

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

BY

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I hope that you are all comfortable and that you are enjoying yourselves. It is said that when you are in a pleasurable state of mind you learn and retain more than when you are restless. It is also said that at best one only retains about ten percent of what one hears in a situation like this. So I will won't make that hard for you. I'll only try to give you one main thought to remember. We have just had a veritable feast. I want to use that last sentence to illustrate the point I want you to remember throughout the rest of what I am about to say. From that sentence you no doubt assumed that what I was referring to was what we just ate. A feast is just a feast; or is it? What we just ate was also a feast, but what I was referring to was what we have heard at this wonderful symposium thus far. The point that I wish to make tonight is that you can never take anyone's actions, the spoken word or the visual symbol at face value. There are always additional connotations that change the meaning slightly depending on what little nuances you can grasp a hold of. Most of what I will say tonight will illustrate my point.

It is both a real honor and a humbling experience for me to be asked to speak to you on the subject I have been given. I was asked to speak to you tonight at this banquet about my personal experiences with Native Americans that have helped me to better understand them and thus what we call "Rock Art." That places me in an awkward situation. Before I begin the meat of my remarks let me make a few preliminary statements as appetizers that may help to put my position in a little better perspective. This request creates a situation where I would have to violate two prime directives that I was taught while I was on the Navajo Reservation. The **first** is to never do your own talking. By that they meant that if you speak for yourself you bring yourself within an area where you are out of hozho. The **second** is never tell someone more than they need to know (c.f. Campbell, 1988:63,67).

By illustrating these two points, I think I can also help you understand what I feel are a few important points concerning these symbols that we love so much. These remarks will also relate to why we often have such a hard time getting information about their symbols from them (the Native Americans). I have been fortunate to have had many opportunities throughout my life where I have been taught by some great men from various nations. One thing that they all shared was a reverence and a caution about how they talked about themselves. This **first** point sets the stage for how I believe we are to look at their personal representations within the framework of their symbol systems. Those types of figures are what they tell us about themselves and fall within the parameters of this mind set.

Not too long after I had moved onto the reservation, I learned that you never ask anyone what their name is (Ni sha' haa yinilghe?) as the dictionary teaches one to do. That is considered by their standards to be rude and uncouth. One appropriate way to ask is, "Ha'at'iish da bił ni?", what do they say to you. In answering you, they do not have to give their name but a familiar or nick name. There is a reason for that.

To many Native Americans, nothing has just a face value (there is a clue there), it's face is it's name; and a name to a Navajo, as well as others, is a very sacred piece of potentially powerful knowledge. Knowing the name of a witch and using it in a specific situation can destroy him. A witch using the name of someone in a specific way can destroy the balance of the positive creative force around that person, and thus that individual is brought out of hozho. In other words knowing a name can give one a power or an advantage over who or what possesses the name.

My education with this began when I once asked an old man in a trading post what his name was. This is the gist of what he told me. "Who am I to tell you who I am?" With his old wrinkled lips puckered up, pointing them toward another in the room, he said, "ask that one there, she can tell you better than I."

There was an episode in the M.A.S.H. television series once that relates to this situation. That story illustrates that this philosophy exists in other cultures, but not the so-called civilized western societies. The show was about an old Korean gentleman who helped his beautiful and honorable granddaughter gather and do the camp laundry. He was sick and despondent inside because he had come to have to lower himself to do that kind of work. For those who are hung up on the implications of chauvinism here, you're missing the point. I didn't say that it was woman's work. Notice the ambiguity and cultural context. There is another clue there as to one of the problems that keep us from fully understanding rock art. Now back to the story.

He had once been a great military leader in the Korean army. It was not seemly for such a great man to do such lowly work. When asked by Col. Potter what the problem was, he could not speak in his own behalf because that would not have been appropriate. His granddaughter spoke in his behalf. Because of what she said and his admiration for Col. Potter's horse, Col. Potter gave his precious horse to the old man. Soon afterwards the old Korean gentleman rode into the compound in full military dress and with all his decorations (the symbols representing his name, synonymous with his status, similar to many of the details we see in the symbols). Shortly after that, the granddaughter brought the horse back. At Col. Potter's curious expression she thanked him for his gracious kindness that allowed her honorable grandfather to die with some pride, dignity, and honor. For him that was a good day to die.

There have also been several Q-Lube advertisements recently on T.V. about what's in a name, and about people with various familiar names. One was a young man trying to start a baby sitting business who couldn't get any clients. He said he had references up the wazoo (a contradiction) and would charge \$3.00 less than the going rate. His name: Freddy Kruger. A hotel owner named Norman Bates and a financial adviser named Imelda Marcos also had problems getting clients.

What's in a name; what's in a glyph? An anthropomorph used as a self portrait is, in a sense, part of someone's name. How he portrays or presents himself to the world is in part how he relates to this philosophy. Begin to look at style profiles, the predominant percentages and how types of figures were represented. Begin to notice types of the

percentages of human figures and how they were treated. That is a result of their primary cultural programming. There is a difference about that within the people we call Fremont. Consider the Classic Vernal Fremont and the Western Utah Fremont. If I asked a more humble Western Utah Fremont what his name was, I imagine that the first response would have been like the example I just gave of the old Navajo gentleman. If I asked a Classic Vernal Fremont, I would probably be told a little more than just Jack Biih tsa'ii.

What do we know and what are we to understand in a name, or a glyph, the concept behind that glyph, or its source? These are often very different concepts.

Is "Jack" just a "meaningless" name? Even though that is what he is called, his name is really John. Both mean the same thing in one sense, but in another they don't. Biih tsa'ii is a female deer. I knew that as it's definition long before I associated it with the concept of doe. Doe is the female of anything that the male of which is a buck, which includes antelopes and hares. Then, do the words female deer and doe have different connotations that are valid for meaning and intent? And what does the combinations of John and Doe mean? Appropriately it's an unknown quantity to us, yet it represents much more than simply the unknown (there is another clue).

The **Second** point; never tell someone more than they need to know, illustrates the fact that there are many things represented in what we inappropriately call rock art that deal with things that we have no business knowing. There are many sacred things that are privileged information in Native American societies. We are also very naive to think that we can just ask anyone "what does this mean?", and get an accurate answer. I didn't say get the truth, because what you would have gotten would only have been "your truth."

In both Navajo and Hopi social and religious stratification there are those who are the keepers of special, privileged and sacred information. Not just anyone can have access to that kind of information. The symbols at some sites, for instance, are used to relate special knowledge in special initiation processes. Some knowledge can be bought, but other knowledge can only be earned by ordeal and initiation. And we are stupid and naive enough to think that we can waltz into a site and get "the" answer to what all this symbolism means.

Let me relate two incidents that I have already told some of you that will help relate this and a few other important facts that we always seem to ignore.

While at Coppermine, Arizona one of the jobs that I had was to do a multiple generation genealogy for those in the Coppermine Chapter. It took a year to gain the confidence of the people there to do that work. During the process of getting that information a couple of graduate students from NAU came up to do a study on the high percentage of albinism at Coppermine. Since they didn't know the language and their study dealt with heredity, the trader suggested that they try to team up with us. They asked if they could go out with us and if we would translate for them to help them get their information. This story is told in greater detail elsewhere (Warner ND), but I will only mention here the fact that the people we were working with never answered any of their questions with what we would define as "the truth." I have also dealt with that definition elsewhere (Warner ND, 1993:13).

Besides the embarrassing and personal nature of the young anthropology student's questions, the reason the Navajos didn't want to answer any of their questions is that the students didn't have a sufficient or necessary need to know, nor did they have an adequate knowledge of how to properly obtain that information (i.e. a combination of procedure and proper etiquette). As a result, they were rude and offensive. The answers that they got were general and vague. Their answers were no more than a cloak to satisfy what The People viewed as a nosy and inconsiderate intrusion. Because their offensive manners upset the people we were working with so much we finally told the students that they would have to get their information on their own. We helped them get a young boy who they paid to translate for them. We later learned that he wasn't translating exactly what the spirit of what they wanted to know was and they never got any better results than when they were with us. Those poor, incomplete and often inappropriate answers were the basis for their research, part of which was their master's theses.

The next incident occurred in the Cedar Ridge Trading Post. Another couple was doing research on various aspects of Navajo mythology. That days' investigation was whether White Shell Woman and Changing Woman were one and the same. They didn't believe Gladis Reichard's statements in her then recently published book on Navajo Religion. It was in the late summer of 1966. The trading post held about 15 to 20 young Navajo boys ranging in age from about eight to about 18. One of the researchers was buying the boys all the candy, Twinkies, corn chips and soda pop that they could eat. We went in to pay for some gas and stayed to listen to what was going on. After each question that he asked, they would discuss among themselves what to say. One of the older boys would tell another to answer his question a certain way. Since they were outright lying to him, I asked the older boy why they did that to confirm my suspicions.

The gist of his answer was what I suspected. He was asking questions to the wrong people, ones that hadn't received all of the higher levels of that knowledge, ones who had no right to reveal that kind of information if they did know it, and at the wrong place, at the wrong time of the year and under the wrong circumstances etc., etc., thus the researchers were told the wrong answers. And we expect to ask just anyone what a symbol means and get an accurate answer. Never, never, never ask "What does this mean?" If, and only if the circumstances and potential consultant are right, ask "What is there that you can tell me about this?" That does not put your subject on the spot, or force him to be devious.

To further illustrate this concept, let me use an example of Navajo poker. Today, for the Navajo, playing cards is in a way analogous to going to war. On the war path any act of subversion, trickery or deceit that would help win the battle was expected and considered as honorable. That's no different with us and what makes us believe a warrior is great. To win at Navajo poker one has to be devious, or "cheat" by our way of thinking. When the game is over you could have any number of any kinds and types of cards. It is not dishonorable to cheat, only to get caught. To get caught is like losing one's life in battle. It is also much the same with basketball. When you understand that there is an inherent distrust and deep-seated dislike for Anglos, how can you expect to ever get a straight answer from them about something that they wouldn't tell you if they did know? First ask yourself; Why am I so special that I think that I could or should get the truth from them? or Why should they even

tell me the truth?

Let's consider the ramifications of the word to "lie." Niyooch'iid-you are a liar, in the dictionary implies that the meaning is the same as it is in English, but in actuality it is not quite the same (another clue). Considering our invasion of their personal and private or sacred situations; to lie is in many cases a necessity. In English it is believed that a lie is told to deceive, to get oneself out of trouble or to get gain. In Navajo it can also be used to conceal or cloak higher levels of the truth. This implies that the answer (i.e. the lie) is the appropriate level of the truth for you: "your truth", and in that sense it is not a "lie." That is the only level that one of our nature is worthy of or has a need to know. In the previous examples, the students from NAU were told lies not to be deceptive in a negative sense, but a positive one - one that would protect The People.

If one hears or becomes aware of or learns about a "truth," and does not comply with the ramifications of that knowledge, then there is a violation of the balance of hozho. The misuse of that information or public use of private information such as Frank Waters supposedly did with the Book of the Hopi, and the reason that Ekkehart Malotki from NAU was asked by the Hopi to never publish a couple of his research projects is that this misuse of information can create a negative power that will have tremendous ramifications from the one who received the information, to the ones that gave it, to the people in general, and to the metaphysical structure of the balance of hozho (c.f. Warner 1991, Sec 6,P.23,32).

This may seem like a dismal picture but it really isn't. Actually it is quite exciting because some Native Americans believe that once we have earned the right to know, the knowledge will be given. That is like the statement that when the student is ready, the teacher will appear. Yet there are often stipulations on the use of that information, a stewardship if you will. If we just use the example of Christy Turner's informant recognitions to illustrate that, think of what differences there would have been if he had followed the proper procedures of inquiry and used more appropriate consultants instead of the ones he used as informants, and in the appropriate way and during the appropriate time of the year, and had them under a ceremonial obligation (c.f. Harris 1989:98).

With that little background I will now briefly cover four areas of concern I believe are not generally considered by rock art researchers. These include Pride, Integrity, Spirituality, and The Obverness of Symbolism. Some of you are probably wondering how or why in the world these areas of concern could possibly apply to our understanding of rock art symbolism. When we conclude I believe that will be more obvious.

PRIDE

I feel that pride can be exemplified in several distinct areas that affect the physical aspects of the symbolism that was produced on the rocks. The first area of pride is expressed in the idea that who you are is also defined in a large part by who you are not. That creates the Do Dine' Da, Ka Hopi, Cuts he he nunts types of attitudes that we see being expressed between various nations. That is an expression of pride. Even though our national primary cultural program says that as Americans we are all equal, our secondary cultural program says that some of us aren't. Some of us are known as gentiles, jack Catholics or atheists, or a

member of another - specific (i.e. less desirable) race or religion. The analogy of our national cultural program to the Navajo or Hopi is that if you're not one of us you're an enemy.

That leads us to the second area concerning pride, which is racial prejudice. In 1966 I and two younger Navajo boys were driven off of the boardwalk in Farmington, New Mexico, in front of a western tack shop and out into the street by the owner with a pick-ax handle. I experienced their fear and their hatred against Whites come to boil just under the surface. Yet race had nothing to do with it. I was called an Indian lover by the owner who considered himself a good Christian. In his mind I was categorized along with his category of "Navajo" or "filthy stinking gut eaters." Yes, I've eaten guts, but I have never ever smelled body odor on a Navajo while it was common on many Anglos out there. Even though I am Anglo on the outside, I was not what the Navajo who knew me (clue) called Do Dine' Da, not Navajo. Since I respected the People's traditions and lived by their laws I was for all (my) intents, and (their) purposes (another clue), Dine'. That will be exemplified again later. That is the antitheses of a bilisanna biliganna, an apple whiteman, red on the outside, but still white on the inside.

While at the Red Lake (Tonealea) Trading Post during the death of its owner in 1966, I was invited to have dinner with the deceased trader's brother and his wife from here in Blanding. During the course of the evening I was playing ball with their daughter. The deceased trader's sister-in-law and Pitts, a young man who later taught English at Montezuma High School, were washing the dishes and in the discussion, racial prejudice came up. She made some very inappropriate comments and when John indicated to her that she should be careful about what she said, pointing to me because I was part Indian, she immediately forbade their daughter from associating with me. As I sat there looking at her telling her daughter to get away from me, I had a hard time keeping the tears and my anger from welling up, and out of respect for the deceased trader I had to leave.

I have a cousin here in Blanding named Ray Alexander, who was once the principal of the High School and then Mayor of Blanding. He adopted two little boys: one Scandinavian and the other Navajo. Both were adorable and beautiful little boys. As they grew up, the good people here in Blanding accepted one and didn't the other, which caused a great deal of problems in that young man's life. I don't need to tell you which was which.

An example of prejudice between Native Americans will also help to illustrate what I am trying to get at. While my wife Judy and I were still quite young, long before we were married, we went on many programs with several Native American groups. One of those groups was led by R.P., partner with Richard Horsely of the Hopi Kiva on Richard Street just south of the LDS Temple in Salt Lake City. R. drummed for their Hopi dance group. The leader of a Navajo group was B.A. He drummed for a that dance group. We participated with these groups for several years, until B. accused R. of drumming witchcraft music on the stage and offering witchcraft prayers. Those accusations became ugly and finally culminated in what could be called a tribunal to settle the accusations. My father was one of those who testified in R.'s behalf. He testified that R. was standing beside him and was not the man who offered the prayer that B.A. was talking about. Even though that was the case, that situation ruined R.P.'s credibility, and as a result R. and his family eventually moved back to

Hopi.

What was sad is that it was just a case of jealousy. When I lived at Coppermine I got to know B.A.'s family very well and they were all very good people. I later found out from Phil Garn, a past president of URARA who also knew of B.A., that he eventually ended up in the state prison for something else. But that hardly helps R.P., a man who's life he helped to ruin. Those are the kinds of experiences that helped me understand the importance and value of pride, to have pride in who I was and who I wanted to be. That pride became a part of how I identify myself and how I perceive others identifying themselves.

The last area that concerns pride is Native American's attitudes and resentment about the intrusions of another group. The examples presented earlier from Coppermine and Cedar Ridge would fit in here, but this also includes another situation where Judy and I and other anthropology students were the butt of many, many jokes at Shipolovi at a Parrot Dance. During that ceremony, the clowns that performed their rituals during the rest periods between the main dancers went through many antics to humiliate us. This culminated in their performing the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States. They all faced the flag and said it proudly, with respect and dignity up to the last line where they all turned around, faced us and then said, "with liberty and justice for only white men!!!" As they said that all looked at us straight in the eyes, with looks that could kill and gave to each of us an extended middle finger.

If you think that pride doesn't make itself manifested in rock art, look at the themes of the Chicano murals. Pride deals with not only the quality and perfection with which the work is done, but how you do it, the feeling with which you do it. Also look at the profile face of a rock art figure on the cliff down on the Utah side of the swinging bridge by the mission on the San Juan river east of Bluff (Fig. 1).

After this presentation a photograph of a Chinese gang member arrested in S.L.C. appeared in the S.L. Tribune, March 31, '96, page A17. Tattooed on his chest was a string of letters like beads of a necklace that he proudly wore. They were tattooed on with a staple. They spelled "ORIENTAL PRIDE". The symbols that they made are an expression of what was in their heads and in their hearts, and thus manifested various degrees of their pride.

INTEGRITY

The next area that we need to consider is integrity. At first you may not see the difference between pride and integrity. There is an area of overlap, but each have their own areas that are not involved with the other. Because of their pride, Native Americans have an integrity to what it is that makes them who they are. And that integrity is what again allows them to be proud of what they are. That integrity is an extension of how they think and what their philosophy, their weltanschauung, what their world view is. One aspect of that integrity is what allows them to be honorable when playing poker when we call it cheating. Part of where pride and integrity overlap is that a large part of their pride comes from their cultural heritage and the beliefs that they inherited from that aspect of their background, where integrity is the mold and it is the cultural impetus that helps them create the finished product.

Another aspect of Native American integrity is their expression of their place in the universe, from placating the game stewards before taking the life of a brother so that they may live, to entering their hoghan.

We will not eat the flesh of an animal that we would otherwise eat if that animal was a family pet. That is our "integrity". Native Americans eat the flesh of their brothers, a closer relationship than a pet, but they do so with their view of "integrity", which is far more reverent and respectful than ours. I was severely chastised once and then forced to ask a roasted sheep rump (Dibe' bijilchii) to forgive me for my disrespect when, after cutting a piece of meat from it, I stuck the knife into it. It had given its life to us so that we may live and I had committed an abominable offence against it and its life and sacrifice. The People will not even lay silverware down during the meal so that they point toward another, because that is not only an insult, it disrupts their Hozho.

When I had been on the reservation for just over one year I began to notice something that I didn't quite realize till I read a side note about it in Gladis Richard's book, *Navajo Religion*. Men enter the hoghan differently than women do, and the physical domain is different for the man than it is for the woman, and for the youth than it is for the adult. Take an imaginary line and divide the hoghan east to west, and into a north and a south half. That is the division of the sexes. As long as I entered the hoghan and went directly to the south side of the hoghan to sit and talk with the women while they sat weaving, carding or spinning wool, I was a stupid, ignorant Biliganna. Even though I did it that way I was treated with hospitality. When I began to enter the hoghan as a man, and one who knows, I was treated as one who knows (i.e. given their total undivided attention and respect).

Draw another imaginary line from the north to the south through the middle of the hoghan. That provides an east and west half. That division is between the youth and the mature adults and creates the universal mandala. If you study this division, you will discover that besides creating a socio-religious place for every individual, it marks the opposition in society between those with wisdom and those who are still not yet as wise, mature and spiritual. After circling the fire in the appropriate direction and sitting at the north half of the east west line with my back against the west wall, the position demanding respect, I was then given their total undivided attention. That is also the position where one will be embraced by the light on Equinox sunrise. In doing that I then became Dine', and one who knows. Complying with all of the laws of the people from proper social etiquette (which is totally different from ours) to ceremonial observances allows one access to a broader scope of information than one who does not (a big clue). That is also part of the game and of that integrity.

Another part of integrity is the use of ceremonial obligation and testing. In every relationship that I have with a Native American I always have to assume that I am being tested. The reason is that people and attitudes always change, if it is nothing more than one's expectations and the closeness of the relationship, which one has to earn. Their love and respect is not given freely. Even when I have proven myself to one person, I have to expect to continually prove my self over and over again. Why? Because they have been betrayed too many times (c.f. Harris 1989:98).

Before I can expect them to help me I have to obligate myself to them (That is an active position on my part). Before they can expect me to do something for them, they can either test me or simply obligate themselves to me. Most often that occurs with a gift. In the process of passing a test there is a transfer of obligation. There is also a transfer of obligation in the act of compensating for a gift, or in providing a service. A ceremonial obligation is the highest form of obligation, one that takes a considerable amount of time or energy to earn.

One of the most important aspects of integrity is remaining true to what you do in life or in this case on the rocks. Joseph Campbell's statement about the fact that an artist or author needs to remain true to his work applies to this expression of integrity (c.f. Cytowic 1993:217, Campbell 1988:55). Integrity extends from the mold of cultural impetus to purposefulness of the author of the symbolism.

SPIRITUALITY

Again our view of what the Native American views as of a spiritual nature is not what we as western thinkers do. Their spirituality is what gives these other areas of concern a greater focus or forceful impact. To the Native American every ancient site and especially rock art is sacred. There was a spiritualness there before the physical remains that were created, as we see it, ever existed. Often that site was used to mark a place where they felt power. Those sites were used to claim that power and the land as theirs. Those whose foot prints were the oldest are the rightful stewards, in a usufruct term, not fee simple. And what do you do when you claim the land? One draws who he is. It is we who were here first. Is that what we refer to as a portrait? It is not exactly the same as what we call portraits or "Kilroy was here", as we often hear. And then who were the later ones (not directly related) that also claimed a stewardship to the land? How one depicts oneself when one claims the land depends on who he is, and is different in meaning if not in presentation.

Another aspect of spirituality is that when they hunt they are not only concerned with the technical aspects of hunting, but the spiritual or ritual aspects as well. The symbols that they placed on the rocks reflect those spiritual aspects in all of their various concerns.

I have often mentioned that when an element becomes stylized it no longer represents the source of that form or what that form is, but an extended concept related to that form in some other aspect with an overlying meaning. One thing that I have not mentioned is that aspect is the spiritual nature of that form. Stylization, they believe, takes the meaning out of the natural, physical mortal realm and places it into the spiritual realm. That leads us to the last area of concern.

THE OBVERTNESS OF SYMBOLISM

If you have been able to follow the drift of what I have been trying to say, what I said at the beginning that nothing has just a face value, then you are one that will do well in this field. Let me finish by making my goals with this presentation a little more obvious. The dictionary defines obvert as to turn something so as to present a different aspect. Besides being obvious, most symbolism has an unobviousness to it. Let me illustrate the difference between the fact that we usually assume an obvious symbolism (a face value) in our society

and the fact that you cannot make that assumption in theirs. When you go to the bank to make a transaction there is a little basket of candy there for the transactee. This usually occurs in a particular form of candy that we refer to as suckers. In our usual naive nature we simply see candy as a means of saying thank you for your service. On the other hand, thinking in the Navajo way (looking for a deeper meaning), we know that a sucker is one who has just been taken advantage of, so in Navajo Society (with the Navajo perspective and distrust of unknown meanings and innuendos) one can not take anything at face value. Thinking as a Navajo I catch myself wondering if they are trying to tell me something. Are we to take the candy at face value, or is it being used as a pun or a metaphor as well?

The unobviousness of symbolism can occur in many different ways. I could spend hours and hours on just this subject alone, but let me finish with just one area as an analogy. Besides being puns and metaphors that are hard to grasp, they can also be allegories and or have many different levels of symbolism. One way of looking at these is that the lower level is the natural, organic or physical representation. The next level is the conventional, structural, corporate or social level. The third level is the supernatural, superorganic, intrinsic or abstract level. The personal or private level can be either natural or supernatural. It can be very ambiguous, obscure and obtuse with intention and even more so oftentimes without intention. There are also natural things that we are just not familiar with. That is not so different from our society with our symbols and language. In fact the word symbol is entomologically related to the word parable (Ayto 1990:516). That's an interesting fact.

Let's look at a few ambiguous words that do not obviously say what they mean or others that mean something else. In our society we drive on parkways and park on driveways. If that isn't confusing enough we have words that mean one thing and then just the opposite as well, at the same time, but not in the same context (another clue). On the one hand to buckle means to fasten together, and on the other hand it means to fall apart. On one side engagement means a loving tie or a military battle. Downhill can mean both getting easier or getting worse. Quite can mean slightly (quite nice); or exceedingly (quite out of the question). Temper can mean to harden as in steel or soften as in justice and mercy (Readers Digest Picturesque speech March 1995:73).

A few more things about face value and the obvertness of symbolism to think about. Why do we have Interstate highways in Hawaii? Why is brassiere singular and panties plural, or if clothes (clows) is plural, is one article of clothing a cloth or a clow? Why is it called "shipment" if you send it by car, but "cargo" if you send it by ship? Why are they called "apartments" if they are stuck together? If fire fighters fight fires, and crime fighters fight crime, what do freedom fighters fight? If con is the opposite of pro, is congress the opposite of progress? If bees live in an apiary, do apes live in a beeary? If olive oil comes from olives, where does baby oil come from?

A word can have it's meaning by joke such as vanilla (Ayto 1990:554), or by mistake such as abominable or abracadabra (ibid:2). A word's meaning can occur as a coincidence of similarity of sound such as belfry (ibid:59), or a coincidence in form such as dagger (ibid:154). Meanings can change from an action to the effect it produced such as streak and poison (ibid:506,401). Meaning can shift from the action to the one who does the action such

as ram, Buccaneer or fornication (ibid:430,82,237). Meaning can also change from a place to an object such as duffel (ibid:187). Meaning can move from one object to another different object such as in porcelain, magpie, sky/heaven/cloud and stool (ibid 404,333,481,504). Meaning can also change from one state of being to another different state of being as in posthumous (ibid:407). There are many more examples but this adequately provides the idea that there is no face value in words or symbols, and that they, like rock art symbols, just up and change their meanings in time and space.

Let me take a few examples of how Navajo has the wonderful ability to extend the meanings of other words to create new words or to represent new objects, a whole new symbolism. I have mentioned in a previous paper that 'adee' is a horn (dibe 'adee' is a sheep horn) and Beesh originally implied flint and now is steel, and when combined represent spoon, since spoons (metal sheep horns) were originally made from split horns. Also Bila' is his hand and taa' is three, but combined they create his hand-three (fingers) or a fork. Beesh bee hane'e, is the metal by which talking is being done, or a telephone. Beesh hataa'hi, singing metal is the radio. Beesh nitseskees, the metal thinker or thinking metal is a computer.

A billasana is an apple, add atsee' (tail) and you get bilasana bitsee', a pear or just bitsee' holone (tail exists). A didze, is a berry, while a big berry (didzetsoh) is a peach. That makes sense, yet a big, little berry is an apricot (didzetsoh yazhi). Tsinaa'eel, a wooden duck is a boat, while a na'al'eeli, the one that is a duck, is a sailor. Children are 'alchini or those that smell wildly, not stink, but like wild animals who sniff the air. Lii da'alchini is a wild horse, not a horses children. A javelin is a combination of wooden, enemy and slay, tsin'anahalghahi. Nilch'i, is both air and spirit. A tsetah dibe, is among the rock + sheep, not a lost sheep, but a bighorn sheep.

Let's just take one word, rope (tl'ool) and attach it to several other words and see what it does to them. Shijaa' is my ear + tl'ool (rope) = shijaa' tl'ool or ear ring. Shikee' is my foot + tl'ool (rope) = shikee' tl'ool or my shoelace. Tsin is tree + bee, (it's) + tl'ool (rope) = tsin bee tl'ool or tree root. Chidi is car + bikee', (its foot) = tire, but with tl'ool (rope) = tire chains. It is interesting that the Navajo word for a bald tire is better than the English word. In Navajo you say akee' dilkooh (smooth tire), not akee' 'atsii' atin (a bald tire, without hair).

Just to illustrate how compact Navajo is let me use one word in three sentences and count the number of letters or words in Navajo as compared to English. Breeze is, nich'i (notice the similarity to air and spirit). A breeze will come up, didooch'ih (5-1). There comes a breeze, 'aadee' yich'ih (4-2). The breeze has gone down, 'iich'ih (5-1).

CONCLUSION

All of these examples may in some small way illustrate that the way that they represented things then is not quite the same as we do now, nor do they feel or believe about or think of things the same way as we do. If that is the case then how can we honestly believe that we can come to a close, let alone an "accurate" approximation of "the meaning, the truth" of what these symbols really contain?

When I look at a panel and especially when several different time periods or styles are present, I can't help but see these kinds of things emerge from between the lines so to speak. If I have left only one impression, I hope that it will be that before you can understand their symbolism (a manifestation of who they were, the way that they felt, thought and believed) you need to understand them and where they are coming from. Since for us now that will be impossible, another way of saying that is that we will really only be able to grasp a very small view or tiny aspect of the total picture.

Meaning to us is too often a finite term. The best source to discover the possible realms of meaning is to study the works of people like Bill Strange who has devoted numerous papers to elucidate and caution us as to what meaning might mean and what we can and can't do with it. If you are serious about understanding rock art symbolism, study his and other similar works. I am sure that the main point of this presentation parallels what he has said so very often; that since nothing has just one face value, we can not assume that we know what it means. As Tom Freestone has said, "It often means what we want it to mean."

Pride, integrity, spirituality and the obvertness of symbolism, I believe encapsulates what is involved in the fundamentals of their very being; the clock that makes them tick with a different rhythm than we do (our terminology or analogy, not theirs). Clocks were probably the devices that originally separated us from our perception of reality. Since they never had a clock, they had a very different perception of what reality was to them (another clue) (Cytowic 1993:176,203).

Another would no doubt have chosen to express his thoughts about this request with different thoughts or these ideas with different words. Maybe other words would have been better, but I felt that these words best describe or encapsulate the way I feel about and have come to perceive these amazing peoples and what they left for us to ponder.

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