hál!

27 Áu:dé hègáu án dáu:fǒ:à!

28 Égàu tháp èm dáuvâigàu, jógà!

29 *He-ye-ya! He-ye-ya! He-ye-ya!*

30 *He-ye-yo! He-ye-ye-ye!*

31 *Káun náu à hîthàudè!*

32 *À áu:lyî!*

33 *Í gà cí:hòlàul:yà!*

34 *Dáugá é dáu!*

35 *He-ye-ye-ye!*

36 Èm dáu:vâigàu tháp, jǫ́gà.

37 Gàu gà dảuè à tháu:dáu.

Richard Bauman maintains that narratives and everything that surrounds narratives, all framing, including performance, "is accomplished through the employment of culturally conventionalized metacommunication." So every event in Kiowa stories, including the story within the text is itself "metanarration." "In empirical terms, this means that each speech community will make use of a structured set of distinctive communicative means from among its resources in culturally conventionalized and culture-specific ways to key the performance frame, such that all communication that takes place within that frame is to be understood as performance within that community" (16).

...I imagine the old man Tenadooah when he tells his story. There are certain narrative frames he has to provide his listeners in order for them to understand his tale. A Kiowa listener is obviously aware of the special close relationship of animals and men. There will be no need to explain how a deer can speak directly to a man, for indeed it is in the nature of things for this to happen. Old man Tenadooah can tell of the time he lay on top of Mount Sheridan and of how, as he lay praying, a collared lizard, sometimes called a "mountain boomer," big as greyhound, confronted him, barking, trying to make him go away.

Yes, the old man Tenadooah tells his listeners, it happened just like that....

Kiowas tell stories within stories. Kiowas tell a story about somebody else's story. They make commentaries about the story. They talk about the content. They account for the context. Sometimes they take a story from the past, a myth or legend, and plop it in the midst of a new story. Kiowas reflect on ideas, themes, and action that someone else had concocted. The story the old man Tenadooah told Oscar, Oscar retold to me. He was taking a "prior text" and context and reentexualizing it into a new context. It all came out of someone else's experience down through the years to a different time.[2]

Oscar's grandfather's deer story is about an encounter the old man had with a mother deer while out hunting with some other Kiowas. Within that framework the deer sang a supplication song. The song is plaintive but beautiful, something that would appeal to Kiowas. What is striking about the whole story is that it talks about the encounter between man and a sentient animal. This is no ordinary encounter. This is no ordinary animal. There is something different and almost human about that mother deer. She has an imploring tone. Her song, begging, beseeching, almost prayerlike, recalls that famous Kiowa story about the mother dog who led a man and his family to safety from an enemy. This story translated from the original Kiowa and told by Scott Momaday illustrates the relationship between men and animals in story:

> Before there were horses the Kiowas had need of dogs. That was a long time ago, when dogs could talk. There was a man who lived

> alone; he had been thrown away, and he made his camp here and there on the high ground. Now it was dangerous to be alone, for there were enemies all around. The man spent his arrows hunting food. He had one arrow left, and he shot a bear; but the bear was only wounded and it ran away. The man wondered what to do. Then a dog came up to him and said that many enemies were coming; they were close by and all around. The man could think of no way to save himself. But the dog said: "You know, I have puppies. They are young and weak and they have nothing to eat. If you will take care of my puppies, I will show you how to get away." The dog led the man here and there, around and around, and they came to safety. (1969:20).

Like the story of the mother deer we find an animal, in this case the dog, that implores the aid of a human. I find this remarkable for several reasons. First, it illustrates the extraordinary set of events which cause two creatures in great need and for some reason that perhaps only the old Kiowas know help each other. Secondly, I believe that the story teaches one that even the lowliest creatures serve some useful purpose in this world. But even more, I think what makes these stories great is that they inspire hope and compassion in the people. One of the stories my grandfather tells is about his own father's story when he climbed upon Mount Sheridan to pray and was thrown off four times to the ground before his prayer was finally answered. That is also what a Western-minded listener might regard as a "fantastic" tale. The hard-to-believe- it-happened kind of story, something supernatural and therefore unreal. The uninitiated don't know how to take these kinds of stories. They don't understand what's going on in the Kiowa mind. In other words, who would believe a deer can talk to a man? And if this wasn't enough, sing a song of supplication to the hunters? If someone other than a Kiowa hears this story, he or she will immediately try to explain that it must have been a dream. Or it

has to be a tall "fantastic" tale. Many of these very people believe there were giant animals that lived millions of years ago on this earth. Scientists have found fossil evidence. That's why. They have presented their case without anything more than the physical evidence of fossil remains and a way of dating it and theories based on these physical things. That's all they really have to go by. To buy into their kind of truth we have to believe them. We have to agree to their words. There is nobody else to turn to but their theories, their words. There is nothing more than that, and you have to buy into that to believe it. Scientists also believe how Indians came to the Americas. They have theories. That's it. Some scientists believe the earth was hit by an asteroid and destroyed most living things, including dinosaurs. Scientists have produced evidence. But is this true? Who really knows? Some very respectable scientists believe there may be extraterrestrial life somewhere in the universe and they argue and theorize that there is, and will do so to their graves. Now, who really knows if there is life anywhere other than the earth? Who really knows there is a heaven or hell? Yet many people believe there is. They believe everything that happened in the Bible is real. They believe and will go to war and kill others who don't believe that it is the word of God in the Bible. Is this all really true? Who really knows? Did all of that really happen? Is it a fantastic tale? Was there an Adam and Eve? The creation of the heavens, the oceans and the earth? Who made up such an unbelievable story? But a simple story by an old Kiowa man, now most Western men will not believe in such a thing and they will call it a fantastic tale. What about Darwin's theory of evolution? Is that Englishman mad? How

does he know things evolved the way he says they do? But many of us are convinced based on this one man's ideas and words.

In the final analysis it may not even matter if people believe in somebody else's stories. But the kinds of things that happen in Kiowa stories are, for Kiowas, real events and not supernatural things. They tell them just like they know they happened and that's the way many of those stories are. When they are heard or read, they have to be taken on their own terms. To understand how Kiowas tell stories, one has to enter them as a child would enter an enchanted forest. That's the only way to understand and enjoy storytelling no matter whose stories they are. By and large, stories have to be taken in their raw form. Try to enter storytelling with preconceived notions about storytelling and stories will only lead to disappointment. The Kiowa stories are fascinating but require the listener to do more than simply listen to the text itself.

Old Kiowa stories constitute the best ideas Kiowas have of themselves. Period. They are acts of the imagination and memory. They tell of time immemorial. By means of these stories Kiowas are able to remember and relive their tribal memory, history and culture. Indeed, the miracle of those noble and heroic times is evoked and comes alive in the imaginations and minds of Kiowas everytime the old stories are told. Momaday, perhaps the best spokesmen and advocate for oral traditions, has written that "The oral tradition is that process by which the myths, legends, tales, and lore of a people are formulated, communicated, and preserved in language by word of mouth, as opposed to writing" (Momaday, 56). As human beings we are equipped with the necessary tools to

tell stories. We human beings are by and large creatures who have a good sense of ourselves as humans and as such are beings, as Momaday says, "made of words; that our most essential being consists in language." It is this "element in which we think and dream and act, in which we live our daily lives," and we cannot "exist apart from the morality of this verbal dimension" (49). It is in this same sense, I believe, that Kiowas told stories and still are telling stories today. There seems to be an absolute truth to the way that Kiowas approach storytelling, and it is this sense of how Kiowas tell stories that I want to present in this study.

When I first set out to learn what Kiowa storytelling was I approached it through written texts. These were oral renderings which had been transcribed into Kiowa and then translated into English. They were done well by Parker McKenzie and others. They included the nuances and special language features that I had always regarded as proper in the storytelling domain. Nothing seemed amiss here. Everything seemed to be in its place, including the famous formulaic openings and closings I had read so much about and that were a large part of oral traditions, Kiowa or not. I had spent a good many years writing my own stories in English and thought I had a good grasp on "literature." It seemed not at all difficult to think that some of the same things I had studied in literature and then wrote about were naturally a part of any language group or literary tradition. I had early on regarded the Kiowa stories as texts and texts only. It was only after I had studied verbal performance and the ethnography of oral performance that I begin to see how much more there was in Kiowa storytelling, that the texts were

only the shell and that what was going on inside and around the stories was certainly worthwhile and perhaps the most distinguishing feature in oral Kiowa storytelling. I had spent many years relishing the content of stories. In his marvelous introduction Dennis Tedlock tells what the typical storyteller does.

> Here speaks the storyteller, telling by voice what was learned by ear Here speaks a poet who did not learn language structure from one teacher and language meaning from another, nor plot structure from one and characterization from another, nor even an art of storytelling from one and an art of hermeneutics from another, but always heard all these things working together in the stories of other storytellers (Tedlock, 3).

It appears that indigenous storytellers knew how to tell stories without the normal aid of formal instruction. Most of this was done simply by listening to others telling stories and then telling the stories themselves. When I asked a contemporary Kiowa storyteller how he learned, he looked at me like he didn't know what I was talking about. "I just learned," he said. I didn't know quite what else to ask him, because he was right. He had no formal instruction to speak of. Neither did my grandfather or any other storyteller of whom I was aware. The fact of the matter was there were no formal Kiowa storytellers as such. That is, there was no training in the sense that storytellers can be trained these days to tell competent stories just like writers can be trained to write good, competent stories. In the old times, storytellers learned by listening to others and practicing themselves (Hymes 1981, Tedlock 1983, Finnegan 1977, Ong 1982, Havelock 1963, Basso1996, Bauman 1977). There were no schools, no textbooks, no how-to-texts to follow. Every Kiowa grandparent was a "potential

storyteller" and told stories to the best of his or her ability, and that was that. In time they could improve, some better than others, some lesser. Without any real training could anybody tell stories? Could I be a storyteller or anybody else without training these days? What in fact was (or is) a storyteller? What did (or does) it take to become one?

Because we are so reliant on writing in western society, storytelling has become an activity confined to formal training. "Literature" nowadays is the term we use when we refer to stories. We have been taught in school that stories are written accounts of people and we are given texts that contain these stories. These come in the form of short stories and fiction mainly. There are occasions when we hear a professional storyteller. This is usually a live performance done in front of an audience and there are some pretty formal ways the stories are told. First of all the professional storyteller is somebody who is pretty well-known like Garrison Keillor or the late TeAta, a well-known Native American storyteller who performed primarily for non-Indian audiences. The event is usually well-publicized and we are often charged a fee to attend. The professional storyteller is more than often well-versed in talking to large groups of people and the way he or she tells stories is flawless and most importantly, entertaining. God forbid that the performance should be dull. For Kiowas there was and still is no such large public event. The fact of the matter is Kiowas do not claim to be storytellers in any sense of the word. They are not equipped to handle storytelling out of those claims. While I was recording in the field no one came along and said so and so is a

storyteller. When I asked who tells stories? Or who is a storyteller? I might as well have asked who was the man in the moon? No Kiowa volunteered any names. Oh, there were some Kiowas who said so and so told good stories, but there was never any special excitement about it. Scott Momaday is a storyteller in every sense of the word because he has written superb stories and novels. He has been asked to make public appearances all over the world, and people naturally assume he is a storyteller, which he is, though not in the "Kiowa" sense of storyteller, not in so far as the term applies to the Kiowa world.

Richard Bauman (1972) notes that performance as a mode of spoken verbal communication consists "in the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative competence." This means that the speaker or storyteller must display a certain degree of social competence in order for his hearers to follow. The Kiowa story, if told properly, must include the stuff cultures are made of and make up the tribal domain. Sometimes referred to as the context of the story, the social values that make up the themes in stories are those things that are meaningful to the people. If a story contains acts of heroism and bravery, it is because those are the values that are important to the people who will hear the stories. If generosity and closeness of family are important these are the attributes that the storyteller invokes when recounting a story. In other words, stories are embedded in the social and cultural fiber of people or the tribe. Without these features no story could be told. Stories are by their very nature framed by

the social context. It is a way for discourse to occur. It is a way that all the voices can intermingle and communicate things. Greg Sarris (1993) describes this as "a specific kind of dialogue, or conversation, that can open the intermingling of the multiple voices within and between people...where voices intersect and overlap" (5).

Story frames are devices used to separate normal conversation from an oral performative mode. This notion of performance as a frame is the means by which we contrast "literal communication" from a more aesthetic one. When people joke, quote, translate, orate, dramatize, or do interpretive speeches, they generally provide some kind of performative frame to distinguish what they are doing from ordinary speech. This way the listeners are more readily tuned in to what is being said, and so respond accordingly. What comes before and what comes after speech is as important as how one responds to it. Without story framing features, talk is simply talk. For the Kiowas, a performative mode required that storytellers and listeners know the appropriate means by which stories could be told and how one had to respond to such an event. It gave rise to a methodology for storytelling which developed into a fine art. Since stories were told and not written, the people who engaged in telling stories or listening to them had to remember everything in the story text as well as the story context. Although there are no great Kiowa storytellers, every Kiowa grandparent has the potential to become one.

At one time every Kiowa grandchild knew how the Kiowas came into the world or how Séndé and the animals stole Sun from the strangers far to the east. Every tender Kiowa ear could distinguish the sounds those faraway creatures made as they played

with Sun, as they tossed that fiery orb back and forth and jeered at anybody who dared to approach. In my mind I can feel the cold and damp of that ancient tribal camp west of the strangers' home. This is no tiny mountain village where everybody sings and laughs and dances. No. It is reality made harsh by darkness and death. Giant monsters walk upon a black earth. They strike fear into the hearts of the people. The people groan out in agony. They pray for relief that will not come. The darkness and danger is pervasive that surrounds their daily lives. And it remain so until someone steals Sun and brings it home so it can light up the world. I asked several of my storytelling consultants if they remembered the story. They did. Although there were as many different versions as there were consultants, they had all heard the same story at one time or another and marveled at it just like I had. The story had remained pretty well intact down through the ages.

When I asked several of these same consultants if they had ever received any formal instruction on how to tell stories, I was informed that they had not received any training whatsoever. They had learned to tell stories just by listening and telling stories over and over the way they had heard them told, or by making them up on their own. It seemed that very early on storytellers just naturally developed a sense of how one told stories properly. Timing, knowing when to tell a story, even in normal conversation, was paramount to their development as storytellers. It wasn't so much that you learned to tell a story a certain way, John Tofpi told me. You had to just be ready to tell one when the opportunity arose during conversation. That was the best way. For Kiowas, there

was no special procedure for storytelling. The story event could take place anytime or anywhere in normal conversation. The best way for this to happen was to learn how to listen well and be ready to make a story in the midst of normal talk. In time you could become an expert. It was as natural a procedure as sneezing or clearing your throat, which, curiously enough, was often a signal that told you a story was about to be told.

There were no storytelling guidelines, or at least they were not written down. The earliest stories were obviously productions given in uncommon speech. By this I mean the notion that language takes on special coloring in storytelling as opposed to common speech. This may also be regarded as a special language code. Richard Bauman (1977) notes that the use of special codes "is one of the most widely noted characteristics of verbal art, so much so that special linguistic usage is taken often as a definitive criterion of poetic language. The special usage may center on one or another linguistic level or features, or it may extend to whole codes" (17). When John Tofpi or Cornelius Spottedhorse told a story it came during ordinary conversation, but you could always tell the difference. It occurred in the change in voice tone or rhythm. Facial expressions and even bodily gestures too indicated the presence of a narrative. To be sure, all communication that took place within the story frame was to be understood as performance within that community (Bauman, 16). Listeners knew when a story began. Not only did they know but shared in its production.

Formulaic story framing is a distinguishing feature in traditional Kiowa stories. When English speakers use the introductory formula *Once upon a time*...they are using

formulaic framing. People produce "performative" language like this to separate what they are saying from normal conversation. Using special markings in the language make listeners take notice. If people were to use everyday language when they told stories or recited important sayings their words would fall on deaf ears, so important are the special tonal markers and registers in storytelling (Bauman 1977, Hymes 1981, Basso 1990, Tedlock 1983). It is within that framework that stories get told and how it occurred in the Kiowa oral tradition as we know it today. As we can see and Bauman has argued, "modern theories of the nature of verbal art tend overwhelmingly to be constructed in terms of special patterns within texts" (7). Notwithstanding, both Jakobson (1960) and Stankiewicz (1960) write that general formulations "identify a primary focus on the message for its sake." That is, there is a concern with the form of expression rather than the needs of communication as the essence of verbal art (Bascom).

Séndé ą̂hêl *Sende was coming along* is the formulaic opening in Séndé tales. Nobody knows who invented the formulaic features for opening and closing Séndé stories, but they are still used when Kiowas tell Séndé stories. Bauman notes that there are at least seven communicative means that serve to "key" or "frame" "oral performance." They are special codes; figurative language; parallelism; special paralinguistic features; special formulae; appeal to tradition; and disclaimer of performance (Bauman 16). Of these, special formulae seems to be the most used special feature used by Kiowas today. In addition to this, I have found in almost all the stories I

collected the ubiquitous "hàu," *yes*. Hau is the repetitive response listeners use to inform the storyteller they are following without question what he is saying. This marker appears to be more of an aid for the storyteller to continue than a simple yes response, to be sure. So crucial is this special code marker that it seems utterly impossible to tell a story without its inclusion.

As a part of the performative act, Kiowa stories of old were of necessity framed well. When my grandfather began a story he would say, Cáuigú á cí:dê *The Kiowas were camping*. This was the signal for me to sit up straight and take close note.

> The Kiowas were camped and there was no sun. There were strangers who possessed the sun and played with it all the time. They rolled it about and threw it high into the air. They gambled with it. When somebody came around they became very possessive of the sun and fussed over it.
>
> One time somebody came and they did not leave and so the strangers let them play. There was a man, a deer, a prairie hawk, and a mythical coyote, and by and by they picked up the sun and ran away with it.
>
> "Stand in line and pass it along," they cried.
>
> The sun was hot and they had to toss it back and forth. Then Sende stepped up and said, "Bring it here."
>
> And they gave the sun to him and he kicked it straight up into the sky where it landed and all the world was lit up.
>
> You must say yes.

CHAPTER III

KIOWAS, KIOWA TEXTS, CEREMONIAL OCCASIONS

Kiowas are said to have left the Montana high country of the Yellowstone after 1682. James Mooney (1898) places the Kiowas here, as does Parsons (1929) and Meadows (1999). By this time they had acquired horses and moved out onto the great plains (Mooney 1898; Boyd 1983; Meadows 1995). Most of the literature describes this era as the time "a dispute over an animal killed on a hunt" and "a portion of the tribe separated and went away to the north never to be heard from again" (Meadows 1999). Tribal legend refers to the incident and breaking up of the tribe as Auzaithauhop *The-Udder-Angry-Ones.* According to Kiowas, the ones who stayed in the north are apparently still there. There have been reports of a strange tribe who speak a language similar to Kiowas somewhere in Canada, but no one has yet documented or proven this. If this had been true, I am sure the Kiowas would have known who the people were and made contact.

According to tribal legend, the Kiowas journeyed eastward into the Black Hills of South Dakota. From here they ventured southward into Wyoming near Devil's Tower. By now they had acquired Taime, the Sun Dance medicine and become a Sun Dance culture. Kracht (1997) describes the Sun Dance as the "most important Kiowa dance" and unifying "the tribe socially and spiritually." By now, they had entered into what is now Kansas and Colorado and very shortly after, Oklahoma, always on the lookout for the best opportunities, a better place to make camp. Meadows (1999) contends that by

the time the Kiowas settled on the Southern Plains, "they possessed many of the sociocultural forms considered typical of nineteenth-century Plains Indians and were well adapted to a mobile hunting-and-raiding economy which emphasized the horse, tipi, and bison" (34). I should like to add that although the Kiowas are noted for raiding upon the Southern Plains, their real passion was to journey out on the land and take in the full breadth of that magical place. Momaday describes this period as "a time of great adventure and nobility and fulfillment" (3). "Taime came to the Kiowas in a vision born of suffering and despair," Momaday writes. "'Take me with you,'" Taime said, "'and I will give you whatever you want'" (3-4).

I like to think of this time as the most adventurous period in Kiowa history. And it was, as Momaday and others have said "a Golden Age" of the Kiowa people. The journey they recalled in story continues to be recalled today and is renewed every time Kiowas remember. "The journey is an evocation of three things," Momaday writes: "a landscape that is incomparable, a time that is gone forever, and the human spirit, which endures" (4). I like to think about the Kiowas and their place in the world. It is an enduring story, full of meaning and great human value.

Kiowas speak a language similar to those dialects spoken in the southwest, New Mexico and Arizona. John Harrington, who is credited for detailing much of the structure of the Tanoan languages, noted the similarities between Kiowa and the Pueblo languages as early as 1923. In *The Pueblo Indian World* (1945) he notes that a

"considerable study of the various Pueblo Indian languages of the Southwest and of the Kiowa language of the Great Plains area, amounting to a very detailed study of some of these, reveals that all of these languages without exception are closely genetically related one to another and to the Aztec, also called Nahuatl, of central Mexico" (Hewett and Dutton, 157). By the time of this writing, other linguists have tried to categorize Indian languages everywhere. While some linguists have categorized Kiowa as Caddoan or Algonkian, others cannot place Kiowa in any language family and have simply relegated Kiowa into the category of "isolate."

Because Harrington decided to eliminate what he terms the other "niceties of Indian pronunciation," he provides "an approximation" of the vowel and consonant sounds between the Pueblo tribes and Kiowa as a kind of announcement of what he has discovered in the southwest. He seems almost reluctant when he calls attention to this matter, for it had always been a source of much argument among linguists of his day. Unfortunately, his announcement goes almost unnoticed until he brings out a more inclusive Kiowa study a few years later, assisted by the late Parker McKenzie.[3] Of that publication McKenzie writes

> As an honor gesture, he [Harrington] included me as co-author, although I took no part in its preparation. He never learned I was much disappointed my Kiowa writing system was not used in it, but I recognized he intended the monograph for linguists and therefore had to use a writing system they would understand. (McKenzie Correspondences)

I knew personally of his disappointment and wish Harrington had included the writing

system of which McKenzie writes. I became aware of the system around 1980 when I worked at the Kiowa tribal compound in Carnegie. By then, others had also taken notice of the system and were commenting on its uniqueness and practicality. There were still many problems regarding Kiowa grammar at the time and so little notice was made of McKenzie's invention until 1998, when the Kiowa tribe itself initiated its Kiowa Language Preservation Program and officially adopted the system in its teaching component.

With the publication of *A Grammar of Kiowa* (Watkins 1984), many of the major problems of Kiowa grammar were settled. That work was also achieved with the assistance of Parker McKenzie and is perhaps the most influential one done on Kiowa to date. Beginning with a fine introduction, the work outlines the phonology, morphology, and syntax problems of Kiowa. This work, like Harrington's, stands as a testimony to the importance of the continued attempts to understand American Indian languages in these crucial times when many of those languages are in decline. For all intents and purposes, the struggle to keep native languages alive is a major concern not only for language scholars but for tribes themselves. It is the combined efforts of both scholars and tribesmen, however, that will help to keep indigenous languages alive and a living part of Indian communities across the country in the years to come, including storytelling which is informed by language and tribal culture.

I grew up in Kiowa country and have played a part in the cultural life of the Kiowa people. I believe I have shared in large measure with some of the oldest tribal

traditions, including ceremonial participation with the Tàlyí:dàui:gàu, the *Ten Sacred Kiowa Medicine Bundles*. When I was a boy I heard Kiowa stories spoken in both Kiowa and English. Because my parents and I lived in the same house with my grandparents who spoke Kiowa all the time, spoken Kiowa is the language with which I am most in tune. It is the music of Kiowa that resounds in my mind and memory even now. As a child I spoke and understood English with ease, but the first sounds that I heard were Kiowa sounds. These are the sounds that resonated within the walls of the house where I grew up. This is the music that informs the stories I heard and which still provokes an immediate emotional response and appreciation in me.

Most people, no matter what culture they come from, have heard at some time or another the stories of their people. They have not only listened to the stories but have participated in the storytelling itself, learned from it and even told stories themselves. In short, every human being, at one time or another, has been exposed to the stories his or her people have in their possession, and appropriated the important human values that are inherent in the stories.

Kiowas tell stories that are peculiarly Kiowa. This means that when Kiowas tell stories they have to abide by certain storytelling rules. Storytelling rules, like any rules that govern any kind of activity in human society, reside in the language (Saussure1959[1916], Whorf 1956, Sapir 1921). Otherwise, no one would be able to understand what a storyteller was talking about. Keith Basso observes that the study of languages "reveal...the shapes and contours of other cultural worlds" (Basso 1990: xi).

In other words, if we study languages we can know about the people who speak them. The same principle applies to storytelling. If you study the storytelling processes you may be able to see how the society of a culture informs storytelling. You can begin to understand how it is that the people think and value things. According to Basso, "linguistic anthropology is a way of doing ethnography that seeks to interpret social and cultural systems through the manifold lenses afforded by language and speech" (xii). In other words, every cultural group tells its own stories according to its own language rules. When Kiowas tell stories they are evoking systems of governance for both language and speech. In my mind's eye I see groups of Kiowas clustered around campfires telling stories. Listeners, enthralled, nod their heads and mutter "hau," the ubiquitous Kiowa term of affirmation that signals for the storyteller to proceed with the storytelling. I have seen and heard my grandfather use these subtle storytelling cues to keep the storytelling going. I know that in his mind he understood how it was that he must listen and respond to storytelling, that everytime he nodded and responded he was telling the storyteller that he could go on telling his story. On and on into the night. Without these simple utterances and gestures, the storytelling would not be accomplished, nothing gained. Storytelling, by and large, is a complex system of sounds, cues, and gestures that make storytelling the unique human accomplishment that it is.

Many of the stories I heard as a boy were told at night. A magical time. The thought of storytelling in the night is to my mind the single most thrilling event of the day. For a child, anything is possible during the night. During night it seems possible for

a man to wrestle a bear and win. A man can talk to the storm spirit and the storm spirit will listen. Night provides a kind of contextual frame around the story. There is a need for some kind of story frame. Dennis Tedlock calls it a "tale frame." A tale frame occurs around stories told at night, Tedlock reminds us. By and large, people go to theatre at night. They, as a rule, wouldn't think of going to a theatrical performance during the day primarily because most people work during the day, and night is usually the time people can relax to enjoy a dramatic performance. Likewise, most people go to the movies at night and on the weekend for obvious reasons. If a person wants to view a horror film, he or she would rather do this at night rather than during daylight hours (Tedlock). Why? "We ourselves confine most drama (whether state, screen, or television, except for highly realistic soap operas) to the night, and we tend to confine horror (both on screen and television) to the late night; moreover, except for summer repeats on television we confine drama largely to the winter" (Tedlock). Both theatre goers and movie goers generally prefer nocturnal hours to surround their entertainment and leisure. There is an element of mystery with these hours and it adds to the pleasure of the senses, not to mention the romance we commonly seek when we are at leisure and the lights are turned down low.

Not only do we frame our entertainment with the curtains of nightfall and mystery, we also separate our normal activities from special ones we have devised for different reasons, such things as holidays and other times and events set aside from the normal run of things. Sundays are a good example. In this country, Sunday has been

established as a day of relaxation and rest. It is also a time set aside for spiritual reflection and worship. For an observant Jew, this occurs on Saturday or Shabbat. According to the Torah, the first five books of the Law in the Bible, one is forbidden to engage in any kind of work or activity associated with work. There is a curtailing of activities people commonly engage in during regular work hours. The point is, if a person is going to set aside a special time to rest, reflect and meditate on the spiritual side of life, such times are designated or "framed" in order for these events to transpire just like they are when people tell stories. At such times common events in life are suspended in order that something special can replace it for a while.

Séndé stories, which are told only at night, are a good example. The story goes that if you told a Séndé story during day your nose would get cut off. Kiowas adhere to these storytelling rules. The stories themselves are framed by the night. When I was a boy I expected to hear stories right after sundown. We also framed these stories by sitting at a certain place on the porch. Grandpa would light up a cigarette he had rolled in an oak leaf. He would smoke and then tell a story. Everything followed a logical order or pattern of events. Every time. If he told a story during daylight hours, somehow all the magic seemed to go out of it, because nighttime was always more enchanting and mysterious. To my way of thinking the kind of storytelling I enjoyed way back when was narrated under the stars. If it had been recited during the day it would have sounded like plain exposition, strands of words going no where. Storytelling just had to occur after nightfall.

There is something special and magical about telling stories at night, and Kiowas know this. When Kiowas tell stories at this hour they are applying a storytelling frame of night. Like the Zunis,[4] Kiowas can tell "real" stories, which include tribal histories and other personal deeds and events, during the day; fictional tales and accounts, by contrast, have to be told at night, just like dramatic performances and movies on the American scene.

Once, during the course of my fieldwork, I asked John Tofpi, who was my major storytelling consultant, why Kiowa stories sounded better at night. He smiled and nodded his head, as he is prone to do at times, but he said nothing. I sensed that this was his way of showing that I was probably right. He often responded to my questions with silence during our work together on Kiowa storytelling. I don't think he did this because he didn't know how to answer to the question. Indeed, his silence was an apt answer to such questions. Not answering directly often meant that he needed time to muse over things. He wasn't about to answer without giving my question a good going over. Cornelius Spottedhorse reacted the same way when I asked him a similar question, as did Dorothy Kodaseet, my two other consultants. Dorothy was especially shy about answering questions. Sometimes she would simply say she didn't know. Or would keep silent. She must have thought it queer for me to ask questions regarding how Kiowas told stories. It must have given her an unsettling thought that somebody should ask such things. I'm not so sure she thought I might be a rather odd fellow sometimes. I would have to go back later and pose the same question in order to get her response, but each

time I did I was rewarded more than I had dreamed, for she would sometimes elaborate in her responses and comments. Other times, I would have to put questions another way just so I could get a response or two.

"Dorothy, are Kiowas prone to tell stories to their own grandchildren?"

Put another way: "Dorothy, how often did your grandfather tell you stories when you were a little girl?" Or: "Dorothy, who told you stories? Your parents or grandparents?"

I remember quite a few times a smile would light up her face as if she'd suddenly recalled a special moment a long time ago when things were easier and there was so much to live for. "He told me stories. Yes, he used to go to the store and buy esan *sweet food stuff*. Grandpa."

"He did?"

"My aunt was jealous too. She used to watch everything we did together."

"Why?"

"She thought we were getting something more, I guess. I don't know. I loved my grandpa."

She was very fond of her grandparents, especially her grandfather, I-See-O. I-See-O was one of the famous Kiowa Indian scouts attached to the 7th Cavalry under Hugh L. Scott. Scott befriended I-See-O. They were very close, I am told. One time, during the Spanish American War, Scott asked his old friend to prepare a special prayer for his safe return from that war. He had been detailed to an attachment overseas. I-

See-O took the general into a sweat lodge he had built himself and prayed for him before the Talyidaui which he kept. Scott returned safely, wounded only in the hand. Later on, he became Chief of Staff in Washington, D.C. He never forgot I-See-O or the special prayer for his safe return.

On a return visit to the Kiowa Elders Center I would sometimes find Dorothy ready to answer a question I had posed earlier. I'd find her busy working at the reception desk or in the dining room. Painfully shy, she would hardly look up at me when I walked up to her desk.

When she finally finished her details, however, she would sit down and fold her hands together and try to respond to my questions about Kiowa storytelling as best she could. Sometimes, she'd tell me another story about her grandfather I-See-O. She once told me about the time her father had to carry the Tàlyí:dáui *Medicine Bundle* on horseback from Fort Sill to his home west of Carnegie, about a forty mile ride. The horse died for no reason before they reached home, she said.

"My father had to carry that medicine strapped to his back," she said. "It was heavy but he brought it home."

"Did he ever explain to you why the horse died?"

"No."

"How did it die?"

She paused for a long time. In typical Kiowa fashion she answered my question. "I don't know. It just died. It was hot that day."

I didn't ask her any more questions. She seemed to be satisfied with the amount of information she told me. When I asked her later about that incident, she went into a little more detail. This time she told me the exact location where it happened.

"It was up near Fred Botone's. Do you know where that old house is?"

"Yes," I answered. "I do."

"It was there. That horse just dropped dead right there. For no reason. I don't know why it died like that. You know, they used to carry the medicine on the back of a horse then. Horses never died like that."

"How did the medicine come to be in your father's possession?"

"My grandfather I-See-O died at Fort Sill where he lived. Them soldiers built him a house. He was my father's father-in-law. My father had to take over as keeper of the medicine."

I knew what she was talking about. If your parent is a keeper, you automatically take over keeping the medicine after they die. When my grandfather, who coincidentally kept the same medicine that I-See-O had, died it was up to my mother to be keeper. Usually, the task went to a son. But since my grandfather had no sons, my mother became the keeper. She even looked to me to help her because I was his oldest grandson and I knew how to smoke the pipe and transport the medicine when necessary. My mother did not like keeping the medicine. She was ill and so we had to take the medicine to James Silverhorn who kept several other family medicines for various reasons. Mother was relieved. She could not take care of the medicine the way she

thought she should. I thought she was right, given the circumstances with which we were faced at the time.

It was difficult, as I say, but I never gave up asking questions about storytelling, and all of my consultants tried to provide answers to questions the best way they could. In time, I thought I was getting better at asking questions. Sometimes I would drive home and be thinking about what I would ask next time. Sometimes I would be at home and a good question would come up in my mind and I would have to stop whatever I was doing and sit down and write it out. I wanted to know everything I could about Kiowa storytelling. Like Keith Basso, I wanted to focus "on a small set of spoken texts in which members of a contemporary American Indian society [in my case, Kiowas] express claims about themselves, their language, and the lands on which they live" (Basso, 100). I didn't know there were going to be more surprises in store for me, more than I expected. In addition to this, I found out a lot about myself, not because I was a student in the field of ethnography and native languages but because I was another person trying to make sense out of the conditions people were born into and live all of their lives and sometimes are at a loss as to why things happen as they do like growing old, infirm or ill, and dying. I, too, was a part of this human drama, I realized, whether I liked it or not. In short, the many conversations I had and recordings I made in the time I spent in the field revealed more about my own people than I had ever expected. But the experience also allowed me to peer into a place within myself where my own being resided and slowly got exposed to me. And quite by accident, I too began to think about

my own being and what this meant to me in relation to the world about me. Somehow, like storytelling, I was providing a frame around my own existence, my own life.

Something else: Having grown up Kiowa and played an active role as a Kiowa, I had taken my own Kiowa heritage for granted, like a lot of people do. I had assumed I knew all there was to know about being human and alive in these modern times. I had not intended to make much of the fact that I was even Kiowa, ever. Indeed, I think I actively tried to extract myself from my own identity a few times. I had lived and spoken the Kiowa language, albeit broken and sparingly if at all, when I was barely walking. After I grew old enough and left home to seek my fortune in the world, I had all but forgotten the world of Kiowa and the Kiowa language. Every now and then the pleasant sound of Kiowa words or the memory of a story came to me and I recognized each as it came bubbling to the surface of my consciousness and I would either be sad or happy for it. Other times a familiar image would crop up in my mind as I was writing or speaking or dreaming. And still other times I would be caught off guard and utter a Kiowa word or phrase to someone familiar I happened to meet on the street or in some odd place like a movie house or grocery store.

I think I have heard and known the best old Kiowa stories, the so-called stuff of Kiowa origins, myths. These were, it seems, sealed in my soul forever. I think I had long ago rather arrogantly thought myself to have arrived in the knowledge of such things as living, life, the pursuit of happiness, beauty, and the good things in life, including Kiowa stories. In terms of my own cultural memory and place in the world, I

generally knew I belonged somewhere in the huge scheme of things. Specifically, I somehow knew what it was to be Kiowa. But like everything you learn as a child, those things fade or become dull in your memory. When my grandfather died, everything that connected me to that place long ago, what Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1990) refers to as *habitus*, seemed by and large irrelevant in my own life. I had not added to its tacit presence or need for continued growth. I wanted to find my own way in the world. For me, that seemed the logical way to go. And it was and still is in some ways. But much of who I am and will remain for the rest of my life consists in what I had to come to terms with when I reached a certain age-- the sum of all you are and the culture you were born into and were nourished by. Like it or not, at some point as you mature you begin to see the worth of it and make the best of the conditions which revolve around and affect you and those you care about. Sooner or later, you have to come to terms with who you are and be at peace with that realization, for in it is real value and meaning. I can only term what was revealed to me as this: being human-- as well as Kiowa, Choctaw, English, Irish, and Jewish-- all the backgrounds I am part and parcel of. That seems to have made all the difference in who I am right now.

It was not easy to come to this realization, not by a long shot. I had traveled too far from my own being, as I said, and it never occurred to me that I should ever return to that place. To apply the wisdom of the old Hasidic storytellers: the forest where the fire used to burn brightly was almost out. The words needed to ask the right questions were all but forgotten. If I could only remember something of these things, that is what could

make all the difference. It was the late 20th century. Something had to be done about how Kiowas tell stories. The Kiowa language was declining rapidly. Kiowas were not using the language as they once had. Some of the old master speakers were gone. Two of whom I had worked closest had died recently. They were the best speakers of Kiowa I knew at the time.

One of them, Oscar Tsoodle, was a close relative of mine.[5] He was one of the last traditional Kiowa peyote practitioners. He was a brilliant Kiowa speaker. The other, Parker McKenzie, was a Kiowa linguist in every sense of the word because he was self-taught. Truly one of a kind. In my opinion, McKenzie's work in Kiowa is incomparable and always will be. No Kiowa I know has ever mastered an understanding or an ability to explain the most minute parts of Kiowa as did Parker. I owe everything I know about the language to this extraordinary Kiowa. He did everything he could to teach me how the Kiowa language worked and even recorded several stories for me the summer before he died. He knew as well as any Kiowa elder that the Kiowa language was in decline. He, of any Kiowa, could speak the truth about the possible death of the language. And he tried very hard to show every living Kiowa that this didn't have to be, that if every responsible Kiowa took a real interest in the language, it had a chance of surviving at least a little longer in this world. I shall have more to say about this remarkable human being when there is more time. Suffice it now to say that I believe I am learning how to do better fieldwork and to assemble an ethnographic study of oral storytelling due to my storytelling consultants and others in the discipline. Furthermore,

I have learned that, although many of the old stories are being lost from memory all the time and some already lost forever, new ones, in fact, great contemporary narratives are growing up in Kiowa country all the time. These are worthwhile and lasting contributions to the canon of American literature in this country and time.

Another thought I need to add here: I am in awe of the ability of humans to create and recreate stories and tell them in perhaps the same way they did centuries ago. In order to know this I had to record and interview as many of the living storytellers as I could in Kiowa country. I had worked with the Kiowa tribe about seven years prior to this time. I had learned more Kiowa in that span than perhaps I had hearing it and speaking it in a Kiowa home long ago. For this, I say again that I am grateful to grandparents who spoke only Kiowa around the house and insisted that I understand and respond as much as I could in the same language, although we were also an English speaking bunch and could converse as well as anyone in our English-speaking world. Still, it was always spoken Kiowa around the house. You could say "bring the water," "sit down," "go outside," "how are you feeling," in Kiowa. Spoken Kiowa was as naturally a part of our lives as breathing cool spring air. Notwithstanding, Kiowa storytelling occurred at any given moment in the environs. It didn't matter when. There were just stories that had to be told to keep us human, I suppose. It was due in large part to the heavy traffic of Kiowa relatives and elders who passed in and out of our house. All the Tenadooah adults spoke Kiowa and spoke it daily everytime they came together. We younger ones couldn't help but pick up Kiowa, and, if we were fortunate,

speak it ourselves as we needed to after the old ones had gone from this life. Everytime John Slow told a story, I imagined I was hearing my own grandfather's voice. There are times now when I look up and in my mind's eye I see my grandfather walking toward me, say, from the creek near our old house, advancing slowly, trudging along in that certain and deliberate way of his. Always aware of who he was and sure of himself.

I asked myself not a few times out in the field if the questions I was putting to my storytelling consultants were relevant to storytelling. Were they the proper questions one asked Kiowas? Was there such a thing as a Kiowa storyteller? If so, how was it determined? What about the tradition of storytelling? Was there one? How old was it? Did it just consist in stories told in Kiowa and then passing these on to the next generation for posterity? Were contemporary Kiowas telling stories the same way they did a century back? What system was there for telling stories? How much did it draw on tribal customs and values?

My consultants I'm sure had never before been asked to respond to such questions regarding Kiowa storytelling. This made me feel silly sometimes. They must have thought I was acting "too much like a white man," their usual remark when you start asking questions that aren't commonly asked. They must have thought how foolish I was to do things out of the ordinary order of things out there. As far as they were concerned, one consultant told me, "We simply tell stories and that is it. We don't memorize them. We don't try to make them fancy like white people do. Who cares?"

Yes, I thought. Who cares how they, contemporary Kiowas, tell stories anyway? Who needed to know? Everything you wanted to know about Kiowa storytelling seemed pretty obvious if you just sat down and listened. It helped to be Kiowa and to know a little Kiowa. You tell stories because they keep you alive. What else could you expect to happen in storytelling? Stories kept alive the hopes and dreams of the tribe. Of the nation. What was so unusual about that?

Yes, sometimes I felt pretty foolish. Not because of all of the questions but because I was a Kiowa too; and what business did I have of asking my own people these things? Let the white man do that. He is expected to do such things. Not a fellow Kiowa.

But still, in the end, the fieldwork was rewarding. I learned a great deal about Kiowa storytelling, and am still learning as I write this dissertation. I also learned how to think over questions that were asked of me carefully before I answered them, the correct Kiowa way. There was another thing: Kiowas communicated, not only during ordinary conversation but during rounds of storytelling. There was always time to think and reflect, comment and interpret while telling or listening to stories. Everytime I sat down and recorded and interviewed consultants I expected to spend most of an afternoon doing it. I knew there would be an almost equal time of pausing, thinking, and reflection. Many non-Indians I believe would find this exasperating. I can now see why someone like Elsie Clews Parsons (*Kiowa Tales*, 1929) could get so upset doing fieldwork with Kiowas.[6]

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Like the traditional storytellers of old, contemporary Kiowa storytellers tell fantastic tales that could be true or untrue. Tedlock (1983) observes that when the Zunis tell fictional stories "they do recognize certain kinds of truth in them" (164). And often cite "etiological claims in the closings such as these:

> The sun sometimes has a halo now, and deer are now capable of witchcraft and must therefore be hunted with special precautions. Asked whether this tale were true, Andrew Peynetsa said, "Almost. That's why the sun is that way;" asked on another occasion whether this narrative were a telapnanne, he said, "Yes, it's a telapnanne, and after the telapnanne was acted the deer became all wicked." Joseph Peynetsa, asked whether this tale really happened, said, "No. I say no, but I don't know why the hunters do this. Somewhere, somebody must have found out. Somehow, maybe an accident. Maybe it wasn't like this, but later something must have happened to make people think the deer were witches. Anyway, all the hunters know this." (164-65).[7]

Kiowas recognize true events in both the old stories and contemporary ones. It is often hard to tell the difference between fiction and nonfiction. Tedlock observes that when asked whether something is real or unreal in a story, the storytellers he was working with said that it was, while others said that it wasn't or could be. "Asked whether "Ducks now waddle rather than [walk] straight," answers, "Yes, that's true. Ducks really walk that way" (165). Tedlock goes on to plain that "Explanatory elements, then, since they refer to real conditions, lend an air of reality to the stories that lead to them. This is paralogism," he writes, "a literary device described by Aristotle: 'Whenever, if A is or happens, a consequent,B, is or happens, men's notion is that, if the B is, the A also is....Just because we know the truth of the consequent, we are in our

own minds led on to the erroneous inference of the truth of the antecedent.'[8] Faulty logic it may be, but Aristotle approved of it as a verisimilitudinal device" (164). On the best examples of the use of verisimilitude in storytelling, Tedlock mentions that one of the highest compliments paid a Zuni storytelling is for the storyteller to be able to tell a story "as if he were actually there."[9]

In my own work with contemporary Kiowa storytellers, I was told on several occasions so and so can tell a story "like it's real." One day John Tofpi told me a story I couldn't tell was a dream or a real incident.

"It was a hand," he said. "I saw a hand and I heard a voice speaking." He said the voice told him things about his life and things about the living world. "It was giving me something," he continued.

I didn't know what to make of the story and didn't know the proper way to ask him how to explain it. It would have been rude if I had. It would have been an insult to ask him if it was a dream or something real, so I didn't say anything.

"It held out its hand and I reached like this for it. It was in the shape of a tree, just like that one down by that bridge. I went down there and I looked around for it and I found it. That tree. It was in the shape of a hand."

I listened to his story with real interest, because I recognized so many familiar storytelling features in it. He had every intention of telling me just like it was, that it was in fact a real event. Something had come to help him live a better life. After all, didn't everything change for the better after the dream?

I had to agree that he must have had a true revelation. Kiowas present stories that, like good fiction, have aspects of the real and unreal in them. There is little separation between what happened and what might have happened, but you are not told what it is. This kind of storytelling frame keeps the listener involved intimately in the tale, under the storyteller's spell, so to speak. My grandfather told what most non-Indians would term "fantastic" tales, because the content was so unbelievable. He had somehow learned the art or aesthetics of telling a story this way to intensify the dramatic effects. Like any good Kiowa storyteller, he had learned that you could build up a powerful plot and action by making the listener believe things that were otherwise unbelievable. He had cultivated this skill creating a kind of magical sense that all good storytelling must have to keep listeners or audiences engaged. Add to this other storytelling frames like telling stories at night and verisimilitude and the stories suddenly become experiences of gargantuan proportions.

Many of these special storytelling devices and the heavy use of supernatural occurrences are what initially drew my attention to the early Greek myths. At the time I wondered if Homer wasn't himself a Kiowa, because, like the Kiowas, he heard voices and talked to inanimate things like rocks, trees, and ocean waves. In his explanation of how a reliance on orality switched to literacy, Ong describes how Julian Jaynes (1977) "discerns a primitive stage of consciousness in which the brain was strongly 'bicameral,' with the right hemisphere producing uncontrollable 'voices' attributed to the gods which the left hemisphere processed into speech" (30). I mention this only because it seems

worthwhile in light of how Kiowas rely on the oral dimension in language and how this relates to the way they tell stories, and not due to some "primitive stage of consciousness," as Ong states that Jaynes suggests. That argument is based on something quite different than that which concerns me and oral storytelling.

In one aspect, oral storytelling is itself poetry, or at least a kind of poetry. There are certain features in poetry which suggest orality and storytelling. For one, poetry has as its source the spoken word. Poetry from its inception was an oral undertaking, and so poetry has always seemed connected with and been interested early on in the word uttered. By and large, most poets would rather have their poems heard read aloud than read from print. This, again, is due in part to the very early association of poetry made of spoken words. Therefore, poetry is rooted in a kind of orality of which Jaynes speaks.

Let me go a little further to explain what I mean about orality and the present argument regarding literatures and storytelling. To a poet, there is a certain attraction and fascination for language and words. Many poets have attributed their ability to make poems to some realm of the mind or imagination they describe as "primeval," "wild," "passionate," or some state of being I have heard described as "early human consciousness," and a vital creative link without which a poet could produce a good, if not great, poem.

It is often difficult, if not frustrating, for the hardcore academic mind to connect to this area of creativity. It is not only metaphysical but cannot in most cases be

challenged successfully in an academic way, and therefore has always been source of much misunderstanding between the arts and academia. Somehow or another, poets and people attracted to the spoken word and the magic therein seem to be in touch with something other worldly or another which "ordinary" people are not.

It is here that much of the debate between academia and the arts occurs. And yet, ironically, it is here, in this very fertile field, that great literature springs out of the earth as beautifully and as abundantly as Iowa spring corn. It cannot happen otherwise, we are told.

Consider what poets Kim Addonizio and Dorriane Laux (1997) write that Carolyn Kizer, contemporary poet, said regarding those poems that "come to us as 'gifts,' the ones we don't have to struggle over:"

> Kizer was working on a long poem for weeks, unable to make much headway, feeling frustrated and blocked. She kept at it Long after she felt she should give up. One morning she sat down at her desk with the poem in front of her, ragged and mis-shapen as ever, and she was *suddenly struck by inspiration* [italics are mine] and wrote a new poem which came quickly and fully....(203).

Note what Jaynes (1976) himself writes in a chapter titled Of Poetry and Music:

> What unseen light leads us to such dark practice? And why does poetry flash with recognitions of thoughts we did not know we had, finding its unsure way to something in us that knows and has known all the time, something, I think, older than the present organization of our nature? (361).

That poems seemingly come "quickly and fully" to poets is fairly well-known, and yet, nobody seems to be able to explain how this happens, and that is the concern of which I am speaking here. If we are going to understand orality in Kiowa storytelling, or any other non-Western literatures, for that matter, we need to take a very good look at some of the research regarding orality and literacy, because both have a huge bearing on how we should approach a culture that relies heavily on an oral tradition. We have to understand that one of the biggest problems in scholarship is how we look at something new and different. This is where much of the misunderstanding is as I see it. As I said, I was attracted to Greek literature and in that attraction I saw that there was a tradition of the literature that was produced in a European culture long ago. There were many books written on the subject of the literature and people. People had spent countless years studying the Greek myths and writing many volumes on the subject.[10] Everything I learned at one time or another seemed to be based upon the Greek culture. The very alphabet we had all learned and learned how to use was largely a product of the Greeks. Somewhere along here I began to think that if it is so easy to understand and use what

the Greeks had done, why couldn't the same thing be done for Kiowa literature? If we could take Homer's texts and develop them into a Western institute of thought and literature, we could as easily develop the same thing for non-Western literature.

That seems long ago. I now know how difficult it might be for scholars to do this who are trained in the Western tradition. As Vine Deloria, Jr. has contended, "Respect for non-Western traditions is exceedingly difficult to achieve" (33). Why? Because there is a fundamental different way of looking at data and assembling it into meaningful particles of information. What the Western academy has done is look at scientific data several ways and then arrive at some interpretation(s) that become in effect the final word.

People like Deloria think scientifically-trained individuals in our Western academies as a rule do not trust anybody else's way of thinking but their own. That is why it has been difficult for non-Western people's ideas and theorems to be accepted and understood by Western men, Deloria complains (1997). What this means fundamentally is that the studies that have largely affected the way most, if not all, of us think about the world have been promulgated by Western man. Non-Western thinking people like Vine Deloria, Jr. explain this as a major failure in the advancement of the understanding of the world as a whole and moves science "another step forward into the unknown" (28). Deloria claims at the same time that one of the flaws in our intellectual community is that scholars [including scientists] "are generally specialists in their field and are often wholly

ignorant of developments outside their field. Thus, a person can become an international expert on butterflies and not know a single thing about frogs other than that they are disappearing-- a fact more often picked up in the Sunday newspaper science section than from reading a scientific journal" (28). What he recommends as a remedy to this shortcoming of Western-thinking man is a more "interdisciplinary" approach to scholarship, but decides that this probably is not likely to happen very soon, although there have been some breakthroughs, he allows, and presents some examples.

The idea of relativity, which was first applied only as a concept in theoretical physics "to explain the relationship of space, time, and matter," has now moved from "philosophical physics to apply to biological phenomena and environments" (Deloria, 42). Where scientists were once divided, Deloria argues, they are now working together in areas to understand natural phenomenon and the world around them. Where scientists once thought the ruins of ancient Indian temples were religious sites early cultures of dictatorial theocracies where the people spent their lives building, archaeoastronomers now interpret not as primitive "but sophisticated computers which can scan the horizon if properly used...as proof of a complicated Indian star knowledge" (43).

Other breakthroughs that qualify, Deloria points out, are in the fields of zoology and medicine, where as recently as 1992, at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a panel presented a new field of study in the area of "zoopharmacognosy," or the use of medicinal plants by animals. Following that meeting, a Duke primatologist remarked: "If these work for primates, then they are potential

treatments for humans." This statement is an apparent departure from "ordinary scientific logic," Deloria contends, but is worthwhile, since, according to the Navajos, bears are credited for teaching them to use a species of *Ligusticum* plant for certain ailments (43).

What I mean to be saying here is this: Kiowa storytelling, the inclusion of Kiowa storytelling as a serious scholarly pursuit in the academy, serves to make storytelling a more widely appreciated form of aesthetic and knowledge, and to extend the understanding of a people, Kiowas. Consider John Tofpi's story again: he finishes telling me one of his fantastic tale stories, I sit a long time thinking about it. I think about the great Greek tales and the dreams of Odysseus, clever Odysseus. I think to myself, In college we never questioned whether the story was real or not. It didn't matter. Yet, we approached the work of the Greeks with serious critical intent. We read other canonical sources. The Great Books. Theoretical stuff. I thought Homer was a real person at first, because my teachers let on like he was. Was he? Nobody knows. My teachers could only equate him with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But even here there were problems. Later on, when I read biblical scripture, I was told that much of this, if not all of it, was true. It supposedly came straight out of the Almighty's mouth. *Arrghh!!* Not only were the scriptures true. All of those fantastic and magical things that happened thousands of years ago were true accounts too.

White people want to own all the truth, my grandfather used to say. "They want to have the last word about Indians. About the way they live. About their language. They want to claim every inch of the earth. And heaven!"

He would pause and stare at me a long time, his demeanor serious. "You believe that?"

He'd patiently await my reply, which he wasn't always sure he would get.

But then I would say something, usually silently. Yes. A nod of my head.

*

Here's another consideration: As a Kiowa young man looks back over the years when he was growing up, he begins to realize that much of what his grandfather told him about people and life was appropriate and right. He has experienced much in the interim and lived in a rapidly changing world, and like many such as himself has studied in public institutions of higher learning. He thinks to himself: I have learned that English stories and poetry are literature. There is American literature too, even if it is written in the English language. These works, we are given to understand, are worthy of serious study. They are so because English is our nation's language. The literature we study is authored by distinguished, English-speaking persons. Many of these are themselves famous authors. Everything these authors have written must be good because the stuff is published and put in books that are studied in the university. Literature, all kinds of literature, are worthy of serious study. This is what is important.

Until recently, American Indian oral narratives were treated more or less as folktales. What we are given to believe is that anything uttered by indigenous peoples cannot be anything more than tribal lore and therefore must be approached as such. Nothing could be farther from the truth! The fact of the matter is that there is even more to the literature than the text itself. At the regional literary symposium American Indian Voices held in Racine, Wisconsin in 1991, Kimberly Blaeser said:

> For my master's thesis I focused on the secular narratives of the Lake Superior Ojibway elders, and oftentimes I would have a tape recorder and tablet ready and my pencils sharpened, all ready for a story. What would happens is that I would go to the elders' houses and pretty soon I would find myself driving them to the grocery store or taking out the garbage or hoeing the garden or pulling in the boat from the dock or helping them winter the harvest. Then a story would come, eventually, but first you had to get the work done. That was an important lesson for me as a writer to understand: how patience works into the process, and you can't just sit down at the computer or typewriter and capture those histories or biographies. You have to spend time with the people. You have to establish trust. You have to establish a sense of the familiar with them so they know your frame of reference is somewhat like theirs and they feel comfortable with you in talking about some difficult times. (14)

Much of what Blaeser talks about is true regarding how storytelling happens. I can remember those days when nothing happened. You simply went to the consultant and sat down or went out into the fields, walking. One time John Tofpi and I went out to the Slick Hills for Indian perfume. Àu:hį́. Àu:hį́: is native juniper. The kind Kiowas like is a special kind of cedar and you don't find it just anywhere. It grows in the rocky hills south of Carnegie. He told me about the three different places to get cedar, or

àu:hį́:. John Tofpi is in my estimation the àu:hį́: maven. The two most important Indian paints are gúl:áum:gá *red paint* and gùtqógùl:àum:gà *yellow paint*. They are holy paints. Sacred. Many of his stories deal in these subjects. He even conducts tours out to the places where he collects cedar and Indian paints. He must know every location in the area and spends a considerable amount of time talking about the different kinds of cedars and paints and where one can find the best. It seems that a great amount of his free time is spent drying and preparing àu:hį́:.

That day John T. and I went to the Slick Hills it was a cold, windy April day. We drove southward from Carnegie. All along the way he told me stories about cedar and how it is used by Kiowas. He said he thought modern Kiowas had no use for these sacred things and that he thought he should tell them about it whenever he could. He liked to tell people, he said. He even took them on "culture tours" to see where the stuff grew and showed them how they had to cut it. It was all pretty ceremonial.

"You have to do these things the right way," he said.

We parked along the highway. He pointed up the rocky hills. I thought we'd never reach the summit.

"There," he laughed. "It's thick up there."

Yes, I nodded my head, regretting I had come out here in this awful cold, not to mention that rocky climb I would soon have to make. If there is a stiff price for everything that is worthwhile and good this was judgment time, I thought.

We climbed out of the car, while trucks barreled by almost shaking us out of our

clothes. We braved the steep granite escarpment and arrived at the summit. The wind was so sharp you could feel it through your clothes and into your bones. I almost turned around and walked back down to the car to wait, but John T's time was too important. Besides, he might tell a story and I would miss out on it.

We found small junipers. They were knotted together on a precipice. It was about a hundred feet drop from there to flat ground below. As I looked over the edge, I had visions of me plunging headlong down to the ground. I wondered why I had come out here.

"This is it," John announced as soon as we arrived. He took off his cap and prayed quietly. I felt guilty and ashamed for not having more faith in this little field trip that turned out to be one of the most significant moments in my work with John Tofpi out there.

We cut off branches. Sure enough, when I pinched off a sample of the needles and brought my fingers to my nose the scent was remarkable, unmistakable. It was the right kind of fragrance. It was a prayer fragrance, the kind Kiowas smoked the house with after a death in the family or sprinkled over the open fire in the peyote tipi.

We filled our two grocery bags full and drove home quietly. On the way he told me all about àu:hį́: and sə́ə́:gá, sweet sage perfume, another special fragrance favored and used ceremonially by Kiowa men. I thought about Indian fragrances for women and could come up with not one. I wondered if women used any kind of special scents at all. I remember making a mental note to ask John later about it but forgot all about it.

"It's a medicine. It's a prayer, guy. You have to make a prayer before you cut it. When you get home, use it. Don't just let it sit somewhere. If you don't use it right away, give it away to other people or put it in a small sack and spread it around the house so the house smells good. It's a good medicine for these things."

I brought my portion home. I hope to use some of it as he prescribed or give it away as he told me that I should. The point I want to make here is there was a small story about fragrance cedar, but we had to go out and find it first. We had to struggle up the granite slopes in the cold wind. We had to make a prayer and then cut the branches and put it in sacks. All this took time. A whole afternoon after lunch. We drove about 12 miles to locate it. On the way home he told me the story of àu:hį́:, that it was a prayer, a ceremony. It had all the aspects of a ceremony. The same amount of intensity but in smaller proportions.

A ceremony!

In miniature.

He made up the story about cedar as he went along and showed me the right way to use it so I would know from thence forth.

Indians tell stories different ways. Non-Indians need to take account of these remarkable stories. We can all learn from them.

Like the traditional origin myths and stories, contemporary Kiowa stories are framed by the social contexts where they grow up. Tribal life and living inform and give rise to contemporary stories. When Kiowas come together socially in small groups, they

tell stories.

CHAPTER IV

WHEN ANIMALS COULD TALK: CONVERSATIONS WITH JOHN TOFPI

All right, this is how we tell stories. It ain't much but that's all we got.

Two things help John Tofpi get through his daily life. They are his tribal beliefs and storytelling. Around 82 years of age, this gregarious and often nosey Kiowa is a fairly able-bodied man for his age. He likes to talk and joke a lot, but what he likes doing most, everybody knows around Carnegie, is gossip. Though he can often get on people's nerves, he is likeable and has interesting things to say. I have found him companionable, sensitive, and very often wise. When I told my mother I was consulting with him on contemporary storytelling, she narrowed her eyes in the way she does when she can't believe I'm doing something so foolish or stupid.

"Oh dear me," she fairly sighed. "That *Sáuibé* Slow. Can you find anybody else?" Her eyes narrowed some more. I could see my selection did not please her but I didn't care. I knew or thought I knew what I was looking for. I didn't want any celebrity Kiowa. I wanted a simple, everyday, run-of-the-mill person. I'd promised myself before I came out to do fieldwork with the Kiowas that I would stick to my plan, which was to work with people I thought would sit down with me and tell stories and talk about storytelling in great detail. I thought I knew some Kiowas who could do that. John Tofpi was a good choice. He was straightforward and honest. He was not only a relative of mine. He was also somebody who knew lots of stories and people. I

knew I could count on him to tell things just like they are.

"But what do you mean, Mom?" I tried to defend myself. She was still looking at me with slitty, suspicious eyes, like I had told her I'd befriended Saddam Hussein.

"He don't know nothing."

"What do you mean Sáuibé doesn't know, Mom. He does. And he has interesting things to say. You know he knows just about everybody in town. Every Kiowa alive knows Sáuibé, and he, John Slow, knows them. He's full of news all the time and funny at that. You should hear him. He's not afraid to say anything."

She looked the other way like she didn't hear me. When she turned her head I thought I saw her smile. I could tell I was getting to her now. In a little while I knew she'd agree. How could she not?

"It'll be okay," I explained. "He's exactly the kind of consultant I need. He doesn't claim that he knows everything like most Kiowas do. You know how they are around here. I'm not looking for an expert, because the kind of fieldwork I'm doing has to do with plain Kiowas. Storytelling isn't such a specialized field, you know."

"Everybody tells stories."

"I know it. So, see, Mom, he's not a bad choice after all and he has time to talk about those things."

I was feeling victorious.

She looked at me and kind of smiled. "Oh, I guess you're right."

I could tell she meant what she was saying now. She cared a lot for him, just

like she did all of her Kiowa relatives. Kiowas have a great capacity for close family ties. Kiowas are bonded closely like no other people I know. Almost every Kiowa is related to another Kiowa in one way or another, be it a cousin, a grandpa, a grandma, an uncle or aunt. I have cousins I don't even know until I go to the Fourth of July powwow down at Carnegie park where every Kiowa ever born a Kiowa under the sun can materialize like Captain Kirk or Spock on the Enterprise-- and this person walk up suddenly and extend a hand and tell you they're your cousin.

Or my mother leading an old person up by the hand will just introduce me. "This is your grandma," she'll just say.

It's really very awkward sometimes and embarrassing, because you want to acknowledge the relationship but don't know how to do it. When I was a young man trying to date a Kiowa girl, it was awful because I didn't know whether or not I was kin to the girl I'd taken a fancy to. To be sure sometimes I'd wait a few days before I'd tell my mother about a girl I'd met.

And then of course she'd drill me in a kind of offhanded way, like it was just about the most ordinary situation in the world.

"Who is she?"

"Um, her name is Katy, Mom."

"Katy who?"

"Oh, Katy something. I don't remember."

"You don't remember? She must have a last name. Who are her parents?"

"Her parents? Joe-- no, it's Bill. Bill and Mamie Frizzlehead."

"Frizzlehead? Oh, no, no. Oh, dear me, she's you're cousin! You're related to her on your grandpa's side! You can't do that! It's out of the question!"

It was tough meeting girls back home. But that was how it was, which is another subject but it helps to clarify this whole business of Kiowa kinship. That Kiowas put a great deal of stock in how they are related to somebody is pretty well known in southwestern Oklahoma. As it turns out, Kiowas are actually one big family in ways that puzzle non-Indians. They can't believe you have so many grandpas and uncles and brothers. And this is what mom was trying to point out to me when I mentioned that I was working closely with John Tofpi as my story consultant. John T., or Sáuibé, "Slow", is mom's cousin on her father's side, something I more or less knew. Being related as I was meant easy access to stories. I honestly needed a good and reliable consultant and couldn't think of anybody else when I first arrived at the Kiowa Elder's Center some time back. Kiowas don't like to tell intimate details to strangers. They keep stories within a tight, informal circle of close friends and relatives. I knew this and so it was easy for me to approach John T. as well as the other story consultants with whom I worked. Besides, as I was saying, John T. had other good qualities as a consultant: he knows just about everybody in Kiowa country. White and Indian. He has his finger on the pulse of Kiowa Indian country, and all of this makes for a perfect storytelling co-worker.

After I pointed out all the good qualities I thought my story consultant had,

mom finally relented.

"Oh, well, I guess you're right then." She laughed. "He's your relative anyway."

"I know it," I said, thinking this meant that I might have to do something special in recognition of that fact. Kiowas like ceremony. A good friend of mine told me this one time when we were discussing the difference between his own people (the Choctaws) and Kiowas. He said, "You know the Kiowas are different than my people because they still have ceremony."

Yes, I think I had responded. I had been talking to one of my uncles. We were discussing our Choctaw background, about the fact that we never learned any of the Choctaw language, not one word of it, when my Choctaw friend strolled up.

"Our people don't have that anymore," explained my Choctaw friend. "Kiowas, on the other hand, do those ceremonial things."

"How do you mean?"

"Well, take for instance, dances. Kiowas still do their traditional dances. They sing the old songs, my friend. You don't find too much of that with lots of tribes around here."

I concurred that he was probably right. If you record something Kiowa, say a story or song, you might have to pay for it or do something special in recognition of the event. You reciprocate. It shows respect, appreciation. For Kiowas, there is this kind of rule of thumb when you give somebody something you supposedly own, like a song.

Now Kiowas can be very formal about such things. You got to be careful. I know this can be tedious for people who don't understand Kiowas. There is often a lot of misunderstanding between Kiowas and other people for this very reason. Say for instance a person, a non-Kiowa, asks a Kiowa to record a song. Now this can be a personal song, or, say, an Óhómàu composition owned by somebody the Kiowa knows or is related to. Now, in order to do this, the non-Kiowa must make some outward sign or gesture in recognition of the event. Or better, the person receiving the gift must show, preferably publicly, that something important has been exchanged. Money, a blanket, or some sort of gift exchange must take place. It is not the payment that is so important here as it is the recognition of something significant happening: the exchange of the song from one party to another. That is what is important and why it is ceremonial. You commemorate the occasion of the gift-giving or the gift itself. It is like the exchange of gifts between two persons who care about each other very much. Giveaways at powwows are a good example. When Indians make a giveaway at a powwow, they are by and large extending the life of not only the shawl they might be giving to a relation, or, in some instances, a stranger. They also are extending the life or ceremony of the giving itself. It marks that existential moment of giving. It is the hallmark of well-being, Kiowaness and tribalism.[11] When one receives a gift at a powwow giveaway, that item, whatever it is, is not generally kept. The difference here is that most non-Indians would be offended if you gave away a gift they gave you. Not Indians. A Kiowa gift, if given in the traditional sense of giveaway, must be passed on

to somebody else just like it was received. The closest thing to it is the kind of exchange Malinowski (1922) observed going on between the Trobriand people in the South Seas. Here, he observed, the people exchange *kula*, in a ceremonial way that maintain's a network of mutual recognition and continuance-- survival. Malinowski noted that the island people who lived on several islands drew closer together as a society because they had established a ring of trust through *kula*. Everybody within that society formed what they called the *kula* ring. When a fisherman needed a canoe he could fetch one from somebody within the network. This assured that he had the means to transport his goods or food to the rest of the island circle. Without the means of the canoe he could not fulfill his obligation to his family or the people. This reciprocal spirit helped to sustain the people of the South Sea islands, as noted by Malinowski and for which he is famous.

There are countless other such accounts of gift-giving and gift-giving practices as the one described by Malinowski around the world among different peoples. R. Jon McGee and Richard L. Warms write in an introduction to Marcel Mauss's *The Gift* that, "Mauss describes the rules of generosity on the Andaman Islands and the Kula trade in Melanesia, as well as other associated exchange practices. These exchanges, he believes, are the material expressions of Emile Durkheim's social facts. They are used to forge and maintain alliances, and they replicate the divisions between the people involved in them. The interdependence of the exchange network increases social solidarity" (McGee, Warms 1996:103). People often depend on such exchanges to

remain a people and to keep a strong social bond. The Kiowas had found a way to do that to ensure who they were and still do that today at powwows and at Carnegie park every Fourth of July, or anywhere else they gather and can see this outward sign of solidarity. The practice of *kula* and other exchanges and gift-giving are the means by which cultures continue as social entities (Malinowski 1922, Mauss 1924).

For Kiowas, gift-giving or gift exchange occurs in a spirit of goodwill. My father explained it to me this way: "You give these things because it makes you feel good to do it," he said. "It's not because you want something back. No. Somebody gives you something and you give it away because somebody else is going to feel good that you recognized them. Or else why would you give them something?"

I thought this over a good many times while doing fieldwork. I worried that I was somehow supposed to reciprocate the people I was interviewing and from whom I had recorded stories but didn't know how. I worried that I needed to give something back in recognition of these gifts. I worried that I needed to exchange something for their work and participation. One of the ways I learned that I could do this was simply by listening to what they had to say, to hear their stories. That was it. Kiowas often impart information freely, but they expect at least a fair hearing. Listening respectfully and closely is a way of showing that what you are hearing is acceptable and meaningful. It helps to fill the need of ceremony (Hyde 1983). Mom was only reminding me of what was expected of me while I worked with Kiowas, my own people. I came to know immediately what she was talking about each time she told me how Kiowas "do things."

She was helping me to make sure I was doing the right Kiowa thing. "Do it the Kiowa way," she had declared more than a few times. "That's the right way. That's what counts. That's being Kiowa." When she prepared an elaborate meal for Oscar and me one day when I first began to interview and record his stories, that was an exchange sign she did in my behalf. I'd all but forgotten what she was doing at the time. It seemed quite unnecessary to go through with the elaborate preparation she undertook just so I could meet with Oscar to talk about Kiowa storytelling. Even though I should have known better, I wondered why she was doing it. At first, I thought there was some other reason she was preparing that big meal and didn't recognize that what she was doing was perfectly appropriate. It was perfectly Kiowa and I did not for some reason recognize it. Maybe it had been too long since I had experience this Kiowa way. She didn't even explain it to me right off at the time. Rather, she told me about it later on when we visited. That she had been thinking about the visit I had planned with Oscar for a long time came up in our talk. Getting wind of it, she had decided to prepare the meal because she recognized how important it was for us and her own tribal self. What she was in fact doing was paying homage to the oldest surviving cousin in her family. Oscar, her brother in the Kiowa way, was coming to her house. This was a special sign to her. It meant reinforcing family relationships the old Kiowa way. When she told me "That's the Kiowa way" of doing things, she was in fact telling me how important it was to reinforce and reaffirm Kiowaness, the same sort of spirit I was to experience in storytelling. She did a very ceremonial thing in recognition of this important cultural or

tribal event that was about to take place in her home. It was a perfect act, an appropriate time and event in Kiowa life. And it was done well.

Since gift exchange is such an important symbolic act of humans I believe a little more explanation is needed here. I do not mean to make a symbolic interpretation of Kiowa ritual because that of course would involve more study and analysis, which I cannot do. What I want to do, however, is explain that Kiowas who are told a story recognize the event by an outward sign. Victor Turner (1967) observes that symbols are essential to social processes: "Symbols, as I have said, produce action, and dominant symbols tend to become focuses in interaction. Groups mobilize around them, worship before them, perform other symbolic activities near them, and add other symbolic objects to them, often to make composite shrines" (444). From this standpoint one could argue anthropologically that by gift-giving or exchange Kiowas are externalizing some internal social process or "interaction." Victor Turner contends that "The symbol becomes associated with human interests, purposes, ends, and means, whether these are explicitly formulated or have to be inferred from the observed behavior. The structure and properties of a symbol become those of a dynamic entity, at least within its appropriate context of action" (Turner, 442). In other words, Kiowas through an exchange of a gift or in my mother's case, an elaborately prepared feast, show outwardly that some ceremony or ritual is taking place culturally, is approved, or expected of approval, and is acceptable-- and is in the case of my work, appropriately Kiowa. Without this contextualization cue or outward sign it would not be

recognizably a Kiowa thing we were doing. By contextualization cue, I mean that social frame or social context that surrounds every human performance (Gumperz, 1982). We are told all humans do this. We do this to help each other understand one another. In other words, we humans cannot escape our social context. We are dependent upon our social milieu to come to terms with ourselves, others, and our surroundings (Goffman 1974). When we lecture, tell stories, dance, or do just about any social thing there is to do, we have to rely on everything around us to impart information about what we are doing and why. This allows the people we with whom we interact to understand us. Social animals that we are, we have all agreed wittingly or not what social cues or codes are necessary to impart information to one another. We have to rely on this system of social practice in order to make sense and be understood to the people who share their lives with us in meaningful ways. We may be doing this in the most exacting or ceremonial ways, not even recognizing that we have become so routinely practiced at it that it is as reflexive as breathing air or drinking water (Goffman, 1974; Turner, 1967). Kiowas, in the exchange of stories or story information, need some outward sign to show that something significant has taken place, that it is no small matter to do these things. These exchanges, in the Durkheimian social sense, are used to forge and maintain alliances, and they replicate the social bonding between the people involved in them. The interdependence of the exchange network increases solidarity, as we have said above. Without them there is no social entity. The tribe disintegrates into a meaningless heap. As Marcel Mauss (1872-1950) has pointed out:

> Material and moral life, as exemplified in gift exchange, functions there in a manner at once interested and obligatory. Furthermore, the obligation is expressed in myth and imagery, symbolically and collectively; it takes the form of interest in the objects exchanged; the objects are never completely separated from the men who exchange them; the communion and alliance they establish are well-nigh indissoluble. The lasting influence of the objects exchanged is a direct expression of the manner in which sub-groups within segmentary societies of an archaic type are constantly embroiled with and feel themselves in debt to each other. (Excerpt from *The Gift*, p103)

I am sure there are other ways to explain all of this but it is not necessary for our purposes here. I merely want to point out what seems to be going on in gift-giving and exchanges so that I can delineate Kiowa storytelling and how Kiowa storytelling works.

CHAPTER V

MAGICAL REALISM

I knew where to sit down and pray because it came to me in that dream.

Tribal traditions, like the Kiowa language John Tofpi speaks, have been passed down to him by his family and tribe. These traditions include praying everyday the old Kiowa way, treating one's relatives with care and honor, singing the old songs, and telling stories. If you sit down and talk with John Tofpi, he will invariably talk about the good old days. He will tell you all about his family and other families in the tribe. He will tell about the events he considers important when he was a young Kiowa man growing up, and he will not fail to mention those who were informative and influential to him in life, "who told me how things were." He likes to reminisce and joke about his cousins, friends, and relatives. Sometimes he is serious; other times he is laughing, he seems always to be having a really good time. But, most important of all, he is sure that without all of his close relatives he would not have turned out to be the man he is today. He thinks that everything that ever happened to him was meant to be. Things don't just happen, he has said time after time, though not in those exact terms.

"You know, things have a meaning," he has said.

Or, like he said another time in a little anecdote that became one of the major features in Kiowa storytelling I made note of: "There is a reason for everything."

> I was sitting down by that old tree near the bridge where you all live and I saw you and your little boy coming down the road. I was sitting under that

> tree. I went down there to sit and pray. You know that big tree is shaped funny. [He gestures with his hand, extending it out as if to grasp some object someone is handing him]. I go down there to pray sometimes. That's why I was there that time.

He didn't even finish telling me why he was there at that particular location praying until a few weeks later, when I went back to Carnegie and asked him about that tree incident again. At the time I didn't know if it was a dream he was relating or a real event. He told it so casually without any explanation or anything. It just happened, as it were, and the next thing I knew he was finished. I didn't have time to ask him if it was a dream or what. He opened the story and stopped, like lots of Kiowas do when they tell stories, I found out. We were sitting on the southeast corner of the front lobby at the Senior Citizens Center where we had been meeting over the course of months since I started interviewing and recording. It was a windy, cold day outside. Sam Ako, a relative of his, was sitting across from us. Sam, who has had cerebral palsy from birth, has some difficulty getting around normally. His speech isn't very clear and if you're not used to it you have trouble understanding him. I didn't know him very well when I was working at the Center some years back, but this time we sat down together and talked quite a bit and I was enjoying our newly established acquaintanceship. I'd arrived fairly early and there weren't too many people about. They would be arriving very shortly, I thought, and if I wanted to hear anything important, now was the time. John Slow was on a roll. You can hardly keep him from talking when he is in the mood, but he can get a little tongue-tied too if you ask him too many intimate questions too rapidly, especially

if you ask in front of other people. So I got to my questions as quickly as I could.

"Hàu," he said in a serious tone of voice after I had asked him several times about the tree and creek incident. "I saw that hand in my dream. It was just like this." He held his hand aloft and spread his fingers in the manner of tree branches. "It came just like this in a dream and said, 'Open your hand. I want to give you something.' Just like that."

He had his eyes wide open like he does when he's telling you something extraordinary. Kiowas like to hear their listeners make a response and every so often I had to answer him "hau" *yes.*

"You know that?" He asked me several times.

"Hau. Yes, I know it," I said.

He went on.

"I raised up my hand. No, I opened it like this and something fell into it and I shut it. I didn't look at it. But I could feel it in my hand. Just like this."

He held his clasped hand way up high to show Sam and me how. Sam laughed and looked the other way. He said something in Kiowa, and John T. glanced around at him.

"See there?" He went, "That's something, ain't it?"

I looked at Sam sitting across from us grinning. "It sure is, ain't it?"

He cackled and nodded his head in agreement.

"That Sáuibé, he sure has a strange story there," Sam said in Kiowa to me.

"I don't know what it was," John continued, "but when I opened my hand to look at it there was nothing. I looked in my hand and there was nothing there. But I had this image in my mind. I could see it just like that."

"How was it shaped?" I asked John. I was dying to ask him if it was a dream or a real event.

"Like that," went John. He held his hand up in the air and spread his fingers. "I saw this image and I knew where it was and because I walked over there by that bridge below your house. You know the one I'm talking about."

"Yes, I know," I said. In order to keep his story going I had to constantly respond that I knew what he was talking about. It's the Kiowa way of following somebody's story, and I knew my response was expected or he might stop right there. You say 'hau,' meaning yes to keep them going. If you once stop responding, I don't know what would happen. I haven't tried it yet and wouldn't under any circumstances.

"I sat down right under that tree. I looked around at those other trees but they weren't shaped right. When I saw this one tree I knew that was the one."

"Is that why you sat down under it?"

I was wondering again if I shouldn't ask him if this was all a dream but didn't have the heart to at the last minute. Not yet. I wanted him to let me know somehow or another. Maybe I was just reacting the way I was supposed to. I don't know. I was accustomed to listening to stories. I kind of knew Kiowa storytelling style but this time, because I was doing fieldwork on it, I wanted to be absolutely sure. But when it came

time to jump into the question I was stumped. I decided to ride it out. The answer to my question, I decided, would have to come when he was ready to let me know in his own good time. Kiowas by and large like to take their time. They don't like to rush about, talking, thinking, or at least it appears that they don't. Many times while doing fieldwork in Kiowa country I found myself rushing about, going in and out of the building, driving downtown for supplies or food and so forth. Sometimes I would sit down and talk to some Kiowa elder and in the next moment I'd jump up and go and talk with somebody else and I know I must have driven some of those poor elders crazy. Part of my own frenzy I know is just my own nervous energy. When I compare myself with other Kiowas, it is as if I am some kind of alien in their midst, and so I find that I have to slow down and try to relax a lot more than I usually do.

"I did," John said. "I knew where I had to sit down and pray because it came to me in that dream."

Ah-ha, I thought. Now, I know it was a dream. Let's see what he has to say about that now.

"But what did it mean?" I asked. "That tree in there and all?" I was trying to keep the narrative going as best I could now. I sensed that the story was still wide open. I wanted to keep up the momentum.

He studied me over for a long time like he couldn't believe I could ask such a stupid question. And I felt astonishingly foolish asking it, so I put it another way. "I mean, how did it make you feel?"

He kind of chuckled. "I guess it meant things were going to be okay. That *He* was going to be with me. You know I was drinking a lot. Too much, boy. I lost my wife and for several years I was lost. I didn't know what to do. I went around aimless all the time."

I wanted to tell him I was sorry, but knew he wouldn't know how to respond to such a inane statement in the Kiowa sense of it. I had to check myself a good many times on such expressions out in the field. Even when you're speaking in English to Kiowas you have to maintain a Kiowa sensibility always. Kiowas, as a general rule, understand when you make remarks like "thank you," "I'm sorry," "you're welcome," and so on. However, such remarks, in the Kiowa mind anyway, are almost always unnecessary. For Kiowas, such remarks seem empty of any real value or meaning as they might not in English. I have often tried to find some equivalent way to say such things in Kiowa but could not. I found myself having to sit through many sessions with John and others and saying nothing, when, on the other hand, I would have been considered insensitive or unsympathetic if I had been sitting with, say, a white person in similar circumstances.

"When did she die?"

"Who? My wife?" He thought about it a minute. "In 1971. January 14."

"That wasn't too long ago."

It grew quiet for a long time. I waited, a bit anxious. Maybe, I'd said something wrong, I thought. I should have been more careful. I didn't know what to

do but wait. I was about to say something, when all of a sudden, he spoke up again.

"No. It was bad. Gyah." He fixed his huge horses eyes on me like he wanted me to say something. When I didn't he spoke up himself.

"I stayed away from the drum for five years," he lamented. "I never went near the sound of the drum. A cousin of mine told me not to stay away from this. You might get sick, he told me. Bad ain't it?"

I nodded my head.

I thought about how bad it must have been for him. How alone he must have felt living up there in that small house of his at the edge of town. Every time I drove past I would glance over at it sitting there in the middle of the lot. It looked the same way it always did when I was a boy. It looked like it was just fastened there permanently to the earth like it had to be. I always wondered how it looked inside. Did it have lots of furniture? Or just a table with one chair? Perhaps he owned a bed. A sofa. I was curious. I had visited lots of Indian homes out there, including Parker's tiny house out at Mountain View. They're really lonely places.[12] Usually furnished with old furniture. Indians didn't lack in things, I used to think. They just like living the way they do. I think living in simple conditions made them feel more at home like it used to be long ago. You go inside a house sometimes and all the old ghosts rush at you. It's like entering a strange forest but one that is not scary. It's just different. The trees are the same as those you are familiar with. You look at them and touch them to see why you are so taken by them but still are not sure. I sometimes wonder if I had lived

another life and that I am experiencing something from that time and place. Who knows. But as I was saying, when I go by John's house I think about the old times and wonder how he must live alone like he does and I sometimes ask myself, "Does he cook for himself?" I wonder how a Kiowa man such as John Tofpi takes care of a house and does all the housework most Kiowa women do themselves. These days most women think both husband and wife should handle housework pretty much on an equal basis if both parties work every day as they do in most cases. He must have had to eat pretty simply, I have thought, because I couldn't picture him frying an egg or boiling coffee. I've thought he probably consumed lots of Campbell's soups.

"So you drank," I said after a few minutes had passed. "I mean I didn't know that you did that."

He stared at me a moment and then looked out the huge front window where some old people were shuffling in the double doors. It was brighter outside now than earlier, but still chilly. There was a lot of sunshine streaming in the wide windows, but there was a brisk north wind blowing. It had rained the day before and there was a pool or two of clear water in the street in front of the building. Every time the huge double doors opened a cold gust of wind blew into the big room, making everybody in there sort of hunker over in their chairs. I hoped the wind would let up before I drove home later that day.

"Yeah," he exhaled to my relief. "I was lost, boy. Real lost. You don't know how it is when you lose your mate, guy."

"And so what did that dream mean to you?" I had to be sure it was a dream. But I had to be especially certain where the dream left off and reality started. Did he dream the tree and then go looking for it? Or was the tree just one of the manifestations of the dream, like everything had happened in the dream, including Jeff, my son, and me walking down the road below our house. Things just were not clear to me yet.

"You mean me?" He gave me the most serious look he'd given me all morning. "It was there to show me. It was there to help me make a prayer so I could go straight maybe. I don't know. But I went down there to pray and sure enough I began to get better. I quit drinking and started to sing, you know."

I couldn't picture him drinking. Didn't want to or couldn't. Over ten years ago when I was working for the tribe and saw him almost everyday at the Elders Center, I never once saw him appear like he had been drinking. That was unimaginable. And now here he was telling me he drank. *Back then.* I was not so much shocked as I was curious. If you drank around there everybody knew about it. It was public record like getting married or divorced or getting thrown into jail. I had close relatives who were alcoholics, and I'm not sure every person in town knew that they were because people around Carnegie make it their business to know everybody else's. Typical small town. (After we bought our house and moved back to Carnegie I remember one of the few times I picked up the local newspaper and read where it listed all the burglaries, bad checks, and public drunks, listing each public offender by name. I hadn't seen such

character assassination in a long time and was really offended by it.)

"I sat down and that's when I saw you and your boy walking," John Tofpi continued his narrative. He was leaving the text wide open again. He was recontextualizing the event. He was, I think, allowing me to enter into his narrative and provide some of the answers myself. He'd left the story open for me to enter it. Like a stone tossed into a quiet pool, Kiowa narrative expands outward, wave upon dark wave, image upon image like the black waters in Homer's Odysseus story. Since I began work with the Kiowas I have noticed that many storytellers will open up a story text and leave some parts of it unclear or unfinished so you can provide some of the answers or comments or conclusions on your own. A huge section of the story may remain open for hours or days or even weeks (Sarris, 1993). I learned that you could hear a story and go back to it days later where the storyteller would pick it up again and continue. I have had to remember where we had left off storytelling like you do when you read a novel and lay it down and stumble on it the following week and have to piece the story back together again. A lot of what John was doing, not only in this instance but several other times, was giving me the opportunity to participate in his story and draw some conclusions on my own. I could even add my own story. It was as if he thought that I knew how this had to be done. If I didn't provide anything it was all right too. I was beginning to learn that some stories don't even require a resolution or closure. They leave much story content up in the air. A finished story is sometimes not a requirement in Kiowa storytelling, I've learned. And John Tofpi this time was doing

some of this. So I thought I should let him know that I would rather he finished it somehow rather than I. He must have known I had some idea of the context he had been pulling in around us, that because I was Kiowa I should know what was going on. He'd been trying to frame his story with the details of his life all this time: who his relatives were, what went on around him, his own state of mind-- everything Kiowa he could think of, and now he had a story frame set up in the middle of our conversation. He wanted to get back into the story proper so he could explain what was going on inside of him. I sensed that perhaps he had gotten to the climax of his story now. I thought I could actually feel the story develop into a full-blown entity inside of him and ready to burst forth like water from a broken dam.

"You two were coming down the hill just like that. I'm surprised you didn't see me, because I was sitting right there under that tree. Did you see me?"

"I know, Sáuibé," I said, trying to keep up with him. "I don't know why we didn't see you."

"Gyah! You just walked on by. You know, I was sitting there."

"Why didn't you call out to us?" I wanted more story, but he seemed to want me to put something in myself. I noticed he kept a close eye on me. He was coaxing me, leading me into the story web he had spun so carefully. I had the same kind of experience with my own grandpa when he told stories, as I did with Cornelius Spottedhorse, my other storytelling consultant. Cornelius, however, wasn't as insistent as John. He didn't seem to pressure me to draw any conclusions or add any comments

to his stories. When he opened up a story, you were lucky to get in a word edgewise. But he also made allowances for participation. Most of the Kiowa stories in my study were like this. The storyteller at some point allowed me, the listener, to comment, even if it was to just respond hau 'yes.' There are other ethnographies on Native American storytelling where fieldworkers have observed and participated in this exact storytelling technique (Sarris 1989, 1997; Basso 1990; Hymes 1981; Tedlock 1983) but others lacked dialogue and participation. I'm thinking about such fieldworkers as Parsons, 1929, Marriott, 1945, 1947; and Nye, 1962, all of whom collected Kiowa stories and concentrated on only the text and little, if nothing, else. These stories were hardly commented upon then or now. They are in many cases well-written texts. Parsons (Kiowa Tales, 1929) is the only one with an introduction and some cursory comments about the Kiowa people, her "interpreters," and the Kiowa Indian community. Her observations on her Kiowa hosts, who also told the stories and translated and interpreted them provided her with the amenities of their homes, but about whom Parsons sometimes made disparaging remarks in her book. Her comparisons of story themes, action, and characters between the Pueblos and Kiowas are remarkable and useful, culturally. Like the other authors who have worked with Kiowa narratives, I suspect Parsons of interpreting most of the stories from her own limited perspective, and not enough from Kiowas themselves, which is typical of the time in which she worked. This may have been the only way to get the stories collected and published, which brings up another problem. Too many ethnographies on oral storytelling are

collected and published too quickly. I don't believe anybody has the capacity to do any real justice to stories they've collected hurriedly, translated and shipped off to the press, without doing serious injury to the work as a whole. So far, among non-Indians, Maurice Boyd (1981, 1983) may be the only one who has contextualized most of the stories in his books. He spent more time in Kiowa homes doing the work, unlike Parsons who stayed only two months in Kiowa country, if not less. Nye may be the only other one who seems to have known more about how Kiowas told stories, but that too is a long shot. In each case, these ethnographers focused on the texts only. There are few attempts to venture into the souls of the people whose stories they have published. I am a little suspicious about any outsider doing something as important as collecting Indian stories and then making claims that the Indians themselves haven't had a chance to comment on. What I attempted, and hope I have succeeded to some degree on, was to enter into the storytelling event itself and let the storyteller's voice and the voice of his story speak for themselves. I have tried to stand back and participate in the narrative event when I was allowed to or could. It was hardest to comment upon or make any interpretations or add prior texts if need be to the story proper itself. But when I did participate it made all the difference, for I was allowed to experience what it was to engage myself as both listener and participant in the storytelling itself. Only through active participation is Kiowa storytelling made manifest and whole. Only then can the wonder and ceremony that is Kiowa storytelling occur. I'm not sure if all of this makes that much sense, but I am sure that it may be close to how contemporary Kiowa

storytelling takes place. There are so many ways that Kiowas frame and contextualize storytelling that it is going to take years to arrive at some real in-depth knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon. It's a little early yet. But in time I believe there will be an understanding, and we will all began to recognize some very familiar storytelling features we didn't know were there until now. Doing so can make all the difference in how we look at the world around us and engage more fully in as human beings.

"I don't know why I didn't call out to you," John continued where he had left off. "I was just sitting there."

Now I have my clue, I thought. He *was* there. His dream story is fused with something he actually went out to do. He had dreamed the tree and set out to locate it, down by the bridge by our house! I must ask him to be sure this is the case. I imagine he was in a prayerful state and didn't want to interrupt himself out there. Maybe that's why he didn't say anything to us. John Tofpi is complex. He sometimes doesn't want to say too much. He would rather not provide lots of extra details in his responses. I think he protects himself in ways that are altogether in his own psychological makeup. If he knows you aren't paying any attention to him, like my son Jeff and I did that day on the road, he's liable not to make his presence known. He's secretive that way, I believe. That day on the road he wanted to be just a spectator perhaps. He wasn't in any mood to talk and maybe he didn't want a lot of questions asked either. Somebody might laugh and say, "We saw old Slow down by a bridge sitting there." He's not about to take that chance. We didn't know what he was doing down there, which is

fine. It might have called attention to him somehow if we did and embarrass him. An off the cuff remark would bring on a little teasing or too many questions, like: What was he doing? I'm afraid people don't take John seriously around there. He's always had to make people laugh and like him, I believe. They don't understand the real man under the clothes he is wearing. People don't appreciate his real true feelings. Just like any other ethnic group, Kiowas tend to generalize about each other too much. They want certain people to act a certain way and if they don't, something surely must be wrong with them. That's how it is and it can be tough on persons who are shy like John Tofpi. Even if it means being out of character momentarily, for some Kiowas, like Sáuibé, life can be difficult. I don't know if this is a Kiowa thing or not. It can apply to almost anyone anywhere.

After he finished talking about that episode down at the bridge and the strange apparition, he changed the subject quickly to his own relatives, and that's how the session ended. This day what he appeared to have done was leave the story open. The next time we talked, which was a few weeks later, he wanted to talk about how we were kin to each other. When I asked him about his dream story again, he just nodded his head and smiled and said, "I dreamed it. Yeah. Sure I did."

I wanted facts. I wanted him to say he went looking for that dream tree in his own words, because it made how he told stories all the more fascinating. It was just like my grandfather told stories, mixing dreams, fantasies, and facts. Fusing everything together, as it were. Making stories holistic. Whole. Prove a point. Everything

coming together into one unified Kiowa reality. But John wouldn't let that happen. Not yet.

"You mean that tree thing you saw in your dream? You saw it and looked for that very tree?"

"I did," he replied. He took his hand and shaped it into the figure of a tree. "It was shaped like this."

Two weeks had passed since we last talked and it was as if the story had never concluded from the first telling. He was right in the midst of it again and going just as strong as ever. I was completely taken by this. Amazed.

"And that's what you saw down by the bridge where we live?" I asked.

He nodded his head vigorously, like he was happy I could remember that detail. "Right there."

I had the whole answer now, I thought. I felt satisfied. Now I knew that when he reopened the story, if he ever did, I would have a different frame of reference to work from. I made a note of that in my notebook. I figured that if he was going to tell me more dream stories there might be a chance that they could be partly dreams and partly real occurrences. It was hard to tell what might be real and what might not be unless I came right out and asked him. I'd read something about verisimilitude in storytelling. Consider how Tedlock (1983) explains it.

> I hope it is clear by now that one need not look to modern children's fairy tales, or to modern dreams, or to the concept of a "prelogical mentality" (which still survives, implicitly, in psychoanalytic attempts to treat tales as collective dreams)

> to understand the fantastic features of oral narratives. The Zunis place their fantasy in the past while we often place it in the future, but that is more a question of where our respective interests lie than our mental structures. The end results of the fantasy process are much the same, whatever the setting, ranging from extreme actions of human beings (such as murder and suicide) to Kafkaesque transformations and unnatural monsters. Both the Zunis and ourselves maintain a constant tension between the fantasy and the real world: The Zunis shore up their fantasy with all the devices their particular traditions and experiences provide, drawing upon gesture, quotation, onomatopoeia, ethnopsychology, technology, and ritual, together with tale-ending paralogic.[13] If our sound effects are better or if The Thing, who drinks human blood in a film, seems more real than Haynawi, who collects human hearts in a tale, this difference is largely a matter of the technology available to the artists working in the respective media. And both the Zunis and ourselves, whenever we bring these strange and dangerous worlds into being, feel the need to throw up some sort of frame around them (177).

A lot of the truth "which Zunis see in their fictional narratives derives," Tedlock points out, "not from the final etiological elements but from the efforts of the narrator to create the appearance of reality within the body of the story itself. The ability to create this appearance," he goes on, "is the most important measure of the individual narrator's skill" (166). My grandfather, whose skill here was so well-developed, I think, could do this almost by sleight of hand. He tells one particularly long story about when Taime, the Sun Dance medicine, came to the Kiowas and I would like to include that whole story here to illustrate just how skillful was his use of making fantastic things seem real. The recording of my grandfather telling the story of the coming of Taime to the Kiowas was itself made in 1964 by Sherman Chaddlesone, a Kiowa Methodist preacher, who, at the time was pastor at Mountain Scott Kiowa Methodist Church,

Lawton, Oklahoma, and my grandfather's "friend" in the Kiowa way. Now, Taime is the spiritual name given to the spirit of the Sun Dance. Along with the fantastic element inherent in verisimilitude is the contextualization that my grandfather put into the narrative. First of all, grandpa explains that he does not know anything. He of course is speaking in Kiowa. The entire recording is in Kiowa which I have included after the English version.

"I do not claim to know everything," grandpa begins in typical Kiowa fashion. "And I am not clever, or wise. I just know what was told to me by my father."

What he begins to do right off is open up the story so that he will have the full participation of his listener(s). (In this case Sherman and Cherry Chaddlesone, at their home, with their children in Lawton, Oklahoma.) My grandfather and grandmother had been invited to their house this afternoon for a meal and conversation. I do not know the exact nature of that meeting. However, Cherry, who is a granddaughter on my grandfather's side, was always fond of "her grandpa" and so was thrilled to see my grandparents and this occasion her husband Sherman asked my grandfather to tell him about Taime. At the time, Sherman held the title of "Kiowa Methodist Pastor" around Comanche county. While he was considered a modern Kiowa, my grandfather was more the traditionalist. He was about eighty-two years old at the time and had quit attending the peyote ceremonies but was an active prayer man in *Tàlyí:dàui:gàu* The (Ten) Kiowa Boy Medicines, the oldest Kiowa sacred medicines. A keeper of one of the Ten Medicines, he always smoked and prayed with the medicine for our family, and

for those who came to the house with prayer petitions and gift offerings. And so much of my grandfather's talk in those days, just three years before he died, centered around old Kiowa ceremonial ways. When Sherman asked him to tell the old story of how the Taime came to the Kiowas, grandpa accommodated him, not knowing at the time that the recording would come down to me in this present work. The brackets contain either English or direct statements or questions put to Sherman Chaddlesone.

English Version

The Coming of Taime to the Kiowas

1 Long ago.

2 O, so long ago.

3 It must have been back when life began.

4 Somewhere during that time a very poor young man there was.

5 Perhaps he was down and out.

6 Or perhaps he was without relatives but he was poor and he was taken in by a very old man and his very old wife.

7 But then he accommodated their food needs.

8 And now I am telling you the story as I know it.

9 Although someone may know it better than I do, this is still going to be my best effort.

10 All right then, maybe he was down and out, as I said.

11 But then the old man and woman were hard pressed just to survive.

12 And then he went out one day to hunt and he must have taken a firearm or bow and arrows.

13 And then all at once he came upon a set of animal tracks and they were buffalo tracks.

14 A buffalo had laid down these tracks.

15 And it was probably hard times because during winter the buffaloes usually grazed elsewhere and not here.

16 For some unknown reason here were tracks.

17 And so he followed the tracks.

18 Perhaps I will kill this one and take it home, he thought.

19 And he followed the tracks.

20 And he followed the tracks, when it occurred to him that the sun had set.

21 The sun lowered and it was dusk.

22 He thought: Now then, I'm going to let it go now and go home.

23 And come back tomorrow and maybe there will be tracks left.

24 And I shall again take up the search, he thought.

25 And so he went home.

26 And he arrived where they camped.

27 And he slept.

28 In the morning after breakfast again he went out.

29 And he arrived where he had left off his search the day before.

30 All right then, he followed where the tracks led.

31 And he tracked.

32 He tracked and sure enough the tracks were newly made.

33 And he was encouraged.

34 And then before he knew it was dusk.

35 And so he had to leave off there.

36 And he journeyed home.

37 And he slept.

38 Early the next morning he sallied out and where he'd left off tracking he arrived and sure enough here were the tracks.

39 And so he followed the fresh tracks.

40 Right here dirt had been stirred up in a pool of drinking water.

41 Clearly he was closing in and would find what he was looking for, he thought, as he proceeded.

42 And now it was the third night.

43 Again it became dusk.

44 But then here lay tracks so fresh.

45 Heaped up right here were droppings.

46 And still steamy.

47 Ah! Night was growing up.

48 And so he left off and lay down to sleep.

49 The fourth time, it was the fourth time he'd gone out looking.

50 In the morning he left and here now and beyond lay a mist it made.

51 And so, on the fourth day he encountered it.

52 He'd found it.

53 He found it.

54 He trailed the buffalo four days.

55 He found it.

56 He found it and it transformed into a man.

57 It transformed into a man.

58 And the man said, "Come here. Come here. Go with me," he said.

59 And he went with the man.

60 Because he was probably afraid.

61 Perhaps he was entranced.

62 Who knows.

63 And so he went with the man and they came to a big mountain and the man led him inside the mountain.

64 And so the man led him inside the mountain.

65 And there he kept him.

66 And it was there that he began to teach him.

67 And so it was that he taught him things.

68 This Sun Dance, as they call it, and the dancing was what he was teaching him.

69 It was prayer.

70 It was prayer.

71 That was what he was teaching him.

72 And so it was that what he taught him he learned.

73 And so he asked him to exit and he (the young man) went outside and left.

74 And he arrived at home.

75 He arrived at home.

76 And so it happened that this old man and this old woman were not human beings after all.

77 And so he (the young man) told them, "All right now, I have stayed with you a long time.

78 I have remained a long time," he said.

79 "I must go now," he said.

80 And so this old man--he and his wife were seated together-- he said, there are two things tied up in bundles and suspended on a rack inside the tipi. Go see for yourself."

81 "See for yourself."

82 "Because you have treated us well and lived with us."

83 "You have provided for us and so go look at it."

84 "I will give you one or the other," he said.

85 "I shall give you one of them."

86 And this is what he said.

87 Which was which?

88 One was probably yellow and the other might have been blue.

89 Now which one was the correct one?

90 But there were two of them.

91 And so he took one of them which it turned out was the ritual Sun Dance, they say.

92 Tą́i:mé.

93 [You understand the term Tą́i:mé?]

94 Sun Dance.

95 That was apparently the ritual prayer.

96 It was apparently the summer prayer.

97 [Do you understand clearly?]

98 It was apparently the summer prayer ceremony.

99 Alongside life as it evolves.

100 In the summertime when every living thing ripens and becomes conscious.

101 Rain soakens the earth.

102 Everything is wet and the grass grows.

103 Flowers.

104 Every kind of fruit grows.

105 And so this was summer.

106 Summertime.

107 The fullness of summer.

108 Life.

109 Apparently in the summertime everything becomes conscious and why it can ripen.

110 It was food and life.

111 Making of life.

112 It was prayer ritual that he (the young man) had apparently taken hold of and made his own.

113 Tái:mé is what they call it.

114 The Sun Dance is what it is.

115 It is the summer prayer ritual.

116 In the middle of summer when all the fruit ripens.

117 In August, in September.

118 Everything wakes up during this time.

119 All fruits!

120 [Fruit].

121 It was every kind of food you eat.

122 It was everything that grows on this earth and it was the prayer ritual, everything that Tái:mé was in charge of, it was.

123 They say it is the prayer tradition of Tái:mé they pray about.

124 During this time everybody shouted ecstatically.

125 Everybody was overjoyed.

126 It would occur every summer during this time.

127 Apparently this is where they pitched their prayers.

128 They initiated their prayers and went forth

129 and it was during this time they came together.

130 It was during this gathering that the buffalo grazed nearby.

131 With abundant ripe food.

132 All the ripening foods.

133 The center of the season.

134 All foods.

135 All right, right in the middle of the ripening of foods they prepared themselves and this is where they made their prayer.

136 They prayed the Sun Dance.

137 It was during this big prayer that everybody came together and camped.

138 And the prayer they made right there.

139 Apparently they were giving thanks to God.

140 They were praying in thanksgiving.

141 This Sun Dance it was.

142 It was the Kiowa prayer.

143 And it was the Kiowa prayer tradition.

144 It was the Kiowa prayer tradition right there.

145 The Sun Dance was the Summer prayer ceremony.

146 He was in charge of the ritual.

147 [Do you understand the meaning clearly now?]

148 Now then, the Kiowas prayed through the Ten medicine bundles.

149 They (the Kiowas) were keepers of this prayer tradition.

150 This prayer way was given to the Kiowas in the beginning.

151 Language. The Kiowa language and these things, these Kiowa Talyop, they say, those.

152 And prayer.

153 With them (Tàlyóp) the Kiowas could pray.

154 It is for the future.

155 It is religion.

156 [Is that what you call prayer?]

157 The Kiowas made the big prayer first during the Sun Dance, and everything else.

158 The feast itself also.

159 And the buffalo.

160 Everything came together at this time.

161 And everybody played and had a good time when it came together.

162 They were in prayer.

163 It was a big prayer.

164 They wanted to always come together in the summertime.

165 Very old women.

166 Old ones.

167 Aged.

168 They prayed for these too.

169 Children. *He-yo-he! O-yo-he-yo! He-yo-he! He-yo-ho!*

170 That.

171 They prayed for the children.

172 All right, everyone.

173 It was for the Kiowas and every Kiowa society.

174 Right there, everybody was praying.

175 And they danced.

176 They were happy.

177 For four days.

178 Because everything is done in four days.

179 They prayed and danced for four days.

180 They prayed.

181 There in the middle of the Sun Dance lodge, without eating food and drinking water, the old ones prayed.

182 About life.

183 Right here on this earth.

184 Their humanity and way of life.

185 Prayerfully.

186 Every kind of dance was there.

187 Everything came together there.

188 Even evil was there.

189 Nothing in life was barred.

190 It was the big Kiowa prayer.

191 Now, take a close look at it.

192 Right now, everything that you are asking about, including the dance tradition itself, you are doing to this very day.

193 The way we dance you wanted to know about and how it came to us and how it was given to us and what it was-- it was a big prayer.

194 Now you know that the white man came ashore (and he is ruthless) and does things in an arrogant way.

195 He shattered it!

196 They annihilated The Beginning.

197 How ruthless!

198 Now take close look at it.

199 Now then, the last Sun Dance--The-Time-The-Buffalo-Hide-Hung Sun Dance, they call it--was the last such ceremony.

200 That one.

201 That one.

202 Apparently it was then during the afternoon of that last Sun Dance.

203 It was then that everybody in the encampment saw it.

204 "There! Something is coming out! Something there!"

205 Everybody was coming and they saw it.

206 Right there in the middle of the Sun Dance lodge something white emerged.

207 And it grew larger and larger and they were all looking at it and it came out and got up and they were looking at it and it rose into the heavens, right there at the sacred Sun Dance because that is where the Kiowas pray and dance.

208 That's where the dance first came.

209 You wanted to know and I am telling you.

210 So it is. That is all there is.

Kiowa Version

The Coming of Tâi:mé to the Kiowas

1 Tòǫ́áu gà dáu:mê.

2 Ó, tòǫ́áu gà dáu:mê.

3 Qácómdà áugáu gà thảumáum:déhèl:déę̀ gà dáu:mê.

4 Hábé áuhyàu:déę̀ jógúl dáu:mè:dè kảuàun jógúl dáu:mê.

5 Mảun hàgà hę́:màu:dáu.

6 Hàgà jépjéhę̀ dáu GÌGÁU káu:àunhèl GÌGÁU qáptàu qómǫ́:hèldè GÀU mà:yí átà:dèàl qómǫ́:hèldèę̀ hègáu ę̀ yát:tài:dò:hèl.

7 QÀUT hègáu áuhyáudè máun é:gàu mén fítfásàtjàu.

8 Àkó hègáu égàu châu yą́ hê:jèhài:gàdàu:déchò dè hê:jètjàu.

9 Há:jèl tàui thá:gá máun án hái:gádàu NÉ óbàhàu nàu yá hê:jèhài:gàdàu.

10 À:kó, hègáu hágá gà dáu:mè:déę̀ hègáu gà hę́:màu:dè:hèl.

11 Héjáu yá:jé hègáu máun ę̀ cí:dê.

12 NÈGÀU hègàu kî:hèl gàu ę́:bà:hèl GÌGÁU máun hą́u:gàut, hàgà zêbà--háyá hàundè dó:cà gàu ę́:bà:hèl.

13 GÌGÁU háundé jǫ́:hêl NÀU émgàu ę́:gàu án àundą́u:mê GÀU ą́ugáufį́ án àundą́u:mè.

14 [Buffalo] àn àundą́u:mè.

15 Nàu máǫ́:dè. Hègáu máun gà dónmé, bót sái:gá àn ó ópchò àn cául háyá ét àuzó:nè NÀU èt dónmé.

16 Há:chódèfê:dò hègáu án àundáu.

17 NÀU hègáu àunhí:hèl.

18 Hègáu gą́ hóljàu áuhyàudè GÀU jócà dé hí:jáu, ą́u:dê.

19 GÌGÁU àunhîhèl.

20 GÌGÁU àunhîhèl dècàugàu, háundé jǫ́hèl NÈGÁU fãi yíhèl.

21 Yíhèldèchò gà kǫ́:hí:hèl.

22 Hègàu ą́udê: À:kó, óihyàu gàt kómàu:gù:jàu GÀU jói à kóbà:thàu.

23 GÌGÁU káhí:gáu à âuià:thàu GÀU háyátjò hègáu án àundáu:tháu.

24 NÀU fòi gà âuiàunhà:fèjàu, áu:dê.

25 GÌGÁU jói gà ái:hêl.

26 GÀU máun hágá è cîl:déè: chán.

27 GÌGÁU èm dè:mảu.

28 Káhí:gảu fòi án fí:pátcáhèl GÌGÁU hègáu fègáu gà áihèl.

29 GÌGÁU áugàu kí:dél áugàu gà àunyí:gátò:dàu:dèè: chánhèl.

30 À:kó, hègáu áutcàu án àundáu:dégùi hègáu èm àuzónhèl.

31 GÌGÁU àunhîhèl.

32 Àunhîhèl GÀU hègáu gà bả:hèl NÉGẢU máu:sàutjè háòdè hègáu án àundáu:mê.

33 NÈGÁU fáu:tà:hèl.

34 GÌGÁU háundé jó:hèl NÀU fègáu gà kó:hí:hèl.

35 Nègáu fègáu áuihyàu hègáu máu:gú:hèl.

36 GÀU fòi jói gả áihèl

37 GÀU fòi èm dè:máuhèl.

38 Káhí:gáu fòi hègáu gìgảu áu:dê gà áihèl GÀU áugàu gà àunmáu:gù:dèè âuichànhèl

Némgàu fòi héjáu án àundáu:mê.

39 Hègáu àunhî:hèl NÀU hègáu án sáutảun:dàu:mè.

40 Tó:cà é:gàu á tó:dảu:mê NÀU pàidáu:mê.

41 NÈGÁU hègáu, hádàljè hègáu hâuigàu máu é hágá hègáu èt tájàu, áu:dè, dèàu:tàup.

42 NÀU fègáu é:hàudè [third night].

43 Hègáu fòi gà kó:hêl.

44 GÌGÁU èm cò:dósàutjèjàu:.

45 Émgàu sáutàl á cótjé é:gàu [manure].

46 Néjàu gà á:fáu:dà:.

47 Ah! Hègáu gà kó:háu:.

48 NÈGÁU gà âuiài:hèl GÀU ó: èm dè:máu:hèl.

49 Yí:cáyàu, hègáu yí:cáyàu:dèè: hègáu bá:hêl.

50 Kápáui:déhèl NÈGÁU bá:hêl NAU émgàu án áubáu:à:dàu:mê dè:áu:tàup.

51 GÀU à:kó, [fourth day]yàu gà dáu:mêdèè: hègáu qáu:jéhèl.

52 Hègáu táu:hêl.

53 Táu:hêl.

54 É:gàu [buffalo] àunbáu: yí:cả kì.

55 Táu:hêl.

56 NÈGÁU táu:hêl NÈGÁU áungàu qá:hìàum:dè:hèl.

57 Hègáu qá:hìàum:dè:hèl.

58 NÈGÁU jó:nê, "Èm á:. Èm á:. É táihì," jó:nê.

59 NÈGÁU táihì:hèl.

60 Hègáu bòt máun cí:tà.

61 Hàgà sáumtà.

62 Háyát dáu:cá.

63 Hègáu táihì:hèl NÀU qóp è éthèl:déè: hègáu fâu:hé:béhèl, qópcá.

64 GÌGÁU áuhyàu qópcá áugàu è éthèl:déè: hègáu qópfă fâu:hé:béhèl.

65 GÌGÁU áu:hàu, áuhyàu hègáu fâu:dó:dê.

66 GÌGẢU à:kó bétàu hègáu án màuhé:mê.

67 Bétàu án máuhê:mè, hègáu háun:dé.

68 É:gàu qáu:jó, bả jó:gà. Cúngà gả dáu:dè.

Bétàu áuhyàu hègáu án màuhé:mê.

69 Dáu:chái:gá gà dáu:mê.

70 Dáu:chái:thàu:gà gà dáu:mê.

71 Áu:hyàudè hègàu án màu:hé:mê.

72 À:kó, hègáu máun án màuhém gàu án hái:gả.

73 NÈGÁU tépdáu:fèhèl NÈGÁU kĩhèl GÌGÁU bá:hèl.

74 GẢU jó:cà chánhèl.

75 Jó:cà chánhèl.

76 GÌGÁU à:kó, hègáu NÈGÁU é:dè qáptàu GÁU mà:yíàl, bétàu háun ỏbâui:fòihyóm:qà:cỏm:qà:hị̀: máun è dáu:mê.

77 NÀU à:kó, hègáu jó:nê, "À:kó, hègáu cyói:dê máu tái:dò.

78 GÀU cyói:dê hègáu à tháu," jó:nê.

79 "Dè kóàu:zỏn:jàu," jó:nê.

80 NÈGÁU qáptàu--È á:dê, tà:càu:gàu-- NÀU jó:nê,

"É:gàu jó gát â:sàuldéè áu:fãu: yí: hàundè gà pá:," jó:nê. "Bàt bó:," jó:nê.

81 "Bàt bó:," jó:nê.

82 "GÀU...bót thá:gá dáu jàu GẢU dáu tái:dò.

83 Gàt fitfãusátjàu NÀU bàt bó: éhàudè.

84 Há:gâi, há:gâi yán áu:jàu," jó:nê.

85 "Há:gâi yán áu:jàu," jó:nê.

86 NÀU hègáu é:dè jó:nê:

87 "Há:gâi gả dảu:mêdè?"

88 Câudè máu gà héngùtqòdàu:mè GÀU gà sáuihé:dàu.

89 Háyát kóhài:dàu:cà?

90 Né yí: gà dáu:mê.

91 NÈGẢU é:dè gà cáumhèldè gá háu:hèl:dè, bétàu hègàu dáu:chái:thàu:gà gà dáu:mê:dè hègáu qảujó é:gàu, bá jó:gà.

92 Tái:mé.

93 [Tái:mé máun èm kảu:thàu:yả?]

94 Qảu:jò.

95 Áuihyàudè dáu:chái:gả bètáu gà dáu:mê.

96 Fâidàu:chài:qì dáu:mê.

97 [Háu hègáu háiòdè èm thàu:dáu?]

98 Fâidàu:chài:thàu:gả gà dáu:mê.

99 Qácómdà ɛ́:gàu gà ánmàdéɛ̀.

100 Fâigà ɛ́:gàu fâithàu NÀU jéhàundè gà cúà:thàu.

101 Dáumàl è sô:thàu.

102 Gà tá:dá:thàu GÀU sôn gà qíá:thàu.

103 Á:kì:gà!

104 Hát jéhàundè [fruits] gà qíá:thàu:dè gà dáu:mê.

105 GÀU à:kó, fâigà gà dáumê.

106 Fâikì:dà.

107 É:gàu fâi:fâu:dà.

108 Qácómdà.

109 Bètáu fâigà jéhàundè gà cúà:hèl QÀUT thá:gá gà qíá:y:ìdè gà dáu:mê.

110 Fí:gá gà dáu:mè GÀU [life] gà dáu:mê.

111 Qácómdàdè.

112 Dáu:chái:dègà bètáu áuhyàudè gà dáu:mêdè áuihyàudè:dè
bètáu gà háu:hèl:dè dáumê.

113 Tái:mé gà dáu:, bá jó:gà.

114 Qáu:jó:dé áuihyàudè dáu:chái:thàu:gà gà dáu.

115 Fâidàu:chài:thàu:gà gà dáu.

116 Fâikòzài:yáu hègáu jêhàundè áutcàu [fruit] hát gà qíá:dàu:dè.

117 [August]yàu, [September]yàu.

118 Óihyàu gà jâyà.

119 Jé:é:!

120 [Fruit].

121 Jé: fị:gá: bát fàutjàudè gà dàu:mê.

122 Jédàum:tài: gà qíá:yì:dè: gà dáu:mêdè áuihyàu:dè dáu:chái:thàu:gà gà dáu:mêdè áuihyàu:dè Tậi:mè dáu:mêdè áuihyàu:dè gà fàudó:dê.

123 Dáu:chái:gá:dèfè:dò é:gàu fãigà Cáuiqàcò:bàu Tậi:mê á dàu:chài:hèl, bá jáuẹ̀

124 jé: ém chàthá:dê:.

125 QÀUT jé: àn á ó:tậ:yì:.

126 Hègáu gà bá:thàu NÀU fãigà óihyàu gà áum:déthàu:.

127 Bétàu hègáu dáu:chái:gà áuihyàu ém qí:jáu:.

128 Ém qí:jáu: GÌGÁU à:kó, á bá:tháu:.

129 GÀU óihyáu gà áum:déthàu NÈGÁU á jó:jép.

130 Jé: á jó:jépdéẹ̀: hègáu cáulàl háu:bè pậu:mà.

131 Fí:gá:àl!

132 É:gàu é: hát gà dáu:dè hègáu jé: gà jâyàu.

133 Zái:yâu gà dáu:mê.

134 Fí:gá: gà dáu:mê.

135 À:kó, hègáu jéhàundè fị:gá: gả màu:hó:tháudéẹ̀:, zái:yâu gà dáu:mêẹ̀: hègáu dáu:chá:igá hègáu gà ậumàu.

136 Hègáu Qáu:jó á dàu:chàtjàu.

137 Hègáu áuihyàudè ẻm dáu:chái:tháu:déẹ̀: áuhàu jé: á báu:dèthàu: GÀU ém

qú:jáu:.

138 GÌGÁU dáu:chái:gá, áuhyáudè gà âumà.

139 Dàu:qí: bétàu dáu:mê:dè à:hô:dè gá àu:màu.

140 Á ò:tà:dàu:chàt:jàu:dè: gà dáu:mę̀.

141 Qáu:jó é:gàu dáu:dé.

142 À:kó, hègàu dáu:chái:gá áuihyàu gá dáu:déè̀: hègàu Càuigú á dáu:mê.

143 GÁU Cáuigúdàu:chài:thàu:gàt dàumê.

144 Dáuchâi:thàu:gà gá dáu:mê áuhyáudè.

145 Qáu:jó àugàu dáu:dè...Fâidàu:chài:qì dáu:mê.

146 Áuhyàudè gà fàu:dó:dê.

147 [Háu hègáu háiòdè̀ yán hái:gá]?

148 À:kó, fâidàu:chài:qì dàu:mê:déè̀: hègáu Cáu:kì, áugàu háungàu àn Càuigú ó: ànqí: ém dàu:chátjàu, dáu:chái:thàu:gà gà dáu:mè. Áuhyáugàu.

149 Dàu:chái:gà gà fàu:dó:dê.

150 Cáuigú àuhyáudè gà áu:hèl [to begin].

151 Jó:gá, Cáuijò:gà GÀU é:hàudè áugàu háundé Cáuigú Tàlyóp(gàu), bá jó:gàdè. Áuhyàugàu.

152 GÀU dáu:chái:gá.

153 Cáuigú. Áuhyàudètjò ém dáu:chái:lî:jàu.

154 Thófé:gû:dè:thàu:gà gà dáu:mê.

155 [Religion] gà dáu:mê.

156 [Háu châu gà ká:u dáu:chái:gà?]

157 Áuhyàudè Cáuigú gà thàumàu:hèldè gà dáu:mêdò dáu:chái:èi. Qáujóàum:déè:. À:kó, hègáu jéhàundè.

158 Fí:gá:àl.

159 GẢU cáulàl.

160 Jéhàundè zái:yâu gà âumàu.

161 GÀU háu:bê jé: gà chánmàdéè:-- ém ó:tá:yàiàu:màu.

162 Ém dáu:chátjàu.

163 Dáu:chái:èl gà dáu:.

164 Hègáu áu:hàu fãi:yàu á báu:dé:tháu:.

165 Xálì:chò:hyòp.

166 Qó:báu: [Old womans].

167 [Real old].

168 Áuhyàu:gàu bét dáu:chát:jàu.

169 Sâ:dàu. *He-yo-he! O-yo-he-yo! He-yo-he! He-yo-ho*!

170 Ảuihyàudè.

171 Sâ:dàu bét dáu:chát:jàu.

172 À:kó, é:gàu jé: á dáu:.

173 Cáuigú á dáu: GÀU hát háundé áutcàu. GẢU jê:yì:gàu:.

174 Hègáu áuihyàu jé:hàui ém dáu:chát:jàu:

175 GÀU ém gún:màu.

176 Á ó:dáu:.

177 Yí:cá: kì:.

178 Bót jé: háundé yí:cá kì: gà áumgá.

179 Yí:cá: kì: ém gún:màu: GÀU ém dáu:chát:jàu:.

180 Ém dáu:chát:jàu:.

181 Áugàu Qáu:jóchél déè:. Bî:dàu. Áugàu á dáu:gàu yí:cá: kì:. Fí:hé. Tó:hé ém dáu:chátjàu.

182 Qácóm:dàè:.

183 E:gàu dáum è qáu:dè:è.

184 Á qácòm:à:dé:thàu:gà.

185 Dáu:chái:thàu:gà gà dáu:déè:.

186 Jé:cùngà gà tháu:.

187 Jéhàundè gà tháu: áuhyàu.

188 Ául:káui:gáàl: gà tháu:.

189 Háun háundé té:dádàu:màu:dè.

190 Cáuidàu:chài:èl gà dáu:.

191 NÀU bàt kóbò:.

192 Áuhyàu. É:gàu bè chát:jàu. Áuhyàudè cúnthàu:gà gà dáu:dè... Éhàudèkì: héjáugú:hyàu bàt jáu:.

193 Áugàu bè gúnmàu:dè. Bót èm háiàun:dàu: háchòdè cúngà gà fáu:dè. NÀU áuhyàu gà fáu:hèl:dè: gà dáu:mê:dè: gà dáu:dê. Dáu:chái:èl gà dàumê.

194 Nạ̀:kó, hègáu Cí:thá̰i:dâu:dè:qì: émhàu hít. GÀU (zélbé bót). GÀU gà étfătế:thà:dàu.

195 Gà têm!

196 Áuhyàudè [The Beginning] gà dáu:dè gà thàumtém.

197 Dé zélbé!

198 Bát kóbò̰.

199 À:kó, áugàu "Á hó:nâuqàu:jò:"-- "Kàu:jólâ:qàu:jò:" á kàu:màu--Hóndáu:mè:.

200 Áuhyàudè.

201 Áuhyàudè.

202 Bétàu Qàu:jó hóndàu:dḛ́ḛ̀: á Qáu:jócí:dê NÀU kísàukòhài gà áumdéhèl.

203 NÀU jé:hàui à Qáu:jócí:dê GÀU gá jàu:bà.

204 "Áugàu! Áugàu háundé báudà! Áugàu háundé!"

205 Jé: á Qáu:jócí:dê GÀU á bò̰:.

206 Áugàu Qáu:jó: dáu:. Áugàu gà dáu: háundédḛ̀ḛ̀:. Báu:dèhèl GÀU thá̰i:dáu:mḛ̂.

207 GÌGÁU àu:tàup étáumdéhèl. GÀU étáumdéhèl. NÀU á jàu:bà:hèl. NÈGÁU báu:dàhèl. GÌGÁU èm hâhèl. GÌGÁU á jáu:bá:hèl. NÀU bá:hèl. GÀU pànbáyí:hèldè. Áuihyàu. Áuhyàudè Qàu:jò:dàu:chài:gà. Cáuidàu:chài:gà dáu:dèfê:dò ḛ́:gàu ém gúnmàu.

208 Áuhàu cúngàdè gà chándè èm áundàu:dò èm jétjàu.

209 Chólhàu. Ódèhàu.

Now to most people, unless they're Kiowa, this story is going to strike them as a fantasy or tall tale in some respects. There are just too many fantastic things going on in it. But to me and other Kiowas everything going on and everything in the story are pretty real. There is nothing in the Taime story to which I cannot relate. I've talked to many Kiowas concerning these aspects of Kiowa tales and myths and legends, and all are in pretty much agreement that things existed the way they were and told in stories and hearsay by Kiowas.

To experience the old way of Kiowa storytelling you almost always have to look at the Kiowa text written out, just as it is here. The linguistic features for telling stories the old way are just incredible. There is so much going on in the text itself it would be criminal to miss if you are going to make an analysis of a true Kiowa story. The sound elements are so powerful and compelling. They are essential to the heart of Kiowa storytelling and they occur in this story. All the Kiowa stories that were told in Kiowa can be found in the appendix. Even without any understanding of Kiowa, at least a cursory look at the Kiowa text can reveal something of the dynamic force that sound elements play in Kiowa storytelling and can show what pains storytellers went through to convey what is magical in stories.

The story of Tą̀i:mé is a magical story told of long ago. It is a long story that seems to get longer at each telling. I have heard several versions of it. It falls in the category of traditional Kiowa stories but is not itself an origin myth. It could easily be identified as a fantastic story too. In the final analysis, I believe it is a traditional story

because of the language and antiquity of it. It tells of how a young man came to understand the power of Tá̲i:mé. It also tells of how, through his extraordinary encounter, Taime came to be with the Kiowas and stayed for many, many years. Perhaps it was centuries and not years. Many stories tell of encounters such as this one. How many stories I have heard that are similar! Every medicine man met up with some animal or bird or strange beast to learn from it how to doctor, and how to affect magical cures and so forth. This kind of sacred knowledge was kept by the person who it was given to and/or passed on to another member of the family when the person either passed on the power or died. The sacred knowledge that was given was kept in story form so it could be recounted just like the coming of Tá̲i:mé was. I have heard many stories of these things when I was a child. Sadly, many of these stories have been lost and are no longer told.

The telling of the story of Tá̲i:mé, as well as many of the other Kiowa stories I encountered, did not occur on just a two-way street: one street coming in one direction representing the storyteller; and the other coming in an opposing direction representing the listener. There appears to be a third or middle street, what Greg Sarris (1989) calls a "betweenness." In order for the story to happen as it should, both the teller and listener must create what might seemingly be called a kind of rest stop. This location along the storytelling highway is the third street, intersection, or betweenness of which Sarris speaks, where the story brings together the teller and listener to form a kind of partnership, where there is "the possibility of a dialogue" (Sarris 1989), of dialogic

engagement. It is this juncture that I wish to call attention to as a means of understanding the Kiowa narrative event. The juncture or rest stop or betweenness is that place where storytelling becomes something more than someone telling a story and someone merely listening, perhaps absently precluded from the dialogue. This "betweenness" that Sarris talks about is the dialogic interaction that must take place between storyteller and audience. It represents the "dynamic and highly contextual" nature of storytelling. It is the problem Dennis Tedlock addresses when he says that "the reporting of ethnographic field experience is no longer a choice between a third-person account in which the natives talk (if at all) only to each other and a first-person confessional account in which the observer talks mainly to himself, but a problem in how to present an encounter in which two participants construct a textual world between them" (19). Sarris describes this encounter of Tedlock's general observation about reporting of ethnographic field experience "bi-cultural and bi-personal," because "so many of the same issues are at work. And it is the ethnographers who have been most concerned about the problems and have provided the most cogent discussions and examples of resolutions" (Sarris 1989:139). Although Sarris is concerned chiefly with ethnography and the construction of autobiography, the same problems occur in storytelling, where storyteller and listener must engage in an encounter that is dialogic, continually open for more dialogue as a means to bring together rather than separate teller and listener or no storytelling is consummated. There must be no forfeiture of the presence of either one in the context, but the seeming marriage of the "bi-cultural bi-

personal composite composition when the teller and listener(s) make an encounter." Sarris notes that James Clifford (1983) maintains that "while enthnographers [can] cast encounters between two individuals and successfully dramatize the intersubjective, give-and-take of fieldwork and introduce a counterpoint of authoritative voices, they remain representations of dialogue" (135). Sarris offers Carlos Castenada as someone who perhaps has "invented...the strangeness of his informant's voice and revealed the specific contingencies of [an] exchange" when he wrote Don Juan. He maintains that "Castenada 'found' a Native (Yaqui) informant who provides more than information about psychoactive plants in exchange for occasional groceries. The informant mentions realities different (separate) from those of Castaneda's experience" (141).

With John Tofpi and other Kiowa storytellers, I at first consciously bore this in mind. And secondly, I tried to keep the narrative event and setting open so we could engage in a dialogic exchange at all times. John left much of the story open for me to fill in for myself, as I have said. In regards to verisimilitude, I could ask myself if what I heard was real or not. I could dwell on these kinds of questions if I wanted to. That was part of the idea perhaps. That was how he told his stories. I had experienced that this is what happened with other stories, including my own grandfather's. I had to tell myself this was another way Kiowas used to tell and still tell stories. I was glad we were getting somewhere with how Kiowas told stories as time went along. I was finally feeling more and more, as Tedlock said about his study with the Zunis "a good deal of the truth which Zunis [and Kiowas] see in their fictional narratives derives not from

final etiological elements but from the efforts of the narrator to create the appearance of reality within the body of the story itself' (166). And, "the primary vehicle for a Zuni [or Kiowa] tale is, of course, the verbal description of its events, but in seeking to create the appearance of reality a narrator has recourse to a number of devices which," Tedlock says, "stretch the limits of verbal description or transcend them..." (166). The ability of a Kiowa storyteller too, finally, is to stretch the truth out a bit, or "contribute to the appearance of reality." Many who listen to Kiowa stories may have trouble separating what is real from what is not. But this shouldn't discourage most. According to Tedlock

> Native American tales do have modern parallels: Bergman and Fellini, for example, who assume a certain knowledge of Freudian psychology on the part of film viewers, present the full-blown psychotic women of *Through a Glass Darkly* and *Juliet of the Spirits* without cue and abandon the comparison with modern fiction...The proper question to ask about Native American tales is not Why are motivations and the like not fully explained? But Does the native audience understand these things? All indications are that Native American audience members, through the application of the same ethnopsychology which they use in everyday life, understand a great deal. (169).

Yes, John left much of the story open for me to fill in myself. Part of this had to be filled in by my own ability to believe or not believe, to hear and/or see something that was real or not real. In the final analysis, it probably didn't matter. I think he just provided a way for us to be closer as Kiowa kinsmen and I think that was sufficient in his mind whether I understood this or cared. His was a gesture because that was the right Kiowa thing to do. All during my work with him and others there were occasions

where this kinship bonding occurred. It was part ritual, part casual. Sometimes it felt formal; other times it didn't. I didn't mind and thought it right. The fact of the matter was I felt more and more Kiowa each time I met with one of my consultants, and we all developed a very close relationship during those months. I was especially glad that I had gotten close to my own parents, my uncle Oscar Tsoodle, John Tofpi, Cornelius Spottedhorse, and the others I included in my ethnography on storytelling. This day, when we finished talking John got to his feet and prepared to go home.

"Hey, guy, come back again real soon," he laughed. "We can talk some more. I'll tell you about that good cedar and sage. Qólgá. Àu:hį́:."

He'd been telling me a lot about qólgá or àu:hį́:, *ritual cedar*, and sé́ógá, *ritual sage*. He had apparently located places where one could cut qólgá and sé́ógá and wanted me to know. He was concerned that I should know everything he cared about. These two items defined him clearly perhaps, and that is how he wanted me to know him. He had told me that his dream story was part real and part dream; I was satisfied, and now he was ready to go home.

"My brother," I said in Kiowa. "I'm glad you were able to talk to me about those stories today."

"Sure," he said in a serious tone of voice. "I know lots of stories. We'll talk some more. We'll go out and cut some cedar. I know where it grows plentifully. It's good, that. Smells good. It's good."

He paused and looked around. "Hey, where's everybody?"

"What?"

"Where did all them old folks go?"

I looked around. There was nobody in the building. It was completely empty. I just noticed the absence of laughter, loud elderly talk.

"I guess they went home.."

"You located a good place, didn't you?"

"I sure did," he said. "It's easy to get to. There's three places I cut cedar. Nobody knows but me. I can show you over here. *Missouri Red.* That's what them White folks call it. Must be some kind of science name, you know. Maybe so." He raised his eyebrows. "It's the best àu:hį: around though, boy."

He laughed.

I got up and walked over to the front door where he stood, his crumbled cap in his hand, ready to open the door and depart. It had a Co-Op patch sewed across the front of it..

I gestured with my head toward the south. "It's not anywhere near Longhorn mountain, is it?"

Longhorn mountain is the historical place where Kiowas cut cedar. Every Kiowa who smoked cedar knew that site. Asking him about Longhorn reminded me of Keith Basso's work with Western Apache storytelling using placenames. Basso (1990) makes a clear distinction of how this social bonding occurs in Western Apache storytelling. Not only were the Apaches he was studying telling stories. Basso also

noted that they were oftentimes "reinforcing tribal values and moral behavior" to stay close together. For instance, when an Apache wanted to subject his listener to a lesson in moral teaching or correct moral behavior, he'd tell a placename story. He wouldn't necessarily tell the entire story. Just mentioning the placename was enough for the listener to remember what had taken place at that precise location perhaps dozens of years ago, very much like the unfinished business Kiowas do. A very good moral lesson was learned this way, the Apaches had informed Basso. For instance, if a man misbehaved while he was passing by some geographical region of the country and paid dearly, that incident and location were memorialized in a story. If a man misbehaved in the same way later, an Apache storyteller could simply make reference to the location and instantly the man was expected to come to terms with his error and mend his ways (Basso 1990). In this way, Western Apaches conducted their lives in the appropriate way they should as a unified people. I thought John Tofpi was a lot like those Apaches. Because he was Kiowa, he knew the importance of placenames and everything important that was associated with places. Perhaps there was some underlying meaning in Kiowa places and placenames just like the Western Apaches. I thought maybe I could ask him more about this next time.

"No," said John. "It's somewhere else different. You'll see. I'll show you. Missouri Red, they call it."

He slipped his ball cap onto his head. Just before he started out the double doors, he hesitated, turned around. "Hey, little brother," he said, "that old man

Tainpeah was my own grandpa. Did you know that?"

Tainpeah, my grandfather's oldest brother, died at an early age.[14] Purportedly, the handsomest Kiowa, everybody in the Tenadooah family said only good things about him. He'd also married one of the most beautiful Kiowa women in the tribe, and was my grandmother's own sister.

"I know," I said exhausted from our long visit. "We're related close, aren't we?"

He laughed. "You bet." And stepped out the door.

I left John Tofpi that day thinking about the cedar and sage. I thought about the locations he mentioned where he cut cedar and sage. It reminded me of the Western Apache placenames and the moral significance that Apache storytelling put into their placename stories. I thought how thoughtful he had been about my feelings regarding our close relationship, how he had wanted me to know exactly where he and I stood as family and tribal members. For him, this was the honest Kiowa way of doing things. Like a Western Apache, he had learned how to conduct himself in the appropriate way. He was doing what he knew best. It was, in a way, his obligation as a Kiowa to be the best kind of man he could be. While the Western Apache did this in their placename stories, he did it by establishing his Kiowa relationship to me, I thought. I am sure he would have done the same for any other of his Kiowa relations if the occasion had presented itself. Every visit I made following this one in some way clarified Kiowa

storytelling, and the meaning of being Kiowa and what that meant to Kiowas, to me. I learned once and for all that what John wanted always to do first was re-establish our roles as kinsmen. Simple as that. This was his Kiowa obligation. He figured it had been some time since we talked, so each time we met he made sure I understood how closely we were related before we talked about anything else.[15] Once we got that business out of the way we could talk about anything we wanted.

CHAPTER VI

LOOKING BACK AND REMEMBERING, KNOWING WHO YOU ARE

"Go Away! Go Away!" Barked the collared lizard at the Old man Tenadooah. "I don't want you up here. This is my home. You are not welcome here. Go away!"

The way Kiowas tell stories, on the surface, looks simple but is not. Storytelling consists of Kiowas gathering in small intimate groups, usually close friends or relatives. Stories occur in the midst of conversation unexpectedly. Often humorous and joking they are consistently framed by texts from outside the present time and may include unbelievable situations, characters and actions. My grandfather tells the story of how his father climbed atop Mount Sheridan in the Wichita Mountain Range where he lay for days fasting and praying for the recovery of his wife who had been in labor too long. There the old man lay. Finally along came a great lizard "the size of a greyhound." Resentful and full of power, the reptile "barked at him."

"Go away! Go away! I don't want you up here. This

is my home. You are not welcome here. Go away!"

Kiowas, like Western Apaches and other tribes, contextualize and recontextualize characters, themes, ideas, values, and almost everything pertinent into their stories (Foley 1997; Becker 1995; Bauman 1977, 1986; Hymes 1981; Tedlock 1983). Sometimes a Kiowa storyteller will reach way back into history and pick up some prior text and recontextualize it into a new story (Becker 1995; Basso 1990). This makes sense because we all do that when we tell stories. We are just not aware of

it most of the time. If we paid more attention to ourselves we might see that it is not such a new idea. But in the context in which I was studying Kiowa storytelling it became crucial because I was trying to keep my mind on it. Sometimes it was like following a strange mountain path with many side distractions and so I had to aim as straight ahead as I could. Accounting for it, that is. I had to find out just how it worked for Kiowas. So I was especially careful when I listened to John Tofpi talk because he would suddenly drop a story into the context of our conversations, as did the other storytellers I interviewed. As he told his stories I was reminded of similar stories my grandfather told me. When my grandfather wanted to tell me, for instance, how prayerful Kiowas were, he'd often mention his own father and the story of his father. What both John Tofpi and the old man were doing was taking a prior text and recontextualizing it into a story that was presently being told. This way the story was constantly expanding, accruing new data, new insights, making sense in different ways. The story about my grandfather's father, like so many my grandpa told, were also teaching me what it was like to be a Kiowa, how important it was to be faithful and to hold out against much difficulty and discouragement in life. Many of his stories were about the persistence of Kiowa faith. They told how Kiowas faced obstacles so great most ordinary human being would have given up. In the face of such insurmountable obstacles, a good Kiowa, my grandfather used to say, will bend himself into the task of fasting, praying, making sure his sacrifice will "pay off." I was thinking about these things all the time I was working with John Tofpi in the field. I thought to myself many

times: John Tofpi knows. He is a Kiowa and doubtless has heard the kind of Kiowa stories I have heard. He has taken old texts and applied them to a new time with new problems (Foley 1997; Foley 1986; cf.. Becker on '*Prior Texts*' 1995) and, as far as he was concerned, just like in the old stories, "if a person was faithful and persistent, things worked out for the best."

We humans seem to need to corroborate an idea or theme in a story by bringing up a similar situation from the past. At home, when Jews observe Pesah (Passover) every spring, they are recontextualizing Jewish values and faiths by remembering their liberation from Egyptian slavery. Pesah is the eight days that commemorate the exodus of the Hebrews from bondage by sitting down together on the first and second nights to pray and read and relive that time. Eating matzah and bitter herbs recalls the hard times and the haste with which the Hebrews had to flee Pharaoh. It is a reminder of that time and how good it is to eat and remember and be a free human being. Pesah is a living event about time immemorial, yet it is about timelessness itself. This comes to mind at the seder meal when the Exodus is relived in the reading of the haggadah *(story order)*.

> Every individual should feel as though he or she had actually been enslaved in Mitzrayim and redeemed from Mitzrayim. Therefore, each of us should speak of our own Exodus-- in the language that we understand, in the context familiar to us, and with the knowledge and experience that we have acquired.
> (from the introduction of *Passover Haggadah: The Feast of Freedom.* The Rabbinical Assembly, 1982. Second Edition.)

Similarly, Kiowas tell stories of remembrance. Kiowas bring past events into the present. These 'prior texts' are reminders of important events that have taken place and

are important to Kiowas. This way, nothing important to Kiowas is lost. Everything that makes John Slow Kiowa, for instance, is contained in his stories and how he reconstitutes a story each time he tells it. Most people do this, Indian as well as non-Indian. I am simply bringing it to mind because it helps to define as clearly as possible how Kiowas depend upon recontextualizing important things in their lives and how this affects them and makes them Kiowa, just as observing Pesah helps Jews be Jews. And so everything that makes every Jew a Jew, say, comes together for Jews at Pesah, a meaningful and holistic exercise of the human mind and human soul that occurred long ago.[16] It has been over 3,000 years of remembrance and it is still alive today all over the world where Jews observe Pesah. The point I am trying to make here is not a religious one. Rather, it is that sense of place and time we draw upon in storytelling. It is a way of framing narrative, and remembrance. John Slow's dream story, for example, occurred somewhere in time and may be recontextualized into a story today. The same recontextualization of my grandfather's stories or anybody else's may do so also. Foley (1997) recognizes that

> genres can be recontextualized from earlier contexts to new ones with a greater or lesser shift in their interpretation. This is called an intertextual gap between the actual performance and the abstract idealized generic model we might have of it from earlier performances. This intertextual gap can be strategically manipulated by performers to minimize the break with earlier performances or maximize it, the point being to communicate certain meanings by such choices, such as adherence to tradition and the importance of the ways of the ancestors (minimizing) of the value of the new in a rapidly modernizing nation-state (maximizing). (pp.377-78).[17]

Either way you look at it, the recontextualization of events and things are what make many Kiowa storytelling events occur. Kiowas and others do this constantly, perhaps without knowing it. We humans are always referencing what we talk about and we generally want people who are listening to us to know what it is we mean. We share many kinds of information and values by means of going back in story or conversation and bringing those things to the fore, as it were, so we can see that we are in tune and doing what we must in order to be human and part of a cultural group. Finally, not only is a contextualized remembrance a story container, it is also a small ceremony of sorts, for it manifests some aspects of human ritual which all great stories do.

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So many of the things Kiowas have been through have been reminders of who they are and what they are all about. It was always good to know a place where the tribe had lived and remember the words that tell of that place and time. In their stories Kiowas were always going back to and reconnecting place and time, because it was a way to remember and know things. These days Kiowas tell stories, but more often than not these contemporary accounts are done in English, or a combination of English and Kiowa. Kiowa is more and more rarely spoken. In some striking ways Kiowas are like Jews. Like Jews, Kiowas come from a historic nomadic tradition. They too have a rich tradition of oral storytelling. When I first embarked on my study of Kiowa storytelling, I was always thinking about the stories told by the great Hasidic masters in Jewish

history, because they reminded me so much of Kiowa storytellers not only in their own peculiar history but also in how they told stories. But most of all, I thought about the notion that, like the Jews, Kiowas have always wanted to maintain their own identity, and that by maintaining this identity they could remain a whole people, as they should. In order to protect themselves from powerful and, very often, hostile forces Kiowas have had to struggle very hard. When I hear the old Kiowa stories I am both delighted and saddened because I know that some day I will no longer hear those stories told in the old way. I know my children and my grandchildren will not hear those stories or know and understand the ways of the old Kiowas. Furthermore, I realize that the Kiowa language will one day not be spoken like it was, say, thirty or fifty years ago when I was a boy. Just a few months ago my uncle and language and story consultant Oscar Tsoodle died and took with him what I call classical spoken Kiowa. He talked Kiowa the way my grandfather and many of his generation talked Kiowa. He prayed the old Kiowa way. In our family, he was the last Tenadooah elder. He carried the drum for my grandfather when he was a boy and young man.[18] The peyote ritual, or the Native American Church, was introduced to the Kiowas in the latter part of the nineteenth century (Boyd, 276). As Boyd (1983) points out "Some men of the Kiowa tribe believe that the Kiowa use of peyote came from Quanah Parker, who learned the peyote religion from a Mescalero Apache named Chavato" (276). According to the Kiowas, peyote came or was brought to the Kiowas by a mysterious woman in the tribe. The account about peyote goes like this:

One day a woman was informed that the brother she cared for since childhood had been killed in a fight. She lamented, "What good will my life be now? I must get away from this camp," and that was the last her people saw of her. No one knew where she went. They searched in hopes of finding her wandering through the mountains and hill country thick with timber. In those days many wild animals lived in the mountains, so after ten days here people stopped the search because they assumed some hungry animal had killed her.

One morning she suddenly reappeared in camp, happy and talking to everyone she met. She explained, "After leaving camp, I wandered over the mountains and valleys and became exhausted, hungry and thirsty. I fell asleep and a vision came to me which I want to share with you. What I have seen in my vision has been fulfilled. The herbs I have in this bag are a medicine. This medicine gives me the Power of Nature. It is a power to know future things and a power to heal sickness."

Then she ordered them:

Erect a tipi and make a crescent dirt hill a round a fireplace and use sagebrush for seats. Choose your own servants, a Fire Man who keeps up the light all night and two reliable men to lead the ceremony, the Head Chief or leader, and a Sub-chief. At midnight the Chief will order the Fire Man to get a bucket of water for those in attendance. When he brings in the water, he will place it in front of the fireplace. Next he will roll a cigarette, smoke the peyote, and then pass the cigarette to the Sub-chief to smoke. After puffing on it, the Sub-chief will hand the cigarette back to him, and after he smokes again, he'll crush it on the ground. Then the bucket of water will be passed around to the men to drink. After the water is passed, the Chief must go outside with his whistle and blow toward the east, then southward, then westward and finally northward before returning inside the tipi. The Sub-chief will throw pieces of cedar on the fire as incense, while the leader rubs himself with cedar smoke and sits down in his original place. Next morning, a woman will bring in water for the attendant to drink, and the water duty is reenacted the same as it was earlier. (This legendary account of the origin of the peyote religion as told by Bottali to the Kiowa Historical Society in 1976 and recorded by Maurice Boyd in *Kiowa Voices*, Volume II)

This is a wonderful story. It was given to Boyd to put in his book and I am sure

it stands just as it was told to him. I wanted to include it here because it helps to define my uncle Oscar and in a way commemorates his memory. As I said, Oscar learned everything about the old Kiowa ways from my grandfather, as his own father had died when he was a boy and he naturally took up with my grandfather Henry Tenadooah because he needed a good male figure to learn all the good things he needed to know as a Kiowa. They went to the peyote meetings together all the time. They prayed and sang together. Whenever my uncle Oscar came down to my mother's house to visit, she told me, he always talked about the old days and how it 'used to be.' Not only did he talk about those old remembered days. He spoke of them affectionately and passionately in the Kiowa language, as a Kiowa, because, to his way of thinking, you could not say anything better than in the Kiowa tongue. I admired him for the things he believed in as well as our closeness as Tenadooah kinsmen. But mostly, now that he is gone, I miss his storytelling panache, his great and wonderful, sometimes wry, humor. He represented what is best in Kiowa traditions and language. We are somewhat better off as humans because of his presence among us.

CHAPTER VII

TELLING STORIES WITHIN STORIES

The following account is the last of my many visits with Oscar Tsoodle over a two-year period. As I have said elsewhere, Oscar Tsoodle, who is my Kiowa uncle on my mother's side, is perhaps one of the last truly traditional Kiowa speakers. Like the account I recorded with John Tofpi, I thought it would be best to let Oscar demonstrate in his own way how Kiowa storytelling is accomplished. The main reason for doing it this way was for me to get as close to contemporary Kiowa storytelling as I could without having to say it in so many words. Here, as elsewhere in this study, I could not think of a better way than to enter storytelling as it took place in ordinary conversation. This meant that I had to enter the storytelling circle with my co-worker, enter it in dialogue so that the storyteller could show how the storytelling process works. I had determined to make as little interpretive analysis as I could, if any at all and was interested mainly in raising the storytelling process itself to a level of dialogic participation, because I knew that here would be the best place for me to come to an understanding Kiowa storytelling. Bakhtin (1981, 1986) refers to this area as a highly charged meeting between "a multiplicity of social voices and a wide variety of their links and interrelationships (always more or less dialogized)" (263). "Heteroglossia is Bakhtin's way of referring....to the peculiar interaction between the two fundamentals of all communication," Michael Holquist writes in his Introduction to Bakhtin's *Dialogic Imagination*. "On the one hand," he goes on, "a mode of transcription must, in order to

do its work of separating out texts, be a more or less fixed system. But these repeatable features, on the other hand, are in the power of the particular context in which the utterance is made; this context can refract, add to, or, in some cases, even subtract from the amount and kind of meaning the utterance may be said to have when it is conceived only as a systematic manifestation independent of context" (xix-xx). I wasn't familiar with Bakhtin or any of his work until I studied the American Indian novel some time back. Up to that time, I had assumed the text was everything. I had envisioned taking large chunks of Kiowa stories in the original and then transcribing them and translating them into English. After that I would go inside like a diamond miner to extract bright gems of truth and wisdom. It had not occurred to me then that there was much more to storytelling. There was a vast field of human activity surrounding stories. This vast social context had to be taken into account. In order to understand how Kiowas told stories I had to contend with the environment where the stories took place. As I thought about it and began to read more about the social context, several images came to mind. One of them was a sheep herder. I thought: The Kiowa storyteller is not unlike a sheep herder. In order to corral the sheep in one place the sheep herder has to build a good solid structure he can herd the animals into to contain them. Similarly, the Kiowa storyteller must frame his stories with the materials of the vast social context he finds in his environment. If the structure is constructed soundly, the stories will be contained. If not, the metaphorical sheep will have escaped.

As I drove down to my mother's house that hot summer day in 1998, I didn't

have sheep herders or sheep on my mind. Rather, I was thinking of some way I could record Oscar's stories and then follow them up with the right kind of questions that would keep him talking in the engaging way he talks. Oscar is a great talker and storyteller, I told myself. Yes. I should just let him talk. Let him frame everything, and then we can go from there.

As soon as Oscar lit a cigarette and got settled down, I told him that I needed to record some Kiowa stories and ask some questions about Kiowa storytelling.

"I need them for the field study I'm doing," I said.

At the time I had gotten it in my head that I would record as many stories as I could in Kiowa and then backtrack, as it were, and analyze the texts. I wanted to be sure I had everything I needed in the way of the texts themselves, transcribed, translated, and whatever else needed to be done in order to take a close look at how Kiowas told stories. Was I in for a surprise. Kiowas were telling stories about everyday affairs. There were stories everywhere. They were being framed by different kinds of contexts all the time. You couldn't tell where one story left off and where another began. You had to listen closely sometimes or you could miss out on a great deal. I was progressively learning about Kiowa storytelling as it really was happening. It wasn't what I expected. This is not to say Kiowas have quit telling the old stories, the ones told in Kiowa, the heroic stories of Séndé and his ilk. I am not sure those stories are told the same way that contemporary stories are being told. But I believe they are. Some storytelling practices like framing features, contextualization, telling

stories in the midst of conversation, and telling them to close friends and family in small groups, I think happened in past performative settings as they do now. These contemporary or modern stories, as I call them, were about minor events in Kiowa life, some of them quite trivial and not like the heroic stories I once heard when I was a boy. Many of these new accounts were personal narratives about relatives, brothers-in-law, and cousins doing funny things either to themselves or to other people. Joking and teasing dominated much contemporary storytelling. Sometimes it seemed that Kiowas weren't telling stories at all but telling jokes. It hadn't occurred to me how storytelling, the process of storytelling, was occurring until I sat down and took the time to observe and participate in it. I had to go further by entering into the dialogue when it ensued. I had to help the story develop at times, or engage my own comments and anecdotes. Storytelling is a dynamic existential creature. Hard to get a hold of, difficult to recognize. When I first asked Oscar to tell me a story, he said he knew a few but then talked about other things. How was I to know that he'd already opened a storytelling event. He changed the subject like he wanted to think about it for a while first. But all along, while I waited, he told one story after another and I had to be quick enough to catch them or lose out.

Oscar studied me over a bit after I told him what I wanted to know about storytelling. "There's lots of prayers down here," he began slowly. "You know that?"

I nodded my head and said hau *yes*. I could tell he meant business.

"There are, Sègí (nephew in Kiowa). All up and down this creek. All of this land. Your grandpas and them-- we had peyote meetings all up and down this creek. There's lots of prayers on this land. Hàu."

He gestured about with his hands. I think he was imagining the ground around us where Mom's house sat. It was as if he wanted to establish common grounds before he could really talk about things. He wanted familiarity of terrain and he used the home place as a reference point. Kiowas love familiarity of the geography. Sépyàldà, *Rainy Mountain*, is a point of reference for Kiowas for all times (Momaday 1969; Boyd 1981, 1983). It is the place where Kiowas ended up in their long migrations across the plains. There are hundreds of other such geographical locations on the plains from Montana to Mexico, but Sépyàldà is the grand-daddy of them all. After Oscar explained his reasons for wanting to come down to the old homeplace to talk, he got into a more serious frame of mind. He could do that in the wink of an eye. He changed gears so easily and had all of us (my dad, mother, and I) in the proverbial palm of his hand, leading us along like blind men upon a path of mystery and delight. One rare quality Oscar had was this engaging power he appeared to have over his listeners (or should I call them dialogic partners?). Kiowas and just about everybody else around Carnegie knew him. They either liked or disliked Oscar. He was too honest a kind of person not to like either way. But they couldn't dismiss him either. He was opinionated about almost everything. If you engaged him in conversation you were going to hear almost anything come out of his mouth. And he knew no strangers. That was one of his best qualities.

If you were a total stranger on the streets of Carnegie and walked up to Oscar and asked him directions, he would not only tell you right away what you needed to know. He would also tell you all about the person you were looking for or the place you were going to. He was that kind of person and that's what made him the attractive person he was. In a town like Carnegie, which is mostly made up of whites, he knew no strangers and could dialogue with anybody anytime. He was complex, a human being with many sides to his personality and he shared every part of himself with the people with whom he came in contact.

After he quit talking about the homeplace, after what I thought he established as a common point of reference, he began to talk about our relatives: How they were doing, where they were going and so on. Kiowas, when they get together as we had that day, invariably get on to the subject of their own relatives. It is storytelling, a way of getting at the business of telling other stories. Since many of the stories Kiowas tell have to do with relatives, storytellers will begin talking right away about their own kin. At one point he asked me a few direct questions about myself. He was warming up to me, I remember thinking. He wants to get intimate real fast, I thought. That way he could say what he wanted to. We could be on common ground. He could seemingly relax, put me in my proper, Kiowa place so I would have to listen to everything he had to say that day. It was a good way. It was the Kiowa way, I remember thinking.

We had been talking about names. Kiowa names and naming ritual. My father was talking when Oscar interrupted. Apparently, M, who is his granddaughter in the

Kiowa way, had asked him to translate her name. "'Well, what is it?' He had asked her in Kiowa, he told us. "'Kòmjòmá *Ghost Woman*,'" she'd replied. "Nàu bà jáu *And I replied*," "'Háun àn chólàu ém kậumâu *People don't call themselves that kind of name*,'" he'd replied. Kòmjó, *ghost*, is a term applied to apparitions and ghostly spirits. You can talk about these entities in terms of their presence in stories or actual appearances to people, usually in dreams or some scary context, but never as part of a real life situation like a name. For Kiowas, kòmjó is *GHOST*. Period. What M. expected was an adequate translation for the name Spirit Woman, which was her given Kiowa name, but it was against the rules.

"Kiowas don't call themselves ghosts," Oscar fairly growled in a way that reminded me of distant thunder.

We all laughed. "Hàu!"

"That name is reserved for somebody dead," said my mother.

"Right," Oscar agreed. "You can't use that name. Not Kiowas." His face darkened with a consternation I hadn't seen in person's face in a long time. For a moment I thought he might curse, which he could do in any given moment but didn't this time.

We laughed. We were warming up for some good stories. We were all in good spirits. We had eaten to satisfaction and were anticipating a few surprises this day. I'd never tasted better beef tongue and soup and I knew I was glowing, content, like an incandescent lamp.

"Yeah," Oscar went on, "'Call me Ghost Woman.' And I said, 'I will not call you such a name. Hą̀unê.'"

I said younger Kiowas don't know Kiowa enough to realize what they're doing.

"That's right," Oscar replied. "They don't. Like this." He picked up a slice of bread to illustrate. "You have to explain this bread to someone in order for them to know what ébáu is."

"Some Kiowas call it égáu."

"Ébáu, égáu, it doesn't matter. The whole point is it's bread. That's what they have to know."

The whole result of our talk about M's name and her confusion about how to translate it, Spirit Woman, into Kiowa, had taken us into a lengthy talk about the Kiowa language and how it was being misused nowadays, that many Kiowas, particularly the young, did not know Kiowa words. They knew some words like kòmjó (ghost) but didn't know how to use it correctly in conversation. That good spoken Kiowa is in decline is a pretty commonly known fact among Kiowas and others. There is much conflict between speakers and non-speakers in that when non-speakers make mistakes the speakers laugh or correct them too harshly. This causes the non-speakers to be afraid to try and speak Kiowa, so they refrain. I wanted to bring this up but dad spoke up before I could.

"It's hard to catch on to Kiowa," he said. "You got to be speaking it day and night, day and night. Teaching it is hard too. Lot of them do it their own way. You

don't understand what they're saying. Like she said, 'Kòmjòmá.' That's not right. Kiowas are scared to use that word in everyday talk."

"I will not call you that," Oscar said. "Let someone else call you that."

"Yeah," dad spoke up. "The old ones knew how to give a [Kiowa] name. They did it right. Oh, by the way, brother-in-law. L's daughter over here, B, has a daughter. They're having a peyote meeting. She wants me to give her a name at that meeting. Now, how am I going to do that? Yes, I told her. I will. I asked her about her relatives to get some clue about a name, you know. It's not easy, this naming business. I thought it over. She could do something, you know. Why doesn't she bring in the water in the morning? They're so young but they want a Kiowa name. That's interesting. They want to do it prayerfully. For the future. That's what it is. That's it. They thought it over. They never come into a meeting. But they've decided to make a meeting for a name. How do we name someone then? Peyote prayers and name use. Why not call her Á:kị̀dàu:chài:mà *Flower Prayer Woman*? This peyote is a flower, you know. We call it different names, but this one is appropriate, you know. It's good that way, see."

"Do it prayerfully," Oscar offered. "Do it the right way. It's the way it has to be done."

He paused. He looked at me. It was the first time today that he made eye contact with me. I was almost afraid what he might say to me.

"Your name is Pànthậi:dê *White Cloud*, hậu?"

"Hàu," I answered relieved. "Châu à kậu *I am he*."

"And càunqí Áutpậu:à: kậu *Weeping/Pausing/Coming Forth?*

He was wanting to confirm this was my cousin's son's Kiowa name. It is the name of my great grandfather Tenadooah. It is a holy name, a name you can bear with great honor.

"Yes," I said. "That's Henry's son's name."

"Hàu. They gourd dance, don't they?"

He was making a remark about the name Áutpậu:à:, that it was given to a child who liked to gourd dance. I sensed that he wondered how that might be. I should have asked him if he had named my cousin's son himself. I don't know who gave my great grandfather's name away. It is such a beautiful name. It suggests a very faithful and prayerful man. The name must be very old and come down many centuries like many Kiowa names.

"You know your grandpa and their father, they made prayers," Oscar explained. "It's there, that. You know God controls your life. He's there. You're going to enjoy it all your life. You will die to an old age. Like your grandpa and them. They [the Kiowas] made fun of the old man [Tenadooah] because he prays all the time. Áutpậu:à:. That's what that name means. He's weeping, praying. They made fun of him. He cries and stops and prays. Èmhá:dèà: *He Who comes Invoking The Great Spirit*. Bèlfân *Sore Mouth*, a.k.a. Big Bow, and him, the old man, my grandfather, the two of them went exploring together. Like Daniel Boone. 'We went around, They fed us. They

treated us good. Those tribes we visited on our journeys. We just go. We just go for the heck of it. Those tribes welcomed us too. I prayed and him, he sang. That's what we did when we went out. They treated us good. We never killed nothing or nobody. We were just travelers seeing what there was to see in the land. They were good to us. We never killed nobody. They were good to us.'"

Because I sensed it was okay to, I broke out of the story frame by asking him what Áutpáu:à: and Bèlfǎn were looking for.

"They were dàumsáumzè:mà *going around just looking at the land.* They liked water," he explained. "Kiowas like water and things. They went looking for water and told people where it was. That's what they were doing. They went out like that and then came back and told the people things, how it was way out there."

Tedlock (1983) says that "Once a narrative is well under way, the possible openings actually chosen for the *eeso* 'yes,' or 'proceed' response are most likely to be those in which the performer departs from the story proper to offer an interpretive aside" (290). I allowed (or we all who were present there allowed) Oscar to make this "interpretive aside," but it opened up the story enough to allow other listeners in the audience to participate.

My mother, for instance, who had been busy in the kitchen with the food as Oscar was talking, spoke up-- *participated*, that is-- on her way to the table where we men were seated.

"They had interesting stories to tell," she said.

She set out plates of hot food and a pitcher of ice tea. She'd been busy ever since I arrived. I wanted her to sit down and join us because she seemed to be a little stand-offish. But as soon as she made this remark she came over to the table, sat down.

"I bet they had interesting stories to tell," she repeated in Kiowa.

Yes, I thought. We are getting into some serious storytelling. You can feel the tension growing up around the table like a body of rising water. Any minute we're going to be up to our throats in it. I braced myself for some good storytelling. I was excited about what I was going to hear just like I used to be when I was a boy. When grandpa or any of the other old men told stories like this I remember how good it used to feel.

"Yes they did," Oscar replied. "That's the way they were. They liked to see things, what was out there on the land."

"I bet they learned a lot of things from different tribes," mom added. Oscar was leaving his story open so his listeners could enter any time they wanted and contribute their own thoughts or comments. This is when Kiowa storytelling becomes the dynamic event that it is. When these added comments start coming, the level of the storytelling rises. Depending on the skillfulness of the storytelling, the story can remain open for a considerable time. In this state of deferred time much of the creativity in storytelling can occur. The real test is how long the storyteller can hold out or restrain himself. A non-Indian listener would get restless or possibly annoyed at this point. I, in my impatience, have gotten angry with my grandfather who could hold off for a very long

time. Sometimes he would stop a telling altogether so he could smoke a cigarette or change the subject in mid-flight. Then I would have to just sit back and wait until he was good and ready to start up again. When he left open a story he could have been waiting for something in his narrative to catch up: an explanation, a definition, some other extraneous information. Or he might have needed me to make some comment or response, which I didn't always do. The point is the story sort of came to a halt and there you had to wait until it picked up again. At this juncture it is difficult to see exactly who the storyteller is if you aren't alert to it. The fact that Oscar was the invited guest and the object of my study were cues enough to make all of us realize who the storyteller was. But too, the session had come to a full halt many times. An interloper, or perhaps an unexpected guest might have entered the storytelling session at some point after picking up what was going on. But then, this person might not be able to enter the dialogue right off but at a later time.

"Hàu," Oscar assured us. "They sure did. They went everywhere, them two. They were world travelers back then. They met different tribes."

After this last remark Oscar stopped. He'd said want he wanted, I think. Perhaps he was pausing so somebody else could pick up from there. I don't know what. But as soon as he stopped her, dad spoke up.

"Now this business about Jé:gàcùngà *Pueblo dancing*," dad said. "That's what we call the snake dance? Hậu?"

I looked at my dad. He was not only a good Kiowa speaker and tribal historian.

He was also an excellent interlocutor. He knew how to keep things going in the right direction. I was glad he was there with us today.

"Hàu," Oscar replied, falling right into dad's question. "Yes, Jé:gàgùn," he repeated. "Around here we call it 'snake dance' now. That's wrong. It's not that. It's Jé:gàcùngà.

I asked how the Pueblos danced the snake dance.

"Hàu," Oscar said. "They dress up. Men and women. It's a Pueblo dance, you know. They dance it with dignity. Not like we do now. Snake dance. We changed it from its original form."

What he in fact meant was we ruined it. Where it was originally a dignified dance with meaning, when the Kiowas took it they made it up into something different. That is what was irritating to him.

"We ruined it, didn't we?" I was hoping he would open up a new story perhaps. Technically, the story frame had broken slightly to include yet another story. For the time being I wasn't sure what might be going on. I had but to wait and see what would follow next.

"Hàu. We sure did," everybody around the table agreed in one voice. Yes. It's not the way it used to be.

"How did they do the Jé:gàcùngà?" I went on, encouraged by the group.

"Well, not like they do it now. Different. They sang the same songs." He proceeded to sing a snake dance song. It was short. When he stopped singing he said,

"They held feathers in their hands like this. They dressed up good too. They danced well. With feathers. All adults. Get them damn kids out of there! They don't know. It's a serious dance. It is."

"Hàu," we all agreed.

There was a long pause. We were drinking coffee but hadn't started to eat yet.

A longer pause followed. We were still sitting there looking at the food, when Oscar spoke up again.

"Over here at Óhómàu,[19] Father came along. He was all dressed up and I said, 'You ought to give me that outfit and let me dance. You're a white man, I said.'"

"He ruined it, right?" I laughed.

"Yeah," Oscar said. "I made fun of him. He's got his own place. I notice Catholic priests try to do our things.[20] Several times I've seen it. They want to know the way we do things. At the fair, you know that priest said he's making a peyote meeting and invited me. He said, 'this peyote. How does one get peyote?' That Navajo I was with was going to tell him and I told him not to. 'No, brother,' I said. 'There's no ways,' I said. He doesn't know. This one doesn't know. He doesn't need to know. This Navajo wants to know how we do it too. After one meeting he was running he said, 'Hey, brother, I'm going to go over to this powwow.' He wanted to run off just like that. We just got out of the meeting. You don't mix things up like that, you know. They mix everything up. They don't do it right. That's not the way. You know, they ruin stuff. Even the food isn't the right kind. Chili. They had chili and I

said 'We don't eat chili like that.'"

"They don't know," dad said. "They do it all wrong. They eat early and then go home," dad complained. "I don't understand them." He didn't like the hurry people seemed to be in when they ran a peyote meeting, he said. Both he and Oscar complained about how the peyote ritual was changing, that nobody did things the right way as they should. People weren't only ignorant about the correct procedures anymore, they also were in too big of a hurry. As soon as the meeting was over, Oscar said, that Navajo man got up and went to Sunday church services the next morning. "You don't do things like that," he said. It wasn't appropriate.

"I asked the Navajo man where his father's symbolic peyote was and he said he didn't know," Oscar said.[21]

"They don't know," dad added. "Hą́u:nê."

"They said 'Eat now. It's chili'. 'I don't eat chili,' I told them."

Oscar, although he didn't say so, was referring presumably to a meeting he'd attended that the Navajo man had conducted and invited a Catholic priest to attend.

"You too," explained Oscar. "Smoke. If it's a woman, you let her smoke it. It's a woman's smoke. You can roll your own after she's finished. It's her tà:bàut. You keep it on your own side."

"If you bring in tǫ́: *water*, it's the same way," dad added. "There's a certain order to things. If you go outside, don't go outside and smoke."

"Hau. Smoke in there," Oscar said. "Take your time. Take your time."

Here he emphasized time once more. Like most modern Americans, Kiowas nowadays are in too big a hurry, he complained. In earlier times everyday life went along at a slower pace, he said. There was more time to talk, more time to listen, more time to sing, dance, eat, and visit. I should add here that one of the biggest complaints I heard among the people I recorded and interviewed was that the modern Kiowas, like white people, "lived in the fast lane." This remarkable shift in lifestyle was not confined to only young Kiowa people, the complaint goes. Every living Kiowa was caught up in things that weren't Kiowa. Many of my consultants were surprised that people their age and older had stopped taking more time to talk and visit with one another. Like Oscar complained that day, "We're in too big a hurry. I don't know why."

And so Oscar and dad complained that the celebrants disrupted the peyote service by going outside too often and smoking. If somebody wanted to smoke, they could take their time and do it right by smoking inside the tipi. The right way. Things were changing and these two oldtimers didn't like it, just like they didn't like that Catholic priest who went into a meeting anytime he wanted to or that one of the celebrants would just get up after a meeting and go to church the next morning, as if the peyote meeting itself had little or no spiritual value at all. If you prayed all night, then what was the point of going out the next day to pray at church? Better if you had stayed at home and went to church on Sunday like everybody else. Things were coming apart in Kiowa life, and Oscar and dad didn't like this at all. I took it that they weren't so angry as they were disappointed. Oscar would make a comment and then dad would

follow by making one himself. Oscar opened up the conversation for dad to enter it, back and forth and so on. Each time one opened up the conversation, the other threw in a story.[22] It was a well-orchestrated demonstration of how these two Kiowas could let a story occur almost casually anytime in conversation. This struck me as uniquely Kiowa.

At a followup meeting between the two of them during the Fourth of July powwow at Carnegie, they did the same thing at Oscar's camp. Dad opened up the conversation about how Kiowas were now participating poorly in the gourd dance. Oscar got his cue somewhere during this time and told a story right in the midst of dad's talk. It was a one-on-one conversation at first, and then it brought in Oscar's nephew and several other Kiowas who happen to be sitting nearby in the shade arbor. Everybody under the shade arbor got a chance to add their two cents. The conversation opened up enough for any bystander to participate in the conversation or contribute an anecdote or story. This allowed a total dialogic moment. I recorded part of it, but it came out unclear. Still, the idea was there that Kiowas love dialogic confrontations that engender stories.

Another important point I'd like to make here is the new social practices these days regarding smoking in public places. In 1998, most smokers are limited as to where they can smoke. Many public places post signs clearly so that smokers are warned where they can or cannot smoke. A thoughtful Kiowa smoker, for example, rather than light up in a tipi, would more than likely go outside away from nonsmokers, thus not

violating laws regarding smoking in public places. This idea didn't occur to me until my wife suggested it when I told her about my father and Oscar's remarks regarding cigarette smoking outside the tipi. In the old days, celebrants almost always stayed inside the tipi to smoke. Had I thought about the public smoking issue at the time I would have brought it up. It might have been one explanation why people went outside to smoke. If I had pursued the smoking issue rather than let it go, Oscar would no doubt have made a number of critical comments that I believe would have still burned my eyes now. *Oh, you know how them young Kiowas are*, he might have said *They have no respect. Them old Kiowas. They smoke anytime they want to. They don't care about the old ways. Like it used to be. They're selfish. They just think about themselves. They're just a bunch of renegades They do anything they want these days. It ain't like it used to be.*

"When they pray, say Hàu," dad said, as the discussion continued about the Kiowa peyote way. "Hàu. That's the idea. You agree in there. That prayer will be done. You're in there for that."

"Chólhàu *That's right*," Oscar added, shaking his head. He was on a roll now. If there were going to be any good stories told, now was the time, I thought.

"That's what it's all about in that tipi," said Oscar. He was going to say something else, but we were ready to eat now, mom announced. So she prayed and we began to eat. Oscar and dad went on talking about the Kiowa peyote way and I sat there and helped myself to Mom's boiled beef tongue and potatoes. I ate and tried to

listen to everything I could. After they finished talking about the peyote way I asked Oscar if it would be okay to record some of his stories now. I had asked him several times before and he had agreed but wouldn't tell any stories at that point. I think he wanted to think things over before he got started, which is pretty typically Kiowa. Still, on the other hand, I think the storytelling had already ensued. We were in the midst of it. It just wasn't framed off by any distinct formulas. Once we sat down at the table that morning, storytelling officially commenced. When doing fieldwork with the Western Apaches, Keith Basso got the same results. He had to wait several days or even weeks before he got one "identifiable" story recorded, he said. I, too, wanted what in my mind was an "identifiable" story. I was in the same predicament Basso had found himself in. I knew Oscar had the potential to tell some very good identifiable stories, but at the time I didn't realize that we were already in the midst of storytelling. In fact, from the minute that he walked into Mom's house, we'd entered storytelling. Everything that we said and everything we did around the table was storytelling and part of a bigger story picture. Everything was contextualized into story and story text. Oscar had come prepared in his own way for this storytelling session and slowly swept us all into the narrative framework he had built up. But it took many months for me to realize what had happened that hot summer afternoon and evening, and I still am not that clear about it.

"I want to record something," I asked my uncle Oscar once more, setting down my coffee cup. "If it's all right with you. You know, the old stories you heard when

you were a boy."

He paused with a cup of coffee in hand. A point of light shone in his eyes. "Like my kọ̀ *grandpa* used to tell me." He laughed.

I told him hàu. I was glad he'd finally decided to tell a complete "real" story. I wasn't looking at how he was going to tell the story.

"Yes. That's what I want to hear," I pressed on. I don't know if I said it at the time, but if I could go back right now to mom's house and we were all sitting around again I think I would have probably said, *I want to look at how old Kiowas told stories long time ago. And I want you to show me how it's done, Sègí.*

He sipped his coffee and smiled. Like any good Kiowa he was *taking his time.* I had a lot of respect for this man, I remember thinking. I remembered him from when I was a boy. He used to come around and visit grandpa at the old house that sat on the banks of the creek. It was usually any season, but I see him better in the soft light of summer, perhaps in the evening when the western sky is rosey-colored and the air is filled with the scent of wildflowers that were always growing luxuriantly on the creek banks north of the house. They talked about old times. He knew many things about our huge and growing Tenadooah family and was himself becoming an important Kiowa. Lots of people knew him. Both Indian and non-Indian. In fact, I don't think there's a single Kiowa who doesn't know him now. This includes most young people. These days, he is considered a "traditional Kiowa" by most standards. This is because he is a peyote man still, just like in the old days. He speaks the Kiowa language fluently

and well, and is among the last true Kiowa speakers. When he found out I was working closely with Parker McKenzie with the Kiowa language he used to tease me pretty hard about that. "He doesn't know anything," he used to say. "He's a Mexican.[23] What does he know?" I used to laugh and tried to understand what he was saying, but there were times I felt like defending my old friend. Still, in the end, I knew he cared a great deal about the language and had a lot of respect for Parker. He was just playing out the role of a Kiowa relative to me. He was letting me know how important it was to be a relative, that we understood the other Kiowas around us and had our own ideas about ourselves and our own language and didn't need someone outside our immediate family telling us what to do. I felt honored sitting there with him in my mother's house listening to him. I knew I was in for some very special surprises that day.

Oscar asked me to get him an ash tray and lit up a Marlboro cigarette. As he lit up and began to puff on his cigarette I thought about that Marlboro cowboy riding out on the open range. In my mind's eye I saw him jump on the back of the Marlboro cowboy's saddle and ride away with him. When I looked up again his eyes were shut. It looked like he was asleep, but he still had that cigarette clutched between his teeth. There was a grin on his face. By now, several hours had elapsed and I could see he had been working up the inspiration to tell a story in the good old Kiowa way.

He began by talking about my family. Our children. He had carefully constructed a frame within which he could tell his stories. He was carefully building another stronger story frame, I thought. He was preparing to really get down to some

serious storytelling.

"Not to change the subject," he began suddenly in Kiowa, "but how old are your children? Ah, how, how big are they? É syânè: é è tháu: *When they were small you all lived here.*"

I told him their ages and he laughed jovially.

He looked like a great Greek god sitting there in the big armchair. His face was dark as a walnut, and round. It looked like he had greased it well with some kind of oil.

He said he couldn't believe they were as old as I had described them. Even dad was surprised. They grow up too fast, they both remarked.

Kiowas are so very proud of their relatives, especially the young. They can go on for hours talking about children in the family. Children are a great source of pride for Kiowas. Children are the future and Kiowa parents and grandparents try every way they can to see that their children receive the best benefits for a good and productive life. People from the outside cannot see this act of family pride, I know. But it is there everytime I sit down with Kiowas and we talk about their families and children. Invariably, a Kiowa parent or grandparent will go on about the children in their family, how they are doing, what they are doing and where. It is a remarkable experience to sit down and hear just how important the children of Kiowas are. It is not unlike most parents or grandparents everywhere. It just seems that for Kiowas there is nothing better than to have a child or grandchild who is healthy and growing up and doing something significant and important in the world. Most Kiowa parents and

grandparents are especially proud of children who have gone somewhere away from the community where they grew up and are doing well. Every time an outstanding Kiowa person comes back home, say, during the Fourth of July celebration each summer, everybody in the encampment down at Carnegie park knows. Every summer, when I go to the powwow down at Carnegie, I keep an eye out for Scott Momaday, because he has been a great benefactor to not only Kiowas but to Indians and non-Indians alike in the state of Oklahoma and everywhere.

Oscar listened carefully as I tried as best I could to tell him in Kiowa about my children. His round face brightened like he was happy to hear how well my children were doing. I knew he and my parents approved that I was conversing in Kiowa. They like it when younger Kiowas speak the language. Sometimes they chuckle when words are mispronounced or misapplied in speech.[24] Many younger Kiowas fear they are being ridiculed when they speak, but I know now that in most instances, Kiowa elders approve of younger Kiowas speaking as well as they can. As one elder told me the other day at the Kiowa Elders Center: "You have to try. It doesn't hurt. Make all the mistakes you want. We all make mistakes." I liked what that old man said. It reassured me. And even though I am perhaps one of the youngest fluent Kiowa speakers around, my Kiowa is not that perfect. I can expect to be corrected by kinsmen when I try to speak Kiowa. I had to overcome my fear of making mistakes a long time ago, and that has helped me speak more now. Like many new speakers these days, we all miss words and say them a bit oddly. Kiowa is changing. We don't make near the

same sounds the oldtimers made. But that's okay. Languages change. There is what linguists call language maintenance and language shift. Language maintenance means a "community collectively decides to continue using the language or languages it has traditionally used" (Fasold 1984::213). Language shift "simply means that a community gives up a language completely in favor of another one" (Fasold 1984:213). Language maintenance and language shift are the collective results of language choice. That is, when a community decides whether to keep its own language or change it to a dominant one, it has chosen to do one or the other. There are instances where the community has decided to speak both languages. In this case we would say the community is bilingual. Diglossia, another term used in the study of languages and society, describes how different languages are assigned different tasks in multilingual societies. That is, "the case where 'two distinct... languages are used...throughout a speech community each with a clearly defined role'" (Fasold 1984:34 quoting Ferguson 1972:233). Foley (1997) maintains that "Language shift can be very slow and gradual, as is the case with Hungarian in Austria (Gal 1979) or Gaelic in Scotland (Dorian 1981), or it can be sudden and swift, as is now occurring with a number of languages of the Sepik region of New Guinea, in which language death is occurring over little more than a single generation (Kulick 1992)."[25]

Either way you look at it, whether language shift is fast or slow, or God forbid, a language dies, it happens and is the cause for much concern among native peoples (See Fasold's discussion of Tiwa, 1984:231-9). Kiowas feel the angst of this situation

in Kiowa country.[26] Contemporary Kiowas mix much English in their everyday conversations and storytelling, but like many native languages Kiowa is evolving in its own way all the time.

"You know, sègí *nephew*," Oscar said, continuing our talk about my family, "before you know it you and your wife will be all alone." He looked at me like he wanted me to respond, but I only nodded my head. He then began to talk about his own life with his wife and their happiness. "We were always together," he reflected, sharing some intimate remarks of his own. The story frame he was constructing grew larger. As he continued to talk, he suddenly shifted to a story about his wife and him. "Yes, we were indeed a very close Kiowa couple, he said. She bore me four children. You two will be by yourselves before you know it." His voice took on a grave tone.

When he shifted to the subject of my wife and me, I was suddenly drawn back into his story. "It'll be quiet after your children grow up and leave," he said. "You'll see. It's very lonely."

Yes, I thought, and nodded my head.

As he continued I couldn't help but think how our conversation shifted back and forth from story to present life and back to story. I immediately thought about a statement Dennis Tedlock made regarding Zuni storytelling: "The more a fieldworker knows and is known, the less that fieldworker can avoid joining the action. The other side of this is that the less that a fieldworker knows and is known, the greater will be that fieldworker's inability to interpret the actions of others, whether those actions take

him into account or not" (Tedlock 1983: 287). Kiowas told stories in the same manner: participation. Participation was required. No wonder Oscar kept bringing me into his stories. He was expecting me to contribute to the story in some way. This kind of shifting from story back to present time continued for the rest of the afternoon. It was, to say the least, a creative event in storytelling and something that occurred over and over everytime we met and talked about storytelling over the next two years before his death.

After Oscar left that day, I made some notes for our next storytelling session. I was going to pay special attention to the participatory nature of Kiowa storytelling next time. I also wanted to observe how Kiowas could strike up a story in the midst of ordinary conversation, and tell fantastic stories of verisimilitude. Knowing when to tell a story in the midst of normal conversation was important, I observed. Almost everything that led up to storytelling involved making a frame around the entire storytelling event. This meant bringing in how the storyteller was related to the listener(s). Contemporary Kiowa storytellers were consistently opening and closing stories to allow maximum anticipation. Every aspect of Kiowa culture was brought to bear upon the storytelling event so that the listener(s) were reminded what was valued in close relationships and tribal life. These were important elements in storytelling. There were many other features in how Kiowas told stories. But these few seemed the most important for now and things I could watch out for as I continued my fieldwork in Kiowa country. I was learning much as I went along. Kiowas storytelling was not a

vapid, unimaginative session where chitchat occurred. It was an elaborate event that included family relationships, family ties, kinship, and everything good in Kiowa life and living. In order for this to happen the storyteller had to contextualize much material, from the listener and the tribal past and even the present. At every session that I recorded many or all of these features became apparent. I cannot remember any sessions that began without the storyteller first establishing a close and intimate rapport with the listener(s), a dialogic rapport. Usually small and informal, all of the storytelling sessions seem to bring together only people who were on intimate terms with one another. I never witnessed a storytelling session between a storyteller and strangers. There seems to be a vast difference between how Kiowas tell stories and how non-Indians tell stories. Kiowas, for the most part, are not what I would call performers, not in the modern sense of that term. What Kiowas do, rather, is engage their audience(s) in an intimate relationship so as to establish and/or re-establish that close relationship. This does not make entertainment or humor any less important, for these aspects of storytelling were always present in the sessions in Kiowa country. Kiowas were forever telling jokes and teasing, and this had to have a profound effect on the people who came together in a close relationship. I was often made a comic victim in the storytelling sessions myself and delighted in it immensely, because in some ways I knew I was being asked to participate in an intimate relationship with the storyteller and everybody else in the group and was honored in that way. Never was I excluded from a close storytelling relationship over the long months that I went out and did fieldwork in contemporary

Kiowa storytelling. When a conversational or interpretive aside was given, I was often allowed to break into the story frame with a comment or interpretation along with the others in the listening group and the storyteller him or herself (Tedlock, Sarris). These breaks or asides "are likely to be those in which the performer departs from the story proper to offer an interpretive aside" (Tedlock 1983:290).

Finally, something more must be said about how I conceived of the dialogue that ensued between myself (the fieldworker) and the storyteller. Sarris (1993) observes that "Dialogue is essential...not meant to teach a specific rule or idea, but to expose something-- whatever it may be--about the relationship" (84). I would like to add that the dialogue clarifies an understanding that is necessary between the storyteller and listener within the context. I thought what Sarris said to conclude his chapter on dialogue important and I include it here.

> Dialogue, self-reflexivity, polyphony, and bifocality characterize many of the newer ethnographic endeavors and textual recreations of oral literature. These texts seek to reveal, among other things, the different world views and interactions among participants--fieldworkers and informants-- and the problems that arise as a result. Difficulties are likely to surface with the textualizing process, and should also be made apparent to the [listener]. These newer texts are said to be collaborative in nature...It is an art generating respect for the unknown while illuminating the borders of the known. (84).

Kiowa storytelling occurs in small, informal settings. Kiowa storytelling almost always begins, without warning, in the midst of normal conversation. Kiowa storytelling is at best a dialogic event. Kiowa storytelling has a reciprocal quality about it, in that there is give and take on both the side of the storyteller and the listener(s).

Tedlock refers to this as "paradigms of experience and interpretation [that yield] to discursive paradigms of dialogue and polyphony" (41). Language, as Tedlock quotes Bakhtin as saying, "'lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in the language," in other words, "is half someone else's'" (41). The narrative event can't take place without the active participation of storyteller and listener. A listener is expected to participate in the storytelling event. Just to make sure this is a main feature in Kiowa storytelling, whenever I got together with John Tofpi and some of his close friends at the Kiowa Elders Center I took an enormous amount of field notes and made hundreds of comments in a notebook so I could look up things in the recent literature on the oral storytelling genre. I recorded as much of the dialogic participation that occurred in the sessions with lots of recording tape and the best recording equipment I could muster. As time went along I began to see more ways Kiowas told stories and began to understand a little better how sophisticated and varied these narrative events were.

CHAPTER VIII

WHO CAN TELL THE BIGGEST FIB? TEASING, JOKING AND TRICKSTER NARRATIVES

Hey, lookit that chief eat that sonavabitch, will you!

One day after Cornelius Spotted Horse, Wilbur Kodaseet, and John Tofpi got settled down, Cornelius told a funny story about John Tofpi. They are related to each other in some Kiowa way. When you are related this way, it is customary to say anything you want to your relative, and that is how this teasing and joking session got started. I was sitting nearby and recorded and enjoyed the entire session that afternoon.

Story 1

> You know this man went up to that church. R's church. You know him, don't you? Well, he's back. He went way up there to preach and then came back home. That R's married to that S. You know her. Anyway, this one [John Sáuibé] went up to that church to hear him preach and R told him all about it. Well, this one got so wrapped up in that preaching he went home that night and he traveled to heaven. Well, he was up there and the first person he met was his grandpa. His hair was all long and bushed up. He didn't brush it. And he was all dirty and stringy. The first thing he said when he saw this one was 'Hey, do they still eat raw bot down there?'

This story is a hyperbolic tale. Cornelius uses verisimilitude. He is of course teasing his friend John. That's the point of the whole story. He didn't tell us John Tofpi dreamed and went to heaven. He just said he traveled to heaven. When he first told this story, I had to think about this a few seconds before I realized what he was talking about. No time during the story did he tell us this actually happened. As far as

he was concerned it was a real event and that's how he made it known to us. As far as Cornelius was concerned, John Tofpi really went up there and saw his grandfather. The joke of the whole matter is of course that the old man is bushy-headed and asks of all the questions are Kiowas still eating cow innards uncooked. Cow innards are a Kiowa delicacy. You have to understand the implications of these very special food items. So that when the subject of such things comes up, if you are a good Kiowa, you have to understand that bót *cow innards* are mentioned to conjure up images of dining paradise or the like.[27] You have to envision a great feast taking place. Many Kiowas, when they butcher, take the tender parts of innards, including the kidneys and liver, and devour them right there. I heard Cornelius tell this story about four different times over a six-month period. He told the same story in almost the same way each time. The story contains the same characters. All the action is the same and there is the same punch line or joke at the end. He made up the story of course, but I sometimes forgot and thought that everything that was going on in the story was real.

The next story is a real classic.[28] I don't know who first told it. It is an actual or real event that took place around Gotebo. Cornelius told the story almost exclusively in English, about 90% of it. But he added just enough Kiowa words to detail some of the sublties to make it more comical. The effect of the story was about the same as the first story he told, to tease and joke. Those of us who heard Cornelius tell this second story enjoyed it because he became more animated this round and added his own personal twists and humorous comments, which he excels in. When it comes to telling

humorous stories, stylistically, is hard to beat Cornelius Spotted Horse.

Story 2

> Three Kiowas were out hunting and they killed a buffalo. Boy, they proceeded to butcher it and one of them was eating this piece of the innards. I don't know what they call it but it's a piece about this size [gestures with his hands]. It looks like a gland or something and while he's cutting it up and putting it in his mouth, two Wild West cowboys ride up. 'Hey, chief, what you got there?' One of them cowboys says. But he's too busy eating that thing he doesn't even look up. Golly, that White man just shakes his head like he can't believe that Indian watching him gorge down that thing and his buddy looks over at him and says, 'Hey, guy, lookit that chief eat that sonavabitch, will you!"
>
> Ever since then, Kiowas call that bót sonabitch.

When Cornelius finished telling this story, he belly-laughed. John Tofpi laughed. He and Cornelius laughed. We all laughed. By now, several other Kiowas had joined us. They heard Corn's story and laughed. It was an excellent Kiowa joke story. The joke was on all of us Kiowas of course. We were all the butt end of this funny tale because we still call that piece of cow entrail *sonavabitch*. This term is not offensive. It is humorous because a white man coined the name. The Kiowas heard the word and took it as their own. It is this ironic twist of events that set the stage for the humor. Kiowas look for these kinds of ironic twists that occur in everyday life. These kinds of events make good material for stories. I have heard Kiowas do this over and over. Some of the stories I collected are accounts just like this one. They do not all involve white people, but when they do they are especially funny, I think, because Kiowas like to juxtapose incongruous parts.

Many of these humorous accounts can be termed "tall tales." In this respect, they are a lot like the stories Richard Bauman (1986) collected in Texas. Like Kiowa stories, they are accounts about comical occurrences between two or more people. They are often outright lies. That is their special appeal. They are a corpus of oral narratives that constitute what Bauman calls, "orally performed verbal art." Bauman focuses on how these performances draw significantly from their social contexts. He writes that "the investigations on which [the] book is based were motivated by [his] long-standing interest in the ethnography of oral performance...as a way of speaking, a mode of verbal communication" (2). Like some of the best storytelling analyses, his work is offered in the spirit of "the integrated tradition" of such figures as Edward Sapir, Kenneth Burke, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Roman Jakobson, "who have maintained an integrated vision of the social and the poetic in the study of oral literature" (2). What makes these stories humorous are the inside jokes that the storyteller and, sometimes, the listener are aware of. Both storyteller and listener share in a social context the way the two do in Kiowa narrative performances.

After Cornelius finished his little tale, John Tofpi laughed and then he proceeded to tell his own version of the same story. It was as if he wanted to tell it the *right way* this time. I figure he wanted to add his two-cents. I know the practice. I have sat in on some storytelling sessions where two or more people tell the same story but a slightly different way each time. The point, I believe, was for them to tell the most fantastic version of the same story. In almost every given occasion, I sensed a bit of competition

between the storytellers to tell the most outrageous story. I think this is part of the fun, just as it is to tease one another.

John Tofpi finished, and in a few minutes Cornelius told yet another version of the same story. They were building the story in ways to make it even more hilarious than the time before. It was a form of competition to see who could tell the most humorous version of the story in the most exaggerated way(s). Cornelius changed the characters slightly and put John Tofpi in the middle of one story as if he was there himself. Cornelius was recontextulizing the original story for the added comic effect. William A. Foley (1997) would say he was recontextualizing from some past source to a new interaction in the story and John Tofpi himself. This is similar to the way we tease a friend by putting him or her into an old tale we know as one of the characters, say, putting them in the middle of the action with dialogue in his or her mouth. My grandfather would sometimes put me into a Séndé story (prior text). This recontextualization would make me feel like I was part of the drama. He would have me say something and have Séndé or one of the other animals respond. It was greatly effective for my participation, not to mention the dialogic effect. Effective storytelling always has the listener come in close contact with the story elements, if not play bit parts. It is all imaginary but great entertainment and fun. It is an effective storytelling method, not confined to Kiowas alone. It works in both oral and written narratives. The funny thing in Cornelius' story was that John was planted in the story. Cornelius described how John looked standing there in ragged attire. His hungry eyes glowered.

Those eyes told the whole story. Cornelius told us John himself would liked to have jumped into the fray physically, because he took such an active role in the story. I believe he would have liked to devour the cow innards himself right there! Somewhere along here Cornelius switched his focus slightly and told a short tale about how Kiowas love eating cow innards no matter what you called them.

> They like that áu:bí: *gland*. They eat raw just like this. [Takes the imaginary piece in his hand and shovels it hungrily into his mouth. Gyah!

We all laughed when Cornelius finished. The big room now hummed with voices the way it usually did each day with elders. The only way I can best describe this unusual sound is like the rush of distant water out of the hills. It is a pleasant music to the ears because the voices are those of people you know well or who are kin to you in that special Kiowa way. We are creating quite a disturbance in our storytelling corner that everybody has come to associate with us of late. We have caught somebody's attention. An old man. He shambles toward us smiling, his hand extended. After I shake his hand, he nods his ancient silvery head and totters back to a chair and sits down. Some of the new arrivals shamble over to shake our hands and pay their respects. I look around and all at once goodwill and genuine joy seems to fill everywhere in the building like water. This, I tell myself, is a truly Kiowa environment and I am right smack in the middle of it. I know the feeling. I know the excitement here. It seems we have struck the right chord today. Nothing can go wrong. Nothing. We have created a perfect Kiowa *habitus* right here. Would that some great

enthnographer like Mooney or Malinowski had walked up suddenly to experience all of this and then write about it! Nothing we say today can go wrong, I think to myself. I ask myself: Is this really happening? Does it always happen? To Kiowas? To others? I mean is this how it happens when Kiowas come together and tell stories? Is this what those cultural anthropologists experience out in the field when they immerse themselves in observation participation? In Haiti? On some remote and exotic South Sea island? On the Trobriand Islands? Is this the kind of tribal brew an ethnographer prepares himself or herself to enter into in order to understand the human condition as social realm for living cultures? Is it that simple? I thought this: It is an historic time and we are all alive in it. This is the fulfillment of something I cannot easily put my finger on. It is holistic and sacred. That is the general feeling I perceive here and I am glad to be sitting with Kiowas here this day. We have to take account of it in every way we can, make it meaningful. Àhó! I feel blessed.

Another time (just the two of us) Cornelius and I meet in the same spot at the Kiowa Elders Center. This time we're alone. John Tofpi is in Lawton. He had collected his allotment lease money and went "to pay his bills." Cornelius is in a more somber mood this time and relates mostly in English the following rather grim story:

Story 1

> I want to tell you about this man. This man.
> Yale Spottedbird was telling the story about the Kiowas going way down there. Texas. They stopped at that big river. I Think they call it the Brazos. Brazos River. Váuél, they said. They know where to cross. They happened to look across and there was an Indian man, strange Indian man. Sitting across.

> Way over there. And of course, they're Kiowas. *Hégáuigáu* 'Unconscionably' they want to get rid of him. So one went around this way. One went way this way. And they got across and knocked him on the áultêm *head.* They hit him!
>
> So they rested there. They went on south. Way down in south Texas. Coming back, at that river cross, he was still there. He was still alive! So they got him for good this time. So when they came back [to their home camp] this guy named his son, Aauiholhel 'They killed him again.'
>
> See. That's the hę̂:jègà *story.*

What started out as a rather serious and sobering account of a man getting killed turns out to be humorous with a slight ironic twist. What puzzles Cornelius is that the man in the story is still alive when the Kiowa warriors returned.

Why?

They came back and that guy was alive and they really killed him then. I don't know how it happened. It's kind of like magic, ain't it? It's funny, ain't it? They thought they got him the first round, see. But he came alive. So, they named his grandson. Áàui:hòl:hèl.

That's a good name. Yes, it is. I wonder why they killed that man? I don't want to believe these Kiowas are so bloodthirsty. How could anybody just snuff out somebody's life?

Well, the stories come out like that, you know. He was just sitting there. Doing nothing. When they came back he was still sitting there after they hit him over the head. The Kiowa warriors couldn't believe he was still alive, I guess, and must have been astonished. They had hit him on top of the head like that and thought he was dead as a

door knob, but when they come back they find him sitting up just like he was the first time. Gyah! It's bad ain't it?

I'll say.

Hey, they were bad, ain't it?

I know it. They just killed him like that.

They did. Ain't it funny how people are?

Yeah. It's bad.

When they came back, I mean when them warriors come home he named his own son after that man sitting there. Áàui:hòl:hèl. That's what they called him. That's his name. They came back there and he was sitting there, that man, and they killed him again. Golly. It's bad ain't it?

I'll say it is. They were commemorating what happened.

Right. Those Kiowas. It's pretty bad, ain't it?

It is.

Áàui:hòl:hèl *They-Killed-Him-Once-More.*[29] A Kiowa warrior had taken the incident and recontextualized it into his own life. What Cornelius inferred strongly to me was the strangeness of how a man could come back to life again; but even more, the ironic twist of how this incident caused a man to give his own son a name commemorating the event. I thought that must have been a very Kiowa thing to do. I believe Cornelius agreed and said there were other such events where a name was sort

of conjured up, not too much unlike this event. I mentioned the name Yí:sàum, Parker McKenzie's name, which recounts a heroic event and how that name came to be. Kiowa names like Jòháu:sàn 'Little Bluff,' Zépgàuétjé 'Big Bow,' and others translate into short descriptive terms but are often lengthy accounts of some human experience. What has happened is the name has been abbreviated into its simplest, most intelligible parts, usually the root terms and the gender marker on the end. When Kiowas get together and talk about a relative, say, they can often summon up the entire name and it looks nothing like the name commonly associated with the person.

"Them stories come out like that," Cornelius said. "Now, let me tell you this other story about this Kiowa butchering that took place sometime after the territory opened up to white people.

"Okay," I responded.

Story 2

> ...Them cowboys come riding up.
> "What you doing?"
> "We're going to eat."
> From what I hear it's called--- it's round. And some people they stuff it. And then some of them just cook it like that. And them *Tháukáui* 'white people' said?
> "You eat that?"
> "Yeah."
> "Well, I'll be sonavabitch," *jǫ́:gá* 'he said.'
> "Hyah! Gàu há:chò ę́:gàu gá kąu:màu! 'Look how he's calling this thing!'

"That's how it got started," Cornelius laughed and explained to me how that name *sonabitch* came to be associated with cow innards. The Kiowas took the cowboy's

word and reconstituted it into a name that is now a Kiowa joke only Kiowas who speak Kiowa know. The joke is in the name. Kiowas have words for things and sayings and expressions that are shared only among themselves. When they use a word, say, like sonabitch, if they are a Kiowa speaker they will understand where the term derived and will probably chuckle about it. There must be thousands of such terms but no one has taken time to collect all of them and find out their derivations.

Sonabitch huh? They still call it that?

Yeah, they do. It's a good word, ain't it?

Cornelius told this story several times before, and I recorded several of these tellings which were all more or less the same. I noticed he left out some of the details in the story above, but it wasn't enough to change it that drastically. In this version, he'd also provided more dialogue than the previous ones. It was a sort of abbreviated version of the other stories. Many stories Kiowas tell can be told a different way, as I mentioned, but the essential idea will remain intact. If it is a joke story, the punch line will of course not be excluded because that is the main feature in the story. When the story is told several times over, say in one setting, it is often funnier at each retelling. Each time a story is retold it is told with a fresh vigor and power, I believe. The storyteller always tries to bring something extra into it so that it will be better than before. I enjoy the different versions of the same story, as do other listeners in a setting. I heard Cornelius tell this story in other settings. It was always the same story and provoked laughter each time.[30]

I asked Cornelius to retell the John Sáuibé story about going to heaven and visiting with his grandfather. This is how he retold that story:

Story 3

> He [John T.] had a prayer meeting at his house. First time he ever had a prayer meeting at his house. He don't pray, you know. Hegau 'and then' I told him after everybody left that he still wanted to be a real Indian. Hègáu mái: gà âihèl 'Thus he went heavenward.'
>
> "Kǫ̀jè gà bǫ́:jáu. À káhį́:tà. 'I want to see grandpa. I'm lonely.'" After midnight.
>
> I said when you went up. "Did they have them Russian ships? Sputnik, you know."
>
> He just laugh. He laughed about it having the prayer meeting. At his house.
>
> "This fall, this summer he's going to come back," I said. "His wife T. Her Indian name. T. She's got a little organ. It's got another name but it looks like a little piano. Hégáu bótài àn á qáu:. 'It lays right on her paunch.' Boy howdy! (She's a good singer, you know. She's a good singer.) Áuhyàudè é báunmàu, I said. 'That one, she's bringing it.' You better get ready. Cául étjé sandwiches bàt áum gàu banana gàu cool aid. Boy! Cakeàl. Boy! Hègáu á ánmà this summer,' bà jáu." I told him be ready ahead of time.

This was an entirely different version from the one he told me before. He retold each story I recorded this day at least three times, so I know each version is slightly different each time. I wanted to see if there were any major changes in how he told the stories but found none. All the stories still contained the same settings, plots, characters and action, only slightly different in each telling, usually the intensity of tone, voice modulation, etc. The version above had the same setting and the same characters but the point of view had changed to include the preparations before the supposed prayer

meeting. This made the story more hilarious. John T., a.k.a. Sáuibé, according to Cornelius, 'don't pray,' so how could he prepare for a religious gathering so elaborately? In this version, he left out John T's old shaggy-headed grandfather altogether. For some reason the grandfather didn't show up in heaven as he had before, a small detail that I looked for in this telling but disappointedly missed. I thought it added effectively to the joke and provoked much mirth.

Somehow old people in stories just provoke laughter among Kiowas. Perhaps this is because grandparents play such a vital role in almost every Kiowa child's life. Grandparents were and still are the central object of affection and warmth in every Kiowa child's life. Grandparents are almost always the teachers, friends, playmates, and storytellers of Kiowa children. I cannot imagine growing up without a grandparent in the same household at least two-thirds of the time between ages one and a hundred years. You can play jokes on a grandpa and get away with it. When grandma teases you, you have to take it. Grandparents teach grandchildren how to take jokes and dish them out. That is why it is easy to see how Cornelius could bring John T's grandfather into the story. The Grandfather provided the extra mirth and incongruity that provokes remembrance and laughter. Most of the stories a Kiowa child hears are from grandparents. All the Séndé stories are told to grandchildren. Not only are these stories entertaining, they also provide moral teachings. It is not surprising that Cornelius' story should include a grandfather, someone who played a prominent role in John's life.

This time Cornelius used more Kiowa than he did before. The stories he told

before were told almost all in English. I wondered why he had switched language codes from the last time. I imagine he just felt more comfortable with me. He felt he could take more risks. I noticed he had been very careful when he spoke Kiowa. He might have been afraid of making a mistake, afraid the others would laugh at him. With me alone, he could and did take more chances. Whatever the case, I was glad he used more Kiowa rather than English. I believe he did too. There is just something more Kiowa going on when you use Kiowa in stories. One other thing I noticed too was that he used Kiowa when he told stories more than John Tofpi ever did, and almost an equal amount as Oscar, although for a speaker Oscar excels everybody else. What all of the storyteller consultants did, however, was tell stories in small, informal groups. They all told stories in the midst of conversation as if by chance, except Cornelius, in the last session where he told me his stories by request. He was more than willing to tell his stories, but all the storytellers used about the same amount of framing around the stories, drawing heavily from tribal beliefs and values. The stories all the consultants told, moreover, were alike in that they included humor and verisimilitude. The listener as expected had to understand what was going on in the story in order to follow the storyteller. It is a practice you develop as a listener over years of storytelling. Listening closely helps, but in time you know enough of the storytelling method so that you too can tell humorous jokes and fantastic stories the Kiowa way. Finally, I am related to all these storytellers and believe they would not have told me any stories if I wasn't. That is just the Kiowa way.

"How about that bridge?" Cornelius said just as we were about to wrap up our session this day. I didn't know what he was talking about. He seemed to have exhausted all the stories he wanted to tell when he brought up what was going on around Kiowa country, some things of which I wasn't privy to. Here he mentioned the dedication of a bridge west of Carnegie that had occurred recently and been a controversial issue. Apparently, a group of interested Kiowas had apparently decided to commemorate the occasion of the ghost dance of 1888 by naming the bridge Sétáfêt:jàu *Afraid of Bears*. The ghost dance, or à:mâ:dècùn:gà *feather dance* (as Kiowas refer to it) is said to be the ceremonial dance and ritual to bring back the buffaloes and lost culture of the Kiowas when the white men came. Boyd (1981) was told by Kiowa elders that

> In a vision in 1882 a young Kiowa received the mission to restore the buffaloes. Known as a medicine man, he took the name of Buffalo-bull-coming-out and began his buffalo medicine in a new medicine tipi in front of which he placed a buffalo skin on a pole. After a year of unsuccessful medicine-making, he announced that somebody had broken his strict regulations and that the Kiowas must wait until 1888 before his medicine could begin again...(90)

"Tribal tradition says the dance associated with Wovoka's vision came from the north, and the Kiowas were first introduced to it at the great Ghost Dance held on the South Canadian River in September, 1890, in the presence of about three thousand Arapahos and Cheyennes, together with some Caddos, Wichitas, and others...The Arapaho apostle of the Ghost Dance among the southern Plains tribes, guided the participants through

this first ceremony" (Boyd 1981:90). It is in this same spirit of appropriation that the Kiowas wanted to name the bridge and what provoked the controversy. But, as I said, I didn't know anything about it and after Cornelius mentioned the event he dropped the subject. The main point was that it was entirely out of Kiowa character to name a bridge after somebody who was virtually "unknown" among Kiowas. It was the ridiculous nature of the naming ceremony that provoked Oscar's criticism later. Cornelius in this same vein of storytelling mentioned another Kiowa man who had "fooled some Kiowas into the belief that he could lower the sun from its position in the sky." The Kiowas apparently believed him and so they all came together to witness this "crazy" so-called magical feat. "'I'm going to lower the sun,' he is said to have told the astonished Kiowas. And so, believing him, they had all come together to witness the miracle. The trickster had produced a gold pocket watch. He'd suspended the watch "on a pole or something. When the Kiowas arrived, he took his pocket watch out and held it toward the western horizon and gently lowered it. 'I'm lowering the sun,' he is reported as exclaiming.'"

"They're màubę̱, ain't it?" Cornelius laughed. "Real goofy."

(In Kiowa màubę̱ means 'stupid, dumb.')

"Hégáu à sáumdè 'They just stood there ogling,'" Cornelius kind of growled. That anybody could believe a person could perform such a feat was utterly foolish is what seemed to provoke Cornelius'scorn, as it must have many intelligent Kiowas at the time. Cornelius, who is an extremely intelligent man, is not someone easily fooled. I

have heard lots of Kiowas ridicule some of the incredible stories that have come down to us. This wasn't the only occasion where a Kiowa felt this way. I have seen Parker McKenzie gnash his teeth at some "wive's tales," as he used to call them. "They don't have any sense," he would often complain to me when he'd heard some outrageous remarks or stories he considered foolish, if not downright lies. Kiowas can be extremely critical when it comes to telling truth from fables. One can be labeled "unreliable" at the drop of a hat. Kiowas can be unforgiving of stupidity and irresponsible and foolish talk, and this has earned them great respect among other tribes and whites but also a reputation for unnecessary harshness. For Kiowas, stories can be part serious and part play. Kiowas have a knack for mixing humor and satire. If another Kiowa should make some outlandish claims and an observant Kiowa should get wind of it, the Kiowa making those foolish claims had better provide results or he will be ridiculed unmercifully. There must be hundreds or even thousands of stories about people who have said or done things that are perhaps the stupidest things a person can do. Kiowas love to tell about those people to show how utterly foolish humans can be. These stories are told in highly exaggerated ways, with the main point being to make fun of the fool. In this manner, Kiowas remind each other that respectable persons should not be making foolish or outrageous claims, or saying or doing stupid things because some Kiowa will find out and expose you to the world. Kiowas like Cornelius and John Slow are intelligent and pretty well informed. As mature Kiowas and storytellers, they seemed to have found out pretty much about the world. They know a lot about human

nature and find fodder there to create stories. Much of the dialogue might be considered gossip by outsiders, but it is not. At best, I believe, it is a way of keeping each other informed: Kiowas inform each other on their affairs or other humans in their social environment. It is both entertaining and informative. This may be a wholly different genre of storytelling one can explore if one has the time to collect the stories and the interpretations that I am sure Kiowas would gladly give.

Of all the storytellers, Cornelius is perhaps the most imaginative, if not the wittiest, in the group I worked with in the field. He is, I believe, aware of his powers. He does it with such ease. For Cornelius, storytelling is play. And anyone interested in storytelling, written or not, knows that the best stories are the kind that are the most playful and that require the least amount of effort to tell. Cornelius is one of the most self-assured Kiowas I know, in both storytelling and everyday conversation. I have known Cornelius Spotted Horse since about 1981. He likes to sit, huge, almost imposing, at a round table near the entrance of the Kiowa Senior Citizens Center, thinking always, I am sure, about a humorous anecdote or story. You can almost see the story trying to work its way out of him physically. You feel it growing up inside him somewhere. It is as if he is wrestling with the story, trying to assemble its parts. He shuts his eyes tightly when he laughs. He sometimes frowns up at the ceiling as he is talking, creating, remembering. You can see when the story coalesces into a whole piece, and it is unlike anything you ever heard in your life: a beginning, middle, and end

that is alive with tone, sound resonance, power. Cornelius has the ability to finish one story and in a few minutes start another. He has an amazing storytelling acumen and wit. Sometimes I think he's right in the middle of a story and suddenly it's all over. Done. He laughs merrily while I try to catch up. His two good friends John Tofpi and Wilbur Kodaseet know how he tells stories. They have had to learn how to follow him. They gravitate their own stories around his. They add one story to one of his. One story precipitates another. "The words we want to use shoot up of themselves-- we get a new song," writes the Eskimo poet Orpingalik. Always opening, hardly closing. These personal narratives have as their main objective to recount a joke and make people laugh. They are humorous accounts that are truths, half-truths, fiction, and mostly, lies.

As I stated before, there are no *Kiowa storytellers*, not in the sense that most people understand the title "storyteller." Kiowas, for example, do not do live performances of stories in front of an audience in some official manner. As far as I know, there are no tribes that "perform" storytelling. Kiowa storytellers, at least the ones I have observed, sit around at places like the Kiowa Elders Center, and the stories just grow out of their conversations. Some of the stories, like those told by John Tofpi and Cornelius Spotted Horse, are anecdotes they tell between themselves and are based on real incidences. Others, like the one about John going to heaven and meeting his grandfather, are a mix of fact and fiction: verisimilitude. The part about the *sonabitch* is a good example of fun and word play, fact and fiction. The three Kiowa men

butchering and eating buffalo innards with the cowboys is real and happened possibly around the turn of the century in western Oklahoma, more than likely near a Kiowa camp or else the term would not exist today. Still, there is a little fiction in that story also.

The strongest storytelling features in all of these contemporary stories is how well they were framed by the social and tribal context. Cornelius is, in my opinion, a master storyteller. Stylistically, I think he puts more artistry into his stories. I think most Kiowas know this around Carnegie. Nobody had to come along and discover him as a "storyteller." He was born a storyteller or developed as one over the years. He is in complete control of his storytelling art and seems prepared to take up a story and build another one onto this one with incredible ease. Kiowa storytellers seem to just be born.

One more thing about Kiowa storytelling: There are stylistic differences depending upon the situation and setting. I have never heard two Kiowas tell stories in the same way. When John Tofpi tells a story, it is almost always a humorous account. The characters in a John Tofpi story do or say funny things and are often people in real life. Sometimes you don't even know they are people you know until after he finishes the story or comes right out and tells you. Cornelius, if he is sitting there, will often take the same story, make a few stylistic changes, put in a different punch line and make the story his own peculiar creation. Whether these stories are told in Kiowa or English, they are exceedingly funny accounts. When I ask John T. why Kiowas like to tell funny

stories, he answers, "They're just stories." And, "Kiowas like to joke a lot." It is a form of play, he explains. Humorous accounts and jokes about family members and friends are told usually during special occasions when families and friends get together. They tend to be highly exaggerated stories that end up making somebody the butt end of a joke and are meant to poke fun and provoke laughter, several consultants have maintained. Told to individual listeners or in small groups, these storytelling events tend not to be public performances for large groups or for some special public occasion. Unlike non-Indians, Kiowas seem more interested in sharing their stories with their own family and friends rather than with strangers.

Occasionally, Kiowas also tell funny stories and jokes to people outside of the tribe they regard as friends. At powwows, for example, MCs joke a great deal with the audience. They make part of their performance long drawn out discourses with people they pick out among those present. These orchestrated performances feature a lot of joking and fun-making and provoke laughter. Some very good MCs are invited to powwows all over the country. They are popular and well-known figures in the powwow circles. One very famous MC is Sammy "Tonkei" White, a Kiowa. A native of Oklahoma, he has traveled to perhaps every great powwow in this country as an MC and is still one of the featured writers in popular Indian newspapers across the country. The popularity of MCs has grown over the years, and there are new names popping up at summer powwows. Many of Tonkei's jokes are about his friends, but many of them are about his own family and friends outside of the tribe. If you are a relation of his and

you are at a powwow where he is MC, watch out. He may say something funny about you, or make up a comical story and cast you in it to embarrass you.

The powwow MCs tell jokes and jokes that are really stories that have become popular at the powwow circle. Many MCs trade stories and tell some of the same ones at powwows, so it is easy to recognize these stories. The only difference is that they are told with a slight twist to them. Each MC changes the stories around to fit his own tastes to poke fun at somebody in particular. The teasing and jokes are all done in jest and meant to entertain the crowd, but are often missed by non-Indians.

Let me explain what I mean. By and large, Indian humor is a fairly popular element in Indian storytelling, but is often missed by non-Indians. As serious a work of fiction as *House Made of Dawn* is, it is not without its humorous moments. Take, for instance, the scene where we find an old medicine man trying to cross a swift stream on horseback when suddenly the animal takes a notion to lie down in the water and the old medicine man topples off into the deluge and has to swim to dry ground. Now, that scene, the way it is described, is in my opinion great literature. The use of ironic humor in this instance is executed well but is often missed by readers. In another chapter there is a character by the name of Tosamah who says a lot of funny things about Indians that only Indians seem to recognize and laugh at. Generally, whites regard these statements as harsh. One Native American author at a literary symposium on Indian literature observed that when whites read stories written by Indian authors they often miss things like "the punch line, ironic twists, and the general point of a story" (An unknown Indian

author, 1992). Momaday (1970, 33) pointed out that there is a "clear distinction between Indian humor and white-man humor". Things that make Indians laugh by and large do not make white people laugh. What makes Jews laugh, does not necessarily make non-Jews laugh. What makes an African American laugh will not often make a non-African American laugh, and so on as ethnic jokes and storytelling go.

Can a statement be made that Indian narratives collected and published by whites lack in humor? Perhaps. There may be a few exceptions like *Portrait of The White Man*, by Keith Basso (1979), a fine work with Western Apache jokes and "portraits" of white men that only the Apaches know how to tell. Basso writes: "Making sense of other people is never easy, and making sense of how other people make sense can be very difficult indeed" (3). Vine Deloria, Jr. (1969) observes that

> The Indian people are exactly opposite of the popular stereotype. I sometimes wonder how anything is accomplished by Indians because of the apparent overemphasis on humor within the Indian world. Indians have found a humorous side of nearly every problem and the experiences of life have generally been so well defined through jokes and stories that they have become a thing in themselves. (*Custer Died for Your Sins*, 148)

I don't believe non-Indians see or respond to the same kind of humor that Indians do, or if they do they overlook or dismiss it altogether. They are missing out on a lot...

...Sende: Kiowa Trickster and Cultural Hero!

Séndé is the tribal hero who fulfills the need for Kiowas to joke and laugh at others and themselves. Paul Radin (1969) states that the trickster serves a "two-fold

function of benefactor and buffoon...is the outstanding characteristic of the overwhelming majority of trickster heroes wherever they are encountered in aboriginal America" (124). The overwhelming argument is that the trickster "cannot develop in a void. Like God, he needs man to express and develop his presence among them. Man has to intervene and make him whole" (126). This seems to be the greatest appeal for the trickster. For Kiowas, the trickster is the manifestation of human strength and human weakness. Séndé not only represents the best side of humanity. He is also the worst side. This contradictory trait is something I believe contemporary Kiowas understand perfectly and include in contemporary storytelling, and it is perhaps this aspect that is the most difficult to comprehend by outsiders. Séndé can make mistakes just like any human. Or he can perform miracles. Séndé by and large is the epitome of Kiowa joking and humor. A comic, mythic figure, Séndé can turn himself into any object or creature he wants. Simply by an act of will he can become a coyote, a tree, a man, or stone.

Like Séndé, Nanabozho, the woodland tribal trickster, is a "universal and semiotic sign" (Vizenor 1989, 1992,1993). "Nanabozho," Vizenor writes, "is a "*holotrope*, a comic holotrope, and a *sign* in a language game; a communal sign shared between listeners, readers and four points of view in third person narratives" (187). He calls him "a comic healer and liberator in literature; the *whole figuration* that ties the unconscious to social experiences."

> The trickster sign is communal, an erotic shimmer in oral traditions; the narrative voices are holotropes in a discourse.

> The author, narrator, characters and audience are the signifiers and comic holotropes in trickster narratives. In this discourse the signified becomes a comic *chance* in oral presentations; however, in translated narratives the signified is rehearsed in hermeneutics and structural lections, causal theories and comparative models in social science. (188).

Not a champion for the social science cause, especially anthropology, Vizenor strikes hard and often unmercifully at those he believes are the enemies of native narratives. Most people don't take some of his ideas seriously, but I believe them to be some of the most perceptive and honest ones in modern writing. "The trickster," he reiterates, "is a semiotic sign." This, Vizenor points out, is the weapon that the Indian will use to destroy the misconceptions and tricks and lies put on him by the white man. For Vizenor, the trickster is one of the most powerful literary metaphors invented by Indians. With the trickster figure it is possible to undo the shackles Indians have been bound by. The trickster is an apt metaphor, or semiotic sign to do battle with.

Because Kiowa storytellers are knowledgeable in the ways and uses of the trickster, they have the right semiotic sign to combat the most threatening obstacles in the world. In one sense, Séndé is present in every joke ever uttered by man. He is also in every joke ever played on man. Like Nanabozho, Séndé is the comic genius that showed up and strutted about the stage in every Shakespearean comedy. This protean being is for all intents and purposes the quintessential jokester we find in Italian opera, the Chinese theater, and French mime. The ubiquitous trickster is, in essence, every human condition everywhere in all times and comparable to heroes in classic Greek

literature. Paul Radin, for example, notes that "the impression one gets from the Winnebago stories about the trickster, if one approaches him from the side of Greek mythology, is almost that one is encountering an easily outwitted, woman-chasing, gluttonous Heracles, rather than a double of the divine trickster of Greek mythology, Hermes!" (176), which is another way of saying that the trickster has qualities not unlike classical Greek deities. I am mindful of the Greek comedies of Aristophanes when I think about the trickster, as I am of Prometheus who stole fire and was punished for it. Many of the characters we find in literature cut an often all-too-human figure we recognize in ourselves. This is what makes for great and enjoyable literature. It is universal and meant for any and all readers. Indeed, now that there is a fairly well-established genre of the trickster novel, more and more people have come to understand and appreciate the trickster figure as he emerges in contemporary American literature.

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Here are a couple of "trickster" stories told by my mother and father that I would like to include at the end of this chapter. They are not Séndé stories in the classical sense of the Séndé tale, but are nonetheless, tricksterlike in characterizations and actions often associated with the trickster like that found in the contemporary Indian novel.

The first story is an account about J.H., an acquaintance of my father, who was, in addition to being a fancy dancer of the first order, a famous Kiowa artist in his own right. Multi-talented, J.H. danced, painted, and was even a preacher for a time, but his

real distinction, like any true trickster, and for which he was a source of much enjoyment and fun to my father and the rest of his acquaintances, was his appetite for drink, wild women, and his often outrageous behavior in public and recklessness when away from wife and home.

The account my father gives is based on a trip he, J.H., and several other Kiowa men had taken to Houston, Texas, where they were slated to perform Plains Indian dancing at a rodeo. Seasoned entertainers, my father and his dubious companions had traveled extensively and performed in faraway places like Cincinnati, New York, Boston, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. On this particular trip, the troupe arrived early so they could prepare themselves for the big show that evening. They had traveled by automobile and been imbibing heavily all the way down from Oklahoma, and it is the ordeal of that trip and happenings of which my father recounts.

Story One They Threw Us Out of the Restaurant

> On the drive down there it got interesting. "Heaven is the answer," J.H. kept saying. "Pànmá:chò gà dáu:! It's in heaven. That's where it's at!" He kept saying this on the way down to Texas. He was of course downing beers by the gallons. He was really excited and talking. "S., fòi bàt áu:qù:jàu. S. [his wife], don't be pawning my dance regalia," he kept saying. All the way down [to Texas]. We arrived down there and he wanted to shout for joy. He was really feeling it by now. It was early in the morning and he was still two sheets to the wind. "Hègáu è chán gàu hègáu è sép. 'We just arrived and were disembarking from the car.' "Cául hágá chói bá tòm. 'Let's drink some coffee somewhere.'" Boy, he was ready. We finally ran into a restaurant. A fellow was sweeping up the place dè càugàu è bàu:dà 'at the same time we entered that establishment.' We went in there. J.H. liked it so much èm cháthà:dè (he hollered in a big voice).

"Eeeha! Eeeha!"

Damn, that manager threw us out of there fast.

"Hey, ya'll get out of here!"

John Boone jàu, "Damn, guy, bàt sáu:hôl! *You killed it*!"

Given by my mother, the next story is an account my grandmother told about an incident surrounding herself and Dáu:yá, a very tall Kiowa woman who carried herself about in a rather portly manner and who was given to talking loudly and ridiculing people. My grandmother, who was petite and unassuming, did not anger easily, but if she did, she could be real firebrand.

The main point of the story is Dáuyá's mockery about how small and ridiculous my grandmother looked when she was dancing at the Gallup Ceremonies from which they are now enroute from, headed homeward and my grandmother's witty and otherwise sarcastic response to her. I should also point out that the action in the story is picked up where Dáuyá is talking to her husband with whom she is seated next to as he commandeers the car while my grandmother and grandfather are supposedly sound asleep in the back seat.

Story Two

1 Jó:gá. Há:bêl. À dè:hêmà.

2 Há:bêl. Jó:gá, 'á òbàjàu.'

3 Há:bêl-- (she was laughing, making fun of grandma).

4 'Tónthà:bààl èm gúnmàu gàu jólsàui.'

5 (Momma, she's little, you know, and she [the other one] was so tall and

she was making fun of mom who she thought was asleep in the back seat).

6 Hègâu Momma jàu, "Gàu háundé há:bê!

7 Á dè:hêmâ nàu....

8 Èm jâu:bà nàu máu Thàuél bè gúnmàu!"

English Version

1 She [Dáuyâ] said--. She was bothersome, making fun. I was trying to sleep.

2 Bothersome. She said, 'We were counting on her.'

3 Bothersome-- (she was laughing, making fun of grandma).

4 'She danced between our legs even and was so swift.'

5 (Momma, she little and she [the other one] was so tall and she and she was making fun of grandma who she thought was asleep in the back seat).

6 And mom, exasperated, exclaimed, 'How bothersome!'

7 And imagine me trying to sleep and...

8 ...I saw you and you looked just like that Big Spoon jumping around!"

The real punch line is the comparison my grandmother draws between the tall woman and Big Spoon, because he was supposedly an incredibly stupid and foolish person. If somebody compared you with him, you had to be the most wretched human being on

earth. This is the point my grandmother makes in this story told by my mother. It is more a mocking story than a trickster one, but I believe it has features of the trickster tale in that the tone is funny and ironic, and there are undertones of deceit that only a trickster is capable. Dáuyá even looks the part of a trickster. Her demeanor is one of both cunning and sneakiness. She pretends to be a friend when she is really not. She is the kind of person no one should trust. A trickster and a gossip, Dáuyá will make a fool out of her own mother if given the chance. In true trickster spirit, she begins her dirty tricks as soon as her victim looks the other way.

CHAPTER IX

CONTEXTUALIZING AND RECONTEXTUALIZING OLD TEXTS INTO NEW TEXTS

I recorded a storytelling session with Oscar Tsoodle and my dad again at my mother's house sometime in the late summer of 1998 to see if any of the storytelling features I observed the first time had changed or if there was something I had missed. Just like the stories told of old, Oscar and dad were telling stories and framing them with commentary, anecdotes, prior texts, and the Kiowa social context. They were taking prior texts and embedding them into normal conversation so much it was difficult to see where one narrative element left off and the other began. Just as before, the two of them were telling stories in the midst of conversation. They incorporated jokes and humorous accounts into their talk. This time, just like before, I recorded the entire session and let the storytelling develop on its own. Again, what I wanted was for the storyteller(s) to narrate the events as if there was no recording apparatus there and certainly no observer-participant. Furthermore, I wanted only to act as a pair of Kiowa ears and eyes and not an ethnographer of contemporary Kiowa storytelling. This was the only way I knew I could explore storytelling as it really occurs. Storytellers comment on stories and make interpretations as they go along. While the storytelling sessions are always open and the listener may participate anytime, the storyteller generally sets the tone and frames the entire event. As soon as one storyteller concludes, another can automatically begin and so on around the circle of participant-

listeners. In one setting I remember there were as many as a dozen men but only three of whom told stories. The rest sat and listened and interjected comments and discussion. The session was held at the Kiowa Elders Center just before the noon meal. A museum meeting had been scheduled that afternoon and the building buzzed like a beehive. The storytelling group, which incidentally was comprised of relatives and friends, collected in the same corner where John Slow, Wilbur Kodaseet, and Cornelius Spotted Horse always sat. For some reason or another these three men were not in the group but met there the following day when I went back. In any case, the dozen or so men who gathered on that day told many stories, many of them jokes about their brothers-in-law, cousins, and other close relatives. The session was an unplanned event like most storytelling whose end was merely to entertain and create a warm Kiowa atmosphere prior to the museum meeting.

We took a small break that morning at my mother's house so Oscar could smoke. While the grand old Kiowa smoked, dad picked up the conversation. He started by making some comments about Kiowa children, that they were generally all different in the way they behaved nowadays. I believe he made this comment because in his own mind he was wondering why young Kiowas were not like they used to be. One of my father's pet peeves is that Kiowa young people do not uphold their Kiowa traditions. This includes speaking Kiowa, singing, dancing, and generally behaving respectfully in the good old Kiowa way. And this was the general tone of his conversation this day.

"They have their own ways," said my father. It pleased me to hear this because he'd always been adamant about everybody in the family doing certain things that we should as Kiowas. That of course was a long time ago when we were all much younger and there were fewer things to disagree about and the talk was dominated by him or some older members in our family. Nowadays, things were changing for Kiowa families and it seemed that along with modernization even the way parents normally felt about the old ways was changing. Yes, they would all like the children to remain close to home and be Kiowas but they also had to accept the fact that there were no jobs or opportunities for families in the Kiowa community like there were in the 1950s and 1960s, say. One had to grow up and go away to make a decent living. Young Kiowa families tended to be smaller than they used to be and more mobile. It was a normal developmental process that affected all modern American families. And Kiowas were no different than others. And all of this growing up and going away meant that each young Kiowa had his or her own special way of proceeding. Where young Kiowas once listened to all the advice they were given by their parents and grandparents, nowadays they listened to other people in other social settings at school, in the towns, and on television. Nowadays, Kiowas grew up fast and left the community in larger numbers. A few stayed and worked in the small towns or for the federal government where there was ample opportunity. But by and large, a young Kiowa was better off going away to train for a career and then landing a good job in a city far away. Change was inevitable. And I believe it is this tone one hears among Kiowas. Most of the Kiowas I came in

contact with out in the field when I was collecting material for storytelling and who I come in contact with now have accepted that things are different than they used to be but that this is inevitable. By and large Kiowas appear to have a good outlook on life even though it has been very difficult for many in that part of the country where they finally settled permanently around 1890. There aren't as many land holdings as there used to be and soon all of those lands may disappear. The tribe itself is purchasing land that would otherwise be bought by white people in a sometimes vain attempt to maintain some hold on lands that once belonged to the Kiowas, and this is a subject that comes up very often in conversations among Kiowas.

Oscar was talking mostly in Kiowa now, and hearing him talk that way made what he was saying all the more interesting. I warmed up to him quickly this day. I thrilled at the very sound way he intoned Kiowa. He was certainly in command of the language. I felt privileged to be there with Oscar and my father and mother, in their home. There is nothing better in the world, I thought, than listening to the voice of this very important Kiowa relative talk about the family in my own mother's house. I could actually feel the warmth of this union growing up between us all. It grew and spread out and filled all around us like a substance. It was truly the Kiowa way of getting close to your Kiowa family. Kiowas, when they want to get real intimate, speak Kiowa directly to you. Fluent Kiowa speakers, what is left of them, mix in a few English words or phrases but Kiowa is always the dominant language in close circles. You feel comfortable and whole listening as Kiowa is spoken around you. At least I do.

"Hàu," Oscar went, "you and your wife will be by yourselves when your children grow up." We were talking about husbands and wives. He and Dad had just finished talking about children growing up generally. Now Oscar was on the subject of his wife. He had lost his wife about a half a dozen years ago and he now lived by himself mostly. His daughter Tommie and her husband were now living with him but he was still lonely, he said. He said you never get over the companionship you once had.

"I know it," I responded.

Oscar changed the subject by talking about some Kiowa children who, no matter how well they were raised turned out badly. It saddened him, he said, because in spite of how good the parents had been and how well they had raised their many children, many of them had turned out badly. He said that there were too many alcoholics in this one family and he couldn't figure out why. In that family, only one son out of five was alive today. The others had died tragically of alcohol. I could see this disappointed him a lot, as it would any Kiowa elder. One of the saddest things in Kiowa life is when children do not turn out well and Kiowas often talk about this sad state of affairs and it is such an emotional occasion that one is often moved to a long period of silence and reflection, as if a great shadow had come over the land and all had to sit a while, letting the weight of that moment pass before they could proceed. It is an honestly deep emotional experience when Kiowas turn conversation toward something that has affected a Kiowa family in a tragic way. Oscar said it was a sad thing that families ended up tragically and that it was bad. My mother spoke up and talked about people in

the Tenadooah family, that they were not doing so well either, that some of them were living together in the same house until recently and had been thrown out because of alcohol.

"They were all drinking," mom lamented. She mentioned that the youngest one in the family, the one who had apparently taken over the house after their mother died and threw the rest of them out of the house.

"It's no good," said mom. "I don't know what the world's coming to. She's the youngest one. That one. The oldest one left too."

I asked where the oldest one was. Cat.

Oscar answered that she now lives south of Carnegie. "She married a well-to-do Kiowa boy," he explained. "All she is is just a housewife now. She just lives there. She doesn't have to work." He was obviously very happy she had met with good fortune. She'd previously been married but that marriage had dissolved for some reason or another and the family was almost in despair of her ever meeting a good partner.

After he mentioned who had married her, everybody seem cheered about her good fortune. It's good for Kiowa daughters to meet a good man. Kiowas like good husbands for their daughters. If a woman is taken care of, that's the best thing. As my fieldwork progressed during those days I began to notice the patterns that emerged from the sessions: Kiowas are constantly talking about their children or somebody else's. They want their children to have good jobs and to be able to eat well and live in good homes. Like everybody, Kiowas are always happy to see their own children profit

and get ahead. What is so wrong with that?

"'You got it made,'" Oscar said he'd told Cat. "She cusses a lot," he reminded us, and then he turned back into the story and picked up the dialogue he had had with Katy. "'Don't say that *white man*[31] or he'll have to throw you out of the house.'" He was referring to curse words. Kiowa has no curse words. If you curse at all you have to resort to English, and so he was admonishing her about her propensity for the use of foul four-letter words and so on. We all laughed. He was adding more humor. I was relieved that he was. I'd begun to think everything we were going to talk about was going to be too sad and deep. Everytime dad tried to carry the conversation elsewhere, Oscar turned it back around to where he wanted it. He didn't want to have any deep discussion or philosophy right now. That would probably happen soon or later as the conversation transpired, but only after it grew out of conversation naturally, as it should. It didn't take long to get back on a humorous track. No matter how serious a story might be, as I began to see, it doesn't take long for a Kiowa to mention something funny or make up a joke and in so doing let the air out of deep talk. I guess it's just the way many Kiowas look at life. It's a tough life, but you got to take it with a "grain of salt," as they say. He went on to praise Cat's good fortune and went on to show where she lived and all the land her new husband had inherited. At this point, the three of them got on the topic of land and how important it was for Kiowa families. Oscar went into great detail about the land and who lived where around Carnegie. I could see the importance of land and made a note to mention it in my study. I wanted to make sure

that for Kiowas land was important. It was interesting how the topic of one of the children in the family who had met with good fortune turned to other matters about land.

"He don't talk much," Oscar said he told Cat about her husband, as if he knew the man personally. "He's a good provider," he said he told her. "He has a good car. Got good clothing. Got good something to eat. 'You'll ruin everything yourself. He will chase you off if you do.'"

He was of course being humorous and we laughed as he talked. He reminded me of Séndé. In my mind's eye I could see him sitting in front of fire telling a story in trickster fashion to all his human and animal friends. We were his audience, he was the trickster storyteller of old. A true master, Oscar could tell funny and witty stories you didn't know whether were about real events or invented ones. He was a Séndé man, I remember thinking.

"Say, nephew, he said, nudging me in the ribs, "get me an ash tray. Àn dé há:bòp *I'm wanting to be smoking*."

"Hàu." I jumped up and fetched him an ash tray. His Kiowa name is Tabael 'Big Smoke.' I don't know where he got that name but it fits him perfectly.

"Yeah, she was fortunate," he went on. "'God had pity on you for sure I told her.'"

Oscar characteristically had opened his stories with what Greg Sarris called the "vast territory that is oral" (41). And in so doing was not only extending the territory

but also letting the territory "be talked about and explored." Storytelling inevitably was being centered or framed by the social context and commentary. While the stories opened up like this there was also a generous amount of interpersonal and intercultural discourse going on in specific ways. What scholars of oral literatures are looking at more and more, as Sarris observes, are "the broader contexts in which these literatures live." In other words, scholars are considering what lies beyond the spoken word, beyond their own perceptual range as listeners and readers and what that larger context says about their position as literate speakers and writers (Sarris 1997). What they are seeing is the "vast territory" inherent in Native American literatures, what happens naturally and almost effortlessly in oral literature, as it does in serious literature. There isn't that much difference. With Indians, at least with the Kiowas, listeners are almost always being invited to participate in the storytelling itself, to add to, to comment, to interpret and keep the story going. This may also involve adding one's own stories. The storytelling frame allows this kind of discourse to occur. That is one of the unique features in oral storytelling among Indians, this sense that one story is everybody's story.

I enjoyed the subject of Kiowa families in storytelling during this session. But what I found compelling with Oscar was the way he engaged the interest of all of his listeners. The part where he actually recounted the dialogue he had had with Cat was extraordinary. I had heard storytellers use this device before but here it seemed all the more informative, if not entertaining. He used his own tone of voice but struck so

realistic a quality of dialogue he had taken up with Cat that we were almost convinced that we were hearing what went between the two of them just as if it had occurred, live. Storytellers of great skill can affect realism with such ease that it is always a pleasure to hear them tell their stories. While Oscar talked and interjected dialogue and other remarks into his stories I couldn't help but think that I was sitting in the presence of a great Kiowa storyteller.

After we took a short coffee break dad got onto a story about one of his cousins. He began first telling us about B, an old Kiowa storyteller who used to visit at dad's father's house. He was beginning his story first by framing it with details we already knew about in part. He said the old man would stay over a few nights sometimes, and his father would later say, 'He likes to lie a lot but he's good company. That whole family's like that.' It was in this spirit of telling huge fibs and how B was a tall tales maven of sorts that dad wanted to be sure we understood clearly before he gave the following account of his chance encounter with his cousin E, who happens also to be the grandson of B and who, too, can tell some very tall tales.

"I want to tell you a little story," commenced dad:

> Recently, I ventured down there. Down yonder, down over to the Wichita tribal office to eat. And I got my tray of food and wondered, now where shall I sit down? I almost.....they must have thought something.....but then I sat down. [Having spied his cousin E. Who was sitting nearby] "Hello there, brother," I said. He raised up his head, you know. And he started right in talking real loud. And everybody in there was looking our way. No doubt they must have thought we were arguing foolishly or something. He don't know nothing. And then he started

> in telling me a story. He said, "brother." He said, "you like to sometimes go to peyote meetings and stuff. You believe that way, and so I too believe in this Taime (religion)." He wants to have that (Taime religion)... "Hell, you never did go into the Sun Dance or Taime," I said. "What do you know about it? You don't know anymore than I do about it. And I don't know nothing about it." That's what he was telling me over there. That's what he said. He said, "I'm going to have it right there (at my home). No matter if I do it by myself." You know as well as I do, nobody does a Sun Dance alone. How can you figure out somebody like him? He's something else, ain't it?

This rather longish story is humorous. It is meant to poke fun at a relative who has decided to do something stupid: conduct a Sun Dance alone. Now, this is an unheard of occurrence. No respectable Kiowa anywhere in the history of time ever conducted such a ritual Sun Dance-- by themselves! And this is why it is a joke story meant to ridicule and show absurdity. Dad tells it in Kiowa and the effect is even stronger and funnier than the English version here. Still, we get the full intent of the story even in English. Stories, told in a joking way about relatives, almost always require the listeners to be relatives because the listeners are more than likely well-acquainted with the figure in the story. This is what makes the story amusing. Stories generally revolve around relatives who do odd or oftentimes stupid things, like E in the story above. In order for Kiowas to show that this is improper behavior, they will sometimes tell stories about relatives who do unorthodox things as a means to show how improper they have behaved. I don't know if this is the entire reason why dad told this story, but I do know that E is the kind of a person who does do strange things and

his name and stories about some of his mishaps have come up before among Kiowa relatives. These stories always provoke laughter, and in the end the listener usually agrees with the storyteller that the actions perpetrated by someone like E is all but ridiculous in the world of human affairs. In the conversation we were having prior to the story, E's grandfather's name came up as a very good storyteller. One of the things he is remembered for is telling some good old-fashioned "lies." Dad has always said that telling lies runs in that family, and I believe this was essentially what he was reminding us of, not to mention the humor associated with lying. One thing I noted in this story was how it occurred in the midst of normal conversation, like many of the stories Oscar and other Kiowas tell. We were all just talking about relatives and other events when dad decided that this was the best time to tell the story of foolish E and so that story happened without any warning, and was taken in good humor.

As I say, we had a good laugh after dad finished his story as we were expected to. In the good old Kiowa way we had to acknowledge the foolishness there is in talking about something as absurd as trying to pull off a Sun Dance by yourself. A few years ago, a rather young Kiowa woman tried to conduct a Kiowa Sun Dance too. She reportedly went up north and hired a Crow or Northern Cheyenne to help officiate a Sun Dance. That was her first mistake. The other mistake she made was that she was a woman trying to initiate a sacred Sun Dance, an unprecedented act on the part of a Kiowa person. She was not even in the hereditary Sun Dance family. Everything she had dreamed up was so anti-Kiowa that everybody in the tribe was appalled and angry.

Angry voices rose up like stormclouds over land. Much talk crisscrossed like lightning across Kiowa country. Kiowa talk. There were news releases, interviews and all sorts of controversy. I kiddingly mentioned a possible lynching and was soundly reproved at a meeting by one of the woman's relatives. Jeez! A group of Kiowa elders convened a meeting on what to do about it. In the end they tried to put a stop to it, but she filed a motion against the group, claiming they were discriminating against her constitutional right to freedom of religion. She also charged that they were discriminating against her because she was a woman. There were a lot of angry words and hurt feelings among Kiowas that summer. And so as it all ended up, there was no Sun Dance. A cloud of disappointment, which has not quite settled yet, stood over many Kiowas. The last time the Kiowas held a Sun Dance it was in 1888. There had been some talk about reviving the Sun Dance, but nobody had gone this far. What this woman was doing was not only bold but sacrilegious. This was the same kind of event my dad's cousin E was trying to pull off and it was ridiculous in my father's eyes and that's why he was telling us the story. He'd framed it with the reference to the old man B. Kiowas love to recontextualize stories, and this is exactly what dad was doing. They will often go back a good many years and pick up a theme or idea and recontextualize it into a current account in a skillful and often humorous way to make a point. Kiowas love to provoke humor and use irony to do this.

When I asked dad later on why E wanted to revive the Sun Dance, he said E had no sense.

"Nobody can conduct a Sun Dance by themselves," grumbled my father. "It's impossible to!" My dad pulls no boners when it comes to expressing his disappointment fellow Kiowas. If you happen to be in his *own* family? Better look out.

"I wonder why he thought he could do it?" I asked. I'd been thinking about this all along. I knew E and other people were capable of doing just about anything they wanted out there. Kiowas can revive a Sun Dance. I believe it is possible. Perhaps one day they will. It's a matter of time.

"People do all kinds of things. It ain't right. But they try to do it anyway."

The whole idea was ridiculous from the beginning. Kiowas, like any other Sun Dance culture, do things collectively. As a tribe. As a people. When anyone attempts to conduct a sacred service of some kind, it only shows that they are brash or insincere. Someone like the young woman or E. will only provoke ridicule and derision. Kiowas hate being made fun of and so they quickly try to quash silly actions and they do this by telling a story and letting everybody know how they feel about it. "We have to show that this is not the Kiowa way," is the way one Kiowa put it.

Along this same line of thinking, Oscar told the story of a bridge naming ceremony that had occurred recently. This was the same incident Cornelius had referred to earlier but about which he didn't go into detail. It was still a pretty hot Kiowa issue, like many things are in Kiowa country. This also might be considered a ridiculous, if not a downright characteristic, Kiowa irony or "trickster"story, because it has features of both. This story, as I said, pertained to the naming of a bridge west of Carnegie.

The Kiowas at one time held Ghost Dances. The most famous Ghost Dance ground was located on Kiowa lands near a railroad crossing, the subject of this story. Apparently, officers of the Kiowa Museum Board decided the crossing should be named in behalf of one of the Ghost Dance leaders, Sétáfèt:jàu *Afraid of Bears*, to commemorate his good name. In any case, this was ridiculous in Oscar's eyes, because nobody in the tribe recognized Sétáfèt:jàu as anybody except the son of a Mexican captive. In Oscar's eyes the man was a no-count Kiowa and he couldn't figure out why of all the illustrious Kiowas the KMB would choose him.

"You know, over here, out west of town," Oscar began.

> You know, over there where White Fox lives, where people go driving, they're building a bridge...country...and so he came over and said: "Brother, I came for something." He said that. And "Yes," I said. "You came after something?" And he said, "Over there where they're building a bridge." He said "I'd like to dedicate it. To this here man Afraid-of-Bears," he said. And I said, "Do you know who he is?" "Well, I don't know him," he said. "Then why are you doing it?" I said "He's a Mexican. He's a Mexican. Yeah. He's a Mexican man. Like Parker McKenzie. He's one of those," I said. If you're going to dedicate that bridge....you should know somebody. You know old man Little Bead Boy. You know White Fox. You know Louie Toyebo. That bunch," I said. "That's the ones to memorialize. That way you memorialize them, you know. Where they live way back there, you know." But this one, Afraid-of-Bears!
>
> "Over here where they used to hold the Sun Dance--were you there?" He asked me.
>
> "I used to help Grandpa set up camp but I don't remember exactly where," I told him. "I didn't have the foggiest notion about anything back then," I said. I never was inside (the Sun Dance lodge). And I never was close there.
>
> "Let's dedicate it to Afraid-of-Bears somehow."
>
> And I said, "Hell, I don't know him. Afraid-of-Bears

was a Mexican!"

Yeah, now like if they were building this bridge over here--dedicate it to your father-in-law. So you can talk about him. What kind of a man he was. That's good, you know. People knew him. But this Afraid-of Bears--- hell, nobody knew him, you know. Yeah, he's just a little bitty fellow. He was a Mexican like Parker McKenzie. Like Parker McKenzie's grandpa Martinez. [Oscar gestured with his hands to show how tall he was.] He was about this big! Yeah, those are the ones. They were captives. They swapped them off to each others. The Comanches. They got them as hired hands. They trained them. Ones like that. What you want for him? Whiskey? Yeah, they traded for whiskey too. They traded for anything.

This was one of the funniest accounts we'd heard all day and we laughed a great deal about it. He told the story over at least two times to make sure we knew what he was talking about. Just like the oldtimers, he was retelling the same story. He wanted to make sure we knew exactly how it happened. Each time he told it it was slightly different but not that much. The main point he wanted to emphasize was how stupid it was for a Kiowa to try and name (of all things!) a bridge after a Kiowa nobody, in his estimation. I don't believe too many Kiowas knew Afraid-Of-Bears. He is not a great Kiowa leader. One thing that Oscar reminds us of is that if you try to do something like name a bridge after someone in the tribe, make sure it is a person that all, or most, Kiowas recognize as worthy. Doing otherwise will provoke ridicule. This is a Kiowa lesson to refrain from doing stupid things, because people will make fun of you.

I asked Oscar to explain a little more about how Kiowas traded implements and other things for hired help. He laughed and said it was true. As far as he was

concerned, you could trade anything for a Mexican hired hand.

"They traded for them Mexicans. Them Kiowas. Anything. You could trade for anything back then. You get them for hired hand. The Comanches got them for anything. Yeah. They trade. At Zóltò̲ *Stinking Creek*, your grandpa had one. My aunts got cross with us if we spoke to the hired hands around the house. They didn't want us to say anything out of the way to them, or be teasing them. 'Leave them alone,' they used to tell us. Àn bét a̲u:dèp *They were mean*. But we knew how to talk to them. We had our own ways of talking to each others. We talked to them when nobody was watching."

"They had their own way of talking to each other," dad said. He was trying to explain what Oscar meant when he said, 'We had our own ways.' Apparently, the aunts didn't want the boys to bother the Mexicans. They thought they were making fun of them perhaps. But, as Oscar put it, they had our own ways of communicating with one another. They understood each other is what he meant. It was like so much of Kiowa storytelling. The teller and listener were clued into what was going on or else the story went nowhere. You had to be a good listener to know what was going on in storytelling. You had to learn how to be a good Kiowa listener. This developed over the years, so that when you began telling your own stories you were an expert at telling because you knew how the listener had to take part in the story, to make it come out right. In the same manner, the young boys in the family found a way to talk to the Mexican hired hands. They pretty much had their aunts fooled, in other words.

"They hired them to cut wood, carry water," Oscar went on telling us about the Mexican hired hands. "They do just about everything. They kept them. They traded for them with the Comanches. They came this way to us."

While we were talking dad mentioned Ándélé, the famous Mexican Kiowa captive who got on the Kiowa rolls had inherited land just like any Kiowa. He was foolish and selected the worst land around. His allotment, which was located south of Verden, turned out to be all sandrock.

Mom laughed. She hadn't said very much all morning and I was glad she was talking more now. The conversation had opened up enough for her to make a few comments and this was what she wanted to do. She said she grew up when there were lots of Mexican hired hands in Kiowa homes and remembered Ándélé well, whom her parents had kept for many years. She obviously knew lots of stories about the hired hands and him Ándélé. I'd heard his name many times when growing up. They were quite fond of him around the Tenadooah household. Grandpa and grandma treated Ándélé like a son. All of the Tenadooahs cared about Andele.[32]

"His lands were worthless," declared mom. Without saying it she was implying that Ándélé was such a fool he didn't even know the difference between good land or bad land. He was apparently a lot like a *shlemiel*, that Yiddish term describing "An unlucky person; a born loser" (Rosen 1982). Rosen describes the *shlemiel* as someone who "falls on his back and breaks his nose" (286). As it turned out, Ándélé was allotted two quarters of land that consisted almost entirely of sandrock. This must have given

rise to many jokes in Kiowa circles. I could imagine many of his relatives laughing about his poor choice. Remarks might have gone something like this (said of course in Kiowa): *How could that old thing do such a stupid thing! Didn't he even know what he was doing? What an ignoramus!*

"But nobody could tell him he'd made a dumb mistake," mom continued, still seemingly irritated after all these years. "All of it was sandrock. Can you believe that? Rocks! All of it. It's all sandrock south of Verden, you know. Can you tell me who would choose such lands?"

She of course was speaking Kiowa and it all came out very funny and we all laughed. We got a good laugh out of her small contribution, and I made a note to myself to ask her to tell me some of her own personal stories the next time we got together which she did several times that summer and the following year. Without even trying mom was a superb Kiowa storyteller. I remember some of the stories she used to tell me in Kiowa when I was a kid. They were always comical anecdotes about grandpa and grandma or some of our other relatives. Below is one of them.

The Story of Ábò:à: (They-Saw-Him-Coming-Along)

1 Ém gúnmàu, jó:gá.

2 Jógú:dáu ém gúnmàu.

3 Ém Tó:kó:gá:gùnmàu, jó:gá.

4 She [grandpa's sister] was bragging about her brother-in-law Ábò:à.

5 Ém gúnmàu. Hègáu gáp ét gúnmàu gàu ául bé cí:nyi:.

6 She [my aunt] was telling my dad.

7 She was bragging about her brother-in-law dancing. Nà:hó's brother.

8 Dad helped her make the stèory. He said, "Gàu há:bê!

9 Á xá:dè gàu á cyǫ́i!"

10 Jógú:dáu è dáu gàu è sólèdàu gàu bét dólbé.

11 Nàu hàjél dáu?

12 Éhàudé Í:!

English Version

1 They were dancing, he said.

2 Those young men were dancing.

3 They were Blackleggings dancing, he said.

4 Your grandpa's sister Abbie Daingkau was bragging about her brother-in-law Ábǫ̀:à.

5 They were dancing. They proceeded in the opposite direction and their hair was looooong flowing down their backs.

6 My aunt was telling my dad.

7 She was braging about her brother-in-law dancing. Naho's brother.

8 Dad helped her make the story. He said: "You're bothering me!

9 They were dancing and they were soooo tall and soooo good-looking."

10 Who is your brother-in-law?

11 *Your* son!

After my visit with Oscar and my parents, I wanted to see if Kiowa storytellers shared some of the same storytelling features with other storytellers and so I visited with Carol Willis, who is another member of the Tenadooah family. Like mom, Carol was a Tenadooah in every possible way imagined, and she loved to tell humorous family stories to relatives in small, intimate gatherings. Her grandmother, who was my grandfather's sister, was a person of few words. Like me, Carol grew up in the same community and we know all our relatives, especially the old ones and remember many wonderful times when they were all alive and we visited each other's homes and spent many hours telling stories, visiting, and laughing. Although there were many sad times, we could not remember so many compared to the good times, and that day I visited and recorded our visit I was thinking about these things and this was essentially what we talked about.

Members of the Tenadooah family as a whole love to tease and joke with one another, as seen with Oscar, my father and mother. I had seen some patterns in how Kiowas told stories and looked forward to talking to other relatives.

Carol Willis is a cousin of mine, the daughter of the late James and Winnie Tapedo of Carnegie. She grew up hearing Kiowa spoken daily. When I called her and asked if she would participate in my field study of Kiowa storytelling, she agreed instantly.

"I always knew you could do that with our family," she replied happily when I told her I had been recording contemporary stories with some of our relatives and

including them in my dissertation. We had worked together some years ago when she was the director of the Indian Education program in the Oklahoma City public schools. Not only is she knowledgeable about educational matters regarding young Indians everywhere, she is also a fluent Kiowa speaker. I find the two of us speaking more and more Kiowa everytime we meet, and this time when I talked to her she was overflowing with Kiowa words. Like me, she lives in the greater Oklahoma City metro area and it is difficult to locate any Kiowa speakers with whom to speak, and so whenever we meet our talk is always animated and warm, full of Kiowa expressions and joy.

After we talked a while about our Tenadooah family and storytelling, she told me a story about one of our grandpas, J.O., who was my grandfather's younger brother and someone whom I was exceedingly close to and loved very much.

"You remember that old arbor back home?" Carol started out.

"Yes, I do," I said. "It's the one where we all used to gather and eat and visit. It was the best looking arbor around."

"Yeah, my grandpa had it built. It had a sidewalk leading up to it. There was a cooking facility attached to it just like the willow arbors used to have. You remember them?"

"How could I forget. It was so big and cool. I remember late night visits and feasts in the summer. You all practically lived in it all summer."

"I know it. We could all sit around and even sleep in there. We did live in there all summer like a lot of Kiowas did back then. Everybody had an arbor. The bigger the

better. Well, one time we were all gathered out there with grandpa J.O. and he was talking about how jelly bean somebody looked. 'Everytime I see my folks they're just jelly bean,' he laughed. He was always saying that."

Jelly bean was an expression J.O. liked to use to describe someone who dressed flashily. Carol thought it was so funny when he expressed the term in Kiowa, and that was the beauty of that story.

"You know we learned a lot from them, didn't we?" I put in.

"We sure did. Dang, it was our schooling."

"Oh, by the way," I said. "When I was talking to John Tofpi, we got onto the subject of Cedar Dale country school and he told me he went there when he was a boy. He went to Cedar Dale before he went to Carnegie. Isn't that amazing? I didn't know that old country school was that old."

We both laughed about the fact that almost everyone of our relatives at one time or another darkened those narrow, wooden halls that led to that one huge classroom where about thirty or more children of all ages gathered each school day until it closed down in the early 1960s. My cousins and I teased about that school. It was a kind of embarrassment to matriculate at Cedar Dale. I never attended it, but many of my Tenadooah cousins did. I remember the times we would drive up into that driveway on the school bus from town to turn around and how everybody would duck behind a bush or around the corner of the school house so they wouldn't be seen and teased.

"Yeah, I went there too," she boasted like it was a privilege only reserved for

the very special.

I laughed and told her lots of our family went to school there.

"You can say that again. It was rebuilt in 1928, after it was destroyed by that tornado around 1927 or so. You remember that big storm?"

"I sure do," I said. I wasn't alive during that time but I had heard about it a million times. It was the biggest event that ever happened out there because it killed some Kiowas. Grandpa told a story about it many times. It had apparently destroyed many Indian homes and killed an important medicine man's wife. Lonebear. Lonebear and my grandfather had had some kind of disagreement.[33] The old medicine man gave him fits by chasing him in his dreams. "In my dreams he chased me, " grandpa said. "Even under the water. I couldn't get away from him. He was zélbé. Powerful. He had his power in that single braid he wore behind his head. Storm ripped it off him and destroyed his house. It killed his wife too. Hôl." I believed him, because I had heard what kind of power that old Kiowa man possessed.

> That Storm Spirit told me in my dream: "look at that man there," jǫ́:gá.
>
> I saw him sitting there. He was looking the other way. The Storm Spirit went behind him. "I'm going to show you what I can do," the Storm Spirit jàu *said*. "I'm going to take everything away from him." And it did. It even took his medicine from behind his head. That braid. It ripped it off like a piece of paper. You see what I mean?

He had told me one of those dream stories just like John Tofpi had. Another term used to describe these kinds of stories is *magical realism*, where the supernatural is combined

with realism. This is done so skillfully in storytelling that it is often hard to identify stories that are magical but at the same time real life events. Grandpa loved telling these kinds of stories. Many of his stories were about magical or supernatural events and encounters between people or animals or things. When I asked him why these things happened, he would mostly say that was how things were. Because I was so young I was often a little afraid, but I always let on like I wasn't. Even though he told me the old powers were now all gone I was often afraid that maybe they were not. I liked to ask him questions about these unnatural things because they interested me, but I believe he would only tell me what he thought I could understand. The rest he left up to my imagination. And so when Carol told me about the 1927 tornado that devastated that part of the country, grandpa's story about old Lonebear came to mind. It seems pretty well-established right now that Kiowas tell stories about events, places, and people that hold their interest and become a part of the collective Kiowa consciousness. Kiowas never forget the stories because they are a part of their collective tribal memory and remind tribal members what it is to be Kiowa. They also instruct Kiowas on what is good or bad. Of course it is necessary to remember the consequences of wrongdoing and evil, that to choose the wrong action or say the wrong words can be a person's undoing. Grandpa, as long as he lived and breathed air, kept my imagination alive with stories of remembrance and the Kiowa way of life.

"Yeah, that storm was devastating," Carol said, reminding me of the Storm Spirit and his awesome powers. "It ruined lots of Kiowa homes around here. Cedar

Dale was spared." She paused. "We all went to Cedar Dale when I was a kid."

"Tenadooah Academy," I laughed.

"Really."

We reminisced about the old school and how it had played an active part in our lives. She thought it had done the family good. She saw how it had helped to keep the children focused on education and a changing world, that things Kiowa were good but changing rapidly. I agreed. We talked about some of our cousins and how they had fared since that time. Most of the old homeplaces are gone. If you drive by the old home sites you can sometimes see remnants of old houses, a few standing brick chimneys, slabs of concrete or the dome of a cellar half-buried in tall johnson grass. Sometimes the posts of old barbwire fences stick up in the sky like the bleached bones of some prehistoric animal.

"They had allotments around there," I said. "Rather than attend the public school in town, a lot of our cousins went to Cedar Dale. There was this kind of joke about Cedar Dale."

"You can say that again. We were just teasing though."

"Yeah. I know. We all made fun of that country school, but it was the central educational institution out there in the 1940s, 1950s, and the early 1960s, when it was inactivated. One of my cousins, Calvin, never got out of the eighth grade. He wasn't too bright, as I recall. He attended, I believe, about twelve years, repeating some of the same grades over again because they didn't know what else to do with him. He would

sometimes tell us about his lessons and the old school teacher who he didn't get along with. I don't know where they dug her up but she taught at Cedar Dale for many years. Somebody said she just shriveled up and blew away."

After Carol and I finished talking and decided on which day we would meet again, I made a mental note to ask her to tell more stories about Cedar Dale. Because that school played such a major part in the lives of the Tenadooah family, I wanted to be sure we covered as many aspects of that memorable old place as we could. There were dozens of stories about that school and I wanted to see how many different stories Carol knew. As always, I wanted to see how our own family told stories of remembrance. I wanted to see what patterns there were in our family storytelling. I wanted to see how we recontextualized the stories from previous experiences and story elements, just like the people used to do in the Bible. I wanted to know what social conditions informed our stories or how all that tribal context came to inform us about our own Kiowaness. In the stories I'd recorded with John Tofpi, I'd detected some recontextualization of characters, themes, and other story features into new contexts. That is, he'd taken some characters out of some old Kiowa stories, 'prior texts,' and embedded them into contemporary ones. Recontextualizing characters from old sources into the new was what M.M. Bakhtin (1981, 1986) had in mind when he was trying to make sense out of the features in the novel. *Chronotope*,[34] is the term he used to describe recontextualized figures in stories. It is a [space-time]term he borrowed from mathematics. "This term," Bakhtin writes, "is employed in mathematics, and was

introduced as part of Einstein's Theory of Relativity" (84). In his chapter "Forms of time and of the Chronotope in the Novel," he writes that its special meaning "in relativity theory is not important for our purposes; we are borrowing it for literary criticism almost as a metaphor (almost, but not entirely). What counts for us is the fact that it expresses the inseparability of space and time...We understand the chronotope as a formally constitutive category of literature; we will not deal with the chronotope in other areas of culture" (84). What his theory attempts to do in literature, as near as I can understand it, is to take "widely separate periods of time" and put them together in a time realm of "story." This can include the treatment of characters, dialogue, and other kinds of features that make up stories. We can, for example, take a character like Sende and put him into the middle of any contemporary story if we like, and that is utilizing the feature of the *chronotope*. This treatment of figures in stories can be traced to many Native American stories today, including contemporary Kiowa. *Darkness in Saint Louis Beartheart* and *The Heirs of Columbus* are two examples of the trickster novel where the literary chronotope is treated effectively by a contemporary Indian novelist.

On my later visits with Carol, which sadly were too short, we talked some about people we knew back home who exemplified some character traits of the trickster. "So and so is like Sende" and stuff like that. What it really came down to was that we grandpas were telling trickster stories all along and had not the foggiest notion that they were incorporating features that only recently the literary establishment had discovered.

My conclusion is this: in their own way, Kiowas are precursors of some of the literary excitement that seems to be going on everywhere these days. I can't help but think that this is putting a new light on how we look at Native American literature. I can't help but feel good about it, that it is a positive force and can make all the difference in how we think about literature, particularly literature in this country, and Indian people.

What I have tried to do in the past chapters is draw some conclusions about how Kiowas tell stories. Among the storytelling features that emerge are the framing features that seemingly enclose the text. This does not exclude the social or tribal context, an aspect without which Kiowa storytelling could not occur. Kiowas tell stories in the midst of ordinary conversation without warning. These stories occur so unexpectedly that it is sometimes hard to know where a story starts or ends, as it is planted so firmly in conversation. It is difficult to tell if these stories are true or not, and they often portray unusual or dreamlike people, creatures, and animals, making the stories fantastic or magical creations. There are stories which open and remain open so the listener is able to interact directly with the storyteller by adding comments, asides, stories, interpretations, or any number of responses or remarks that add to the story to make it grow. Stories are often told in small, intimate groups, usually made up of relatives and/or close friends.

Other storytelling elements that occur in Kiowa storytelling are prior texts and embedding elements, as well as Bahktinian chronotope. Often one cannot tell if a story

is about a real event or supernatural dream. These magical realism stories invoke the real, super-real or fantastic. These very charged storytelling features make the stories surreal at best. They demonstrate some unusual, if not often understood, ways stories evolve in oral texts. To understand the nature of contemporary Kiowa storytelling it will be necessary for scholars to extend the study by going out into the field where storytelling occurs and engage themselves dialogically in the storytelling process, for by no means has the understanding of oral storytelling been exhausted.

Finally, oral storytelling, Kiowa or not, is an important contribution to literature, all literature. American literature is incomplete without the literatures of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. I believe the question of whether these literatures are serious literature or not has already been asked and answered to some extent. The emergence of American Indian literature in this part of the world could be one of the most important, if not the most exciting, literary events in these times.

*

When I visit with Carol Willis, she tells me a little more about her own family background. During these visits she tells me how difficult it was for her to speak Kiowa. Like me, she has lived away from her Kiowa family and community for a good number of years. Such an absence can cause a decline in the skillful speaking of language not only for Kiowas but for many other tribes. Many Kiowas who have moved out of Kiowa country have all but completely lost the Kiowa language.

"When two young Kiowas meet these days," I say, "it is almost certain they will

not be communicating in Kiowa."

Carol agrees.

*

This day Carol and I have no more than lamented the condition of the Kiowa language when suddenly she remembers something someone told her that was humorous and she wants to tell me as well as she can in Kiowa. The story she wants to tell me comes quickly in the midst of conversation, and she struggles to tell every bit of it in Kiowa.

According to Big Ox's wife:

1 Jé: sa̲:dàu dét chán.

2 Gát fi:pátcá gàu gúp è tép.

3 Ém páuá:jóyàia̲u:màu gàu bét véfàu:dà.

4 Háundé ó:dé ét yáia̲u:màu nàu à qòmta̲:!

5 À jò:chán gàu náuál háyáàl dè gúnmàu, sa̲:dàu áugàu én jàu:dèchò.

6 Gi̲gàu dè hâ:jàu, à a̲u:dèp, né e̲ tâ:bà:àu:dèp!

English Version

1 All our children came over.

2 We ate and went outside.

3 They began to play ball and having a wonderful time.

4 How they began to play volleyball! And I envied them.

5 I went home and tried to jump and play like they did.

6 The following morning when I tried to get out of bed I had lots of difficulty!

The punch line is not in the content itself. It resides in the language. It is the way Big Ox's wife put it in Kiowa that is humorous, especially the part where she says she had trouble getting out of bed. Said in Kiowa, that's funny: Hègáu káhí:gáu né tâ:bà:àu:dèp. 'I had great trouble getting up.' The humor is in the way you say tâ:bà:àu:dèp, e.i., 'rise up,' as in getting out of bed and 'difficulty to do it.' Getting out of bed this way brings to mind someone who is very old or infirm, someone so crippled they can barely manage to sit up. An elderly Kiowa might say this to somebody to explain their own physical condition, and I am sure every Kiowa grandchild can remember either a grandmother or grandfather making such a remark, that it was so funny that everytime they think about it they have a good laugh. When put in that context and how a grandmother might look and the incredibly funny way they say things in the company of their grandchildren, Kiowas cannot help but get tickled. This ability to summon up what Becker (1995) calls a "prior text" can make Kiowa storytelling an unforgettable moment. Emphasized by Bakhtin, this recontextualizing procedure is easily transmitted to or is fitted into a contemporary narrative. In Bakhtin's view, "genres are strongly dialogic," i.e., a "single stripe of talk (utterance, text, story) can juxtapose language drawn from, and invoking, alternative cultural, social and linguistic home environments, the interpenetration of multiple voices and forms of utterance" (Duranti and Goodwin). Different voices or "dialogic texts" summon up "different

cultural, historical and personal perspectives" (Foley). What Big Ox's wife was doing was bringing up how her grandmother said funny things and then fitted it into her own story. It is an amazing narrative skill, and takes many years to master. One has to understand the kinds of contexts where these utterances occur in order to appreciate their full import. Having grandmothers who say silly things is important here, because this is where one hears humorous uses of language. It only takes a little imagination and memory to recapture how grandma used to say comical things, repeat them, and make everybody laugh. This storytelling skill is not confined to just grandmothers. Grandfathers and other relatives employ similar, if not the same, techniques.

Carol tells another very short story in Kiowa before we wrap up an afternoon of recording. It is one sentence long. It was told to her by her uncle Ruben Topaum, who used to work with her in the Oklahoma City Schools before she retired. She says it was payday and Ruben was so happy they had gotten paid that day he told her in Kiowa:

1 Hábâlchò à témdàu nàu chóiàl ę́ thą́i:dáu.

2 I was so broke that even my coffee came out white.

Now, if you are old and Kiowa and down on your luck you might say such a thing. Reuben is around eighty years of age, and does not strike me as a Kiowa elder in the truest sense of that word. He is a War World II veteran and has seen action overseas and been decorated as an outstanding soldier. He is kindly and a very likeable and funny person whom I have had the pleasure to have known. When we see each other, he is always happy to see me and always greets me in Kiowa and we reminisce

the old days back home around Carnegie. He is without equal when it comes to telling jokes and funny stories. The rather very short story or joke he tells above is a really a modern "classic," if there is such a thing. It is so because it carries words, ideas, themes and images you might have easily shared with others growing up around old people. Kiowas have developed a knack for putting ironic or unusual occurrences into striking remarks like one-liner jokes or terse witticisms. They are very Kiowa, if that's the proper way to identify them. That is, they reflect a kind of wry attitude toward hardship like poverty, pain, shame, and anger. I don't know why it is but Kiowas will often stare right into the face of great adversity as if to taunt it. Who knows why! Is this what counting coup did for a warrior? I detected some of the same tendencies I am describing in other Kiowas during my fieldwork. I of course knew this or sensed it over the years when I was in contact with my people on a more regular basis.

But to get back to Reuben's story, I must say that his catchy remark carries about as much humor and energy as an Eddie Murphy or Rodney Dangerfield one-liner. Such is the power of these "mini-stories." Said in Kiowa, they provoke a nostalgic memory of someone close making such a remark long ago. For me, that is where the genuine appeal is.

CHAPTER X

LAST WORDS

Through storytelling, we can project ourselves outside the confinement of time. This is what makes storytelling--mythmaking--so interesting.

Momaday

One day I got to thinking about John Tofpi's dream again. As time drew on I was getting bolder about asking him and the rest of my consultants storytelling questions. They were becoming more talkative. I believe they were beginning to see what I was trying to do and I think they wanted to help me. I appreciated their concern and know that without these wonderful and informative Kiowas I wouldn't have gotten anywhere. So far, everything was coming along well and I was taking voluminous notes and reading many related articles and books about the oral storytelling genre. I was reading Richard Bauman quite a bit and Keith Basso. But there were many other helpful texts and I was going from recordings, interviews, chit-chat, and storytelling, back to the texts and so forth. It was exhilarating to try and make some meaningful connections, and I was feeling more self-assured as time went along. With this in mind I drove over to the Kiowa Elders Center. I thought I might ask John to tell me more about his fascinating dream story again. As I pointed out before, at first, I couldn't tell if he had actually dreamed the story or if it was a real incident. It was a magical realism story of sorts. This time he sort of rambled on about the dream and I didn't want to interrupt him by asking him if he'd actually dreamed the story and then walked down to

that bridge so he could locate that tree and pray as he said he had. I thought "What on earth would he be doing way down there next to the creek by our house praying anyway? And what should I care that he saw my son and me walking on the road close by? There is nothing particularly Kiowa about that. He simply enjoyed walking way out there near a place where he grew up." Sáuibé *Slow*. This must have put him in that prayerful state of mind. This way, too, it could make his dream meaningful, like dreams are meaningful to Kiowas for the most part. Maybe he concentrated better that way, I thought. I thought about asking him why he did it, but then I changed my mind thinking it wasn't an appropriate thing to ask. He'd simply thought once and for all that when he told me the dream I'd understand everything because that's how things were. That was being Kiowa as far as he was concerned. This was perhaps due in part to the fact that we were Kiowas and Kiowas often tell personal narratives which undoubtedly belong to some realm of human understanding only Kiowas are supposed to understand. There are events that are as ordinary as sitting down, talking, standing up and walking. So it is the same with this going somewhere away from your house to pray or think or whatever it is one wants to do. My grandfather even did this early in the mornings when he'd get up and walk out by the creek to pray. I would lie awake listening to him going, going. Out there on the creek bank. Then it would be that his voice would go out over the land, as far away as anybody could imagine, to confront the known or unknown, perhaps the inscrutable. Yes, that was it. To know yet not know. That was an important question to ask one's self. Did he not say so in his dream? That the tree

"looked like an outstretched hand," in an attitude of supplication. Did he not even show me how it looked by extending his own hand outwardly and cupped?. "Like that," he had said. That done, he had looked at me a long time as if searching for a sign of recognition. A recognition of what?. To get my reaction, I imagine. No doubt about it, in his own mind he had been witness to a kind of miracle, and I think he wanted me to show some appreciation for it.

"See?" he went on as if to re-enforce what he'd told me over several times already. "Just like that it looked." Like any good Kiowa, he was equating that dream to a vision of real and true worth.

He looked at me and studied me over for a long time and then said, "It was something, huh?"

"Yeah," I replied. "It sure was."

What else was I supposed to say? He expected me to respond and I did. I could tell he wanted me to know that this was no imaginary happening or fluke, but a real incident, just like Momaday had pointed out in his Ko-sahn story in 1970 at a Princeton literary symposium. John Tofpi wanted to be absolutely sure that I knew where he stood on this important matter of the dream. I'd heard Kiowas tell stories when I was growing up and this was one of those stories. It was too important and meaningful to let go. You had to be certain that whoever heard your story knew exactly how it occurred and how it affected you. That's what was important. As far as John was concerned, or any good Kiowa storyteller, for that matter, you had to tell the whole story, which

meant your own understanding and commentary on it as you recounted it. And if you were a really good storyteller, you had to make sure your listener was with you all the way. You made sure by asking questions like: Is this so? Is this how it is? Yes? No? Right? This is what my fâbí *brother* Sáuibé was trying to get at that afternoon sitting on the sofa at the Kiowa Elders Center this second-- or was it a third?--go at the dream story. He was bringing me into the realm of his consciousness and being the good old Kiowa way. The way Kiowas are supposed to tell a story. My grandfather talked about similar revelations in his own dreams. I've heard him go on about what he'd seen in his dream and how it equated with this or that in real life and so on and you didn't know where one part of the story left off and the other started up again.

For a listener from outside of the Kiowa tribal context it can be difficult to follow a Kiowa story, and very often, maddening. Elsie Clews Parsons (*Kiowa Tales*) must have struggled a great deal trying to interpret the Kiowa narratives she collected and published in 1929. If you read the stories closely it becomes clear that she didn't have the interest or concern in magical realism, which is one of the chief features in Kiowa stories. Consider the following excerpt:

> My brother Hoseptai (gun walking), is a medicine man. I do not know how he became one. I think he had a dream. He did not go to the mountain to fast.
>
> He was asked by a White man to cure his wife. She...

There are no details given as to how he became a medicine man. There are no subliminal encounters or voices speaking out of the rocks or clouds. It is just a straight

forward narrative. Parsons has just simply let the story unravel without any elaborations, which may be a better method than Carlos Castenada attempted. There are other samples like this one but not necessary to include here. In his biography, Desley Deacon (1997) tells us that Parsons's "first interest as an anthropologist was in Pueblo Indian culture and the American Southwest..."(21). Her true interest was not in language or oral literatures and may account for the bad translations in the Kiowa work.

It appears that Indian narratives were up for grabs pretty much around the time Parsons came out with Tales. For instance, C.F. Lummis came out with Pueblo Indian Folk Stories in 1910. Franz Boas published Kutenai Tales in 1918. Robert Lowe published Myths and Traditions of the Crow Indians about the same time. In 1919, William Jones published Ojibwa Texts, Volume 2. In 1926, George Grinnell published By Cheyenne Campfires, and in the following year Elsie Clews Parsons published Tewa Tales (1927), followed in 1929 by Kiowa Tales respectively. Lastly, Ruth Benedict (1931) published Cochiti Tales.

Alice Marriott spent some time with the Kiowas studying their culture and writing about it. She published *Winter-Telling Tales* in 1947. These are Sende trickster stories. They are authentic but she takes liberties with the language and makes her own interpretations. Note the following passage:

> As Saynday was coming along, he met some of the animals. There were Fox and Deer and Magpie. They were all sitting together by

a prairie dog hole, talking things over.

In the original Kiowa story, these animals had not even met, much less spend time "talking things over." The animals just show up at the place where the strange beings live and are playing with the sun. One of the animals in the troupe, a fox, enters, the games and kóbéhâfè "took away" the sun from them. In Marriott the animals are trying to find some way to get the sun. These animals are "thinking" over how they can solve their problem. In many traditional Kiowa stories, as well as other Indian stories, much action is unmotivated action. Things occur often for no apparent reason. In Marriott's story, however, we find Séndé and the animals "sitting around planning" or strategizing how they will accomplish their goal. In the original Kiowa story they simply come together and go and *take away* the sun, presumably on behalf of the Kiowas. They are not cuddly, cute animals like the kinds you find in Disneyland. These are wild animals with very sharp teeth, and they will bite humans and eat them up if given the chance. These are not fairytale critters. They are not concerned with teaching moral values or how people ought behave. Séndé and his entourage simply want light in the land, and they mean to get it anyway they can. What drives the original Séndé story springs from the Kiowa mind. When one reads Marriott's translated stories, something natural and Kiowa is missing. One gets something one might fine in an Aesop's fable or a Grimm's fairytale. Marriott seems intent on justifying certain actions in stories as if she knows the difference when she does not.

In another passage of the same story, we find Deer complaining to Séndé that:

> We don't like the darkness," to which Saynday responds, "What's wrong with the darkness?" Deer answers, "It won't let things live and be happy."

I have never heard such a line in the original story. I would ask Marriott how she came up with such lines, especially the part where the deer replies, "It [the darkness] won't let things live and be happy." Since when did Kiowas use terms implying happy or happiness? Such terms do no exist in Kiowa. This does not mean that Kiowas lack in feelings of joy or happiness. Kiowas feel and express deep feelings like any other humans. They just don't say things like "happy" in the way some people do. Marriott puts words and sentiments into the mouths of characters at will, it would appear. The question is: Who benefits from this and why? Not only is Marriott taking liberties with original texts, she is also misrepresenting Kiowas. She leads readers into thinking Kiowas "think" or "feel" in ways that are uncharacteristically Kiowa.

Authors have often taken too many liberties with Indian texts. They have often made changes whenever and wherever they want. To do this hastens the demise of what is original and rare. We do not want to see "the Indian...pushed out of the way, confined in unseen corners of the territory," as Greg Sarris (1993) puts it.

I had set down the last of the old Kiowa tales, and I had composed both the historical and autobiographical commentaries for it. I had the sense of being out of breath, of having said what it was in me to say on that subject. The manuscript lay before me in the bright light, small to be sure, but complete; or nearly so. I had written the second of the two poems in which that book is framed. I had uttered the last word, as it were. And yet a whole, penultimate piece was missing. I began once again to write...For some time I sat looking down at these words on the page, trying to deal with the emptiness that had come about inside of me. The words did not seem real. I could scarcely believe that they made sense, that they had anything whatsoever to do with meaning. In desperation almost, I went back over the final paragraphs, backwards and forwards, hurriedly. My eyes fell upon the name Ko-sahn. And all at once everything seemed suddenly to refer to that name. The name seemed to humanize the whole complexity of language. All at once, absolutely, I had the sense of the magic of words and of names. Ko-sahn, I said, and I said again KO-SAHN.

Then it was then that ancient, one-eyed woman Ko-sahn stepped out of the language and stood before me on the page. I was amazed. Yet it seemed to me entirely appropriate that this should happen (N. Scott Momaday, 1970).

The point Momaday is getting at is that storytelling, written or unwritten, requires an act of the imagination, and in imagining the storyteller can bring into life anything imagined. So Ko-sahn, who Momaday imagines, has a "consummate" and whole being in the story just as John Slow's vision has in his. Nobody asks Momaday whether his encounter with Ko-sahn is real or imagined. There is no need to. He presents his encounter as real. Later on in his talk he adds that he questions her existence himself to which she rebukes him roundly. 'You imagine that I am here in this room, do you not?' She says. 'That is worth something. You see, I have existence, whole being, in your imagination. It is but one kind of being, to be sure, but it is perhaps the best of all kinds. If I am not here in this room, grandson, then surely neither are

you' (49-50).

Every story my grandfather told me had elements of the imaginary and real in it. I never thought back then to ask him if it was real, because to me everything was real. When he told me the story of old man Tenadooah going up on top of Mount Sheridan and how the mountain boomer that was "big as a greyhound" confronted him and fussed at him to leave, I believed it. He did too. His father would not make up such a tale, because he was not a man who lied. It wasn't in his character to. Kiowas will ridicule such a man. When grandpa's father got blown off the mountain four times, he plunged fifteen hundred feet to the granite floor below. My grandfather's own story about his dream of the spirit man in the hospital was magical and real too. He told me saw the spirit, he felt its presence. He dialogued with it. It actually happened, as far as he was concerned, and that became the story. Momaday was encountered by the old woman Ko-sahn. Whether anybody believes this or not, is immaterial, because to Scott it did happen. That is the story.

As a further condition for making something appear as true or real, we add a little mystery by telling things at special times of the year or at night. The theatre and opera are traditionally performed in the evening. Tedlock says, "we ourselves confine most drama (whether stage, screen, or television), except for highly realistic soap operas, to the night, and we tend to confine horror (both on screen and television)to late night; moreover, except for summer repeats on television we confine drama largely to the winter" (164). Somehow this lends itself to our sense of something being real. We

do not question the authenticity of human expression or feeling in the arts. Our sense of reality is somehow altered and we generally believe what we observe on the stage or on screen because that is one of the conditions of the aesthetic expression. This is not a farfetched concept, and it is worthwhile. When the same kind of ideas are brought to the oral narratives, there should not be a question but that what is occurring has real human worth and satisfies through the profound human emotions it arouses in people.

When I asked my grandfather if he really believed that Tąimé rose up in a cloud of smoke the last time the Kiowas performed the Sun Dance, he looked at me and smiled and said in Kiowa, "What do you think?" In his own way he was putting me in a position to inquire into a belief system. It didn't matter whether what he was telling me in the story was real or true or not. What really mattered was that I understood the meaning of such an event. If it happened or not didn't matter. I just needed to have some contact with it, real or unreal, imagined or not. Being Kiowa means one must listen carefully to stories and be involved *in* them, as Momaday was with his and Ko-sahn. When he asks her if she was really there in the room with him when he imagined her in his story, she turned the question around and asked him if he was in fact in the room himself. Similarly, when you are a Kiowa if what he or she tells in a story really happened, be prepared to be told in turn "If what happens in this story does not seem to really exist, then surely neither do Kiowas."

Sound System of the Kiowa Language

Laurel Watkins was the last important contact Parker McKenzie had with the outside world before he died in 1999. Their association began in the fall of 1977. The amount of work accomplished by both Watkins and McKenzie on the Kiowa language is enormous and I believe the most significant to date. I am well-acquainted with the McKenzie writing system and have applied that system in this study. The following description of the sound system and writing of Kiowa is taken almost wholly from both Watkins and McKenzie to whom I am indebted for all I know about the Kiowa language. I have edited and changed parts of this description for purposes of clarity only.

I. Consonants

There are twenty-two Kiowa consonants in the Kiowa language. Fourteen of these have the same sound as those in English. Eight are distinctive consonantal sounds for which there are no English counterparts. McKenzie lists those sounds as: c, ch, f, j, q, th, x, and v, respectively. These include two variants of k/ p/ t, unaspirated and ejective, which McKenzie refers to as "soft" and "plosive," and affricatives ejective x and voiceless ch.

The McKenzie Writing System consonants are arranged in the following way:

McKenzie Writing System for Consonants

	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Laryngeal
Stops						
Ejective	v	th			q	
Aspirated	p	t			k	
Unaspirated	f	j			c	
Voiced	b	d			g	
Affricatives						
Ejective			x			
Voiceless			ch			
Fricatives						
Voiceless			s			h
Voiced			z			
Nasal	m	n				
Liguid			l			
Glide				y		w

The Mckenzie alphabet features single and two-letter combinations for sounds for which there are no equivalents in English. For example, C CH F J Q TH V X

represent Kiowa sounds and not those commonly associated in the English alphabet. McKenzie's approach is practical, as he has said and conveniently utilizes the keys on a typewriter or computer when writing.

P T K

The first group of sounds are pronounced exactly as they are in English.

	English	Kiowa word	English gloss
p	paint, pinon, poem	pân	sky
		pí	fire
		póí	lice
t	toy, tail, Tony	têm	break
		tén	heart
		tón	tail
k	key, king, klutz	káu:dáu	blanket
		kîn	cough
		kọ̀:gí	grandfather

F J C

These letters are unaspirated sounds. The corresponding sounds occur in English following S as shown below.

	English	Kiowa word	English gloss
f	spike, spit	fãi	sun
		fị:gá	food
		fôl	insect
j	stick, stone	jó:dé	shoe
		já:	star
		jó:	house
c	skate, scarf	Cáuigú	Kiowas
		cí	meat
		cúyàul	coyote

CH

This diphthong has a very special sound in Kiowa. The corresponding English sound usually occurs like the plural S after T, as in cats.

	English	Kiowa word	English gloss
ch	bats, hits	chệ	horse
		chát	door

	chói	coffee

V TH Q X

This last group of Kiowa sounds has no equivalent sound in English. They make an explosive sound at the beginning of a world. Linguists refer to these sounds as ejectives.

English	Kiowa word	English gloss
v	váu	creek, moon
	vé	laugh
th	tháp	deer
	thên	hail
	Tháukáui	White person
q	qóp	mountain
	qí	husband
	qáu	knife
x	xól	plume
	xó	stone, rock
	xé	thick
	xân	trick

II. Vowels

There are ten vowel elements in Kiowa, including six vowels and four diphthongs and may be classified as unnasalized vowels, unnasalized diphthongs, nasalized vowels, and nasalized diphthongs.

The McKenzie writing system lists the 10 vowel inventory below:

I -pronounced ee
e -pronounced ay
a -pronounced ah
o -pronounced oh
au -pronounced aw
ai -pronounced ahy
ui -pronounced ooy
oi -pronounced owy
aui -pronounced awy

II. Suprasegmentals

All the vowels and diphthongs may be high, low, high/low, with combinations of length and nasal, except high/low, which does not need length.

1. Tone
   - high ´
   - low `
   - high/low ^

2. Length ¯

3. Nasal ˛

The International Phonetic Alphabets (IPA) of Kiowa phonemes

Below are the IPA corresponding Kiowa phonemes as shown by Watkins.

	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Laryngeal
Stops						
Ejective	p'	t'			k'	
Aspirated	p	t			k	
Unaspirated	p	t			k	(?)
Voiced	b	d			g	
Affricatives						
Ejective			c'			
Voiceless			c			
Fricatives						
Voiceless			s			h
Voiced			z			
Nasal	m	n				
Liquid			l			
Glide				y		w

-Watkins

Notes

1. *The Dialogic Imagination* by M.M. Bakhtin was edited by Michael Holquist and translated by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, University of Texas Press: Austin, 1981. The editor tells us it is the 9th such printing in paperback.

2. The late David Apekaum, a fine storyteller himself, tells a similar story told to him by his father about Snapping Turtle, a famous Kiowa medicine man of the late 1800s. This story, like Oscar's, is a retelling, a story within a story. There are thousands of such Kiowa stories. I am lucky to have a few of these accounts in my possession.

3. *Vocabulary of the Kiowa Language*. BAEB 84. Government Printing Office: Washington, D.C., 1928.

4. For more on Zuni storytelling, see Dennis Tedlock's *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation* (1983). Also by Dennis Tedlock: *Finding the Center: Narrative Poetry of the Zuni Indians* (1972); (with Barbara Tedlock) *Teachings from the American Earth: Indian Religion and Philosophy* (1975).

5. Sègâi *Uncle* Oscar died in March 1999. As I have mentioned elsewhere, he was what I consider the last classical Kiowa speaker and traditionalist. I do not know of anybody in the tribe who can fill the empty place this great Kiowa occupied during his lifetime. He was one of my grandfather's favorite nephews. He lived only two miles from the place where I grew up. A complex man, Oscar Toddle could move multitudes with his witticisms and in the next instant shock them with his sometimes critical remarks.

6. In her Introduction of *Kiowa Tales*, Parsons bemoans one of her storytelling consultants as arrogant and whose disposition "was undoubtedly an asset for the young men in the old war days and was encouraged by tribal practices." In another place she writes that it is not helpful to work with people who are arrogant and boastful, many of whom are the "younger generation who are either ignorant of the tribal past of ashamed of it and anxious to rationalize it into present frame of things, it is these unsympathetic young people who worry both a storyteller and a recorder" (xi).

7. For more information, see ch.5, in *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation*, "The Poetics of Verisimilitude."

8. *Aristotle, Rhetoric and Poetics*, p. 259. The quotation is from 1460a in the *Poetics*.

9. According to Dennis Tedlock: "The phenomenological poetics of Gason Bachelard, instead of curving ever inward upon the forms of language, opens up both sides of the dialectic between what he calls the 'formal imagination,' which we may take to coincide at least partially with Jakobson's 'poetic function,' and the 'material imagination,' which in its purest form deals with '*direct* images of *matter*' (Bachelard, On Poetic Imagination and

Reverie, pp. 10-11). Here I am reminded, once again, of the question Joseph Peynetsa once put to me while we were working on a Zuni story: 'Do you *see* it, or do you just write it down?' And as another Zuni said, taking the narrator's point of view, 'If you are really true to a story you make it like it's right in front of you.' In Zuni storytelling, then, the material imagination takes precedence over the formal imagination, and my discussions of the poetics of verisimilitude and of time in storytelling (see Chapters 5 and 7) have been, in effect, explorations of the material side of Zuni poetics."

10.By and large, great literary scholarship is constructed on Greek models. Presumably, this is because the Greeks had invented a writing system for their language. Ong (1992) contends that by Plato's day (427?-347) "a change had set in: the Greeks had at long last effectively interiorized writing-- something which took several centuries after the development of the Greek alphabet around 720-700BC (Havelock 1963, p.49, citing Rhys Carpenter). The new way to store knowledge was not in mnemonic formulas but in the written text" (24). What happened in writing "freed the mind for more original, more abstract thought...Plato excluded from his ideal republic poets, because "he found himself in a new chirographically styled noetic world in which the formula or cliche, beloved of all traditional poets, was outmoded and counterproductive" (Ong 1992:24). From this idea it becomes clear that, intellectually, literacy is preferred over orality. There has been an ongoing debate regarding the primacy of speech over writing among academicians in the past twenty years or so.

11.Many Indian tribes do giveaways too. The great potlatch of the Pacific Northwest is a case in point. Here, elaborate giveaways occur to assure tribal solidarity and wealth.

12.These lonely houses which have fallen into ruin are reminiscent of a house in a lovely sonnet by Frederick Goddard Tuckerman, sonnet XVI of the second series which I would like to quote here in its entirety.

Under the mountain, as when first I knew
Its low dark roof and chimney creeper-twined,
The red house stands; and yet my footsteps find,
Vague in the walks, waste balm and feverfew.
But they are gone: no soft-eyed sisters trip
Across the porch or lintels; where, behind,
The mother sat, sat knitting with pursed lip.
The house stands vacant in its green recess,
Absent of beauty as a broken heart.
The wild rain enters, and the sunset wind
Sighs in the chambers of their loveliness
Or shakes the pane-- and in the silent noons
The glass falls from the window, part by part,
And ringeth faintly in the grassy stones.

13.Tedlock writes: "Paul Ricoeur, who sees the distancing of fiction as "a distantiation of the real from itself," might argue that realism is not so much a means for shoring up fantasy as it is the means by which fantasy opens up new possibilities in real life (*Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, p. 142).

14.There were four Tenadooah brothers. The two oldest brothers were Tainpeah and Daugomah. Their names became the surnames of all their offspring. Unless people know the naming process that was followed in the late 19th century, they will not realize that some Kiowa families are members of the nuclear family even though their last names indicate it otherwise.

15.It was always hard to "break in" to conversation after I had been gone some time from the Senior Citizens Center. It took warmup time to reestablish a rapport with my storytelling consultants, and at first it was very unnerving. What seemed like hours was actually not that long but the anticipation and wait caused me a great deal of anxiety and I feared I would have to start all over again. I always had to remind my co-workers that I was back to try and pick up where we had left off from our previous work. Luckily, I had kept some good notes and I had my recorder to rely on. Each time I went back into the field I would review where we left off from the last time. Then, when I arrived, I would simply try to engage my people in small conversation, gradually weaving our way back to our last talk.

16. According to the Jewish lunar calendar the first Passover was observed at the time of the Exodus from Egypt about 3,300 years ago.

17.To expand somewhat on the Foley entry, p. 378: The topic of genre (Dubrow 1982) is vast and has obvious overlaps with the field of literary criticism. Bakhtin (1981, 1986) is the basic source for his ideas. Bauman (1977) gives a more anthropological slant to the problem, as do the important survey articles by Bauman and Briggs (1990) and Briggs and Bauman (1992), and the anthology of classic articles by Becker (1995). Jakobson (1960) is his most famous statement of the poetic function, and Hymes (1981), Tedlock (1983), and Woodbury (1987) are important milestones in the development of a theory of ethnopoetics. Valuable case studies of genre framing, illustrating minimal and maximal intertextuality, include Abu-Lughod (1986), Bauman (1986), Briggs (1988, 1992), Caton (1990), Duranti (1994), Fox (1988), Gossen (1972), Kuipers (1990), O'Barr (1982), Sherzer (1983), and Urban (1991).

18.There are three important figures or personages in the peyote ritual, each assigned a special task that is conducted throughout the night. The peyote priest officiates or directs the peyote meeting. The fire keeper is assigned to keep the fire going all night. The second, also known as the drum carrier, officially ties the drum and ritually prepares the

instrument for use in the meeting. He generally sits next to the peyote priest. He sprinkles àuhį *cedar* on the embers at the beginning of the peyote meeting and prepares the first prayer smoke.

19.Óhòmàu is the dance the Kiowas were given by the Omaha tribe. It is a sacred dance society. It includes a sacred dance bustle and other ceremonial paraphernalia. It has its own songs and there is an annual ceremony in the summer. The Óhòmàu leader leads the dance and ceremony. The dance ground is located about eight miles west of Anadarko on the Chêthàidè *White Horse* family allotment.

20.Father Isadore Ricklin (1890s ?), a Benedictine at St. Patrick's Mission, Anadarko, OK, was one of the first priests in the area who attended peyote meetings conducted by Kiowas. He was the first priest assigned to Indian territory in this part of the country. He befriended some Kiowas and used to attend meetings regularly. My grandfather said, "He was a good man." When I asked him if the old priest ate peyote, he said, "He did. He had big whiskers. We called him Sénpàuzélbé *Terrible Whiskers*. Later on there were other priests who frequented those nocturnal meetings. Father Edward Bock, another Benedictine priest assigned to St. Patrick's, 1959-through the mid 1960s, thought peyote a fine spiritual practice for Indians. He interpreted much Christian or Catholic symbolism in the peyote ritual. He pointed out some obvious symbols in the cross, the burning of incense, the blessing over the water, and the peyote staff which is held in the opposite hand of the singer while he shakes the gourd in the other.

21.In the true spirit of the peyote religion, a person who is a practitioner has a personal attachment to it through a peyote his father, grandfather, or some other close relative owned and used to conduct the peyote meeting. This special peyote is placed in the center of the moon altar as a symbol of the unity and spirit of the meeting where it remains throughout the ceremony. Without this sacred symbol it is virtually impossible to conduct a meeting.

22."Dialogue in the most general sense is understood as conversation between two or more people, people talking back and forth with one another. M.M. Bakhtin sees dialogue as an essential characteristic of the novel, which for Bakhtin is comprised of a diversity of voices. *Heteroglossia* is Bakhtin's term, or major trope, for the multitude of voices that comprise not only the novel but all forms and elements of communication" (Sarris 1993:4).

23.Parker McKenzie's father, General McKenzie, was a Kiowa captive. Parker told me he was taken as a boy by the Mescalero Apaches somewhere in New Mexico. Later, he was traded to the Comanches before coming to the Kiowas. Kiowas took many Mexican and white captives on the Southern Plains (Mooney 1898), perhaps more than any other tribe. Oscar's remark about Parker's partial ethnicity should not be taken as disparaging but as ironic humor. Outsiders do not always "catch the Kiowa humor and teasing." Kiowas

tease one another about their family backgrounds often, because many are themselves descendants of non-Kiowas. Tháukáuimá *White Woman*, my grandfather's maternal grandmother was either a Spanish or Mexican captive. She was the great-grandmother of Oscar Tsoodle. The joke in our family was that no matter how much we teased other Kiowa s about their diluted bloodlines we were ourselves descendants of non-Kiowas.

24.That chuckling is sometimes a hindrance to young speakers was explained to me by a young woman at one of the Kiowa languages classes recently in Anadarko: "I don't know," the young woman said. "But they laugh at you. I try to say it right but I can't. I don't mind speaking myself but I'm afraid I'll say it wrong. I never tried because I thought I was going to be wrong. My grandma tried to help me say things right but I just couldn't do it. I guess I need practice" (Unidentified woman at Kiowa language class, Anadarko, Oklahoma, 1999.)

25.I would like to take a closer look at the condition of Kiowa just to see to what extent the language is in shift. There is no way Kiowa can be compared with the Tiwa language in northern New Mexico where it seems that despite the presence of two dominant languages, Tiwas have maintained spoken Tiwa for the past 400 years. Here, Tiwa is the language choice.

26.This is why the tribe has initiated the Kiowa Language Preservation and Revitalization Program with federal grants and tribal funding. It is currently underway and making headway in southwestern Oklahoma.

27.There is a famous story Parker McKenzie tells about a butchering event near Gotebo, Oklahoma, which unfortunately is not included here. That story quickly became a classic when I was working at the Senior Citizens Center. Cornelius recorded it and made sure I heard it again some 12 years later right after Parker died. After we listened to it, Cornelius made a few remarks and added a few anecdotes of his own. The session was a storytelling event, all with tribal framing and context added.

28.There is apparently a select group of bót stories. This one, I heard for the first time. It, like the one Parker tells, happened at about the same location near Gotebo. I like both stories equally well.

29.The word is one sentence, an example referred to in linguistic terms as *incorporation*. Kiowas are often given names that are miniature stories or events they have experienced themselves in life. In time the name becomes abbreviated so, for example, if someone is named 'He who went into battle and emerged two times victorious and they [his fellow warriors] all saw him,' it now becomes 'Seen Twice.'

30.See Keith Basso's *Portrait of The White Man*, a good study on Western Apache Indian humor and storytelling.

31.Kiowas love to make up puns. When Oscar used the term 'white man,' I knew he was referring to cursing, the act of white men cursing in English.

32.See the biography by J.J. Methvin, *Andele: The Mexican-Kiowa Captive*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996.

33.There were apparently rivalries among Kiowa medicine men, competing and trying to outdo one another. They often put curses on one another. The man with the strongest dáui *medicine* proved his worth among peers and was held in high esteem. One of the most powerful Kiowa medicine men known among Kiowas was the famous Snapping Turtle.

34.Bakhtin writes "In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope" (84). This would account for the appearance of the trickster in the trickster novels. He sometimes is camouflaged so that it is difficult to see him. Still, he is there, disguised.

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