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ANCIENT TRADITIONS, MODERN CONSTRUCTIONS: INNOVATION,
CONTINUITY, AND SPIRITUALITY ON THE POWWOW TRAIL

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Abstract: In contemporary Indian Country, the majority of people who identify as “Indian” fall into the “urban” category: away from traditional lands and communities, in cities and towns wherein the opportunities to live one’s identity as Native can be restricted, and even more so for American Indian religious practice and activity.

This article will explore a possible theoretical model for discussing the religious nature of urban Indians, using aspects of the contemporary powwow as exemplary, and suggest ways in which the discourse on Native American religious practices can inform the larger discussion of religion in general by implying a comparative direction between urban Indians and other religious actors in American secular society.

Key Words: American Indian, Performance, Identity, Ethnicity, Spirituality, Dance, Religion, Powwow, Embodiment, Modernity

One of the principal problems for urban Indians is how to remain Indian; in spite of their various difficulties, they do remain Indian by keeping together through a network of communications, by getting together for kinds of celebrations and powwows. There's greater unity among Indians today. The young urban Indian particularly wants to understand himself in traditional terms.

-Leland Orchard (Kiowa)¹

When I'm feeling depressed, or if I'm having a hard time, the main thing that will get me out of that is a pow-wow. I don't care what is going on in my life; if I'm at a pow-wow I'm happy.

-Norma Rendon (Oglala)²

Perhaps the most visible manifestation of American Indian traditions to non-Indians, the public-access intertribal powwow, serves as a unique and complex manifestation of identity negotiation, spirituality, and social networking for the Indian participants. Both the result of and a venue for contemporary Native religious, social, and political continuity within the confines of modernity, the powwow and its associated activities serves as a key feature in the struggle to maintain traditional orientations in a country that continues to challenge that very expression. This is perhaps most significant among the urbanized Indian populations in the US, providing many Natives in urban centers with one of the few outlets for traditional Native expression.

In spite of the presence of excellent works such as *Powwow*, edited by Clyde Ellis, Luke Lassiter, and Gary Dunham, and Tara Browner's *Heartbeat of the People: Music and Dance of the Northern Pow-wow*, scholars of religion have given the powwow phenomenon little notice, due in part to the relative invisibility of indigenous traditions in the Academy, but also due to the controversial nature of the claim that the powwow represents an aspect of Native sacred traditions. This article is an attempt to suggest a direction for the discourse on contemporary American Indian religious identity using the intertribal powwow as an anchor, providing insight into the historical and social significance of the religious nature of the Native participation in pan-tribal traditions. "Pan-Indian" practices, those that treat tribal-specific traditions liberally and opt for common-theme activities germane to Native American communities generally, often form the core of culturally-specific spirituality for both urbanized Indian

communities (whether residing in off-reservation lands, multicultural metropolitan areas, or both), and land-based communities for whom assimilation has effected the level of traditional (tribally-specific) participation.

The significance of the powwow to Religious Studies lies in the fact that this form exists as an essential aspect of the religious lives of many American Indians, especially those who can be termed “urban Indians.” The discussion here serves as the theoretical direction of a larger research project on the spirituality of urbanized Indian communities, which explores ways in which the study of contemporary Indigenous religions can provide insight into the discussion regarding the religious/secular divide. It is my contention that the significance of embodied practice in the formation and maintenance of religious identity cannot be overestimated, and that the contemporary expression of American Indian spirituality provides an ample focusing lens through which to view the role of religious action in the processes of religious identity negotiation in modernity. Both following and critiquing the social constructivism of Berger and Luckmann expressed in their seminal text *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*³, I suggest that contemporary American Indian communities are aware of the institutionalization of some key images associated with “The Indian” as a social construction, a construction that exists in the larger storehouse of American social knowledge⁴, and engage these images noetically in an ongoing effort to gain and maintain agency with regard to their individual tribal identities. Thus, the intertribal powwow represents an important venue for representative interaction, establishing and valorizing a broad Native presence that can support individual tribal efforts to increase traditional communal identities.

This initial foray requires significant treatment of a host of relevant issues, namely, the nature of contemporary American Indian religious identity, how that identity manifests in “urban Indian” settings, and what exactly qualifies the contemporary powwow as a religious phenomenon. After providing an overview of both the intertribal powwow and its history, I explore the concept “Indianness” in order to bring some focus to the topic at hand and to highlight what I view as the foundations of indigenous philosophical systems, namely, locale, sacred power, and protocol. In addition, my own concept, that of referring to “re-traditionalism” as *reprise* will need illumination. Finally, the connections between Native American religious identity negotiation, the performative aspects of the intertribal powwow and pan-Indian practices, and religious culture as it interacts with modernity in general populations. My intent is to establish the parameters both for my own future work on this topic, as well as the interrogation of concepts germane to the study of religion in modernity in general.

The Intertribal Powwow

The history of the powwow is difficult to discern, and I will here draw on Tara Browner's excellent book, *The Heartbeat of the People: Music and Dance of the Northern Powwow*, and the seminal text on contemporary powwow issues, *Powwow*, edited by Clyde Ellis, Luke Lassiter, and Gary Dunham.

The discussion on origins seems to focus on the fact that "powwow" is from the Nagaransett (Algonquian) term *pau wau*, which was used for healing ceremonies first observed by German immigrants to Nagaransett territory in the Northeast⁵. In fact, Browner points out that much of the early use of the term is found in the writings of German immigrant folk healers who referred to their Indian counterparts as "powwow doctors."⁶ The term was evidently utilized by subsequent Euroamericans to refer to any gathering of Indians, and the vernacular use of the term has tended to cause a relative dearth of serious analysis of the form beyond that being done by excellent researchers in the area of Ethnomusicology such as Browner. However, the important role that the powwow plays in contemporary Indian Country cannot be denied, and contested issues of identity, authenticity, economic exploitation, and spiritual significance are all part of the cultural negotiation engaged in by contemporary Native communities. Thus, the powwow makes an excellent context for the utilization of the theoretical approach central to this article.

The dance styles and regalia associated with the modern powwow, have their origins in the Pawnee *Iruska* ("the fire is in me") dance, the rights to perform this dance were then sold to the Omaha, who then sold the rights to the Yankton Sioux, who then gave the rights to the Tetons⁷. Throughout all of these transitions, the basic form of the dance remained, though the Omaha replaced the Pawnee use of four "water drums" (drums with an amount of water in them to produce a particular sound) with a single "big drum"⁸. The Pawnee, who received the *Iruska* via a vision given to a man called Crow Feather, set the standard for regalia, as well, as Crow Feather was directed to create a particular head piece, made of porcupine quills and deer hair, as well as a crow-feather belt⁹. These two items form the basis for elements of the men's traditional regalia—the "roach" (headpiece) and "bustle" (feather belt). The diffusion of this dance in early White contact period is a story complex in the extreme (far too large to recount here), the significance of which is the fact that Indians of many different tribal backgrounds began to adopt the dance, regalia, and musical styles of this system as a method for maintaining their Indigenous identity in the face of assimilation pressures. Though the dances and music may have originated outside of the tribal tradition of an individual participant, or the sponsoring Native community, they nonetheless aid in the preservation of Native identity, which also gives rise to specific traditional retention. One example of this process can be found in the

work of ethnomusicologist Chris Goertzen on the role of powwows in the preservation of communal identity among tribal groups in North Carolina. He finds that the Occaneechi-Saponi community sponsors three annual powwows, each held in close proximity to lands that served as landbase for the Occaneechi prior to White intrusion¹⁰. Thus, these events serve to both bolster Indian presence in North Carolina, but also to call attention to the history of the Occaneechi in particular.

Much of the history of the powwow as a popular event in Indian Country includes the level of importance placed on the powwow as a method for teaching Indian youth about their heritage. The most modern powwows include competition dancing, in which small monetary prizes and gifts are awarded to the winners of different categories associated with dancer age, style, and gender¹¹. It is this competition aspect that is given the credit for enticing youth to participate, and once they are willing and enthusiastic participants, the hope is that that enthusiasm will translate into other areas of Indian cultural identity formation and maintenance, and key to my study is the fact that many communities depend upon the local powwow as a way to ensure that their children receive important information about tribal heritage and spirituality.

Powwows have a fairly standard format when writ large¹², but are again opportunities for addressing much more localized issues. Included in most powwows are the Gourd Dance, an honoring dance participated in by military veterans who are members of various Gourd Societies; the Grand Entry, which includes all powwow dance participants (generally, those who are in dance regalia), preceded by a color guard carrying the US Flag, the flag of the state where the powwow is held, and an Indian Eagle-Feather Staff; and an emcee, who keeps the activity organized, calling for certain dance songs from the participating drum groups, identifying the dance style featured during any given song, and presiding over the competition dances. The emcee also entertains the crowd with jokes and other patter in between dance songs, and this patter can be quite important in terms of the political implications of the powwow described below. The emcee can call attention to particular honorees, assert the proper behavior expected on both Indian and non-Indian participants, as well as orate on Indian issues generally, calling attention to the historical treatment of Indians, current events, and/or exhorting those present to behave respectfully toward Indian culture and others in general. The emcee is really only limited by his desire to remain among the pool of potential emcees when it comes time to decide on the personnel for the next powwow, and his microphone makes his voice a constant presence during the entire powwow weekend¹³.

Invited drum groups accompany the dancing, the number of drums dictated by the size of the powwow and availability of the groups. Drum groups are organized, and generally follow the powwow circuit in their regions, as do many of the powwow dancers. The protocols observed when

engaging in activities associated with the drums provides a key insight into the inherent religiosity associated with contemporary pan-Indian spirituality in general, as the drums are treated as honored beings, given gifts of tobacco and sage, and the drummers observe a strict decorum when in its presence.

Dance regalia, too, are treated with much respect, and one enters into a sacred manner once it is donned. An arena director serves for the entire powwow, with much of his responsibilities concentrated on the actual dance circle, maintaining order, and on constant vigil for feathers, which may inadvertently drop from dance regalia. If a feather is to touch the ground, the dancing stops, the arena cleared, and the feather ceremonially gathered and returned to its owner, in keeping with traditional protocols.

The role of “traditional” Native culture at these events transcends typical uses of that term, in that much of the materials that go into dance regalia are modern in origin, and the styles, especially the “fancy” dance styles of both men and women have developed innovative steps over the years. In addition, songs sung by drum groups can either be very old or very recent, some are humorous and sung in English, others are in various Prairie tribal languages, others still are melodious sung syllables without direct translation. Indeed, one key feature of my approach is to interrogate the very nature of the concept “tradition,” as the key to traditionalism at the powwow is the presence of, and respect for, Native protocols and the adherence to these by participants as well as non-Indian observers. Honoring elders, asking permission, and generally engaging in a weekend of “Indianess” makes the event traditionally Indian, even if that event is simulcast on local television or streamed over the Internet for home-bound Indians to enjoy.

In addition, the powwow has become a source for other community-oriented events, such as giveaways (the gifting of items to honored guests), informational booths on Native health and nutrition, and especially for socializing with other Indians. The powwow as a cultural fair for non-Indian participation is evident on the surface, with vendor booths selling arts and crafts, food, and craft materials, but less evident to the casual observer is the active contestation of space engaged in by the Indian community. The powwow requires adherence to certain protocols by all involved, and the non-Indian participants are asked to follow certain rules (no alcohol is allowed, photos are to be taken only with permission, entrance to the dance ground is regulated, etc.) and it is here that Indians can assert their authority over non-Indians in an act of subversion of dominant cultural paradigms. This expression of pan-Indian identity, along with the utility of the powwow in expressing the value of Indianess and asserting the continued presence of Native Americans, gives the powwow an obvious cachet in the maintenance of Native identity in contemporary Native American communities.

“American Indian-ness”

Central to the issue of Native religious identity resurgence is the context for the reckoning of American Indian identity in the first place. While the issue of identity is certainly complex and contentious in any context, given the history of Indian-White contact, the categories for expressing that identity become even more politically charged. Hilary Weaver, in her insightful article “Indigenous Identity: What is it, and Who Really Has it?”¹⁴, suggests that there is not even consensus on terminology when she asks,

“Are we talking about Indians, American Indians, Natives, Native Americans, indigenous people, or First Nations people? Are we talking about Sioux or Lakota? Navajo or Dine? Chippewa, Ojibway, or Anishnabe? Once we get that sorted out, are we talking about race, ethnicity, cultural identity, tribal identity, acculturation, enculturation, bicultural identity, multicultural identity, or some other form of identity?”¹⁵

Far from being one simply of semantics, the issue of naming lies at the center of my approach to the problem at hand. I view the act of defining as political, thus terminology takes on a particularly important level of significance. What I intend to do here is outline the basic parameters of the category “American Indian religious identity,” with emphasis on the political utility of that category from the perspective of Native people in modernity. Though Weaver is most concerned with what she calls “cultural identity,” I follow much of the conventional discourse on American Indian cultures in that I find more overlap than difference between the categories associated with generalized “culture” and those which can be termed “religious.”¹⁶ Therefore, Weaver’s discussion will provide the frame upon which my discussion of identity will hang.

Weaver begins her article by recounting a tale in which two basketball teams, one Navajo, one Lakota, are preparing to vie for first place in an all-Native basketball tournament. When the Lakotas see the Navajos practice, they become worried about their obvious skills on the court. They then begin to note that the players look suspiciously Mexican, due to their dark skin and the presence of facial hair. Conversely, as the Navajos watch the Lakotas practice, also becoming concerned by the team’s skill, they note the light skin and short hair of many of the players, suspecting them of actually being White. Both teams approach the referees with their concerns, and suggest qualifications for Native authenticity: the Lakotas call for tribal enrollment cards, which some of the Navajos lack, and the Navajo team calls for a language-proficiency test, which many of the Lakotas fail. Ultimately, neither team won over the

referees, who cancelled the final game without deciding on a champion. This apocryphal tale, which I have heard in several other versions, highlights one of the difficult issues in Indian Country: the authenticity question and its ability to divide, rather than unite, Indians in both inter-communal issues, dramatized here by the story of the basketball teams, as well as intra-tribal divisions arising from resource-access issues. The process of identity authentication is one of “power and exclusion”¹⁷ in that the significance of identity is in who is left out. The contested parameters of what constitutes legitimate Native identity can be exploited to a certain degree in the furthering of the colonial project of the larger American society. Manipulation of the nature of “Indian-ness” by both Natives and non-Natives turns on the locus of authority for the legitimation of that identity. But where do the qualifying conditions for “Indian-ness” come from?

First and foremost, Weaver reminds us, is the role of language in the construction of these categories, and therefore the choices made when identifying the aboriginal inhabitants of North America, are significant. Take, for example, the difference between the terms “American Indian” and “First Nations,” the latter used almost exclusively in reference to Canada’s aboriginal communities. In addition, “Indian” may connote more romanticized, and less understood, stereotypes associated with Native people than “Native American.”¹⁸ As it has been my own experience that the term “Indian” is also the most often used self-identifier in Indian Country, that must also mean that the romanticized vision that accompanies the word may play a role in the self-identity associated with it.

The fluid nature of this self-identification is also an issue within the larger discussion of American Indian identity. As Joane Nagel articulates it, “...an American Indian might be a ‘mixed-blood’ on the reservation, from ‘Pine Ridge’ when speaking to someone from another reservation, an ‘Oglala Sioux’ or ‘Lakota’ when asked about tribal affiliation, or an ‘American Indian’ when interacting with non-Indians.”¹⁹ Perhaps more significant to my purposes here is that the fluidity of self-naming can also be measured longitudinally. For instance, a person may be content to identify “American Indian” at one stage in their life, but want to narrow that identity over time by learning more about their tribal culture and associating themselves with others within it.

Cultural identity issues are also associated to some degree with shared characteristics and/or common origins. You have to be born an Indian. However, it is also true that “American Indian” is necessarily a construct to begin with, as there was no need for a broad collective identity prior to European contact. This complex relationship between ascribed and achieved characteristics, while not unique to indigenous people, nonetheless creates the circumstances for the process of re-traditionalism in that American Indian religious identity is both linked to

ethnic reality as well as to religious choices. In the contemporary context, tribal practices, Christian church membership, and a hybrid of the two can all formulate the core of what any individual might term “traditional.”²⁰ This sense of identity as construct, using both tribal forms and external non-Indian aspects as the building blocks, informs Weaver’s discussion, and she identifies three key “facets” of identity: self identification, communal identification, and external identification²¹. While the relationship between internal and external sources for the construction of individual identity is a fairly standard view²², it is the importance of communal identification that makes indigenous identity unique in her view. I would suggest that religious identity in general draws from this middle category “communal identification” in a way that other forms of identity formation do not.

A key concept from Berger and Luckmann is helpful here, namely, the “social stock” of knowledge²³, the sum total of what everyone in the social group “knows” about the social world. The constructivist position is that this collection of knowledge is gained primarily, if not exclusively, through social interaction. Meaning is both gained and reinforced within communally-located semantic fields. The issue that Weaver has explicated is that the social stock of knowledge within Indian Country often includes stereotypical imagery associated with that produced by the colonialist imagination. Thus the *meaning* of “Indian-ness” for any individual emerges in the context of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous semantic universes. The constructionist variant (that the semantic *artifacts* available to any individual arise in a shared semantic universe) is also relevant in that Native identity in modernity is expressed most often through the employment of symbolic elements recognizable by BOTH Natives and non-Natives as “Indian.” The intertribal powwow provides a key venue for the expression of Native religious identity in a way that uniquely engages spiritual forms that are both idiomatic and universal, recognized by Natives and non-Natives, and flexible enough to include the breadth of Native spirituality.

Self-perception is the key to identity, and, following such social psychologists as Henri Tajfel and John Turner, also the basis of our adoption of in-group values.²⁴ In addition, Weaver points out that self-identity is never static and develops over time as the individual’s self-perception changes.²⁵ It may, in fact, be that all of the possible options from which to choose one’s identity do not present themselves until a relatively fixed point in the maturation process. This view is supported by the recent literature on female puberty ceremonial revival in American Indian communities that points to a cognizant, purposeful move toward a neo-traditional approach to womanhood. Inés Talamántez, for example, has shown that the *Isanaklesh Gotdł*, the Apache girl’s initiation ritual, remains the largest ceremonial cycle in Apache communities due, in part, to a desire by Apache women to impart a sense of womanhood that

conforms to a conglomerate of traditional Apache values, individual need in contemporary Apache communities, and modern feminist concerns.²⁶

What I propose as a response to such phenomena is a view that sees the true elements of culture, Weaver's "communal identification" and values, as traveling below the surface of overt behaviors and practices, a theoretical paradigm that accounts for a lifeway capable of adapting itself to new and changing circumstances while maintaining an adherence to traditional values and beliefs. I find the musical term "reprise," therefore, is a much more fitting one than "revival," "revitalization," or "resuscitation" when referencing the broad topic of "re-traditionalism" in that "reprise" alludes to the articulation of an earlier theme whose basic elements remain present throughout the piece. What most discussions of American Indian revitalization depend upon, is the assumption that repression of specific practices associated with American Indian religiosity and the eclipse of traditional beliefs and values by those of the dominant culture (Christianity, market capitalism, patriarchy, etc.) was total, and thus the re-traditionalism concept has been used to diminish the authenticity of some revitalization movements in Indian Country. This use, or misuse, of the concept is evident in the anthropological and historiographic employment of the specifically theological term "conversion" when referring to both religious and social adaptations by Indian communities over time. What these discussions need to do is to take a critical look at the use of that term, which a Religious Studies approach would do, and seek to discern a pattern wherein the religious conversion of Indian individuals or communities can be viewed as a tactic for remaining traditionally linked to their precontact identities.

While it seems counter-intuitive to argue that Christian conversion can be seen as a tool to resist assimilation, some excellent work has been done in this area, especially Michael McNally's discussion of the role Christianity has played in providing forms for the revival of Ojibway identity²⁷ and John Haskell's discussion of the development of Native American liturgies²⁸, among others. What is key to these analyses is the standard by which precontact cultures are measured for their variance vis à vis "Western" or Euroamerican ones. Viewing precontact cultures as viable, dynamic, and complex allows the historian to ask more interesting questions with regard to the colonial interaction. "Indigenesness," then, becomes a key factor in the discourse. In an attempt to provide a portable, cross-cultural concept for the category "indigenous," I suggest the dynamic interaction between three key categories: locale, power, and protocol.

Any discussion of indigeneity has to include a geographical referent, and I prefer the term "locale" when engaging this aspect of American Indian identity. The reasons for choosing the term "locale" rather than "place" or "space" is significant and requires some discussion here. The concept "place" connotes a location in geographic terms. While it is true

that land-based orientation is one of the key issues with regard to American Indian spirituality and that that set of issues will play prominently in the entirety of this work, geographic location is only one facet of the embedded quality of indigenous cultures. Much has been written on the topic of the importance of place to American Indian religious traditions and this central theme will be unpacked later in my argument. Suffice it to say here that my understanding of the category “locale” follows closely on that of Jonathan Z. Smith’s use of “place” in his seminal texts *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (1992) and *Map is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (1993), which illuminate the relationship between human activity and the construction of places.

For Smith, utopian religious systems are religions of “‘nowhere,’ of transcendence” and correspond to the quality of the immigrant²⁹. The religious activity of the immigrant, then centers on developing systems for accessing the transcendent, usually in the form of an omnipresent deity, through visions and/or epiphanies, which renders a religious system capable of bringing a sense of the sacred *along with* the disembedded cultures, or perhaps more precisely, allowing for the assumption that the sacred is *everywhere*, and therefore, *nowhere in particular*. Religious disembeddedness and portable gods allow for the assumption of any new region entered into as potential “space,” taken on authority of the immigrant’s utopian sacred system.

In contrast, an imminent sense of the sacred, a sacredness that *resides* with the people, assumes the role of the territory in adhering to that sacredness. In fact it may be, for some indigenous religious systems, that it is the *place* that authors the proper sacred behaviors. In other words, the logic of these “locative” systems assumes the land itself is an actor, and perhaps the *key* actor in the development of the sacred behaviors appropriate to that land. If “sacred behaviors” can stand in for the academic term “religion,” then the ultimate defining quality of indigenous religious systems may be the derivation of those systems from the landscape itself. Thus, the category “locale” used here begins with a sense of the deep connection between the sacred aspects of the universe and the physical reality of territory.

As Henri Lefebvre has shown³⁰, much of the modern project is an appropriation of space; the abstracting of space in order to control meaning, much like the process described as “disembedding” by Anthony Giddens³¹. It is the resulting abstract space that attempts to produce and impose social homogeneity. Seeing places as empty space to be traded as commodities allows for the dissolution of the lived social systems dedicated to those places, and it is partly in response to this social distancing that indigenous peoples attempt to exert traditional control in the reappropriation of sacred places, objects, and practices. The traditional authority over the locale exists as a localized power to which the people are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the homeland,

a lived social space that can be termed “sacred power.” What I suggest is that the contemporary intertribal powwow is an exercise in the creation of sacred space, not only in terms of the sacralization of profane area for the purposes of dance, but also to engage in the political act of asserting an aboriginal presence seen as inherently part of the landscape.

The Powwow as Locale

It is beyond the scope of this article to fully interrogate the category “sacred power” as it is employed in the study of religion. However, it is imperative that my use of this term achieves clarity sufficient to the understanding of my overall argument. My use of this term conforms closely to Mircea Eliade’s³² sense of something set apart from the “profane” or mundane. The larger issues involve *how* and *why* things are “set apart.” While there is much variety in the discussion of religious sacrality, there is also consensus as to the culturally-located nature of the act of categorizing the “sacred,” as well as the placing of items in that category (places, songs, objects, people, times, etc). In the modern context, American Indian religious reprise consists primarily of reorienting the community to the features of a tribally-defined sacred universe, which, like defining terms and appropriating space, constitutes a political act. The reprise of religio-cultural identity, then, occurs within the contested realm of signification³³.

Defining the sacred in traditional terms, and subsequently acting in relationship to the sacred, remains at the center of the reprise process. It is often this act that precludes the individual impetus for indigenous renewal. In other words, revitalizing communities draw individuals to it, further adding dimensions to the communal notions of the sacred. Therefore, sacred power is both culturally-located and contextual, following the definition of religion laid out above.

Sacredness can be seen as the manifestation of the principle organizing power in the universe. This follows closely Gregory Bateson and his approach using systemic theories in that the act of setting something, someone, sometime, or someplace apart as “sacred” is done to create markers for the assumptions that underpin a society, markers that protect these basic building blocks in the schismogenic nature of human culture³⁴. My attempt here is to orient the reader to my particular direction concerning the broad term “sacred” and the particular function that the term obtains in pan-Indian activities associated with a broad Native identification. Any given tribal sacred value will resonate with a broad, pan-Indian religiosity, and similarly, with a few key exceptions such as gender roles, the presence of sacred societies, and the role of a class of religious professional within specific tribal contexts, pan-Indian values will reflect specific tribal sacred norms. Powwow practices draw on this fluid nature of Native sacred ideals, in that broad categories of

religiocultural significance are assumed to be active in the dances, songs, and behavior of the participants. In terms of concrete circumstances regarding this ineffable quality, the actions taken in a communal setting that adhere to the overall sacred quality assigned to that setting follow a general proprietary patina I will here term “protocol.”

The power that resides in and works with the people is linked inexorably to the landscape itself. This connection between locale and power is what constitutes the special relationship the people living in that locale have to the power of that locale. This relationship, following the logic of Durkheim, connotes the relationship the people experience with each other. The social structure is therefore reflected in the relationship between the people and the sacred power within the context of the locale. This relationship requires a system for enacting both the social responsibilities given the sacred locale, and the sacred responsibilities to the source and manifestation of that power. I use here the term “protocol” to refer to this system.

While the term “protocol” has a fairly broad usage, with etymological connections to issues of etiquette, agreement, and propriety, all of the connotations are nonetheless both communal and active. One utilizes or refers to a protocol, and does so in order to arrive at an agreed-upon standard. I take the key features of this operational category to conform to the category “ritual.” However, my sense of sacred practice is at the center of this article, therefore the category protocol requires a much more extensive treatment. “Ritual,” as a feature of protocol, requires its own clarification here.

Again taking my lead from J.Z. Smith, ritual engenders a “gnostic” quality within religion³⁵, which reflects what Smith calls “an exercise in the strategy of choice.”³⁶ This distinction, that ritual is a thoughtful and purposeful exercise, defies the term’s vernacular use, which connotes mindlessness and empty repetition. Ritual provides a systematized method for encountering and interacting with the sacred, and is therefore often repetitive with regard to actual practice, and can be rote in the sense of second-nature. However, Smith shows that repetition and unconsciousness can impart, or result from, focused attempts at generating meaning. Rituals are, at their base, communally meaningful prescribed actions that communicate and enact the proper ethos given the shared understanding of the structure of the sacred universe. The conscious incorporation of traditional activities associated with American Indian tribal cultures by Indians engaged in cultural and religious renewal, are examples of Smith’s notion of strategy and choice, bringing Indian people to a larger sense of their cultural identity as well as communicating that identity to others, both Indian and non-Indian.

In terms of protocol, then, rituals provide important opportunities to engage the sacred system for the purposes of learning and displaying the knowledge of one’s proper role in that system. For indigenous

communities, the embedded nature of that system warrants ritualized approaches to daily life, as well. Thus, protocol can be seen as ritualized interpersonal interactions, with the assumption that the other-than-human world obtains personhood, as well as the human. Sacred beings and the natural world warrant diplomatic status, as do the members of the human community. It is this quality, that of proper behavior given the sacred nature of the lived universe, that underpins the use of the term “protocol” herein, and protocol provides opportunities to engage in the strategies of identity formation and negotiation through the employment of ritual acts and paraphernalia. Respectful decorum, awareness of the responsibility one has to the other-than-human world, and enacted cultural values are all key features of the powwow.

Identifying “Native”: Pan-Indianism in Review

Indigeness, the autochthonous and lived experience of locale, sacred power, and protocol, provides the contextual backdrop for this discussion of powwows as sacred practice, and its importance to the production and maintenance of Native religious identity. Indigenous identity is a growing movement worldwide, as people who trace their traditions to their lived locales attempt to reestablish control over their own cultural and religious destinies. My argument is that it is culturally-significant *practices* that provide the impetus for the revival of traditional religious identity, with the more individuated and internal issues associated with *belief* providing the supportive rationale for this identity. Further, I believe that this quality—that of the primacy of practice over a secondary role of religious belief—provides a helpful paradigm from which the comparative study of indigenous religions within modernity generally can proceed.

For Indigenous people, the tendency is toward fluidity with regard to personal identity, but a unity with regard to place. In other words, it is often difficult for the Native people with whom I work to see themselves as complete individuals apart from others; who they are as individuals is inherently situational. However, the world, and indeed the universe, is most often seen as a coherent tapestry that is impossible to parcel. Maintenance of a collective identity (most Indian nation’s name for themselves simply means “people” in their languages) is therefore dependent upon maintaining a fluid connection to a constant Universe. For Euroamericans, on the other hand, there seems to be a trend in the opposite direction. In the modern industrial West, people begin from a place of absolute ego, the establishment and maintenance of individual identity is paramount, and though we obviously change as people over time, we are always that same immutable individual moving through time and space, but the world is particulate in nature—a machine made up of

separate components that can be pulled out of context and understood on their own terms—which is in a constant and inexorable state of flux.

Many analysts view revivalism among Native Americans as vast transformations of current circumstances, and indeed, that is the case in some examples. The Handsome Lake Tradition; the Ghost Dance; and the Peyote Religion, the foundations of the Native American Church, all contain innovations in sacred practice, which are, especially in the cases of the Handsome Lake traditions and the Ghost Dance, meant to bring about radical change to the entire world. The use of these “radical shift” systems as benchmark references, however, has colored the way in which analysts have approached the issue of revitalization among contemporary American Indian communities, rendering a skewed version of the on-the-ground attempts made by many involved in this process today. In the majority of American Indian communities since the turn of the last century, I would argue, what constitutes a revival movement is the manifestation of the reprise process. This sense of the revitalization process assumes that the core aspects of the worldview never dissipated over time. Like a seasonal waterway, American Indian worldviews continue to flow, albeit in the sub terrene. The spiritual motives that once gave rise to specific ritual practices—practices that may have been suspended after contact—remain vital within communal relationships and traditional relationships with the universe. The process of identity revitalization involves merely taking the proper clothes out of storage, literally and figuratively, and donning them once again.

Any discussion of the role played by powwows in the reprise of American Indian religious communities in contemporary contexts must address the phenomenon collectively called “pan-Indianism.” A key feature of the development of individual tribal responses to modernity, it is also a factor in the creation of what I have been referring to as “Indian Country.” The historical realities surrounding the steady transformation from multiple and distinct tribal cultures to a broadly-defined ethnic reality that can be termed Native America, must include a discussion of the processes responsible for knitting together these various cultures into one common set of issues, concerns, and outlook called “Indian Country.” This reality, both a result of colonialism and a method of resistance to it, is a complex one which needs much more space than I am providing it here. However, after a brief overview of the discourse on this phenomenon, I will provide two key features, namely, the cooption of Plains Indian ritual complexes such as the *inipi* (Lakota sweat ceremony), and *Cannunpa Wakan* (the Lakota Sacred Pipe), and the development of pan-tribal networks in education, politics, and activism, which include the modern “powwow.” It is this process of connecting to one’s own individual tribal heritage by utilizing “pan-Indian” practices where traditional communal paradigms are elusive, as well as the realization of American indigenouness as a cultural value, that informs the discussion of reprise in extra-tribal

circumstances, making the concept “reprise” available for application to other religious contexts.

In his insightful book *The Return of the Native: American Indian Political Resurgence*,³⁷ Stephen Cornell employs the term “supratribal” to refer to the practice of some Native Americans, in some contexts, to employ a broad Indian identity irrespective of individual tribal differences. This term is helpful in that it doesn’t imply a negation of important connections to specific tribal contexts that “pan-Indian” can, but nonetheless points to the permeability of those boundaries in modern circumstances. A key aspect of the historical development of this identification alluded to by Cornell is the view of non-Indians, even from early colonial times, that any “supratribal” activities indicated assimilation³⁸. This view, that “supratribal,” pan-Indian identity represented a transitional stage or phase in the process of eliminating Indianess altogether, masked what may have been the more important aspect of this development: a tool for the resistance to assimilation. Like the Chumash adoption of Spanish as a common language, thus forming a collective unity that the Spanish never were able to discourage, supratribal interaction between Indians during the colonial period laid the groundwork for future collaborations that effectively resisted assimilation, setting the stage for more severe attempts by the nascent US government to force the issue through removal, boarding schools, and disenrollment³⁹. As has been shown by several political scientists, the expected response to violent suppression of a people is most often a solidification of their collective identity, and the continued growth of adaptive mechanisms for the assertion of that identity⁴⁰. Thus, it is possible to conceptualize the development of pan-Indian, supratribal practices as a response to the continued effort by the US government to erase Native American identity, leading to development of the practical tools for the maintenance Indian identity. What I will here propose is that it is this toolkit, comprised of practices and ideologies appropriate to the supratribal and pan-Indian context that provides much of the foundations for an eventual return to *tribal-specific* religious identity by keeping the possibilities of Indianess in the modern Native American consciousness. The supratribal practices available to people who identify as American Indian, therefore, provide the foundations for the reprise of religious practices and ideas in particular tribal contexts. While this process tends to apply to non-reservation-based Indian communities, the relevance of this pattern on US reservations and Canadian reserves where tribal traditions have lapsed is also notable. The key issue for my purposes here is that the reprise of American Indian religious identity often begins with practices, practices seen as being uniquely located in the cultural history of indigenous Americans generally, which provide the framework upon which a viable and coherent system of beliefs and values can be reconstructed. The cultural specificity of the practices ranges from

broadly pan-Indian to those with specific tribal connotations. The reprise of canoe culture in the Pacific Northwest tribes, the presence of the *Isanaklesh Gotál* complex in Apache country, and the Longhouse religion of the Haudenosaunee are all examples of this latter type, while the pan-Indian cooptation of sweating, the presence of the Sacred Pipe, and Plains Indian dance styles, serve as examples of the former.

One of the key issues with regard to the development of a pan-Indian movement has been the willingness of some tribal communities to share sacred information. For many tribes, there are restrictions on the sharing of this information with anyone, even mixed-blood members of their own communities. Therefore, one factor in the overt “Plains style” of supratribal activities is due to a distinct lack of such prohibitions in these tribal contexts, especially those of the Lakota. The Lakota, one of the divisions of the Siouan-speaking tribes of the northern Great Plains region, have also inculcated themselves in the American popular culture due to their well-reported resistance efforts during much of the nineteenth century. As the tales of the “Indian Wars” between followers of such chiefs as Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse and the US Cavalry reached the media consumers in the East, the image of the horseback-riding, war bonnet-wearing, tipi denizens of the Plains became the icon of America’s “wild West” and the representative figure of Indians in general. The later employment of this imagery by Hollywood further cemented the Plains Indian image in the modern American consciousness, as well as abroad⁴¹. It is no large leap of logic to assume that Americans of Native descent, to whom tribal identities were unavailable, would also draw from this iconic imagery when formulating their own self-image as Indians. In addition, the reservation system, owing to its role as a tool for the goal of assimilation alluded to above, tended to place Indians of multiple tribes on the same reservation, often by government fiat. Thus, Indians have, from relatively early in their interactions with non-Indian immigrants, consolidated ritual practices out of necessity. When removal policies⁴² gave way to the modernizing effects of the “Indian New Deal”⁴³, Indians of geographically distant tribal regions found themselves interacting in intimate religious settings, many of whom came to urban centers from multi-tribal reservations, or reservations on which spiritual knowledge had experienced a lapse. As it is an important factor in the role that powwows play in contemporary American Indian spirituality, Native urbanization deserves some explication.

Urban Indians

As these “urban Indian”⁴⁴ communities continued to grow, it was through the lens of pan-Indianism that many members viewed their spiritual lives. In Indian Health Service offices, Veteran’s Administration clinics, and independent agencies devoted to American Indian concerns,

these urban Indian communities began to formulate tribal-style interactions outside of specific tribal circumstances⁴⁵. The religious implications of this process are significant to my purposes, as this community-forming effort by urban and urbanized Indians revolves around culturally-specific activities such as singing, dancing, storytelling, traditional arts, etc., all which have religious connotations in their specific tribal contexts. When placed in relation to other Indians of different tribes, however, these practices often adjust to accommodate these differences, rendering a set of common understandings of Indianess and Native spirituality via the participation in a set of common practices⁴⁶. Thus, one can find Indians of various tribal backgrounds forming communities within which pan-Indian practices are the central religious feature⁴⁷, especially the Lakota, *inipi*-style sweat ritual, and the presence of the Sacred Pipe (Cannunpa) of the Lakota.

Sweating is nearly ubiquitous in classical American Indian contexts, and varies greatly in both ideological rationale and practical style⁴⁸. Ivan Lopatin divided the ethnographic category “bath” into “classes,” two of which are relevant to American Indians: “direct fire,” in which a fire was built in a small enclosure with sweating depending on heat alone; and “water vapor,” in which heated rocks are brought into the enclosure and water poured over them to produce the effect.⁴⁹ Such authors as Inés Hernandez-Avila, James Waldrin, and Wolfgang Jilek have attested to the variety of ideological rationale for this practice, with the following elements identified as fairly standard among the examples:

Sweating purifies the body.

The sweating enclosure places stress on the body, which purifies the spirit.

The enclosure represents the essential aspects of the creation of the universe.

The iconic sweat ceremony of the Plains tribes, known by the Lakota term *inipi*, has been best described by Raymond Bucko in his book *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary Practice*,⁵⁰ and the following aspects can be added to the list of elements of the sweat ceremony from the *inipi* material:

The Sweat Lodge represents the womb of the Earth.

The suffering experienced in the lodge is on behalf of the people.

In addition, for the Lakota as well as in other tribal circumstances, classical sweat ceremonials were generally engaged in peripherally to larger ritual complexes such as vision questing, seasonal observances, etc. Sweating provided a preliminary purification ritual prior to engaging in the larger ceremony, as well as a rite of re-entry to the community after hunts, battle, handling the dead, etc. While the physical act of sweating often had more mundane uses associated with personal hygiene, the ceremonial sweat is differentiated by the activities engaged in during the sweating process. In other words, the ritual sweat bath is accompanied by overt ritual activities such as singing, meditative prayer, and orations by leaders, and is also generally seen to be hotter and longer, adding to the physical stress of the practice. The ceremonial sweat has moved from the periphery to the center for contemporary Indian communities, given the dearth of ritual opportunities available to contemporary Indian people⁵¹.

The resulting corpus of material on sweating, given the additions from Lakota-specific rationale, has found its way into most Native sweat experiences, even those that on the surface are a result in the efforts to revive tribal-specific sweat practices. For example, the classical Chumash sweat was of the “direct-fire” variety, and no womb imagery is reported in the ethnographic materials⁵². However, most sweats in contemporary Chumash Country are of the “water vapor” style, and do incorporate the concept of a return to the womb to be re-born at the end of the sweat. The basic point, relevant to my purposes, is that much of Indian Country tends to include sweating as a central ritual activity, utilizing the larger ideological system alluded to above, given the inability to participate in some of their traditional ceremonial systems due to either traditional knowledge lapse, or the practical difficulties given the constraints of contemporary society and/or urban living.

The modern version of the Sacred Pipe also has its key origins in Plains ideologies, especially those of the Lakota⁵³. While, again, smoking tobacco and other non-intoxicating herbal mixes is fairly ubiquitous in classical Indian Country contexts, the specialized pipe of the Plains, consisting of a long (usually eight to eighteen inches, with the longer being the standard) thin stem made from hollowed cottonwood, and a separate, carved stone (a red soapstone known as catlinite is standard) t-shaped or elbow bowl, is most often found in urban Indian contexts. Tribal specificity is here again being asserted more frequently. For example, I interviewed a Chumash elder, Pilulaw Khus, who insists on a conical soapstone pipe endemic to Chumash Country, in all ceremonial smokes in which she participates. However, I observed much of the same imagery associated with the Lakota Pipe in her ceremonials. The Pipe imagery relies heavily on Black Elk’s account, reported by Neihardt in *Black Elk Speaks*, as well as by Joseph Epes Brown in *The Sacred Pipe*. This imagery derives from the visit to the Lakota by White Buffalo Calf Woman, a sacred being who brought the Lakota’s key ceremonial structure to them during a

time of difficulty for the people. The *Cannunpa*, which White Buffalo Calf Woman gave the Lakota and is still in their possession⁵⁴, was the central feature and provided the model for all subsequent pipes.

These two rituals, the sweat and the pipe, have also been aggressively co-opted by New Age and Neopagan communities, and since the same sorts of imagery are drawn upon by these groups, they are illustrative of the logic behind the contemporary American Indian reprise and thus will be commented on briefly here.

The New Age appropriation of American Indian spiritual practices and imagery has often been remarked upon by many Native activists as one of the most serious issues facing contemporary Indian Country⁵⁵. At the center of this debate, as I see it, are two key questions: Why do American Indian traditions appeal to non-Indian “seekers” (to borrow W. Clark Roof’s term⁵⁶), and how are we to theorize the difference between non-Indian appropriation of Native traditions and the appropriation of tribal-specific traditions by Indians of tribal backgrounds other than the ones being appropriated from? The implications of these factors speak to the very center of my thesis in terms of the role that practices play in forming and maintaining ideological principles seen as foundational to religious identity. For New Age and Neopagan seekers, I believe the answer to the first question I’ve posed is the role that ritual practice plays in the re-negotiation of religious identity in the contemporary American religious marketplace (to again borrow from Roof⁵⁷). Many seekers may be characterized as such by their desire to find a more fulfilling spiritual practice than that which is found in either their religious communities of origin, if any, or in the main-stream Christian paradigm that dominates American religious consciousness generally. Along with Eastern traditions and South Asian practices, the exotic practices of the “other” may provide the seeker with a significantly more evocative experience appropriate to the individualistic approach to religious identity formation in the contemporary American religious landscape. Sweating can be far more physically and emotionally intense than ritual activities available in a mainstream setting, and the Pipe imagery can be adapted to a broad, earth-based ideology. Sweating also evokes a “Mother Earth” image in the womb orientation of Lakota religion, and the smoking of a “peace pipe” is a key feature in the Indian imagery ensconced in the general American cultural psyche.

These issues also inform the second query—that of an analytical approach to supratribal use of the *inipi* and the *Cannunpa*. Again, I see two factors which need to be addressed, both relevant to the task of this article. First, many of the urban and other non-reservation Native people who engage in the kind of spiritual revitalization described herein are themselves “seekers.” As Roof points out, much of the development of the seeker comes from American cultural shifts at the end of World War Two. “Baby Boomers,” the statistical population spike as a result of the return

of American men from war, tend to connect with a cultural turn represented most clearly by controversies and protests surrounding the war in Viet Nam and the rise of the Hippie Movement. While Roof points to the fact that only a portion of Boomers can be seen to cluster at the hippie end of the scale, their presence in the cultural consciousness allows for an increase in the desire for individual agency in religious choices. That may have meant simply “switching,” moving laterally from one Christian denominational paradigm to another, or an all-out adoption of an identity that encompasses much of the exotic elements from Asia referred to above. For most, of course, there was, and continues to be, a middle-ground approach where many people engage in main-stream denominationalism which includes Christianity, Judaism, Islam, and “Hinduism,”⁵⁸ while simply augmenting their spiritual lives with elements chosen salad-bar-style from around the religious possibilities in the American religious marketplace. For contemporary American Indians, many of whom identify as “Christian” in most surveys⁵⁹, are engaged in a similar act of augmentation wherein Native American ritual provides either an opportunity to experience their traditional cultures while remaining Indian, or allow Boomer Indians to engage in a revitalization of what they view as a more “authentic” religious identity associated with their traditional Indian practices in deference to the adopted Christianity of the colonialist. For both of these groups, the possibilities of American Indian cultural traditions vary according to circumstances. In a reservation setting where many elders remember and practice the classical religious systems, the augmentation or transition is fairly straightforward. However, in urban contexts, where access to tribally specific traditions may be limited, or in reservation settings where traditional lapse has occurred due to the colonial process, the choices are somewhat more limited. An example of the former comes in the form of Wendy Rose, Native American poet, activist, and college professor, who identifies as “Hopi/Miwok,” two tribal traditions separated both geographically and ideologically separate (the Hopis are a Southwest Pueblo culture, the Miwok a temperate California forest culture), and she resides in the Sierra foothills of central California, away from both tribal settings. An example of the latter situation can be seen in the famous story surrounding the Alkali Lake Canadian First Nations reserve, in which cultural revitalization was hampered by a lack of traditional knowledge among the community members on the reserve. Practice-centered approaches to religious identity formation and maintenance again provide a theoretical framework for the analysis of supratribal, pan-Indian employment of cultural activities of tribes other than one’s own.

Conclusion: The Powwow as Spiritual Practice

Powwow participation is an important example of a pan-Indian activity that provides opportunities for Indian cultural revival. As with sweating and other pan-Indian practices, powwow dances, music, and regalia are steeped in the tribal traditions of the Great Plains, and regardless of one's tribal affiliation, the standard dances of the powwow derive from, and often replicate, traditional dances of the Plains with some regional innovations in style, mostly along general southern style/northern style motifs, as well as traditional/fancy divisions. Indeed, the "Fancy Dance" styles for both men and women have taken on a life of their own in terms of interpreting the movements of Plains dances and the rendering of the regalia appropriate to those dances.

While it is clear that powwows are both a tool for uniting Indians, it is also a divisive element, which, Ellis states, makes it, "no different from any other contemporary social, cultural, religious, and political" institution in Indian Country⁶⁰. Early participation in Wild West shows met with much disdain from traditionalists, and later Christian Indians tended to view powwow participation as a direct attack on Christianity⁶¹, and indeed, some still do.

At the center of the reprise process is the valorization of traditional American Indian worldviews, providing both individual and communal support through opportunities for regular ritual participation. Many programs dedicated specifically to issues in Indian country such as health and welfare, legal services, and youth education value traditional Native identity as essential for Indian health and sovereignty, and employ regular communal religious practices as a method for maintaining that identity⁶². That these religious practices draw from pan-Indian systems of supratribal identity in urban settings seems to make little difference, and key to my analysis is the movement of many Indians I have interviewed from supratribal activities to tribal-specific ones when they have been able to identify these and gain support from knowledgeable tribal members in their attempt to familiarize themselves with practices associated with their tribe of origin. Makahs who participated in Pacific Northwest "fish-ins" during the nineteen sixties and early seventies made use of the findings from the famous Ozette archeological excavation to channel that activist energy into specific Makah reprise efforts. Chumash who grew up dancing in California powwows now take their own children to activities associated with the *tomol*, the traditional Cumash plank canoe. I have participated in sweat ceremonies in the backyards of small-town California with Osage, Kickapoo, Haudenosaunee, and Tsalagi people as well as Chumash, those sweats were often accompanied by the Sacred Pipe, and distinctions between tribes were allowed to unite the participants in a broad sense of aboriginality and authentic

indigenusness regardless of the ethnographic incongruities that often accompanied these events. The key point is that many people, including the author, have gravitated toward Indianess gradually, incorporating tribal-specific activities along with supratribal ones. This process has its detractors, those who view any modern return to traditions as an act of construction that nullifies any claims to traditionalism⁶³ that emphasize the seeming incongruity between contemporary Indian communities and the felt need for traditional activities in order to achieve and maintain both physical and spiritual health. In this same way, early assumptions of pan-Indianism as a sign of assimilation continue as non-Indians view these activities, especially the intertribal powwow, as “Americana” available to all American as part of our collective past. It is in this milieu, that of competing discourses regarding American Indian religious continuity, as well as the “wooden” social scientific terms used in the perpetuation of the “vanishing Indian” myth with regard to contemporary Indian communities, where Indian people seek to employ exemplars of their religious, social, and economic connection to their ancestral past in order to make an ancient, modern, traditional, contemporary statement about who they are, and more importantly, who they will be, in the next millennium.

Notes:

¹ Jack Slater, “Urban Indian: Fighting for Identity”, *Los Angeles Times*, February 29, (1976).

² Quoted in Tara Browner, *Heartbeat of the People: Music and Dance of the Northern Pow-Wow* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 104

³ Peter L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books 1966)

⁴ Berger and Luckmann 65.

⁵ Browner, 27.

⁶ Browner, 27.

⁷ Browner, 21.

⁸ Browner, 22.

⁹ Browner, 22.

¹⁰ Chris Goertzen, “Powwows and Identity on the Piedmont and Coastal Plains of North Carolina”, *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 45, No. 1, (2001), 69.

¹¹ Patricia C. Albers, and Beatrice Medicine, “Some Reflections on Nearly Forty Years on the Northern Plains Powwow Circuit”, in *Powwow*, Clyde Ellis, Luke Lassiter, and Gary Dunham, eds., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 2005), 26-45.

¹² This overview is drawn from these powwow sources: Albers, Patricia C. and Beatrice Medicine, “Some Reflections on Nearly Forty Years on the Northern Plains Powwow Circuit”, and Ellis, Clyde, “The Sound of the Drum Will Revive them and Make them Happy” both in *Powwow*, Clyde Ellis, Luke Lassiter, and Gary Dunham, eds., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 26-45.

¹³ For an excellent overview of the role of the powwow emcee, see Daniel J. Gelo, "Powwow Patter: Indian Emcee Discourse on Power and Identity" in Powwow, Clyde Ellis, Luke Lassiter, and Gary Dunham, eds., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 130-151.

¹⁴ Hilary Weaver, "Indigenous Identity: What is it, and Who Really Has it?", *American Indian Quarterly*, (2001).

¹⁵ Weaver, 240.

¹⁶ For examples of this convention, see N. C. Peroff, "Indian Identity", *The Social Science Journal*, 34, no. 4 (1997), D. A. Mihesuah, "American Indian Identities: Issues of Individual Choices and Development", *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 22, no. 2 (1998): 193-226, and T. Griffin-Pierce, "When I Am Lonely the Mountains Call Me: The Impact of Sacred Geography on Navajo Psychological Well-Being", *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research Journal*, 7, no. 3 (1997): 1-10.

¹⁷ Weaver, 244.

¹⁸ Weaver, 243.

¹⁹ Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 21.

²⁰ Weaver, 245.

²¹ Weaver, 240.

²² Weaver, 243.

²³ Berger and Luckmann, 65.

²⁴ Henri Tajfel, "Social Categorization, Social Identity and Social Comparison" in *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations, European Monographs in Social Psychology*, 14, ed. Henri Tajfel (London: Academic Press, 1978), 61-76; John Turner, "Social Comparison, Similarity and Ingroup Favouritism" in *Differentiation between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations. European Monographs in Social Psychology*, 14, ed. Henri Tajfel (London: Academic Press, 1978).

²⁵ Weaver, 244.

²⁶ Inez Talamántez, "Dance and Ritual in the Study of Native American Religious Traditions", *American Indian Quarterly*, 6, no. 3-4 (n.d.): 338-357.

²⁷ Michael D. McNally, "The Practice of Native American Christianity", *Church History*, 69/4 (2000): 834-859

²⁸ John Hascall, "The Sacred Circle: Native American Liturgy" in *Native and Christian? Indigenous Voices on Religious Identity in the United States and Canada* (New York: Routledge Press, 1996).

²⁹ Hascall, xiv.

³⁰ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Blackwell Publishing: 1991).

³¹ Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (San Francisco: Stanford University Press: 1991), 12.

³² Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (Orlando: Harcourt. 1968 [1957]).

³³ Charles Long, *Significations: Signs, Symbols, and Images in the Interpretation of Religion* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1986).

³⁴ Gregory Bateson, *Angels Fear: Towards an Epistemology of the Sacred* (New York: Macmillan, 1987).

³⁵ Jonathon Z. Smith, "The Bare Facts of Ritual", *History of Religions*, 20:1/2 (1980): 125.

³⁶ Smith, 116.

³⁷ Stephen Cornell, *The Return of the Native: American Indian Political Resurgence* (NY: Oxford University Press 1988).

³⁸ Cornell, 132.

³⁹ For an historical treatment of this process and the relevant government actions, both legislative and militaristic, see Vine Deloria, *God is Red: A Native View of Religion* (Golden, Colorado: North American Press, 1972); Vine DeLoria, Jr. and Clifford Lytle, *The Nations Within: The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty* (Austin, Texas: Pantheon, 1984); and Thomas W. Cowger, *The National Congress of American Indians: The Founding Years* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

⁴⁰ See for an excellent example of this conceptual paradigm: Leo Panitch, "Violence as a Tool of Order and Change: The War on Terrorism and the Antiglobalization Movement", *Monthly Review*, June 2002.

⁴¹ For examples of American Indian stereotypes in American popular culture, see *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film*, Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, eds, (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1998), for Continental representations of Indians, see *Germans and Indians: Fantasies, Encounters, Projections*, Collin G. Calloway, Gerd Gemünden, and Suzanne Zantop, eds., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002).

⁴² "Removal" generally refers to the US Government actions in which tribal groups in the South were forcibly removed to "Indian Territory" as a result of the Indian Removal Act, passed by Congress in 1830. For an overview of this policy and its implications, see Ronald N. Satz, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era*, Originally published (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1975); republished (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2002); and Anthony F.C. Wallace, *The Long, Bitter Trail: Andrew Jackson and the Indians* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993).

⁴³ Graham D. Taylor, *The New Deal and American Indian Tribalism: The Administration of the Indian Reorganization Act, 1934-45* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), 185.

⁴⁴ For an analytical treatment of this concept, see James B. Lagrand, "Introduction" in *Indian Metropolis: Native American in Chicago, 1945-1975* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

⁴⁵ Donald L. Fixico, *The Urban Indian Experience in America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000), 46-49.

⁴⁶ Joan Albon, "Relocated American Indians in the San Francisco Bay Area: Social Interaction and Indian Identity", *Human Organization*, 24(1964): 296-304, and Arthur Margon, "Indians and Immigrants: A Comparison of Groups New to the City", *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, 4/4 (1977): 20.

⁴⁷ James Treat, "Intertribal Traditionalism and the Spiritual Roots of Red Power" in *Native American Spirituality: A Critical Reader*, Lee Irwin, ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 270-294.

⁴⁸ Ivan A. Lopatin, "Origin of the Native American Steam Bath", *American Anthropologist*, 62(6) (1960): 977-993.

⁴⁹ Lopatin, 978.

⁵⁰ Raymond Bucko, *The Lakota Ritual of the Sweat Lodge: History and Contemporary Practice* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

⁵¹ Jason Baird Jackson, *Yuchi Ceremonial Life: Performance, Meaning, and Tradition in a Contemporary American Indian Community* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 18.

⁵² Alfred L. Kroeber, *Handbook of the California Indians* (New York: Dover Publications, 1976), 327-329.

⁵³ For this overview, I draw on a brief article by Ben Black Bear, Jr. (Lakota) available at <http://www.bluecloud.org/2.html>, last accessed in Spring 2011, but see also Joseph Epes Brown, *The Sacred Pipe: Black's Account of the Seven Sacred Rites of the Oglala Sioux* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1989).

⁵⁴ Russell Means, *Where White Men Fear to Tread: The Autobiography of Russell Means* (New York: St. Martin's-Griffin, 1995), 315-317.

⁵⁵ For an excellent overview of the debate on this issue, see Christopher Ronwanién: te Jocks, "Spirituality for Sale: Sacred Knowledge in the Consumer Age" in *Native American Spirituality: A Critical Reader*, Lee Irwin, ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 61-77.

⁵⁶ Wade C. Roof, *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1993), 79.

⁵⁷ Wade C. Roof, *Spiritual Marketplace: Baby Boomers and the Remaking of American Religion* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 10.

⁵⁸ Analysts of South Asian religion view Hinduism as a category as somewhat of a construction. For a treatment of this issue, see Gauri Viswanathan's "Colonialism and the Construction of Hinduism" in *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism*, Gavin Flood, ed., (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 23-44.

⁵⁹ Paul Schultz and George Tinker, "Rivers of Life: Native Spirituality for Native Churches" in *Native and Christian: Native Voices on Religious Identity in the United States and Canada*, ed. James Treat (New York: Routledge Press, 1996), 56-67.

⁶⁰ Clyde Ellis, "The Sound of the Drum Will Revive them and Make them Happy" in *Powwow*, ed. Clyde Ellis, Luke Lassiter, and Gary Dunham (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 10.

⁶¹ Clyde Ellis, 10.

⁶² American Indian/Alaska Native Initiative, A Special Project of National Significance Report to CARE Act Grantees, 2005. Accessed at <http://hab.hrsa.gov/special/%5CSPNS05RPT%5Caian.htm> in June of 2006.

⁶³ See for a Chumash treatment of this issue see John Anderson's commentary available at <http://www.angelfire.com/id/newpubs/haleywil.html> last accessed May 2012.

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