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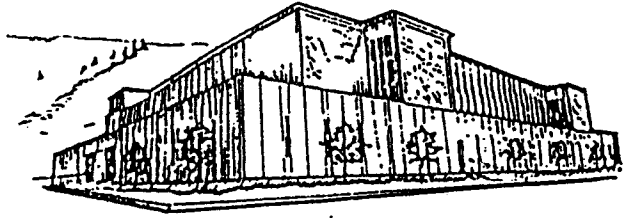
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THE MANDAN AMERINDIAN CULTURE

A STUDY OF VALUES TRANSMISSION

prepared by

Philip Arthur Zemke

B. A., University of California--Santa Cruz, 1976

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Masters of Interdisciplinary Studies

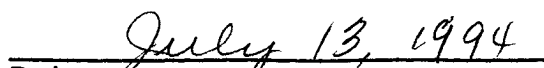
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Zemke, Philip A., M.I.S., July 1994 Anthropology
Religious Studies
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The Mandan Amerindian Culture: A Study of Value Transmission
(114 pp.)

Committee Chairperson: Richard Clow *Richard Clow*

Lydia Sage-Chase is a "keeper" of Origin Stories which encode the value system of the Mandan Amerindian culture. Lydia Sage-Chase practices Mandan values in the present Euro-American cultural context. Mandan values stress generosity, cooperation, reverence for life, and self-sacrifice. Psychologist Abraham Maslow claims such values as innate to human nature, and reinforced or discouraged in the familial dependent early childhood period.

Mandan cultural evolution spans eleven thousand years in the Upper Missouri River environment, progressing from small bands to consolidated villages forming a tribal unity. Each stage of evolution utilizing the family model and value system as culturally normative.

The Mandan credit Divine relatives with creation of the world and Origin Stories. The Okipa Ceremony of creation and history established a tribal unity for perpetuation of Mandan values. The Mandan use of the aoristic concept of a repetitive past establish the Divine relatives as omnipresent.

Mandan cultural forms contain associate prompts which reference the value system. Mandan kinship terms denote all humans and objects by familial terminology (mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, son, daughter). Mandan language provides the two most common prefixes (MA and MI) as reference to the Divine relatives. Mandan dwellings, village configuration, and landscape, encode personified stories which reference the value system.

A Mandan can destroy the world through error. Mandan conflict resolution requires reference to the Origin Stories, acts of self-sacrifice, and gift exchange, to remedy error.

Lydia Sage-Chase was enculturated to Mandan values through familial example, language association, exposure to the Origin Stories, and the landscape depicted in the stories. The responsibility which Lydia Sage-Chase fulfills, to use the Origin Stories to teach Mandan values, establishes Lydia Sage-Chase as an active exemplar of Mandan values in the late twentieth century.

PREFACE

The Mandan culture of native North American people has engaged my interest for over twenty years. That interest was first sparked by reading of the Mandan culture, and became a direct experience of relationship with the Mandan people ten years ago. For these past ten years I have contrasted the Western cultural values of my own upbringing with the Mandan values which describe a full human life. And consequently, I have come to a greater appreciation for the dignity of the human experience regardless of cultural particulars.

I believe that as individuals, and as a society, we must unceasingly explore our relationship with our fellow human beings. I also believe that we are asked to ground such relationships on principles of mutual dignity and respect if we are to make actual the potential genius of each human being.

The Mandan people provide us with an example of a social family who took up the challenges intrinsic to a life focused upon individual and collective cooperation with the entire world. The Mandan success is apparent, for they were legendary among the North American Amerindian nations as examples of generosity, non-aggression, and sophistication. That example is yet before us, frank and

potent, and it is an honor to write of the Mandan people.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the many individuals who have contributed to the preparation of this text. Each author listed in the bibliography is appreciated for their unique contribution. They are, to use poet Gary Snyder's terminology, "elders" from which I learn through the written word.

In the academic sphere I am greatly indebted to many for their counsel and example. From the Native American Studies Department at the University of Montana I especially thank Dr. Rich Clow, Dr. Henrietta Mann, and Rhonda Langsford. From the Department of Anthropology at the same University I offer particular thanks to Dr. Kathrine Weist who has been an invaluable guide throughout the process of searching and writing. From the Religious Studies Department I thank Dr. Ray Hart, Dr. Paul Dietrich and in gratefulness, my mentor Dr. Joseph Epes Brown.

To those who have given encouragement and time to reading portions of, or complete initial drafts I say thank you; to Sherry Schultz, Cindy Taylor, Ginger Lee, and Celeste Rivers. A special thanks is extended to Stephen Pratt, who has listened and replied so well for the past six years to all of the conjecture and discovery surrounding this text.

There are many in the Mandan homeland who have given gifts to this project. The staff of the North Dakota

Heritage center, and especially archaeologist Dr. Christopher Dill, have been exceedingly generous. To the staff of the Knife River Indian Village Historic Site, and Bill Haviland in particular, I owe an ongoing debt of gratitude for many hours in their library and upon the village sites where I sought inspiration. I thank Eric Holland, past president of the North Dakota Archeological Association for his friendship, and for his years of dedication to the preservation and teaching of Mandan culture. I take great pleasure in appreciating my "brother" Terry Wiklund who has given me a place in his home, a car to drive, and hours of companionship trekking to Mandan sites throughout the past eight years.

The relatives which I have made on the Fort Berthold reservation have blessed me with their generosity and kindness. Although I extend my thanks to them all I wish to give of my appreciation specifically to the Goodall family, to Gerard Baker, to Anna Rubia, to Luther Grinnell, and especially to Grace Henry for her kindness and hospitality shown in so many ways.

For my Mandan family, Lydia Sage-Chase, Louise Otter Sage, and Bob Chase, I pray you well. As family you have given me support, you have counseled me with integrity, and you have provided the example of the dignity inherent in the identity of being Mandan. It is an honor to be a part of your family.

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CHAPTER I

INQUIRY AND METHODOLOGY

Lydia Sage-Chase is the youngest of the five remaining full-blood Mandan Amerindian people. At fifty-one years of age she is a mature teacher and practitioner of values inherited from previous generations of Mandan people. The Mandan people place emphasis on personal responsibility for practicing the values of generosity and hospitality, reverence for all life, respect for elders, and non-aggression in all personal interactions. Lydia Sage-Chase is presently a primary "keeper" of the Mandan stories and traditions.

Lydia Sage-Chase holds a BA degree in communications and public relations, and has worked for the United States National Park Service and the North Dakota Park Service as a Mandan cultural interpreter. She is currently an administrator for a Native American artist consortium, and hosts an Amerindian television program in North Dakota for cable access television. In 1991, she was selected

as a presenter for the Smithsonian Institute Exposition on American agriculture. Upon receipt of her documentation of Mandan agricultural history and practices, the exposition coordinators placed the Mandan presentation in the premier position at the exposition. Over the weeks of the exposition two and a half million people were given a direct experience of the Mandan culture.

Lydia Sage-Chase has been commissioned to prepare presentations of Mandan oral tradition for the archives of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.. The Library of Congress project is enhanced by the fact that she is proficiently bi-lingual in the Mandan and English languages. Her bi-lingual and bi-cultural proficiency allows her to convey Mandan cultural paradigms for non-indian people through stories and her interpretations, which are both rich in subtle details and cultural comparisons.

The principle inquiry of this thesis is singular in nature. How do the traditional values of the Mandan culture provide a Mandan individual, Lydia Sage-Chase, with the essential coping mechanisms capable of adapting the Mandan world to a radically altered material and social context of western dominate culture. The definition of "Traditional" used here, is a thing or idea which is passed on across generations, with "values" being defined as the intrinsic (or proposed) quality of the idea or thing which makes it desirable, useful, and worthy of esteem.

The focus of this text, transmission of values, is necessarily interdisciplinary. Anthropological methods of investigation are being applied to a specific Amerindian culture that possessed a distinct religious-spiritual cosmology.

The Mandan culture is foremost an Amerindian culture whose values were, and are, informed by the material and social particulars of the American Northern Plains environment. The anthropological data in this text, as pertains to the Mandan ecosystem, history, social organization, mnemonic significance of material objects and language, and methods of enculturation, has been formatted to focus upon the central question of perpetuation of Mandan values. The examination of religious-spiritual beliefs provides the essential ontological paradigm from which the Mandan credit the origin of their values.

The format of the text is as follows. Chapter One will briefly introduce the contextual alteration experienced by the Mandan, from their pre-historic traditional life to inclusion in the present Euro-American culture. An extensive interview with Lydia Sage-Chase will provide an illustration of her utilization of Mandan values in a present context. Chapter Two pertains to how Lydia Sage-Chase received authority to speak on and about Mandan values. The Mandan rules of value transmission through oral tradition will be put forth. Those rules are pertinent

to the methods of disclosure of Mandan Origin Stories in this text. Chapter Three introduces the Mandan environment which informed their value system, the historic progression of Mandan culture, and finally, testimony of Mandan character and culture during the period of their pre-eminence on the Northern Plains and the course of Mandan adaptive challenges in the period of Euro-American cultural integration. Chapter Four examines the originating cosmology of Mandan Divine relatives, who the Mandan credit with authorship of the phenomenal and nomenal world, as well as the authorship for the appropriate human reciprocal response. Chapter Five explores the Mandan personal responsibility for maintenance of Mandan values. The cultural forms for reinforcing the Mandan values, such as language, mnemonic association in housing and village configuration, personal attire, and features of the landscape will be interspersed with the presence or absence of those prompts in Lydia Sage-Chase's present reality. Conflict and resolution paradigms will be presented, as will as Mandan concepts of heroic and foolish behavior, and the consequences of that behavior. A final summary will provide conclusions as to the persistence of traditional Mandan values in the present context.

The late twentieth century context in which Lydia Sage-Chase must practice Mandan values is remarkably different from the pre-historic and historic context which

originally formed that ethic. The formative history of the ancestral Mandan originated in the era of Paleo-Indian gatherers and hunters approximately eleven thousand years ago at the Knife River Flint quarries of the Upper Missouri River Region in present day North, Dakota (Ahler 1988: 4-7). Around 1100 A.D. the Mandan began augmenting the ancestral predominance of bison hunting with the practice of produce gardening, and the Mandan villages became the central location for Northern Plains intra-tribal trade until the 1830's (Wood 1967: 18-19).

The Mandan were decimated by smallpox epidemics in 1781 and 1837, and subsequently negotiated a reservation treaty with the U.S. government in 1851. The Fort Berthold Reservation combined the Mandan, Hidasta and Arikara peoples into the Three Affiliated Tribes. The treaty allowed the Mandan to continue gardening and small game hunting in the riverine environment of their Missouri River Trench homeland (Meyer 1977: 111-123).

In the early 1950's, the U.S. government built the Garrison Dam on the Upper Missouri River. The waters impounded by the dam inundated the 155,000 acres of Missouri valley river-bottoms which had been home to the Mandan for thousands of years. "The Village Indians were forced to move their farmlands away from the river onto the shortgrass prairies, mesas, and badlands that their ancestors chose not to cultivate" (Ibid: 176).

The anthropological community had by the mid 1950's declared the Mandan culture extinct (Bruner 1972: 71). The principal criteria for such a declaration was, that the Mandan language was no longer primary among the people, the traditional ceremonies were no longer conducted, and that most formal cultural practices (such as membership in gender specific age-graded societies) were no longer socially contextual (Ibid: 71). However, when Edward Bruner visited the Fort Berthold Reservation in 1953 seeking subjects for his survey addressing early childhood development and value systems, he discovered that the Mandan value system was primarily intact. The Mandan and Hidatsa children practiced reverence toward elders, familial loyalty, and self-esteem contingent on service benefiting others.

Edward Bruner concluded that although the ceremonial and formal social organization of the Mandan and Hidatsa had all but disappeared, every Mandan and Hidatsa child of six to ten years of age nonetheless behaved in accordance with the traditional kinship system although no child had any concept of the kinship system as a system. Bruner offered the hypothesis that kinship was learned early and persisted, while formal religion was learned later and was apt not to be persistent. Furthermore, he found that the kinship system, the value system, and the role concepts were inseparably internalized in early childhood (Ibid:

72-75).

Lydia Sage-Chase was eleven years old at the time of Edward Bruner's visit and would have been one of the children from which he drew his conclusions. She also witnessed the "drowning of the land", and experienced the transition from traditional riverine communities to government mandated upland communities. New communities which were short on employment, while seats of alcoholism, poor health, and poverty. Lydia Sage-Chase married, and moved from the reservation to spent her young adult years in the metropolis of Los Angeles, California. As a mature adult Lydia returned to the urban environment of Mandan, North Dakota (two hundred miles from the Fort Berthold Reservation) to take up her responsibilities as a "keeper" of the Mandan tradition. The values which Lydia learned as a child prompted her to take up those responsibilities as they had preceding generations of Mandan people when they reached maturity.

Lydia Sage-Chase lives in a reality of distinct value systems evolved from dissimilar cultural ethics. While the focus of this thesis is not a specific comparative study between Euro-American cultural values and Mandan cultural values, I believe it is useful to establish a general preamble for understanding the differentiation of the two cultures.

The theoretical support which illustrates the

consequential results of enculturation by the contrasted cultural models comes from the observations of psychologist Abraham Maslow. Maslow's theory receives complementary support from the work of psychologist Alice Miller. Together, they hold a general agreement that safety and self-esteem which gives form to cooperation and generosity is intrinsic (essential, innate, and primary) to humans. They agree, and as Edward Bruner's research with the Mandan-Hidatsa revealed, that the intrinsic value system is integrated into the cultural value system in the early childhood years. Moreover, as Alice Miller proposes, the infantile narcissistic (prompt need fulfillment) stage which precedes the cooperative development stage is equally intrinsic. Each developmental stage requires fundamental completion before moving to the next step (Miller 1981: 7). The "secondary structure" of cultural value systems, enacted by the society and family, will have the effect by various degrees of reinforcing or compromising the individuals actualization of those intrinsic values.

Abraham Maslow felt that the Euro-American structured story of the natural world as hostile to human life (fallen, broken, paradise lost) generates a predominate need-deficit (lack) psychology. Maslow proposed that a sense of world as hostile, when affixed to fundamental needs for food, shelter, and socialization, restricts the psychological options for conflict resolution and individual creativity.

When need-deficit motivation is dominate, fear based conformity becomes a cultural norm. This form of oppositional motivation then gives rise to a perpetuated value system of individual possessiveness (hoarding), and self-security gained through opposition to "otherness" (Maslow 1968: 44-59). Alice Miller points to adult ego-centric possessiveness as being a result of unsupported narcissistic needs in the infant stage (Miller 1981: 9-14). The collective culture which views "otherness" (whether people or environment) as hostile or suspicious, is an exclusive social form where intrinsic cooperation will have a limited field of activity. Maslow noted that the individual who displays unconditional inclusive behaviors, and who risks being creative beyond social norms, is an exception in Euro-American culture. Maslow termed such individuals, self-actualized, and noted that such individuals consistently refer to their inclusive ethic as having a spiritual basis (Maslow 1968: 3-6).

Abraham Maslow also offered a contrasted paradigm to deficit-need motivation. He proposed, that when the family and society reinforces intrinsic values the individual will often exhibit growth based motivation marked by the ability to live with satisfaction in the moment, to engage in creative risk taking, and, to enjoy a sense of inclusion with "otherness" (Ibid: 39-41).

The Mandan base their entire cosmology (how existence

is ordered), and subsequently their ontology (the ideological nature of reality) of "secondary structure" of values, upon the premise that the entire phenomenal and nomenal world is familial. Lydia Sage-Chase speaks succinctly of this belief, "The Mandan believe that all life comes from one Creator. All is related. The ideas of generosity, cooperation, and goodness towards others are everybody's responsibility so that the Creator's gift of life will go on." (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993).

The means by which the Mandan generations established a "symbolized story" to express and perpetuate their fundamental tenet stated above is a function of the following text. To assist in that function it is essential to understand that the Mandan story, while particular to a time and place, is based on a tenet recognized as a primary religious principle. As Professor Seyyed Hossein Nasr pointed out in a plenary talk on religious plurality at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago, on September 2, 1993, "The doctrine of religio perennis (perennial religion) is crucial to understanding the plurality of religions and the sense of absoluteness within each, despite their formal differences". Professor Nasr explains, " Religio perennis is the eternal message of God, or, to use another terminology, the manifestation of the Divine Principle, since some religions do not have a personalistic view of the Divine Principle. This term,

however, embraces all of them (Hinduism, Judism, Islam, Christianity), including Taoism, Native American religions, and Buddhism...It declares that the Divine Principle has revealed various religious universes, all of which have been revealed in accord with cosmic laws and principles." (Nasr 1994: 16-17). Lydia Sage-Chase's statement of Mandan belief agrees with professor Nasr's statement, and the elaboration of Mandan beliefs in subsequent chapters of this text will bring this understanding more fully into focus. At this point it is sufficient to recognize that the Mandan concept of inclusive relativity was and is an absolute covenant (agreement) made with and by their experience of Divine Principle.

The Mandan covenant informs each unique and self-aware Mandan individual about their interdependent relationship with all "otherness". A relationship wherein personal satisfaction is contingent on the satisfaction it provides the interdependent "other"; which is inclusive of the family, community, tribe, all human beings, all elements of nature, and the generative spiritual agency which animates life. The Mandan cultural ethos of absolute inclusion of the phenomenal and nomenal as family requires a level of attentive personal responsibility in every act. During Edward Bruner's 1953 surveys he also interviewed Mandan and Hidatsa adults who revealed a consensus for personal responsibility:

A good man (woman) was, and is, one who respects the old people, is brave and demonstrates fortitude, conforms to the obligations of the kinship system, is devoted to village cooperation and unity, is generous, gives away property in public, gets along well with others, and avoids overt expressions of aggression in interpersonal relationships (Bruner 1972: 71).

Forty years have passed since the Mandan-Hidatsa definition of right conduct was related to Edward Bruner. Lydia Sage-Chase has experienced an incalculable contextual change during those forty years, moving from the enculturating riverine communities of her childhood to the urban environments of her adult life. The familial constancy of her reservation youth has given way to an integration within a dominant culture ethic where she is a minority individual identified with "otherness".

During a 1993 visit with Lydia, she spoke at length on Mandan values. She spoke of the values as virtues, pointing out that the ideal of a traditional value requires a subsequent expression. Enacted values thus reflecting the moral character of right action and right thinking of the individual, who then is considered virtuous. The stories she told touched on her years as a child learning the Mandan values, and on her adult years of practicing and teaching those values and virtues.

From the teachings there come many values for all people to live by, our notion of the peoples generosity goes back to the time of the Creator. The produce of the gardens, corn,

beans and squash, the produce is not given just for ourselves, but for other people, to feed other people, to share with other people. Sharing meant that there was, must be a trade-off with the other nations, tribes (Lydia believes that given language and territorial distinctions, that the term nations best describes the diverse groups of Amerindians). Trade-offs, sharing and receiving, must work in handling seeds too. If someone asked mom for garden seed, they must be prepared to trade for it. The richness of the seed will not follow unless something of value is traded.

Go ask for someone to teach you, they have knowledge, you must take something to exchange. Its like tuition, a form of tuition. You make the exchange for the knowledge, they will bless you, your hands or mouth, you have the blessing and knowledge, you have it after that.

Another virtue is taking responsibility for other people, caring for other people. Each village was an economic unit. Each village provided for everyone in the village. We would not kick people out of the village to wander and cry, like it has been shown in movies, the Mandan provided for the elders, the orphans, for everyone. Clan relatives took care of each other, clan relatives can include someone not your blood relative, aunts were considered mother, you called your aunties mother (fathers brothers were called father). So you had all the fathers and mothers to tell you right from wrong. Children were never left alone. The Mandan support system in the family was really superior.

Growing up Mandan you were not abused or told you couldn't do something. You had respect for your grandparents and what they could do. When a child asked about something they weren't told to go away, go outside and play. Someone took the time to show you how to do it. If someone was putting a top on a quilt they would get you some clothe and thread and a needle and show you how to make a quilt. Because you could hurt yourself with the needle you were taught to take care of that. A needle dropped on the floor could get stuck in someones's foot. Things like that. Children were taught that if they thought that they could make a quilt that they must also take care of the tools. (Lydia's mother, Otter Sage, added that children are growing up confused because they don't see their parents at work. Parents work away from home and

children's play doesn't grow from what they see their parents do.) When I was a little girl we would get up early, every morning grandfather, grandmother, mother, and my aunties, to go to the gardens. Grandfather said that if you didn't work in the summer there would not be winter food. He didn't say it in a way to frighten us, but to teach us the importance of work.

We are not to brag. Mandan people, one of our virtues, is not to brag or boast on ourselves. Let someone else brag about you.

Another virtue is sharing. If you see someone without, even if you can't afford it, you share what you've got. The more you can give and share with others the higher your standard. The holier people, medicine people, never had much, they were always giving everything away.

You offer first to the Creator, then to the elements of life. You give to people, and you always get back. When Bob (Lydia's husband) and I were going to school I'd cook food and take it around and leave it for our relatives. Going to school we didn't know where the next dollar was coming from, but something always came, a check, or someone would ask for a presentation for me to do, it always came back.

Another characteristic is honesty. Grandfather used to say that if you break something tell it right away. If you used my pick-up and have a flat tire, don't hide it, tell it right away, we might need the truck for an emergency.

At presentations people sometimes say to me that Indians didn't know anything before whites came. That is not so, we have a complex language with different language for men and women. Our number system has been used since the beginning of time. We know botany, knowing the true value of plants and the use of them. We are environmentalists, protecting the environment we live in. We believe the Creator lived amongst the Mandan and taught us all these things, taught us everything. The Creator taught us about cross-pollination, and planting beans amongst the corn so that both support and feed each other. Corn needs the beans to be strong and produce. We sing songs about this while we work in the gardens.

We believe in giving credit. A few years ago a young man come from an institute to ask about seeds and gardening. He went away after

learning about the Mandan way of gardens and published a story. But he didn't give credit for where he learned what he wrote about. He came back and asked me for some Ridge-bean seeds. I said no, and he asked why not. I told him to go and think about it, to look at what he wrote, and to come back when he figured it out. He did come back again, when he know that he had not given credit for the sources of his story. It's not just me, he didn't give credit to my grandfather and great-grandmother who kept the knowledge of the gardens for their whole lives. They deserve the credit (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993).

It is evident that Lydia Sage-Chase approaches the material and social environment of late twentieth century America from a foundation based on inclusive Mandan values. She lives, not in two worlds, but in a Mandan world. The inception of her enculturation to Mandan values came, as she has stated, from an extended family of many mothers, fathers, and grandparents. And as will be discussed in detail in a later chapter, the Mandan extended family is constituted to sufficiently meet the infant needs in the narcissistic developmental stage. Furthermore, the developmental stage of intrinsic cooperation in Lydia's formative years was reinforced by the example of the Mandan and Hidatsa adults as described by Edward Bruner. The credit for knowledge which Lydia gives to her familial teachers points also to the Mandan method of teaching through oral transmission of stories. Stories which informed her familial teachers, and which encode the significance for human relationship with animals, plants, landscape, and other humans. Lydia Sage-Chase is a living

chapter in the continuum of that which is Mandan. The following chapter will discuss the Mandan method of maintaining that continuum, the Mandan rules for telling the stories, and how Lydia was personally instructed to "keep" the Mandan story.

CHAPTER II

MANDAN RULES OF DISCLOSURE

In this chapter I will establish the credible authority from which Lydia Sage-Chase speaks of the Mandan values. The details will be given which establish the lineage of previous story-keepers from which she receives that authority. The second purpose of this chapter is to provide the Mandan rules and exceptions for disclosure of the Mandan Origin Stories in which the Mandan values are encoded. It is essential to the propriety of this text that the Mandan rules of disclosure be presented, and that any inclusion of materials from those Origin Stories be found accountable by the Mandan rules of disclosure and exception.

The majority of Mandan Origin Stories appear to predate the period when the tending of gardens was integrated into the Mandan culture. The Corn Story nonetheless rivals the Origin Stories in importance, for the Corn Story's essential information for agriculture practice encode a how and why, as do the other Mandan Origin Stories.

The rule of disclosure pertinent to the Origin Stories also apply to the Corn Story. The means used by Lydia Sage-Chase to present informal information subtracted from the formal narrative of the Corn Story will serve as a preamble to the chapter. The progression from the informal to the formal is an example of how the Mandan passed on knowledge in increments, continuously assessing the listeners desire or need for more formal information. This example also points to the Mandan propensity for recognizing human interaction as primarily a field of teaching and learning.

I first met Lydia Sage-Chase in the early summer of 1985. I was returning to North Dakota for a second year of producing and directing a historical drama about the Mandan and Hidatsa people. Upon my arrival at the headquarters of the Knife River Indian Village Historic Site near Stanton, North Dakota, I was told that someone wanted to see me.

Lydia Sage-Chase was sitting at a picnic table under a cottonwood tree winnowing seed corn with a deer-hide. Five minutes after formal introductions Lydia was fully engaged in teaching me the propriety of Mandan corn seed care and gardening practices. As I took no notes at that meeting with Lydia, the following description is a summary drawn from memory, rather than a literal narrative.

Each clan was responsible for one kind of corn. All the perfect ears of seed corn for

the following years gardens were kept during the winter, and prayed over, by the Corn Priest of the Waxikena clan. A pictographic account recording over thirty generations of Corn Priests was lost in a 1832 fire. In the spring the seeds were prepared in a special potting mixture of soils and sand. The Goose Women Society met to determine the size of the gardens for each year. As the spring floods receded from the river-bottoms everyone worked to remove or burn any debris and spring growth of weeds from the garden areas. The soil was loosened with ashwood digging sticks and hilled up. Each hill of corn received seven or eight seeds. The tallest male clan relative put the seed in the ground, so that the plants might grow as tall. The multiple corn stalks gave each other support against the winds. Beans were (companion) planted in interval hills with the corn. The beans supported the young corn stalks and later used the corn stalks for support. Broad-leafed Squash planted between the corn rows reduced moisture evaporation from the soil. Sunflowers were planted around the outside of the gardens as a natural fence and wind-break.

Each morning before the day got hot, the women went to till a portion of the gardens. Each group of women came from a particular extended family who lived together in the same earth-lodge dwelling. Each earth-lodge group cultivated three to five acres of gardens. Singing to the plants as they worked (corn plants are regarded as children with souls), the women tilled with bison shoulder-blade hoes, and ashwood rakes believed to repel insects. Young men guarded the women as they worked. Young girls or grandmothers played with the babies under shade trees or specially built arbors of posts and willow fronds.

The corn was planted in timed intervals to prevent the crop from being in the fragile tassel stage all at once. A strong wind or hail during tasseling meant the loss of that portion of the crop. Corn varieties were grown at a distance from each other so that they would not "travel" or cross-pollinate. Each corn variety was also grown at various terrace levels. The garden areas in the river-bottoms were less likely to be affected by drought but more likely to get frosted. The uppermost terrace gardens around the villages were less prone to frost while affected more by lack of rain.

(Squash, and Green Corn yet in the milk stage, was harvested in August.) Squash was cut into rings and dried. The Green Corn was eaten raw, boiled, or roasted. Seed ears from the Green Corn was set aside as it had twice the storage life (four years) as seed from the corn left to fully ripen. (In late September or October all the women, men, and children went to the fields to harvest the corn.) Corn for trading was braided into bunches for easy transport by those coming to the Mandan village to trade. Corn for use in the villages was removed from the cob and stored in leather pouches in underground cache pits. The grass-lined cache pits held thirty to sixty bushels of produce and were located throughout the villages. Ears of Green and fully ripened corn (referred to as mother) were carefully examined, and those with no imperfections were chosen as seed corn, and then given into the care of the Corn Priest to be kept until the next spring (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1985).

The initial description of corn practices presented to me by Lydia was limited to the practical application. Little mention was made of the creation/origin story behind the practical. As we came to know each other throughout that summer, Lydia provided various details of the cosmology. Yet, as I have never asked to receive the "telling" of the complete Corn Story, Lydia has only provided the details which are necessary to my level of inquiry. The Mandan virtues attached to proper credit and payment for knowledge was evident in the level of disclosure between Lydia and myself.

The practicality of Mandan corn growing practices is evident from Lydia's description, regardless of any acquaintance with the Origin Story behind it. The

practicality of native horticultural science of the Mandan people resulted in their being the first Amerindian people to grow corn in the short growing season above a latitude marked by the present northern Iowa-southern Minnesota borders.

In 1882, O.H. Will and Alphonso Boley visited the Mandan people and secured Mandan seed corn. Subsequently, Mandan corn varieties entered the Euro-American agricultural picture, and as a result the thousands of acres of corn in the northern latitudes of the U.S. and Canada are owed to Mandan origin (Will 1964: 27). Yet, for the Mandan to maintain and evolve those viable corn seeds, they depended on the knowledge which passed from generation to generation in the Corn Story. The means by which the Corn Story knowledge is yet shared between families and generations requires that each individual maintain a responsibility (virtue) for the decorum of credit and payment as concerns the information essential to garden productivity. The complexity of Mandan garden science requires a precise means for the information to remain viable for each generation, and the virtues of cooperation and fidelity to the prosperity of familial generations is central to the Mandan way of life.

As I talked with Lydia of corn and later of other matters of Mandan culture, all of my questions were met with good humor. My impression was that Lydia was taking

care of my well-being by teaching me the correct manner in which to address the matters of my curiosity.

Through the years of our friendship Lydia has epitomized the Mandan reputation for social hospitality. She has been generous and gregarious, humorous and straight forward in her views. Foremost she has been a consummate teacher story-teller. Lydia has remained consistent in her teaching through the years; pointing first to the exemplary way of doing something, then relating the numerous possible consequences for doing it improperly, and finally stating that the choice of conduct was up to the individual.

The Mandan appreciate that the individual must be made aware of the rules and consequences if the individual is to make wise choices. The basis of Lydia's teaching comes from the Origin Stories, verified by her personal experience of putting the values encoded in the stories into practice.

The perpetuation of cultural values requires teaching each new generation those values. The Mandan are oral traditionalist, "passing on" their cultural values through the Origin Stories which give explanation to the how, who, why, when, and where of reality. "If you ask an old Mandan to describe a commonplace custom or even a tool used in his daily activities, he will invariably first introduce data on its origin to explain its adoption and use by his people. Those possessing vast knowledge of these "origin myths" occupy high status positions in the village and

tribe (Bower 1950: viii). In the published Mandan Origin Stories and personal stories as recorded by Prince Maximilian of Weid, Martha Beckwith, Frances Densmore, Alfred Bower, and the North Dakota Historical Society, I have found the values of the Mandan present as the uncontested means for resolving every conflict, and meeting every environmental and social adaptive challenge. Each Mandan generation received, through the Origin Stories, the means to chart the course of their interactions with the personal, social and natural environments.

For the Origin Stories to remain accurate and effective requires that Mandan rules of propriety for story-telling be followed. A paramount rule as related by Lydia, is that (specific Origin Stories are only to be transferred through the institution of the Mandan clan system.)

(The Mandan immediate family recognized all members of a particular blood line as clan relatives. Clan relatives also included those not of direct blood lineage who nonetheless shared direct descent in the clan from the time of the clan's origination in the distant past. The clan(s) was the primary means of economic, spiritual and political support for the individual throughout their lives (Ibid: 26-27). All families related to the six original Mandan clans traced their descent from the origin described in a particular Origin Story. The six clans were called the Westside (Moiety).) The remaining seven

Clans

clans received their names from the dream of an individual, which then was sanctioned as authentic by the Mandan elders. Those seven clans were called the Eastside (Moiety) (Ibid: 27). (Nine of the thirteen clans had become extinct by 1929 (Ibid: 30).)

As oral tradition is always, but one generation from extinction, the entire body of knowledge and history of the Mandan people had to be passed orally to each new generation. The Mandan accomplished that feat by recognizing those of each generation who by right of inheritance and publicly witnessed temperament, proved responsible enough to be "keepers" of the stories. (The matters of inheritance, recognition and training of story-keepers were functions of the clan elders.)

Lydia Sage-Chase is being taught to be a "keeper" of the Mandan Origin Stories of her mother's Tami'sik clan, the second clan created. Her father's clan, the Waxikena clan, was the first clan created. Lydia is in line to inherit the stories of her mother's clan, and given the current Mandan necessity to maintain as many of the Origin Stories as possible, she is becoming a "keeper" of many, if not all, of her father's clan stories as well. The exception, for Lydia to receive rights to the stories from both sides of her lineage, is a result of her been recognized as having the temperament necessary for a "keeper" of the stories, and moreover, that there are but

a limited number of Mandan available to keep the stories.

The potential Mandan "story-keeper" is often recognized in the behavior of the young Mandan child. Lydia's love of stories was so great that, rather than playing outside with the other children, she would say she wasn't feeling well, and would lie down on a blanket near the adults who came to her grandparent's house to socialize and to tell stories. Lydia's grandparent's and mother recognized her attraction to stories, and as was common among the Mandan when such attraction was realized, Lydia moved into her grandparents house where she could receive formal training in story-telling. Lydia began learning how to receive and accurately tell stories at the age seven. In the mornings and evenings her grandfather would tell her a story and she would tell it back. The sequence and details were explored until she was proficient in that story. A new story was then introduced. Lydia was also taken by her grandparents, mother, and other relatives, to the places where the cultural heroes had walked, and where the stories yet revealed their impressions. As the Mandan story-tellers related to Alfred Bower in 1929, "My informants often remarked that they would have forgotten many of the(se) stories had they not been able to see for themselves what the older people had explained" (Bower 1950: 341).

Although Lydia lived with her grandparents, her mother

Louise Otter Sage was a continual presence. Louise Otter Sage taught Mandan language and culture at the Twin Buttes school on the Fort Berthold Reservation for many years. Through her diligent efforts, two generations of the Mandan and Mandan-Hidatsa people have substantially regained nominal use of the Mandan language and cultural history. Now eighty years of age, Louise Otter Sage lives with Lydia.

Lydia's grandparents on her mothers side, were James and Francis Holding Eagle. A well respected family on the reservation, they were among the families to host Alfred Bower during his 1929 visit. James Holding Eagle was an able teacher of integration of cultures. During his education at a boarding school in the east he showed a talent for academics which placed him at the head of his class. He was later to become an ordained minister in a Christian church, and as Lydia related to me, he was able to integrate biblical theology into the Mandan cosmology with ease and clarity.

The mother of Francis Holding Eagle was Scattercorn. Lydia Sage-Chase carries her name Scattercorn. Great grandmother Scattercorn was the first Mandan women to hold the office of Corn Priest. Thirty-eight male Corn Priests had preceded her (Ibid: 193). Scattercorn was of the Tami'sik clan, yet the necessity of "keeping" the knowledge of the corn viable required that a rule of exception apply whereby she received the Corn Priest rights to stories

and ceremonies which had previously passed exclusively through the males of the Waxikena clan. By rule of exception, Scattercorn also passed Waxikena clan stories back to her son-in-law James Holding Eagle. The rule of exception allowed Scattercorn to adopt James as a son, thus nullifying the standard rule of mother-in-law and son-in-law avoidance. A rule of avoidance which did not allow for direct verbal communication between the two individuals. That same sense of exceptional necessity is invoked to allow Lydia to "keep" both Tami'sik clan and Waxikena clan stories.

Scattercorn was taught by her father, Moves Slowly, the last male Waxikena Corn Priest. "Having no younger brother, and since no male of his clan indicated a desire to purchase the bundle, he sold his rights to his daughter, Scattercorn" (Ibid: 187). Moves Slowly played a particularly important role in the continuum of the Mandan Origin Stories. (In 1837, after the smallpox epidemic, Moves Slowly collected eighteen ceremonial bundles (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1989) for which he knew the entire regiment of ceremony, songs, and stories resident to each bundle. A Mandan ceremonial bundle is a collection of specific objects which serve as associate (mnemonic) prompts for remembering the sequence and content of the Origin Stories and their accompanying songs belonging to that bundle.) As the Mandan tradition was for a "keeper" of a ceremonial

(Bundles)

bundle to attend feasts for bundles with related objects (Bower 1950: 107), Moves Slowly had acquired a formal familiarity with the complete ceremony of the bundles which he subsequently rescued. Although no list of the particular bundles rescued by Moves Slowly exists, the number of ceremonial bundles spoken of in Alfred Bower's 1950 text numbered seventeen principle bundles, numerous secondary bundles (which elaborated the details of the principle bundles), and duplications of both principle and secondary bundles. As those bundles noted by Bower belong to several clans it can be assumed with some certainty that Moves Slowly rescued bundles beyond those from his Waxikena clan (Bower 1950: 187-188).

The importance of necessary exception was basic to Mandan tradition. The over-ruling of mother-in-law avoidance by mother-son adoption, as utilized by Scattercorn, was a practice from earlier times when a gift of a scalp or horses, which was normally taken to the mother's lodge, was taken as a gift to the oldest "mother-in-law" in the man's wife's lodge. The son-in-law was then treated as a son in his wife's lodge (Ibid: 55-56). The matter of Scattercorn officiating as Corn Priest, a role usually designated as male, also had an earlier precedent. Alfred Bower was told that (women, once passed their menopause, officiated at ceremonies when no male was sufficiently trained or immediately available

to lead those ceremonies.) That exception extended to ceremonies which were generally considered male gender specific. The women served as intermediaries in training the following male generation in the ceremonies (Ibid: 94). The importance of the Origin Story (and accompanying ceremony) to survive intact, has therefore traditionally superseded the general rule of exclusive clan transfers when circumstance demands such an exception.

The role of spokesperson for the ideals of Mandan conduct has belonged to the Waxikena clan since the inception of the clan system.) The Waxikena clan name translates as, "Those who say bad things" (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1989). Lydia, through her father's Waxikena clan affiliation, is thus obligated to tell others about the rules inherent as ideal values in all Origin Stories.

In the earlier drafts of this text I asked Lydia about including previously published narratives in the text. Lydia responded with a detailed overview of the proprietary nature of story-keeping. The keeper of an Origin Story requires a gift to be given for the telling. The Origin Story cannot be retold in detail by someone who has heard the story, but does not have the rights to tell it.

The Origin Stories are only told in the season from mid-summer to mid-winter; from the annual Okipa Creation Ceremony through the harvesting season. The Origin Story cycle closes with the mid-winter solstice, when in the

years past the Mandan people had completed their annual move from the summer villages to river-bottom winter villages sheltered from storms.) The Origin Story cycle, predominate during growing and harvesting, reinforced the respect (ceremonial and individual) inherently necessary in the reciprocal exchange of life between the user and used.)

The Personal Story cycle predominated from mid-winter to mid-summer, and emphasized personal success garnered from application of Mandan values. Personal stories were considered particularly potent if the occurrence related in the story had been witnessed by another person. The personal story reinforced reciprocal trust between people.

Reciprocal respect between individuals was essential to the many spring activities accomplished by the cooperative members of each clan. The spring activities included repair of the summer village, garden preparation, and gathering of the next years supply of firewood from the waters of the Missouri River. The spring activities demanded a high level of competency and confidence among the people working together. The personal stories shared in the winter and spring acknowledged each individual as capable and willing to act cooperatively.) All clan relatives, holy people, and story-keepers, were omnipresent as cooperative supporters and teachers for any questions or struggles encountered by the individual. For the Mandan, the health

and (success of each individual was essential to the health and success of the people as a whole) (Ibid: 1989).

The Mandan belief in consequences which follow irresponsible use of stories (and other breaches of tradition) is simple. While the individual committing the error may encounter personal illness or "bad luck", a further possibility is that illness or misfortune will befall a member(s) of the individual's extended family. (The destiny of the family is affected directly by the actions of its interwoven members.) The individual's effect on the collective destiny and the emphasis on teaching and gift-giving as remedial means of conflict resolution, will be presented in detailed example in a later chapter. Here it is sufficient to note that breaking the Mandan rules surrounding the Origin Stories goes beyond simple civil censure. Breaking the rules opens up a realm of psychological (and physiological) consequence for the collective which the individual depended upon for survival (Ibid: 1989).

There is a singular rule of exception as concerns the Origin Stories. The exception allows that stories with characters of a dual nature can be spoken of in any season in cases where an immediate need for a lesson occurs. As Lydia explained, the choice to use the exception then becomes the responsibility of the individual. I propose that the dual character descriptions to be included in

the following text, and the purpose of this text to education, meet the Mandan criteria for exception (Ibid: 1989).

(The foremost Mandan cultural hero (deity), First Creator, is personified as coyote, the hero-trickster. He is constantly giving, yet variable as to time and amount given. He is a dual character)(Ibid: 1987).

(The Mandan cultural hero, First Man, the younger brother of First Creator is the giver of the Origin Stories, the clans, and the rules of social conduct to the Mandan. On occasion First Man supersedes his own rules and thus is potent as a dual character)(Bower 1950: 124,128, 337-340).

Good-Furred Robe, the eldest brother of the bringers of corn, is in some accounts given credit for acts attributed to First Man. Good-Furred Robe, while an ancestral bringer of innovation, also made a mistake of great importance. Good-Furred Robe is therefore a dual character (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993).

The Old Woman Who Never Dies, is the generator of seasonal cycles and female attributes. She is the intentional forebearer of personified celestial children, some who promote life and others who are identified as destroyers. Thus she too has potency as a dual character (Bower 1950: 155-156).

In further keeping with the Mandan rules of propriety,

the two renditions of the creation stories presented in the following text will not include verbatim narratives from any specific story-teller or "keeper". To establish a textural form which both respects the rules of the Mandan oral tradition, and yet offers the reader the context for appreciating the importance of that oral tradition, the renditions presented here will contain only the thematic elements which have been found consistent in all published accounts. Careful attention has been taken to edit the personal details unique to each of the published personal narratives.

The continuum of Origin Stories which Lydia Sage-Chase received through the traditional Mandan authority has been maintained through Mandan rules of transmission for centuries. The Origin Stories are essential to the Mandan continuum for they establish the Mandan relationship to the landscape which informed the stories. The following chapter will examine that landscape, and the history of the Mandan's relationship with the environment and other nations of people.

CHAPTER III

THE MANDAN ENVIRONMENT AND HISTORY

The Mandan people recognized that the environment was dual in character, in both constancy and flux was "given", and that the "given" was the story of the "Giver". Therefore, the Mandan story of the "given" and "Giver" is essential to knowing the Mandan story of environmental concepts. A story which begins with the Creation:

The First Creator created the First Man, who in turn created the earth. It was made of mud brought up from the bottom of the sea by (various birds in various renditions) and on the earth all forms of life were created.... The First Man walked about on it, meeting some animals and finally the First Creator (a contest was held which proved the First Creator as the elder of the two). The two of them then went wandering about together....The First Creator said the earth must be remade....so the two cultural heroes each took half the land to shape....The First Creator made hills and coulees (west), but First Man made his section flat and wooded (east)....Then each made himself a portion of a pipe, the First Creator making his of ash wood inlaid with stone (bowl), the First Man making his of soft wood (stem). They placed the two together and the First Creator said, "This will be the center, the heart of the world"

(Missouri-Heart river confluence). They walked along and met a bison from whom they got tobacco. Then they made new people, and those of "good disposition" were chosen by the First Creator to be taught through First Man to use bison. The people to whom First Man was born were the Neutakena, People of the First Man, the Mandan (Bower 1950: 347-365, Will 1906: 139).

When the last Pleistocene glacier receded eleven thousand years ago, the world of the Northern Plains had been remade. Due to the western boundary of the glacier, the Missouri River had changed from a pre-glacial northern flow to a post-glacial southern flow, turning south near present day Garrison, North Dakota. The Missouri River, the dominate natural feature of the remade Northern Plains, originates in the high valleys of the Rocky Mountain range, and flows east, gathering waters, silt, and wood as the land descends in steps down the "Missouri Slope" (First Creator appears from the west). The first step east of the mountain range is predominated by semi-arid sage prairie until the land is cut by the dramatic "badlands". The badlands are the erosive legacy of the northern flowing Little Missouri River which empties into the "Big" Missouri River (Wood 1967: 4-5).

East of the Little Missouri River, the land steps down into what was short grass (favored bison fodder) prairie two hundred years ago. There the prairie rolls like undulating water, punctuated by low hemispherical

mounds and stream-formed serpentine coulees. Scattered across the sight-line are wind eroded, sentinel-like, flat-topped buttes and mesas.

One-hundred and twenty miles to the east of the confluence of the Little Missouri River, the Missouri River turns to assume a southerly course. Sixty miles south of the bend the eastern flowing Knife River empties into the Missouri, sixty miles further south, the Heart River meets the Missouri, and another sixty miles south, the Cannonball River does the same. Eastern flowing tributaries continue to meet the Missouri River as it flows southeast into and through the Central Plains to an ultimate confluence with the Mississippi River. East of the Missouri River Trench, the land soon loses its hilliness as it descends to a great glacial-formed valley, which extends to the mid-western woodlands (Ibid: 6).

The Mandan homeland extended from the Little Missouri River to the west with an approximate northern boundary at the southern bank of the eastern flowing Missouri River. Past the point where the Missouri River turns southward, the Mandan claimed a hundred mile territory to the east, and a hundred and forty mile territory to the west, of the Missouri River Trench. The southern boundary of the Mandan homeland receded from a point south of the Grand River confluence, to the Cannonball River confluence around 1475 A.D. (Ibid: 1).

*Missouri
River*

The climate of the Northern Plains is extreme and dramatic. Winter temperatures of zero to fifty degrees below zero are common. Winds sweeping unchecked from the northwestern Canadian plains average ten miles per hour, although storms with sixty miles per hour winds are not uncommon. Snowfall is usually sparse, but accompanying driving winds create frequent blizzard conditions. Summer temperatures are often above one hundred degrees with dry winds from the south or southeast. Rainfall, which averages ten to fourteen inches a year, appears in the form of showers and thunderstorms which defy any pattern of prediction. Subsequently, sufficiently watered land and drought stricken land occur within a few miles of each other across the region. The growing season between frosts, while averaging one-hundred and twenty-one days, is often as short as seventy days. Intervals of as long as one-hundred and twenty rainless days are common (Ibid: 7).

Even the spring season displays erratic activity. In some years, warm Chinook winds moving along the eastern face of the Rocky Mountains generate premature snow-melt that lowers water volume in the rivers later in the summer. Conversely, the village gardens, usually planted in May, were not planted until July in some years due to late spring floods. The spring breakup of the ice also creates dramatic effects with the river sometimes "deserted a village",

or cut through the garden sites as it changed course. (Bower 1950: 28).

The valley created by the meandering Missouri River was a veritable oasis in contrast to the upland prairie. The valley varied in width from a half-mile to perhaps twenty miles at the great bend, and offered a respite from the harsh, yellowed and treeless prairie. The descent to the green woodland valley floor revealed not only a pleasant climate, but a cornucopia of trees, plants, animals, birds and aquatic creatures. The bottom-lands and sandbar islands supported a progression of willows and cedar groves, climaxing in forests of cottonwood, ash, elm, box elder, and hackberry. The prairie coulees grew thick with buffaloberry, juneberry, chokecherry bushes, and rose hips. Prairie turnips flourished upon the prairie near the river.

The mammal populations residing in the river valley, or on the nearby upland prairie, consisted of bison, elk, whitetail and mule deer, antelope, black and grizzly bear, badger, wolf, coyote, gray and swift fox, kit fox, skunk, porcupine, beaver, prairie dog, jackrabbit, cottontail, and mice. The river valley birds included: whistling swan, whooping crane, golden and bald eagle, hawk, crow, raven, great horned owl, turkey, Canadian goose, grouse and pigeon. The migratory eagles, geese, swans and cranes use(d) the Missouri River as a navigational pathway. The river was

rich in catfish, sturgeon, turtles, and mollusk. The Missouri River valley is a proven hospitable environment, and while the formative Missouri River is capricious to be sure, it is also enduring and generous; providing water, food, shelter and comfort to animals and humans for thousands of years (Ibid: 6-7).

The botanist, Melvin Gilmore visited the Mandan people during his 1914 journey to the Upper Missouri country. His general description of Amerindian relationships between nature and beliefs may be said to apply to the Mandan.

A people living with nature, and largely dependent upon nature, will note with care every natural aspect in their environment. Accustomed to observe through the days and the seasons, in times of stress and of repose, every natural feature, they will watch for every sign of the impending mood of nature, every intimation of her favor and every admonition of her austerity. Living thus in daily association with the natural features of a region some of the more notable will assume a sort of personality in the popular mind, and so come to have a place in philosophic thought and religious ritual (Gilmore 1977: 3).

Joseph Epes Brown, senior American scholar in Native American religious studies wrote of the Native American concept of nature as an inspired religion:

In most of the great religious traditions of the world people built centers of worship in the form of cathedrals, churches, or temples, and in these centers and in the many symbolical forms introduced into them, people expressed their image of the universe. It is certainly not difficult to sense this totality, or to feel

that one is actually at the center of the world when one is inside the great medieval cathedrals of Europe. For the Indians, however, the world of nature itself was their temple, and within this sanctuary they showed great respect to every form, function, and power. That the Indians held as sacred all the natural forms surrounding them is not unique,....But what is almost unique in the Indian's attitude is that their reverence for nature and for life is central to their religion: each form in the world around them bears such a host of precise values and meanings that taken all together they constitute what one would call their "doctrine" (Brown 1986: 37).

The preceding detailed narrative of the Northern Plains environment and the upper Missouri River Trench illustrates the diversity of resources found in the Mandan Homeland. The availability of those resources at any moment was nonetheless regulated by fluxuation in the climate and subsequent response of the dynamics of the Missouri River. For the Mandan the river served as the place for the gathering of animals, birds, and plants, and additionally transported the replenishing silt for gardens, the nearly total supply of firewood and building materials, and in the spring brought drowned bison to protein starved villages (Will 1906: 121). The environment of the Upper Missouri River region was generous while unpredictable.

The relationship of the Mandan with their resources required, as Melvin Gilmore noted, an attention to the patterns and behaviors of nature to the point of placing religious value upon the observations. The primary value which the Mandan culture subsumed from the Northern Plains

environment is summed up in a statement which Lydia has given agreement to; "The world is generous, and when one is generous the world returns that generosity" (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993). The given environment "taught" the Mandan to enact an ethos which established all animals, plants, and the landscape, as revered elder "teachers". The learned human reciprocal response consisting of a "doctrine" of reverence and thanksgiving. As an example, in earlier times the young men who trapped eagles and hunted bison first ceremonially pierced their flesh that they might share the pain of the eagles and bison. In eagle-trapping one was said to "suffer for the birds" (Bower 1950: 243). And while the landscape, familiar to the ancestral Mandan, now has an overlay of the structures of modern America, Lydia yet "shares" her songs with the plants in the gardens, and "feeds" ceremonial cornballs to the Missouri River (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1987).

The Mandan History

The date of origin of the identity of the Mandan as a distinct culture is a matter of interpretation.

Archaeologist Raymond Wood utilizes the coalescence of the northern bison hunting people, located at the Heart and Missouri confluence, and a corn growing people who

migrated to the Missouri River around 1100 A.D., as the origin of the Mandan identity. He recognizes any earlier cultural forms on the Upper Missouri River as too nebulous from an archaeological basis to be classified Mandan. His belief is, that given the length of the Mandan habitation at the Missouri and Heart river confluence (six-hundred plus years before initial documentation), that the Mandan may have completely integrated any distant historic event into the details of the landscape immediate to the Heart River area (Wood 1967: 11). Anthropologist George Will earlier used the same classic Mandan period (beginning 1100 A. D.) to identify the first Siouan speakers to migrate from the woodlands (Will 1906:97). Yet there is evidence of an antecedant people located at the Heart and Missouri confluence who began building earthen mounds around 500 B.C., the construction of which Wood noted as requiring a stable and complex social organization (Wood-Chomyo 1973: 15). Archaeologist Stanley Ahler offers evidence of yet more distant antecedant peoples in the Mandan homeland (Ahler 1988, 4-7). The question of establishing the relativity of the classic Mandan and the antecedent populations is answered through the Mandan oral history.

The history of a people may be said to begin with their recognition of self-identity. The continuum of self-identity lives only as long as the story of origin

and perpetuation is told. From the Mandan point of view, they have been perpetuated through the ancestral Neutakena (People of the First Man) since the seminal experience of the "Remaking of the World". The story of the Creation and "Remaking of the World" was the inaugural event of the Mandan Okipa Ceremony of the four cultural periods of Mandan evolution. The Okipa, performed at least once a year for centuries, was last held in 1890 (Bower 1950: 118). Lydia Sage-Chase has related to me that the Corn Origin Story which came with the 1100 A.D. migration of the woodlands Corn People, and which includes a theme of three emergences prior to the Corn People emergence, is a recognition of the three pre-coalescent periods of ancestral Mandan history (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993). Lydia Sage-Chase's view accords with that of ethnographer Alfred Bower who proposed that the Mandan oral history did agree with the archaeological evidence (Bower 1950: 14).

The Mandan speak of themselves as Neuta, the people, and from their point of view the history of the evolution of Mandan culture and values begins with the Neutakena, the first people chosen by the cultural heroes to perpetuate the values presently identified as Mandan (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993).

The earliest evidence of human residence in the ancestral Mandan homeland following the "Remaking of the World" lies along the drainage of the Knife River forty

to fifty miles west of the confluence of the Knife and Missouri rivers. There, (Calcedony Flint has been quarried for the manufacture of stone tools for over eleven thousand years (Ahler 1988: 6). Stanley Ahler, archaeologist from the University of North Dakota, and an authority on the quarries, spoke for the significance of Knife River flint as follows:

Knife River flint has been the technological foundation of all Indian cultures in the region ...for one hundred centuries this stone has been one of the most valuable natural resources in the middle reaches of the Missouri Valley...this valuable resource served as a drawing point for cultures in all ages..., and trading activities ...such as high-quality Knife River flint, solidify the social bonds linking the widely scattered hunting groups. Such bonds are needed should game become scarce in any one locality. In this way, the few people in this part of the world work(ed) to ensure their own survival (Ibid: 4).

The scattered hunting groups depended on an economic based on reciprocal exchange of resources. An economic model which has persisted for ninety-eight percent of human experience. In that model people share the fruits of their labor among themselves, and establish leadership contingent on witnessed knowledge willingly shared with the band or group (Harris 1989: 42-43). The small band economy exhibiting an innate proclivity for cooperation and reciprocal inner-group generosity.)

At the quarries sites scattered bands also joined

together to form "hunting cooperatives" necessary to the hunting method of impounding bison herds through driving them into compounds and canyons, or jumping them off of cliffs. This cooperative impound hunting method was emerging in various areas of the Great Plains at that time (Jennings 1986: 221). The reciprocal small band economy was then augmented with an intra-band cooperative hunting dynamic, and with, as Stanley Ahler has asserted, evolution of intra-band alliances. The historic Mandan attributes of hospitality, generosity, and inclusive cooperation toward others, may well have begun as a response to the evolving economic and social dynamic around the quarry sites. The ancestral Mandan response being an inclusive extension to other bands of the functional values effective in the small band dynamic. The Mandan extended family, in size and supportive function, continues to resemble the small band group even into the present.

(The first day of the Okipa ceremony focused on the Creation and "Remaking of the World". The language used to related the story was so ancient that the Mandan, whose daily language was the most archaic of the Siouan languages, could only understand two phrases; Corn Mother and Thunder Father (Bower 1950: 111).) The continuum of the Okipa, and it's story of encoded values, owes its origin to the ancestral people claimed by the Mandan as relatives. "The Buffalo People, who were the performers (originators) of

the Okipa, were created on the earth near Heart River by Lone Man after the lands were made" (Ibid: 117).

(The second day of the Okipa Ceremony was an enactment of the disappearance and reappearance of animals and birds in an ancient time. The Okipa Ceremony itself is said to have originated as a response to that past occurrence.) The Mandan story tells of Haito, the Speckled Eagle, hiding all the animals in Dog Den Butte after a dispute over a white bison robe. The cultural hero, First Man, tricked Haito by staging a ceremony (the initial Okipa) wherein human beings were disguised as the hidden animals. Having thought that he had failed to hide everyone, Haito released his captives and cooperated in staging all subsequent Okipa Ceremonies (Ibid: 120). The speckled eagle is equated with its winter grounds in the Rocky Mountains. In times of drought, when animals begin to disappear, the western Eagle Sky Villages are consulted as to the cause of the lack of western rains and river flow.

(A drought of immense proportion affected the entire Northern Plains region from 6000 B.C. to 2500 B.C. Referred to as the Altitherm Period, the drought depleted the secondary tributaries, diminished the bison herds, and drove most people off of the plains.) Only the larger rivers could have provided the uninterrupted water source and diversified food resources necessary for sustaining human populations during the drought. (The Upper Missouri River

Trench meets that criteria for sustaining human populations during the drought period (Jennings 1983: 221-223). The Snulden-Rostberg site (3700 B.C.) provides evidence of continued human habitation in the Mandan homeland during the Altitherm Period (North Dakota Heritage Center, 1993).

The third day of the Okipa Ceremony was the "everything comes back" day. On that day hundreds of Mandan people impersonated a wide variety of animals. The immediate conclusion is that this was an enactment of the increase of animals in the post Altitherm Period. Moreover, the enactment may also have marked the return of trading partners to the Upper Missouri Region, for the Mandan used totemic terms such as; fish people, eagle people, bear people, corn people, etc., to describe those from beyond the Mandan homeland (Bower 1950: 26).

The ancestral period (400 B.C. to 1100 A.D.) does exhibit evidence of borrowing between the ancestral Mandan and the mid-western Woodland cultures. At the Boundary Burial Mound complex near the Cannonball River, a classic Woodland style log-lined grave has been found containing artifacts (atlatl weights) similar to Woodland manufacture (Wood 1960: 43). Rock cairn effigies, and conical and lineal mounds, are found throughout the Mandan homeland. The effigies and mounds are similar to those found in Wisconsin on the trade route to the mid-western Adena and Hopewell cultures. Knife River flint has been found with

burial grave-goods in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Ohio (Ahler 1988: 7).

The fourth and final day of the Okipa Ceremony was a restatement of Mandan values as they applied to the final period of pre-historic and historic Mandan cultural evolution (1100 A.D. to 1890 A.D.). The period was one of consolidation, with distinct Mandan bands (identified by dialectic distinction) joined together into a tribal unity (Bower 1950: 137). The fourth day of the Okipa Ceremony celebrated that unity.

A Siouan speaking people from southwestern Minnesota-northwestern Iowa moved west to the Missouri River around 1100 A.D.. The story of the Corn People tells of their being invited to the Missouri River by First Creator and First Man. The Corn People brought with them the arts of horticulture and pottery-making. Their emergence story is as follows:

The Mandan were living under the ground, and through a hole in the sky they saw light. Several animals were sent up to investigate. Finally a vine grew up through the hole, and the people climbed the vine to emerge in the upper world. Three times different groups of people climbed up the vine. The fourth time that people climbed up the vine it was broken by a large or pregnant woman. The revered ancestor Good-Furred robe made a mistake, letting the woman climb up the vine. Because of his mistake many people had to remain in the ancestral underground villages. In the above world Good-Furred robe, with his sister Waving Corn Stalk, and brothers, Head like a Rattle and Cornhusk Earrings, became the leaders of the

people. The place of emergence was a mountain on a river near a great lake.

Remembering what his father and mother had taught them below, Good-Furred Robe showed the people to grow corn wherever it was not rocky. Staying to the west bank of the river they settled for periods of time, then traveled north, at some point trading with people of the east side whose language (Siouan?) they could understand. Further upstream they spent time near the Mississippi River (thought to be in the vicinity of the pipestone quarries in present southwestern Minnesota). The bow and arrow, and pottery came to the people during that time. After a time two men were hunting to the west and came to the Missouri River which the people called Mantahe, "the stranger". Soon, First Creator and First Man came to the villages of the Corn People and found them to be of "good disposition", and First Man said that he wanted the people to come to the Missouri River to live. Later First Creator and First Man came to the Corn People again, and invited them to move further up the Missouri River, and to have the Okipa Ceremony (Ibid: 155-162).

Any suggestion of contradiction between the Corn People story and the Buffalo People story offered at the beginning of this chapter was explained to Alfred Bower as follows:

My informants did not consider this to be an inconsistency at all. Their explanation was that, when Lone Man (First Man) made the land around the Heart River, he also made the land to the south as far as the ocean. He made fish people, eagle people, bear people, corn people, buffalo people, and others whose history was inaugurated into myths of the sacred bundles. These various people were born into the Mandan tribe by magical means, thus populating the lands (Ibid: 26).

The coalescence of the northern Buffalo People and the southern Corn People marked the beginning of the classic period of Mandan identity. It is important to note, that

Handwritten note:
 This is the classic period of Mandan identity.

before the merging, the two peoples lived just three hundred miles apart on a major trade route, thus allowing for a long-term assessment of each others "good disposition".

Upon arrival on the Missouri River the Corn People were comprised of three dialectic bands; the Nuptadi, the Nuitadi, and the Awigaxa. The coalescent Mandan claimed a history of five dialectic bands, thus the remaining MananarE and the Istopa dialects are presumably from the Buffalo People. Each of the dialectic bands (except the Awigaxa) blended into the populations of each of the villages scattered from the Heart River confluence to an area south of the Grand River confluence (Ibid: 24-25).

While the villages were autonomous in political, economic, and spiritual practices, intra-village cooperation in time of drought was essential. The dispersal of the dialectic bands throughout the villages enhanced the intra-village cooperation, for each distinct dialectic referenced to the extended familial band which generated the dialect. The familial values of reciprocal generosity and mutually beneficial cooperation remained as the primary value system, even as circumstance prompted extended family bands to join into multi-band integrated communities (Ibid: 24).

The scattered village were semi-permanent in nature. A villages was sustainable at a particular location as long as the river stayed close enough to replenish the garden plots, enough arable land was available for garden

rotation every four years, and sufficient firewood and building materials were available (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1987).

(The scattered village configuration was abandoned around 1300 A.D.) Villages north of the Grand River consolidated into larger fortified villages near the Heart River. The villages south of the Grand River also consolidated into larger fortified villages. The need for fortification and "safety in numbers" acknowledges the increasing population of mobile hunting groups coming onto the Northern Plains around that date (Bower 1950: 15).

(From 1300 A.D. to 1500 A.D. the Mandan were divided into distinct regional groups. The northern villages used a rectangular earth-lodge dwelling, and created the first village center dance plaza and First Man shrine. The southern villages used a circular earth-lodge, and did not have the dance plaza or shrine. The southern people did initiate intra-village gender specific societies of non-blood related individuals. The women's Goose society regulated garden size, a necessary function in the southern area prone to drought. The men's Black Mouth society served as village defenders (Ibid: 16, 138).)

(The southern people moved north to the Heart River area around 1500 A.D.) The reason for the move may have been a prolonged drought, for Mandan oral tradition speaks of "dry years" preceding the move (Ibid: 138). By 1600

A.D. all of the Mandan villages, various estimates number five to thirteen villages (Will 1906: 91), were located from the Heart River confluence in the south to the Knife River confluence in the north. The Hidatsa people came among the Mandan at that time, and adapted much of the forms of Mandan material culture (Bower 1950: 10, 17).

Each Mandan village had a large flat-fronted rectangular Okipa Ceremonial Lodge, a shrine (Ark of the First Man), and a dance plaza. The circular earth-lodge was adapted by all of the villages (Ibid: 24-25). In each village the first inner circle of lodges closest to the shrine belonged to the "keepers" of Origin Story Bundles (Wood 1967: 15).

At the conclusion of the 1832 Okipa Ceremony witnessed by George Catlin, those from the westside moiety who had pierced their flesh rubbed bison fat on their wounds. The piercers from the eastside moiety rubbed corn meal on their wounds. Tools and precious goods were then taken at the direction of the First Man impersonator and offered to the Missouri River. Bison robes and seven ceremonial cornballs were also "fed" to the river. The Okipa Ceremony closed where it had opened, with First Creator and First Man, and the river they had generously "Remade" for the Mandan people's prosperity (Ibid: 150). The Buffalo People and the Corn people had again witnessed each other as willing to make generous sacrifices for the perpetuation

of a unified Mandan prosperity.

The Mandan history as presented above does establish a marked correlation between archaeological surveys, both recent and past, and the oral tradition given in the Okipa Ceremony. The continuity of the oral tradition which is presently identified as Mandan is a value encoding story which has passed unbroken from generation to generation since the "Remaking of the World".

The importance of the Mandan history to this text rests on the continuum of the extended familial group as the primary enculturation mechanism for teaching values systems. (As has been shown, the small-band extended family of the quarry site period continued to serve as a model for each adaptive need to include other peoples in cooperative and loyalty paradigms. The scattered villages, and the later consolidated villages, utilizing the familial values model to deal with increased populations of diverse origins living in more compacted communities.) The familial values model ever expanding to include others as family. The period of Mandan history prior to 1300 A.D. found the Mandan secure as the dominant population on the Northern Plains. In that ancestral period the foundation of virtues of "good disposition", enacted from an ethic of familial values, was consistently utilized and extended, as a model for any necessity of consolidation. The foundational ethic of familial values established in the ancestral period

continued to serve as an adaptive survival modality in the period following the 1837 smallpox epidemic, with rules of exception used as adaptive necessity dictated.

The familial value model had also been tested in the period from 1300 to 1837 when the Mandan reached new expansive levels of familial inclusion with the large numbers of Amerindian and Euro-American peoples who came to the Northern Plains. A period of their history when the Mandan were at their pre-eminence on the Northern Plains, and their methods for familial inclusion was at its most elaborate.

Mandan Prosperity and Hospitality

We have reached a point in the Mandan story where we can speak of their culture at its pre-eminence. The Mandan and neighboring Hidatsa villages constituting the hub for trade in the Upper Missouri river region of the Northern Plains. The visitation of numerous Amerindian and Euro-American traders to the Mandan villages expanded the necessity for the Mandan to honor the ethical sensibilities of their visitors, while maintaining the virtues of the Mandan value system. Beginning in 1300 A.D. the Mandan were no longer the singularly dominant population on the Northern Plains. The Mandan were out-

numbered by the accumulative population of other peoples. The need for Lydia Sage-Chase to integrate diverse cultural paradigms into the Mandan value system has a noted similarity to the integration faced by her ancestors in the pre-eminent Mandan trading period when as many as twenty different Amerindian tribes visited the Mandan.

The following description of intra-tribal trade comes from the 1804 period, at the time of the Lewis and Clark visit to the Mandan villages:

There were three main routes by which horses (after 1750) and other goods came into Mandan hands, each of them involving exchange with nomadic hunters who came to the Mandan villages to trade. (1) The Crow came to their villages from the upper Yellowstone with goods obtained from the Shoshoni Rendezvous in southwestern Wyoming. Here the Crow obtained goods from the Shoshoni as well as goods from the west from the Nez Perce and the Flathead, and from the Spanish Southwest from the Ute. (2) Another route, suspected of being the older, was between the Spanish Southwest, and the Mandan and Arikara (the Arikara maintaining a trade center on the Grand River) by the nomadic Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, Comanche, and Cheyenne and Arapaho... (3) The Mandan and Arikara also exchanged goods with nomadic Cree and Assinibion(e), who lived to the northeast...the nomads brought dried bison meat and other produce of the chase to trade for corn and other products of the villages' gardens...the nomads working harder at the chase, and the horticulturalists harder in their gardens in order to have the necessary surplus for trade (Wood 1967: 18-19).

The goods which the Mandan offered in trade for bison products were diverse. (The ancient trade in Knife river flint continued into the historic period, when it was

supplemented with European iron. Eagle feathers were another trade item which the Mandan had provided other people for centuries. Items traded into the Mandan villages, and subsequently traded back out again, were dentalium and olivella shells from the west coast of the continent, conch shell from the gulf coast, and copper from the Great Lakes region. The garden trade produce consisted of squashes and beans, sunflower seeds, and most importantly, corn. Yet, even when the bison were plentiful and mobile hunters did not need corn to supplement their diets, they came for the Mandan tobacco (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1987).

The Mandan tobacco was essential to the Northern Plains-wide "calumet" or peace making pipe ceremony, with the relationship of the First Man (peace-keeper) and tobacco established in the Origin Story before the "Remaking of the World". Mandan villages were safe-zones of peace on the Plains, for the pipe ceremony, as well as the "feeding of corn" adoption ceremony affirmed the familial relationship between the First Man and the Mandan trading partners. The "adopted" family member was expected to respect Mandan familial values. The obligation to cooperate as a Mandan family member was so paramount, that trading groups of a tribe "adopted" into a Mandan village defended the village against attacks by other members of their own tribe (Ibid: 1989).

Beyond earshot of the Mandan villages all agreements of peace were held as void until re-constituted with yet another pipe ceremony. Lydia Sage-Chase related to me, "The Mandan disdain those who made war just for the sake of making war" (Ibid: 1993). Meriwether Lewis wrote that, "The Mandan are at war with all who make war only, and wish to be at peace with all nations, seldom (are the Mandan) the aggressors" (Devoto 1953: 65).

The Mandan, as noted earlier in this chapter, realized all peoples as relatives originating from the "Center of Creation" at the Mandan homeland. That relativity was granted to the non-Siouan speaking trade partners, as well as the Siouan speaking peoples who were considered closer relatives due to language affiliation (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993). The Siouan speaking tribes who migrated to the Missouri River and its surrounds between 1300 A.D. and 1600 A.D. were the Dakota, Lakota, Assiniboine, Yanktonan, Yankton, Hidatsa and Crow, in the north, and, the Iowa, Kwapa, Winnebago, Ponca, Otoe, Missouri, Omaha, Osage, and Kansas, in the south (Will 1906: 7). Mary Louise Defender Wilson, a Yankton educator and historian, related to me that today the Siouan peoples were especially fond of speaking highly of their Mandan relatives. Those Siouan people recognizing the Mandan as the (Grizzly) Bear People of the north. However, the Lakota began to speak of the

Mandan as a weak people following the decimation of the Mandan by the smallpox (Mary Louise Defender Wilson, 1990). Lydia Sage-Chase related to me the Mandan perspective about the conduct of other peoples. She said that while all peoples are related to the Mandan, only those who act in accord with the Mandan values are granted the closest determination of "kin", being of the same kind (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993).

The respect afforded the Mandan traveled in many directions. To the west, the Absoroka (Crow) spoke of the confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone rivers as the tail of a great serpent, of which the Mandan people were the head (Clark 1966: 296). In the south, the Ponca and Omaha founded societies for revered and generous elders, and named the societies after the Mandan (Mails 1973: 274, 310). To the north, the Assiniboine, through their trade with the Algonquian speaking Chippewa and Ojibawa, spread the story of the Mandan to the far eastern woodlands.

The French explorer and trader, Sier La Verendrye, received the Assiniboine stories of the Mandan at Fort La Reine near Winnipeg, Canada. (Journeying in the company of Assiniboine guides, La Verendrye entered a Mandan village in 1738, and became the first European to leave a written account of the Mandan people. From the Assiniboine stories La Verendrye expected to meet a fair-skinned and fair-haired people who lived in great cities. He expected to meet

a people different in kind from any he had yet encountered in North America (La Verendrye 1968: 301).

Given the context of his expectations, La Verendrye's initial reaction to the Mandan people was one of disappointment. They were in his assessment simply different by degree from the native peoples he had met. Yet La Verendrye's disappointment was followed by an appreciative observation of the actuality of the Mandan village. He wrote that "all the streets, squares and cabins (lodges) are uniform in appearance...they keep the streets and open spaces very clean...the ramparts are smooth and wide" (Ibid: 339). Of the people themselves he noted that "This tribe is of mixed blood, white and black. The women are rather handsome, particularly the light-coloured ones; they have an abundance of fair-hair. The whole tribe, men and women, is very industrious" (Ibid: 340).

The primary purpose for La Verendrye's visit was to establish a direct European trade with the Mandan villages. For the Mandan the direct relationship with a trade partner required that the Mandan civil and ethical values be included in that relationship. Consequently, La Verendrye was met four days march east of the Mandan village (Menoken site), and was "fed corn" and given tobacco as terms of temporary adoption (Ibid: 318). At the village entrance he participated in a pipe ceremony which established his conduct as peaceful. He was then carried on a bison robe

into the village and feasted in an earth-lodge (Ibid: 325-326). Later, during an evening of deliberation over trade agreements, the Mandan asked that La Verendreye "admit us to the number of his children" (Ibid: 331). La Verendrye placed his hands on the heads of several Mandan and adopted them into the "Father-Son" relationship. [The Mandan father and son relationship was centered on mutual aid in time of war, a significant pledge to the Mandan point of view, for they were contending with aggressive mobile hunter people, including the Assiniboine, at the time. The adoption by La Verendrye as a "Father" placed the French in a permanent familial allegiance with the Mandan against any violence initiated by the Assiniboine, or any others bent on disturbing the Mandan peace (Ibid: 330-331).

As other Americans and Europeans paid visits to the Mandan a written body of testimony as to Mandan character and customs was established. In 1832 George Catlin wrote of the "good disposition" of the Mandan people as follows.

The Mandan are certainly a very interesting and pleasing people in their personal appearance and manners; differing in many respects, both in looks and customs, from all other tribes which I have seen. They are not a warlike people; for they seldom, if ever, carry war into their enemies country; but when invaded, shew their valour and courage to be equal to that of any people on earth....They have very judiciously located themselves in a permanent village, which is strongly fortified, and ensures their preservation. By this means they have advanced further in the arts of manufacture; have supplied their lodges more abundantly with the comforts,

and even luxuries of life, then any Indian nation I know of...and are therefore familiarly (and correctly) denominated, by the traders and others, who have been amongst them, "the polite and friendly Mandans" (Catlin 1973: 93).

Recently published ethnographic notes which supplement the 1833 journals of Maximilian's visit to the Mandan provide a more detailed description of the Mandan character and temperament. The following description quotes first the journals, and secondly from the ethnographic notes.

They discuss with pleasure subjects of the highest order, the universe and its cause together with kindred topics, saying that their own explanation was far from satisfactory....They are very fine orators and use very impressive figurative language. They like to talk....By nature they are proud and full of ambition....They often are highly sensitive, and some have been known to die of love or from wounded personal pride due to an insult to their honor (Maximilian 1843: 417).

Some writers have spoken rather too unfavourably of the moral character of the aborigines of North America, and their domestic habits...I have never observed any disputes among them, but, on the contrary, much more unity and tranquillity than in civilized Europe. It has often been asserted that the Indians are inferior in intellectual capacity to the Whites; but this has been now sufficiently refuted. If man, in all varieties, has not received from the Creator equally perfect faculties, I am, at least, convinced that, in this respect, the Americans are not inferior to the Whites....Many American and foreign works have taken notice of the striking good sense and wit, the correct judgement of the Indians, in all the occurrences of daily life...One is often at a loss to answer their questions, founded on correct and natural judgment...In general, the Mandans and Minnetarees (Hidatsa) are not dangerous, and though there are many rude and savage men among them, they are, on the whole, well-disposed towards the

Whites: the former (Mandan), especially, manifest this, and have many good and trustworthy men among them (Thomas 1982: 243).

Sier La Verendrye counted one-hundred and thirty earth-lodges in the Menoken village. His son, who traveled westward to the confluence of the Heart and Missouri rivers, visited five villages all of which he estimated to be twice the size of the Menoken village (La Verendrye 1968: 344).

An estimation of the accumulative number of Mandan lodges can be put at fourteen hundred and thirty. Raymond Wood estimated that an average of ten individuals lived in each earth-lodge (Wood 1967: 16). The Mandan population can thus be estimated at fourteen thousand individuals in 1738.

Following the 1782 smallpox epidemic the Mandan moved to two villages near the Knife River confluence. The earth-lodges numbered sixty and thirty-eight in the two villages (Will 1906: 100). The approximate population of the two Mandan villages being estimated at one thousand individuals by Wood's system of calculation. In 1832 George Catlin estimated the combined population of the two villages at two thousand people (Ibid: 101). The actual Mandan population probably fell between the two estimates. Another smallpox epidemic raged through the two villages for three weeks in 1837. The number of Mandan surviving that epidemic has be estimated at one-hundred and twenty-five individuals (Ibid: 101). The Mandan pre-eminence on the Northern Plains had come to an end.

The years between the 1837 smallpox tragedy, and the 1845 combined re-settlement of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara at a northern location called Like-A-Fishhook village, were called by the Mandan, "the lost years". Once re-settled, the years at Like-A-Fishhook village were years of attempted revival for the Mandan. Even though they no longer maintained a position as primary Northern Plains traders, that position being usurped by Euro-American companies, they continued to farm, hunt and trade. The annual Okipa ceremony continued for a few years with increased Hidatsa participation, but frequently Mandan young men secluded themselves away from the villages to pierce their flesh in the exclusive company of the few Mandan elders (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1989).

The Mandan then made a critical choice in an attempt to increase their population. Marriage with people from outside the tribe was encouraged for the first time, providing that all children from those marriages be raised as Mandan. Some Mandan claim that the choice to marry outside the tribe constituted the beginning of the end for the Mandan, while others viewed it as an adaptive necessity within the propriety of extended relatedness. (Ibid: 1989) Nonetheless, by 1876 the Mandan population had increased to an estimated 241 people (Meyer 1977: 132).

Life for the three tribes at Like-A-Fishhook was not easy. The Lakota were unceasingly belligerent, attempting

to turn the three tribes from their compact of peace maintained with the Euro-Americans. The 1851 Laramie Treaty which ceded Mandan-Hidatsa land in exchange for government protection, established Fort Berthold near the village, but to little result (Ibid: 111). Only with the overall cessation of plains warfare in the late 1870's was the sense of siege finally lifted from the village. But, other trials were nearly as numerous as the Lakota incursions. Small, but frequent, epidemics of cholera also laid siege upon the three tribes. The decline of the bison and the introduction of large quantities of sugar, salt, wheat, and pork as dietary replacements corresponded with evidence of insistent tuberculosis and venereal diseases. Moreover, the wood supplies and arable lands surrounding the village were unable to sustain the village population on an indefinite basis. The traditional practice of moving a village when wood or land was exhausted was not an option at Like-A-Fishhook. The practice of having a winter village in the river bottoms ceased in 1866, and as a result the summer village was required to absorb the continuous impact of it's human population for several decades.

The increase in the Mandan population tells only a partial story; for given a general low birth rate and incidents of disease, the population of the combined three tribes actually showed a steady decline. Only the abating of epidemics in the 1880's finally stemmed that decline

(Ibid: 132).

In the mid-1870's the government considered and then abandoned the idea of moving the three tribes to Indian Territory in Oklahoma. An alternative plan was to persuade tribal members to abandon the village and take up wheat farming on allotted lands scattered about the Fort Berthold reservation. Although the plan was opposed by Mandan and Hidatsa elders, by 1886 the Arikara had departed from the village, and in 1888 only a few Mandan elders remained at Like-A-Fishhook. As families left, their lodges were destroyed by government agents to prevent any possibility of return. The ending of a millennium of a village societal lifestyle was "One of the half-dozen most important events in the history of the Three Tribes" (Ibid: 134-137). Additionally, after 1889 the government prohibited any further enactment of the Mandan Okipa ceremony of history and tribal unity (Ibid: 152).

The allotment distribution was complete by 1895, yet the result was not a random distribution of the people across the reservation. The Arikara took allotments in the northeastern section, the Mandan in the southwestern section, and the Hidatsa located either in-between or with the Mandan. Locating as near to the Missouri River as possible, each tribal groups approximated the traditional choices for village locations (Ibid: 135).

The demography of the reservation in the first half

of the twentieth century reveals that a few small community centers existed, Elbowood being the largest with a population around three hundred, while the majority of the people were scattered in about the valleys and benchlands. "The intention to scatter the Indian people over the countryside like white farmers had been substantially realized" (Ibid: 202). Although the three tribes suffered the droughts of the 1930's along with the rest of America's heartland farmers, the native gardens, owing to centuries of "drought wisdom", did not fail, while the upland ranches and farms of whites and Amerindian alike did fail (Ibid: 172-74). The urbanization movement of the World War II years found Fort Berthold people leaving the reservations for employment in war industries, although the majority of those that moved did not leave North Dakota (Ibid: 203).

In the summer of 1948 the Mandan gardens prospered. On the reservation "69 percent of the families had successful gardens...while still in the bottomlands" (Nabhan 1989: 179). Yet a cloud of ominous proportion hung over the gardeners, for in 1947 the news had come from the government agents; a proposed dam, the Garrison Dam, was going to drown the 155,000 acres of fertile Missouri River bottomlands on the Fort Berthold Reservation (Meyer 1977: 176).

The move from the bottomland took years, being completed

by the end of 1954. Buildings were salvaged, the Four Bears bridge moved, churches and cemeteries were relocated. In the late summer of 1954 a large "Farewell to the Valley" powwow and ceremonial was held at Elbowood. Relocation communities grew around the locations of new schools. The White Shield school, near the east section town of Parshall, attracted the Arikara people. The Man-Da-Ree school in the western section became a community represented by all three tribes. Twin Buttes school, in the southwestern section became the center for the Mandan people. The government agencies resided in a "created community", named New Town by the Army Corp of Engineers (Ibid: 227).

• The Mandan people have an ancient prophecy which in part warned that if the waters of the Missouri river ever reversed their flow, the Mandan and the entire world order were in eminent danger of destruction. As the Missouri's waters were impounded by the Garrison Dam in 1954, the surface of the river flowed backwards.) At the beginning of this chapter the story of the "Remaking of the World" described the reversal of the flow of the Missouri River from the north to the south. The Mandan history began with that event, and eleven thousand years later the Mandan history may be closing with the Missouri River again reversing it's flow. The world "Remade" again.

Throughout the Mandan history, the familial model

of inclusive relativity met every adaptive necessity faced by their culture. The original concept taken from observations of nature, that the generous world calls for a familial reciprocal generosity, has never been abandoned as the foundation of the Mandan ethic. From the period of small familial bands through the consolidation period the tenet of inclusive generosity may appear to have been more easily sustainable, for it was enacted by a small population of people of similar "good disposition". The ability of the familial value system to expand to embrace peoples of diverse ethics in pre-eminent trade period, nonetheless appreciates that the Mandan of that period enacted their ethic from a position of strength. A strength founded on their ability to dictate the terms of behavior within the villages, and, the desire of their "adopted" trading partners to live by the Mandan ethic, and thus maintain access to the Mandan trade goods.

It is in the period following the 1837 smallpox epidemic, a destructive period when all but the Mandan family and stories have suffered near extinction, that the Mandan values have been most severely challenged to prove their endurance. And where Mandan families continue to offer their children the encoded values through example and story, as in the case of Lydia Sage-Chase's family, the Mandan values have continued to prove their endurance.

Lydia Sage-Chase is living in a "Remade World", and

is living proof of the efficiency of Mandan values to endure. The endurance of those values must point to the Mandan foundation of belief. The following chapter will examine the "Givers" of the Mandan values.

CHAPTER IV

ORIGINATION OF MANDAN VALUES

Mandan beliefs and values have grown with thousands of years in witness of the Missouri River dynamics and the Northern Plains environment. "The suggestive influence of environment (which) plays an enormous part in all spiritual education" (James 1982: 112). A particular environment to which the ancestral Mandan ascribed an interpretation of cause and effect reality.

Observations of any environment potentially predisposes the human consciousness, through intuition and logic, to question the existence of that which is the unseen "mover" behind the movements of the environment. The proposed answers to this question of the nature and character of the "mover" differ from culture to culture, and, from religion to religion. As will become clear in the following chapter, the Mandan sought and continue to seek, a dialogue with the unseen "mover", the Divine Principle, which is in Mandan belief, omnipresent in all their interactions with the totality of creation. For the Mandan therefore, "an act is never simply physiological; it is, or can become,

a sacrament, that is, a communion with the sacred" (Eliade 1957: 14). (The omnipresent link between the consciousness of the individual Mandan and the suggestive Mandan environment has been the familial ideal. Moreover, the family, the environment, and the inception of the traditions recognized as Mandan values are given authority through the divine personified relatives, the Mandan cultural heroes.)

The Mandan cultural heroes described here exhibit aspects of dual characteristics, thus keeping to Mandan rules of disclosure. The purpose for this disclosure is to reveal the continuum between the characteristics of the cultural heroes and the Mandan ideal of spiritual, psychological, and physical health.

OHMAHANK-NUMAKSHI- First Creator, is the supreme being among the Mandan divine beings. First Creator is the Hero-Trickster and appears at times in the form of the coyote in Mandan stories. First Creator, as exalted and most powerful, created the earth, human beings and all existent objects (Bowers 1950: 155). First Creator is equated with the direction of the west from which comes the flow of the Missouri River with its bounty of bison, firewood, and building material. The spring floods which replenished the soils of the gardens were attributes of First Creator's heroic and generous nature (Ibid: 93, 10,

132, 137). Conversely, as the trickster, First Creator displays the eccentricity of nature. The Missouri River flow can vary from year to year, or may change course altogether. The bison came, like the spring floods and summer thundershowers, with the trickster's sense of time and place. The echo of nature and First Creator are consummate; a primal-volitional dynamic of persistent giving, without absolute predictability.

First Creator, as creator, imparts his characteristics to the creation. The human being is readily recognized as a psychological echo of the hero-trickster. In thought and behavior humans are constantly interacting with their world, although the fruits of their labor show inconsistent results. At times heroic and at times self-defeating, the intentionality of desire and satisfaction resident to each human life flows ever onward from cradle to grave.

The Mandan recognize the divine organic character of a Creator, in nature and themselves, which was constant in ideal, dualistic in comprehension, and varied in expression. Thus, the Mandan Creator provided the human aspect of creation with the opportunity to be periodically inconsistent, without losing constancy with the Creator's presence and character.

NUMANK-MACHANA- First Man, or, Lone Man, is the creation of his elder brother, First Creator. First Man is also

known as Buffalo Man, his clothing made from the hide of the primary cooperative hunter of the bison, the Buffalo Wolf. As the premier teacher of the Mandan, First Man taught the methods for hunting of the bison, originated the clan system, distributed the Origin Stories amongst the clans, and established the ceremonies to mediate floods.

First Man entered into village life through periodic virgin birth when virgin women ate of bison kidney fat or corn. First Man never married, and thus had a lifetime primary fidelity to the familial line of birth which is characteristic of Mandan clan fidelity.

First Man as the peace-keeper acknowledged his role as the teacher of cooperative social behavior. The First Man shrine, which stood in commemoration of the Great Flood at the ceremonial center of each Mandan village, had protective planked sides which encircled the sacred cedar representing First Man's body and all Mandan ancestors. The shrine echoed the defensive planked wall surrounding each village, and acknowledged that First Man also mediated with the floods of people entering the Mandan homeland. The shrine also represented the canoe (Ark) which First Man rode south to mediate with a people who were abusing Mandan people traveling there to trade. Lastly the shrine represented the corrals used to capture the bison stampeded over cliffs (Ibid: 105, 116, 125, 128, 143, 148, 159).

First Man was identified with creation of the forms

and events in the east. The westward migrations of Amerindian tribes and Euro-Americans, and the innovations or objects they carried with them, required First Man to provide an interpretation, to give them a proper "fit" in the Mandan ethos. The trial and error characteristic of First Man in adapting to new circumstance is illustrated by First Creator's need to make corrections in First Man's attempts at co-creation during the "Remaking of the World" (Ibid: 353). Additionally, when First Man traveled south in the Great Canoe, to mediate with an intractable people, he knowingly broke the rules dictating only twelve men in the canoe (Ibid: 360). First Man, as a dual character and archetype of complex social conduct, presents an example of both the constancy necessary to cultural continuum and the eccentricity of genius needed to step beyond the "rules" when adaptive occurrence can not be fitted to the existent cultural matrix.

First Man appeared many times among the Mandan, but is now said to no longer come in physical form, as he has gone to live in the south (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1989). The reason that First Man ceased coming to the villages may be that the innovation of consolidated fortified villages, with his shrine at the center, was recognized as a final entity of Mandan social organization. The consolidated villages brought the clans into a unified blend, and, the age-grade societies of non-blood related individuals secured

an intra-village fidelity of mutual military support and coordination of garden production. The solidarity of social structure would not however have ended the need to continue to interpret the social rules First Man originated.

Subsequently, when his guidance was needed the Mandan followed his example as the Lone Man, and they wandered in solitary vigil sending thoughts upon thoughts to him. Each Mandan striving to come to a "single mindedness" so that they might hear his advice (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993).

The cultural heroes are ancestral relatives to the Mandan. They teach the formal rules of "doing", as an elder teaches the younger. First Creator is recognized as the giver of the human instinctive nature, and First Man as the giver of human intellectual nature. First Creator can yet be expected to appear, at any time, and in any guise. First Man can only be found in the concentrated mind of the individual.

The Mandan cultural hero is an archetype. The originator of the a priori ideals for sacred conduct. Incidentally the cultural hero is potentially resident in every person one might encounter, thus fostering an appreciation of another as sacred. And, the cultural hero is the witness and comforter to the internalized ethical sensibilities of the individual, who is thus also held as sacred.

The guiding cultural hero is both a host who provides

psychological and physical sustenance, and a guest who comes unannounced to receive the same courtesy of shelter and sustenance. The covenant of generosity extended to all peoples and beings is incumbent upon this reciprocal exchange between the host and guest; where both the giving and the receiving are acknowledged as vital to life.

The anthropomorphic, dualistic and thought-responsive nature of the Mandan cultural heroes point to the psychological continuum between the cultural hero as role model, and the Mandan psychology of discernment; the internal human activity of choice, acceptance of consequence, and remedial guidance. As close as a whisper away, the presence of the cultural hero demands the attentive respect of the Mandan individual for all elements of life, and in turn, provides a certainty of being heard.

Mircea Eliade, an eminent religious scholar, has written that humans are less a given entity than the entity which the individual "makes" of themselves. The given nature is then but a potential, while the choices made through a lifetime "makes" one who they are. Eliade offers that a member of a culture, such as the Mandan, assuredly recognized temporal history, yet, "the only history that concerns him is the sacred history revealed by the myths...the history of the gods,... for one becomes truly a (hu)man only by conforming to the teaching of the myths, that is, by imitating the gods" (Eliade 1957: 100). The

Mandan who followed the model of the cultural heroes gained the opportunity to "make" of themselves a cultural hero.

The following description of the Mandan qualities attributed as feminine comes from Maximilian's 1833 interviews with the Mandan headman, Dipauch, and from Alfred Bower's 1929 interviews with Mandan elders.

The Old Women Who Never Dies is the divine grandmother of the regenerative rhythms of nature. She has a lodge south of the Mandan on a great island in the Missouri River. Her husband is the serpent who is the river (Bower 1950: 289-291). She also has lived in Grandmother's lodge near Elbowood (on the land allotment of Scattercorn and James Holding Eagle, and where Lydia Sage-Chase grew-up). The moon is revered in connection with the Old Women Who Never Dies, for it is considered her permanent abode (Ibid: 155).

The Old Women Who Never Dies is instrumental in the creation and re-generation of all earthly feminine forms, both the phenomenal and the nomenal; such as the spirit women of the sacred cedar groves (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1989). The Old Women Who Never Dies also has off-spring who are of celestial nature. Of her three daughters, "the eldest is the star that rises in the east, the morning star; and they call her, "the woman who wears a plume." The second daughter, called "the striped gourd", is a high star which revolves around the polar star, and lastly, the third

daughter is the evening star which is near to the setting sun" (Bower 1950: 155).

The male off-spring of the Old Woman Who Never Dies also number three; "The eldest son is the day (the first day of creation), the second is the Sun...the third son is the night." The Sun is revered as it is the abode of the First Creator (Ibid: 155-56).

The Old Women who Never Dies had an adopted grandson who taught the Mandan rituals and then departed to live in Venus, "and it is he who protects mankind on the earth; for without his care the race would have been long since extinct." (Ibid: 155). A specific correspondence of Venus and the Moon in the spring sky is the sign to germinate corn seed among the Mandan. When the Old Woman Who Never Dies sends her geese north to the Mandan homeland, the corn planting ceremonies begin. The Mandan village headman, Dipauch, told Maximilian that the Mandan did not know who the Old Women Who Never Dies was, but that she had great power (Ibid: 155). Her powers were in those things which were either beyond the earth, or had to be waited upon to arrive in their season.

The paradox of the Mandan cultural heroes having both beneficial and eccentric attributes extends to the Mandan ontology of misfortune as well. The female progenitor, The Old Woman Who Never Dies has been noted above as a beneficial diety. However, the same entities of her

creation; the stars, Sun and Moon, are also considered as potentially "evil". In the potency of evil, the Sun, the Moon, and the stars are birthed by the Woman Above, a female attribute connected by inference with The Old Woman Who Never Dies (we are reminded that The Old Woman Who Never Dies is considered a great mystery). The story of the The Woman Above, Sun, Moon, stars, and the speckled eagle Hoita is encoded in the People Above bundle. In that story the female entities of potential evil are nonetheless referred to as Holy Women, equating holiness with power. (Ibid: 296-299). "These Holy Women cause twisted faces and insanity" (Ibid: 299). Alfred Bower noted that even though the People Above bundle(s) were numerous among the Mandan, that most people had a reluctance to discuss the details of the bundles and stories (Ibid: 296-298).

The (People Above) ceremony differs in function from most ceremonies in that it was performed to ward off misfortunes sent by these evil mythological gods. Other sacred beings are either neutral or helpful, but not so with the Sun or his sister (Moon). They were cannibals and brought miscarriages, insanity, twisted faces, droughts, death, and misfortunes to the people. Ceremonies were rites of appeasement. The Sun was a cannibal who brought death to members of war parties and carried their bodies to his mother's lodge above, where he prepared them for his meals (Ibid: 296).

The occasion of eccentricity (the extraordinary) was given explanation through the People Above bundles. Thus

occurrences of physical deformity, mental aberration, and environmental calamity were given an explanation for their appearances when no other tenable explanation was apparent. The powerful image of the Old Woman Above, coming to a man in a dream, required that he take up the dress and duties of a woman for the remainder of his life as homage to her demands (Ibid: 296).

There was also an entity earthly in description and activities, who was called, OxinhEdE, the Foolish One. Alfred Bower describes, after Catlin, the Foolish One as he appears on the third day of the Okipa Ceremony.

Throughout the ceremony there had been challenges sent to the Foolish One to come and match his powers with the Lone Man and his pipe. Foolish One symbolized those who did not respect sacred things, and the drama illustrated the unhappy lot of those who failed to fast or seek supernatural protection through purchase or fasting. Just after the performers has completed their first dance on the third day, he appeared on the prairie following a zigzag course to the village. He was scantily clothed, wearing a breechcloth of buffalo hair, a buffalo tail behind, anklets of buffalo hair, and a small closefitting cap of buffalo hair with a raven feather in it. He was painted black with white teeth painted around his mouth; a red disk on his chest represented the sun; a red crescent on his back represented the moon....While the Foolish One approached the open circle of the village, the Okipa Maker (the sponsor of the ceremony) continued praying at the sacred cedar and did not move from his place until he heard him near by, within the open circle. The Okipa Maker grasped Lone Man's pipe in both hands and carrying it before him, advanced toward the Foolish One, challenging that one's right to come among the people to frighten them and bring misfortune or death at the hands of their enemies

by breaking up the dances for the buffaloes. As he advanced, the singing and dancing stopped, while all looked on attentively at the drama. No person was to utter a sound, and any dog that barked was killed by the Black Mouths (police society). It was believed the tribe's welfare was dependent on the powers of Lone Man's pipe to overcome the power of the Foolish One's staff. The Foolish one retreated before the Okipa Maker, and the people sang the victory songs (Ibid: 144-45).

A point of interest found in the Mandan characters of misfortune is their visible presence. In the description of the Foolish One, he was "called" forth to be challenged, not relegated to a dark place of avoidance. The Sun, Moon, and Woman Above were a constant presence in effigy form. The effigies were hide and hair sculptures at the top of long poles, and were erected in great numbers in special "fasting shrines" where the skulls of enemies were displayed, as were the skulls of Mandan adults (Ibid: 307). The "fasting shrines" also contained effigy poles of the First Creator, signifying the continuum of life regardless of misfortune. In each village effigy poles to the First Creator and First Man stood before most lodges. In addition, the First Man shrine, the Ceremonial lodge, and the lodges of the Origin Story bundle-keepers provided the affirmation that the omnipotent power of generosity and cooperation would always overcome any natural misfortune, or, any foolishness latent in human nature. The Mandan acknowledged the nature of life as having the functional power to destroy as well as create. Avoidance

of such truth was not a satisfactory response to life and nature. The honest response was to appreciate the phenomenal (and nomenal) world as it was in totality.

The Okipa Ceremony

The Okipa Ceremony, as described in chapter three, was an encoded sequential history marking the four periods of Mandan evolution. Yet, paradoxically, the Okipa begins in the mythological time of First Creator and First Man before the "Remaking of the World". As a mythic enactment the Okipa is then a doorway to The First Day of Creation, the a priori creation from which all experience gains its primal and temporal significance. It is a time out of time which is actively present as the eternal center of the Creator's Sacred History. The Mandan concept of the past is aoristic. The aoristic defines a past which is incomplete, repetitive, and potentially present in every moment (Will 1906: 200). Thus the Mandan history is not a was, but an is, and the immediate experience of the a priori creation was not confined to the Okipa Ceremony, but was rather a moment to moment psychological reality.

As the Okipa marked the center of time it also marked the center of space. As related from the Small Hawk Bundle, Mandan earthly life is at the center of a vertical axis

consisting of a sky world, the earth world, and an underground ancestral world (Bower 1950: 272-281). Moreover, the Heart River area of the Mandan homeland was held as the place of creation, the "Center of the World", from which creation horizontally radiated. Mircea Eliade claimed, that for the religious human, the ground upon which one stands is always recognized as the archetypical "Center" from which the world radiates, for where one stands is where sacred creation is perceptively occurring in the eternal now (Eliade 1957: 36-37). For the Mandan, the First Creator, the ancestors, and the individual, occupy the position and moment of ontological creation together.

The annual Okipa Ceremony reaffirmed the mytho-historic Mandan recognition of their responsibilities to maintain the covenant of generosity at the sacred center of creation. Every Mandan person witnessed the Okipa, and all the villagers gathered as one in witness of themselves as a tribal unity. The Okipa was an occasion for each Mandan to meet the cultural heroes on sacred ground in sacred time.

The last enactment of the Okipa Ceremony was in 1890 (Bower 1950: 18). Lydia-Sage-Chase never witnessed that ceremony. Yet she is familiar with the ceremony, both through George Catlin's written account, and most importantly, through the receiving of the Origin Stories which provided the basis for the Okipa enactment. Lydia

is also familiar with the activity and imperatives as set forth by the Mandan Divine relatives. Lydia's grandfather James Holding Eagle assured her that the Creator was always "just a whisper away" (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993), and assuredly Lydia listens for that counsel.

The contextual changes in the Mandan homeland can not diminish Lydia's access to the omnipresence of the First Creator. Nor does contextual change relegate the values authored by the aoristic Creator to a time in the past. The values are also "timeless". The contextual changes do however require a sense of adaptive vigilance as the values are applied to non-traditional settings, for instance in the example of publishing Origin Stories. Nonetheless it is a Mandan's responsibility to practice the values regardless of circumstances. The essential obligation to so act, and the Mandan cultural forms which reinforced and reminded the individual performing those personal acts, are the subjects of the following chapter.

CHAPTER V

METHODS OF REINFORCING VALUES

The following chapter will address the methods which brought and kept the Mandan values into the consciousness of the Mandan individual. The initial enculturation period examined will be the familial dependent early childhood years, when example (mimicry) is the primary instruction. Further discussion of early childhood enculturation will entail a description of Mandan language prefixes as associate prompts (mnemonic devices) which point the speaker, child and adult alike, back to the presence, virtues, and activities, of the cultural heroes. The mnemonic imagery of the Mandan earth-lodge, village configuration, and significant storied features of the Upper Missouri River landscape will serve as examples of the cultural encoding of material forms as reinforcement to the underlying value system. The means by which Lydia Sage-Chase was provided childhood access to the primary means of enculturation (example and language), and, her continued adult access to the secondary reinforcements (earth-lodge, village sites, and landscape) will be

integrated throughout the text.

The chapter will conclude with examples of the Mandan means of conflict resolution. The Mandan methodology for conflict resolution being the telling of the Origin Stories, the giving of gifts, acts of personal sacrifice, and familial contributions to the re-constitution of the balance of an individual's personal power. Again, Lydia Sage-Chase's present application of Mandan values in the remediation of conflict situations will accompany the traditional accounts.

Mandan Kinship Terms

Henry Lewis Morgan listed the Mandan with tribes using the Crow Kinship system. Lydia Sage-Chase informed us in an earlier chapter, that all her "aunties" were identified with, and acted as, "mothers." This (Crow) Mandan Kinship system is anthropologically described as being of the bifurcate merging type, a system which Morgan called a "classificatory type", since father's brothers are classified as fathers and mother's sisters are classified as mothers. In the grandparent's generation sisters of grandmothers are grandmothers and brothers of grandfathers are grandfather. The paternal grandmother's brother is a "father", while the brother of the maternal

grandmother is a "mother's brother". The husband of a father's sister is classified as a grandfather. Parallel cousins are treated as siblings, children of a "father's sister" are "fathers" and "father's sisters", while the children of a mother's brother are sons and daughters. In the children's generation a woman classifies her own sons with her sister's and brother's sons, and their daughters with her own daughters. A man classifies only his brother's sons with his own sons and his daughters with his brother's daughters, while classifying his sister's children, both male and female, as "children of the clan" (Bowers 1950: 39-41). The kinship terms such as "mother", "grandfather", "son", etc., were inclusive of persons within a family, clan, village, age-grade society, and the tribe as a whole.

The baby born into the Mandan earth-lodge, or house in Lydia's case, met a world saturated with the mnemonic terminology of family. The growing child had not only a biological mother, but all the mothers represented by mother's married and unmarried sisters, who were individuals the child could turn to for affection, food, and care. From the child's infancy onward, those mothers shared in the parenting role. There were many grandmothers and grandfathers to play with in the home. There were mother's brother(s) who held an attentive role in guiding the child's exploration of the world, and father(s) who became reverent

symbols of courage. Everything and everyone in the lodge was an elder to the new Mandan child, and was spoken of as teacher. Emphasis was given to those who were good examples. From the time that the Mandan child could speak and ask questions, a gift was placed in the toddler's hand, and the appropriate relative was pointed out as the "keeper" of the knowledge which the child sought. Gift in hand, the child turned to their teacher in times of need and question (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1988). Children under the age of seven years learn from direct witness (mimicry). They are taught from the stories they heard, and the witness of the storied themes enacted by the example of the adults and older children around them. We are reminded, that Edward Bruner found Mandan children as young as six years of age who could proficiently interact in the kinship system without having an awareness that it was a structured system (Bruner 1956: 72).

The example set by the adult Mandan was informed in part by the "identity" of their particular clan. The names of the clans of First Man origin are a form of cultural "grammar"; a structure based on the Origin Story's theme of generosity, which in turn supported the enacted "language" of everyday Mandan living. During Lydia's childhood, the following three clan "identities" informed her sense of values. The identities given to the three clans of First Man are: Waxikena "to tell bad stories

about", Tami'sik- said to be stingy with food, and, Tami'xixiks- referring to the use of poor leather in making harnesses for carrying wood (Bower 1950: 30). The "bad stories" refer to confronting individuals about conduct in contradiction to Origin Story tradition. The "stingy" refers to the need to be generous. The "poor leather" refers to the tradition of always utilizing the best materials and attitudes in acts of creating, and in particular, the careful use of a finite supply of essential resources (firewood), an admonition to use resources wisely in the face of possible scarcity.

It is apparent that the three clan names are all references to the central Mandan covenant of generosity and fluxuation of it's actuality. They serve as mnemonic reminders that the clan cooperative must encourage their members to strive for the ideal of the covenant. The covenant which Lydia inherited required that each clan assist it's members, particularly the old or unfortunate.

It was the clan's duty to care for its old people having no blood children. Old people were invited in to be fed and clothed by younger members of their own clan. When returning from a successful hunt, young men would offer meat to the old people who met them at the outskirts of the village. One was expected to offer meat to old people of the same clan without being asked for it (Ibid: 32).

When Lydia spoke in the first chapter of her preparation of food given to clan relatives, she was

enacting the clan responsibility to generously share. That she had little to give at the time was inconsequential, she gave regardless. And as she noted, something always returned in an affirmation of the inherent reciprocal generosity of the world.

Language

The young child of six years of age proficiently uses the complexities of language before knowing anything of the names, rules, and structures of grammar. This may be said of all children in all cultures. The innate capacity to absorb the "grammar" of a language extends to the "value content" as well. Again we return to Edward Bruner's findings, that values are thoroughly integrated in early childhood. In the Mandan language, which Lydia used as her initial language, a mnemonic consistency appears in prefixes which denote and remind the speaker of the Creator's presence. George Will assembled a Mandan vocabulary in 1905 which fills eleven double columned pages. The most frequently recorded prefix found in Will's vocabulary is **MA**. **Ma** denotes things and orientations created before the Mandan, and attributed to First Creator. **Ma** also denotes tools and practices of primary social interaction attributed to the Mandan cultural hero of social

conduct; First Man. The **Ma** prefix provides an emphasis to elements which maintain an ancestral teaching role to the Mandan.

First Creator

Maxopinita- Great Spirit
 Mahto- Bear
 Mahteke- Badger
 Manasuk- Bush
 Manawaxe- Cottonwood
 Mahixsi- War Eagle
 Mandeksuknike- Egg
 Manawareruhp- Elm
 Mahikeuke- Flint
 Masihe- Fog
 Manaroxte- Forest
 Maxiki- Badlands
 Maskape- Meat
 Mantakteuka- Little Missouri R.
 Mampsita- Morning
 Mahtke-Tomorrow
 Mahakahgitta-Top
 Mahoc-Turnip
 Manaahpo-Autumn
 Mahna-Winter
 Mantahe Passahe-Missouri R.

First Man

Mahminituxe-Ark of First
 Man.(village shrine)
 Manapaxe- Wooden dish
 Manoxaharuc- To cheat
 Manuka- Friend
 Mahxsi Akubbacka-
 Feather Headress
 Manasinkoe- To heat
 Maxopinicwahedic- Feast
 Ma'hi- Knife
 Manaitirutcuke- Spear
 Manachilhnduc- To smoke
 Manaca- Tobacco
 Manahumpe- Snowshoes
 Mataxopini- Snake rattle

The second common prefix found in Will's vocabulary list is **Mi**. **Mi** is found in reference to the activity or presence of water, and when speaking of things with feminine influence.

Mihe-women	Mini-water
Mihti-village	Mihnuptakohc-twist(braid)
Mihsi passahe-Yellowstone R.	Minipahde-whiskey
Minicote passahe-White Earth R.	Miniruhmenicka-whirlpool
Minixte passahe-Teton R.	Minixcakoc-stream
Minimihnde-waterjar	Mihkade-tinder
Minihini-a spring	Misanake-stone
Mindextec-large stone	Minikerre-sea
Mihnde Manke-Rockie Mts.	Mihptotke-kickball game
Minixedoc-pond	Mihtikxte-muskrat
Mihtike-mouse	Miipsikac-shallow
Misiahankta-north	Mihkac-most
Miniwakaxte-bank(river)	Minisukhedic-flood
Minakocwakerupcec-listen to	Minixte-lake
Mihakcuke-wild goose	Minimenihc-curly

(Will 1906: 209-219)

(Any confusion about the application of **Mi** as relates to the names of rivers is answered as follows. Passahe (river) translates to, Pa - being of the head, ssa - to dry up, and he - an activity of.)

The Earth-lodge, Village, and Landscape

A story which each Mandan child received early in life was the story of the Grandparent Earth-lodge.

Before a child was born they lived within an earth-lodge shaped "Baby Hill" where they were cared for by an elder grandmother. A ditch ran around the inside floor of the lodge. A log was placed across the ditch, allowing a child ready to be born to reach the passageway which led out from the earth-lodge interior to the world outside. (Bowers 1965: 127)

The Mandan earth-lodge also offered a wealth of mnemonic images. The stories of the Small Hawk Bundle speak of the world as an earth-lodge, with the domed sky, the domed roof of the lodge, and the fireplace the heart of the created world. The four posts which support the earth-lodge roof were dressed with bison hides in reference to the four seasons of the bison revolving around the Mandan at the center (Bowers 1950: 272-282). The thirteen peripheral posts and beams, where the rafters and the walls met, may echo the ten existent and three extinct Mandan clans called out in the Okipa ceremony of Mandan history, symbolizing the protective nature of tribal solidarity. Again the thirteen posts may represent the story of First Man, who as protector of the people had been the thirteenth person in the Great Canoe when he journeyed to people from the south who were mistreating the Mandan. First Man had

also walked through the bogs leaving blood from his feet (a willing sacrifice) on the swamp grasses used for thatching the roof of the earth-lodge. Moreover, rainwater taken from the depression formed by people dancing around the First Man shrine in the center of the village was mixed with clay to repair the interior floors and the exterior roof and walls of the lodge. First Man was thus present in the security represented by the lodge. Earth-lodges were prone to leak at the point where the rafters joined the walls, and inside the earth-lodge the dripping of the water encircled the lodge floor forming an eroded shallow ditch echoing the "Baby Hills Earth-lodge"; a mnemonic reminder of each Mandan birth. (Ibid: 272-282)

The objects of the earth-lodge, considered to be older than the Mandan in the order of creation, were spoken of in the terminology of venerated elder relatives. Mother Corn hung from the pillars and Grandmother Morter was used to grind the corn. Every sleeping area had a post upon which each man hung his dance mask made of elder brother bison's hide, horns and hair (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1987).

Looking at the passageway of an earth-lodge was to look upon its face. The shape of the earthlodge can also easily be seen as the image of a pregnant belly, an image supported by the Mandan symbology of the earth-lodge altar as the head, the hearth the heart, and the passageway a birth canal. The earth-lodge was the familial womb which

birthed generations of Mandan people.

The configurations of each village also provided mnemonic consistency in matters of relativity. All villages followed the same pattern. The owners of the Corn bundles selected the village site, and individuals representing Lone Man and Hoita (Speckled Eagle and People Above) laid out the village plaza, the ark of Lone Man (First Man) and the ceremonial lodge (Wood 1964: 15).

Each earth-lodge extended family was located in their own clan district within a village. Although the location of a clan district might vary from village to village, the location of the primary keepers of tradition did not vary. The shrine and dance plaza were centrally located in each village, and the Origin bundle keepers lodges were always in the first circle of lodges facing the central plaza. The Okipa Ceremonial Lodge was always located on the north side of the plaza. Thus, the formal conduct imperative to the shrine, Origin bundle keepers lodges and ceremonial lodge, was consistent regardless of the village one was visiting (Wilson 1934: 351-352).

The Mandan earth-lodge is familiar to Lydia. In 1934, Lydia's great grandmother Scattercorn supervised the construction of several earth-lodges at the On-the-Slant village site south of Mandan, North Dakota. Lydia served as an interpreter at the site in the 1980's and still gives programs there. The mnemonic significance of the earth-lodge was given to Lydia in her childhood through the Origin Stories. The primary story source since reinforced by

access to the physical structures.

The configurations of the villages are also familiar to Lydia. There are many remaining Mandan village sites, and although they are now but a series of depressions in the earth, they nonetheless afford a visitor the sense of the form of the villages. I have not asked Lydia if she has been to all the sites, yet I believe that through the years she has made a visit to each of them. Visiting past village sites to pray for the ancestors is considered an act of proper veneration for Mandan people.

The Mandan landscape features many landmarks of mythical and historical significance. Eagle Nose Butte, where the people were saved from a great flood, is located south of the city of Mandan. Heart Butte, west of the Heart River confluence, is considered the center of Creation. Dog Den Butte, site of the Okipa origin, is near the Knife River confluence. The site of the Old Woman Who Never Dies lodge (called Grandmother's lodge) was located on the property where Lydia spent her youth. Lydia has been taken to these sites in the course of her life.

The many objects of Mandan material culture which also encode mnemonic value reinforcement, such as ceremonial regalia, hair styles, tools, etc., are given their sources in the Origin Stories familiar to Lydia. The documentation, through the artwork of George Catlin, Karl Bodmer, and Fredrick Kurtz, as well as numerous descriptive ethnographic

texts, are also familiar to Lydia. Lydia utilizes that body of knowlege to remind and reinforce the presence of the Mandan values in her life.

The last time that I sat in Lydia's kitchen she brought out several remarkable objects of ancestral veneration, two healing sticks brought from Central America in the 1890's, her grandfather's polished stone used to play the Chungkee game, and Scattercorn's elkhorn hide-scraper handle. As we passed the hide-scraper back and forth, smoothed with years of use and polished with many applications of bear grease, lydia explained the markings on the hide-scraper which told of Scattercorns life of work. On three sides of the hide-scaper were marks for encampments, with encircling marks noting the hides scaped at each place. One side was for antelope, one for bison, and one for deer and for bear. We held in our hands Scattercorn's story of her relationship to the animal relatives who fed and clothed her family. If Scattercorn had been with us at the table she could have filled our minds with the details of the landscape and spirit of the Mandan Homeland still living in the simple marks on her hide-scraper. Lydia and I sat together in the presence of a yet living past.

Personal Responsibility

The most important article of personal apparel that a Mandan possessed was their bison hide robe. The male's robe was called Mahitu, and the female's Mihihe. Each person's robe carried a pictographic record of the achievements and heroic actions of their lives, including important gifts given. Each pictograph recorded a deed which had been substantiated by witnesses. Carried or worn, in summer and winter, the Mandan robe was a constant reminder that the bearer was someone of respect who could be trusted (Will 1906: 110-111).

Every culture invites its people into a ideal interpretation of right relationship with the world. Yet, if the individual is to remain genuinely and creatively interested in the culture's continuum, they must personally experience that cultural ideal as verifiable, somewhat agreeable, and infinitely adaptive. Even the Mandan covenant of generosity, recognized as an indivisible principle of life, required that the Mandan individual undertake solitary quests to secure the quintessential experience of the covenant as personally certain. For beyond allegiance to beliefs lies the more enduring faith born of personal revelation.

The framing of a Mandan's personal life story, regardless of the particular circumstances it related,

nonetheless remained constant with the primary themes of the Origin Stories. The Mandan protagonist in any story, whether personal or an archetype, is a hero who resolves conflict through acts of generosity, reverence for ancestral wisdom, familial loyalty, and self-sacrifice. Even the antagonist (Foolish One), which points to the human potential for error, infers the reciprocal condition of the heroic (First Man).

The Mandan hero is not predicated upon victims, villains, and rescuers, but rather fulfills through quest, discipline, and sacrifice, the classic journey to self-mastery (Pearson 1986: 9-16). The heroic, as a dominant theme of Mandan stories substantiates the trial and error necessary for the maturation of individual skills of discernment. A discernment which accepts one's frailty as well as one's power on the path to an internalized ethic of practical wisdom.

In the Mandan Origin Stories the potency of First Creator is made manifest through thoughts, words, and deeds. First Creator alone knows when and how generosity reveals itself. "It was also believed that those who neglected the unfortunate would not live long, since the sacred things (First Creator and relatives) frequently sent destitute people into the tribe to detect the selfish families" (Bower 1950: 97). First Creator cannot be said to have ever made an error, regardless of the consequences his unpredictable

nature had upon human life. The Mandan individual on the other hand could lose equilibrium with personal, social, and spiritual covenants, and in that state of error become an agent for destruction.

It would be unrealistic to portray the Mandan as perfect, for they were tested by life's challenges as all humans are. Yet the Mandan people did, and do, set a high standard for themselves in relationship to expectations and ideals. The Mandan recognized personal power (psychological security and creative potency) as essential to a healthy relationship with the world. A Mandan who was without a good relationship with their personal power was a person to be pitied, for in that unprotected state they were apt to act unwisely even onto their own, or another's death. The individual without functional personal power was considered a danger to the world (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1993). The Mandan individual, as aoristically potent (active in an a priori dynamic), could "break" or block the flow of nomenal (invisible) intentionality which subsequently manifests as the components of the phenomenal world. The importance of this Mandan concept upon Mandan psychological and social activities cannot be underestimated, for failure to remedy the error could ultimately result in the death of the new generation of animal, plant, ceremonial bundle, children, etc., injured by the error. The Mandan individual could literally destroy

the phenomenal world through error.

For the Mandan people, it was realistic to expect an individual to make errors or act foolish. Regardless of whether the act of error was born of ignorance, personal desire, or intentional malice, the need to rehabilitate the error was, and is, paramount to the communal and phenomenal survival.

The Mandan were not given to initially place blame for error, but rather, they extended every effort to establish an immediate efficiency of re-balance. Individuals who made little or no effort to remediate their behavior were held to ridicule, or shunned. Shunning, a form of inner-village exile, was accomplished by the people pulling their robes over their heads when encountering the offending person (Anna Rubia, 1985). A woman who repeatedly ignored warnings to clean her lodge (where vermin might breed) had her lodge burned. A hunter who repeatedly disrupted the hunt would have his hunting tool confiscated (Lydia Sage-Chase, 1990).

The three most frequent paths to re-balancing, and or, enhancing personal power and spiritual guidance were fasting, self-torture, and gift-giving. The path of gift-giving was considered the most powerful, for it required a greater dedication of time and effort than the other two paths (Bower 1950: 165). The following narrative is an illustration of the Mandan method of resolution of

imbalance, and the role of the gift in that resolution. The scenario, leadership of a Mandan war party, is an example of an occasion of great risk of personal power; for any death or injury to members of the party fell as a sign of questionable competency of the leader (Ibid: 66).

Returning from an unsuccessful war expedition, the leader would cry as he approached the village, while the other members would walk quietly to their lodges. For many leaders, this would be the last expedition as leader. He would be condemned by the brothers, sisters, and parents of the one killed and would be opposed by them every time he sought advancement in status. He could and frequently did overcome their opposition by going into mourning for the one he was held responsible for. He would gash his legs and cut off a finger which was offered to the Sun. He would set up a tent or build a simple shelter at a distance from the village where he would remain. In the meanwhile, his brothers and sisters, assisted by their clan and his age-grade society, would accumulate robes and other property which were given to the lodge group that had lost a member. They were expected to accept the goods which was at first refused "because they loved their relative so much". The unsuccessful war leader's representatives then sought the village chief, a man who by virtue of his tact on settling quarrels and his generosity in caring for the old was highest in village esteem, and paid him to take his pipe to the grieved relatives, lay it before them, and inform them that they, as relatives and associates of the unsuccessful war leader, begged them to accept it. Since none could refuse a request when a sacred pipe was placed before them, the aggrieved people, both men and women, smoked and accepted the goods to which in the meanwhile has been added horses and other articles of value.

The aggrieved family, feeling compassion for the unsuccessful war leader who had shown, by his act of fasting and his family's lavish

display of goods, respect for their lost relative, sent a representative with new clothing to the fasting place, dressed and painted him, and conducted him to their lodge, where he was given the choicest foods to eat. While he was eating, the brothers of the boy who had been killed, brought their best horse and riding equipment to the lodge. When the feast was ended, the unsuccessful warrior, now in the good graces with the family, was told to mount. He was led through the village, while the oldest female of the lodge sang the "Praise Song"...The unsuccessful warrior, by his acts of mourning and the payment of goods to the aggrieved family, regained his former status. If he were successful the next time he led a war party, the people said that bad luck will sometimes come even to those most careful to conform to tribal custom, and never hold it against him (Ibid: 66-67).

The Mandan method of conflict resolution, illustrated in the above narrative, follows the formal ritual-drama of conflict, restitution, and re-integration (Turner 1986: 34-35). The dynamic included, making use of public demonstrations of sincerity, receiving assistance from loyal allies, and enlisting sanction from a "wise" person who embodies the wisdom of the tradition (Origin Stories) through the symbol of that wisdom in the object of the pipe.

As the Mandan narrative illustrates, the reintegration process of social breaches often utilizes gift-exchange. The utilitarian purpose of gift-exchange as concerns alliances between people and restitution of grievances is one of the essential functions of the gift:

In order to trade, man must first lay down his

spear. When this is done he can succeed in exchanging goods and persons not only between clan and clan but between tribe and tribe and nation and nation, and above all between individuals. It is only then that people can create, can satisfy their interests mutually and define them without recourse to arms (Mauss 1967: 80).

Giving of gifts to restore social harmony was but one use of gift-exchange in the Mandan culture. In fact, the exchange of gifts accompanied almost every social interaction. Occasions for gift giving started at the birth of a child and thereafter included his or her naming ceremonies, hunting, craft, and war honors, society memberships, marriages, building of an earth-lodge, bundle purchases, acknowledgement of civil office, and ultimately gifts given on the occasion of the persons death. Along the way, gifts were given for skills learned, guidance sought from others, illness treated, and thanksgiving offered to the phenomenal and nomenal world. The Mandan propensity for giving gifts was, and is, a reflection of the Creator's exchange of generosity for generosity.

The exchange of gifts is yet active amongst the Mandan and Hidatsa people of the Fort Berhold Reservation, with the "give away" being an intregal part of any pow-wow or ceremony. Lydia Sage-Chase has participated in the gift-exchange throughout her life. And as knowledge is considered a paramount form of "good" to be acknowledged and exchanged, Lydia's giving of herself as a teacher is

an essential obligation of her keeping of the Mandan covenant of generosity.

Through the extention of familial relativity every human being has the power to destroy the world with erroneous thoughts, words, and deeds. As such, it was imperative that Lydia "teach" the young man who did not credit the proper sources for his article on Mandan gardens about his personal responsibility. It is Lydia's obligation to teach, to "give away", the Mandan values to others, "so that the Creator's gift of life will go on" (Ibid: 1993).

IN CONCLUSION

The examination of traditional Mandan values serving as a functional value system for a present day Mandan individual has been the basis of this study. The focus of the thesis has rested on the most primary of human social organizations; the family. Recognizing the family as the environment of value enculturation in early childhood, and the environment for adult value reinforcement as well. The body of the text illustrated how the primary Mandan narrator of this text, Lydia Sage-Chase, received her foundation of Mandan values, virtues, and responsibilities, from the example of her family, the stories which informed their example, and the language which reinforced those values. Lydia Sage-Chase received a primary process of value enculturation from that which "survived" as Mandan into the late twentieth century. Lydia's Mandan family survived, and that family taught her a value system which reinforced her innate nature to be cooperative, generous, and inclusive.

The proposition of an innate nature of cooperation which Abraham Maslow and Alice Miller ascribe to the individual, and the essential importance of the family

to foster that nature, is omnipresent in the cultural history of the Mandan. A proposition for acknowledging an innate nature for familial cooperation and generosity is also evident. The family which reinforces innate cooperation in the individual must sense cooperation as innately functional on the communal level. And as the Mandan example illustrates, the familial model was functionally expandable to mediate with all of their complex social adaptive necessities.

Lydia Sage-Chase has also encountered many of the traditional Mandan ceremonial and material mnemonic "secondary systems" of value reinforcement. Those encounters set her apart from the general determination by Edward Bruner; that most Mandan and Hidatsa people lacked such agents of "secondary" reinforcement of the primary values. Yet, through the efforts of Lydia, her mother, and others, the encounter with the "secondary systems" of value reinforcement is increasing for the descendents of the traditional Mandan peoples.

I believe that the answer to the question of "how" the traditional Mandan values serve as coping mechanisms for Lydia Sage-Chase is to be found in her practice as a teacher of those values. Lydia "keeps" the values active in her life as a teacher. The values, and all the mnemonic associations which point to the values, find their way into her daily conversations. Mandan values are inherently

included in any discussion of how and why the world or humans are the way they are. Aoristically, the Creator and the traditional values are present and pragmatic in Lydia's expression of reality. The Mandan values of cooperation, generosity, and reverence for life, are not just theoretical abstracts, they have an immediate application.

Lydia Sage-Chase, is not simply coping with the context of the late twentieth century, she is actively inviting all people into a discussion, a lesson, in cooperative familial behavior. It is not simply a virtue for Lydia to teach others. It is her heroic unconditional obligation to teach all humans that reciprocal generosity is a covenant to be kept with the Creator of life. Just as the Mandan cultural heroes taught the Mandan to live, Lydia Sage-Chase lives as a Mandan cultural hero.

The story of the Mandan people which Lydia Sage-Chase inherited is a substantiated testimonial to the proposition that generosity, cooperation, fidelity, and respect among people is not only possible, but, can afford a rewarding and enduring way of life.

The attributes of generosity, cooperation, fidelity, and respect were for the Mandan effective social paradigms because they were observed with an unrelenting honesty as to cause and effect. The symbolized language with which the Mandan "imaged" the cause and effect, had at it's root

a fundamental reality; that the world as both visible and invisible, phenomenal and nomenal, is undeniably generous.

For the ancestral Mandan hunter-gatherer, and later Mandan hunter-gardener, the Upper Missouri River region presented a veritable paradise. That the good fortunes of paradise were tempered with periods of resource and climatic flux was a reality readily accepted by the people. To accept natural variation, while holding to the ideal of constancy, was for the Mandan a call to seek the gift of generosity regardless of circumstance. Unconditional acceptance required contemplative waiting upon the particulars of generosity, while seizing every opportunity to be generous in any given situation. Reciprocal generosity was an immediate ideal. A recognition of the world as perceptively and conceptually sufficient.

The recognition of the world as generous is a positive concept of mind, and, it requires the individual to mutually foster the generous exchange through attentive cooperation. For the Mandan, cooperation with the elements of nature meant listening, watching, and learning, before action could be initiated. Cooperation in the Mandan social world required the same intentionality of listening, watching, and learning. Those attributes of cooperation which yet draw people into an intimacy where they can witness each other in action, and thus establish trust and strategies for working together.

Regardless of when an individual was born a Mandan over the thousands of years of Mandan cultural evolution, the family was the primary teacher and enduring primal image for the world. The family established each Mandan individual as never alone, never without support, never distant from the guidance necessary for making ethical choices. The Mandan individual reciprocated with fidelity for the immediate, extended, and tribal families survival. A fidelity which extended to include all of the world as family.

We could treat the Mandan as a simple curiosity now that the days of the bison and the earth-lodge villages are over, but I think we would be doing a disservice to our common humanity with the Mandan if we were to neglect to ask what can we learn from them. I believe that the Mandan story can and will continue to teach us about basic human values. If a yardstick for measuring a culture's values is it's treatment of the young, poor and elderly, then the Mandan are worthy teachers. If an enduring culture is known for it's attentive stewardship of the environment, then the Mandan are models of worthy citizenship.

The Mandan people's story offers encouragement to the proposition that human culture can thrive when based on a generous and inclusive ideal perpetuated through the responsible teaching of each new generation. In every family each new generation represents the possibility to

tell the story of the world as generous, cooperative and related. If we choose to enact and pass on that heroic story to our next generation, the Mandan people would say that we are relatives of "good disposition".

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