

**NAVAJO MOUNTAIN
AND
RAINBOW BRIDGE RELIGION**

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With English translations
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CONTENTS

PART ONE: AN ILLUSTRATED INTRODUCTION

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. HEAD OF EARTH AND ITS RAINBOW | 3 |
| Waves of Storytellers | |
| Migration to the Head of Earth | |
| Pilgrimage to the Rainbow | |
| 2. IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE | 27 |
| Monster Slayer versus United States Cavalry | |
| Concerns of Subsequent Generations | |

PART TWO: NAVAJO INDIANS EXPLAIN

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| 3. LONG SALT | 39 |
| Interview | |
| 4. FLOYD LAUGHTER | 43 |
| Interview | |
| Monster Slayer Mythology | |
| Protectionway Prayers | |
| 5. BUCK NAVAJO | 85 |
| Interview | |
| Rain-requesting Prayer and Song | |
| 6. ERNEST NELSON | 105 |
| Interview | |
| 7. BUSTER HASTIIN NEZ | 131 |
| Interview | |
| Rain-requesting Song and Prayer | |
| 8. PAUL GOODMAN | 139 |
| Interview | |
| 9. LAMAR BEDONIE | 143 |
| Interview | |
| 10. SLIM WOMAN | 151 |
| Prayer and Legend | |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 155 |

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book owes its existence to a local crisis in Navajo religion. In 1971 a number of Navajos in the northwestern region of the Navajo Indian Reservation became concerned about the expanding waters of Lake Powell. The water level continued to rise and eventually intruded beneath Rainbow Bridge, a large natural sandstone arch in southern Utah. The Navajos sought assistance from a legal services office on the Reservation, claiming that important religious interests were being infringed by the flooding. The question was put to me, whether religious significance can indeed be documented for Rainbow Bridge. I thank Richard W. Hughes for his interest in the work of a historian of religions and for persuading me to investigate this matter independently—also Leland C. Wyman for referring this task to me. And I thank all the members of my family for postponing their 1976 summer vacation to another year. Special thanks must go to the people of the Rockefeller Brothers' Fund for having made this research possible.

After some initial hesitations, about whether information and samples of this sacred tradition should ever be entrusted to tape recorders and to paper, all of our informants decided that the seriousness of the situation demanded that they risk the unprecedented. And even though the limits of conscience varied from one informant to another, their reasoning was generally this: "The gods will not object when we, their people, try to protect their own sacred places and bodies." So we thank Robert Long-Salt, Floyd Laughter, Buck Navajo, Ernest Nelson, Buster Hastin Nez, Paul Goodman, and Lamar Bedonie for their contributions. The material for Chapter 10, from the Richardson Collection, was made available for inclusion by the courtesy of the Arizona Historical Foundation in Tempe. Additional information and help in the field was provided by Charlie Salt, Singer's Daughter, Ned Yazzie, Mrs. Ed Smith, Mrs. Ralph Cameron, Gail Adler Hughes, Lisbeth Eubank, and others. From among Paiute men, Mike's Boy and Toby Owl have contributed to our understanding of Navajo Mountain area history.

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March, 1977

Karl W. Luckert

■ PART ONE ■

AN ILLUSTRATED INTRODUCTION

1

HEAD OF EARTH AND ITS RAINBOW

Waves of Storytellers

The Head of Earth and Rainbow Bridge belong together. The sacred springs of the area—the one on the Head of Earth, the one remaining near Rainbow Bridge, and lesser ones—work together and pool their blessings. A Rainbow-person, whether he appears as radiant colors among pregnant clouds, or whether forever transfixed in sandstone he spans a canyon, is close kin to Moisture and to Rain. Rain, in turn, feeds all the sacred springs—also those which are used daily, the not-so-sacred springs. In response to offerings of precious stones, pollen, pious prayers and songs, more clouds are born from the Holy Spring atop the Head of Earth—youthful white clouds which within hours mature into heavy black clouds. Black clouds rise and float from there to send forth rain; and Rain refreshes the parched sandy pastures. Green pastures are nourishment for Navajo horses, sheep, and cattle; and healthy herds sustain the People. And so, the Head of Earth, Rainbow Rock-span, Cloud and Rain people, the Navajo people and many kinds of animal peoples, all belong together in what should be a happy and beautiful world.

Every culture has its utopian vision, an ideal which sustains the enthusiasm by which it lives and expands. And every human culture advances with two cutting-edges—along an intellectual and a physical front. In the forefront stand the theorists and storytellers who envision new frontiers; they are followed by a larger number of pioneers or engineers who expand the boundary of their culture by the use of physical force. In the end, the latter are justified again by theories and stories. In a culture of herdsmen, such as the Navajo, storytellers and pioneers are frequently the same persons. One could therefore, perhaps, speak of the two cutting-edges as two "functions."

Our Anglo-American culture heroes envision the good life, Utopia, as a condition where all men live happily in the company of many gadgets and machines. In this manner our theorists have concluded that a few more million acre feet of water behind Glen Canyon Dam would indeed provide what every good citizen of our culture always needed and deserved—a few more kilowatt-hours of electricity to consume. This will then be the reward of modern man, for religiously accepting the gospel of technology—for believing the story of the mechanical and impersonal universe. Long before a corps of engineers built Glen Canyon Dam, to back up waters to flood the sanctuaries of Navajo gods, teachers and storytellers of the Impersonal Universe—chemists, physicists, biologists, economists, etc.—have made inroads on the minds of Indian tribesmen. In their wake they have left the stamp of their judgement, SUPERSTITION, on everything that rested on axioms which were not theirs.

Though motivated by a different utopian vision, Navajo culture has expanded into Paiute territory by the same dynamism and logic. Human history everywhere is a never-ending competition among storytellers. By some stories a culture lives and grows, by some it dies. The stories of Navajo pioneers reveal that none of them actually ever had to advance into foreign territory. Advance parties of Holy People or gods have always explored and Navajo-ized the territory in plenty of time ahead of them—usually as early as the time when humankind was created. The Paiute Indians who had lived in the Navajo Mountain area, well-adapted for centuries, had no stories and no vision that could withstand the Navajo imagination and their readiness to receive ever new revelations concerning all the interesting features of the landscape. Long-settled cultures tend to suffocate in their own secretions of tradition. They become complacent in what seems to be established; they are therefore no match for newcomers who still believe, in all

honesty, that they are in direct touch with the sources of reality—and whose storytellers still dare to explain anything, from trivia to ultimates and gods. The gods of the Navajos have commissioned their people neither to subdue Mother Earth nor to dam her arteries and build a radio tower on her head. But they cooperated with their chosen herdsmen in providing land, life, and livelihood.

Migration to the Head of Earth

The Navajo people themselves do not refer to their sacred mountain in the northwest of their reservation as "Navajo Mountain," which would be *Dził Diné*. Their word for it is *Naatsis'aán*, a contraction of *Nahasdzáán* (Earth) and *'atsiits'iin* (head). *Nahasdzáán* itself appears to be a contraction of *Ni'go Asdzáán* (Earth Woman). Thus, the sacred mountain is, in fact, the Head of Earth Woman. Nevertheless, this mountain has not always been a shrine to Athapascan peoples. Early Blessingway mythology, recorded in the Chuska Range and in New Mexico, refers to this far-western place with a measure of disdain. It was the place to which Monster Slayer banished the ancestors of the Paiutes, the ugly children of the monster "Who-kicks-off-the-cliff" (Matthews, 1897, pp. 122f; Wyman, 1970a, p. 567).

But when during the nineteenth century Navajo pioneers gradually approached this mountain from the east, they began to compare it more sympathetically to a loaf of blue cornbread. And finally, when in 1863 Navajo refugees hid behind this mountain, looking at it from the west, it revealed itself as a divine Shield, yea, as the Head of Earth itself.

The Head of Earth Woman, at its top, gave birth to Monster Slayer, the proven heroic savior from back east in *dinétah*, who—like many a rain cloud during the monsoon season—was born and raised there in the course of one day. Rain clouds originated from the sacred Spring atop this mountain; Monster Slayer was born in a flint hogan nearby.

In 1863—or, as myth says “in the days when humankind was born”—Monster Slayer was transferred miraculously, and born and raised at this place. Clothed in an armor of flint, he and the Head of Earth placed themselves as shields between the People and Kit Carson’s cavalry. Remnants of prayers, which this event forced from the lips of these Navajo refugees, still echo today in the formalized Protectionway prayers of their descendants:

I am spared! I am spared!
 Enemy has missed me! Enemy has missed me!
 Today it did not happen! Today it did not happen!
 (NELSON, par. 36)

And,

I have survived! I have survived!
 All of us have survived! All of us have survived!
 I have survived for you! I have survived for you!
 For many more years! For many more years!
 (LAUGHTER, par. 98f)

One hundred and thirteen years after sentiments of this sort were first expressed to this mountain, the ninety-one year old priest, *Ashijhi Nééz*, still lifts his hand toward the Head of Earth in a gesture of greeting. And he prays for protection:

Head of Earth, on the top!
 Head of Earth,
 by your holy power may I also be holy power.
 With this power I will be spared.
 With this power with which you talk may I talk.
 (LONG SALT, par. 9)



Pilgrimage to the Rainbow

The discovery of Rainbow Bridge is an event to which, I am convinced, many people can lay claim. The ancient Desha people may have seen it as early as 7,000 to 8,000 years ago. Basketmaker peoples may have found it between A.D. 1 and 600. Then, judging from their general settlement pattern, Anasazi farmers should have found it at least during Pueblo II and III, between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. Some Paiute scouts may have chanced into Forbidding Canyon during the eighteenth century or earlier.

Navajos came into the specific area west of Rainbow Plateau and Navajo Mountain in 1863 when they fled from United States troops. Their discovery of Rainbow Bridge could have happened at any time after that date. In any case, the leader of the Navajo band of refugees, *Hashkëniinü*, had no difficulty finding it when he led the Williams brothers and their father to the place in 1884. Since *Hashkëniinü* had returned to the Oljato area by 1869, it seems likely that he had visited Rock-arch before that time. The Williams brothers initially asked him to reveal the whereabouts of his secret silver mine; the sly chief led them to the natural arch instead. At the time, however, the Williamses thought nothing about their discovery. They had mineral treasures on their minds; moreover, scratched into one end of the arch they found such names as Billy Ross, Montgomery, Jim Black, George Emerson, Ed Randolph and Wydel. During that visit the Williams brothers also learned that the Paiute, Mr. Owl, had been keeping horses in Bridge Canyon for a number of years (Crampton, 1960, pp. 100-3).

All my Navajo informants, even some who take pride in being descendants of Chief *Hashkëniinü*, gave credit for the discovery of Rock-arch to the Navajo, Blind Salt Clansman. It is said that he ventured into this canyon while rounding up horses. He followed the bed of the wash and, watching his path, he did not notice the arch until he was right under it. "What is this? Why did I not see it earlier?" he wondered. He backed up a little ways and discovered that, indeed, a bend in the ravine had in a natural manner obstructed his view.

Lamar Bedonie assured us that the Blind Salt Clansman never went to Fort Sumner. All of this adds up to the possibility that he was a member of *Hashkëniinü's* band, that he discovered Rainbow Bridge between 1863 and 1868 and that subsequently he led his chief to it. It is possible that during these early years Chief *Hashkëniinü* imposed an order of silence about this entire area on all his people. Judging from the number of prospectors who are said to have disappeared in his



Navajo Mountain as seen from the west. Lake Powell in foreground.
"... when in 1863 Navajo refugees hid behind this mountain, looking at it from the west, it revealed itself as a divine Shield, yea, as the Head of Earth itself."

Navajo Mountain as seen from the southeast.

"The Head of Earth Woman, at its top, gave birth to Monster Slayer . . . who—like many a rain cloud during the monsoon season—was born and raised there in the course of one day."



realm, it would be an understatement to say only that he did not like visitors. When it became known later, after 1884, that the chief himself had led some White people there, the Blind Salt Clansman would naturally have been released of this obligation to secrecy.

The Paiute, Noscha Begay, whom Cummings credits with the discovery, was in 1909 still a young man. His younger brother, Toby, remembers that at the time of his death—which according to Cummings happened in 1918—the first gray hairs had become visible on his head. This would suggest for him a birth-date in the 1860's. And, if our above data and assumptions concerning the Blind Salt Clansman are correct, he indeed saw Rainbow Bridge before Noscha Begay could have seen it. However, this does not mean that no other Paiute had found it before the Navajos arrived.

Apparently in 1908, a certain "Ushini Bi-nai-etin," the "One-Eyed Man of the Salt Clan," told the Wetherills of the arch. He told them that it is called the Rock-Rainbow-that-spans-the-canyon. "Only a few go there. They do not know the prayers. They used to go for ceremonies, but the old men who knew the prayers are gone" (Jett, 1973, p. 136). That this refers to the Blind Salt Clansman seems to be beyond the limits of doubt. Somehow he either promised or managed to remain ambiguous about his willingness to lead the Wetherills there the following year. But during the winter of 1908-9 he died. The Cummings-Wetherill expedition enlisted, therefore, the help of the Paiute, Noscha Begay, to lead them to the arch. As they waited at Oljato, the Douglas party with their Paiute guide, Mike's Boy, joined them.

The history of the discovery of Rainbow Bridge becomes interesting—well—it becomes amusing, when finally in 1909 history-conscious White travellers are led there. The historical record will forever tell us, in bronze, that the Paiute Indian, Nasjah Begay, first guided the White man to that place; and on paper, that Byron Cummings was the first White man to see Rainbow Bridge, that John Wetherill was the first White man to pass under it, and that W. B. Douglas—their competitor—finished second in both of these races (Cummings, 1952, p. 43).

If I were to continue in this peculiar manner of White man's obsession with historical firsts, I could perhaps claim that I happened to become the first White man to identify some figures of Navajo gods in that sacred area, including the dual nature of Rainbow Bridge. But surely the gods themselves will remain unimpressed by all this, unless my readers—who will now be able to hike this canyon with added

awareness—will actually do so with greater reverence and awe toward them.

No poetry or ceremonial tradition resulted from the discovery of Rock Rainbow by the Paiutes, Owl and Son of Owl. Toby Owl, Noscha Begay's younger brother, said that he is unaware of any Paiute ceremonies connected with Rainbow Bridge. Mike's Boy, now a centenarian, assured me that he also knows of no Paiute song, prayer or offering associated with the arch.

The results were quite different with the discovery by the Navajo, Blind Salt Clansman. At the time when he chanced into Rainbow Creek Canyon, his name was still "Son of Mr. Ears" (*Jaa' Biye*)—a name which later caused some confusion with the above mentioned "Son of Mr. Owl" (*Né'eshjaa' Biye*). *Né'eshjaa'*, the bird which we know as Horned Owl, is to the Navajos an Eared Owl. Later in life the Son of Mr. Ears became partially blind, and people began to name him by referring to his blindness. Since all his lore and teachings were credited to him as the Blind One (No Eyes), it is quite possible that many sacred features and divine persons in the vicinity of Rainbow Bridge were explained by him later when he no longer could see them very well. It appears that the partially blind sage was fond of narrating his memories of the days when he still could see well. These memories were thereby put in sharp contrast with the dimness of his present experience; they were valorized by his renewed appreciation for what was once there for him clearly. Be that as it may, it suffices at this point to know that the teachings of the Blind One reached receptive minds. What began with a simple cowboy's ride down that canyon evolved into full-scale pilgrimages to the sacred home of Rainbow and of other gods.

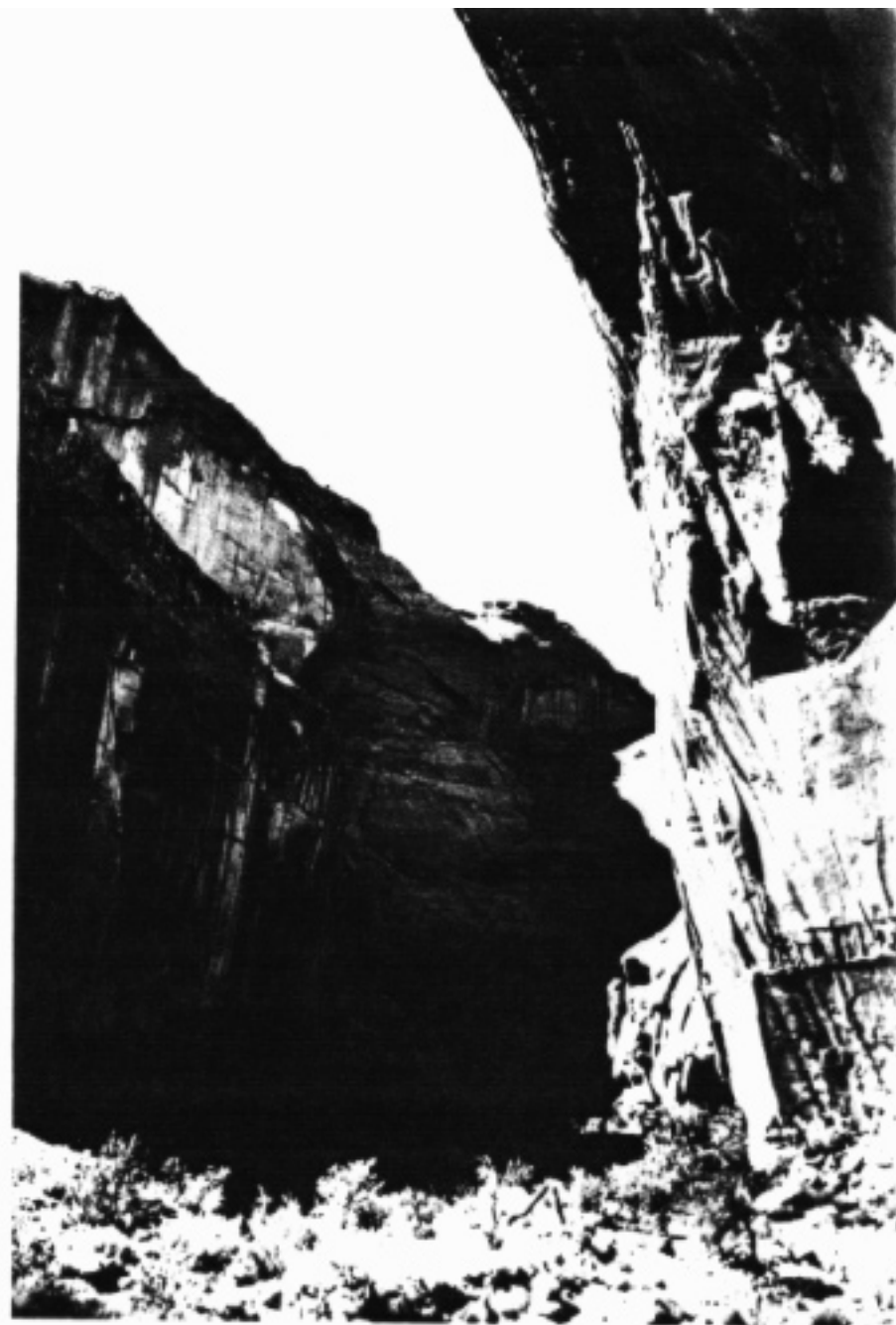
Discoveries either happen or are the result of planned expeditions. Pilgrimages, on the other hand, are inspired not by men but by the gods themselves. It seems therefore highly appropriate to start our illustrated pilgrimage in a time and at a place representing the perspective of the gods.

In times long ago, when the ancestors of man still lived together with the gods, many kinds of animal peoples also lived harmoniously in their midst. During that mythic era, the outward appearances, shapes and clothes of all these people were still fluid and changeable. When the gods finally left our human ancestors, in order to live more to themselves, they retained this quality of primeval interchangeability and flux. The members of the human family of people, along with

many animal species, became fixed to the shapes and skins in which they still roam about today.

In a large windswept cave seemingly carved like a half-dome into the canyon wall, as was the case at many places in prehuman times, there dwelt such gods. Today there is some disagreement among the Navajos about how long the Holy People or gods remained in that cave, whether it was a permanent abode or only a temporary resting place.

It is evident, nevertheless, that at a given time in prehistory, four of these Holy People walked across this canyon and chose to become permanently fixed there as Stone people. Their bodies merged nearly halfway into the canyon wall. And so they stand forever looking up that canyon, ready to spot any human intruder who dares to enter their sanctuary. As soon as one of them is heard, his walking noises and his voice are passed down the canyon, repeated and amplified by one Holy-person after another. White people call this "Echo Canyon"; traditional Navajos know better.



Some Holy People at that time, after leaving their cave, went downstream and around the bend to the right.



Exactly at the corner, where it is possible to overlook both directions, a sentinel took up his position. He is a remarkable person. Long, long ago, in anticipation of the day on which a Navajo would come through here, he put on the mask of a Navajo *yé'ii*-impersonator.



A little farther down the canyon another group of Holy People stationed itself. The attentive visitor will notice that these are menfolk and women, as well as children.



The Navajo pilgrimage reaches something like a climax just around the next bend. The voice and noises of the intruder are at this point thrown back, amplified several times. In addition, in a manner of great urgency, the echo follows only about a syllable behind the original words. Who is it that is talking back at the intruder so intensely? Look ahead, downstream and up. There! He is looking right at you.



This is the Talking Rock, looking your way. Below his tall hat his face is complete—his protruding nose, his squinting eyes, and his mouth contorted as he imitates your words exactly, however strange or foreign these may sound. If in this snap-shot his mouth seems twisted slightly more than usual, it may be because at the moment when it was taken he was repeating some of my words in perfect Schwäbisch.

If you look a little closer you will discover another face looking at you. Talking Rock Girl lies reclined and has her head right below the chin of the Talking Rock Boy. The direction in which she faces varies from his by about thirty degrees.

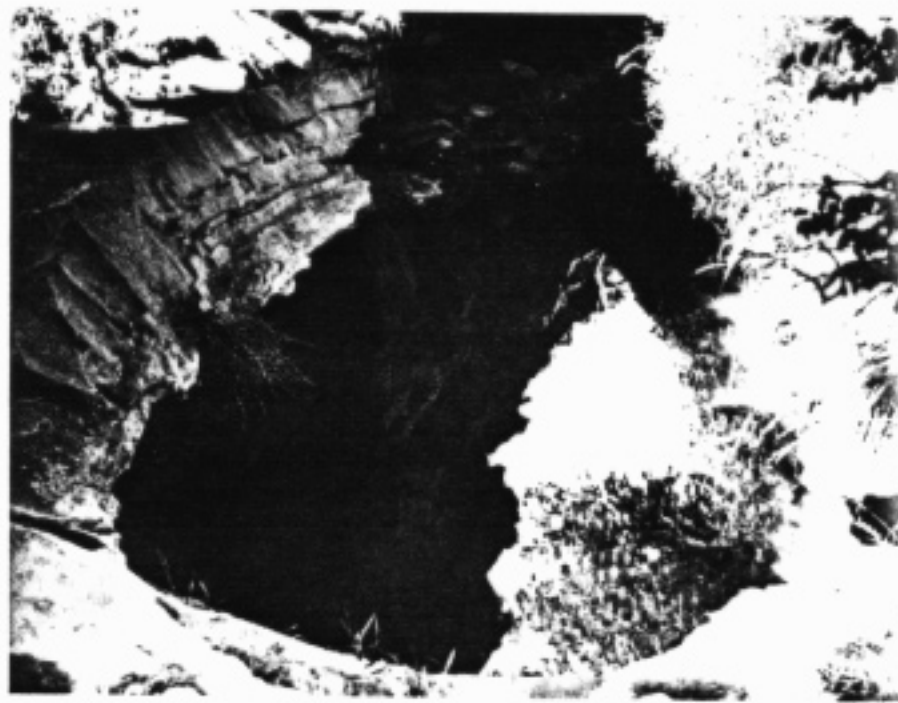
From this place in the canyon the path leaves the bed of the creek and ascends to a ledge right below these faces. So dangerously close

must the pilgrim pass beneath the holy Talking Rock that care should be taken all along not to offend him. The possibility exists that he might angrily decide to fall on someone.



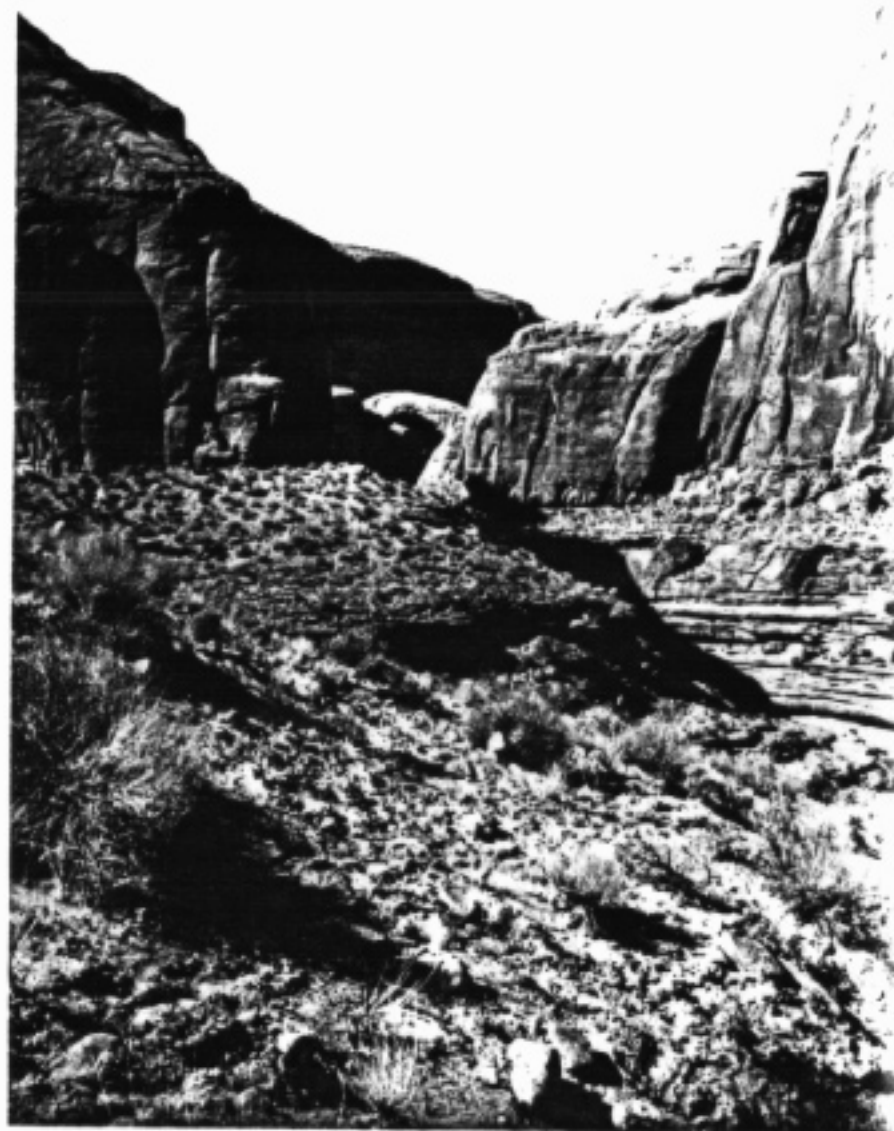
A little way beyond the Talking Rock, and to the right of the main creek, the pilgrim comes upon a ravine. Sparse desert vegetation grows up at its sides. At one spot along the bottom grow fresh grasses, bushes, and even trees.

Hidden beneath this profuse vegetation, and under a sandstone ledge, lies a pool of water. It is a spring. In due time, Navajo explorers discovered that this is a sacred Spring-person who cooperates with a similar divine personage at the top of Navajo Mountain, also with a Rainbow farther downstream.





While standing right above the sacred Spring, you can see a spectacular sight by only turning your eyes to the right. There is another one of those hallowed caves, another place where the gods used to meet. The Spring-person who lives back there used to be even more sacred than the one by which you stand. But this corner of the canyon is now no longer a sacred place; it is being used for other than ceremonial purposes. It has been fixed up to corral the mules which bring tourists into the area.



The greatest of all surprises still awaits the visitor who pauses on the ledge above the sacred Spring, long enough to also look to the left. There he sees the most remarkable of all the Rock people who have stationed themselves in this canyon—a petrified Rainbow person.



My fellow pilgrim! You have come a long way to find this place. Do not rush toward the Rainbow now like a madman who thinks he might be in a great hurry. Contemplate the presence and the grace of the holy personages who have allowed you to pass this far. Walk slowly to the other side of the sacred Spring, on to a ledge on which you can proceed to the Rainbow. Proceed with reverence and be mindful of what you are doing. If you are a non-Navajo, and if your religion does not forbid you to pass under this Rainbow, remember nevertheless that you cannot pass beneath a Rainbow if he chooses to arch above you in the sky. Radiant Rainbow people in the sky back off from whoever approaches them. A pious and sensitive Navajo Indian concludes from such behavior that this must be the Rainbow's wish. One may go near a Rainbow, but one cannot, and therefore should not attempt to, pass under one.

With a small measure of religious devotion and a little more effort, you can climb over a ridge past this Rock Rainbow and view it from the other side. A Rock Rainbow is the only kind of Rainbow with whom this is possible.

What will we see from the other side? A geological accident? A quirk of nature? Those who reflectively have followed this pilgrimage know better by now. This place is the very home of Rainbow. The top of Navajo Mountain, which is seen in the distance to the left, visibly links its own sacred Pool up there with the Rainbow down here, also with the Spring whose ravine is visible below the arch in the near background. With all these Nature persons, and with many others, Navajo priestly singers have left their precious stone and pollen offerings; to them, personally, they have spoken their prayers, and for them they have chanted their prayer-songs.



At this point in our narrative, a White man's curiosity about Rainbow Bridge religion might well be satisfied. But the Navajo reverence for their gods is more specific and analytic than that. Their inquisitive minds came up with another question: In what manner does the Rainbow cooperate with the sacred Spring people of the land? A closer inspection of the Rock Rainbow itself suggested to them an answer to this question.

In spite of having reservations about passing under this arch, the curious Navajo herdsmen approached close enough to identify precisely what kind of a Rainbow person this was. It was discovered that, indeed, these were two Rainbows, a male and a female one, arching together in perfect marital union. Now this certainly explains how all sorts of Rain people, such as young Rainbows and Clouds, originate at this sacred place and float from here into Navajo-land to bless its plants, its animals, and its people with moisture and with life.

Downstream from the home of this married pair of Rainbow people some other Holy People used to live. There was another sacred cave, another sacred Spring person, and at least one other important Rock person. That is now all gone. The intrepid waters of Lake Powell have risen above these sites, and the Navajo worshipper suspects that some of his Holy People down there could have been drowned by now.

Still farther downstream and a little way upstream along the Great River, there was formerly another such sacred place of marriage—the home of other Water people. Colorado River is female; San Juan River is male. At the place where the two used to come together, where the San Juan mounted the Colorado, an infinite number of Water children were formerly born—Cloud and Rain people who would then drift south-eastward. But great uncertainty now surrounds also this sacred place. The waters of White man's Lake Powell have been sent—prudishly, it seems—to cover the nuptial bed of two of the Southwest's greatest divinities. The exact place where these two Rivers used to come together, in one bed, is covered now. Navajo offerings can no longer be placed there at the correct spot.

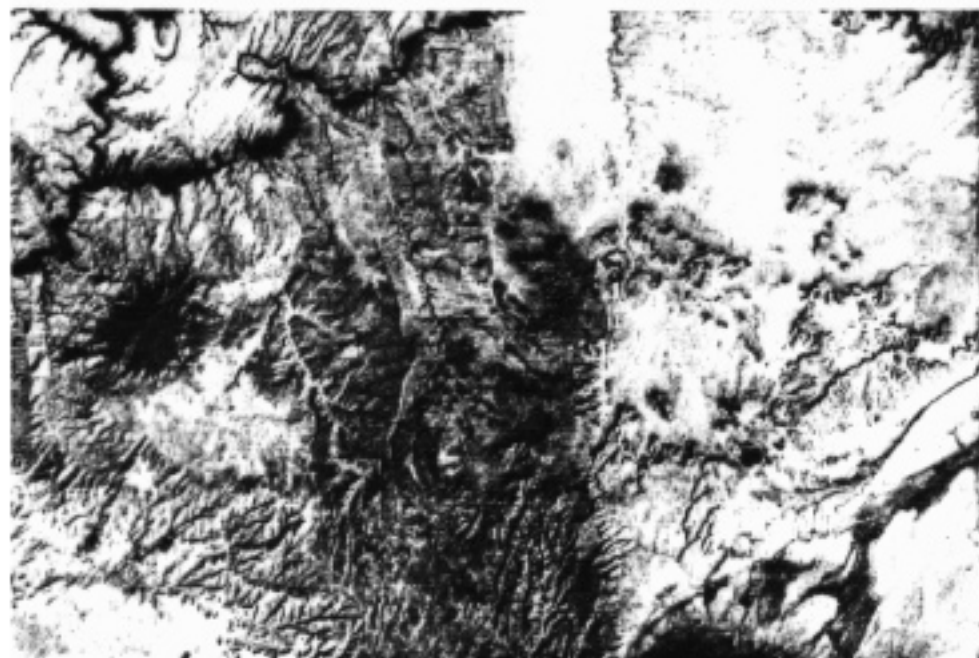


San Juan and Colorado River Junction, prior to Lake Powell. Photograph by courtesy of the Museum of Northern Arizona.

"Colorado River is female; San Juan River is male. At the place where the two used to come together, where the San Juan mounted the Colorado, an infinite number of Water children were formerly born—Cloud and Rain people who would then drift south-eastward."

NASA Satellite View.

—Lake Powell and the dome of Navajo Mountain dominate the western third of this photograph. South of Navajo Mountain, running westward, lies Navajo Canyon. Paiute Canyon runs northward, east of the Mountain, to the San Juan River. Between Paiute and Navajo canyons, south-east of the Mountain, lies Rainbow Plateau. Rainbow Bridge spans a small canyon below the western slope of Navajo Mountain. Along the bottom edge of the photograph, on the right, the northeast tip of Black Mesa can be seen. About two thirds to the right, the road north from Kayenta through Monument Valley, past Oljato, is vaguely visible.



2

IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Monster Slayer versus United States Cavalry

"I will die before I go to a prison camp!" So shouted the angry man as he fled with his people from a troop of mounted soldiers. The soldiers were not of the army of Ramses II; those pursued were not Israelites crossing a Sea of Reeds; and their leader was not Moses. Still, what happened in 1863, between Kayenta and the San Juan and Colorado River Junction, is similar to a number of things which happened some 3,140 years earlier between the Nile delta and Mount Sinai. Fugitive herdsmen were again fleeing into a desert, were again in need of divine protection, and had again become receptive to a new revelation. A new religious cult was born at Navajo Mountain in 1863, centering on "protection" by Monster Slayer and the Head of Mother Earth. Little did Kit Carson and his superiors of the United States Army know what super-human odds they were up against. At the very moment when the Army seemed to be winning, the Navajo Twin war-gods were being reborn on a mountain in the northwest. They went there in order to make that place safe for a remnant of their chosen people.

Hashkéníinii.

The White soldiers did not even know the stern and wily man who supervised the escape of a few nameless Navajos near Kayenta. The people who acknowledged him as their leader, and who at that time named him "The Angry One," were members of his own family and a few relatives. All counted, sixteen people reached Navajo Mountain. Ten stragglers from Black Mesa, who had become separated from

their families, joined the group later. Their number probably never included more than thirteen men who would have been able to fight. Fortunately it never came to such a showdown. General Carleton had underestimated the Navajo population by several thousand—it seems as though the Navajo gods of fecundity were preparing for this event long in advance. The General soon had to tell his Colonel that he should go slow with sending Navajo prisoners to Fort Sumner, that provisions to feed all of them were not available. Meanwhile, at the *Hashkéninü* side, Monster Slayer and Born-for-Water made their Mountain secure. White soldiers dared not come near; they may, in fact, never have come closer than to the Oljato area. *Hashkéninü*'s own mythico-historical commentary on that event is recorded below, second-hand, in LAUGHTER, par. 16–18, 45–52, 81–88. All the prayers and songs which plead for protection, and which have been collected for this report, echo the general sentiments of *Hashkéninü*'s people during their years of hiding.

Early in 1863 *Hashkéninü* was still an ordinary man, about 35 years old. When he refused to surrender to the soldiers he suddenly found himself looked up to as a leader. This meant he was faced with the necessity of also becoming a religious leader. In time he became a powerful medicine man, a singer of Enemyway (*Anaa'jfi*). This is a three or five night Evilway (*Hóchó'jfi*) ceremonial, performed to exorcise the harmful consequences of contacts with aliens (enemies). Enemyway in those days was performed over anyone who had killed an enemy. "To slay an enemy is part of Enemyway" (F. Laughter). And *Hashkéninü* had qualified himself for initiation into such a ceremonial many times over.

In addition to Enemyway, *Hashkéninü* could perform another Evilway ceremonial—the nine-night Upward-reaching-way (*Haneedúéher*), which was related to the Big Starway (*Sp'ísohi*). He got his bundle (*jish*) for this ceremonial from one of his kinsmen, Small Whiskers (*Dághaa' Yázhí*). Whether Small Whiskers had been to Fort Sumner or had taught *Hashkéninü* after the latter's emergence from hiding, which took place in 1869, is not known.

Bilji' doo dilwo'í.

The name of this man, Slow-running-horse, does not appear together with those of men who contributed to Navajo Mountain religion. However, as *Hashkéninü*'s brother he should perhaps be mentioned here. Following the Fort Sumner years he lived in the *Ts'éya'* area.

Ts'naajinü sání.

Hashkéninü referred to Old *Ts'naajinü* as "brother," which may mean "cousin." *Hashkéninü Biye'* mentioned him as "maternal uncle." This member of *Hashkéninü*'s band was the singer who later taught *Hashkéninü Biye'* the Protectionway materials which we have obtained from Floyd Laughter. See LAUGHTER, par. 97–108.

Ashijhi bináá' ádiní.

Some things concerning Blind Salt Clansman have already been mentioned in relation to the discovery of Rainbow Bridge (Chapter One herein). He does not seem to have been the most versatile of medicine men. It is said that he only knew one ceremonial, the Chiricahua Windway (*Ních'i Chishí*). Since this Windway seems to have been picked up by the Navajos at Fort Sumner (1863–68), and since the Blind Salt Clansman was in hiding with *Hashkéninü* during that period, he must have learned it from contact with returnees from Fort Sumner during later years.

With his discovery of Rainbow Bridge came to him a certain amount of prestige. In relation to the ceremonialism, which soon began to surround the sacred area which he discovered, he seems to have fallen very much in line with other singers. His allusion in 1908 to the fact that all the old men who once knew the Rainbow Bridge ceremonies are now dead seems to suggest remotely that he considered himself to be the only survivor who still knew these things. This statement reflects no recognition of the fact that *Ts'naajinü sání* was still alive. The latter knew a great deal about these matters, and he lived until the late 1920's or early 1930's. The explanation for such seemingly contradictory information is this: Navajo medicine men are frequently unaware of what their colleagues and competitors have learned. In this regard Navajo tradition has changed very little during the last hundred years. The cause of all this is not too difficult to perceive. Sometimes a medicine man learns someone else's material quietly, while participating in the other's ceremonies. While he may so get to know a rite, he may nevertheless not be initiated to perform it; or, he may not have the means to follow through and assemble the necessary medicine bundle. So he waits until the initiated singer, who is now in command, will die. As long as the survivor is the only person who knows the ceremony, no one can question his authority to perform. Meanwhile however, portions of ceremonies will "leak" and are incorporated by others into their chantways—with or without the proper

authorization. In recent years the availability of tape-recorders has accelerated this process of pirating, especially among aspiring young practitioners.

Naag'eed deitditi.

The precise place of Shield-deflecting-missiles in the events of Navajo Mountain area history is somewhat vague. Judging by his name, he could well have been one of *Hashkéninií*'s men in hiding. As far as the religious history is concerned, we know that his beautiful cosmology, in NELSON, par. 9-13, has impressed Mr. Pinetree and Trees-extend-down. Thus, among the men of the first generation he scores together with Blind Salt Clansman as a man who was interested in the nature and function of Rainbows and Rain.

Concerns of Subsequent Generations

During the Fort Sumner years the warrior mentality dominated Navajo ceremonialism. In the Navajo Mountain area, as at Fort Sumner itself, defensive thinking after the fashion of "Evilway" prevailed. That is to say, exorcistic rites were performed more frequently than rites of reconciliation (Holyway rites). The fact that *Hashkéninií* himself performed primarily Evilway rites has set the mood for the area. It can be felt there still today.

The ceremonials featuring *yé'ii*-impersonators, which since Fort Sumner have flourished on the eastern and southern portions of the Reservation, are of the Holyway type; they aim primarily at reconciliation with angered gods. Such ceremonials are to this day not permitted in the Navajo Mountain area. They are considered alien and harmful for that region. The balance between magic-manipulative exorcism and religious humility toward the Holy People—whose blessings are desired—is, in the Navajo Mountain area, achieved primarily with various versions of Protectionway and Blessingway rites. The major gods with whom the residents of that area seek to be reconciled in these rites are Head of Earth with Monster Slayer and Born-for-Water at its top, together with a variety of holy Water people. These Water people include Clouds, Lightnings, and Rainbows, together with all their "concret-ified" relatives on Earth—such as sacred Springs, Rivers, Serpents, and petrified Rainbows. A number of additional important Rock people have assembled to surround the conspicuous petrified dual Rainbow; they are his guardian-attendants.

The initial reason for Protectionway ceremonialism in the Navajo Mountain area has been danger from enemies—specifically, the threat of United States troops. To eliminate this danger, Monster Slayer came to reside on Navajo Mountain. This original purpose of Protectionway has survived from *Hashkéninií*'s days all the way into our time when Navajo soldiers participated in the Vietnam war. See NELSON, par. 60, and LAUGHTER, par. 31. And because the United States Government, with all its culture, still appears to traditional Navajos as a kind of alien (enemy) affair, these same rites are being properly applied when someone from the area is being hauled away to prison, to court, or to a hospital (NELSON, par. 37).

Protection of non-warrior kinfolk means freedom from hunger. During their flight the herd of *Hashkéninií* was reduced to twenty sheep and three horses. Thus, protection from hunger for these people meant more livestock; and replacing the livestock which they had lost in flight, in turn, required divine protection during raids into the territory of White settlers. It seems likely that, already during the Fort Sumner years, *Hashkéninií*'s men managed to steal some animals from across the Colorado River. Such raids seem to have remained the sport of Navajo Mountain men, at least until 1908. At that time John Halliday seems to have been the one who excelled in this activity (see Cummings, 1952, p. 20). And from the advice, which Mr. Pinetree gave about offerings for success in raiding (LAUGHTER, par. 6), it seems as though he himself participated in some of these raids.

When life with the outside world became more peaceful, the appeals to Head of Earth and to the gods in Rainbow Bridge Canyon shifted toward the concern for general health. Monster Slayer's salvation, which arrived with his being "born and raised in one day" and by his fending off United States troops on that same day, became the model for "speedy help" itself. Whenever an illness seems hopeless, a situation desperate, Monster Slayer's speedy and effective salvation is always still available. See LAUGHTER, par. 113-14. The discovery of Talking Rock, as a divine-human communication center which reveals "bad dreams," has greatly advanced the effectiveness of all the Holy People who live in that general area (NELSON, par. 38-39; LAUGHTER, par. 33; B. NAVAJO, par. 28-29). Many an illness or accident can so be averted or avoided.

The concern for numbers and offspring undoubtedly was an important one among the early Navajo Mountain residents. A band with no more than thirteen fighting men would, of necessity, hope for

salvation in combination with an increase in numbers. The offerings which were given to the Spring in Rainbow Bridge Canyon (B. NAVAJO, par. 4) have indeed been answered with divine blessings. *Hashkéniníí* and his son, *Hashkéniníí Biye'*, are good examples of this. The number of children of the Father is not known, but we know that alongside his Navajo wives he had thirty-two Ute women slaves. These women and their children later all claimed membership as Navajos in his clan; they formed the Ute branch of Red-streak-into-water. The Son had eight wives and he fathered twenty-eight children.

While Protectionway appears to have been the original rite for both Navajo Mountain and the Rainbow Bridge area, Rain-requesting grew from it and became a nearly independent concern. From among *Hashkéniníí's* men, only Shield-deflecting-missiles and the Blind Salt Clansman are remembered as having been concerned about Rain. It also seems very unlikely that any of them performed a rite of Rain-requesting during the Fort Sumner years. These years of hiding correspond to years of above-average precipitation in the Navajo Mountain area. It is also not very likely that the dry year of 1869 required a Rain ceremony. This was the year when *Hashkéniníí's* band came out of hiding, and Monument Valley at that time had not yet been overgrazed. His son said that when he was 13 years old (ca. 1871) the grass in the area was tall.

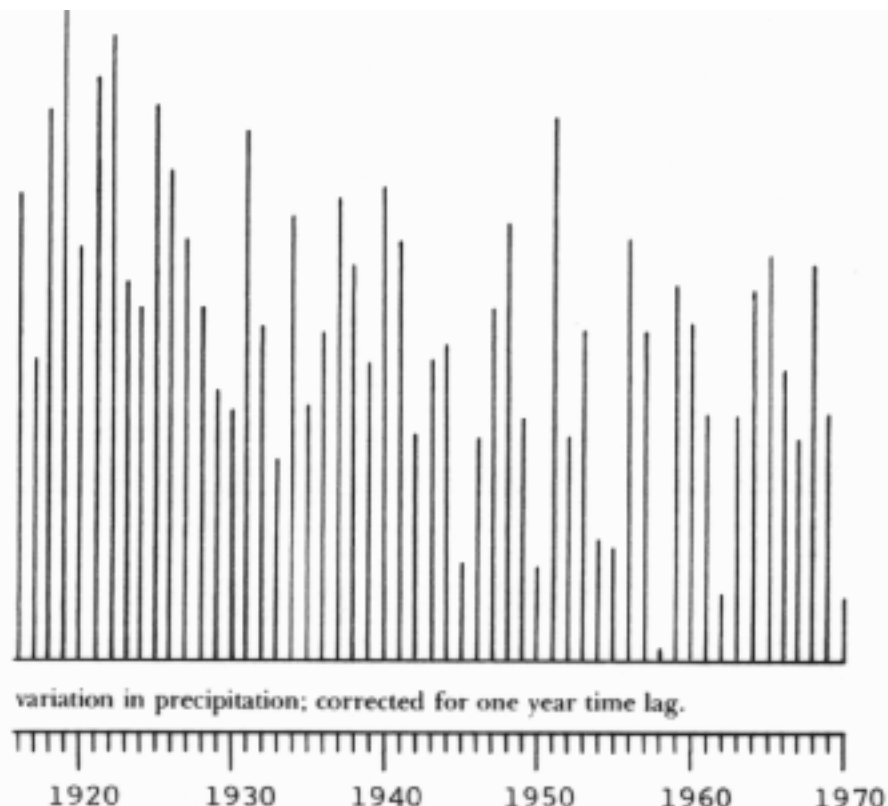
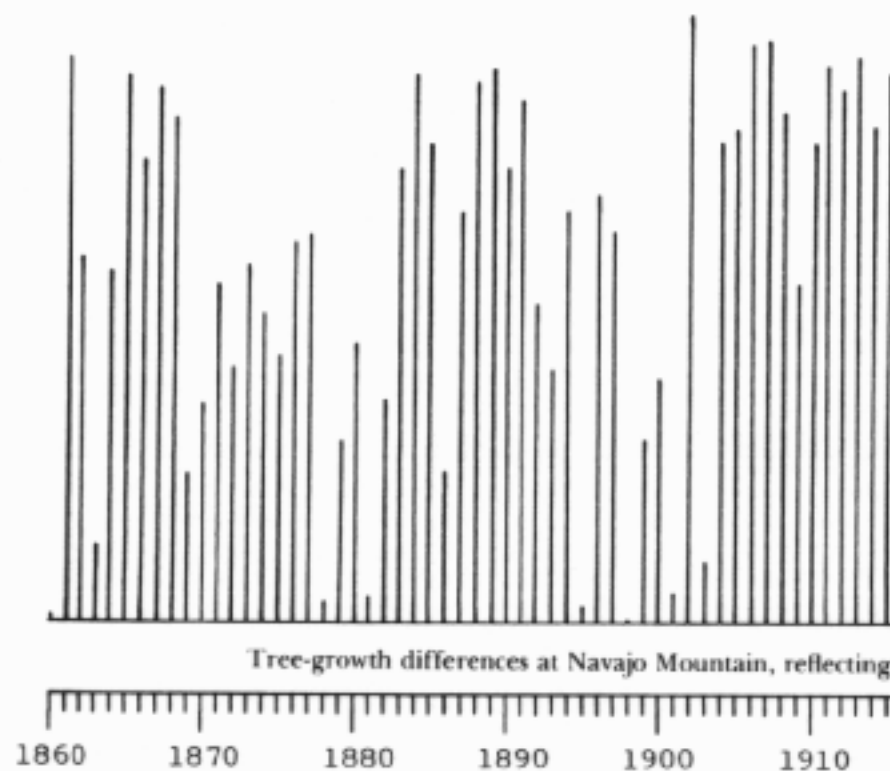
The first period of drought after Fort Sumner, when Rain-requesting could have been conceived, was around 1880. Such a period of drought also came around 1900. In the 1880's the Rain ceremonies—if there were any—were in the hands of only a few of *Hashkéniníí's* men, such as Shield-deflecting-missiles and the Blind Salt Clansman. The very pragmatic warrior minds of *Hashkéniníí* and *Hashkéniníí Biye'* seem to have been less impressed by that effort; in 1939 the latter simply attributed the shortage of grass to a "change in climate" (Charles Kelly, 1953, p. 225).

It seems likely that the transmission of the Rain-requesting rites to the next generation took place during the years around 1900. By that time Whiteman Killer with his three daughters and his intelligent son-in-law, Mr. Pinetree, had become solidly established in the Navajo Mountain area. At that time Pinetree was about 50 years old, his father-in-law perhaps twenty years older. John Halliday, another link in this tradition, was a contemporary of Pinetree.

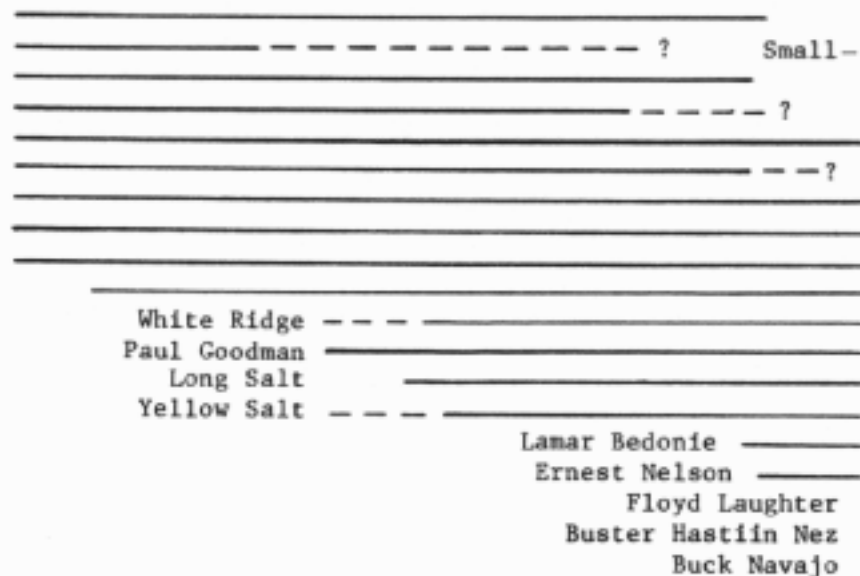
Following the years of drought around 1900 came the wettest period of the century. Rain ceremonies were not needed, and the older generation who knew them passed away. This left Pinetree, John Halliday, and possibly Trees-extend-down, with Billie Halliday, as retainers of the tradition. It appears that only during the 1920's (perhaps later in that decade) Rain-requesting was brought again to the foreground. The ceremonial leader who emerged at that time was obviously Mr. Pinetree. And he seems to have remained the leader and teacher in that effort until his death in 1941.

The next generation of Rain-requesters, who apparently learned the rites since the 1920's, included Pinetree's son who is known as Long Salt, also Paul Goodman, White Ridge, and a "Blind One." Three of these men are still alive (in 1976), but they have become too old to perform. The group of men who learned various portions of Rain-requesting from the 1930's through the 1950's includes most of our informants. In the sequence of their ages they are: Bedonie, Nelson, Laughter, Buster Hastiin Nez, and Buck Navajo.

During the last decade or two, the interest in both Protectionway and Rain-requesting seems to have slackened. Then the rise of Lake Powell waters into the wash below Rainbow Bridge, by threatening the Rainbow Rock-arch itself, has evoked a fresh concern. Upon careful reflection, the dry years of the 1970's have been brought into association with the general desecration of the Rainbow Bridge area and of Head of Earth. Overgrazing and increase of population in the area will not very likely be recognized as causes for the decrease in their livelihood—indubitably, these have all along been understood as blessings from the gods. For the sincere traditional Navajo, the only option left is repentance and the reconciliation with the gods whom, tempted by Anglo-American modernity, he had begun to neglect. And repentance toward the gods—the rediscovery of a realistic human perspective—is the inalienable right of every human being on this planet. Without finding the proper balance between the human ego and its greater-than-human surroundings now and then, humankind would long ago have reverted to the level of brute predators. Human culture is a delicate and complex organism. It lives and grows not only by its teeth and claws, nor only by the cutting edge of analytic and scientific reason. Human cultures grow, as their individual builders do, with a measure of humility, love, and self-sacrifice.



— Navajos at Fort Sumner



Hashkeniinii

Whiskers

Blind Salt Clansman

Shield-deflecting-missiles

Old Tsi'naajinii

Whiteman Killer

Pinetree

? John Halliday

Hashkeniinii Biye'

Trees-extend-down - - - ?

Should Navajo traditionalists worship and adore Anglo-American engineering power, or should they stand in awe of greater-than-human gods? This is the issue at stake as, in the following pages, some Navajos explain to us their ontology. I dare suggest that their future and their human dignity might be better assured if they repent and remain on the side of their gods. This is a reasonable socio-historical assumption even without considering the problems of natural physics. But Anglo-American specialists, who seem to know, have assured me that many native Holy People have all along been at work. Many small Water-droplet-people are known to have bored their way to freedom, through the natural porous sandstone along the sides of the Glen Canyon plug of concrete. In the hope that all their imprisoned brothers and sisters will someday follow, they have succeeded in weakening the stranglehold which our engineers have tried to have on them.

■ PART TWO ■

NAVAJO INDIANS EXPLAIN

3

LONG SALT¹

Interview

1. My maternal grandfather and my father used to speak their prayers on top of the Mountain (Navajo Mountain) many years ago. It was at a level spot, where the home of Monster Slayer (*Naayíé' Neizghání*) was. That is where they sat (Monster Slayer and) Born-for-Water (*Tó Bá Jishchíní*);² they sat there, it is said. That is the place where they placed precious stone offerings (*nd'iz*), these old men. They used to carry these (offerings) there, calling on the name of *Naatsi'áán* (Head of Earth), it is said.³ They also made an offering at the place where the Spring is. That is what the old men were saying (and doing). But nowadays the White people do all kinds of things up there.⁴ It (the old men's ceremonies) made life good for the men and women of long ago.

2. Not long ago, I (myself still) used to place offerings. Offerings is what I used in my ceremonies on the Head of Earth . . . I do not remember the first time. But right here on that (mountain), where the springs are, is where I (used to) have my prayers (*shinahagha'*).

¹Long Salt (*Ashjhi Néez*) is presently (in 1976) the oldest and perhaps also the most revered of the Navajo Mountain area singers. Nearly lame, he still rides his horse; on the day of our visit we had to trail him four miles to catch up with him. His father was the famous rain-requester Pinetree (*Ndshchir'*) of the Many Goats clan. His paternal grandfather was *Dághaa' dah náandí*, and his maternal grandfather was Whiteman Killer. Pinetree was married to the three daughters of Whiteman Killer. His marriage with the oldest daughter, Long Salt's mother, took place after their return from Fort Sumner. Long Salt is now approximately ninety-one years old. He was born in 1885(?) near Water-under-rock (*Táiyus náá'*) at a place called *Tsétgáí*, which is approximately eleven miles southeast from the base of Navajo Mountain.

²Monster Slayer and Born-for-Water are the Navajo Twin war-gods. For the Navajo Mountain version of the myth see LAUGHTER, par. 54-96.

³See etymology above, Chapter One.

⁴Such as building a radio tower up there, by the sacred Pool.

3. At times (some years) we did not have get-togethers (for rain ceremonies). No one really came out to say that they were praying for rain. Maybe some did. We respected (respectfully performed) this mainly in summer.

4. There used to be prayers made at (the side of) Navajo Mountain. These (prayers) go together with (those of) the other four sacred mountains: Blanca Peak, Mount Taylor, San Francisco Peaks, Hesperus Peak. Also included are Huerfano Mountain and Gobernador Knob. These six mountains were prayed to and pleaded with (*naahgah*). They also pleaded with Earth and Sky. They pleaded with Head of Earth. They pleaded for their land.—My voice is giving out, my children.

5. (Concerning Rainbow Bridge), when I was younger I would go there and put down something (as an offering), near the Arch, at a place far from here, a place called Object-sticking-up (*i'ii'd*). My uncle already used to go to Rock-arch (*Tsé nan'áhl'gíí'*), see it, and speak there.⁵ That place is holy. . . . Yes, I went there a number of times and always placed precious stones there as an offering. The old men used to say that it was Rainbow. It really was the Rainbow. My grandfather and my father used to say that. They knew it from long ago.—My throat is just too bad. . . . Rock-arch was not made in my presence. I just know that it was made (a Rainbow). I just went there periodically. . . . "The Holy People came there," my father used to say. He used to say, "The place is holy." And they took precious stone offerings to them (the Holy People there). They used to pray there a lot. (The gods used to) have a ceremony there, they say. It concerns the prayers.—My throat is really sore.

6. Here was a river, and here too was a river. (He draws in sand). Here (by the junction) is where I had my prayers.⁶ There was rain at places, and I had gone there (to plead) for it.

7. (Who was the first Navajo man who found the arch?) There was a Navajo elder (*shahastóí*) who first came upon it. His name was Blind Salt Clansman (*Áshjijí bináá' ádiní*)—at the place where a horse stood

⁵See below, par. 7. This uncle seems to be the Blind Salt Clansman, the Navajo discoverer of Rainbow Bridge.

⁶The point where the Colorado and San Juan Rivers merged before Lake Powell covered it.

with him.⁷ (It was) many years ago, eighty years ago, maybe. (He was) my maternal uncle, my mother's older brother. When I was young I became aware of him. I do not know how much older (than my mother) he was. I did see him when I was young.

8. (Did you carry water from the Spring by Rock-arch to the top of Navajo Mountain?)⁸ I would drink from this water, (but) I never took any of it to the top of Head of Earth. There are many springs around Navajo Mountain. I have drunk from many of them.

9. (Can you give us a prayer?—He laughs and begins):
Head of Earth, on the top!⁹

Naatsis'áán bílátahgi!

Head of Earth, by your holy power may I also be holy power.

Naatsis'áán bee din'jinií éí bee dinishyín doo.

With this (power) I will be spared.

Díí bee hadeesdzih.

With this (power) with which you talk, may I talk.

Díí bee yániití, díí yáshí' doo.

Head of Earth, vegetation that grows on top of you.

Naatsis'áán, níhán'gi hóloóníí nanise'.

Black Cloud, Male Moisture.

K'os díthit, nítsq' bíkq'.

The One who sits blanketed with darkness.

Ááh díthit yee sídáhí.

The One who sits with the Small Rain Moisture.

Nítsq' jóolí yee sídáhí.

The One who sits with the Black Cloud One.

K'os díthit yee sídáhí.

⁷This refers to a petroglyph, no longer there, which commemorated the discovery of Rock-arch by the Blind Salt Clansman. For a more explicit reference see BEDONIE, par. 9.

⁸This question was asked in response to information by BEDONIE, par. 4–5.

⁹This interview took place at Long Salt's home, some miles southeast of Navajo Mountain. With Rainbow-rock-arch being located at the opposite side of the Mountain, the informant saw no point, at this distance, in speaking a prayer to it. He prayed to the Head of Earth instead, which was nearer and within sight.

This is the way my prayer goes. It continues until it covers all of him (the Mountain), starting from his feet (moving) upwards. The rest escapes me right now.

10. (How does the song go?)

Head of Earth, sitting with Black Cloud.

Naatsis'aán K'as diłhít yee sídáhí.

The One who is enveloped by bouncing raindrops and mist. . . .

Tázhool bíł dashoogishí. . . .

And then from there it (the song) moves on to Blanca Peak. It (my sore throat) is stopping me. It is stopping me.

11. (What gods are spoken to in songs and prayers?)¹⁰—The very same names are used. They are Head of Earth-person (*Naatsis'aán yee sídáhí*). (In the prayer for rain) Black Cloud-person (*K'as diłhít yee sídáhí*) is the main one; (then) Male Rain-person (*Nítshé bík'g' yee sídáhí*). That is how the prayer goes, it seems.

IN MEMORIAM

Moments before typesetting I learned that the singer, *Ashjhi Níez*, died during the last week in February, 1977. His powerful, beautiful, and happy bass voice has left us, to mingle forever with the voices of Wind, Male Moisture, and of Thunder. Long ago, in a gesture of prayer, his uplifted hand anticipated the direction of his destiny—upward and northward on a timeworn trail, toward an ancient place where many others, who have left traces of *nit'iz* and corn-pollen along the path of Navajo history, now dwell. Surely, his lameness is no longer a hindrance, as he hastens away—on a Radiant Rainbow, it seems.

¹⁰This admittedly redundant question, to which the informant responded somewhat impatiently but nevertheless graciously, was asked especially for the benefit of those scholars who keep insisting that all gods transcend corporeal phenomena. Navajo Holy People are not "spiritual" beings who transcend their "material" manifestations. They are divine persons who appear as they wish—anthropomorphically or disguised in whichever costumes they prefer to be seen at the time—even clothed in invisibility. All the while, the momentary size of their appearances does not mean very much. Size and shape are both functions of clothing, and clothes are interchangeable. The actual personage, generally thought of as being anthropomorphic, "stands within" its clothes, or within what we might prefer to call "natural phenomena." See also LAUGHTER, par. 33, and footnote 10.

4

FLOYD LAUGHTER¹

Interview

1. Greetings to all of you, and thank you for coming to me and for asking me about some things with regard to the sacred area, which we know as Rock-arch, but which to you is located near and mid-border of the land called Utah, the same land which extends from there and becomes the land called Arizona. Arizona is the land where I come from. But to me these lands are one land, with no barricade or border. The only natural obstacle there is the River, which River my elders used to talk about in the way I shall now describe.

2. Approximately fifty-four years ago I first became aware of this matter. And as I remember those years in this context, things were going well. And from there on, about forty-four years ago, I became more fully aware about the use of the River by my elder men—for

¹Floyd Laughter, who lives within a few miles of Long Salt, gave his age as fifty-seven. He is a member of the Red-streak-into-water clan (Ute branch) and has married a woman of the Salt clan. Being only a son-in-law in the powerful Salt clan, he defines his identity more in relation to his deceased maternal grandfather, Man-who-did-it.

The choice of an informant for more Protectionway materials was not made until all the summer interviews had been translated and examined. By then it became clear that the savior-twins of Blessingway mythology needed to be traced more thoroughly. Protectionway belongs with Blessingway, this much was certain. But there emerged a serious incongruity. The earlier Chuska Mountains versions of Blessingway mythology treat the Navajo Mountain area, land of the Paiutes, with rude disdain. Navajo Mountain area medicine men, who learned to look to their Mountain as a god and a place of refuge, and some of whom count Paiutes among their ancestors, obviously had to keep an open mind toward new and more favorable Monster Slayer revelations.

Already after our first interview, when Floyd Laughter's relationship to *Hashk'innií* *Biye'* was not yet evident, (his maternal grandfather, Man-who-did-it, later turned out to be him), I concluded that his Monster Slayer episode (par. 15–18) must have originated with the very band of Chief *Hashk'innií*. The Protectionway myth, which transfers the Twin-gods to Navajo Mountain, belongs to a time when the Navajos indeed needed protection in the Navajo Mountain area. And this was the case during the Fort Sumner years, 1863–1868.

ceremonial purposes. At that time (before flooding by Lake Powell) there were two Rivers, and they came together north of Navajo Mountain at a place called Water-come-together (*Tó ahidiidłíní*). You see, right now I am fifty-seven years old, and I was approximately three years old when I became first aware that there was a River. And after that I was taught about the sacred area and about the ceremonies which were performed in that area by my maternal grandfather and my father. And I learned of these things by being their helper. And they taught me how to go about doing certain parts of a ceremony in the prescribed manner. For example, I was taught to help with shooting projectiles over (*ah'i da'at'oh*); and to carry out of the hogan the Lightningway-stick (*tsin di'ni'* = bullroarer); and (to do) the blackening in Blackeningway, especially when it was for male patients. And this is the way I started out in my very young years. By listening I learned the songs and prayers of my elder men. Because I learned this in my very early years, I started to do the minor Blackeningway and the giving of ceremonial medicine by mouth (*azáá'nił*) by the time I was thirteen. It is my belief today, that because my elders did these sacred things in those early days, that their children and grandchildren had an advantage which enabled them to grasp the deeper meaning of life, also a quicker understanding of the ceremonies. Such was the case with myself. Today I miss these blessings; nevertheless, I still have a lot of faith in young people. It was said that these (blessings) were made possible because of the sacred area and the sacred River, and that the River was one of our Holy Ones (*Nihidiyini* = gods).

3. And the way to ask of him (the River) is through prayer and offerings—yellow cornpollen (*tádidłín*) and jewel offerings (*nił'iz*). (These were presented to the god) so that what we asked would be granted. The names of the River are also used—the River being two, with one being male and the other being female. That is, the River nearest this side (San Juan River) is female, and the River further over (Colorado River) is male. And at the place called Water-come-together the River further over goes on top and over the River on this side nearest us.² I know this area, and I go there to pray.

4. In those early days I also became aware of the variety of plant-life, of grasses which existed, which were provided for our use. In some

²Contrast this with NELSON, par. 21. The difference is easily explained. One man could have visited the Place-of-merging when the Colorado River was flowing high and the other when the San Juan carried more water. Today it is no longer possible to identify the gender of these two rivers. Their nuptial bed is now inundated by the waters of Lake Powell.

cases these are provided for us even as our foods, on account of these prayers and offerings in earlier times. But today some of these plants are scarce and can be found only in certain places. This we miss, and it is for this reason that we ask that the sacred spots at which we give offerings (*nináda'ajihéggóó*), where we used to pray for favors and give offerings, be made off limits for White people, and that they be made to respect them (the sacred spots) as we ourselves are taught.

5. See, at this time, the place of Water-come-together, near Rock-arch, is already covered with water (from Lake Powell). It has covered one of the sacred spots, and this forces us singers to guess at the exact location of that sacred spot. But we cannot be sure whether it is the right place, because of the water cover.

6. And there is another threatened sacred spot in the vicinity of Water-come-together. A little ways this side, and a very little ways upward from Rock-arch, at the bottom of the slope, is a Spring. It is a special sacred place that is used to pray for wealth. My paternal grandfather, Pinetree (*Nélishchíł'*), used it often, by speaking prayers to and by giving offerings into the Spring itself. For example, this ceremony was used to pray for sheep, horses, cattle, and jewelry to carry around (*naalyéhé*). And it was because of these prayers and offerings that our people were enabled to cross (the River) to go to a place called White-face Mountain (*Dzít binii'ígai*). For this reason it was made easy for them to bring back White man's livestock.³ And these are the things we learned about those happenings. And because we know this, we feel that the Spring itself is holy (*díyín*), that if prayers are spoken to it in a pleading way, (the Spring-person) will grant it.

7. And now concerning Rock-arch. I was told the story of Rock-arch by two different men and on two separate occasions—of how it came to be in the beginning. The men who told me these stories were my father, and my maternal grandfather, Man-who-did-it (*Hastiin át'linii*). And my grandfather heard it from his father, Anger-he-gave-out (*Hashkénini*), who died long ago, approximately forty-three years ago, at the age of eighty-nine.⁴

³This seems to refer to cattle of Mormon settlers, from west of the Colorado River. The Navajos drove these cattle across the River "about a mile or two below the San Juan and Colorado River Junction." It is uncertain whether Pinetree himself participated in these raids, or whether he told Floyd Laughter something he had learned about the Fort Sumner years.

⁴There seems to be an error here of about twenty years. According to Cummings (1952) Chief *Hashkénini* died in 1909; according to Kelly (1953) he died in 1912.

8. The story of Rock-arch tells that Rock-arch is not there without a reason. The story says that in the beginning of Earth (*Nahasdzaán*) it was one of the things which were desired in a special ceremony. In those days of long ago, when man was created, or very shortly after they had come to be, two female persons walked away from a place called Black Water (*Tó hzhání*). They probably just wandered from that area and eventually got lost. In their wanderings they finally reached a place where the Sun comes up and came upon the Holy People of that area. But those (Holy People) would not become used to them because they were different—People-of-the-water (*Táyi'í dine'é*). And the two asked these people whether they could live among them, but the Water people refused—because it would not be a good place for them to be. But since you are here, we can help you and provide a way by which you can return to your own land.

9. And the miraculous means (*bigááí*) was a Rainbow. They were told (that) it would bring them down in the direction where the Sun goes down. And so they were brought back, in that miraculous manner of Rainbow, to the area of Navajo Mountain, which is the "Head of Earth"—the same place which by our elders is called Sky-upheld (*Yáyah náizín*). And they were further instructed to come down at the base of Navajo Mountain, on the other side, and that this Rainbow, when they come down at that place, would remain there. And it was done so in a miraculous way. From the place where they descended the two female persons returned to their home on Navajo Mountain. And that is how Rock-arch is a Rainbow; and it is a female Rainbow(-person). At the time of this event it was also decided by the Holy People, that Rainbow would remain as Rock-arch and that it would be a place to bring offerings and prayers, also a place of refuge.⁵

⁵This seems to be related to the "Two Navajo Sisters" in Enemyway, Beautyway, and Mountainway mythology. See Wyman, 1975, pp. 3, 158ff. See also NELSON, footnote 4.

Some scholars have suggested that a passage in Washington Matthews' Mountain Chant (1887, p. 399) indicates, for the time of its recording, a widespread awareness among Navajos concerning the existence of Rainbow Bridge. The hero of that chantway myth is said to have been captured by the Utes. Talking-god helped him to escape. The god "blew a strong breath, and instantly a great white rainbow spanned the canyon. The Navajo tried to step on this in order to cross, but it was so soft that his feet went through. . . . (Talking-god) blew another strong breath, when at once the rainbow became as hard as ice and they both crossed with ease." If this passage is read discerningly, it seems to prove nothing of that sort. Travelling on a rainbow is an often mentioned theme in Navajo shamanistic mythology. The rainbow in this instance was hardened "as ice"—a substance which matches the original white rainbow in color. Nowhere is it suggested that this ice remained there as red sandstone. Nevertheless, it appears that Laughter and Nelson have based their notion of the rainbow's petrification on mythic proto-types of this sort.

10. When the two female persons returned, they went a little ways from Rock-arch to the Spring, and from there they took some water to Navajo Mountain. Upon arrival at their hogan they tasted the water and found it extremely good; their bodies were made whole. And their prayers found straight and direct access (among the gods). And in those days there was holy vision (*diyingo hot áhát'í*) after the mode of stargazing, which some of our elder men still have today. In dreams it was brought to them, they were told and instructed that the water which they drank was sacred and that water should be obtained in accordance with ritual and offering (procedures). This was done as instructed, and a container filled with that water was brought back. The purpose of why they were instructed to bring water was this—those early people could ask for sheep, horses, and for such other things that would provide them with a livelihood. Accordingly, the song-ceremonial was performed, and from that time on we came to have sheep.

11. And that is the way these two men, and other elder men, (used to) tell these things. It was also said, because in those long-ago days these holy places were used, that they would remain places to go to for needs in the future. And this is what was said in the beginning. Nevertheless, some of these sacred spots are now covered with water. And we no longer know some of these holy places. We can no longer accurately place offerings at those designated spots.

12. Throughout my early life I saw my elders give prayers and put offerings at these holy places. Among them was my father, Tom Laughter, the same person whom our people called Man-whose-hogan-is-on-edge (*Hastiin bidáá'í bighani*). And since his going away, I have been continuing; and I will continue to give prayers and offerings in that sacred area—especially the prayers and the offering rite of the Underwater Talking-god and of the one (Talking-god) above (*Táht'ahjí Haashch'ééhtí' náníngí dóo wódaht'ílgí*).

13. Of these two ways (pertaining to these two Talking-gods) there are altogether eight parts. There are four god-persons with(in) Underwater Talking-god and four god-persons with(in) the Above Talking-god. You see, the four who are above are Sun (*Jóhonaa'éí*), Moon (*T'p'éehonaa'éí*), and two Lightnings—Black Lightning (*Íi'ni' dít'íh*) and White Lightning (*Íi'ni' hígai*). These are the four above. And below are Underwater Talking-god (*Táht'ah Haashch'ééhtí'*), Underwater Calling-god (*Táht'ah Haashch'éoghan*), Underwater Cornpollen Boy

(*Tátt'ah táldiin ashkii*), and Underwater Variegated Girl (*Tátt'ah anih'ánii at'éed*).⁶

14. And that is the way most of these main prayers start. Nevertheless, in asking for moisture it is a little different. There we use the ways of That-which-was-turned-around (*Nástáán*). We say Blue-turned-around, White-turned-around, Yellow-turned-around, and Radiant-turned-around. This (prayer sequence) is followed by (mentioning) Yucca-soap: Blue Yucca-soap, White Yucca-soap, Yellow Yucca-soap, and Radiant Yucca-soap. And that is followed by and concluded with Blue Cornpollen, White Cornpollen, Yellow Cornpollen, and Radiant Cornpollen. And this is the manner in which rain is prayed for and an offering is given to Water.

15. And this is the way we still continue to use these sacred places today. And our fathers and elders used them (so) before us. (We do this) also at a place called Long Mountain, (where I live). And we also use a place at the very top of Navajo Mountain. At that very spot was the Place-of-raising (*T'áá neiyá*).

16. And an event happened (there) when humankind began, when hostilities still flared up between the beings from above and the beings from below.⁷ One of the issues was whether certain peoples ought to be in bondage to others. The way of the winning people was promoted by the beings from below; the beings above were in opposition. And it was because of this great issue that the hostilities erupted into the shooting of projectiles—some from the top of San Francisco Peaks. On this side (on Navajo Mountain) was Monster Slayer (*Naayéé' Neizghání*, also "Enemy" Slayer and on top of San Francisco Peaks was Black-god (*Haashch'éeshzhini*).

17. When the issue was whether we should exist here at Navajo Mountain, when someone (hostile) came to the top of San Francisco Peaks, who was there among us to defend us? At this point appeared Monster Slayer (who was) raised in one day (*t'áá'tá'i jį neiyá*), Born-for-

water (*Tó Bá Jishchiní*), Changing Grandchild (*Tsói Náádleehe*), and Reared-in-the-earth (*Leeyaa Neiyáni*).⁸ And over there on their side, at San Francisco Peaks, were animal-people of the mountains—Mountain Lion (*Náshdóitsoh*), Wolf (*Mq'uitsoh*), Black Eagle (*Atsázhin*), and Buzzard (*Jeeshóó*). And that makes four on both sides, or eight altogether.

18. And Monster Slayer caught those projectiles which were sent from San Francisco Peaks. And among these projectiles were spruce needles (*ch'ó*). Upon catching these projectiles he transformed them miraculously and planted them on Navajo Mountain. That is the reason why we find there of that *ch'ó* family the following (members): *ch'ó deenínii*, *ch'ógaii*, *ch'ó tsoh*, and *gad nizhii* (sharp blue spruce, white(?) spruce, large spruce, and juniper). And in a miraculous way he turned these things into medicine. And today, when there is a nine-night ceremonial, some of these are made into an emetic called *uikóoh*.

19. And at the very top of Navajo Mountain are some places at which one should give prayers and offerings. There is especially one place, very near the place where the tower is now located. This place was used in connection with the Moisture-pleading-way. And I have seen several other places where people of long ago used to place their offerings. And I have placed a few of these myself. However, as far as I know, that spot on the top of Navajo Mountain has now not been used for approximately eight years, because it is the very place where the tower is now. The tower is at the very top and on the crown of the Head of Earth, and we cannot place our cornpollen, our offerings, and speak our prayers because of that tower. Because the prescribed way is to place cornpollen at the crown of the Head, as well as above and across the crown. And that is where the tower is now.

20. This person who was raised in one day, he was raised in that Flint Hogan (*Béesh bee huoghauí*) which is on the ridge, at the top, that slopes toward the south end of Navajo Mountain. There is a small area, formed of black rock in a semi-circle. And this is the place of the very person who was raised in one day to defend us, also the very same one who caught these projectiles. The prayer and offering (rite) of that place and person goes like this:

In one day born and raised,

T'áá tá'i jį neiyá,

Shielded and armored with black flint.

⁶This Underwater quadruple of Talking-gods seems to be the recipient of the informant's offerings, which he gives to sacred bodies of water.

⁷The myth which follows here (par. 16–18) explains the fact that some Navajos were never taken as captives to Fort Sumner (1863–68) by the United States military. The decisive battle was fought already in prehuman times among archaic animal-shaped hunter gods. Monster Slayer caught the pine projectiles which were shot from San Francisco Peaks by the hostile party. The safety of the Navajos in the Navajo Mountain area, confronted by Kit Carson's troops, could thereby be accepted as real as was the visible presence of conifers on their revered Mountain.

⁸For the identities of these divine personages see below, par. 94.

Béesh dithit há doot'in.

Black Flint Hogan.

Béesh dithit bee hooghan.

Black Flint crossed on the hogan,

Béesh dithit bik'i náadit bikaá'.

(by) Monster Slayer.

Naayéé' Neizgháni.

21. And this is the beginning of four series of prayers. It is the starting part. And that prayer is given to the gods of the four directions. After that is done it is concluded with Born-for-Water, Changing Grandchild, and Reared-in-the-earth. And this prayer is especially for protection, it is a plea for setting aside misfortune. What follows then cannot be revealed, it is the most sacred matter. And for these reasons Navajo Mountain and the surrounding area, the holy places, should not be tampered with, because, with the Mountain itself are the two gods, Monster Slayer and Born-for-Water—overlooking and protecting the area in a wondrous-miraculous way. On their behalf and by their authority we implore you not to make light of these areas or to attempt to harm them. If they harm them, they are harming us and our (traditional) ways.

22. One of the reasons why I wanted to talk about Navajo Mountain is that we view it as our hogan. There seems to be an argument about whose home it is now. This I have attempted to answer for you. Beyond this (Mountain), far to the east of here, is a place (called) Blanca Peak (*Sis naajini*). Inside that is White Shell Person (*Yootgaii*). And these persons are persons as (much as) we. Next comes Mount Taylor (*Tsoodziit*), then San Francisco Peaks (*Dook'o'oodl'id*), then Hesperus Peak (*Dibéntaa*). And all of these have their own and distinct Holy-person (god) standing within. And all the space between these mountains is Navajoland, is ours. And these mountains have been set up as our—our—constitution. Yes, it is like the very same thing which the White people call their Constitution. For us these four mountains were set up and sanctified for that same purpose.

23. And then follow prayer words, to a total of twelve sets, which must be recited. They refer to Huerfano Mountain (*Dzit ná'oodshii*), to Gobernador Knob (*Ch'ool'fi*), to Strong Moisture (*Níitsq' dziił*) to Strong Maize (*Naadqáq' dziił*), to Strong Goods (*Yódi dziił*), to Strong Offering (*Ní'iz dziił*), to Strong Cornpollen (*Tádlid'in dziił*), and then to Strong

Crop-raiser (*Anít'ánii dziił*). And that is the way the prayer(-portions) and the offerings are begun.

24. Mount Taylor is female and Blanca Peak is male. San Francisco Peaks is also male. Hesperus Peak is female. Carrizo Mountain is male. That is also why we consider Navajo Mountain to be our hogan.

25. Gobernador Knob also has a special story connected with it. It is the same mountain where mankind came into being through First Man and First Woman. And it is for these reasons (of sacred traditions) that we consider these places to be sacred. And we want the White people to become aware, that we revere these holy places as they do (revere) their Washington, D.C.

26. Each of these mountains has a story, prayer, song, and ceremony associated with it. And all are interconnected, including the sacred songs. And within that sacred land we were born, and continue to be born. And within this sacred land we will reach old age. This was laid down and decreed for us from the beginning. But nowadays, on the tops of many of these mountains, towers have been built. But I still use some of them. I still give my prayers and offerings.

27. And I still go to the top of Gobernador Knob; and one reason why I go there is because I used to go there with my father. And since he has left us (has died) and taken up living elsewhere, I have taken my family there and we have walked on the pathways on which he walked. And we did this as a way of remembering him and to lessen our sorrows. Most of all (we did this) to renew our strength and to renew the covenants which he made (with the gods) with his cornpollen. And I thought that by renewing my own ties with the Holy People I could perform stronger and more efficacious ceremonies for those who ask me to be their singer. I do not say this only of myself, because I know of other men who are my colleagues as singers. They do it individually, and we also do it together.

28. Among them is Long Salt, who is the most distinguished singer of them all, and also the oldest. It was from him that I learned some of my prayers, songs, and stories. He holds a medicine bundle for Female Shootingway, of the five-night chantway. He also does the five-night Blessingway chant. He knows a minor Shootingway ceremony, also the five nights of Evilway. And he knows the Restorationway of (relationships with) every living being on earth. But he is getting very old now; he has just turned ninety-eight. He is the most prominent

man left in the Navajo Mountain area. And in the Shonto area it is Ernest Nelson, Kee Black, and Green-stone. And these are the four men whom I consider to know many of the major and old chants. Mister Green-Stone's Navajo name is Big Salt (*Ashjhi diil*). Kee Black is known as Manygoats (*T'izhání*). And Ernest Nelson's name is House (*Bikini*). And I assume that some of these men have already told you their story.

29. Green-stone learned from a man called Singer-pretending-like-girl (*Hataatí ch'ikjhi adil'ini*) who lives at the foot of Black Mesa. Yes, he is (still) alive. He does have an English name, but I do not know what it is. And Ernest Nelson learned from Red Whiskers, on top of Black Mesa. And these men are well known in the area, they are respected—myself included. And we consider them as our present elders.

30. And these (our) teachers taught us not to reveal these sacred things. But you said you came to ask and to learn about some of these ways and sacred matters, and beyond that, that it (this knowledge) will make you strong and prepare all of those who are going to help us in these matters, concerning our sacred land, so that somehow, by giving you this much information, you can preserve and get across to the White people these sentiments which we have for our land. And that is the way I feel about these things, my younger brother (Navajo interpreter). Because we were able to talk about these things to our mutual understanding, I think they (the gods) will consider it as a prayer and offering, done without demeaning intentions—and that (in spite of a different primary purpose) this discussion and these words will turn to moisture and that we will be blessed with rain thereby. This is the reason why I have revealed more than I should have of sacred matters and sacred places.

31. Just one more thing about the place I come from, which is known as Long Mountain, in the Shonto area. My father used to tell me that this is not its real name. Its original name is Standing-for-moisture (*Niitsq'á yá sízíní*), and another name for it is Strong Moisture (*Niitsq'á dzil*). This is another sacred place, especially the top, which is mostly used to ask for protection. For instance, many prayers were given for and on behalf of our Navajo soldiers; and many of their lives were spared. And this is its special function and use. And yes, we did use it in the last war, (the one) we had just a few years ago. Prayers, offerings, and ceremonies were done for them, (for) one and all, but especially for those from

the immediate area of Tuba City, Shonto, Kayenta, Oljato, Navajo Mountain, and all the areas on this side of Black Mesa. And because my younger brother was spared and returned to me unharmed, my belief about this sacred area—as I was taught and saw my father practice these things—has only been strengthened. I also realize now, that if prayers and offerings are made with sincerity, that these prayers will be granted. That is the way I think of these prayers to Earth and also (of prayers) to Sky and Beyond (*Yadithi*). All these things date back to the time and to the story of the Two who went to see their Sun-father; (these things date back to) their prayers, rituals, and miraculous ways by which these (Twins) travelled to the Sun.⁹ All these things (events of tradition) count.

32. Concerning (the nature of) that sacred area of Rock-arch, that has a lot to do with the way of the Rock(s). That is to say, Talking Rock is there. And just this side (south) of that sacred area are some Standing-rocks, made of dark rock (*tsé naajün*) which resemble people—male and female adults, as well as children. The rock background itself is tinged with yellow, which sets it apart from the black. And when you pass by that area, and when you speak, then this whole rock formation will talk back to you what you say. Nearby is Talking Rock itself, the holy place where we give prayers and offerings.

33. And it is really not difficult to understand, that Talking Rock is a talking Rock, because there are personal beings who exist in rocks, in mountains, and in the depths.¹⁰ And there are four of them (below), just as there are four above, thus a total of eight (Talking-gods). And it is the Rock-persons who are mostly concerned at present about this thing happening to and around them. They are therefore listening intently to what is being planned against them. Talking Rock himself does not answer; rather, he throws back toward us the same words we speak to him. But (at the same time) he catches every word and locks it in. For this reason, if one goes there with the true intention to pray, to bring offerings, and to plead—as if to a last resort—then these will be complete and irreversible. A little ways, approximately midway, between the Rock people and Talking Rock, there is a path which leads to

⁹The two who travelled to their Sun-father are Monster Slayer and Born-for-Water. See below, par. 54–96.

¹⁰These are not mere "spirits" in rocks; rather, they are concrete "inner forms" of people who happen to wear stone clothing—which can be photographed. See also LONG SALT, footnote 10.

the Spring.¹¹ From there one will get a quantity of water, which is to be used for ceremonial cleansing after one returns home to the top (of the plateau).

34. And then, up this way, up in a box canyon, there is a patch of spruce trees (*ch'ô*). According to another Navajo story (tradition) it is said that these trees are Spruce people. And so pine trees are (also persons). These trees belong to the Black-god (*Haashch'ëeshzhini*). This is the reason why in the beginning we were instructed not to build our permanent huts out of spruce or pine. But nowadays many of our people live in homes made of pine.

35. Before you even reach the area, you should always remember Earth-home (*Nahasdzáán bee hooghan*). After that comes Cornpollen-home, White Cornmeal-home, and Yellow Cornmeal-home, making four all together. And then the others (you should remember) are the four mountain homes and the smaller mountains about which I told you earlier. And when we go down into that sacred area, Navajo Mountain will represent all these mountains. The final offering will be at Rock-arch, making four altogether. And then, if necessary, one could (formerly) go beyond Rock-arch to the River. And on the way back all these (prayers) will be sealed with Talking Rock who hears every word that is being uttered. And that is the way, the real way it was done in the old days. In our days we have not made a concentrated effort to do it in this way. For approximately six years, however, some of us singers and people are becoming more and more concerned about these things happening to our land.

36. And so, on this coming Saturday we propose (plan together) to do a remembrance ceremony. It will be called "Pioneer Day" (*Hastól bééháníh*). That is to say, we will remember our elder men and women for the things they have accomplished for us. At the end of this special program we plan to do a special prayer, (spoken) by Mister Harold Drake, Councilman from Navajo Mountain, and (with prayers) by myself and Long Salt. And we will choose one of the elder men to take his stand in the presence of the four Holy People above, and for the (four Holy) People of the below. Among them (the latter) will be Red

Ant, Black Ant, Yellow Ant, and everything else that exists in Earth. And we will also make offerings on behalf of flying beings, of all the trees, the rocks, and the mountains. Then finally, the sacred area and the holy places themselves (will be approached), and we will see then what will happen. This is what we plan to do at the end of that meeting, because some of us feel that there has not been (for a long time) a full and complete ceremony, with prayers and offerings to and on behalf of (all) these beings just mentioned. And the prayers will be for (the benefit of) all people, for our leaders and for those who speak on our behalf—especially for those who would speak for us with words true and clear, whereby decisions will be made in our favor. And this meeting (on Saturday) will be the first planning session of the ceremony itself. And we singers will divide, at that time, various tasks and assignments among ourselves. And for this reason I would like to have your names (written on paper), and the names of all the persons you work with, especially of those who are designated as leaders, also the names of those with whom you (interpreter) work in Tuba City. Because all of us living in this entire area look to and go to Tuba City for help. And this is the way I think and hope to work out these plans.

37. And all these things are according to the ways which are set down by the Holy People.¹² And even though we are going through a period of bewilderment and discontent, especially among our Navajo youths, and because of the fact that one of these youths was taken by death in water and was buried just the other day, it has caused some of us to be alarmed and become concerned that, perhaps, it is time to renew these covenants with the Holy People, before it is too late. And we think that the Holy People are missing these prayers and offerings and that they want us to make it right. Also, Rain has withheld itself and comes only briefly, in large amounts, or far beyond our land. We hear that Rain has come too much, too strongly, and too destructively. And we hear about these things. And it is for the purpose of pleading with Rain, to stop this not normal behavior, that we will do the ceremony.

38. We must think of our Holy People—of Turquoise, White Shell, Jet, and Abalone Shell. White Shell and Abalone Shell are female; Turquoise and Jet are male. And we have to talk to them and plead with them, that they help our youths regain proper reasoning and thoughts. And this is the way it was decreed in the beginning by

¹¹Between the Rock people and the eminent Talking Rock the path does indeed leave the bed of the stream to the right. It ascends to skirt the talus slope beneath the Talking Rock and from there proceeds on a level from which, in a ravine behind the Talking Rock, the sacred Spring can be found. And by the time the ravine and the Spring can be seen straight on, Rock-arch itself has come into view to the left.

¹²Compare NELSON, par. 54; also footnotes 11 and 14.

these Holy People, how (this pleading) should be done, especially with these four gods—Monster Slayer, Born-for-Water, Changing Grandchild, and Reared-in-the-earth. And these are the four who decreed that these things should be so. Then above us, Sun, Moon, (etc.) also decreed that it should be so.

39. Concerning Rainbow, whether one is male, female, or both—one is male. And the way to tell is this. The one who spans longest is male; the short and incomplete one is female. And it's (the male Rainbow's) assigned place is from east to west; and the female one spans from south to north. And usually, if it rains during the day, it will be the short incomplete kind (who appears). Its name is Cut-short-rainbow (*Nááts'íilid agodí*).

40. There is another one which is short and straight and rarely seen, and (if seen) then at night and in the clouds. Usually there are many years between sightings of this shorter and straight Rainbow of the night.¹³ And that is Rain's messenger (*Nahatlin bigáál*). All these Rainbows require their own distinct offerings, prayers, and stories, and much use could be made of them. But we are neglecting to do that. And if these prayers and offerings could be made once again, then the youths would respond to the needs of their people.

41. Now concerning the plans which are (presently) being made for that sacred area. It is my understanding that a paved road is being planned from the dam area over to the area of Rock-arch; also, a floating house that will be a place of rest and refreshment; also a swim area for the many people who are hoped to be brought into the area. Concerning that, the wishes of many people of this area is to fence off, so that we can keep these people away from our sacred area and places—and further, for people to leave that area alone and leave us alone. Because, those sacred places are our places of worship, they are our Holy People (gods). That fence would also allow us access to those places where we must give our prayers and offerings.

42. In the beginning, Rock-arch was put there as a kind of final natural boundary marker, and it was decided and decreed by them (the gods) that, if ever in the future the area was to be desecrated, that

certain prayers and offerings can still be made there as a last resort. For instance, (now) not too far from Rock-arch is a floating house where many unholy things are being done and planned. For example, a lot of beer cans are being thrown around and they eventually end up at Rock-arch. And I know these things, because I helped clean them up. And it seems as though these people do not respect our ways of worship. And they walk on and trample our holy places. They bring and throw their trash even on this side of Rock-arch. You see, in the beginning, when the area was created and set aside, it was not for the purpose of disposing cans, bottles, and other trash. Rather, it was set apart for the placing of prayers, offerings, and cornpollen. That is what I say. And that is what many of us think.

43. And yes, concerning serpents.¹⁴ The inside of mountains (of mountain ranges) is also known as Big Snake (*T'íish tsah*). There is a place (speaker points north) which is especially set aside for raising cattle, near the area of Rock-arch. There, in a nearby ridge, is a place where innumerable snakes are. Farther on, this way (east), is another ridge wherein lies Big Snake himself. And this ridge makes a lot of groaning noise; usually this tells that wind is forthcoming. And usually wind is forthcoming within two days. And these things were told to me by the man whom I mentioned earlier, who was called Man-who-did-it (*Hastin á'íinü*). Big Snake lives in Big Ridge. There are big and long snakes in the Oljato area, which in length range up to thirty feet, and which are black. And that ridge, which runs toward Navajo Mountain, is the one in which Big Snake lives. Big Snake has never been seen. But we know from the noise he makes that he is inside. It was said, concerning him, that he used to steal livestock. This was told by Mr. "X," and it happened at a time when his livestock was in that area. At the top of this ridge lie many of the bones of these animals still scattered about. We were told and warned to stay away from that area. And a little bit higher on that ridge, on its western slope, a hole can be seen which leads into the ridge. And by looking through a binocular one can see water-moss around the edges and extending into the hole itself. And it is said that these Big Snakes are inside, but that they have been pleaded with and that offerings were made to them. So, on condition that we leave them alone, they do not do these things anymore. And this man, who was my

¹³Compare NELSON, par. 22–23. While Laughter agrees with Nelson's par. 42, his male and female Rainbows both belong to daytime. The fact that Nelson actually saw the male White Rainbow twice in his life and at night, made it unnecessary for him to account for such a one in daytime.

¹⁴The question about snakes and their relationship with Rain was asked in order to establish the distance between Navajo and Pueblo religion. See below, NELSON, par. 43–51, and BEDONIE, par. 23–30. For the Pueblo serpent cult see Luckert (1976).

maternal grandfather, said that these are the terms they agreed to. But if we break our side of the covenant, perhaps there could be a re-occurrence of misfortune.

44. Big Snake and all of the things in these areas were set aside, each and everyone for a purpose—after journeys (which the Holy People) made in the appropriate directions.¹⁵ (They were set aside) after starting out at Winged Rock (*Tsé bit'a'i*), (going) beyond San Francisco Peaks to a place called Sloped-down Woods, on back toward (and along) the entire edge of Grand Canyon, on back this way toward Gray Mountain, and on across to the Page area. And that is how many of these areas, ridges, and mountains were named. And in the Sloped-down Woods, near the present location of Williams, an overnight no-sleep ceremony was held for White Shell Woman.

45. From there on to the edge of Grand Canyon, (then) on to Gray Mountain, is (the area where) Blessingway (was performed). And while coming across at Badoway (west of the Gap), it was said that Wildcat was getting tired. Then they came this way (east) and across into Red Lake area. At that time it was noticed that Wildcat was completely exhausted, that his feet were very much worn, and that he had lain down. He only stuck up his head behind a ridge and said that he could go no farther. That is why the place where he had lain down is known as Wildcat Peak.

46. And from there they went back to the area now known as Page, and there to the place known as Red Hills (*Lichil' sinil*). And that is where Big Snake found himself a hole and crawled into it, because his underside was all worn. He could go no further. And that is another home for Big Snake. Prayers and offerings can be made to Big Snake also at that place.

47. From there the journey took them to the edge of the River. But they were hindered from going across because of the canyons and the River. So they turned back and went into the area known as Kaibito, near White Mesa. The miraculous means by which they primarily travelled was the way of Lightning, it also was their shield (protection).

¹⁵Par. 44–51 is typical Navajo "geographization" mythology. The gods traverse, name, and lay claim to stretches of land on behalf of their chosen people. For a similar mythic pattern in hunter mythology, pertaining to an area further east in Navajoland, see Luckert (1975, pp. 32ff). Aside from providing a good example of geographization, these paragraphs suggest a number of fascinating hypotheses. But since these possibilities cannot be explored before the printing deadline of this book, they are best left unmentioned.

And at the top of White Mesa, Lightning said "I will stay here, I like it here." And for this reason, if problems are encountered with Lightning, prayers and offerings can be made on the top of White Mesa. Lightning is the bridge between Water and Cloud.

48. And then they went down into the sacred area of Rock-arch, by way of Underarm Ridge. And when they reached Rock-arch and were very near, intending to walk on the western and northern side of Rock-arch, a voice came to them, saying, "Do not go to the other side of Rock-arch, but instead, walk around this side of Rock-arch"—which they did according to the voice. And for that reason Rock-arch is a Standing Rock-obstacle (*Tsé ndü'á*).

49. And from there they went on to Navajo Mountain, at which place they were told that they must not linger or sleep there, that they were in danger of plots and attacks from over at the San Francisco Peaks.¹⁶ And so they went down the mountain to the area which lies just above the area which today is set aside for the raising of cattle. And it was at this place, at a spring nearby, that there was a cavern, right behind the waterfall. And it was at this place that they lost their smallest dog (*ts'ili*). This dog used to run far ahead, scout around, and then return and report what was ahead—such as impossible places to sleep. And all through the night they remained in the area, hoping the dog would come out. But they could only hear it bark deep within that ridge. And even today one can still hear the barking of that small dog deep inside that ridge. Then a discussion was held among the travelers, that this small dog should somehow be replaced. They left the area without him.

50. They travelled onward and came to a place called Gray Ridge. In the distance they saw a mass of people standing around a big campfire which was giving off a lot of smoke. And they decided to go to see them. But the closer they got the smaller became these people. And when they finally got to that place, nothing was to be found but rock. And from within they heard a voice which said, "In the future there will be many people of your kind, and they will grow and be almost uncountable; these things have been revealed to you at this place." And from there on they were shown and told the direction (in which they were) to go. Their path led them to El Capitan (*Aghaa'tání*), and there they found a lot of animal beings called *Naaghashii*, from whom one

¹⁶Here the narrative intersects with par. 16–18.

gets an overabundance of wool. But they needed food. And from there they journeyed north to Oljato.

51. And in those days the travellers had a time-piece by which they could tell the time of day. It worked according to the miraculous ways of the Sun. And the carrier of this time-piece was overcome with old age and fatigue. Therefore, that apparatus was set into a formation of rock near the area which is now known as Baby-rocks (*Tsé avéé*).¹⁷ And from there they started journeying towards that place now known as Baby-rocks. And when they came near that place they saw people standing—some having babies strapped to their backs or holding them in their arms. And by the time they arrived these also turned into rocks.

52. And that is the way the story goes according to Blessingway. And all of this journey is Blessingway (mythology). All these landmarks were set up (and named) for the purpose of remembering the various miraculous events and covenants, the prayers, the offerings, and the songs—also as reminders for us to continue to visit and to renew these (relationships) with the giving of prayers and offerings, at them (those places), and to them (as to Holy People). And this much I have revealed to you because you have asked me.

53. Now I would like to close with telling you who I am. I am of the Ute branch of the Navajo Red-streak-into-water (*Nóoda'í táchú' nū*) clan. My father was Red House (*Kínichí' nū*), and my maternal grandfather was of the Reed people (*Lók'aa' díné'í*). And that is the way I was made a male human person. And my wife and children are of the Salt (*Áshjhi*) clan. I was born and raised in the area of Long Mountain, the vicinity of Shonto, and many of my elder relatives, including my father, are buried in the Long Mountain area. I have two places, one at Long Mountain and one near Navajo Mountain. I have some sheep, horses, and cattle. But I also work where you found me earlier today (the National Park Service at Betatakin Ruin), and I have worked for the same employer for thirty-nine years, and I have been told that I will (soon) win retirement. . . . I am glad you came and that I have gotten to know all three of you (author, Navajo interpreter with twelve year old son).

Monster Slayer Mythology

54. The story begins in the time when humankind was born. I will tell it from that point on when Monster Slayer came into prominence.

¹⁷Some rock formations, by the highway, east of Kayenta.

At that time White Shell Woman (*Yootgai Asdzáá*) came to be with child. Of course, before she became pregnant she reached the age of puberty and was enabled to have children. And it was during her puberty, probably a little later, when she began thinking about men. She thought to herself: How is this? How shall this be? Somehow she understood that she needed to be with a man. And it was during that time when Sun came to her, and they mated. During that time, also, she came to a place of Water. And it happened where this waterspray was, that some water was dripping. It is said that this water drips with male (potency).

55. The name of the spring was Water-falling-like-(male)-slender-stiff-object (*Tó náidhás*). And the place where she mated with Sun was called Where-sunlight-strikes-first (*Átsé níhidílat*).¹⁸ And it was at this place, where Sun's rays strike first, that this lady became pregnant. And she was impregnated at this place *Tó náidhás* at about the same time. So she was from that time on pregnant with twins.¹⁹ And it was not long thereafter that she gave birth to twins—one male and the other female.

56. The Twins began to grow up, and it was during that time that they began to ask who their father was. And they were told, "Do not say things like that. It is not permitted to talk that way. Therefore, do not talk that way anymore. It is dangerous (*báhádziid*)."²⁰ But this kind of response did not quiet them. They continued to ask, and finally they were told that their father walks far away and that it would be nearly impossible to reach him. Their mother told them this. Again they asked for the whereabouts of their father; and their mother told them where he was. The Twins then said, "We shall go visit our father." Again it was said to them, "No, no, no! It is not permitted to speak like that. All these things are dangerous. And even if one should make it over there it would still be dangerous. (Going there is dangerous) because there is First Man (*Átsé Hastiin*) and there is Giant (*Yé'itsah*). It is said that this Giant walked about and ate people. And it was because of this Giant that the Twins were raised in secrecy.

57. In their persistence the Twins then said: "Make for us missiles like arrows and we shall track this one who is called Giant." And again

¹⁸Based on this myth, and in traditional Navajo usage, a virgin is a "non-sunlight-struck maiden."

¹⁹Underlying this narrative is an ancient belief, that two sexual intercourses are required to produce twins. The fact that one of these Twins had Water for its father (i.e. Born-for-Water) is ignored later when both are referred to as children of Sun. This inconsistency obviously indicates a later synthesis.

they were told, "It is not permitted to say such things, much less to pursue, because they are dangerous. This Giant is very powerful." But the Twins said, "No, No, Not so! We will go to see our father and we shall tell him (of our plight)." This is the manner in which they continued talking.

58. During that time they emerged from the place where they lived. They went a little ways off, and there a Rainbow descended to meet them. They walked unto this Rainbow, and in a miraculous manner the Rainbow rose with them. By this Rainbow they were taken to a far-away place. And this place turned out to be a place of things which could cause one to suffer.

59. For example, there were Sharp Reeds (*Lók'aa dígish*), and at this place of Sharp Reeds all was entangled. Momentarily a space would open, and the reeds were sharp enough to cut to pieces any person who entered. Many bones lay about at this place. It was just before they came to this place that Wind (*Nítch'i*) talked to them. It must be understood that Wind accompanied them and talked to them. Anyway, at this place Wind informed them and gave them a live feather. And Wind said, "With this you will be able to pass through this place; without it you surely will not make it and the reed-blades will kill you." They took this aid into their hands and started going through this place of reeds. The reeds opened up and did nothing. They walked between them without suffering any harm.

60. Later they encountered another problem. The length of this distance is not known. But they came to a place where there was what seemed to be a natural land bridge on an incline. This turned out to be a place of shifting sand dunes. There, if one started to go up, one could never reach the top. The sand would shift underneath, would move a person with it, drag him under, and bury him at the bottom. And at this place they were again told (by Wind) that nobody was allowed to pass over, that this place was Sand-shifting-downward (*Séi shízháósh*). It was at this place that they were given Sunbeam (*Shá bíl'áól*). And with this aid they made it up and beyond this place without mishap.

61. From there they kept going until they came to his home. They were told again (by Wind) that this is where he lives. At that place was a house made entirely of turquoise. And it was nearly noon-time when they arrived and when they were informed that this is the place. The only person home was a woman who later turned out to be Changing Woman. And the lady inquired of them "Who are you? What are you looking for? They answered, "We are looking for our father, and we

have been told that this is where he lives." They told her their father's name, whereupon the lady said (with an air of surprise) "Hmml!" (She went on to say) "He is very unkind, this man who is your father." Thus she wrapped them into Black Cloud (*K'os díthít*) and stuck them into niches under the hogan roof. Precisely at noon he came home.

62. One of these twins was to be Monster Slayer (*Naayéé' Neizghání*), and the other was Born-for-Water; and this was before Monster Slayer got that name. In later events this one who was conceived where the Sun first strikes, the male Twin, was renamed.

63. When he entered his home he (Sun) said, "What did I see?—a shadow-like thing coming toward my home?" Whereupon the woman said, "You told me that on your journeys you are not doing anything (that would be out of line). And here, (bastard-)offspring (*táshkíí*) walks about and asks for you." She said this in a jealous manner. And this was the beginning of the feeling of jealousy.

64. He went straight to where the woman had rolled them into Black Cloud. He grabbed the cloud roughly, unrolled it, and the Twins fell out. They landed on their feet and said, "Father!" But he ignored them. Instead he began to busy himself with readying the sweathouse for them, with building a very hot fire. He had a sweathouse which he used for the purpose of killing. And they began to walk toward the sweathouse. Once again they were told (by Wind), "Now is the time he wants to kill you, this is what he does with the sweathouse." And when they came near the sweathouse they saw that indeed it was being prepared, they saw smoke rising from that place. And they whimpered, "We are being walked to be killed."

65. They heard a voice which spoke to them, "Why do you weep, my grandchildren?" They looked down and discovered that this voice belonged to Spider Woman. They told her, "We are surely walking to a place at which our father prepares to kill us. This we know." Spider Woman said, "Yes, he does kill with that sweathouse, I know. That is how it is. Well, I will treat you with medicine so that you will suffer no harm and that you will emerge from that sweathouse untouched and alive. The heat will have no effect on you." Then she also said to them, "Take these objects and use them as a shield between yourself and the intended harm. Use them four times." And she advised them to hide these objects (on their bodies).

66. They arrived at the sweathouse where their father had heated the stones to the color of red-hot metal. And he told them, "Go in, it is

ready." At the same time Wind told them to listen intently to his voice and to do as he says: "All right, now he (the Sun) will ask you. Each time you shall go beyond a marked point and place a shield behind you." They entered. The stones were even too hot and too bright to look at.

67. And immediately he (Sun) threw the blanket-covers over the entrance. He then asked them, "Are you warm yet?" They replied, "No, not yet!" And they stepped over the first line and put up a shield. And he spoke again, "Are you warm yet?" They answered, "No, not yet!" And they stepped over the second line and put up a shield. It happened a third time, and again they stepped over the mark and put up another shield. The fourth time he asked, "Are you hot now?" And they said "Yes!" At that moment he poured an amount of water into the sweathouse, and when the water hit the intensely hot rocks they began to hiss and to create a tremendous amount of heat, steam, boiling water, and noise.

68. And when the noise subsided they were instructed to retrace their steps. They discovered that the shield second-nearest to them (number three) was cracked, number two was cracked even worse, the first was cracked and splintered four ways. These shields were broken because of the tremendous force of the steam. And there, near the entrance they stopped and rested briefly, looking around in amazement and wondering what happened to them. And they were sweating. Momentarily he pulled the blanket-covers up; and there they sat, ready to emerge from the sweathouse. And he said with amazement—"They survived!"

69. Immediately he turned around and said to them, "Let us go to my home!" He led the way and they followed him. And it was told them again (by Wind) that they would have to endure another ordeal: "Now this could do you in. What you have gone through so far is nothing by comparison. What he is going to do is dangerous. It is one of the major ways in which he kills." And the Twins wept and sobbed again.

70. As they continued to walk they saw a tree. (From there) they heard a voice speaking to them: "Why do you weep, my maternal grandchildren?" They discovered Hornworm (*Wóse'ek'idii*), which is an insect, which, if barely touched, vomits. And usually it is yellow. It was that insect which apparently had spoken to them. They answered, "We cry because we are being led to a place where we are to die. And we have been told that this will be done in a smoking rite." The insect said, "Ah, do not worry. I will put some medicine on you, and you will never be

affected by the poisoned smoke. The smoke will even taste sweet to you." He brought up some of his vomit and put it in each of their mouths. And he said to them, "Now the taste which he is going to give you will indeed be very good." Then they hurried and arrived at his home. They entered the home and discovered that there were children. There were two of them, a boy and a girl.

71. He took them into a room and said to them, "Here, I have prepared for you two pipes, one of turquoise and one of white shell; they are ready for your smoking." And he motioned them to sit near him and began to light the pipes for them. His two children were nearby. As they were informed earlier, the smoke was sweet to them. He lit one pipe, then a second, then a third, and finally a fourth. And at the end of the fourth pipe-full, that was finished. He said to them, "Thank you! You are indeed my children, because up til now no one could withstand this test. And yes, I admit that I, indeed, have procreated you. Yes, that did happen. And then, finally at this point, he ran toward them happily, speaking and greeting them in a kinship manner. He then introduced them to his other two children. They shook hands and acknowledged that they were siblings and had one father.

72. Then he asked them, "Why are you here? What do you want? But first we will give you food. Let us eat together. I will prepare the food." He got something which was shiny.²⁰ From another container he took cornpollen, and he mixed these two into a dough. By this time they were hungry. He said, "This is what I prepare for them (my children), and this is what you will eat also." And they could not believe that this small amount will fill them. But they started to eat, and they ate, and ate, and ate; and this thing of which they were eating remained the same size. They ate their fill and could not finish it. And then he said to them, "Indeed, here again it is proven that you are my children, because you were able to eat of this meal which was offered you. But why is it so difficult for you to finish? (Look), this is the way you do it." And he took the whole thing in his mouth and swallowed it at once.

73. Then he said, "All right, now let us talk. What did you say you came for, my children?" "Yes," they said, "we came for those lightning-

²⁰This probably refers to *u'p'iz* (jewel offerings), the like of which are still given to the gods today. Perhaps the most archaic offering ever given by man to a god has been a gift of food. Cornpollen, which is mixed with this shiny food substance, is a standard Navajo offering also.

bolt arrows (*atsinilt'ish k'aa'*), there, over your door. And in addition, we came for those tongue-eater arrows (*atsoo' oolghat k'aa'*) over here (south), and for these ropes of moisture (*shā bitl'ool*) over here, and for these rainbow arrows (*naāts'ilid k'aa'*) over here.

74. He went near (a door in the east) and pulled it open. He said, "Perhaps this is what you want, goods (*naalyéhé*)." And they said, "No!" He stepped over to another door (south) and allowed them to peek in; he showed them all kinds of four-legged animals, such as horses and sheep. And they said, "No!" He moved over (to the west) and opened another door, and there were all kinds of animal-people, such as cattle. And again they said, "No!" And he moved to the north to open that door. Again, there were all kinds of tangible goods. (They said), "We want that which is right there, above the door. That is what we came for. That is what we want." And he asked them, "Why?"

75. They said, "Well, we want it because back where we come from we are constantly being chased by Giant (*Y'útsah* = Big God). He takes many of our people. What we want to do is to slay him. Then he (Father Sun) wrapped his arm around his head (in amazement): "You do not say, my children! He also is your older brother, because he also is my son. He and you are siblings, because all of you are of one father. How is he bothering you? How is he taking you?" (They said), "Well, what we mean is this, he is killing our kind, and he eats us. On that account we had to be kept hidden from Giant since we were very young. We are getting tired of always having to be hidden and of having to live in fear. For this reason we have decided to do something about this situation. And that is why we came to you, because you are our father and we are your children."²¹

76. Then he said, "Ah so! If that is it (then so be it). But you cannot do it by yourselves. I will have to go before you. And it shall be I who will shoot the first arrow with my bow. Momentarily he brought a horse to the entrance, a blue horse (*úú' doot'izh*). And he said, "I will take you back down there. And when we arrive down there, as I said earlier, I will shoot the first arrow. And this weapon for which you asked, of it I will make for you a duplicate. Not only that, but of all the four weapons which you saw inside, you shall have duplicates to take with you."

²¹The memory of a time in prehistory, when the ancestors of man frequently lost their lives to larger predators, is still widespread in world mythology. The ordeal of these Twin saviors achieves for humankind a degree of salvation—also preferred status among the children of Father Sun.

77. They climbed on the horse and sat behind him. He struck the horse only once, and in one leap, in one moment, they were down—but not yet all the way, only to Midway-in-the-sky (*Yá ahii'*). And when they stopped it was noon. The reason for this was that Giant always came to a certain place, named "Hot Springs," always at noon. And sure enough. They saw him walking toward that hot-water pool. And at that moment they were above him. And when he came to the edge of the water he dipped his head to the water. And as his head touched the water, the first lightning arrow was shot at him (from above). That immediately struck him to the ground; but he still moved and staggered. Then the Father said, "All right, all right, now he is weakened, now he staggers. Go!" And he shot the rest of his missiles, all four. Then each of the Twins sent his arrows straight into his heart. And he fell. And he (Sun) said to them, "Now it is done. As for me, I will go back. And at the moment when he said this they arrived on earth at the place where Giant had fallen. And their father had gone back instantly.

78. They noticed that the Giant's aorta had been pierced. Blood ran all over. And they were told by Wind, "Make a dike!" And there the blood stopped flowing.²² And they went to the Giant and took his heart out and brought it to their mother. They came running into the dwelling place of their mother: "Here, here is the Giant's heart!" She said to them, "Do not say this. It is not permitted to say this (in jest). How dare you say this!" They said to her, "It is true. We have his heart. Come, have a look. It is hanging outside on a tree." She went to look, and sure enough, there hung a hideous heart.

79. Shortly after that he, the male Twin, was named Monster Slayer (*Naayé' Neizgháni*) or "Slayer of Enemy Gods." That became the name of the male Twin. The female Twin was Born-for-Water (*Tó Bii Jishchíní*). It was said of Monster Slayer, that in addition to Giant-monster he killed many other dreaded-ones (*bik'i da'iyé'ii*), including the One-who-kills-with-his-eyes (*Deelgeedü bináa' yee agháanii*), the One-who-kicks-off-the-cliff (*Tsé dah hidiitlatii*), Tracking-bear (*Shash na'atkaah*), Travelling Rock (*Tsé naagháii*), and Clashing-rocks (*Tsé ahééniditii*). So that should make six major dreaded-ones whom he slew. And from that he got his name; and he earned it.

80. Because the Twins slew these different dreaded-ones, they began to be affected with illness. It was at that time when Enemyway or

²²Had two streams of the Giant's blood merged, he would have come to life again.

Squaw Dance was performed over them, which made them well again. And from that time on it was generally a good time for them and for all humankind.

81. But then, an undetermined time later, things began to happen again.²³ People again began to have the problem of being hunted, (this time) from another direction—to a point that it was discussed and agreed that there was a problem. And (in the divine assembly) it was further discussed what should be done.

82. It was at about the same time when a more suitable place was to be found, where some of the People could move to. And by these people Navajo Mountain was discovered to be a good place. But they were told that Navajo Mountain itself was forbidden to humankind. Only certain animals were allowed to be there. And to make sure that this decree was followed, there was a powerful Wind on that mountain, especially at its very top. But still, these people made it to the top. And indeed, it was very windy. Some of the things they found were Mountain-sheep and Thunderbolt (*It'i'm*). And these persons (who went there) were Holy Man and Holy Girl. These two had gone so high that they were unable to come down. A tremendous thunderclap stung them. And the Wind people helped them back down.²⁴

83. One of the reasons they went up was to search for animals, to hunt and to eat them as food. And they reported animal tracks on the Mountain. One kind of tracks which they identified were those of Mountain-sheep. And the people who waited at the base agreed that they could sustain themselves on Mountain-sheep. And it was agreed that another hunting party should be sent up. And when they came to the place where the animal tracks had previously been found, another meeting was held. And it was agreed that a certain rite would be performed, which was called To-be-done-in-one-day (*T'áátlá'í jį bee ádoolníí*).

²³With this sentence the narrator accomplishes a transition from the *dinétah* Monster Slayer myth to the Navajo Mountain area version (par. 81–88; see also par. 16–18, above). The historical date of this new version appears to have been 1863–68; the mythic time of the narrative is, of course, the “beginning” of the human race.

²⁴Later the informant elaborated: Holy Man was smashed to pieces because he butchered a mountain-sheep on that sacred Mountain. The Ant people helped re-assemble Holy Man. This is Flintway mythology, transplanted into the Navajo Mountain area. The theme of killing a mountain-sheep can also be found in an older account by Slim Woman (see chapter herein).

84. Then it was agreed that Monster Slayer and Born-for-Water would be summoned. And they called them by their names. Up there, by (calling) their names, an offering was made (*Áadi ts'ídá áadi yłizhígíí éł áadi biyéel ályaa*), at the ridge going off that way from Navajo Mountain (*t'áá Naatsis'áandi kojį deiz'áhigi*). It was there where a hogan was made of black flint (*Béesh dítłitgo bee hoghan ályaa*). Today this (hogan) is there, still the same (*K'ad t'ah ndi t'áá ákót'e*). There lies Black Rock like that, and from there also extends Black Rock-ridge, like in a hogan (*T'sézhin kót'ego sítį s'íleįį kojį, kodóo dó'ta' kót'ego sítį, hooghan biyi' kót'ego tá' sítį*). Almost the size of this (an ordinary hogan), a little smaller (*K'asdáp' kóninłtsoh, biniił'áajį ániłtsoh*). At its center a black arrow-missile is placed (*Áko atnii'gi kwe'e kót'ee sítį*). It is still like that now; and it is said that he was raised here (*T'ah ndi t'áá ákót'e; t'áá kwe'e neįyá jini*). In one day, it was said, he arose and stood—one adult male and one adult female (*Ts'ídá t'áátlá'í jį áádóo dinégo níidzā, tá' asdzáni*). In just one day!—one day! (*T'áátlá'í jį, t'áátlá'í jį!*)

85. And from that direction (San Francisco Peaks) Mountain Lion (*Náshelóltsah*) and Wolf (*Mq'itsoh*) were forbidding and claiming this part, and they shot missiles at them (over here).²⁵ At the tips of their arrows were pine needles. And when they had sent another projectile this way, Monster Slayer arose to be seen. And he caught the missile and stuck it into the ground. Then another missile was sent this way, which was Sharp Spruce (*Ch'ó deenínii*). This he caught too and planted behind him. And the next missile, of Juniper (*Gad*) he caught too and planted. And this was done several more times, until a total of twelve projectiles were planted. At the very top of Navajo Mountain now stands White Spruce (*Ch'ógaii*). Another is called Strong-smell (*Ch'úsh halchin*). Of these are two kinds, one male and another female. And then another, Pinion-nuts (*Ch'itłáqį*). And all these missiles were sent in their direction. He caught them all. And they ran out of missiles (over there). And then, from here, he immediately shot a projectile of *din-as*(?) back in their direction, directly at San Francisco Peaks. It was the eye of this *dinas* which he shot at them. And with this, which was male, he won over them. Its other name is Big Ochre (*K'itłsoi tsoh*), and it is similar to Hard Oak (*Ch'ech'il ntl'izí*); and it is the same kind which is

²⁵Compare with par. 16–18 and footnote 7, above. It is significant that Mountain-lion and Wolf, led by Black-god (Raven or Crow) have been defamed here and are regarded as enemies. Back in ancient times, when hunter mythology was still relevant, these were respected gods who had to be reckoned with during hunting expeditions.

found on San Francisco Peaks. And this is what he used in order to win over them.

86. And Monster Slayer did indeed catch these projectiles and plant them on this Mountain. And these were designated to be medicine. They were also designated as shield behind which we can run and hide. It was also said, concerning this Water which runs past this Mountain, that nobody can forbid another that. It should be given to you, the Navajo people.

87. And they were also told that any of these game animals on the Mountain, all those good for eating, should not be butchered at the top or even on the Mountain. When an animal is killed, the carcass must be dragged down, off the Mountain. After reaching regular ground at the base the animal can be butchered. And these are the things which were decreed at that time.

88. After this, Monster Slayer and Born-for-Water said, "We shall stay here (on top)." And they went into the (Flint) Hogan, sat down inside, and to this day they are still there. That is the way it is said, how Monster Slayer caught those missiles and how he came to be (again).

89. Now something concerning Thunderbolt. There is a mean one, whose second name is Spotted Thunderbolt. He lives in the ridge (on Navajo Mountain) which runs the other way. For this reason we do not climb on that ridge. If an offering is to be made, it is made just a little this side of it, below the forbidden spot. It is he to whom we make an offering when we ask for rain. And it was said by men of long ago, that this ridge should not be harmed in any way. But recently it was requested that a television tower be built near that ridge. The tower was taken up there and put together at the very top of that ridge, very near the place which is designated for our offerings. And there it stands. And for this reason Rain is uncooperative and does things contrary to what it should do. For example, when it rains, it rains with (spotted) lightning, which strikes homes, sheep, horses, and cattle. And it is said, "This is so because of that thing being permitted on that ridge." And this is what we have been told (by the Holy People) as being the reason for these difficulties.

90. It is this we want the White Man to become aware of, namely, that Navajo Mountain itself is the final home of Monster Slayer, and that we use the ridge and other places nearby to ask for rain and to place our offerings. And these things are sacred to us. We are having

some problems because of what has already been done, and we strongly wish that they would move that tower to another location. . . .

91. A trail has been constructed for a powerline, which runs right this side of the (Flint) Hogan. The trail actually cuts into that sacred area. It was said, this past summer, that a voice spoke to a group of people, to workers. And it was said that at lunch-time these men walked through a thicket, looking for a place to sit down and eat. The voice was said to have come from another nearby thicket of spruce. The voice spoke to them, "What have you done? You have almost covered up Talking-god's sling." And the men looked at each other and asked, "Who said that?" And their search for the speaker of these words was of no avail.

92. Shortly after that, some tragedies happened in this area. A young man went into the water and drowned; another was killed in an automobile accident. And these two, who died, were in that group of workers. This has only re-affirmed the beliefs which we, the elders, have held. Yes, indeed, it must be the case that Monster Slayer and Born-for-Water do now indeed live at that place.

93. This place, Navajo Mountain, is still the place at which we request things we wish to happen in one day. And to the top (of Head of Earth) four prayers and four songs are specifically designated. A little below (the top) apply also four prayers and four songs. And around the Mountain (in four directions) are also four prayers spoken. And that is where it (the prayer sequence) starts. From there it proceeds to the base of the Mountain and moves on up (that is, from the four directional starting prayers). And this is what is called Protectionway prayer (*Ach'ááh sodizin*), and with it belong Monster Slayer's songs.

94. Another prayer is Born-for-Water's prayer, another is Changing Grandchild's, and another is that of Reared-in-the-earth. Although there are these four names for those four prayers, these (two additional names) are only two more names which are given to the Twins. That is, there are two persons with four names (between them); two names for the male and two names for the female.

95. It must be understood that those who were raised in one day were (originally) born at another place. They were summoned to come from that place. They left (there) and said: "Where is the holy place where we can be called on again to be of help?" That is what they said.

96. (Were they brought over by wonderful means—*áíílee'kehgo?*) Yes, they were the very same ones who were born at that other place. They came over here and walked into the Mountain. It was said that this Mountain did not go crazy (*Doo tsí' deryáa da*). You see, these four mountains—Blanca Peak, Mount Taylor, San Francisco Peaks, Hesperus Peak—at some time after they were brought into being, they all went beserk and burned themselves (*ádaadooljéé'*). But this mountain here, Navajo Mountain, did not do this to itself.²⁶ And it is for this reason that the Twins chose this Mountain and said: "We will live in this Mountain." And it was for this reason that this Mountain became sacred (forbidden). Anyway, it was at that time that all these dreadful molesters were becoming a threat. And these events happened in the course of one day. And on that same day the Two were summoned, and in one day those missiles were caught and planted on the Mountain.

Protectionway Prayers and Song

97. Here now I will speak two of the (Protectionway) prayers:

98.

Mountain Darkness, Darkness by which the body is renewed,

Chahatheet dzil, chahatheet yee ats'lis ná'nool'ggtí,

By means of Dark Cloud, by which the body is renewed.

K'os dithit yee, ats'lis yee ná'nool'ggtí,

The One who arises with Dark Cloud, Head of Earth;

K'os dithit yit náadiidáhi, Naatsis'aán;

Dark Flint (jet?), by which the body is renewed;

Béesh dithit éí ats'lis yee ná'nool'ggtí;

Dark Flint repeatedly covered (by clouds), Head of Earth,

Béesh dithit yee ah'éé'ooltihi, Naatsis'aán,

On its tip black flint will be stacked up.

Bilátahgi béesh dithit háádoot'ííí.

With dark flint it will be built up.

Béesh dithit bit háádoot'ííí.

Hogan of black flint, (of the) Killer of Giants (Monsters);

Béesh dithit bee hooghan, Naayéé' Neizgháni;

Dark Flint which crosses underneath them (the Monster Slayers):

Béesh dithit biyaa atnáanináadit:

Your shoes (being) of dark flint,

Béesh dithit níkee',

Dark Flint, arise to protect me.

Béesh dithit shich'ááh náadlidaát.

Your socks (being) of dark flint,

Béesh dithit nístléé',

Dark Flint, arise to protect me.

Béesh dithit éí shich'ááh náadlidaát.

Your clothes (being) of dark flint,

Béesh dithit ní'ée',

With these arise to protect me.

Díí bee shich'ááh náadlidaát.

The One Alive, who cannot be shot by an arrow,

Noolyíni hinááh, doo biná'ált'ohí,

The One who inside him has what cannot be harmed,

Doo atidilyíyí nityü' hólóonü,

Arise to protect me.

Díí shich'ááh náadlidaát.

The One with dark flint in four directions around your head,

Béesh dithit díí'go ntsíndeesk'ííí,

With it arise to protect me.

Díí bee shich'ááh náadlidaát.

The One with dark flint protruding into the four directions,

Béesh dithit nitsü'áádóó,

With lightning from the top of your head, arise to protect me.

Atsimilt'ish bit díí'go háádooditü, díí bee shich'ááh náadlidaát.

Your dark shield with white at the center,

Ninaage' dithitgo ahíí adzilgaigo,

Big Dark Snake,

T'íistsoh dithitgo,

Dark Flint that pierces in four directions,

Béesh dithit díí'go bit bighahiniláán,

²⁶The informant may have learned that at one time some of these other mountains had been volcanoes, also that, geologically, Navajo Mountain is a "dome." Anything which establishes the dignity, if not the priority, of this new sacred mountain—and which rationalizes the Twins' coming to this place—is a welcome revelation.

Stack your shields sunwise around me.

Ninaage'ii shá bik'ehgo shaa náidíít'ííł.

Plant them in front of me for my protection.

Shich'ááh k'idííłtsih holdzil shich'ááh níkidin'áa doo.

Beyond this hold back the danger from me.

Bine' naayéé' áhidíłtsot.

So then I will overcome danger (it will be smaller than I am).

Áko naayéé' shi'oh áníłtsogo.

Beyond it danger will pass by me.

Bine' naayéé' shi'oh adoogáát.

Beyond it danger has passed by me.

Bine' naayéé' shi'oh ílyá.

Behind it I will survive. I have survived here.

Bine' éł deesdziih. T'áá á kwéi yisdziih.

I have survived! I have survived!

Shí lá yisdziih! Shí lá yisdziih!

All of us have survived! All of us have survived!

T'áá áníłtso yisdziih! T'áá áníłtso yisdziih!

I have survived for you! I have survived for you!

Shí nihá yisdziih! Shí nihá yisdziih!

For many more years! For many more years!

Shí nááháhl! Shí nááháhl!

99.

Hogan of turquoise flint,

Béesh doot'izh bee hooghan,

The One of turquoise flint that will be built up.

Béesh doot'izh bee háádoot'ííł.

Born-for-Water, your shoes of turquoise flint,

Tó Bá Jízhchíní, béesh doot'izh níkee',

With them arise to protect me.

Díł bee shich'ááh náidííłáát.

Your socks of turquoise flint,

Béesh doot'izh nístléé',

With them arise to protect me.

Díł bee shich'ááh náidííłáát.

Your clothes of turquoise flint,

Béesh doot'izh ní'ée',

With them arise to protect me.

Díł bee shich'ááh náidííłáát.

The One of turquoise color who cannot be shot by an arrow,

Noolyíní doot'izhgo doo biná'ált'ohí,

That which cannot be harmed being inside you,

Doo atíłyíghgóó níyí' hóloomí,

With them arise to protect me.

Díł bee shich'ááh náidííłáát.

Your hat of turquoise flint,

Béesh doot'izh ních'ahí,

With it arise to protect me.

Díł bee shich'ááh náidííłáát.

Turquoise flint that surrounds your head (hair),

Béesh doot'izh nítíí' ndeeshzheeh,

With it arise to protect me.

Díł bee shich'ááh náidííłáát.

From your forehead a Tongue-eater of turquoise flint,

Nítíí'áádóó béesh doot'izh atsoolghat bíł hááhádítí,

With it arise to protect me.

Díł bee shich'ááh náidííłáát.

Your turquoise shields, which are white in the middle,

Ninaage'ii doot'izhgo atníł' adzilgaigo,

Your shield, the Big Yellow Snake and the Big White Snake,

Ninaage'ii í'íish tsoh doot'izhgo í'íish tsoh tígáigo,

The Ones who have come together, lying criss-crossed through the shield:

Áhidín'ááago yíghá híníłteezhí:

Your shield you will place before me for protection.

Ninaage'ii díł shich'ááh adíłtííł.

Sunwise you will carry it around me,

Shá bik'ehgo shíndíłtííł,

You will place it in front of me for protection.

Shich'ááh níkidíłtsih.

Beyond this hold back the danger from me.

Bine' naayéé' áhadiítso.

So then I will overcome danger (it will be smaller than I am).

Áko naayéé' shí'oh áníítso.

Beyond it danger will pass by me.

Bine' naayéé' shí'oh adoogáát.

Beyond it danger has passed by me.

Bine' naayéé' shí'oh íiyá.

Behind it I will survive. I have survived here.

Bine' deesdziih. T'áá kwi yisdziuh.

All of us have survived! All of us have survived (as a whole)!

T'áá áníítso dadíidziuh! T'áá áníítso yúdziih!

All of us survived! All of us survived (as a whole)!

T'áá áníítso deidzif! T'áá áníítso yúdzif!

We survived! We survived!

Nihí lá yúdzif! Nihí lá yúdzif!

We have survived! We have survived!

Nihí lá yúdziih! Nihí lá yúdziih!

I have survived! I have survived!

Shí lá yisdziuh! Shí lá yisdziuh!

I have survived for you! I have survived for you!

Shí nihá yisdziuh! Shí nihá yisdziuh!

For many more years! For many more years!

Shí nááháht! Shí nááháht!

100. I will now speak the second Protection Prayer. This is Part Two in a series of prayers:

101.

The four Black Flints encircle me constantly.

Díí béesh díthít díí'go shináhoodít.

Four Turquoise Flints encircle me with their sound.

Índa béesh doot'ish díí'go shináhoots'íí.

Four Yellow Flints encircle me tirelessly (energetically).

Béesh íitso díí'go shináhootat.

Four Ridged Flints encircle me with their sound.

Béesh doolghas díí'go shináhoots'íí.

These will pierce through (kill off) danger.

Éí díí bee naayéé' níká doogáát.

With these danger will disappear (will be overcome).

Nayéé' yit ch'idoogáát.

102. The foregoing is the beginning of the prayer. After this the one who prays may add whatever he wishes. Here is an example of what he may pray:

103.

Life will be good.

Yá'át'éehgo na'adán dooleet.

My home will be sitting there well (and secure).

Dóo yá'át'éehgo shighan sí'áq dooleet.

And my fire will burn well.

Dóo yá'át'éehgo shikp' dilt'í doo.

Anyone and whatever one has at his house:

Hát shíí índa haghangi hólónígíí:

one's food, the lower grinding stone, the upper grinding stone,

hach'iyá' nílínígíí, tsé daashjéé', tsé daashch'íní,

and the mush stirrer, the grinding stone brush, the (hair) brush,

índa ádístsün nílíí, dóo tsé bee náálzhóó, bé'ezhóó daníí,

and the spoons, the pots, and the food,

índa adee' nílínígíí, dóo ása' nílínígíí, dóo ch'iyáán,

and one's bed, and hard goods (precious stones, arrowheads, etc.),

índa áadi, hatsásk'eh dóo hont'iz,

and one's possessions, all of them,

índa hayódl nílínígíí t'áá altso,

one's livestock: sheep, cattle, horses, all of them,

índa halíí: díbé, béégashii, híí, hái sháí t'áá altso,

and all of one's relatives, one's siblings,

índa áadi hak'él nílínígíí t'áá altso, bit hajíijéé' danííííí,

one's mother, the father one has, and the elders,

hamáda, hazhé'e hólópda, índa hastóí,

and one's neighbors—

índa díné bit kééhojít'íníí—

With them we survived like that.

Éí bit ákót'éego deidzif.

104. That is a Protection Prayer. In that manner prayers are spoken in different ways. When (instead) one makes the prayer here for himself, one says, "I only survived"—with one's family, one's children, with them only (one may say) "we survive, we survive."

Monster Killing Song

105.

Now to him I surely go. (Two times. This becomes then the refrain).

Hei nei yaa yehe' éi yee yiláq k'ad bich'í' déyáágoó lá ní' . . .

I go to the One up in the Sky (the Sun). Refrain.

Yéhé éi nei yá nááhoogáát bich'í' déyá . . .

I am Changing Woman's son. Refrain.

Asdzáq náádleeht shí biyázhí shí nishlǫ' . . .

I am the Monster Slayer. Refrain.

Naayéé' Neizghání shí nishlǫ' . . .

(With) dark flint for my shoes. Refrain.

Béesh dithitü yee shikee' . . .

(With) dark flint for my socks. Refrain.

Béesh dithitü yee sistlee' . . .

(With) dark flint for my clothes. Refrain.

Béesh dithitü yee shí'ée' . . .

(With) dark flint for my hat. Refrain.

Béesh dithitü yee shich'ah . . .

With Arrow Lightning, with Dark Flint, protruding from me. Refrain.

K'aa' atsimilt'ishü yee, béesh dithitü yee, bee shits'ánahádítgo . . .

With its horn in the ground, on the prairie, I got on top of him. Refrain.

K'ad bide'eelgeed yee halgaigi sélǫ' ní'ée' . . .

With Arrow Lightning, with Dark Flint, I pierced him through. Refrain.

K'aa' atsimilt'ish yee, béesh dithitü yee éi yit bighá hiníldéél . . .

With their orneriness, in vain they tried to hurt me. Refrain.

Be'adilááhí yee ch'ée' adashí'j . . .

Their own evil deeds have become curses to themselves. Refrain.

Be'adilááh yee bízházhaqah bik'ijj' nínahádleeht . . .

106.

I am Changing Woman's child. Refrain.

Asdzáq Náádleeht bi'awéé' shí nishlǫ' . . .

I am the One-born-for-water. Refrain.

K'ad Tó Bá Jishchíní shí nishlǫ' . . .

(With) my shoes of turquoise flint. Refrain.

Béesh doot'izhü yee shikee' . . .

(With) my socks of turquoise flint. Refrain.

Béesh doot'izhü yee sistlee' . . .

(With) my clothes of turquoise flint. Refrain.

Béesh doot'izhü yee shí'ée' . . .

(With) my hat of turquoise flint. Refrain.

Béesh doot'izhü yee shich'ah . . .

Now the Tongue-eater, the Turquoise Flint, protrudes from me. Refrain.

K'ad atsoo' alghatü yee, béesh doot'izhü yee sits'ánahádít . . .

The One-who-kills-with-his-eyes was on the prairie. Refrain.

Bináá' yee jigháanii halgaigi sélǫ' ní'ée' . . .

Now with the Tongue-eater, the Turquoise Flint,

K'ad atsoo' alghatü yee, béesh doot'izhü yee,

With these I pierce him through. Refrain.

Díi yit bighá hiníldééh . . .

Now he does not move. Refrain.

K'ad doo hidí'náah da . . .

With his weapons he tried in vain to hurt me. Refrain.

Binahala' ch'ée' yee ádashí'j . . .

Now he does not move. Refrain.

K'ad doo hidí'náah da . . .

His own weapons have turned again him. Refrain.

Binahala' yee bízházhaqah biy'ijj' nínéldééh ní'ée' . . .

107.

I am Changing Woman's son. Refrain.

Asdzáq Náádleeht biyázhí shí nishlǫ' . . .

Now I am the Changing Child. Refrain.

K'ad awéé' náádleeht shí nishlǫ' . . .

(With) my shoes of yellow flint. Refrain.

Béesh títsoi yee shíkee' . . .

(With) my socks of yellow flint. Refrain.

Béesh títsoi yee sistlee' . . .

(With) my clothes of yellow flint. Refrain.

Béesh títsoi yee shí'ée' . . .

(With) my hat of yellow flint. Refrain.

Béesh títsoi yee shich'ah . . .

With the Rain-streak, with the Yellow Flint,

Níttsá bit'óol yee, béesh títsoi bee,

It protrudes before me (to protect me). Refrain.

Ét yee shich'ááh náhááít . . .

With the Rock-kicker he sat on the rock waiting for you. Refrain.

Tsé ádaah ayádzíítahí yee tsé nich'í' sít'í' ní'ée' . . .

With the Sunbeam, the Yellow Flint, I shot through him. Refrain.

Shá bit'óol yee, béesh títsoi bee, bighá níníldéel . . .

He does not move any more now. Refrain.

K'ad doo hid'náah da . . .

With their orneriness, in vain they tried to hurt me. Refrain.

Be'ádlááh yee ch'ée'h ádashí'í' ní'ée' . . .

With his own hand he used to hide his heart. Refrain.

Bíla'ü yee bijéi nínáydíldéeh ní'ée' . . .

108.

I am Changing Woman's child. Refrain.

Asdzáq Náádleehtí shí bi'awéé' shí nishí' . . .

Now I am the One-who-was-reared-in-the-earth. Refrain.

K'ad leeyah neiyání shí nishí' . . .

By means of the Bear-that-shoots. Refrain.

T'áá shash náá'itkashii yee . . .

(With) my shoes of ridged flint. Refrain.

Béesh doolghasii yee shíkee' . . .

(With) my socks of ridged flint. Refrain.

Béesh doolghasii yee sistlee' . . .

(With) my clothes of ridged flint. Refrain.

Béesh doolghasii yee shí'ée' . . .

(With) my hat of ridged flint. Refrain.

Béesh doolghasii yee shich'ah . . .

Ridged Flint (that) protrudes from me with the Rainbow. Refrain.

Béesh doolghasii yee nááts'ílidii yee sít'ááh' náhíidhí yee . . .

The Bear-that-shoots is waiting for you in the mountain. Refrain.

T'áá shash náá'itkashii yee dzít nich'í' sít' . . .

By means of the Rainbow-ridged-flint I shot through him. Refrain.

Nááts'ílidii yee, béesh doolghasii yee bighá níníldéel . . .

Now he does not move anymore. Refrain.

K'ad doo hid'náah da . . .

With their ferocity they could not harm me. Refrain.

Bighatü yee ch'ée'h ádashí'í' . . .

By their own ferocity they are killed. Refrain, three times.

Bighatü yee bish'zhogh bí'qashii nínáíldéel . . .

109. There is only one person alive in this area who knows the entire Protectionway. His name is Mister White Ridge (*Hastin tsé ligai níní'í'í*). He has become an old man, and it would be difficult to find out from him how he would actually do it. But it has been said that he was shown the ceremony for Head of Earth and also the prayer (which is spoken) to the very top of Head of Earth that was especially outlined for him.²⁷ That is what we know today as "Self-protectionway of Monster Slayer, Raised-in-one-day, his song and prayer" (*Naayéé' Neizghání bí'ach'ááh sohodizin, T'ááá'í jí neiyání, biyín dóo bisohodizin*).

110. There are four major ascending and sunwise encircling prayer-phases and songs which I know and which I was taught by my maternal grandfather, Man-who-did-it. He told me that this is the "ascending and descending prayer," also that this is that very same Protectionway prayer. It is a prayer that is very strong (stronger than strong). It is most useful and the most used way of getting help quickly, when the need arises suddenly and unexpectedly. It is made especially for emergencies, where no other help seems available, and when a person's condition is very serious. It is made to restore that person to his former good self. In the beginning this was the way that was tried. It was a win-or-lose situation.²⁸ And because this procedure succeeded at that time, it is still used today.

²⁷This seems to be the same prayer of which Long Salt gave us a few lines. See LONG SALT, par. 9.

²⁸The People were in distress. Monster Slayer came quickly. He was "born and raised, in one day," and on that same day he brought defeat to all the enemies of the Navajo people.

111. Another kind of Protectionway is of the non-emergency type. There are four prayers and four songs to that. It is called Prayer-of-him-who-is-killed (*Diné seesyíinii bišohodizin*), and is spoken for the four Holy People—Holy Man (*Diné diyinii*), Holy Young Woman (*Ch'íhíh diyinii*), Holy Boy (*Tóhíhíh diyinii*), and Holy Girl (*Al'íhíh diyinii*). These are the four who walk about together.

112. So there are several modes for doing Protectionway, which require Protectionway prayers and songs. In one mode a special tobacco, a special prayer and song, are used—"Tobacco prayer and song (*nat'oh bišohodizin dóo biyíin*). These two are optional. The singer may say, "I will speak only the prayer, without the song." Or he may say, "I will chant the song over you, without the prayer."

113. There are many more of these options. For example, when there is no urgency, or when the patient needs to go somewhere in a hurry, he may ask for a quick rite. Another instance of correct usage of these (quick) optional rites would be when a person has been accused and is summoned by the police or the court, when he needs protection between here and there and back. This is usually performed with placing an offering of precious stones.

114. Another use of Protectionway is in the case of a disabling illness which has been diagnosed as hopeless. A desperate request may be made on behalf of a person for a Protectionway prayer whereby, perhaps, he might be spared. And sure enough, his appointed day (*bee nihoot'áníí*) is postponed once more. This is the reason why Protectionway prayers and songs are very important in such a situation: Monster Slayer prayers and songs are used together with Holy Man's prayers and songs. These are used in various combinations during a Protectionway performance.

115. These two types (Monster Slayer's and Holy Man's prayers and songs) belong to Protectionway, but they need not be limited to it. They may be used together with other song ceremonials. For example, in the case of an affliction during pregnancy, when father or mother have looked on what is forbidden—which then results sometimes in a coma. When such a cause is determined (by a seer), and if it is decided that a ceremony should be held, then this calls first of all for a Protectionway prayer, and then for the proper sand-painting which pertains to that affliction. On this (dry-painting) the afflicted person is seated; cornpollen is put into his mouth. This will remove the affliction.

116. This is the Way which is established for us, the Navajo people. This old way, which we have been taught, is the Way for us today. There are many unbelievers. Some (do not believe) because they say they have become Christians and have been taught Christian prayers. Some others say that this old way was merely fabricated. But it is most certain, that after their (new) ways do not work, the afflicted person can still be restored to health by this ceremony. It is engraved in the Earth, and it is engraved in the Great Dark Sky (*Yádíthít*), that this is the Way. This ceremony came about with Monster Slayer's prayer and song. . . .

117. In major ceremonials Monster Slayer's prayer and song (where they are used) stand first. These songs and prayers are for use against the consequences of his deeds—of killing the monsters and enemies. For these very ceremonials (i.e. War or "Squaw" Dance), they were made and used over him. It was Monster Slayer who first did these deeds (of killing), later these returned to him in the form of afflictions. He was made well once again when these rites were performed over him.²⁸ The Squaw Dance (*Ndaá'*) had its beginning at that time. But since then, the Squaw Dance has been overindulged in (*éí bee tsá' na'aldíéh*) by many people. . . .

118. The Protectionway prayer also has a place in Evilway (*Hóhó'íí*). It is used after a person has worked at a place of native ghosts or witches (*hóhó'*)—which afflicts him with head-ache, leg-ache and internal pains. A person who has these symptoms will usually request a Protectionway prayer, together with a One-night-and-one-day Blackening rite. If the condition then improves, one can perform the beginning rite of Blessingway.

²⁸The ghosts of slain enemies generally plot revenge. The very rites which formerly liberated Monster Slayer from such evil consequences are now used to heal humankind. Moreover, Navajo shamanic mythology, in general, tells of healer heroes who themselves suffered the afflictions from which their devotees wish to be cured. The savior hero—in this case, Monster Slayer—suffered and was healed; therefore he knows how to save and protect his devotees.

5

BUCK NAVAJO¹

Interview

1. Yes, it is true! Where the outcropping of rock slopes to an end, there, a long time ago, were those who walk among the mountains. "Bear" one of them was called. Bear and Crow were some of them. Is that not so? Together with all kinds of other animals. At first they were like man. They were very much like human beings at first.² And at that place (Rainbow Bridge area), near a knob-like hill, a dance of the drum-beating type ceremony was held. And it was said that this was (done) to bring Waterbasket into being. And when the Waterbasket was put down, at the place where it was put also a Rainbow was placed. It (the Rainbow) turned into what is now Rock-arch (*Tsé nan'á*). From that time on it (Rainbow) came into (human) ownership (or use). And in those days it was also decreed that the Navajo War Dance (Squaw Dance) was to be held. And that is the origin of the Squaw Dance. That is where it began. And at that time it was decreed that it (Rainbow

¹At 52 years of age, Buck Navajo is our youngest informant. He lives northeast of Navajo Mountain, close to the foot of Navajo Begay. Among his teachers he lists his father, Dick Navajo (who is referred to by Nelson as "Trees-extend-down"), Mr. Pinetree, and Long Salt. When the first round of interviews was completed, it became apparent that additional information was needed along two fronts—Protectionway and Rain-requesting. Buck Navajo had agreed, in summer, to tell us more about Rain-requesting after the first frost. We visited him again in December and recorded his prayer and song. Perhaps some other informant could have told us more about Rain-requesting. Nevertheless, as far as this report is concerned, his samples, together with some from Buster Hastin Nez and with fragments from other informants, will have to suffice.

²The speaker begins with a reference to mythic prehuman times: In the pre-hunting era the outward appearances of "people" were interchangeable like clothes. Gods, men, animals, plants, and many geographical and cosmic features still lived together harmoniously as "people" in one society. See the discussion of "prehuman flux" by Luckert (1975).

Bridge area) was to be a place for bringing offerings—a sacred place for the Navajo people. That is the way it is. That is where the Squaw Dance started; and that is where the hand-bundle (drumstick) for beating the waterbasket originated. So it is said. And that is the reason why it was (always) sacred. And it (still) is sacred. And it was also said: If Rock-arch should ever fall, it will affect all the people. All the people will be very badly affected. It was not us, the Navajo people of today, who decreed these things; rather, this came from the Holy People (the gods) and from their sphere.

2. These things did not happen only on behalf of the Rain-person. No, they did not. Where the Waterbasket was placed there the Rock-arch stands nearby. Where it was placed, there the ridge has assumed the shape of the Waterbasket. It is still there in the shape and direction in which it was placed. If a ceremony is held to request moisture and rain, water is collected from that ridge(-area) and brought back to where the (main portion of the) ceremony is being held. An offering is taken to that ridge(-area) and placed beneath Rock-arch. That is the way the story (tradition) goes. It is said that it (Rock-arch) is Rainbow. All the Rainbows (in the world) originate from there.

3. And concerning those days it was said, that nearby on Head of Earth (*Naatsis'áán*), on the very top of this mountain, Monster Slayer (*Naayéé' Neizghání*) was put and stood upright. And next to him was placed to stand Born-for-Water (*Tó Bá Jishchíní*). And in this direction Changing Grandchild (*Tsáí Nádléché*) and Reared-in-the-earth (*Leeyaa Neiyání*) were placed. They were established in the course of one day. They were born and raised in one day in a miraculous and holy manner.³ (They were established) out of necessity and need, because there were many enemies in those days. And those enemies were destroying the People in large numbers. And from this sacred event (a number of) sacred prayers resulted. The prayers which result from where the gods stand are very powerful and very sacred. They cannot be loosely talked about, because the gods themselves decreed it so. I learned these prayers from my father and from several other men who used to come together and talk about these sacred matters. And I was in their presence many times. Their words are still alive to me today. They

³For a different view, which is based on a tradition that seems to have originated earlier in New Mexico, see NELSON, par. 27–28. LONGSALT (par. 1) and LAUGHTER (par. 15–17) are in agreement with Buck Navajo on this issue.

were nurtured (through the years) and they grow today (are recalled and revived at this very moment).

4. And it is said, that below this (Rainbow Bridge) one cannot live for the purpose of aging. Because of the prayers, the place is made strong. And this place where the Spring is had a name, and today it still has a name.⁴ And it was designed by the gods, for as long as it is there, (for the purpose) that the People will be blessed with an abundance of children. So it was decreed. It cannot be revoked. That is the way it is. And then from there (Rainbow Bridge area) it (human prayers and offerings) is talked about on the four (sacred) mountains. And the way it is with the mountains—the prayers proceed from the feet of the mountains on up. That is the way the elders, who do these sacred things, do in the Mountainway chants and in other sacred ceremonies. They obtain their power from each of the four mountains.

5. And it is said in Navajo tradition, that *Naatsis'áán* (Navajo Mountain) is the Head of Earth. And concerning this mountain it is also said, that Black Cloud exists inside. And it (Navajo Mountain) is the highest peak in the realm. Why it is said to be the highest peak I do not know—since over there is Blanca Peak (*Sisnaajini*), and over there San Francisco Peaks (*Dook'o'ostlid*)—anyway (you know them), the four mountains around our land. It is all one prayer. Still, each of them has its own separate prayer which is part of one prayer. These prayers start at their (the mountains') feet, (move up referring to) their legs, and on up their whole bodies. That includes Huerfano Mountain (*Dzál Ná'oodlái*) and its ridges. And these prayers are sacred. I cannot say any more (about them in this context). And that is the extent of this story.

6. I obtained this information from my father. My father was called Dick Navajo. Another one (of whom I learned) was John Haliday, my paternal uncle. And another was Robert Sombrero; he is still alive. It was he who knew these stories best, and it was from him and his knowledge that I learned them. And even now I still ask him about these things. And yes, it is all true. I used to be in their midst when they got together and talked about these things. And before them, it is said that there was a man called Breechcloth. He was my paternal grandfather. And this was a long time ago, a very long time ago. It was about the time of the first major war. It was the time of conflict and of captivity at Fort Sumner. And it is said that my father was three years

⁴"To have a name" means that whatever is so named is a person, that it is not a thing.

old when they were released from Fort Sumner. Concerning further back, before my grandfather, I was never told, and therefore I do not know the name of my great-grandfather. And I do not know who would know. Perhaps my mother was told what his name was. Nevertheless, this man who was the father of my father was of the Red-streak-into-water (*Táchü'nüi*) clan. And then I also asked Long Salt. And even now I ask him about these things. I also learned from Long Salt's father, Pinetree (*N'dishchif*). (The man) Pinetree was also my paternal uncle.

7. They who passed on this information are now dead. One of them was called John Halliday, another Billie Halliday. Both of them are now gone. Their (non-English) names were *Hastiin Ch'ahai* and *Bichq' dinüihl*.⁵ And these men were known as carriers (bringers) of water. They were known (so in) many places, even far away. And (bringing on rain) was their specific role. But nowadays in that area (Monument Valley and Mexican Hat) there are no more water bringers, except near Oljato. And in that area are only a very few left. And this other man, Robert Long Salt, was among the original bringers of water. But he cannot perform these functions adequately anymore, because of pain in his legs (which was) brought on by old age. Now it seems as though in this entire (Navajo Mountain) region there will be not more than two of us: the one whom I mentioned earlier, Robert Sombrero, and I. Aside from us, of course, I mentioned earlier my paternal grandfather. But he is long gone. I never saw him. And there is one other possible person; his name is White Ridge, and he is also known as Sombrero. He is Robert Sombrero's father. And then another one, whose name is House. He is my paternal uncle and lives near

⁵These names translate literally "Mister Hat" and "Painful Shitter." Many Navajos have four kinds of names. The English name was given for government records and for business transactions with the outside world. Descriptive Navajo names, such as these, are used during discourse within the Navajo community. The third kind of name usually refers to a person's relationship to someone else in the family—like "Son of Mr. Hat." Finally, the fourth and sacred name is known only to the person who is named and to a few trusted elders or members of the family. If the owner of the sacred name no longer trusts his old trustees, he can choose a new sacred name and select new friends. This name is spoken during traditional burial procedures to address the departed ghost and to persuade him to keep moving northward toward ghostland while, in four successive days, the survivors move their camp further south and eventually beyond the horizon of the homestead. Obviously, names of the second order, such as the descriptive ones given here, which refer to a person's peculiar headgear or to a physical frailty, do not apply when it comes to dealing with a person's core that survives death.

Shonto. (His English name is Ernest Nelson). These (men) also know a lot. They still practice this gift of calling moisture. So it is not only I, myself, who still has this gift. There are those whom I just mentioned. And perhaps there are others.

8. Now to go back to when I was very young, to my earliest recollections as a child. I remember all these prominent men and leaders brought together and gathered in one place. And this was at the hogan of my father. And I remember well the masses of people who came to these gatherings. And their main purpose was to renew and to keep alive these sacred stories. And it happened during night time. And I was in their midst, was lying in their midst, as they were talking among themselves. And even though I was young and little, I had an early interest in this (event of) teaching one another the way of life. And I remember as if it had (all) happened very recently. And this much I remember, and this much I understood when I was young. (Since then) I walked this sacred way. Again right now, as I think about it, it is as if it happened recently.

9. Now for the question as to how things are done in the ceremonies. The offerings are carried from her or his home to that sacred area. Upon arriving at that sacred area there are things which must be done. Prayers (are spoken) at certain places. When the final point (in prayers) is reached, an offering is placed. (Then) an amount of ceremonial water is brought up and back here where the ceremony is being held. And then that sacred water is sprinkled on the ceremonial paraphernalia to sanctify the ceremony. And then the Rains come. And the rain is for all the people. And it is not in any way limited to one person. Nevertheless, sometimes one person will be set aside and designated to stand for all the people. And a ceremony for moisture should be held once a year, at the very beginning of summer. Usually over the weekend of the big Chicken Pool at Flagstaff.⁶

10. In the early days, to arrange a ceremony, there was no such thing as money. The way the services of a singer were secured was this: blue cornmeal bread was the token of the contract. There was always one loaf, one not too large. Everything starts with giving that blue cornmeal bread to the singer. And many people may gather. Then the singer goes a little ways off and tells the gods that he has been con-

⁶It is said that formerly, during the Flagstaff "Pow-Wow," a flock of chickens was put into a bin, of which the Indians could help themselves, to butcher and to prepare their meals.

tracted to do a service of prayer. And as the ceremony progresses, if it seems to be too far to that designated place (Rainbow Bridge area) to do the rites, then it is all right, instead, to journey down to the nearest point along the River. (This is possible) because the River itself will become a part of the place (Rainbow Bridge area) which is specifically designated. For that reason it is all right to do it (this simpler way). This is even more (justified) if the distance is still farther. (If the ceremony is held far from the River), then it is even all right to only use the sacred ceremonial names of that (designated) area. The only thing needed, (then), would be to know the secret of the sacred names of the Head-of-the-river and of all its (the River's) major tributaries. They do have names. This I know because I know. This is what I was taught.

11. Now concerning (the situation) when a person should come to me and ask me to do a ceremony—one that will involve the area we are talking about. We as singers (priestly practitioners), and I as a singer, cannot refuse. There is an exception in other ceremonies, the option to refuse or to accept. But in the case of our specialty with the River and with that (Rainbow Bridge) area there is no exception.

12. The ceremony for bringing moisture can be arranged at the request of one person or of a group of people. Two adolescents, a boy and a girl, are designated and are made to stand for the People in the presence of the Holy People. And they are dressed ceremonially and are given a certain amount of (ritualistic) powers. They are given a certain role and place in the ceremony. And there is a great amount of ceremonial activity connected with this. The name of the ceremony is Rain-requesting (*Nítstq' wókered*). The reason for having a boy and a girl is that there are Male Rain and Female Rain. Another reason for having both a boy and a girl is that both types of rain are desired in an equal amount.⁷ And this ceremony is after the manner of Blessingway (*Hózhóǵǵí*), and it does not take many days. It starts out with a prayer and with the Non-sleep ceremony (*Doo tigháásh*). The sacred bundle is then brought in. And it is a joyful occasion. Many people come.

13. But it could not be done, for instance, today (August 4th). A special time is designated for these ceremonies—which time has come and gone and now is way beyond. Now the Rains are here and Thunders are being heard. And that (special) time is the time of the Chicken Pool, the 4th of July weekend. That is the time when we do it. The

reason we are not doing it now is that the season of Rain is here. There is no reason to call for Rain if Rain is here. (Of course), a time of real need (a drought) is an exception.

14. Now concerning the question about the giving of offerings and what the Holy People instructed in those long-ago times. These are the things I was talking about earlier. To me it seems that it was only a short time ago that I heard (for the first time) about the ways of doing these ceremonies. And concerning what I have heard it seems to me that I myself was present when these things were first taught and decreed by the Holy People themselves. It is my understanding that altogether there are twelve major ceremonies to be had. And concerning offerings a way was taught by the Holy People. And in these offerings is to be included turquoise, white shell, jet, mother of pearl, red ochre, blue cornmeal, and yellow cornpollen. These things I know because, as I mentioned earlier, I was taught. It was just a short time ago that I was taught these things.

15. These things about Rainbow Bridge, of which I talk now, concern the time when Rock-arch was made. It was said that in those days a (ceremonial) dance was held, and, that at the occasion of this dance the participants were sent out in all directions.⁸ One among these (participants) was Coyote. And it was this side of (after) the time of emergence (of the People from the underworld). I am certain it happened after the emergence.⁹

16. Yes, at the time of the creation of Rock-arch, certain songs and prayers were given for us to use—to have and to use in time of need. And a certain way was also given whereby we could give offerings to Rainbow, also to Water, to Earth, and to Sky. There are also many other prayers for all (other kinds of) beings. And these prayers were given to us to use on our journeys (away) from that place. And yes, certain places in the Rainbow Bridge area have (personal) names. And certain offerings and prayers are given at these places. I know about the prayer of the Rainbow, and that prayer has twelve parts (twelve

⁷The phrase "It was said" does not imply remoteness or uncertainty. In the context of an oral tradition an "It was said" is the equivalent of an "It is written" in a written tradition. There is one difference, however. An "It was said" tradition remains alive more easily, whereas an "It is written" tradition often stagnates in its external forms.

⁸This rumination suggests that at this point in time the Rainbow Bridge mythology of the Navajos is not yet harmonized with their Emergence myth of Pueblo Indian origin. For a similar state of affairs in hunter mythology see Luckert (1975, pp. 13, 157f, 189f).

⁹Compare NELSON, par. 25, also the footnote there for a comment on that practice.

ways streaming from it). And one of the ways is Rain-requestingway. Another way is that of Talking Rock (*Tsé yáítí*).

17. Now about this Talking Rock, he is very much like man. As you talk to him he talks back and echoes the exact words you spoke to him. And if somehow, because of a person's mistake, that rock should (have to) fall on him, there is an offering which can be given to avert (this punishment). And it is to prevent Talking Rock from falling (on them) that many of our people are reluctant to talk about these sacred matters. That is the way of Talking Rock.

18. Now concerning the Rainbow Bridge area. All within the area is one. And the one area is all areas. They are one and the same. (But this specific area) is the one place to go, to request, and to make offerings for rain and moisture. It is also the place to go and to ask for individual protection; also the place to go to pray on behalf of the People.

19. Now concerning Talking Rock, that is his own (personal) name. That is the name by which he is known. He also has a second name, which is his sacred name. This much I can say about that sacred name (now). One (name) is Talking Rock Boy and another is Talking Rock Girl. This is it. These are the names by which they are known. And they have their own prayers, and (they have) their own offerings which are turquoise and white shell. But the offerings to them can now not be given as often as we once did. It is a sacred area, and it is a sacred offering. But now there are too many people in that general area of Talking Rock.¹⁹

20. In the early days we only had our own few people who could journey down there only by horse. But now the number of people does not permit us to communicate with them (Holy People) as we should. One thing to remember is also that these rituals of placing offerings cannot be done at night (after the tourists have left), for it was decreed

¹⁹While the place of Talking Rock itself would perhaps be sufficiently deserted during many periods of the day, the spoken or chanted prayer-words echo a long ways through the canyon—even on to Rainbow Bridge itself. This, of course, will attract unwanted spectators. In addition, rites are also to be performed at the sacred Spring and by Rock-arch itself. In the vicinity of the latter, tourists are everpresent. Most Navajo ceremonies are privately sponsored affairs anyhow; they are not public performances like many kachina dances of the Pueblo Indians.

by the Holy People that these things should be done in daylight. But this cannot be done because of the many people in the area now. Our singers say that it should be done in a solemn and quiet manner. And it is now very difficult to do this, because the outsiders in that area will have a natural curiosity as to what is going on when we are trying to offer our prayers. Standing in this sanctuary (in the presence of the Holy People) we have them looking over our shoulders.

21. Now concerning the sequence of the sacred landmarks, coming from here and going down there. The first site we see is Talking Rock. Beyond that is the River itself. And, of course, there is Rock-arch. However, we are instructed not to go underneath and beyond the Arch if we can help it. Our elders used to be reluctant to go beneath and beyond the Rock-arch. Just before one reaches Rock-arch there is a sacred Spring. And if one goes there for the purpose of requesting moisture, one would go only as far as the Spring. (One would go) no farther, but turn from there and return here. (Actually), I can (or should) not say that the Spring is before the Arch or that the Arch is before the River. To me these three (River, Arch, and Spring) are the same place.

22. As far as the sacred (personal) names (of these sites which also are Holy People) are concerned. Since you asked, I will tell you the procedure by which you can know some of the more sacred names. It is this. The gift is turquoise. And this (I say) because you asked. Again, the gift (payment) to know these things is the length of this much (ca. twelve centimeters) of turquoise (loops). For this you will be entitled to know. Also it should be two strands (loops). This is so because these things are sacred (traditional) matters. I tell you these things because you asked. And for that gift there are altogether a total of twelve ways pertaining to things of Rock-arch. Now I reveal to you further, that if you have this gift with you now, I will reveal these things to you. But understand further, that nothing else can replace this. It must be turquoise, specifically the ear-loop portions of turquoise necklaces. Along with (my) giving of the stories concerning Rock-arch, there are songs and prayers which can be given to you after presenting this gift.

23. But a problem that we have (now) is this. Even though you should present to me this gift now, the special time prescribed by the Holy People is long past. Had you come to me on the weekend of July 4th, perhaps I could have told you, and we could have stayed up all

night. (But this can be done) also during the season of Christmas, as the next designated time is after the first frost.¹¹

24. It is (now) also up to me to do something about the situation of Rock-arch. When the time gets closer and closer to the hearing concerning this matter, I myself will hold a ceremony to pray that everything will come out all right, even to the extent of this recording. I will ask specifically that the Holy People will help you, (that they) will help all those who are trying to help us and who (in turn) are trying to help the Holy People. And I will do these things. I will do these things in my own way, in the way that was given to me. And when the time comes still closer, you can notify me or write me at least two or three days (in advance), so that I can appear before these people who are trying to have these things happen to us and to our ways. I want to make it clear again, that as the time gets closer and closer, things will be done in a ceremonial way. And (I will pray) that this matter (the cause of the opposition) will slip away and that we will win.

25. Now concerning the matter of Water itself—water in general, sacred springs, and sacred rivers. First the rivers. There are two River (-persons). It is said that one is male and one is female. The one nearest, this side of Moab (San Juan River), is male, and the one on the other side of Moab (Colorado River) is female. The reason for this being so is that the River nearer our land has more motion to it, and it is male. The one on the other side of Moab is female because it is gentle in its flow. This is what is said of them, that one is male and that the other is female. And the sacred Spring at Rock-arch is called by both male and female names.

26. I do not claim to know everything there is to know about springs and moisture, and what I have done I have done for individuals and for very small groups. And I have not performed any (ceremony) for large crowds. I started doing these rites, I believe, about fifteen years ago. And as far as their frequency is concerned, sometimes I have done as many as two in a month, but really, only among my relatives and members of my community. A few times, though, (I have done them) on request of some persons in Flagstaff or Fort Defiance.

¹¹This restriction, to discuss certain myths, songs, or prayers, applies to many other Navajo ceremonies as well. The original reason for this is "caution." Those gods who hibernate during winter (i.e. Rainbow, Lightning, Snake) are so less likely to get the impression that their names are being spoken in vain. What the Holy People do not know will not offend them.

27. The rites which I perform more frequently are those of the type of Protectionway prayers. These also involve prayers and offerings at the site of the sacred Spring. And these rites are in the line of the minor Blessingway. I must point out that this is not the major Blessingway, (the ceremonial) which requires singers of the major Blessingway.

28. Another possible reason why I present offerings and speak prayers at Rock-arch is when a person comes to me with a bad dream, especially with a dream about (dangerous) water. Now, these types of dreams do not come about by themselves; rather, they come from Talking Rock. And Talking Rock is the one who reveals to a person the need for a ceremony, and he will tell him by way of dreams.

29. Along the same line would be if a person dreamt about a(n ominous) rock. This whole matter concerns Talking Rock. And these kinds of things I would do for anybody who did come to me. But these (rites) are separate and distinct from requesting moisture and rain. And this rite for moisture I do not do by myself, but usually I will have one of my fellow singers with me.

30. Now concerning my own knowledge, as to when I first witnessed (participated in) this rite for moisture. It began about twenty years ago, perhaps a little earlier. I was approximately thirty years old, perhaps a little more.¹² You see, because right now I am fifty-two years old. And once there was a man named No Eyes (Blind One); he was the one who headed the effort of praying for rain. I participated by helping and by doing his errands during the ceremony.¹³ That was the first time that I participated, and it turned out (to be) true. (Rain fell). And I witnessed it. And since that time there have not been as many of these ceremonies anymore. But that is not to say that it is not done anymore. It is still being done; perhaps a little more (often) by people of the Shonto area. (In any case), I do these things, and I (still) do them now in that area. I cannot say that I give more offerings to the Spring, to Rock-arch, or to Talking Rock. I use (approach) all of them (about) equally. Most of these are (of the kind of) Blessingway rites.

31. Concerning this matter of a stack of rocks (altar structure), (about which you have asked), I do not know anything about it. The

¹²The dry years of that period, established by measuring relative tree-ring growth, were 1954, 1955, and 1958.

¹³This "Blind One" was obviously not the "Blind Salt Clansman."

way we (the Navajo people) do it, if we give an offering by the River (in the River area), the offering is placed where it cannot be seen. And this is the way it was prescribed by the Holy People.

32. Now concerning this matter of serpents (about which you asked). When it happens that one of our people is bitten by a (male) rattlesnake, whether intentionally or not, the Salt-brush (*édlwázhii*) is applied. He (the patient) is also made to put on turquoise. In the sandpainting the Snake is also painted in turquoise. But if a female Snake has been harmed, intentionally or not, then white shell is put on the patient.¹⁴ In the sandpainting the Snake is (then) made white to resemble white shell. It is also made with a jewel offering (*ni'íiz*). This will be especially true if the Snake has been killed or burned. And this is the way this is done. Another reason would be, if the Snake by itself has bitten a human person. There are (specific) prayers and songs that have to be used when these things happen. But I cannot and should not say any more on these matters, because these matters pertain to major chantways. Just before this we spoke of Blessingway. That is not to say that one cannot talk about it at all. But it would take very long. There is a separate story that goes with it, and we cannot reveal everything there is to know about this subject now.

33. However, since you asked me about this, let it suffice for you to know, that if anything (is to be done) by way of giving an offering and asking of that Snake—that it should not cause any harm, or that it should not be where it happens to be—even if it (the prayer) is only (spoken to) its track, an offering can be given to the Snake itself. It can be admonished and asked to go back to where it came from. (This can be done) without having to go down to the River area.

34. This is not to say that Snake has no part in the People's way. It is said that it is partly up to him to bring moisture. In order to enlist the cooperation of Snake, usually the following words are said:

Middle-of-the-earth Hogan, Pinion-pine Hogan,

Ni'abnít' hooghanii, Deeshchít' bee hooghan.

He (Snake) walks about with his body,

Bits'íls yee naaghá,

¹⁴Harming or offending a Snake-person is here discussed together with being bitten. Both constitute one event. The effects of the bite must therefore be cured through a gesture of reconciliation toward Snake.

Your (Earth's) offering I have made.

Niyéél áshl'na.

Some soil is so picked up and sprinkled toward the Snake or its tracks. However, in the case of a real ceremony, jewels are used.

35. The reason why Snake is involved in rain and moisture is that Snake looks like (or moves in the shape of) Lightning. And it is said that Rain, too, is male and female. And because of this it is said when it rains, that it rains with male and female Snakes. Rain and Snake together is one thing. And because the story is one (a coherent whole), it is said that one is the other and that the other is it. And this becomes manifest when it rains; snakes show up because they drop down with the rain. And because they are brought in this sacred way, we are not to molest or to kill them. That is how the story goes. It is also said that when one molests a Snake(-person), that the Rains will be slow to respond to our calling them. But on the other hand, it is also said that nowadays Snake is eaten as food by White people. So, I don't know (informant chuckles). As far as I know, none of our people have eaten Snake. Yes, Snake was put here for a reason. They were put here by the Holy People for a purpose of their own.

36. Now concerning this rock that is somewhat hollowed out, (the cave about which you asked) 'yes, it is true about that rock. Now the location of it is within the radius of one mile of the Rock-arch. Now I do not think that the two of you have been to that area. It lies now on the land which was given to Harold (the Councilman) and which he has fenced off. Now as to that hole in the rock, there is also in that vicinity a spring, but it (too) is on that fenced-off land. With that fence it is Harold's, the Councilman's, property. But I have heard it said that inside (the cave now) feed is stored and that it is in some kind of use. At one time the question was raised by the people of this area, at a Chapter meeting, as to whether that particular place, the cave, should be fenced off or not. But lately I have not heard any more about that matter. Animal pack trips are made into this property which is surrounded by that fence.

37. Now concerning these rock formations, as to which one (in the days of creation by the Holy People) was made first, I do not really know. As far as I am concerned, regarding anything in that area, and what I see when I come into that area, it is first Talking Rock, then the Spring, and then Rock-arch. And the cave in the rock I am not sure

where it is. I think it (the other one about which you asked) is near the Spring, perhaps a little ways to the side of the Spring. I have been told that it is this side of the Spring (toward Navajo Mountain). One thing is certain, Talking Rock is the first you see, and when you come back it is the last to whom you give your offerings and prayers. Although there are four places, separate, distinct, and apart, and although prayers are offered at each stopping place, there is only one main prayer in the ceremony, from the beginning to the end.

38. The real place for offering Protectionway prayers would have been as near to the River as possible. But now that is no longer possible. But now that is no longer true, because the water is so near to Rock-arch, and we are forced to retreat. Now boats come to right below Rock-arch. But the prayers for rain are still offered at the Spring. At present the prayers for (both) protection and rain are still done at the Spring. And that is the last point of retreat. Once that is covered by water, and once that is trampled on by outside people, that holy place will be gone (too). There is no more place to go (after that). These holy places must work together equally (as interrelated parts of a single organism). If some part of that is missing, it (the whole) will no longer be complete. Even though there are other, lesser, springs in the area, their main function is to serve a few hogans of the area.¹⁵ They would not do as well as these major (and un-utilized) sanctuaries which were set aside by the Holy People.

39. Now a little more concerning this hollow in the rock, (the one near Rock-arch). It is my understanding that it was a temporary hogan of the Holy People, (at the time) when they came down among us. That is all I know about that, that it was a temporary hogan. And when they left, it (the cave) was left there as a reminder for people to leave their offerings and to speak prayers. That is all I know. Perhaps someone else can tell you more about it.

40. Now concerning myself. I am from Navajo Mountain. I am called Buck Navajo. I am of the Salt clan (*Áshjį́hí*) and was born for the Many Goats clan (*T'izhání*—paternal clan). I hold a medicine bundle for the Female Branch of Shootingway (*Naat'ooyee bí'áádjį́*), also for things pertaining to Sun and Moon—but only the minor version, also for the Big Toe-nail (*Akeshgaan*) and the Toe-nail or Clawway (*Akeshgaanjį́*), also for the minor overnight Blackeningway (*Hóchp'į́*)

¹⁵One must note here the distinction which is made between used (less-than-human and controlled) and untouched (greater-than-human and sacred) water.

anít'eesh), and finally also for seeking out information (by divination)—handtrembling only. That is what I know (aside from the rites already mentioned herein). That is all I know now (at this point in life).

41. And I want to thank you for this occasion, for the chance of talking with one another about these matters. And I thank the people who sent you to help us. And I also know that the Holy People have helped to bring this about.

42. And it is my petition to you, the Holy People—in accordance with the (teachings of the) spokesmen (elders) whom you have sent to us, and (in accordance with) those things which were said and decreed among yourselves in those long-ago times. And because of that event (your meeting), leaders have been sent to us these days. And these leaders are yours. Decree it so that they will win. Today in a place called Salt Lake (City) a paper is on file—that the originators of this paper will be made (by you) to twist around the other way. That with your power you will extend your hand over us and guard us. And that today what they say and plot against us will be shielded off by your hand, Talking-god (*Haashch'íélti'*) and Calling-god (*Haashch'íoghan*). It was you who said to call on you in our times of need. By these instructions we abide. From here on, on the trail of Cornpollen, walk all the way around us and make our leaders strong. That the opposition will be made less in number, and that these things they plot and plan will turn to confusion in their midst; that what they say (now) and what they will say (in the future) will be turned to forgetfulness on their part. But for us, let our papers be carried from here on the Cornpollen path in a solemn, holy, and strong way—and that it (this recording) will in itself become a sacred book, preserved for time and everlastingly; that it will be sanctified by you (the Holy People—Talking-god and Calling-god). Long-life Happiness-one (*Sq'á naagháii bík'eh hóshp'į́*), we are you, you are in us. We are one and the same. And so all is well. And so all will be well. And so all will end in beauty.

Rain-requesting Prayer and Song

43. The following prayer is called "Rainbow Prayer." And it is to be spoken together with (an offering of) Shaken-off-of-it (*bee bągh ídł' nógat*).¹⁶

¹⁶The dust which has been shaken off or brushed from a specially endowed living "person" mediates that person's specific gift. Shakedown of Coyote bring wealth; those of Blue Lizard provide turquoise; those of Turtle bless with long life; those of Mockingbird help to achieve eloquent speech and prevent stuttering; those of Snake mediate lightning and rain. For an example see NELSON, par. 46 and B. NAVAJO, par. 34–35.

44.

The Son of Changing Woman I am, (four times).

Asdzáq Nádleehtí biyáázh nishlǫ́, . . .

The Dawn Boy I am.

Bit hayoolháhtí tsíhǫ́ǫ́h nishlǫ́.

Granddaughter of the Partner of Dawn I am.

Bit hajoo'ázhi ch'íkǫ́ǫ́h nishlǫ́.

Light shining through Rock Boy,

Tséghádi'ndiníí ashkii,

Your feet of Cornpollen have become my feet.

Tádidiín níké'e'íí éí shukéé' násdllǫ́.

Your legs of Cornpollen have become my legs.

Tádidiín níjoodíí éí shijáád násdllǫ́.

Your body of Cornpollen has become my body.

Tádidiín nits'íhíí éí sít'síh násdllǫ́.

Your mind of Cornpollen has become my mind of Cornpollen.

Tádidiín níni'íí, tádidiín shíni' násdllǫ́.

Your voice of Cornpollen has become my voice.

Tádidiín níne'e'íí, éí shíne'e' násdllǫ́.

Your feather of Cornpollen has become my feather of Cornpollen.

Tádidiín ní'ats'ósíí, tádidiín shí'ats'ós násdllǫ́.

Your personality of Cornpollen has become my personality of Cornpollen.

Tádidiín bǫ́ghdóó ánit'íníí, éí bǫ́ghdóó ánishl'íí da násdllǫ́.

Your Happiness before you has become my Happiness before me.

Bee nitsijǫ́ hǫ́zhóonii, éí bee shitsijǫ́ hǫ́zhó náhásdlǫ́.

Your Happiness behind you has become my Happiness behind me.

Bee níkéedǫ́ǫ́ hǫ́zhóonii, éí bee shíkǫ́ǫ́ hǫ́zhó náhásdlǫ́.

By that which you are the Long-life One, I have become Long-life One.

Bee tsǫ́'í naagháii níliníí bee tsǫ́'í naagháii násdllǫ́.

By that which you are Happiness, I have become happy.

Bee bík'eh hǫ́zhó níliníí, éí bee hǫ́zhó násdllǫ́.

Happiness has been restored. Happiness has been restored.

Hǫ́zhó náhásdlǫ́, hǫ́zhó náhásdlǫ́.

45.

Light shining through Rock Girl,

Tséghádi'ndiníí At'ééd,

Your feet of Cornpollen have become my feet. . . .

(continued as in first stanza, #44)

Your Happiness behind you has become my Happiness behind me.

Your Happiness before you has become my Happiness before me.

By that which you are the Long-life One, I have become Long-life One.

By that which you are Happiness, I have become happy.

Happiness has been restored. Happiness has been restored.

46.

Black Rainbow,

Náats'ílid Dítshí,

Your feet of Cornpollen have become my feet. . . .

(completed as in first stanza, #44).

47.

Blue Rainbow,

Náats'ílid Doot'ízh,

Your feet of Cornpollen have become my feet. . . .

(completed as in second stanza, #45)

48.

White Rainbow,

Náats'ílid Lígai,

Your feet of Cornpollen have become my feet. . . .

(completed as in first stanza, #44).

49.

Yellow Rainbow,

Náats'ílid Lítso,

Your feet of Cornpollen have become my feet. . . .

(completed as in second stanza, #45).

50.

Radiant Rainbow,

Náats'ílid Disp,

Your feet of Cornpollen have become my feet. . . .

(completed as in first stanza, #44).

51. From this point on the prayer moves in different directions, depending on what rite is to be done. For example, if one is afflicted

because of an offense against a divine person, then all these prayers are finally finished with "Happiness (and Peace) is restored" (*Hózhó náhasdłíí'*), spoken four times. This is also spoken (in this manner) when an offering is placed below it (Rainbow Bridge). The offering consists of four beads, which are deposited at four spots. . . . The four beads include turquoise, white shell, and whatever other beads which happen to be specified for the favors which one requests. Cornpollen is included in all the offerings. (Then there are) the proper prayers, songs, and procedures, matching the request. When rain is requested, offerings of blue cornpollen, of yellow cornpollen, and of red ash (*t'èeshchíí'*) are included.

52. Now with regard to the song. (Outside of an actual ceremony) it is forbidden to use the sacred name (of the deity sung to). Such is the case in this song, where the Ridge-coming-down, which becomes the Span (Rainbow Bridge), is not referred to by its real sacred name.

53.

I place it (six times).

Díí dé'áo yee', . . .

Talking-bead Boy I am, I place it, I place it.

Éí Yoo' Yáhtí' Ashkú éí shí nishłí, büh dé'á, büh dé'á.

Rainbow of five bands, I place it, I place it.¹⁷

Éí Nááts'íllid Ashdla'go Neelzhee', . . .

Various beads of five bands, I place it, I place it.

Yódí' altaas'éí bii' ashdla'go neelzhee'ii, . . .

Various offerings of five bands, I place it, I place it.

Nít'iz' altaas'éí biyi' ashdla'go neelzhee'go, . . .

Various horses of five bands, I place it, I place it.

Łł' altaas'éí biyi' ashdla'go neelzhee' go, . . .

Various sheep of five bands, I place it, I place it.

Dibé' altaas'éí biyi' ashdla'go neelzhee'go, . . .

Various edible plants of five bands, I place it, I place it.

Ch'uih náágg' altaas'áago biyi' ashdla'go neelzhee'go, . . .

Various people of five bands, I place it, I place it.

Diné' altah deiz'áago biyi' ashdla'go neelzhee'go, . . .

¹⁷In an actual ceremony this line is chanted first with Rainbow's sacred name. The remainder of the song is chanted in the form in which it is presented here.

Today he favors me and therefore I am winning.

Dííjí lá yee shí'oh noosni'go bee lá honeeshnéét.

I am the Long-life Happiness-one, I place it, I place it.

Sq'á naagháii, baa bik'eh hózhó shí nishłí, . . .

I place it (six times).

Büh dé'á, . . .

54. What I have told you thus far pertains to the Blessingway of this area. Beyond the (Colorado and San Juan) River applies the opposite—Enemyway and Evilway. You see, Protectionway is of the Blessingway kind. Beyond the River is enemy territory. And when it (Protectionway) was done for the purpose of crossing the River, that was another and separate rite. It also involved offerings of turquoise, white shell, and other specified offerings, depending on what one hoped to obtain (beyond the River).

6

ERNEST NELSON¹

Interview

1. . . . Well, Well, that is the way it is. Thank you. Thank you very much for coming to see me—for the purpose of asking me some questions. I will tell you about these things for which you have come. Long ago (already) I have heard my elders speak of these things, in the manner in which I am going to tell you.

2. Of these elders one was named Pinetree (*N'dishch'i'*) and the other Trees-extend-down (*T'is Náát'i'*). These two men were my elders (teachers), and it was they who knew about these things. And that was the way it was. And then comes another man, Buck Navajo, who is his son. And he is my "brother," because he is one with whom I walk—we were born of the same clan. And it was he and I who (later) got together to talk about these things, and we continue to do these things together.

3. For example, when a period of no rain comes on us, the (Navajo) People; and when there are periods of epidemics that come over us—and usually we know when these are coming—we hear it talked about by the White people (on the news media), such no-good illnesses as bad colds (flu) or those erupting the skin (measles, smallpox, etc.), and things like these which surely will affect our people. It is for these very things that we can turn to the Rock-arch area for help,

¹Ernest Nelson (*Hootsú Bikaá'* = Mr. House) is a prominent singer in the Shonto area. He is 68 years old. On the day of our visit he was in the process of performing Mountainway. Our interview with him took place during a break in that ceremonial. His own summary of his life appears below, par. 2, 4, 67-71. Protectionway and Rain-requesting he learned from Pinetree and Trees-extend-down, and as teacher of his teachers he names a certain Shield-deflecting-missiles of the Fort Sumner period. By way of their tradition he orients himself religiously toward Navajo Mountain, Rainbow Bridge, as well as the Colorado and the San Juan rivers.

because it is said that Rock-arch is a Rainbow(-person). And it is for these reasons that we go to that area, to make offerings, in order to prevent or to lessen these diseases. Another one with whom I go to that area is my uncle, Ivan Nelson. And we do this frequently.

4. As far as myself is concerned, I am of the Red House (*Kinlich'i'nii*) clan, and I was born for Bitter Water (*Tódich'i'nii*). My paternal relatives (on grandfather's side) are of the Salt (*Ashijhi*) clan. And that is the way I was made and the way I belong to the Navajo people. And Buck Navajo is my walk-along companion. He is of the Salt clan and was born for the Many Goats (*T'izhání*) clan. His maternal grandfathers were (of the) Bitter Water clan; and his paternal grandfathers were (of the) Red-streak-into-water (*Táchu'i'i*) clan. And that is the way he was made and belongs among the Navajo people. And it was his father who told him these stories. As for myself, it was my own elders who told me these stories. And it is because we remember these instructions, that he (Buck Navajo) and I continue to do these things. We offer cornpollen to these holy places in that sacred area of which we are talking—usually at a place where the two ridges come together, and especially below that area where the stream of water goes (used to go) past. And we do this in order that things will go well on our land. And because we give these offerings by and near that stream of water, our land is good, rain falls on the land, and plant-life will be abundant. And usually it happens in accordance with what we pray for (there).

5. For example, this past spring and into June, the one just past, it was like that. These four-legged creatures that we have in our possession—sheep, goats, cattle, horses, mules, and donkeys—it was said that these animals and their kind, all over and even beyond our land, would be overcome by starvation. That is what White people said, what they knew was going to happen—that the sheep, cattle, and horses, and others like these, would be killed by starvation. And that is the way it was. And it was further said, that there would be no rain for the entire summer. And that is the way it was given to us as news or as gossip. And that is the way it was heard and talked about among the People. And it is for this reason that we went to the Rock-arch area and also the top of Navajo Mountain—to make our offerings.

6. At that place, on the top of Navajo Mountain, is a Spring which flows out but then flows right back into the mountain before it has a chance to run off in a stream.² And the location of it is near the

Talking-wind (Radio) tower, just a little ways off. There is a trail, a horse trail, that goes right (up) to that Spring area. The way we travel to the top of Navajo Mountain is by horse. But we did ride in an automobile to the foot of the mountain, and horses were brought there for us to reach the top of the mountain. And these things were done by Buck Navajo and myself. And these things were done to pray that our lands would be made wet once again, by way of rain. And that is how we made an offering at that time. And since that time the land is (in the condition) as you now see it. We have had moisture roll about all over this land. And things are now well.

7. Another thing was these sage bushes. Something had come upon them, and their leaves had become dry and red. And when it rained the (dry) leaves fell off and the sagebrush was cleansed of the insects who had brought on its near destruction. And the rains washed these insects away. The sagebrush has resumed its natural, healthy, and dark color. And it was as though our entire land has been cleansed by the Holy People from above. And now we live well. And with that event, my faith in the sacredness of Rock-arch has been strengthened. And I believe that it is truly the place to which to take our needs and (from which) to seek help.

8. And it was so, in the same way, already with the grandfathers of our grandfathers. It was said that in their time many enemies were on our land. And our people fled from place to place to find refuge. And finally, during that time, the elders of our people turned to those holy places in the Rock-arch area. There they gave prayers and offerings and asked for protection from our enemies. And it was for that reason that many of our people, especially from this area, were spared from captivity and from deportation to Fort Sumner. It is said that from Black Mesa, this side (north) of it, most people were spared.³ And it is for these reasons (of proven sacrosanctity) that the Navajo people want that place to be spared from a rise of water near Rock-arch—that the water should be kept back at a distance from Rock-arch. We use the area still today, and we want to continue to use it for days without end.

9. Now concerning these things, as to how this area came to be and what the Holy People decreed should be done by way of ceremonies, prayers, and offerings, this is in accordance with my memory. There may be some things which I may not recollect as precisely as a White

²This "spring" on top of Navajo Mountain appears to be a depression in which run-off water collects.

³In the course of a century most families in this area have become interrelated. Thus, nearly everyone has by now obtained an ancestor from the *Hashkhuinii* band.

man would do it. The way he does it is to write things down on paper, which helps him to refresh his memory. But most of these things I take from inside my head. The story goes that we got these things, the sacred area, from the big body of Water in the direction where the Sun comes up—toward the place called New York Area. And it is said that in the middle of that great body of water, to the east, there is a mountain called Mountain-from-the-depth-of-water (*Dzít táńí' háá'á*). And it was said that water would flow up the sides of this mountain, all the way to its peaks—and there turn into Cloud. Thus, another name, the second name for that place is Place-of-cloud-emerging-from ocean.⁴

10. It is also said that at that place, during sunset, a Rainbow (-person) appears directly above, with his head facing west. Also at that place, during sunrise, a Rainbow would appear from west to east, (with his head facing the rising Sun). And it is further said, that Rock-arch is both of these Rainbows; and these Rainbow(-persons) are Rock-arch. And these Rainbows were brought from the midst of the ocean to this place here among us. (They were brought) on the back of Sunlight in a miraculous manner.

11. And before that story was told (to me), another (an older) one had been brought down through the lineages of our elders. Several generations of these elders have now been taken (away) by old age. (One of them told it this way). Whether Buck Navajo has told you his name I do not know. The name by which he was called is Shield-

⁴It would be not quite fair for me to evaluate the rationale of this wonderful cosmology from the point of view of one who himself has come from across the Atlantic. From the perspective of a Navajo shepherd, however, who has travelled little eastward beyond the Rio Grande, this is an amazing world picture.

According to the minutes of a meeting, held in Tuba City some months earlier, Ernest Nelson had explained the connection between this rain mountain and Rainbow Bridge more precisely: Bear Man and Big Snake Man went to that mountain in the east in order to obtain rain. On their return trip they travelled on a rainbow. At the edge of a canyon they touched down, and at the place of their descent the rainbow hardened. It became a sandstone arch. With this event, the general area around Rainbow Bridge became the permanent home of Moisture. Bear Man and Big Snake Man brought with them some water in a "flint" shell. Near Rainbow Bridge they buried this shell; it became a sacred Spring.

The link between this and Laughter's version (LAUGHTER, par. 8-9, and footnote 5) must be sought, perhaps, in Enemyway (possibly also in Beautyway and Female Mountainway) mythology. In the "Pueblo War" episode, Bear Man and Big Snake Man eventually win the Two Girls. Nelson's and Laughter's different versions either represent remnants of a once coherent tradition; or, they are two adaptations to the Rainbow Bridge area which have not had time to fuse.

deflecting-missiles (*Naag'eed deitditi*). (He was the maternal grandfather of Ernest Nelson's maternal uncle). *Naag'eed* means "shield." It is that thing that is made in circular shape for the purpose of deflecting arrows and other such missiles from you. And in the story of Navajo tradition, along the line of the prayer rite, a shield was used by Monster Slayer (*Naag'ee' Neizgháni*). And in those times it (the shield) was a sacred round pebble-stone-shield, which served the same purpose for protection against missiles. And the shields which our people used were made after the shape of that which was used by Monster Slayer.

12. When our elder men pray, especially in the Protectionway prayer (*Ach'ááh sohodizin*), after the invisible shield of armor has been invoked by prayer over the patient—when that prayer proceeds to the top of his head—then the following prayer is spoken:

Your shield being black,

Ninaag'eed dítítgo,

In the middle of which is white.

Atní' adzítgágo.

Big Snake being black,

T'íish tsah dítítgo,

Two of them lying together, crossed over.

Naakigo ahidinítáago yíghá hínítézhgo.

Your shield lift up before me.

Ninaag'eed shich'ááh adítisih.

And that is the way it is said in the prayer. And that is the meaning of "shield."

13. And now concerning the name that was given to Rainbow at the time when it was sent forth from the Cloud-emerging-place in the ocean. And that name was Cloud-water-emerging-radiant-rainbow (*K'os táńí' háá'ahídee' nááts'ílidí dispíi*). And it was also said and decided that it would not be called Black Rainbow; (if that had been the case) we would have been defeated and we would not exist here now. Because it was called Radiant Rainbow we exist today. And this is the way it was told by my uncle who was told by his maternal grandfather (whose name was) Shield-deflecting-missiles. And that is the way. The stories of these two men merged together (for me) and have become one. That is the way it was obtained and kept by us, as oral tradition. It is not written on paper. No, not until now. These things which are now put

into that tape recorder will some day be put on paper and perhaps into a book. And these words will in this way not have fled from us. And so it will not have an end. For you see, what I am telling you here came by word of mouth from that old man, Shield-deflecting-missiles. And even though he did not write it down, it is told today from memory and has not been forgotten. But if these words are put on paper, then young boys like he (a twelve year old boy nearby), when they reach their age of reasoning and have a desire to learn about these ways, can get that information and thereby get to know the tradition.

14. Now concerning the sacred area of Rock-arch, the way in which it is used and (divinely) protected. The first of these (holy places you come to) is Black Rock (*Tsé dithit*) or Rock-between-placed-to-guard (*Tsé bich'ááh ndi'á*). Black-rock-instanding-one, Black-rock-canyon (*Tsé eedlij bi' gistiin, tsé dithit bikooh*) that is what it is called. And then beyond that is Blue-rock-come-together-instanding-one. And immediately beyond this is another canyon. These canyons used to be impassable. Then beyond that is Yellow-rock-come-together-instanding-one; and that is so because right next to it is the canyon of yellow color. And then beyond that is Radiant-rock-come-together-instanding-one. And there is a canyon nearby which is radiant (*Tsékooh hodisps*). And that makes four. And that also makes four canyons between there and here (Rainbow Bridge and Shonto).

15. Beyond that, finally, is Rock-arch and the Spring. And concerning the Spring, it also has a name: Radiant-water-tumbled-from-mountain (*Dzit'yi' hahoolghadi to dips*). It received that name from that place of Cloud Emergence, (at the time) when Rainbow was spanned beyond the Spring itself (and was petrified). It was decreed so at the time (of the beginning) and at the place of Cloud Emergence. And the name means that the water, which was radiant and clear, tumbled out from the mountain. In any case, Rainbow was and is Moisture, and Moisture is Rainbow. You see, when water comes from a higher point it tumbles and rolls in waves, it leaves a copy of that motion (ripples) at the bottom of the stream.

16. And in recent times, in those days when our people and their elders were fleeing from our enemies, it used to be that not even horses could get through. And our men used to get down into that area only on foot. Even that was difficult then. Although (back then) they travelled in this manner (on foot), it was nevertheless done by wonderful miraculous means (*áililee'kehgo*). They were assisted in this mode of travel from above, by the Holy People.

17. Concerning this wonderful miraculous way of travel, it is now somewhat substituted for when you are travelling in your automobile (*chidl*), and by the other (means of travel) which is used above (the airplane). But it is said, that one of those miraculous ways of travelling was on Rainbow and on Rays of Sunlight. And that is the way it was in the early days, after that way was given by them (the Holy People). And when these things were still being practiced, the songs and prayers of our elders were holy and stronger (than they are today). And now, when there is no way to reach a certain place, and when we want to reach that place by the *áililee'* way, it cannot be done (anymore). That is because roads and trails have been built to almost everywhere we want to go. And we ourselves have turned to the use of horses and automobiles and to other such means. But even then, after using some of these contemporary modes of travel, we still have to use our legs to walk to some of these holy places.⁵ That is the way the story was told. It is also still the way (in which) it is being told about these things (pertaining to travel).

18. Now concerning the way of placing an offering. The use of the Spring is not important for all needs. It depends on the type of offering and on the request that is being made. And even if nearby streams are used for various offerings, it is one and the same, because that stream of Water will carry forth those offerings to the mighty River.

19. Now something concerning this large River. In the Navajo Way it is said that it has an Origin Spring. But we have not seen those headquarters; we see them only through the stories we hear. It is said that the origin of one of the Rivers is called Pumping-water (*Tághat deezli*). And that (place) is supposedly toward the east, beyond Hesperus Peak (*Dibé ntasa*). And that River is the further one over from us. And the (Origin Spring of the) one nearer to us—and of another one also in that region to the east—is supposedly called Water-start-from (*Derzli*). And that is the one nearer to us (south) of the one further north—before they come together. I am not sure whether, before they merge, the one nearest to us goes this way (north) or that way (south), but I do know that in a prayer it is said that a river comes to and around a bend. In the prayer it goes like this:

⁵This somewhat humorous elaboration on the *áililee'* way of travelling has reference to numerous origin myths of Navajo song-ceremonials. The first shaman of a chantway is usually said to have travelled by such wonderful means (which we might prefer to call a "trance-journey") to the homes of some Holy Ones who in turn revealed to him the details of their healing rites.

From Water-starting-place

Tóghot deerlj

Water comes together at where Water goes around the bend.

Tóghot deerlj naanáázlj tó aheadlj.

20. And these are a few of the names of the two Rivers which become one River. And this is the same River that comes together just before Farmington, and that place is called Water-come-together (*Tó aheadlj*). The one nearest our land (San Juan River) is very winding and its body is kicking. It is Male Water (*Tó bikq*). And the one further over (La Plata River, possibly the Animas) comes probably—who knows exactly from where! But it is said that it comes from the Wide Waters. And (it is said) that the River on this side is male and (formerly) was single. And just like man, he would not walk without a female companion. And so usually a female is sought for the male, and they are joined together. So it has come about, it is said, that Mother Wide Water gave her daughter (La Plata or Animas) River and sent her forth for the purpose of sharing life together. And it is said that they (the two Rivers) are one another companion in life.

21. And that is what is said of that (other) River (Colorado River) which comes past and near the mountain called Mountain-without-a-name (*Dzít bízhi' ádinii*).⁴ And the large ocean to the east is the mother. And that is specifically mentioned in a prayer when we say: "Water Woman, my mother" (*Tó Asdzáq shimá*). Let me say again, that River on the other side was and is female. I will tell you why. At the place where they come together, now flooded, that River went underneath (or was mounted by) the male River.⁵ Before flooding, it used to be that from that point on they were one stream (by marriage).

22. And now about Rock-arch itself, as to whether it is male or female. Radiant Rainbow is female, and White Rainbow is male. And that is the way it was said. White Rainbow is very rare and is hardly ever seen. White Rainbow—have any of you ever seen a white Rainbow? As for myself, I saw White Rainbow, and I saw him within this same region. And I saw him in a time of fog and at night. I saw this sight only

twice in my life-time. The first time was when I was approximately twenty-four years old. You see, I am sixty-eight years old now, and I was born in June, 1908. The second time when I saw it I was about forty-six years old, and when I saw it it was (again) at night time. And I had just come out from inside my hogan, and the moon had risen and was about here (past midway position). And I saw it (the White Rainbow) spanning into and across that area of fogginess to the west. Yes, it was to the west. And the season during which I saw these sights was fall, approximately October.

23. Now something concerning why these things should be so. When this White Rainbow is seen in the fog, and in autumn, it foretells that there will be much snow in the coming winter. And if White Rainbow of the type seen at night should appear during spring, especially if it is seen together with rain, with wet snow and fogginess, it foretells an abundance of rain for all of spring and summer. (This happens then) in accordance with the instructions of Radiant Rainbow at Rock-arch. And so it is. If Rainbow is seen at night, in fogginess and at full moon, it means a blessing of abundant rain for the entire summer. And if it is seen during fall, it indicates big snow for the winter.

24. And so for these reasons, if we should get a big snow, we should not curse Snow. But now, in these days in which we live, when big snow or (even when) any amount of snow is given to us, we profane that blessing by saying, "I have gotten stuck in snow, bewitched by the place of extreme taboo (land of the dead—*ch'íiditahdǫ́f*)."⁶ And that is not good! And then, the opposite is sometimes true. When that good sign is given, that the Rain people will dwell among us for the summer, muddy (road-) conditions are sometimes created. And some of us will again be cursing that which is in reality a blessing. How sad this is!—(especially) after it is sent to us in a holy way by them (the Holy People)! (Rather), it should be so, that even if we get stuck in mud, that we get out as gently (and as quietly) as possible and then be on our way—giving thanks for the blessing of moisture. I do not know about 1967, when we had that big snow, whether one of these night rainbows appeared or not. But I am sure it must have.

25. Now, more concerning the requesting of rain and moisture. When they are called, male and female Rains are both called in equal amounts. One is not called more or above the other. Now, when moisture is requested from Radiant Rainbow (at Rock-arch) it is called

⁴Probably Mount Ellsworth which, being outside the Navajo domain, was never given a Navajo name.

⁵Contrast this observation with LAUGHTER, par. 3 and footnote 2. Nelson's identification of the genders of these rivers agrees with the photograph given herein. San Juan indeed mounted the Colorado River when that picture was taken.

by the names of Rain Boy (*Níttsá Ashkii*) and Rain Girl (*Níttsá At'ééd*). And that is the way it is done at the place of the Spring. And it is also done that way over here at the place of the (local) ceremony. An adolescent boy and an adolescent girl are selected (for the ceremony), to stand in the place of male and female Rain. And I want to be specific and say, that there is a distinction made between young and older males or females. That is the way it was decreed by them (the Holy People). The precise reason for this I do not know, and neither did I ask (my elders) about this point.⁸ Let it suffice for now that I know what I hear in the prayers, (where) it is said, "Earth is Mother, Sky is Father." That is the way one prayer goes. And after that, Mountain Woman (*Dzít Asdzáá*) and Water Woman (*Tó Asdzáá*) are both addressed as females.

26. And it is said, that because Mountain and Water (back then) were named as women, one can find today some women living without men—(namely), the fact that two women live alone. But as for men, I do not think that they can walk without the companionship of a female. As far as I know, it does not seem to be (the case in tradition) that things are mentioned (together) with the designation of "male with male." But as far as females are concerned, Mountain Woman and Water Woman are mentioned together. And, for example, in the major Blessingway, which contains (a prayer) that calls on twelve names and functions, (there) it is also (the case) that males are not named together with other males.⁹

27. And now something concerning Navajo Mountain (*Na-ats'áán*) itself. It is said that at the very top of it is a hogan, made of flint. But I want to be sure to point out that the mountain itself is not a hogan; rather, at its top is a hogan. Also, this very place at the top, the flint hogan among pine trees and lava rock, was not the place where Monster Slayer (*Naayéé' Neizghání*) originated. And that is the way this story (tradition) goes. And it is said, that the prayer concerning this flint hogan starts like this:

⁸BUCK NAVAJO, par. 12, also says that the presence of a boy and a girl signifies a request of both male and female Rains. Ernest Nelson, however, is intrigued by the fact that only children could be used in this ritual. He could think of no reasons why an adult male and female person should be unable to "stand in the place of male and female Rain." I venture to suggest, that the presence of children in this Navajo rain-requesting rite signifies Pueblo Indian influence. According to some Pueblo Indian traditions, a pair of sacrificial children was once sent to the Water Serpent to request rain. See Luckert, 1976, 160ff. For an actual Navajo Mountain area performance see BEDONIE, par. 6.

⁹Ernest Nelson derives not only details of his cosmology and geography from the content of traditional prayers, but also Navajo customs and ethics.

Black Cloud, taken up with,

K'os dítshít bit dah ndúldookí,

Black Cloud Youth, raised in one day.

K'os dítshít ta'ajj neiyáanii.

That is the way the Protectionway prayer starts.

28. It is also said that at one time an elder of our people said—and this is according to my maternal uncle who heard it directly from my maternal grandfather, both of whom are now gone—that there were some arguments among our singers concerning the origin(-place) of Monster Slayer. Some maintain that (since) Monster Slayer is indeed the one who is called Raised-in-one-day, that he was raised on top of Navajo Mountain in that flint hogan. But no! He was born at Place-under-middle-of-rock (*Tséníí' gíme' tséyaa naaz'ánigí*). And also, he was raised at that place where he was conceived and born. But over here, Dark Cloud was (indeed) raised in that hogan. Then, after that, Blue Cloud Boy and Blue Cloud Girl were also raised in that hogan. As for me, I subscribe to that, that it was the raising place of Blue Cloud Boy and of Blue Cloud Girl.¹⁰

29. And now something concerning the area and the location of Rock-arch. There are four places to give offerings to and prayers. Then, after these four places have been approached and passed, there is a fifth place. Among these (five) is that Rock-shelter (*Tséníí' hooghan*). And that holy rock-place was the home of Holy People when they came to visit us in those days of long ago. But it was only a temporary, not their permanent home.

30. That specific place, it must be understood, was used only as a place of lodging for nights during their visits. The main occupant, of that temporary home which is (indented) into the side of a white ridge, was Talking-god, and he has his own holy (and permanent) realm of dwelling (in the white east). There are also several cave-like hogans in the Navajo Mountain area. They all were temporary shelters for the Holy People, their places for resting. And when an offering is made at

¹⁰Having learned some of his other rites from a certain "Red Whiskers who was from beyond the Lukachukai area," it need not surprise us if Ernest Nelson insists on the eastern version of Monster Slayer mythology. In addition, he lives near Shonto, at some distance from Navajo Mountain. Permanent settlers in the Navajo Mountain area all have recast this myth to fill their historical needs and to fit their new homeland geography. The clarity of reasoning, with which the speaker exposes here the Navajo Mountain adaptation, is truly amazing. Compare LAUGHTER, par. 16–18, 81–88, and footnote #23.

that place today, it usually starts with the sacred name (of that place-person): House-in-rock-standing-over-the-sprawl-of-dawn (*Tsé níl' hooghangí, hayookkáat báihásteel bíkáá' yookkáatigi dah siz/ní*). That is the way these (caves) are named, and that is the way of praying to them. And the reason why these things must be spoken in that precise manner is (the fact) that once a prayer has been spoken it will not have been said in vain.

31. For example, during the debates about the San Francisco Peaks (*Dook'o'ost'id*—as to whether a ski village should be built at the lower end of its western slope) I went to a meeting and sat among the audience. At that occasion only the (plain) name of that mountain was mentioned. Its sacred name is White-Shell-Sitting-tunnelled-through (*Düch'it yee sidaa' dzitghághs'ít*). That is the way San Francisco Peaks is called. Then from there (after the name) the remaining prayer is continued and ends with the ways of White Shell Sitting, from its foot, up its leg, up its body, up to the face, up to its mind, up to the crown of its head, and finally up to the end of its feather. And it is for this reason that its destruction cannot be seen, because it is made of white shell. When the sun shines on it one cannot endure the light which reflects from it. And we said to it (the mountain): "Because of this (glorious shiny armor), the things now being plotted against you will not happen—and this, because you yourself will say that it shall be so." And (we also said): "We have come only to request that you invoke the power which is already within yourself, including the ceremony to accomplish this." And this is what I myself said to it (the mountain). I am not sure that others did the same thing, that is, the others from that large crowd which was there. As for myself, I did this. And I did this not entirely by myself, but in the company of the son of an older brother. That older brother is now dead, but his son's name is Hubert Laughter, who formerly was a councilman. And because we did this, things about that Mountain have quieted down somewhat. And probably he (Hubert Laughter) still remembers these things we did for the Mountain.

32. Now something concerning the situation and the talk about Rock-arch. It is of a similar nature. And we singers can also do something about this situation—by invoking the help of the Radiant Rainbow Youths (Boy and Girl). And this ceremony will take us into that area for some final prayers and offerings to them. And again we will tell them to use their own powers which they have within themselves and upon themselves; that in accordance with their own words these things,

which are now being plotted and planned against them, will not happen; that the waters will be held back at a distance. And this is the way we will speak the words for them. And so it shall be.

33. These are the ways in which we use this area. And if the water is allowed to reach and to rise underneath Rock-arch and beyond, the (whole) place will become a place of caution. It will prevent us from going directly to them (the gods), to where they can hear the words which we wish to speak to them. It will force us to try to communicate from beyond hearing distance. It is for this reason that we want you to stop the water from going under a weakening Rock-arch. This is our wish.

34. I know, because I have been told, that at the very creation of Rock-arch it was decided by the Holy People that Rainbow would so be given to us, that it would remain with us in the form of stone. And it was so. Because, if Rainbow itself was to span (such an arch), it would fade away with the heat. Therefore it was decided that it should be turned into stone to remain among us. About the consequences that would befall us if Rock-arch should ever fall and crumble, I do not know. (There is no word about this in our tradition), probably because it was never suspected that such a thing could happen.

35. The sacred area is not limited to that immediate place alone. On a larger scale, beyond that place (Rock-arch) is the River. The land this way (south of the San Juan River) belongs to the Navajo people. And this way (further south) is Red-water-flowing (*Táché' níl'*—Little Colorado River), which sometimes goes dry. And between these two Rivers, about midway, is Black Mesa (*Dzítjín*). And these two (Rivers) were put there to merge for the protection of that sacred area. And (sacred) names were given to them as to persons. Over here (south) is Red Club (*Hahichí'*) and over there (north) is Black Club (*Hahidhí'*). Red Club (Little Colorado River) is our protection laid down on the south side, and Black Club (San Juan River) was laid down in the north so that people other than the Navajo people would be prevented from wandering about in this sacred area. And even we (the Navajo people) are not to wander into those sacred places without a purpose. And if we do (go there, we should do it) only in a prescribed manner—by placing offerings and by speaking ceremonial prayers at places which were put there in those times by the Holy People.

36. And it is for this reason that during a time at which we had enemies, and when they were trying to take our people into captivity,

that some of our elders proposed we should flee behind the protection of Red Club and Black Club. (They also proposed) that we plead for help on the top of Navajo Mountain and in that sacred area by the River, at Ridge-slopes-down. For this reason most of the people who fled from this side of Black Mesa were spared from captivity. And these happenings—being spared—were promised by the Holy People, as part of the following prayer does illustrate:¹¹

I am spared, I am spared.

Shí lá yisdziih, shí lá yisdziih.

Enemy has missed me, enemy has missed me.

Naayéé' asisiih, naayéé' asisiih.

Today it did not happen, today it did not happen.

Díishjį́ doo óodzaa da, díishjį́ doo óodzaa da.

37. And this is the way that prayer goes. And this very same prayer was used after (some of) our people were taken captive to Fort Sumner. Prayers were spoken on their behalf that they would be freed and sent back to us. And this is the way it was done and how Rainbow Rock-arch was used (or appealed to). And even now, these very days, this area is used to send prayers on behalf and by (bundles of) clothes of our people, (of those) who are taken away from us (to the armed services, prisons, or hospitals). (During the rite) someone else sits at the place of a person, next to that person's (bundle of) clothes, as if he is that person.

38. To continue with that area. The last place, coming back, is Talking Rock. And its location is near a black ridge which has a hollow. Talking Rock itself is on that ridge and beyond reach, and its main purpose is to guard and to overlook the immediate sacred area and even the region beyond. You see, it is very much like the White man

and his air-picture (television). It is very much as if he turns it on and sees things which are brought to him from far away, in an instant. He sees and hears at the turn of a knob. And so it is with Talking Rock. He can listen to and be in the midst of (all) holy places where holy words are spoken. Those Holy People are so able to hear by means of Talking Rock. Even now, as I tell you these things, they are listening to us (by way of Talking Rock).

39. And as far as this situation of that sacred area is concerned, we can settle these things through the use of Talking Rock. And if it should be too far to go to Navajo Mountain or to that sacred area, and if there happens to be a great need, it is said that a high hill can be used instead, such as that one near me (a ridge east of my homestead). From its top prayers can be sent to the top of Navajo Mountain, and it (the Mountain) would then pass on our requests (by way of Talking Rock) to Rock-arch. And this is the manner in which they (the priestly practitioners) use it.

40. And yes, there is a (radio-)tower (on top of Navajo Mountain) which White people use to talk to one another. But our way of talking and communicating with the Holy People is a wonderful and miraculous way (*áilílee'kehgo*). And, O yes, concerning that tower on top of Navajo Mountain, that also is an issue with us. We have asked that it be removed because it is at the sacred place of Flint Hogan. And Flint Hogan has a sacred name. Black Cloud Girl (*K'os díihít ch'íkííh*) is her (the occupant's) name. And that is her home. You see, when it is about to rain, a small Cloud forms on the very top of that Navajo Mountain. It grows and grows until, before one hour is gone, the Cloud becomes enormous in size. And that is why it (the Cloud) is called Raised-in-one-day. And that is the way it is. Its full name is Black Cloud Youth-carried-away-by-cloud-and-raised-in-one-day (*K'os díihít tsíhííh k'os bíí ndúldoh tá'ájí neiyáanii*). And that (Flint Hogan) is its home. It is also the home of Thunder. Thunder himself is of the Thunder people who live and move about with the Clouds. Lightnings are their missiles. But Lightning itself comes from Black or Above Sky (*Yáidíhít, yá'qashdi*). And the actual name of that place is Mountain-walked-through (*Dzít yú' íhái*). And it is said that in that place, bundles of Lightning are hung. And these are Arrow beings. And so, for this reason, this sacred area (the mountain top) should be left alone (*ná'eeh*). And that is the way I have heard it said about these things, and for this (same) reason Rock-arch should also be left alone.

¹¹All authentic prayers are believed to have originated among the Holy People; they were given as promises in the beginning. Since no human minds were present at that time to learn them, they had to be revealed to them later. In all likelihood, the prayer to which these lines belong was first revealed to and repeated by a Navajo in 1863 or 1864. Its allusion to the threat of United States troops is clear enough. Yet, as far as the Navajo who speaks these words is concerned, these words are older than humankind. We can detect this style of reasoning among all our informants. For an example of such reasoning in mythology see LAUGHTER, par. 16-17; there these same years of Navajo history are explained. This mode of reasoning certainly is not an attempt to distort history; rather, in this manner a humble religious mind gives credit to the gods for any kind of inspiration it receives. For another dimension of Nelson's authentic religious humility, see par. 24. See also below, footnote #14.

41. I cannot reveal any more than what I have already given you, not even about the bringing of rain. The time for that has come and gone. If that is to be done, it can be (talked about) also after the first frost and on till mid-year—which, according to the White man's reckoning of time, would be autumn to the end of their year. And a gift is given to the singer of almost anything, preferably of turquoise with white shell. However, a singer bent on getting money will not hesitate to ask for a sum of money. But this cannot be so. This should not be done.

42. Now (a few words) concerning this thing you asked, about whether Rainbow Rock-arch is male or female. Let me say, in general, it has not been said that Rainbow surrounds us this way (horizontally in a circle, as in a sandpainting); rather, it arches over us like this (upright). One (Rainbow) stretches from south to north and the other from east to west. Their hands reach into all directions. The Radiant Rainbow is female, and the White Rainbow is male. And the male one goes south to north. And that is that.

43. Now concerning something you asked about the one who crawls on the ground, (about Snake). There is a difference in them. This side of Albuquerque, but behind Mount Taylor (*Tsoodzil*), is a mountain called Red Mountain (*Dzil'tichil*). And this place is designated for Female Serpent (*Diyoósh*). And this place is at the base of Red Mountain, near a white knob-like hill. And then, way beyond (and north) of Albuquerque, where the large mountain range (Sandia) slopes down, but on this side of that mountain range, is a place called Mountain-rolled-away (*Dzil'ts'eeheelts'id*). And this place was set apart for that Snake which makes noise with its tail. And his place, of course, is to the east of us. It must also be understood, that these two mountains are of themselves Snakes laid out in a specific place and direction. The male one is laid out in a south-easterly (direction) and the female Snake is laid facing us (in a north-westerly direction).¹² And there is a prayer which mentions these two Snakes specifically:

In the middle is Black Spot, Big Snake being white.

Atnil'ü diltulgo t'ish tsah tgaigo.

Two of them lying together, crossed over.

Ahidin'tnaago yigha hin'térch.

¹²Ernest Nelson has learned Crystal-gazing from a Rio Grande Pueblo Indian. The geography and serpent lore which are presented here fit that region. In a wider perspective, these beliefs may be seen as part of the general Pueblo Indian heritage from Middle America. See Luckert (1976).

44. What they mean by this (portion of the) prayer is Snakes, Rattlesnake and Female Snake. That is the way that prayer goes, and it refers to the dangerous and untouchable power radiating from them. And that is the way they were made in the beginning. And this prayer was obtained (by men) and made (by the gods) at about the same time when the Shield (of Monster Slayer) was made and was included in the Shield-protectionway prayer. And these prayers were created (together) with these two Snakes in the mountains to the east. These were the first words uttered for them and then became the prayer for them.

45. And furthermore, concerning their role in the calling forth of moisture. It is said that they have definite roles in this matter. For instance, it is said that the tracks of Rattlesnake can be seen, shortly before it rains, in ripples. And those rippled tracks resemble the ripples of water which has gone by. And when they move about in this manner they are calling the Rain people. And that is the way these Serpent people control the calling forth of rain. It is the same way with Female Snake. And, the slow gentle rain is Female Snake rain. It is free of Thunder and Lightning, but it has Rainbow with it. And that is the way the Female Rain is like the Female Snake.

46. On the other hand, Rattlesnake makes a lot of threatening noise, at both ends of its body—at the tail, and he hisses from his mouth. This is especially manifest when he is angry with you. An offering can be made of him (of power brushed from his skin) when necessary (to the Rain people). And when this (brushing off) is done, they are called by their sacred names, and part of that sacred name is White Serpent (*Diyoósh hgaü*). His sacred name is used (in full) at the place of the offering, as well as at the place of the ceremony (back home).

47. And he (the Serpent) also has a part at this place called Rock-arch. Not at the same spot, but rather several nearby canyons away. At that place there used to be a hole in the ground, and from this hole would emerge a Serpent-being. I am not sure whether there were two holes for two Serpent-beings, that is to say, whether one was male and the other female, or what. And I never really found out about its origin and about how it figured in the Navajo way of the story, even though I asked (around) on several occasions. Before I saw this Serpent-being I had been hearing of its existence ever since I was about eleven years old.

48. This serpent-like being's head was somewhat like the head of a Snake, but a little bit shorter. It was scaly, and the body was shaped somewhat like this (he draws in the sand):



And he had legs, and at his throat and at his tail-end he had short legs appendaged. And these leg-like growths were about the length of two links of our fingers. These growths were not real legs, they were free of feet; nevertheless, they enabled him to move about. The whole length of him was approximately three feet. And this Serpent-being was killed by a White man, and I saw its corpse lying on a rock in the sun. And after that I never saw another one like it. And these things happened approximately in 1932. At least, that is the time when the White man killed him. This being had a smooth underside which was grayish in color. The scales on its back were in a bead-like formation and were black and red, with a kind of shine on them.¹³

49. I do not remember the exact name of the White man who killed him, but he was a tall cowboy. At one time I worked with him building trails and roadways in this area. But this White man worked with a group that was headed by a White man called S. R. Richardson who used to have a herd of horses. And that is what he did, this man with whom I worked and who killed that Serpent-being. As I said before, I do not know his name, but our Navajo people used to call him Cowboy Round-faced-one (*Binii' dijooli*). They called him that because he had a very short face. Yes, it was he who killed this beautiful Serpent-being. And even to this day I have not heard of any of this kind, even up and down the River, and I go to far away places in my work as a singer.

50. There was one other person, his name was Tony Onesalt, who saw that Serpent-being. But he is now dead. Not very many people of

the Navajo Mountain area saw that Serpent-being, but many were aware (of the fact) that there was such a one. Even today it is still talked about in gatherings, such as at a ceremonial.

51. Let me say just a little more about this Serpent-being and about my own feelings. And these feelings are, that this Serpent-being which was killed by that White man had most probably a purpose. It was there for a purpose. I think (he was) probably (stationed) a little bit beyond the sacred area as a kind of guardian. And since he was killed, things concerning us as a people have not been very good. And it also seems as though our prayers and offerings are not as effective as (they were) before he was killed and when he was still among us. And because of the way this Serpent-being was mistreated and was finally made to cease to exist, a lowering of the effectiveness of our prayers and offerings resulted. For this reason I implore and ask you to prevent a similar but larger consequence which might follow if the water is allowed to go into the sacred area of Rock-arch. That is all concerning this.

52. Now concerning why I am talking about this sacred area of Rock-arch, and concerning the authority by which I and my fellow singers are talking. In the beginning, when we still existed together with the Holy People and when they existed with us, and then at the time when they left us somewhat to ourselves, they decreed all these sacred matters. The prayers and offerings of the following (ceremonies) were given to us then: Big Snake Prayerway (*T'pish toh bi-sohodizin*), Wind Prayerway (*Nitch'i bi-sohodizin*), and Lightning Prayerway (*Ji'ni'bi-sohodizin*). And these offering and prayer ceremonies, including those made to holy places within the sacred area of Rock-arch, were given to us. And they (the Holy People) demanded that we do these things, (and they promised) that if we do them they would (in return) watch over these holy places. The content of one of the prayers shall be the following:

53. "This holy place, which is within the sacred area designated by you, is presently being talked about. I bring you this offering and (perform) the prescribed ceremony. And I do this so that these things (which are) being talked about you (are being) plotted against you, that they will not be done as they are planned." And this is the way this prayer is (will be) offered. It is a prayer that was decreed and taught to us by the Holy People.

¹³All considered, this serpent-being appears to have been a Gila Monster.

54. (Whether I think the Holy People expected anything like this to happen)—yes, I do think that they expected something like this, way back—as a part of a lot of things which were to happen and were to be seen in the distant future.¹⁴ And that future is now. There are things (today) which have never been seen before and which were not a part of the original situation, (or), as it is said among us, “were not so in the beginning.” And that could be the reason why we hear (today) about both male and female youths who are making of themselves (something else), so as not to be what they actually are. By artistry they change the looks of their faces into appearances which were not meant for the Navajo people. And this is the reason why some of us conclude, and we wonder whether this is a sign of plots and plans to destroy us and our ways. Because, some of us feel strongly about this revelation, that these signs are real.

55. We attempt and we do give prayers and offerings more faithfully, (more) believingly, and more frequently now than before. And that is the way it is done (now). And it was set forth so by the Holy People themselves. Again I say, that in the prayer we say: “I give you this prayer and these offerings just as you asked, and in the manner you prescribed it in the beginning.” And we say further: “You (yourself) tell them, by your power, not to bother you.” And that is (spoken so) because they are Holy People.

56. My question at this point is what will happen if, perhaps, the water is allowed to rise into the sacred area. If it is allowed to go beyond where it is now, and (if it) is allowed to go into other certain spots within the sacred area, it stands to reason that there will be no sacred spot left to place offerings. And there will be no place to plead (with the gods), because certain holy places, especially set aside (for that purpose), will be under water.

57. Understand this, that this sacred area was set aside and decreed by the Holy People to be the place of certain prayer and offering ceremonies—even though there have been other spots set aside on the

land. They all have their purposes. But this one, near Navajo Mountain, is the one set aside as the strongest of them all. And further, this sacred area is not only for people from the Navajo Mountain region. Many people come from all over Navajoland, and they travel great distances, with considerable expense, to make use of this area. You see, I myself have on occasion been approached by individuals who represent other areas in Navajoland. They represent all the people of their areas, and the one representative will stand in the place of all the people of his area.

58. Another main function (purpose) in the singer's use of the sacred area, aside from pleading for moisture, is when I am approached by a person or by persons whose dreams have gone bad. When this happens to a person it is a sign of warning about (pending) misfortune. Something (harmful) which has been shown to him visibly in a dream (*bit áhoodzaa*) is a sign of something that will harm him soon. And if Holy Big Wind-person (*Diya nítsh'í tsah*) does not want this to happen to a person, he will inform him by way of a dream. This is the first quick voice message from him. (Now that the misfortune is known, it can be ceremonially averted).

59. Yes, Talking Rock is involved in this communication. He talks directly to the person in need and tells him: “Come to me and, by your prayers and offerings, hide behind me for shelter.” So for instance dreaming about water. (Seeing) a large amount of water in a dream is likewise a message of pending misfortune. Rock-arch is the primary Holy Person to whom the dreamer and I will turn in order to prevent that sign from becoming true. One of the prayers goes like this:

This dream which I dreamt,

Kót'ego neiseet dóo,

This dream which I dreamt and was brought to me miraculously,

Kót'ego shít áhoodzaa,

Today it will not happen.

Díshj doo bik'eh áhadooñít da,

Today it has not happened.

Díshj doo áhoodzaa da.

60. This is the way the words and prayers begin and are spoken. This is because the Rock itself was set aside as a shelter, as a place to run behind in times of danger. For instance, young men who are called to serve in the armed forces, though they may be made to walk in places

¹⁴The question which is answered here was asked in response to the last sentence of the preceding paragraph. There a prayer, which is to be spoken for the first time in an upcoming special ceremony, is said to have been decreed and taught by the Holy People in advance. This is another instance of religious reasoning which has already been discussed in footnote #11. Even though this statement conflicts slightly with Nelson's last sentence in par. 34, the speaker reasons about the problem of divine omniscience and foreknowledge about as well as anybody.

one would not expect them to return from, they have (returned) and will return when prayers and offerings are given on their behalf. For instance, during the last great fight (the Vietnam war), thus very recently, many of our boys were called to fight in that war. And prayers and offerings were made for some of them (specifically), but it was on behalf of all the soldiers that this area was used quite recently. I myself did several of these pleadings (for protection) for several of these Soldiers-young-men. One of them was Hubert Laughter. In Hubert's case, I also took him to San Francisco Peaks to give prayers and offerings to Big Wind (*Niyol tsah*) and to Thunder/Lightning (*hi'ni*) that they would shield him. And it was said that when Hubert Laughter was at the place of battle he was in a watercraft. The enemy dropped bombs and forced the watercraft to overturn. It began to sink. And in the depth of the water all the men who were different and foreign (non-Navajo) drowned, but for Hubert a miraculous water tunnel was provided by which he could escape. The water tunnel itself was in the depth of the deeper water. And it is for such purposes of life-protection that our prayers and offerings are made. In addition, not long after what happened to Hubert then, it is also said, that another thing happened when Hubert and some White men, and some of other races, stood under a tree during a rain shower. Lightning killed several of them, but spared him.

61. One thing I can tell you, the area is used throughout the whole year, and no limitations were given in the beginning. As to what can not be done at a certain time of the year—the only criterion is the need and whether that need will require prayers and offerings to one or all the sacred places within that sacred area. For example, the prayer and offering for shelter in need, the Protectionway prayer, is permitted throughout the year. And again I say, the only decisive factor is the need. For example, if a person has a need, if he is forewarned in a dream, and especially if in the dream he was shown to be harmed by something, or if he sees something (harmful apart from a dream) he should have a prayer and an offering as quickly as possible, preferably before the Sun comes up.

62. There are only two occasions for which it is not necessary that prayers and offerings be made at the sacred area. One is when Coyote has crossed a person's path or has howled at him from a hill within sight. In this case Coyote himself is talked to, and at the place of his tracks an offering is placed. The other occasion would be when a

person sees (hears) an Owl (*Né'eshjaa'*) who also foretells misfortune. A few words and an offering are given at the place from which its calls were heard, preferably and if possible at the tree on which the Owl sat. The same procedure should be followed with Mourning Dove (*Has-bidi*). And this is the way that is.

63. So with the exception of the request for bringing moisture, anything and everything can be prayed for in the prayers and be made binding by way of offerings in the sacred area (at any time). So, aside from pleading for moisture, it is set aside as a place to pray for shelter, for protection from harmful things—if illness is revealed as coming to a person, or if there is talk of he being sent away. Help can be summoned for him from within that area from whence he was shown (*dah highál'góó*).

64. There are some men with whom I use and share the entire sacred area of Rock-arch. Among them is Buck Navajo, my cousin. Another is Ivan Nelson, and he is my maternal uncle. Before us, and for a long time alongside us, before his legs became lame, there was Long Salt (*Ashjiji Nééz*). These are the three who are known as the primary users of the sacred area.¹⁵ This man Long Salt can still function, but because of the condition of his legs he cannot journey and walk with us (anymore) to the sacred area for the final prayers and offerings. However, he does (has been doing) a major portion of the first part of the ceremonies which are done in the hogan on top (on the plateau above that sacred area) and near our homes. We still rely on Long Salt for some of the long and powerful prayers.¹⁶

65. You ask about whether a number of persons are required to go to that sacred area during a (major) ceremony. I tell you. Usually there are at least two singers and the main person who is requesting the service. This makes three persons for a ceremony. However, to have

¹⁵The fact that other informants in this report have mentioned different "primary users" does not indicate inconsistencies. Navajo singers function ordinarily as priestly practitioners for individuals or for small interest groups. In their rather individualistic society a singer does not always know who else in the vicinity of Navajo Mountain performs a similar rite. This can easily be the case here, when one's home base is as far away as Shonto. In addition, some singers view some of their colleagues as competitors, and they preserve a measure of secrecy for that reason.

¹⁶It would have been more correct to say "we used to rely on Long Salt for some of the long and powerful prayers." The strength and memory of this distinguished priest are now failing. But then, why should one want to write off such an asset to human welfare before one really has to?

two singers, that is mainly a matter of convenience. That way one can concentrate on the prayers while the other can do the necessary things. Sometimes Hubert Laughter goes into the area with his brother Floyd Laughter, and they do their prayers and offerings in that sacred area.

66. Now concerning myself, my standing and reputation as a singer. My people call me and I help them. One of the ways I help them is by doing the Protectionway prayer (*Ach'ááh sohodizin*).

67. I was born on June 11th, 1908, and my census number is 79815. When I turned sixteen I went to school for two years at Fort Wingate, New Mexico. And when I came back from school, even though I had the chance to return there, my stronger sense spoke to me. I concluded that the ways of my elders, what they were talking about and teaching, especially the Prayerway, was an educational undertaking in itself. Thereupon I learned the ways of Prayerway and also the sacred Songway. And because I learned these things I am now a singer (priestly practitioner), and I perform these things among my people. About Blessingway I was taught by my maternal uncle, Pine-tree (*Ndishchíí'*), who has grandchildren in this area by this name. And it is from him also that I learned the Protectionway rite.

68. I learned another ceremonial from a man called Red Whiskers (*Dághatchíí'*) who was from beyond the Lukachukai area. That ceremonial involves turquoise, white shell, abalone shell, and red-stone arrowheads. And another thing used is called Held-with-water (*Tó bóoltq'*). And all of these things are of the major ceremonial which is called Male Shootingway. This procedure is used when a person encounters a major obstacle in his life.

69. Another one I learned from a Hopi, or (rather) from a Puebloan of the group of people who live in New Mexico, in the area we call Water-lifted-from-depth (*Tó hajíloh*). And that is the rite of Crystal-gazing. It is generally used to discover (and distinguish) whether harm is purposely directed against an afflicted person—(an Evilway type affliction)—or whether that person has violated any of the rules set down by the Holy People—(a Holyway type punishment).

70. Also, I do the Enemyway Blackening Rite (*Anaají ant'eesh*) which is done as a part of the Squaw Dance (*Ndáií'*). And that is all. (Note: in a different context, earlier, the major Mountainway was also mentioned. In fact, when we arrived at his homestead, such a ceremo-

nial was in progress. The singer omitted mentioning it here because it was obvious.)

71. That is all I know, except, O yes, one of the major things I do is Rain-requesting. And that ceremony is after the mode of Blessingway. This ceremony was shared and handed down among my relatives—my maternal uncles and my maternal grandfather. And they in turn received it as (having been) handed down from the beginning. But I do not know the use of Handtrembling (*Tinlái*), because that was not given to me.



BUSTER HASTIIN NEZ¹

Interview

1. There are two of us who know about this (event), Henry Gallenti and myself. This place of Rock-arch used to be a place to be revered (*baa hasti*). It is a very holy thing to us, the way we were taught.

2. When I was young, a boy of 14 years, a long time ago, there came a time when we had no rain.² The one whom I call Maternal Grandfather (*Biih hiiheed*), together with another old man, *Tseyi'nii*, *Yázhí*, and my maternal grandmother, who was old, (these went to) this Rock-arch, behind Navajo Mountain, to the place where offerings are made and where the ceremony for rain is held. We were going to go there, and I was told to take care of the horses. "We will go to have a ceremony," I was told. That is what I remember well. We started out and went by way of *Biih hiiheed*. In those days there were no car roads; there were no cars around at that time. We could not go by wagon, only on horseback. We came to Navajo Mountain to my grandmother's brother's place. He was living at Navajo Mountain then. We spent the night there. The place was near a spring, a place called Place-of-cottonwood-tree (*T'is í'ahí*), that is what it was called then, on this side of Navajo Mountain.

¹Buster Hastiin Nez is 55 years old and lives south of Inscription House, by the highway. He told us of a pilgrimage to Rainbow Bridge in which he participated when he was about fourteen years old (around 1935). His travel song to Rainbow Bridge and his rain-requesting prayer are welcome samples of the period in which Mr. Pinetree and his son, Long Salt, dominated the rain-requesting effort.

²The driest years at Navajo Mountain during that decade were 1930, 1933, and 1935—the years 1932, 1936, and 1939 were only slightly better. Some variation can be assumed for the Inscription House area.

3. The next morning I was told that we would continue on horseback with the offering (*nt'iz*). So we started off, the two old men and myself. The one was my great uncle called *T'is N'áhi*, the other was the man called Pinetree (*N'dishchíi'*). In all there were five of us. There were some women with us. We went on to a trading post called Sunshine House (*Shááhiní*). The trader was called the One-with-bad-hand (*B'la' nchxó'i*); he was living there. Now that store is not there anymore. I did not know about that store before this. There used to be no roads out that way. . . .

4. We came to this side, just under the Arch and took the things, saddles and all, off of our horses. We took the offering out of the bags, and then we all sang—we men, and the lady too. Each one had his turn in putting down his *nt'iz* (precious stone offering), about this much (a small amount). Here is where we made our offering (*yeel*). We heard a sound from the place where the water came out. Across from this Spring we made an offering. The east end of the Arch is the male end; the other end is the female. And in that way the people could pass over it. You make an offering, and mist forms there and evaporates as you talk to it. It comes up in spurts. Then the prayer is made, the Rain prayer. Then the Rainbow prayer is made. Rain is requested for all the People. The prayer was made for that purpose. . . . it really started raining on the way back. The people at home had gotten rain even before we got back. This is what I know.

5. Then the people were saying "something is bothering our livestock." Now they say "something comes and makes a sound and we wait (to see what happens)." Then we got my maternal grandfather to help. This side of Navajo Mountain we had an All-night Vigil (*Doo iigháásh*). The people from Navajo Mountain were the ones who wanted this done. We got there and found many people there, as if a chantway was to be performed there.

6. I went there with my maternal grandmother and maternal grandfather, and my paternal grandfather was there. We all got together, and there we had another All-night Vigil over the offering. (*nt'iz bik'i doo náá'iigháásh da*). They put their offerings together.

7. These people had heard that some people were fooling around with Rock-arch, and so they decided to go up to the top of Navajo Mountain to make an offering.

8. We therefore got our *nt'iz* together and left this place and came to the bottom of Navajo Mountain. There were only three of us, myself,

my maternal grandfather, and this man called *Áshjiji álah dílt'ehí*—also called Long Salt or Tony Long Salt. We went to the top of Navajo Mountain, to a place where there was a little water in a depression. We came to the top of the Mountain at noon, after having started before sun-up in the morning. We went up on this side of the Mountain, on what was a horse trail, but we went on foot. We went to a place where in a large area cattails were growing. The place of the water was about the size of a wagon. That is where we made our offering, at the place where offerings had been left for a long time and where (many traces of) *nt'iz* offerings could be found. We placed ours with those offerings, so that we might have things like plants and crops to grow on the Earth and to multiply. We went there to have good things.

9. We had come back not even a mile when clouds formed. We heard thunder, and it rained on us. And it rained all the way down and then all the way home. There (at the hogan) was evidence of rain, there was water all over the place, large puddles of water. That is the way we found it when we got back.

10. Twice on Navajo Mountain is the offering made for the growth and the increase of crops, Rainbow Bridge and the area around it are used, and Navajo Mountain; these two go together. You have to use both of them.

11. (Now) they have put the dam there, have dug up the area, and have done other destructive things near the Arch. They have made all kinds of trails. Now we have a lot of problems. It is hard for us now because of it. We have a lot of complaints about the area below the Arch.

Rain-requesting Song and Prayer

12. The (rain-requesting) song you mention, asking who knows it; I am one (of those) who joined the group. And I learned from my maternal grandfather. It is a Blessingway song—the Rainbow Song—and I still know it today. And I remember the prayer also. I was useful (helpful) in that way. People come to me (also) for protection, and I (help) protect them. (The informant then sang the following Blessingway Travel Song—*Hózhóóí gáál sin*):

13.

I have descended, I have descended, I have descended.

Shí' níkéehinlá, . . . (refrain three times)

On the holy Rainbow to the Arch, I have descended, I have descended.

Nááts'ílid diyin nan'áajj', . . . (refrain two times)

(I got back) when the Sun started out in the east, I have . . .

Ha'a'aah biyaajj' jóhona'ei dah diyá lágo, . . .

The One who was born with turquoise was my transportation, I have . . .

Dood'izhii yit niyishchíníí shigáál lágo, . . .

Back to the turquoise Arch, I have descended, I have descended.

Éi yíí bí dood'izhii nan'áajj', . . .

Back to the algae-colored Arch, I have descended, I have . . .

Éi yíí bí chítchin nan'áajj', . . .

Back to the white shell Arch, I have descended, I have descended.

Éi yíí bí yootgaii nan'áajj', . . .

Back to the abalone shell Arch, I have descended, I have descended.

Éi yíí bí díichíí nan'áajj', . . .

Back to the sacred stick Arch, I have descended, I have descended.

Éi yíí bí (nestíí?) nan'áajj', . . .

Under it I came to him (it), I have descended, I have descended.

Biyaajj' bich'í' níníyáá lágo, . . .

Now Male Rain, Female Rain, I have descended, I have descended.

K'ad nítsq' bikq', nítsq' bí'áád, . . .

Now with Male Rain there is darkness, I have descended, I have . . .

K'ad nítsq' bikq' bí chadahashéelgo, . . .

By means of it there is happiness before me, I have descended . . .

Éi bee sítíí' hózhó lágo, . . .

By means of it there is happiness behind me, I have descended . . .

Éi lá bee shikéeshéé' hózhó lágo, . . .

By means of it there is happiness underneath me, I have . . .

Éi yíí bee shiyaagi hózhó lágo, . . .

By means of it there is happiness above me, I have descended . . .

Éi yíí bee shik'ígí hózhó lágo, . . .

By means of it there is happiness around me, I have descended, I have descended, I have descended.

Éi yíí bee shinaadíí' hózhó lágo, . . . (refrain three times)

Long-life and Happiness has again returned to me;

Sq'a naagháii bik'eh hózhó nátséllíí' lágo;

It is beautiful.

Nízhóní lágo.

14. After this Blessingway Travel Song, Buster Hastiin Nez proceeded to speak a Rain-requesting Prayer:

15.

Rain Boy, I am making a sacrifice (to you).

Nítsq' Ashkii niyeel áshlééh.

Today, Black Cloud which spurts up (Rain) Boy.

Dííj k'os díhít íí hááshígishí tsítshééh.

Now here, this, the Earth our mother,

Díídi kópdi k'ad, nahasdzáán nihimá,

on which life was placed, has become dry (for us),

bikáa'gi ní'ilyáhóogí nihits'áq' náátsai,

has become dry with us.

nihít ná'ooltsai.

Today, various forms of water, Little Rain,

Díshj' tó áltah nááshchíín, tó biyááz,

will come back into existence on (the Earth).

Díí bikáa' háádoodah.

Its pollen, cattail-reed pollen, pollen from various plants;

Bihádííín, teet bihádííín, tádííín naashchíín;

these will come back into existence on the Earth.

díí bikáa' háádoodah.

With these I stepped on the Earth.

Díí bí níkidíní'eez.

With these I came to the Earth.

Díí ní'nikiníyá.

With these my (life's) traveling will be good again.

Díí bee shigááltah yá'át'ée náhodoodleet.

(By) different kinds of animals, (by) horses and sheep,

Naaldlooshii áltas'íí, t'íí, díbé, dínch'í,

human beings will by this be well again.

bíla'ashella'ú díí yee hadaalt'ee náhodoodleet.

By this it will cool off among them (from heat and drought).

Yee bitah náhodóó'as.

They will come together to reproduce, being reproducers.

Yee ahiish ahádoojah, ahiish hahoojahii nílį́go.

Henceforth, from today on, among them there will be rain,

Háa shį́ nne'ni'į́ yookháatgóó dį́į́ bitahgi nahattin dooleet,

The good Male Rain; this is what I ask for.

Nítsgá biką́ yá'á'ée'hai; dį́ nńínishkeed.

For this reason I make the sacrifice.

Dį́ biniyé niyeel áshłééh.

This (offering) I have given to you, pollen I have given to you.

Dį́ naa nłá, tádlidin, dį́ naa nłá.

Beautiful selected turquoise, this I have selected for you.

Doot'izhii bits'á'áanii nızhóni, dį́ ná bits'án'á.

Good selected white shell, this I have selected for you.

Yootgaii yá'áshóonii bits'á'áanii, dį́ ná bits'án'á.

Good selected black jet, this I have selected for you.

Báashzhinii yá'á'ée'hai bits'á'áanii, dį́ ná bits'án'á.

The pollen from a twelve-eared stalk, this I have taken;

Naadgá naakits'áadago atnábidii'áii bihádlidin, dį́ ná bits'án'jaa';

now today I have given (it to) you.

K'ad dį́į́ dį́ naa nłá.

The Female Rain will fall on me,

Nítsgá bi'áad shį́ níkhadoogish,

will make me return with the Male Rain.

Nítsgá biką́ bee náásheláatgo áshidłłłł.

Water pollen, Water drops, make me walk on them.

Tó bihádlidin, bidahtoo', dį́ bidis'isgo áshidłłłł.

Now today, may I be blessed from the home in the middle of the Sky.

K'ad dį́shį́ yá atnı́' hooghandį́' shik'ihoozhdoodłı́t.

I will be blessed repeatedly at the home in the center of the Earth.

Nahasdzáan atnı́' hooghangı́ shik'ihojidłı́ dooleet.

All over the Earth it will rain for me.

Nihokáá' t'áá át'e shee nahodootłı́.

Happily it will rain (for me).

Hózhógo shee nahodootłı́.

Happiness has been restored.

Hózhó náhádlı́.

Happiness has been restored.

Hózhó náhádlı́.

16. That is the way it was; that is the way the prayer was made.
There are many other prayers; this is just one of them.

8

PAUL GOODMAN¹

Interview

1. . . . In this ceremony for rain, we used to place precious stone offerings (*nał'iz*) at that place (the sacred Spring below Rainbow Bridge, which is now flooded). Now nobody goes there anymore. For several years now the water has covered it up. And so, now we do not get rain anymore. There used to be water coming out a distance below the Arch. It was called Waterfall (*Tó nanoolháí*). Higher up it was called *T'is názníts'íli* (?). There is where the precious stone offerings were put into the water. Here is where they made use of it (the Spring) in the Rain-requesting ceremony. Also on the top of Head of Earth were prayers made, and precious stone offerings were placed there also. There, during the prayer for rain, water was sprinkled. Some water was obtained from the sacred Spring to be sprinkled on land in the area that was dry. And so rain would come. Now there is no water to be obtained or sprinkled, since the (lake-)water has covered it.

2. I was just a boy when I first went there. The Navajo practitioners would perform that ceremony down at the Spring. It was much like the missionaries use water for baptism. (That is, the water was sacred). That is the way it was done. Maybe it was eighty years ago. I am ninety-six years now. I went there at that time. That is the way it was done by our singers. Many men used to come there. To become medicine men they went there to be sanctified.

¹Of the Monument Valley area singers, who have their roots near Navajo Mountain, Paul Goodman (*Naakai Dít'oo*) is the oldest. Approximately 96 years old, he is now completely lame. His was our first interview, and because of some technical difficulties we were able to present only a portion of it here. But what we have of it can be regarded as a document that runs parallel, in time, with Long Salt's experience—only one generation distant from the Fort Sumner years.

3. This place has been used since—who knows when?—soon after man came into existence. A long time ago. There is a prayer of Navajo Mountain and also the Arch. The prayer is of Head of Earth and the Rainbow. A medicine man refers to Rock-arch as the symbol of the Rainbow in the sky. The mountain was also called Mountain-topped-with-pine (*Dzilghá Nits'ilii*):

The Pine-cone-topped Mountain,

Dzilghá nits'ilii,

The One surrounded by the dark Rainbow.

Náats'ilid dilt'it bináhaazlái.

The Turquoise Rainbow surrounds it;

Náats'ilid doot'izh bináhaazlái;

The Yellow Rainbow surrounds it;

Náats'ilid fitso bináhaazlái;

The Radiant Rainbow surrounds it.

Náats'ilid diaps bináhaazlái.

4. There used to be markings on the Arch, which I saw. Some of them were in turquoise, some in red, also in yellow. It must have been some Navajos who put these on the Arch. They seem to have done it when they wanted to be prayed for (remembered by the gods).

5. (Who were the singers with whom you were in the Rock-arch area?) I went there when I was told to learn the Blessingway ceremony. I was told to go with a certain elder to learn his ceremony from him. And I learned from him. All who learned to be singers (went there). They are all gone (now). I am the only one left. I went there fifteen years after Fort Sumner. Charlie Salt knows the story.² He knows about the ceremony that started there, but he does not sing it. There is also Lamar Bedonie who knows about it. It has been many years ago,—when I was a boy. One such (elder) person was called Who-walks-around-among (*Honágháahnii*), who died of old age last year, and another man called Yellow Bitter-water Man (*Tó dích'í'niitsoo*). They used to go there. But they are dead now. Many young men went there to become singers. Who-walks-around-among, he used to know many chantways. Dale King used to go there. But now he does not go. He is a Christian now.

²We have interviewed Charlie Salt, but since he himself had never gone to Rainbow Bridge, his comments were not included in this report. Evidently, he knows what Paul Goodman has told him.

6. Four years ago we went to Rock-arch. There the White men have run the water so deep as to cover up the spring below the Arch. We told them not to. I was the only one (in the group) to tell them not to do it. That is what I told them, but they did not say anything and left us. —There were four of us Navajos that went down there with the two White men. Six of us went there. . . .

7. There used to be a Rock that stood up, like a man, in that area below the Arch. It is (now) covered with water, and it could be that he is drowned by now. There was also a place where offerings were made.

8. There used to be a Spring, where it came out of the rock. It was a holy place. But now it has been and is being desecrated. People walk all over it; they urinate in the area; they throw bottles around. It just is not sacred anymore. If the water were lowered and nobody were to walk around at the place for four or five years, the place could become sacred again.

9. Our Holy Ones are not listening anymore; the place is not sacred. The water that has come in has nullified the power of the original gods connected with the Spring-water. The prayers were made with the pure Water, but now there is no use to pray because the Holy Ones have been destroyed. Our prayers are not being heard.—A new dam could be built (to keep out the water) and the water be removed from the canyon. If that were done for a few years, chances are the Holy Ones would revive.

10. (Can you name these gods?)—There is no use naming them, since the water is so high. The (lake-)water has come above the level of the sacred Water, about sixty feet.—Charlie Salt is the man who knows the area. He saw that (stone-)man who stood there. It is covered with water now. We used to go there when I was a boy and then we would pray to it. But now it is desecrated with urination, defecation, and trash. At that time we would be careful of how we went there—where we stepped. We all stepped in a certain way, the same way. If everyone stayed away and the water were lowered, maybe the place could again become sacred.

11. The mountains are still sacred, and they do not want anything built on top of them. Because, each Mountain has a mountain-top song.³

³This refers to the radio tower which stands now on top of Navajo Mountain. Having a mountain-top song means that these mountains are Holy People or gods.

12. (Do you know of a special sacred cave, a place of meeting?)—Many caves were sacred. There are no more places there for men to become medicine men. There are prayers of all the four sacred Mountains, also for Huerfano Mountain and Gobernador Knob. Those who wanted to become medicine men would go to all the sacred Mountains and obtain their prayers there. The Beautyway ceremony started over here. But now it is not sacred anymore.—We can put the story on record, but the songs should not be recorded.

13. The Arch was painted at times because it was sacred. This was at times removed and re-painted. The symbol of the Rainbow is given with the cradle board—the board (which arches) over the baby's head. This symbolizes the Rainbow.⁴ That is the way it used to be. But now it is not considered sacred anymore.

14. Those who know about the sacredness of the Spring would go back to it if the water were lowered that far. There are not many who would go there to become medicine men. Charlie Salt is about the only one who knows about the ceremony at the Spring.

15. Prayer was addressed to a being who matured in one day. In the prayer this person is said to be on the Rainbow.⁵ Blue Rainbow is also addressed in the prayer, also Head of Earth. Prayers were said on top of Navajo Mountain and on top of Rock-arch.

⁴The thin piece of wood, which is bent to arch over the head of a Navajo cradle board, puts these people under the Rainbow deity while they are still babies. The informant is aware that this is no longer understood by most of his tribesmen.

⁵The Twins, after having been born and raised in one day, are said to have travelled to their Sun-father on a Rainbow. See LAUGHTER, par. 58; also BUSTER HASTIIN NEZ, par. 13, where in the song the singer himself descends on a Rainbow to Rock-arch.

9

LAMAR BEDONIE¹

Interview

1. From the time I was born, (that is) from the time I began to realize things, I have been aware of these things, until now. This Rainbow Bridge, together with Navajo Mountain, about these together I have known. Head of Earth (*Naatsis'aan*) is our God (*Nihidiyin*), is Blessingway (*Hózhóǫ́jǫ́*), and is Old-age-place (*Sq'a naagháii*). Of this I have been aware—sixty or more years ago. I am now 69 years old. From the time (I was young) I remember this.

2. I became aware of it (specific ceremonies) when I was fourteen. My maternal grandfather and grandmother, my father and my mother lived around here. Like now, there was no rain and it was hot. When it did not rain we put them (the offerings) there (in the Rainbow Bridge area)—precious stones and cornpollen. We put them there. Medicine to be put in the mouth (*azáa'niit*) and prayers were made—this prayer for rain. We carried out to the top (of the canyon) some precious stones, to the place where the roads come together and beyond it, to the place of the Spring. It is a Holy Spring (*Tó dijinii háálǫ́*).

3. We put the precious stones into the water, into the Spring. (That is), I was told not to put it in (the middle) of the water. I put some in all the four directions along the edge of the Spring, it (cornpollen)

¹Lamar Bedonie is 69 years old and lives south of Monument Valley, near El Capitan. We came to him at a time when he was actually exhausted. He had just returned from an all-night healing rite. Nevertheless, he decided to talk with us then and there. His sometimes very brief answers must be attributed to his being overly tired. Like Buster Hastiin Nez, Lamar Bedonie told us about a trip to Rainbow Bridge with Mr. Pinetree. This trip took place around 1921. Near Navajo Mountain the years 1917, 1920, 1923, and 1924 were drier than the intervening years; and the Kayenta area was driest in 1920.

practiced this ceremony. Blind Salt Clansman did not go to Fort Sumner.

9. (Do you know anything about a sacred cave in the Rainbow Bridge area?)—This side of Rainbow Bridge, toward Navajo Mountain, into the east side there is a hollow under the rock. At this place things (healing chantways) were taught to apprentices. At that same place there is evidence of a *Yéibicheii* dance (*Na'akai*). The Holy People were probably the ones who used to dance the *yé'ii* dance (there). And there is evidence that they performed this dance near Rainbow Bridge, (at a place where) the ground is all smooth. Against the rock Blind Salt Clansman was sitting on his horse. White clay (porcelain—*Leets'aatgaii*) was used to chip (engrave) the rock. And in this manner Blind Salt Clansman and his horse's figures were engraved on the face of the rock—with him sitting on the horse. That is gone now. Someone destroyed it. That is the way it is.

10. Since the time of (appearance of) the paper-book, and to more recent times, I have been wondering what it is (really) like. The things I have missed are probably written down on paper (somewhere).³ But about what I am telling you, I know about it. I went over there myself and participated myself. It is not something I have thought up. And the other men know that it is that way. Whenever there is a meeting, I talk about this (concern for) Rainbow Bridge. The Navajo people do not like it. The leaders (*naat'aanii*) do not like it. Our ceremonies have become difficult. Our prayers and songs are hard to perform. The No-sleep ceremony (*Doo iigháásh báá áł'ingé*) also has become difficult. Now the water holds us back. And at that place people are drinking beverages containing liquor (*bizhéé' hólóní*). Tin cans and bottles litter the place. We never thought of it in that (profane) way. But it is like that now. When plans were made for the dam we were told that it would not be that way. But now people are just overlooking that.

11. (Did you learn any of your songs down there?)—I sing Blessingway, and (other) chants I sing. I have a sacred bag with cornpollen, and I have things to pray with. I have a prayer. And the things which the older men had I have. And I know how to do Crystal-gazing (*Deist'íí'*). I can see through the mountain. I was doing this all night, and

that is why I was sleeping (when you came). The man (patient) was very sick. He lives near Page. If I had not been doing this, I would not be so sleepy now.

12. (These things which you have, which you use for your ceremonies, did you learn the songs which go along with these things in the cave near Rainbow Bridge?)—Yes!

13. (Do you remember the names of people with whom you learned there?)—With Long Salt, with my father Yellow Salt (Kay Bedonie), and an uncle whose name I do not remember. (But) Paul Goodmann (Navajo name—*Naakai Dít'oi*) also knows it. Charlie Salt also knows. We get together.

14. I used to work for DNA (People's Legal Services), and I went to Window Rock and to Fort Sumner (*Hwéeldi*—four years ago, on an anniversary march). And the people asked me many questions. In this manner I was a leader. Then I left (DNA). So, for this reason I thank you for asking these questions, and I thank you for coming to see me. (Now I am a singer). I know the songs, and I have made up a chantway from them. (In the days) when Blind Salt Clansman was alive, there were no Anglos around. None of their tracks were around. . . . he was the one who did the teaching . . . he told us that this was to be our way of life and our food. And this was the way we did it.

15. (Concerning Rainbow Bridge), I used to earn my money from it. I used to take White people up there after they found out about it. At that time there were no trails (yet), and we had to make our own trails. And we made a trail, and I took only White people up there. Some were big (fat) ladies who could not ride horses. They wanted to see the Bridge. So I used to help these ladies onto and off their horses. That was my work. I also used to carry their lunches and hay for the horses. They wanted to go up there and see it, and take pictures. Every day I earned money that way.

16. (Did you have ceremonies for rain only in summer?)—(Yes, but) only when it was dry and without rain. After a number of years there comes a time when it does not rain.

17. (What was the greatest number of people to attend a rain ceremony?)—On the east side of Navajo Mountain a hogan was built, with a large shelter (branch hut). Over three-hundred people attended this meeting to pray for rain. Five people (at that time) went down to

³This expression of awe toward written traditions was in this instance completely unwarranted. Before some Navajo men, such as Lamar Bedonie himself, decided to speak, we knew almost nothing about Rainbow Bridge ceremonialism.

Rainbow Bridge to place offerings (*ni'iz*) at the Spring. I did not go (along that time). . . . thirty-nine years ago it (this practice) was started again. It was ended about three years ago when our (sacred) Spring was covered up by the water which had backed up on account of the dam.

18. (Concerning the) Monster Slayer ceremony, there are songs to Earth, to the Dark Sky (*Yáidihít*), to Sun, to Female Mountains, to Female Water—these are the main ones; then to Darkness in which we sleep, to the Passing Days (*háyoohkád*), and to Dusk (*Náhootsoi*); we use this (appeal to these) right along with Corn and Rain. When there is no rain what will we use?—(when) there is no water in the earth and none from above? Everything we have needs rain. So, Rainy Weather said that it wanted to be first. Since he has said (asked for) this, it is his job now—through Rain we have life.

19. (What is the water, backing up below Rainbow Bridge, doing to the prayers or to the gods?)—It will probably end all. It (Rainbow Bridge) supports life. It will cease. The Water rose and got it wet, and it began deteriorating; that Water is not careful. The Rainbow will be broken. It will break the People's life, their minds and teachings (beliefs). The people from Window Rock (seat of tribal government) say we are surrounded by Rainbow. We say it is our God—(that) our leaders there at Window Rock are surrounded by Rainbow.

20. (How is it that the part under water is not holy anymore?)—Saying "Cornpollen blessed by the Rainbow" we go about; also, this same Cornpollen is contained in the medicine bundle, and in making the offerings. (From making the prayers and offerings) we hope to gain sheep, horses, and other livestock in abundance. (*Nááts'íilid bəgh nanoogáád, éi dū'noo neilyiz leh, lnda t'áá éi dīi ndiilyēeh bi' silá, t'áá inaalyeel bi' silá, t'áá éi dīi dibé éi bee neilyēe doo, t'f bee neilyēe doo.*)—It is not holy anymore, and so we do not have rain now. And there are no plants, even on Navajo Mountain there are none. Plants do not come up anymore, and there is not enough water to go around. We have given this water a different name, and it is used for other purposes than (only) drinking. The Rainbow is broken. Our way of life, our way of thinking, our religion is broken.⁴

⁴As the waters of Lake Powell threaten to rise, Lamar Bedonie foresees the eventual fall of Rainbow Bridge. But what is important here is not only the integrity of the stone structure, but also the intrusion of the controlled (less-than-White-man) waters of Lake Powell. These are understood to be in contrast with the untouched and unused (greater-than-human) Waters of sacred springs. See also BUCK NAVAJO, par. 38 and footnote #15 there.

21. Missionaries say "My Lord" (*Shidiyin*); it is according to that (manner) that they live. My life is (lived) in accordance with this Rainbow, my prayers are holy. According to this Rainbow life began, and people lived by the Rainbow. Nowadays people try to use it in their prayers. The missionaries used it (by praying "My Lord").⁵ But people cannot use it now, because water has covered it. It (its destruction) will break many of us. Many of us depend on this Rainbow. There are things called Lightning, which come down. And people who cannot get along well together, this Lightning punishes them or makes them suffer. This is the way the story (tradition) goes.

22. (Is Rainbow Bridge like the roots of Rainbow? And is there another root?)—Yes, it supports it (like a root). (And) yes, there is (another root). It is attached to Blanca Peak; it is attached to Mount Taylor; San Francisco Peaks it is also attached to; La Plata Range is another to which it is attached. This is the way it is. . . . it is attached to Navajo Mountain and to Carrizo Mountains, and to some smaller ones. Among these smaller mountains the Holy People live.

23. (Does Rain have anything to do with Snake?)⁶—It has something to do with it. It is said that they are friendly with one another. This Arrow Snake (*T'íish k'aa'*) is up there with the clouds—(with) that cloud. (Points to a cloud above the horizon). On that cloud, they are up there. One is Lightning, one is Rainbow, one is Tongue-eater (*Tso'oolghat*), one is Sunbeam (*Shá bił'ool*), and one is Light of Dawn (*Kaihl'ool*). When we converse like this, they know already what we are talking about. Cornpollen blessed by Rainbow (*Nááts'íilid bəgh nanoogáád*) is our medicine. We put this medicine (even) on the cars which we drive.

24. (In that Spring, is there a Water-snake down there?)—There

⁵This Navajo practitioner completely identifies the "Lord" of Christian missionaries with his own divine "Lord"—the living Rainbow deity together with its Rock-arch "incarnation." This reflects not only his ability to compare entities of similar functions, but also his open mind toward other religious perspectives.

⁶This question about snakes, as elsewhere in this report, was introduced by me to establish the distance of Navajo rain-requesting from Pueblo Indian rain ceremonialism. See Luckert, 1976. The fact that none of our informants would of themselves have mentioned snakes, suggests that there must have been very little direct borrowing on that subject. In the Navajo Mountain area, Navajo rain ceremonialism was completely governed by a fascination with Head of Earth, Rainbow, and the two Rivers. Pueblo Indian snake symbolism, while the Navajos were aware of it and had it harmonized with their thinking, did not become an integral part of Navajo Mountain area rain ceremonialism.

are water-snakes. They are in the water, and we drink the water and say that the water is clean. People get water from there.

25. (Does Snake have anything to do with the mountains which were named?)—Yes, the prayer of the mountains runs from here (begins with this). The Mountain is the first thing (deity spoken to), then Spruce (*Ch'ó*) (which) stands up there. Behind that lies a large Snake. He says, I will protect you. When he (a discoverer) looked at him, he saw that the Snake had arrowheads covering him all over. We have a prayer of this Big Snake, and we pray that prayer.

26. (When the Hopi people dance with snakes, does that also help bring rain?)—Yes, they have their powers (*éí hózhó bídahódułh*).

27. (Will the Navajo people ever dance with, or have anything to do with, snakes?)—We have something to do with them. (In) the Lightningway ceremony, male branch (*Na'at'ood bíkq'*), they carry crooked wood, or wood that winds around. We can have medicine put on us in that manner. It is our medicine bundle (*jish*).

28. (Are there any snakes who will devour people?)—That will probably not happen, because they are people and we are people. When we make a sandpainting we put the snakes down as people, then on top of it we sit and get our medication.

29. (Is the River, or wherever the water runs, thought of as a snake?)—Yes.

30. (When the dam was made, what happened to the snake?)—They probably live down there. (They) may have moved elsewhere, or made their roads down there. We do not know.

10

SLIM WOMAN¹

Recorded by Hoffman Birney, 1927

The Prayer

Head Mountain! Head Mountain!

Naatsis'aán! Naatsis'aán!

Black Wind, splendid Chief!

From the tips of your fingers a rainbow put out.

Thrust out a rainbow from your brow,

A rainbow from the palm of your hand—

By which let me walk.

Black Wind and black clouds,

Blue Wind and blue clouds,

Yellow Wind and yellow clouds,

White Wind and clouds of white—

Go thou all before me and darken the sun.

Wrapped in your cloud garments let me walk,

With your garments of clouds about me.

¹The prayer and legend by Slim Woman (*tsahgí ts'is*) of Kayenta were discovered quite unexpectedly during a search in the Richardson Collection, in the Arizona State University library. Inclusion in this report was made possible through the courtesy of the Arizona Historical Foundation. By including this text in our report we are enabled to prove, that an essential aspect of the Rainbow Bridge and Navajo Mountain religious complex—Rain-requesting—was present in the 1920's in the thinking of some Kayenta Navajos. Moreover, this text is a beautiful example of native religious consciousness, of the kind of reasons which the gods will give for selecting different groups of people to inhabit their lands. The obviously very free, but delightful, rendition of the original recorder, Hoffman Birney, has been left essentially as it was found.

Let it rain peacefully before me,
 Let the corn ripen—
 The White Corn, the Yellow, and the Blue.
 Earth Woman, send the rain,
 The Rain, kind and gentle—
 That all may be happiness before me,
 That all may be happiness behind me,
 That all may be happiness round about me. . . .
 Now all is happiness, now all is happiness,
 Now all is happiness, now all is happiness.²

The Legend

In the days before our (Navajo) fathers came
 The Little People dwelt on the Mountain,
 Building their homes in the walls of the canyons—
 The black canyons that run down to the north,
 From the black flanks of Head Mountain,
 From the flanks of *Naatsis'áán*.
 There, in the canyons and on the fertile mesas
 They planted their cornfields,
 Planted their fields of squash and cotton.
 And the Rains came and blessed their crops—
 The gentle, kindly (female) Rain,
 Sent in answer to the prayers—
 Made where the Rock Rainbow spans the canyon,
 Made at *Tsé nááts'íilid na'n'zhoozhí*.³
 But the gods became angry with the Little People,
 For the sanctuary of the Rock Rainbow was violated.
 Tai'eldo, the hunter, returning empty-handed

²I suspect that the traditional ending *híizhí'* was used. I have therefore changed Birney's "peace" to "happiness." Nevertheless, since most Navajo prayers and ceremonials aim at reconciliation with offended gods, the meaning of "peace has been restored" is also implied.

³"Rock Rainbow, slender stiff objects lying side-by-side to span across." The last portion of this descriptive name appears to be a "feed-back term" (a modification) which was introduced by Birney's interpreter.

To *Kin hichí'*, the Red House,
 Shot with his arrows a mountain sheep
 That stood on the crest of *Tsé nááts'íilid*,
 Pierced by the flint point,
 The horned sheep fell. . . .⁴
 Angered were the gods of the Canyon,
 And angry was *'Átsé Hastiin*,
 First Man, the creator—⁵
 He who made the Little People,
 And the Rock Rainbow,
 And the mountain sheep.
 Then the Rains ceased and came no more
 To *Naatsis'áán*.
 And the springs dried,
 And the cornfields withered and died in the sun—
 Till the people from the Red House,
 The Little People, the Anasazi of *Kin hichí'*,
 Fled before the gods' anger,
 Fled around Head Mountain,
 Fled to *Tséyi' bikoooh*, the Canyon of Rocks,
 And joined with the people there—
 The people of *Káít'ul*, the House of Broken Pottery,
 And of *Bitát'ah kin*, the House in the Side of the Hill.
 But the anger of the gods followed them.
 And the red rocks came in(to) the valley of the *Tséyi'*,
 And the waters sped away,
 Back to the Mother-Water's distant bed.
 And the rains came no more to the *Tséyi'*.
 So the Little People departed,
 Moving away, family and family, clan and clan—

⁴Compare LAUGHTER, par. 83 and footnote #24. Killing such a mountain-sheep on Navajo Mountain became the arche-typal "trespass" of Holy Man, the arche-typal Navajo shaman. From the divine punishment for this deed he was subsequently cured, which taught him how to cure similar afflictions in the case of others.

⁵The title "Creator" in the case of First Man is an overstatement. Perhaps one should read here "Co-creator."

Until but three were left in all *Kjits'ül*,
 In the great stained cave where the pine-tree
 Lies across the broken walls of the houses.
 And in the end the three left,
 Moving down the *Tséyi'* to *Bitát'ah kin*,
 To the Side Hill House,
 The house built by the people from *Kinin'áhlǫ́l*,
 The White House far to the eastward.
 Till they too moved on,
 Moved southward and built their homes anew—
 At Oraibi, Oraibi on the mesa.
 Where their children live today,
 Forgotten by the older gods—⁶
 Whom they have forgotten,
 Dying one by one. . . .
 And *Kinin'áhlǫ́l* is empty,
 And *Kin'áhlǫ́l* is empty,
 And the owls and the rats
 Nest in *Bitát'ah kin*,
 And *Kjits'ül*.
 And the gods dwell alone at *Tsé nááts'ílid*,
 Where the ruined altar stands
 Beneath the Rock Rainbow.⁷
 And this is the story of the Rainbow Bridge,
 as told by *Asdzáá ts'ós'* to Hoffman Birney and by him
 written in its present form for Dr. Herbert E. Gregory,
 scientist and friend, with a deep appreciation
 and a profound admiration. 1927

⁶In the Navajo view, of course, the gods of Navajos are the oldest. This may also indicate a degree of Navajo smugness about divine blessings. In the Navajo Mountain area the years from 1904 to 1927 registered as the wettest period of the century.

⁷In the 1920's the existence of this altar was generally assumed—possibly even by the Navajo "Slim Woman." Alexander J. Lindsay has excavated the site and has found no traces of a foundation. It is possible that the second half of this sentence is the recorder's addition. In any case, the Navajos never used such an altar.

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