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ZUNI SACRED THEATER¹

by
Barbara Tedlock

I

THE INHABITANTS OF Zuni Pueblo, located in western New Mexico, participate in an annual series of dramatic theatrical performances that are designed to express their views of ultimate reality and to shape their ongoing lives in terms of this reality. This metaphysical theater both celebrates and helps to unite the social, economic, political and religious aspects of the community by the manipulation of a set of sensuous symbols rather than a set of explicit beliefs encoded in religious doctrines or creeds. The Zuni lexicon of sensuous symbols includes clays, minerals, herbs, flowers, seeds, cornmeal, corn pollen, sun, moon, stars, birds, reptiles, mammals, gems, feathers, flutes, drums, dances, melodies, gestures, postures, wands, puppets, masks, costumes, chants, myths, prayers, prayersticks, altars and shrines.

Zuni theatrical events—which are simultaneously participatory, performative and communicative—are defined by the spatiotemporal co-presence of performers and audience members, including deified ancestors. They are staged in sacred places including both outdoor plazas (*tehwittowe*)² and indoor ceremonial chambers or kivas (*kih-witsinne*). At Zuni kivas include both the permanent meeting rooms of religious organizations and the individual homes that are used for sacred theatrical performances. The dancing, drumming, singing and chanting of mythical texts, visual and aural masking, costuming, body-painting, prayerstick making, erecting of altars, sand and cornmeal painting, corn pollen sprinkling, puppetry, miming, clowning, curing, feasting, smoking and foot racing that make up the annual round of sacred theater are performed in accordance with the cyclical movements of sun, moon and stars.

The year (*tepikwayina*) begins on the Zuni winter solstice (*itiwan'a*, “middle time” or “middle place”) which is also the name of the summer solstice and one of the sacred names for Zuni village itself. Today, the celebration of either the winter or summer solstice officially opens when the North Priest (*ky'akwemossi*)³ announces that all adults are to make prayersticks (*telikinanne*), a religious offering usually consisting of six feathers including downy eagle, duck and tail feathers

of four summer birds tied to carved, peeled and then painted red willow or narrow-leaf cottonwood sticks. Red willow is chosen for both winter and summer solstice prayersticks because its roots are connected to a common root stock. By analogy, the making of willow prayersticks connects all Zunis together into the common root stock of Zuni society, which is matrilineal and matrilocal.⁴

Women offer peeled willow prayersticks that are painted yellow with yellow ochre (*heelhupts'ikwa* "limonite, ahydrated oxide of iron"), which is gathered in the summer solstice once each four years during the pilgrimage to Kachina Village (Kothuwalaawa), the Zuni land of the dead.⁵ The ochre is then kept until the winter solstice when it is ceremonially ground by groups of women accompanied by groups of male singers and drummers and then mixed together with the yellow petals of buttercups and sunflowers. Men also offer willow prayersticks, but these are painted blue with azurite (*maalhayaaluk'o*) or malachite (*akwalhi*), which the Eastern Pueblos trade to Zuni.

Before making prayersticks people wash their hair with yucca-root soap and afterwards four days of sexual continence are observed. During these rituals of separation Zunis prepare themselves for their movement from ordinary profane reality to extraordinary sacred reality. The prayersticks are constructed during the day, offered the breath of prayers, then wrapped in corn husks and placed in a basket to remain during the night. The next morning they are taken out and planted in an excavation at the center of the family cornfield, where they will be left until the sun and moon of middle time (*itiwan'a*) have made their transits across the sky gathering up all the prayers.

During the summer solstice the wrappings are left in the fields after planting. During the winter solstice they are brought home and placed within a small cornmeal enclosed family shrine, which is interpreted by Zunis as symbolic of bringing home the harvest (Ladd 1963:34). Men plant their turquoise prayersticks for the Sun Father (Yatokka Tacchu) and women plant their yellow prayersticks for the Sun Father's younger sister, the Moonlight-Giving Mother (Ya'onakka Tsitta). These paramount Zuni deities, referred to as The Ones Who Hold Our Roads (Ho'n'aawonaawillap'ona),⁶ are the givers of all light and life (D. Tedlock 1979:499).

Each year the date of the combined lunar and solar prayerstick offering at the middle time is announced by the North Priest. He calculates both the winter and the summer middle times by carefully observing the phases of the moon, together with the sunrise and sunset positions along the horizon. Both of these celestial bodies display a double periodicity: the moon is diurnal and monthly while the sun diurnal and seasonal. The Zuni matching up of these distinct but

related rhythms reveals a union of different modalities of the sacred. The lunar phases of birth, death and resurrection are symbolically linked to cosmic darkness, women, plants, fecundity, death and rebirth. The Moon Mother teaches that death is not final but always followed by rebirth, form-changing maturity, death, etc., on and on. The Sun Father, also eternally in motion, is unlike the Moon Mother in retaining a single shape. This ability to remain the same was graphically demonstrated when he sent a part of himself, in the form of twin sons, on a rainbow down into the interior of the earth: they re-emerge unchanged, leading the Zuni ancestors out from the dark underworld into his blinding daylight (see D. Tedlock 1972:225–57). In the process the people were transformed from raw (or soft) people (*ky'apin aaho''i*) into cooked (or ripe) people (*akna aah''i*), also called daylight people (*tek'ohannan aahoo''i*).

Raw people, who include the sun, moon and stars as well as deer, ants, rainstorms, rainbows, corn plants, snakes and the dead, all eat food that is either raw or else has been sacrificed to them by cooked or daylight people who live on cooked food. It was the Sun Father who taught Zunis to make food offerings consisting of tobacco smoke, cornmeal and small portions of cooked food to the raw people. These offerings are either thrown into the cookstove or fireplace and burnt up or else tossed into the Zuni River, where they eventually float downstream to Kachina Village.

Today, as in the past, a Zuni priest makes daily celestial observations from a petrified tree stump located near the ruin of Mats'aakya, the largest of the six original Zuni villages. Zuni winter middle time, which is in the vicinity of the winter solstice (about December 22), but rarely exactly on it, immediately follows the full moon (bright light) that coincides with the lowest and most southerly limit of the winter sun (weak light) as it travels along the southwestern edge of Towayalanne (Corn Mountain). This most sacred of all Zuni mountains has been used many times in the past as a defensive site and refuge for the Zunis during Apache, Navajo and Spanish raids. Zuni summer middle time, which is also in the vicinity of the summer solstice (about June 22) but rarely precisely on it, occurs when the sun, moving northward high in the sky (bright light) passes the slim crescent moon (weak light) at Ya'onakkyā (sacred term for the moon) and continues on the Yala Lhana (Big Mountain), a peak northwest of Zuni village but well within the reservation boundary. It is celebrated on the fourth evening on which both the sun and the crescent moon set together at approximately the same time (i.e. during the new quarter moon) behind Big Mountain.⁷

Winter middle time involves a bright full moon which, on this night alone, mimics both the large round shape and behavior, though

not of course the timing, of the sun by rising in the east at dusk and crossing the sky from east to west in a single night. While the sun at winter middle time is a low and weak southern sun, summer middle time involves a dim new moon combined with a bright high northern sun. Thus, the two solstices are inversions of each other [winter : summer :: strong moon and weak sun : weak moon and strong sun]. The full moon at winter middle time mimics the sun in another way as well, in that it rises and sets at about the same place as the sun at summer middle time; thus [winter full moon : summer sun :: winter sun : summer new moon]. Further, the seasonal and monthly changes of the sun and the moon are declared to be identical [seasons : months :: path of sun : phases of the moon].

Zunis use this combined inversion of the seasons and radical equalization of the seasonal and monthly celestial cycles to organize both their calendar and their sacred theater into simultaneously inverted, though broadly replicating, winter and summer halves. Thus, the months that immediately follow both winter and summer middle time are both named Liloha (return or turn back), which equates the sun's bi-annual change in direction from south to north and north to south with the moon's monthly shape change from new (first appearance) to full and full to new. The next four months following winter and summer middle time are also paired and share the same names, but winter characteristics dominate in their naming: Limbs Broken by Snow, No Snow on the Road, Little Wind and Big Wind. However, upon reaching May and November on the Gregorian calendar these same months on the Zuni calendar go unnamed. This is a neat solution to the problem of lunar variation in the solar year. Since approximately every third year there are thirteen instead of twelve moons, the extra days can easily be intercalated within these unnamed months.

Just as the winter and summer month names replicate, so do certain theatrical performances. But here summer months symbolically and ritually dominate, which gives a distinctively summer character to the winter dance series. The summer dance series called Kachinas Bringing Flour-Clouds (Olo'iky'a Kokko) and the winter dances called Kachinas Exchanging Places (Koyupchonaawe) both consist of six masked dances, one for each kiva group. Loud noises are forbidden during the summer months, because they arouse the dangerous prey animals (*wemaawe*), including bear, mountain lion, wolf, eagle, badger, shrew, red ant and rattlesnake. The Earth Mother (Awitelin Tsitta), slumbering beneath her robe of sunflowers, is also disturbed by loud noises. Thus, an entire popular genre of masked dances that uses large two-headed log drums is eliminated from the summer and winter

sacred dance series. These exciting masked and unmasked dances, with their many complex rhythms and fancy dance steps, are performed either in the late fall before Shalako or else in the spring, outside the winter and summer sacred series (see B. Tedlock 1980).

The proper Zuni term for the ancestral and natural deities impersonated during kachina dances is *kokko*, which also indicates the masked dancers who impersonate the gods and the masks that these men wear. The selection of a specific masked dance to be performed in either of the winter or summer ceremonial series during a given year is in the hands of the dance chiefs (*otakya aamoss'ona*) of the kiva groups within the tribal kachina society (*kotikyanne*). All the initiated member of this society must belong to one of the six dance groups. These groups are linked as older and younger siblings, producing three sets of elder and younger brothers: Wall and Back Wall, Dung and Small Group, Corn Kernel and Brain. The first or head group, associated with the north, is called Wall People (He'iikwe). They are considered the elder brothers to all the other dance groups and their kiva is on the main plaza at Zuni. This kiva is also called Sacred Priest Place (Teshiwan'a) because it serves as the meeting place for the entire rain priesthood as well as the home of the North Priest. The group of the western direction, known as Dung People (Muheekwe), got their name because their original kiva was built on blocks of manure. The Corn Kernel People (Chupaakwe), who got their name because they were always parching corn, are in the south. This kiva is unique because it has a very special cult group within it composed of Corn clan members, who have their own kachina ceremony known as Kan'aakwe. This performance is a dramatization of a mythic battle between a northern group (Zunian) and a southern group (perhaps Keresan since all the songs are in a Keresan language) who had all the deer corralled. According to the myth, the Zunis won and thus the Kan'aakwe must visit Zuni once each four years bringing deer, rabbits and other wild game as tribute payment (see B. Tedlock 1973:48–54). The three traditional colors of these three elder brother groups are yellow, turquoise and red, which are used together on the dance mocassins of the most important *kokko*.

The younger brother kiva group of the east, Brain People (Oheekwe), got their name because they put squash seed kernels in with the birds they were cooking for a *kokko* and the boiling seeds resembled brains. They are nicknamed Slayers (*Lhaknaakwe*) because every time they perform a masked dance a woman dies.⁸ Another younger brother group is associated with the zenith. It is called the Small Group (Upts'anaakwe) because when they were named there were not many members. Today this is one of the larger groups at Zuni and includes

the best song composers. Their nickname is Short Songs (Tenaawe Ts'ana) because, as Zunis express it, "they sing long songs, the longest songs of all." The sixth kiva, Back Wall People (He'k'apaakwe), is the kiva of the below, or the nadir. Just as Wall kiva is the elder brother for all the groups, so Back Wall kiva, its linked group, is the younger brother kiva for all the groups. Back Wall is sometimes referred to as the "tail" kiva, and like the "head" kiva (Wall People), it is used by the rain priesthood, serving as the home of the Priest of the West. This kiva also serves as the meeting place for the Mudheads, clowns named from their appearance and described by Zunis as both the grandsons and grandfathers of the *kokko*.

During the winter months, each group presents a masked dance at night inside houses belonging to the group's leaders. Since the permanent kivas are too small for today's large Zuni audiences, houses that were blessed during the late fall Shalako ceremony are used as kivas for these performances. The pairing between elder and younger brother kivas determines the selection of a chorus and of "female" dancers (since men take all the roles in kachina society masked dances), if a particular dance calls for such roles. Thus, if Corn Kernel Kiva, an elder brother group, wished to dance a Hilili dance it would call upon its paired younger brother group, Brain Kiva, to provide the chorus. If Wall wished to dance Good Kachina, it would ask its younger brother kiva, Back Wall, to provide the female dancers. This arrangement also works in the opposite direction. If a younger brother kiva, like Back Wall, wished to dance Downy Feather, it would ask Wall to provide the "female" dancers and in this situation the younger brothers would be considered elder brothers. This reversibility of age relationships in kin terms is a general pattern throughout Zuni symbolic culture.

Long ago, membership in a particular kiva group was determined at birth by a boy's midwife: she simply called in her husband and the child was given to his kiva group. If she had no husband, her eldest son took his place, and if she had no son her eldest brother became the boy's kachina father (Stevenson 1904:65). Today, however, since most Zunis are born in Black Rock Hospital, located on the reservation, a boy's kiva group membership is not decided upon at his birth. Instead, when he is the proper age for his first initiation, between five and eight a male relative from his father's natal household will be asked by the boy's father to sponsor him, or else offer to do so. Both the older and newer systems assure that kiva membership does not directly correspond to matrilineal clan membership.

For one of several reasons an individual may choose to participate in the activities of another kiva, or even change his kiva group mem-

bership. This may occur because he becomes bored with his group and simply decides to participate in another kiva's dances. Ideally, he is free to come and go at will from any group and to participate in everything within the group including, song composition, rehearsal and performance. In actual practice, however, men usually visit their brother group. Also, in a given year, if a person missed all opportunities to dance with his own kiva group he may join with another group in order to dance. In that case he would undoubtedly choose to dance with his brother group. Since sexual relations with another man's wife in one's own kiva group are forbidden (sexual relations within one's own matrilineal clan and also one's father's clan are also forbidden), a man will permanently change his kiva group membership as a result of a love affair involving the wife of a fellow kiva member. The new kiva is usually the brother group of his original kiva.

Each kiva group has two guards, known as Solimopiya, who, as members of the Bow Priesthood, are individually linked to one of the four semicardinal directions, plus above and below. Taken in an anti-sunwise pattern, the Salimopiya of the north kiva (yellow) is a warrior of the northeast (yellow), the one of the west kiva (turquoise) is a warrior of the northwest (turquoise), the one of south kiva (red) is a warrior of the southwest (red), and the one of the east kiva (white) is a warrior of the southeast (white).

II

The year ends in late December during a very special time known as Teshkwi (Sacred or Forbidden). This ten day period begins after the North Priest's announcement of prayerstick cutting and ends on the winter solstice or the middle time (*itiwan'a*). On the first night of Teshkwi the new year fire is kindled in the "head," or northern, kiva. The following morning the icons of the Sun Father's twin sons, known as the War Gods (Ahayuuta),⁹ are taken to their shrines. The shrine of the Younger Brother War God (Ahayuuta an Suwe) is located on the crown of a peak in the foothills at the Western base of Corn Mountain, visible from the village. There Zuni warriors, or bow priests, kindle a fire whose smoke signals the end of all outdoor fires.

Teshkwi opens, for the people, with a four-day quiet period in which they meditate, pray, practice sexual continence and strict abstinence from all meat, greasy foods and salt. All the street lights in the village are turned out and the village priests expect that during these ten days both Zuni and Anglo guests of the Pueblo, be they employees of the local hospital or school, or traders, lawyers or anthropologists, will cease conducting business as usual, remain indoors,

be quiet, and refrain from smoking cigarettes outside or driving around in their cars after dark so as not to take fire or light outdoors.¹⁰ At the end of the fast, on the fourth day of Teshkwi, small unfired clay sheep, horses, cows, burros, chili, melons, jewelry, coins, dollar bills, peaches and corn ears made of cornmeal are shaped and placed within family cornmeal shrines and under the floorboards in the shrine of the nadir (*iikya*), located in the center of all structures ever used as kivas. This ritual for the increase of wealth is referred to as *i'ts'umme* "making it strong," or "do something for a future benefit" (see Parsons 1919).

On the tenth and final day of Teshkwi two eastern hunt and medicine kachinas who are residents of Shipaapuli'ma, Shitsuukya and Kwelele (see Bunzel 1932b:929, Benedict 1935, I:18–19, 268), are impersonated by members of Big Fire Medicine Society.¹¹ They go around all day long visiting each of the houses in the Pueblo, where the women of the house take embers from the wood stoves and carry them around the house walls in an anti-sunwise direction and then toss them out the door at Kwelele. After this ritual is completed, men remove the ten-day accumulation of trash and stack it on the ground as though it were corn; women remove the ashes from the fireplaces and sprinkle it like cornmeal on the trash and little boys carry juniper torches outside. The entire family prays to the sun and moon, asking forgiveness for any violations of the Teshkwi rules.

Zuni Teshkwi is a classic example of a liminal (from Lat. *limen*, a threshold) period and process during which people are removed from their normal social patterns, religious hierarchy and economic pursuits and leveled to a homogeneous state through discipline (Van Gennep 1969). The reincorporation rituals begin the moment the morning star (*moyachunne Ihana* literally "big round moon"), which may be Mars, Venus or Jupiter, rises on Itiwan'a (Stevenson 1904:130–1). At this time the warrior or bow priests, rain priests (including the six daylight and eight night priesthoods) and representatives of the thirteen curing societies meet together to re-institute the normal religious and social hierarchy of the community (see D. Tedlock 1979).

Pawtiwa, the Chief of Kachina Village, sets the re-incorporation process in motion by distributing the feathered staves of office to the people who will train the key performers and the host families for the most lavish of all Zuni ceremonies: Shalako. Preparations for this week long celebration begin almost a year in advance, when Pawtiwa gives the first befeathered and bejewelled baton to the Longhorn servant (*wo'le*), a member of the Picchiikwe clan¹² who is the keeper of the mask, prayers and chants. This man, in consultation with the host family of the Council of Gods, selects, appoints and instructs the

Longhorn (Sayatasha) impersonator, who is usually chosen from the medicine society of the eldest female resident of the host home. Longhorn, the head of the Council of Gods and warrior or bow priest of the north and winter, is the most important deity present during the first twenty hours of Shalako. The Longhorn impersonator then appoints, from his own medicine society, his deputy: Huututu, bow priest of the south and summer; the two Yamuhakto, firewood carriers and bow priests of east and west; and Shulaawitsi, the diminutive Fire God.

Huututu, named for his call, "hu—tu—tu—," and Longhorn both wear white shirts, white dance kilts, and yellow, red and turquoise moccasins. The three moccasin hues are the minimal colors necessary for representing the rainbow. They are also both the elder brother cardinal and warrior semicardinal colors: yellow for both north and northeast, turquoise for west and northwest, and red for south and southwest. Longhorn and Huututu also wear fawnskin quivers over their right shoulders and carry antelope scapulae rattles in their right hands, with bows, arrows and plumed prayer wands in their left hands. Their white elkskin helmet masks are surrounded with black-and-white checkered Milky Way (Yupyalhana "ashes stretched across") collars. Many valuable shell and turquoise necklaces hang about their necks, both back and front. On top of their masks is a prayerstick and reed cigarette filled with native tobacco and sacred red paint. The feathers of the prayerstick must point forward toward the rising sun in the east.¹³ Their black eyes extend through and connect to their ears. Longhorn differs from Huututu in several ways. Most notably, on the right side of his mask his ear is replaced by a single long and gently curved turquoise horn, hung with black goat's wool.

Longhorn, who represents the paramount direction of north, is also the official keeper of the ceremonial calendar. He talks about the summer (when the sun turns north) while Huututu talks about winter (when the sun turns south). Longhorn says: "*Ulohnan oneya pottiye*," ("The world is pollen-colored") which is interpreted by Zunis as meaning the world is filled with sunflowers. Huututu says: "*Ulohnan uteya k'ohanna pottiye*," ("The world is filled with white flowers"), which is interpreted as meaning that the world is filled with frost crystals. Huututu, who represents the south, is Longhorn's younger brother and deputy. Annually during the Shalako celebration Longhorn leads the Council of Gods in a four-and-one-half hour unison chant (see Bunzel 1932a:710–21). The narrative recounts in detail each ritual activity the Council has engaged in since the previous winter solstice. It culminates at Zuni or The Middle Place (Itiwan'a) when the six Shalako cross the Zuni River at sunset.

The Yamuhakto wear turquoise helmet masks with cottonwood sticks on top, balanced on each end my multicolored yarn tassels (see Stevenson 1904:plate LXIII). Their necks are surrounded by black-and-white striped Milky Way buckskin collars stuffed with black goat's wool. Their bodies are splattered with the same mixture of ochre from Kachina Village and yellow flower petals as middle time prayersticks for the Moon Mother. Like Longhorn and Huututu, they also wear rainbow moccasins of yellow, turquoise and red. They carry deer antlers in both hands. Long ago they were chosen as the protectors or guardians of forest glades in the Zuni Mountains, where the deer live.

The diminutive Fire God (Shulaawitsi) is impersonated by an adolescent boy of the Badger clan (his mother's clan) or child of Badger clan (his father's clan). His entire body and helmet mask are painted black with the darkness of origin then spotted by members of the Badger clan with yellow, turquoise, red and white dots symbolizing glowing embers, corn kernels and the shimmering red star Aldebaran (Mokwayosana "Lying Star"),¹⁴ plus the multicolored stars of Orion's Belt (Ipi'lakkyia "In-a-row"), the Pleiades (Kupaakwe "Seeds") and the eleven stars of Taurus including the Hyades (Sholiikwe "Stick Game People"). Each man paints a single-color. Hanging from his right shoulder down to his left hip is an inverted dappled fawn, filled with seeds of both wild and domestic plants. In his right hand he carries a long string of speckled cottontails, drake mallards with emerald heads and violet wing patches, and several grey and copper ring-necked pheasants. In his left hand is a lit juniper torch. Each year at Shalako he kindles fire by friction to light his torch and then, with his ceremonial father, leads the Council of Gods into the village.

With the five-member Council of Gods come two of the twelve Salimopiya, warriors and protectors of the six dance groups. On the top of their heads, pointing behind them toward the west, land of the dead, is a sagebrush stick wound in yellow parrot, iridescent duck, and sandhill crane feathers. On the sides of their masks are painted two large composite multicolored *tenatsali* flowers, representing a hallucinogenic mixture containing mariposa lilies, lupines, cardinal flowers and datura blossoms. These flower-petal prayers of red, yellow, white and turquoise are associated with the priestly power of travel along the Milky Way. Each Salimopiya has a single black double-billowed-cloud eye, much like the masklike eye markings of the raccoon. Stiff raven ruffs and scores of turquoise, and coral necklaces surround their necks; strings of white and black corn kernels dangle down their backs, war pouches criss-cross their bare chests. They wear cotton dance kilts, embroidered with butterflies and flowers, held up by a

blue leather belt; they are bare-footed with spruce anklets and carry yucca whips in both hands. The right whip, with its tips forward, is used to purify people who have suffered from bad dreams or bad luck, and the left, with tips backward, conceals wild and domestic seeds that are being made-strong (*i'ts'umme*) for spring planting. The Salimopiya neither talk nor sing, but only give the "*ik'ok'u*, the high-pitched squeal of the deer. Their breath brings winter winds.

Having given his first befeathered and bejewelled baton to the keeper of the Longhorn mask who is responsible for the Council of Gods, Pawtiwa gives a second baton to Molanhakto, The Father of the Mudheads, who then appoints nine men, usually from a single medicine society, to serve as clowns for a year. These ten clowns, who are associated with the nadir and the four sacred wombs below the surface of the earth (*awitelin tsitta* literally "four-chambered mother") in which the people lived before emergence, are the infertile offspring of the incestuous union of brother and sister. Both their bodies and their cotton masks are painted orange-brown with sacred clay gathered at Kachina Village during the summer solstice pilgrimage, once each four years. Ears and genitals protrude knoblike from their heads—each one stuffed with cotton wool, garden seeds, and the dust of human footsteps. Their eyes and mouths, turned inside out and doughnut-shaped, express eternal surprise. They are without noses or hair and are nude, except for small black kilts.

Each one of these ten clowns has a separate personality, and each brings a separate gift. Their Father, with a miniature rabbit snare dangling from his right ear, brings native squash; The Speaker, rarely speaking and when he does irreverently, brings yellow corn; Great Warrior Priest is a coward (blue corn); Bat fears the dark and dresses in a woman's manta (red corn); Small Horn thinks he is invisible (white corn); Small Mouth talks constantly (sweet corn); Old Buck is frisky and giggly as a young girl (black corn); Gamekeeper lost two of his brothers to game hunters (speckled corn); Water Drinker is always thirsty (water gourd); and Old Youth is the advisor of the team (*shipitaku* "veins of cracked parched corn"—the gift of psychic knowledge).

During Shalako these clowns play bean-bag toss, hide-and-seek and other childish games. They also tease and chase and are chased by the six giant Shalakos. As the evening progresses, they tell lewd jokes about the owners of the host homes. Between stints of outrageous behavior they prove helpful in refastening costumes onto dancers, cuing performers who have forgotten song lyrics, and miming the songs for the audience. They are simultaneously childish and mature, "grandsons" and "grandfathers" of the *kokko*. These ambiguous beings

are considered the most "powerful," or "dangerous" (*attanni*) of all the impersonated deities.

Pawtiwa leaves six other batons for the owners of the host homes who then, in consultation with each other, appoint six of the twelve Shalako impersonators. The hosts usually appoint men from within the kiva groups of the eldest male in the family. Each of the six Shalako masks has two impersonators who alternate in wearing the mask while dancing. Each host also selects one of the thirteen medicine societies to provide twenty hours of continuous Shalako dance music. The society selected is often the one that the eldest female member of the host family belongs to.

Immediately after their appointment these priestly men with their wives enter a year-long liminal period in which they must suspend worldly activities, including travel outside the reservation, and all of their modern economic pursuits, such as wage labor and jewelry making. Instead, they hunt, farm, cook and help to build and decorate one of five to eight new homes that the host families are preparing for the sacred Shalako event. Eight is the rarely fulfilled ideal, one for each of the six Shalako masks, one for the Mudhead group and one for the Council of Gods. Fewer houses are possible by doubling up, but anything less than six houses is felt to be inadequate. Sometimes there are two Shalako masks in a single house or else one Shalako mask and the Council of Gods. The Mudheads should have their own house; from here they sally out all night long to visit the other houses and tease the giant Shalakos.

People will ask to host a Shalako as much as seven years in advance, but the unstable economic conditions at Zuni often make it impossible for a particular extended family to build a Shalako house the year they pledged to do so, causing the doubling up of the performers. Host families who were forced to drop out in a given year will sometimes band together with fellow kiva, clan, or medicine society members and pool their resources. Since the impersonators must be fed each day all year long and the entire village plus the visitors must also be fed on Shalako night, one family may be responsible for the procuring and preparation of food while another may provide the house-building supplies. Today, counting lost wages, building supplies and food, the total expenses for entertaining the people, ancestors and gods is well over \$150,000. At the height of the Zuni jewelry boom, during the late 1960s and into the mid 1970s, two sisters we know sponsored one Shalako house each, within seven years of one another. Today, with the sagging jewelry market, unstable national economy and cutbacks in local, state and government jobs this ceremonial enthusiasm may no longer be possible.

Families of the Shalako impersonators lose an entire year's income when a husband and wife must cease jewelry making or wage jobs in Gallup in order to engage in a wide range of other activities, including nightly prayer, chant and dance rehearsals; weekly and monthly sacrifices of food, valuable feathers and gems to the sun, moon and ancestors; and religious retreats, pilgrimages, foot races and dance-dramas. All these sacred activities are accompanied by periods of fasting and sexual continence. But the most difficult of all the regulations, in the opinion of both the host families and the families of men who have served in the Shalako dancing-clowning priesthood, is that regardless of what happens in their personal lives, they must not express the slightest disappointment, sorrow, or anger but instead, they must be happy, kind and gentle all year. Ideally, they should not even experience any of these rather common human emotions.¹⁵

Each month throughout this year, during the full moon, prayersticks are offered at distant shrines to the *kokko* priests by the men who will impersonate them at Shalako. On the morning of the tenth prayerstick planting (the eleventh in years when an intercalary month is inserted), which occurs sometime between late September and late October, the impersonators of Longhorn (Sayatasha) and Father Koyemshi (Molanhakto) receive from the North Priest a cotton string with forty-nine knots, some of which contain ground shell, coral and turquoise. From this day on, through the first day of Shalako, one knot is to be untied each morning at dawn and prayerstick plantings are done at nearby shrines once each ten days. Ahayuuta icons are also constructed at this time and placed in shrines located in the semicardinal solstitial directions. This forty-nine day period is known as Kachina Doings (Kohayto). The public part of Shalako begins on the day the fortieth knot is untied, with the arrival that night of the ten Koyemshi. They make a circuit of the four sacred dance-plazas, announcing the coming of the *kokkopriests* by making humorous and obscene statements, and then enter their host home for an eight-day retreat.

The forty-eighth day of Kohayto is the day on which the Council of Gods, including Shulaawitsi with his unmasked ceremonial father, Longhorn, Huututu, the two Yamuhakto, and the two warrior Salimopiya, all cross the Zuni river and enter town. This event is known as Kachina Arrival (Kokko Aawiya). They make an anti-sunwise circuit of the village beginning in the south along the river front, where they stop at two excavations (Tekyalhnaawa and Onaawe) and then move on to the east side of town to an excavation near Dragonfly (Shumaakwe) medicine society house, then on to Big Plaza (Tehwitton Lhana), Torn Place (Ts'iya'aawa) and Back Wall Plaza (He'ky'apaawa). These are the locations of six of the earth shrines that receive Shalako prayersticks.

In different years the first planting of a prayerstick takes place in different excavations, but the anti-sunwise direction of the circuit is always the same. Anti-sunwise circuits are used during the indoor winter *kokko* dances while sunwise circuits are used outdoors in summer *kokko* dances. During Shalako anti-sunwise circuits are used both outdoors and indoors.

After these prayerstick rituals the members of the Council of Gods proceed to their host home, which they bless by placing prayersticks inside the threshold and in a small altar hanging from the center of the ceiling (shrine of the zenith). Then they mark the centers of the four house walls in an anti-sunwise pattern—north, west, south, east—with four cornmeal-flour streaks and root (*lhakwimokya*) them by touching them with prayersticks and dance wands, or striking them with yucca whips. Finally, in the center of the floor, in the shrine of the nadir, they plant seeds of all kinds of wild and domestic plants. Now they remove their masks and begin a smoking ritual with the male members of the host household, passing a hand-made cigarette of native tobacco back and forth while exchanging reciprocal kinship terms—father, son; elder brother, younger brother; uncle, nephew; grandfather, grandson; granduncle, grandnephew.

Right at sunset, when both the sun and new moon set together, the giant Shalako masks enter the village. There are six of these Shalako masks, one for each of the six sacred color directions and kiva groups within the *kokko* society. They arrive from their sacred spring, called Belonging to Shalako (Sha'lako'naawa) and located west of the village on the way to Kachina Village, then cross the Zuni river and, as the Council of Gods did earlier, plant their prayersticks in the excavations. These ten-foot-tall Shalako deities are the visual antithesis of the Mudheads. They are stately, complex and clean while the Mudheads are sillylooking, simple and dirty. The great Shalako masks are constructed with a single long cottonwood pole in the center. On top of the pole sits a turquoise helmet mask, outlined by a fan of spotted eagle plumes framed by two gently curving turquoise horns from which dangle one red and one white fluffy eagle breast feather. Above the circular protruding eyes, on their black bangs are tied four small yellow parrot feathers. On the backs of their heads, just behind the eagle fan, there is a bunch of long red scarlet macaw tail feathers pointing upward and a handspun cotton string dotted with fluffy white eagle down trailing along behind on the full length of the black wig, weighted down by a large turquoise nugget or an iridescent abalone shell. Around their necks are turquoise and coral necklaces and a glossy-black raven-feathered collar. Just above is a tubular turquoise foot-long articulated wooden beak or muzzle that claps open and shut by means of hidden strings.

The Shalako impersonator, who is working the beak, holds up the center pole at waist height. He is surrounded by flexible hoops attached to the pole and entirely covered by six white cloth embroidered blankets (*miheewe*) that are woven by Hopi men and used at Hopi as wedding robes then later embroidered and used as *katsina* clothing at Hopi and traded to Zuni. Two fox skins for arms are attached under the mask and ancient stone axes are concealed within embroidered belts worn by the impersonators. After their arrival in the village, these wonderfully strange composite nonhuman beings or raw people enter their respective host homes, which they root by touching the four walls, burying a prayerstick under the front door, and placing two prayersticks tied together, a turquoise one for the Sun Father and a yellow one for the Moon Mother, in the ceiling altar. These two prayersticks are a prayer for fertility.

At about this time, in its own host home, the Council of Gods begins its four-and-one-half hour unison chanting of a sacred migration myth that cites all the places the people stopped on their search for the center of the world (see Bunzel 1932a:710–56). Afterward, in each home, the elder and younger brother Shalakos chant in unison their own two-hour sacred migration myth (see Bunzel 1932a:762–76). At midnight a ritual of aggregation or reincorporation, in the form of a communal feast, is begun by the women in each host home. First, they serve the masked performers and medicine society choir, followed by family members, friends, kiva group members and visiting Zunis, other Pueblos, Navajos and Anglos. The Shalakos spend the remainder of the night until dawn, dancing up and down the entire length of the room, jingling their sleigh bells while emitting the high-pitched deer squeal, clapping their beaks, and suddenly whirling to chase small mud-colored clowns. Shortly before dawn, just as the morning star rises (or if there is no morning star at the first light in the east), Longhorn climbs on the roof of his host home to pray and then unties the forty-ninth and final knot in his string. Now Pakokko, a Zuni kachina version of the Navajo Yeibichai, Cha'kwayina (sung in the Laguna language), and other masked and unmasked performances may begin. These last until breakfast when the women of the host home wash the sacred paints off the Council of Gods and the Mudheads, blessing them and thanking them for their performances.

The second day brings early morning foot racing, ceremonial hunting, ritual killing, lying in state and final departure for the six giant Shalako masks. This is followed by four nights of masked and unmasked dancing when all kachina society members, plus all Zuni curers, dance in the Shalako host homes. The curers are an impressively shamanic group dressed in their bearskin open-faced masks with gaping

mouths revealing frightening teeth, red-leather tongues, and long-black beards, bearskin moccasins and mittens with intact claws. They dance around individually, growling at people, doing sleight-of-hand tricks, crystal gazing, and on-the-spot cures. The seventh day is Kachina Departure (Kokkwaawanne), with outdoor dancing and singing of long lines of masked dancers from all six of the kivas performing simultaneously, mixing up (*iipotik'ee'a*) their songs, dances, masks and hearts, followed by a massive public gift-giving in which the Mudheads are compensated with color televisions, washing machines and hundred dollar bills for their year of ludic service. Then, right at sunset, when the week-old moon is directly overhead, the Molaawe ritual begins. Ten young Zuni girls, representing the sacred Corn Maidens, participate in foot races. Following this comes the convocation of all dance masks and their removal from the village until after the coming winter solstice. At midnight, when the moon sets, the week of Shalako ritual officially ends. Now, in a matter of just a few days, the annual cycle will begin with Teshkwi, and other Zunis will again take on the year long duties of the *kokko* priests.

NOTES

1. My research at Zuni Pueblo, begun in 1969, was undertaken with the permission of the head of the Zuni civil government, Robert Lewis. Since then, both the field work and the library research have been supported, on separate occasions, by grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research and a Weatherhead Fellowship at the School of American Research. I am most grateful to all of the people and institutions that made this project possible.

2. The orthography used here for Zuni words is a practical one in which the vowels [a,e,i,o,u] should be given their continental values; double vowels [aa,ee,ii,oo,uu] should be held longer than single ones; most consonants should be pronounced as in English, except that [p] and [t] are unaspirated, [lh] should be pronounced simultaneously and [ts] is like the "ts" in English "bats." The glottal stop ['] is like the [tt] in the Scottish pronunciation of "bottle." Double consonants [cch,hh,kk,ll,llh,mm,nn,pp,ss,ssh,tt,tts,ww,yy,'] are held a bit longer than single ones.

3. In the past this office was filled by the Sun Priest (Pekwin). The last man to fill this sacred office moved to Gallup during the 1950s, which is forbidden and later died there and was not replaced. His calendrical duties were taken over by the North Priest.

4. Currently there are fourteen matrilineal clans at Zuni.

5. This Zuni land of the dead includes many sacred springs, caves and hilltop shrines. However, it is currently considered by the U.S. government as outside of reservation boundaries. Zunis are very distressed about this because it is *the* most important of all Zuni shrines. The tribal government with the aid of their attorneys, is currently lobbying Congress for special legislation to recover this sacred land.

6. Cushing (1883:13, 1896:379) translated *aawonaawill'ona* ("The One Who Holds the Roads") as an epithet for the Sun Father alone, thus submerging the female principle. Stevenson (1904:25), overreacted to this and invented a nonexistent androgynous creator god.

7. It should be noted that this is a correction of Stevenson who reported that the Pekwin "has been known to be in error" (1904:108) in his calculation of the solstice.

Apparently, she simply translated *itiwan'a* as solstice and then assumed that any deviation from our own solstices (December 22 or June 22) was in error. Unfortunately there is no good English translation for this conjunction of turning sun and full or first appearance of the new moon.

8. It is said that before the people began to impersonate the *kokko* deities they came in person and always took a woman away with them to the land of the dead (Kroeber 1916:277).

9. I have chosen the English term "icon" rather than "fetish" to refer to the wooden images of the Zuni twin War Gods. According to the O.E.D. an icon is "a representation of some sacred personage in painting, bas-relief, or mosaic, itself regarded as sacred and honoured with worship or adoration" (1366); while a fetish is "an inanimate object worshipped by savages on account of its supposed inherent magical powers" (988). Zuni Pueblo has recently been successful in their requests for the return of certain of these sacred icons to the Pueblo from which they had been stolen during the last century and sold to collectors and museums (see Eriacho and Ferguson 1979; Canfield 1980).

10. With the recent death of the new Tribal Governor and the consequent advancement of the council members, a Zuni businessman, who does not close his enterprises during Teshkwi, may be in line to receive an important post. However, the House Chief has stated that he will not give the oath of office (a necessity for serving) to a man who has made a mockery of his own religion.

11. The thirteen medicine societies also have masks and since women participate in these societies, but are excluded from the kachina society, many choose to dance as masked medicine *kokko*.

12. Picchiikwe is an untranslatable clan-name that Stevenson translated as Dogwood, a nonexistent species in the Zuni bioregion.

13. Forty years ago the prayersticks on top of Longhorn and Huututu's masks were reversed so that they were pointing backwards (like those of the warrior Salimopiya) toward the west (death) instead of forwards toward the east (life). This created a dispute which was resolved by the religious leadership of Zuni Pueblo by consulting the photographs and color plates in Stevenson (1904 Plates LIV and LV).

14. The Zuni Lying Star is almost certainly Aldebaran since it is a red star near the ecliptic where the planets wander and it precedes Mars in rising. Zunis were interested in distinguishing this star from the true morning star because they used to time their raids on the Navajo for the period of deepest sleep. If they erred and left too early, when the Lying Star rose, their enemies might still be awake.

15. This priestly behavior of Shalako impersonators, their families and the host families may explain Benedict's (1934:52-119) misinterpretation of Zuni ethos as "Apollonian."

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