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PAINTINGS OF PUEBLO INDIANS AND THE POLITICS OF PRESERVATION IN
THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Paintings of Pueblo Indians and the Politics of Preservation in the American Southwest

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This dissertation investigates paintings of Pueblo Indians produced in the 1920s. Painted at a time when the federal policy of assimilation was being vigorously contested, many of these images are imbued with a preservationist perspective. Artists, such as Marsden Hartley, John Sloan, and Ernest L. Blumenschein, struggled to find a new visual language for representing the Pueblo people, one that would correspond to their protests against assimilationist policy. Through the efforts of artists in favor of the preservation of American Indian culture, a new concept of “Indianness” was popularized. An anthropological perspective, or one that recorded the customs of “vanishing” Indians, was displaced by a subjective vision, which attempted to evoke the abstract qualities of contemporary Indian rituals, such as their rhythms, communalism, and connection to nature. This new visual language, with its ideological complexities and paradoxes, permeates Georgia O’Keeffe’s paintings of Indian ceremonials.

A study of the extent to which artists’ preservationist stance framed their view of Pueblo Indians, and the visual manifestation of this view in their art, enriches the discourse concerning the art of the Southwest by adding a critical interpretive layer.

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Introduction

The art and legacy of Georgia O’Keeffe is a dominating force in scholarship on the art of the Southwest. And yet, over a decade before O’Keeffe arrived in New Mexico, some of America’s most prominent artists were working in the region, creating texts and images through which they attempted to navigate between a desire for localized expression and an interest in creating art that was nationally relevant. In the process, many of these artists found themselves engaged in a national debate over the cultural, social, and political rights of American Indians.

This dissertation investigates paintings of Pueblo Indians produced in the 1920s, a decade that witnessed an epochal shift in federal Indian policy from assimilation to preservation. Embedded in many of these images is a preservationist perspective, a critical sub-text that has been neglected in visual analyses of art of the Southwest. In their paintings and works on paper, artists such as Marsden Hartley, John Sloan, and Ernest Blumenschein struggled to find a new visual language with which to represent the Pueblo people, one that would correspond to their protests against assimilationist policy, as were articulated in published articles, interviews and petitions. Through the efforts of preservationists, a new concept of “Indianness” was popularized by the late 1920s. A supposedly scientific-objective point of view, pervasive since the turn of the century, was replaced by a more emotional-subjective vision; representations of Pueblo Indians and their objects were displaced by paintings that abstracted the “feel” and rhythm of Indian ritual. This new visual language, complete with its ideological paradoxes and

complexities, came to permeate the work of artists who arrived a decade later, notably Georgia O’Keeffe’s paintings of Indian ceremonials.

During the late 1910s and early 1920s, a significant number of artists and writers in New Mexico created images and texts that were relevant to the outcry over the federal policy of assimilation. The chapters to follow focus on works by Blumenschein, Hartley, and Sloan, for a number of reasons. Images and texts by these artists constitute interesting case studies because they are representative of a range of aesthetic and intellectual responses to the issue of preservation. Furthermore, each of these artists was highly respected in the artistic circle in which he was embedded, and was in dialogue with the intelligentsia at large. For instance, Hartley was in close contact with literary and anthropological communities in Taos and Santa Fe. Blumenschein, who is typically considered to be an academic artist, was supportive of and inspired by modernists in the region. Similarly, Sloan engaged with both modernists and academics, as well as with anthropologists, writers, and social activists. Blumenschein, Sloan, and Hartley all participated in a cross-disciplinary dialogue about federal Indian policy; therefore, the chapters centered on each of these artists also consider a range of materials created by other artists, as well as by activists, writers, scientists, politicians, journalists, and so on.

Historical Context and Method

Assimilationist policy, which had been codified in the mid-1880s, persisted into the early 1930s.¹ After the outbreak of the First World War, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and conservative lobbyists engaged in a campaign focused on the Pueblo people,

¹ The details of the federal policy of assimilation will be laid out in chapter one.

epitomized by the introduction of the Bursum Bill in 1922 and the simultaneous suppression of Pueblo ceremonials.² In response to these assaults, artists and writers in New Mexico, most of whom were seasonal residents, set in motion a highly publicized campaign. They flooded national publications with articles about the failures of assimilation and the merits of Pueblo culture. In language coded with primitivist and cultural nationalist ideas, artist-advocates argued that Pueblo culture should be preserved because it was a model of cultural authenticity. In the words of John Sloan, artists hoped that the “value of Indians to this country...will be recognized by the Indian Bureau and that what is left of a beautiful, early civilization will be allowed to survive...”³ When the political fervor subsided in the mid-1930s, those in favor of cultural preservation had ostensibly prevailed.⁴

This dissertation is not simply about artists’ participation in the assimilation/preservation debate, which has been explored in historical and anthropological scholarship.⁵ My project examines the *visual manifestation* of this debate, delving into the paradoxes embedded in artists’ advocacy for preservation and the

² I will elaborate on the suppression of American Indian ceremonials in chapters two and five. The Bursum Bill will be discussed in chapter four.

³ John Sloan, "The Indian Dance from an Artist's Point of View," *Arts and Decoration* VXX: 3 (January 1924): 54.

⁴ The Epilogue addresses John Collier’s “Indian New Deal.”

⁵ See Keith Bryant (Jr.), "The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway and the Development of the Taos and Santa Fe Art Colonies," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (October 1978), Vine Deloria (Jr.), ed., *American Indian Policy in the Twentieth Century* (University of Oklahoma Press: 1985), Tom Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), Lawrence C. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Native American Sovereignty on Trial: A Handbook with Cases Laws, and Documents* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003), John R. Wunder, *Native American Sovereignty* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999).

emergence of these paradoxes in their art.⁶ A study of the extent to which artists' preservationist stance framed their understanding of Pueblo culture, and informed their representations of the Pueblo people, enriches the discourse concerning the art of the Southwest by adding a critical interpretive layer.

While my research forges a new path of inquiry, it also expands on two important art historical studies. Central to my project are questions about art and ideology raised in the 1991 catalogue, *The West as America*, which probed the notion of pictorial "realism" and challenged popular art historical assumptions about the West.⁷ The show's incisive deconstruction of the art of the West provocatively encouraged subsequent scholars to consider what an image represents, what it fails to represent, and why. Also foundational to my work is Wanda Corn's watershed book on art production between the two World Wars, *The Great American Thing* (1999), in which she examines the visual manifestation of cultural nationalist hopes and anxieties in early American modernism.⁸ Particularly fruitful is Corn's discussion of O'Keeffe, which explores the traffic of imagery between fine art and popular culture, appropriately situating the work of this often mythologized artist in its rich socio-cultural and intervisual contexts.

Current scholarship on the art of the Southwest tends to group paintings thematically, or uses art to support contextual claims; individual works are rarely

⁶ Patricia Leighton, in her landmark essay on Picasso, provides a model for thinking about how artists could create art that was primitivist or reductive, but which was, nevertheless, intended to subvert colonial stereotypes. Patricia Leighton, "'The White Peril' and L'Art Nègre: Picasso, Primitivism, and Anticolonialism," *Art Bulletin* LXXII, no. 4 (December 1990): 609-30.

⁷ William H. Truettner, ed., *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920* (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art by the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991). The NMAA is now the Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM).

⁸ See Wanda Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1999), Charles C. Eldredge, Julie Schimmel, and William H. Truettner, *Art in New Mexico, 1900-1945: Paths to Taos and Santa Fe* (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1986).

scrutinized.⁹ For instance, the National Museum of American Art's 1986 exhibition catalogue, *Paths to Santa Fe and Taos* (with essays by Charles Eldredge, William Truettner, and Julie Schimmel), took a comparative approach to paintings in the region. The show's catalogue, which productively reproduced scores of paintings that previously had received scant scholarly attention, thematically grouped these paintings into representations of Pueblo art and culture, Hispanic life and labor, and the landscape. The exhibition successfully underscored the essential place that New Mexico held in the national art scene during the interwar period. However, paintings within each thematic grouping were read as having similar ideological underpinnings, regardless of by whom, for whom, when and where each painting was created.

The scarcity of close analysis of individual paintings is, in part, a reflection of the propensity to view works by Anglo painters in the Southwest primarily in the context of ethnic tourism.¹⁰ Literature on the intersection of art and tourism in the region has productively drawn attention to the extent to which Anglo paintings of Pueblo Indians were constructions that served to reinforce hegemonic power structures. Thus, my research has paid close attention to scholarship that draws from postcolonial discourse, including anthropological studies by Marta Weigle, Barbara Babcock, and Sylvia Rodríguez.¹¹ Leah Dilworth's *Imagining Indians in the Southwest* (1996) also addresses

⁹ Among the notable exceptions are Charles C. Eldredge, "Ernest Blumenschein's 'The Peacemaker'," *American Art* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2001), James Moore, "Ernest Blumenschein's Long Journey with Star Road," *American Art* 9, no. 3 (Fall 1995).

¹⁰ I have adopted the term "ethnic tourism" from anthropological scholarship. Sylvia Rodríguez defines "ethnic tourism" as a form of tourism wherein the cultural exoticism of the local population (clothing, art, music, dance, language, food, etc.) is the main attraction. Sylvia Rodríguez, "Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Towards a Sociology of the Art Colony," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 45, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 77.

¹¹ See Barbara A. Babcock, "Pueblo Cultural Bodies," *The Journal of American Folklore* 107, no. 423 (Winter 1994), Sandra and Suzan Campbell D'Emilio, *Vision and Visionaries* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, Gibb-Smith Publisher, 1991), Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the*

visual culture production in the Southwest within a postcolonial framework.¹² These scholars tend to understand representations of Indians as encoded with the rhetoric of power, as nefarious agents of manipulation. In unambiguously adopting Edward Said's notion of an "internal consistency,"¹³ this literature tends to homogenize art production in the region, reducing paintings to pictorial evidence that New Mexico was imagined, marketed, and consumed as some sort of desert "Disneyland" for the pleasure and psychological needs of white America.¹⁴ As a result, the interpretive complexity of this art has been truncated. Although images certainly play a part in the terrain of political struggle, as W.J.T. Mitchell has pointed out, seeing pictures primarily as instruments of power often closes off interpretive possibilities and can obscure important paradoxes, contradictions, and ambiguities that reside within them.¹⁵ While discussions of ethnic tourism are certainly elemental to understanding art production in the Southwest, my

Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), Rodríguez, "Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Towards a Sociology of the Art Colony.", Edwin L. Wade, "The Ethnic Art Market in The American Southwest, 1880-1980," in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, ed. George Stocking Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), Marta Weigle and Barbara A. Babcock, eds., *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway* (Phoenix, Arizona: The Heard Museum, 1996), Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1997). Also see, *Journal of the Southwest* 32:4 (Winter 1900), a special issue devoted to related topics.

¹² Dilworth argues that primitivism played a major role in the defining the Southwest as a distinct cultural region, and sees Anglo images of Pueblo Indians as almost unambiguously exploitative. She understands imagining of Indians as instrumental in the formation of national and regional identities. Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past*.

¹³ To this effect, Said explains, "But the phenomenon of Orientalism as I study it here deals principally, not with the correspondence between Orientalism and the Orient, but with the internal consistencies of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient (the East as career) despite or beyond any correspondence, or lack thereof, with a 'real' Orient." Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 5.

¹⁴ Marta Weigle, "From Desert to Disney World: The Santa Fe Railway and the Fred Harvey Company Display the Indian Southwest," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 45, no. 1 (Spring 1989).

¹⁵ W.J.T Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want? The Loves and Lives of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 33-36.

project probes beyond this framework. At the heart of my dissertation is a determination to uncover multivalent meanings embedded in individual texts and images.

A close consideration of objects serves as the keystone of my research. Each chapter of my dissertation is centered on a single image or text, a lens through which to investigate diverse and often problematic responses to issues of cultural preservation. I have made a methodological decision to pay close attention to a handful of images and texts instead of providing an overview of cultural production relevant to the issue of preservation. I have done so in order to tease out the many important layers of meaning embedded in images and texts that hitherto have been overlooked.

Working outward from a careful study of art objects, I embrace a wide-range of methods.¹⁶ Rather than trying to fit visual culture into one theoretical framework, I approach each new object with fresh eyes, paying close attention to both the familiar and the strange. Recent anthropological literature may prove to be relevant to one object, whereas ideas from philosophy (historical and contemporary) might be germane to another. For instance, my understanding of Ernest L. Blumenschein's turn-of-the-century illustrations and 1920s paintings of Pueblo Indians has been enhanced by current anthropological investigations of ethnic tourism and gift theory, as well as by nineteenth-century evolutionary theory and ethnography.¹⁷ My interpretations of Marsden Hartley's

¹⁶ My work is sympathetic to the theoretical underpinnings of Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from The Northeast, 1700-1900* (Seattle and Montreal: University of Washington Press and Montreal, Quebec McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, Second ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

¹⁷ Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1967, first printed circa 1923-1924), Lewis Henry Morgan, *Ancient Society* (London: MacMillan & Company, 1877), Samuel Morton, *Crania Americana, A Comparative View of the Skulls of Various Aboriginal Nations of North and South America* (Philadelphia: J. Dobson, 1839).

New Mexico essays and John Sloan's paintings of Pueblo ceremonials are sensitive to anthropological and postcolonial concerns, as well as to scholarship that considers issues of cultural nationalism and primitivism.¹⁸ I hold steadfastly to the belief that objects should not be subjected to a predetermined agenda, that visual culture should not be colonized for the sake of theory.¹⁹ Thus, my work on Marsden Hartley's New Mexico landscapes extends beyond anthropological perspectives, and considers the philosophies of William James and Henri Bergson, as well as the more contemporary work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty.²⁰ Moving outside scholarship of the modern period, the work of Renaissance scholar and theorist, Michael Baxandall, has encouraged me to think more carefully about the notion of artistic influence, while medievalist Michael Camille presents a provocative model for thinking about the relationship of the real/unreal in visual culture.²¹

While I am open to a range of scholarship—both historical and theoretical—my work is built on careful primary and secondary research.²² I am not interested in

¹⁸ Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935*, Molly H. Mullin, *Culture in the Marketplace: Gender, Art and the Value of the American Southwest* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*.

¹⁹ In their discussion of semiotics and art history, Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson caution art historians to use theory with care. They explain, "What Lacan offers is a theory of visual subjectivity in general, not in the first place a theory of visual art...One might well raise the objection that [in Lacan's analysis of *The Ambassadors*] the object predictably ends up in a subservient and colonized role, as the mere staging of the theory." Mieke Bal and Norman Bryson, "Semiotics and Art History," *The Art Bulletin* 73, no. 2 (June, 1991): 200.

²⁰ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution* (New York: Cosimo, Inc., 2005, originally published in 1911), William James, "The Principles of Psychology (1890)," in *William James: The Essential Writings*, ed. Bruce E. Wilshire (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964).

²¹ Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), Michael Camille, *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

²² Through fellowships and grants provided by the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Henry Luce Foundation/ACLS, and Rutgers University, I have conducted research at the Delaware Art Museum, Yale's Beinecke Library, the National Anthropological Archives, and the Archives of American Art.

interpretation for its own sake, but insofar as it provide a new perspective on socio-historical issues. American visual culture produced before the Second World War is a rich field of inquiry, which will benefit from scholarship that sees its objects as sophisticated bearers of meaning.

Terminology

In the 1910s, a group of liberal minded artists, writers, anthropologists and social activists awakened to the idea that American Indians had unique and precious cultural systems that needed to be preserved. Mobilized by a series of controversies in the 1920s, this group coalesced into a united front against the federal Indian policy of assimilation, arguing that a change in policy would be beneficial to both American Indians and to white America. In general, those who supported preservation objected to or were skeptical of modern industrial society, and thus understood traditional Pueblo culture as an anti-modern utopia. In keeping with historical and anthropological literature, I refer to this group as “preservationists” and to their advocacy against assimilationist policy as the “preservationist movement.”²³ For the sake of dialectic ease, I also refer to the artists, writers, poets, scientists, social activists and patrons who participated in this movement as the “intelligentsia”—a group of intellectuals who are part of the cultural, social, or political elite—as a means to describe the group without outlining the individual occupations of its members. While most preservationists were part of the intelligentsia in

In New Mexico, I have looked at material at the Fran Angélico Chávez History Library (Palace of Governors), the University of New Mexico’s Center for Southwest Research, the Harwood Museum, and the Museum of Fine Arts of New Mexico. Also integral to my study are articles that were published in newspapers and periodicals contemporary to the paintings featured in my dissertation.

²³ For instance, the term is used in Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era*.

New Mexico, not every member of the intelligentsia participated in the political debate surrounding Indian policy. Furthermore, most of those who made up the “New Mexican intelligentsia” were not permanent residents of New Mexico, but rather seasonal transplants from cosmopolitan centers.

The idea of preserving Indian art and culture was certainly not unique to this group. During the late nineteenth century, progressive reformers argued that Indian craft should be preserved as a way to keep Indians from being idle; and, at the turn of the century, salvage ethnographers collected vast amounts of Indian “artifacts” to be preserved in museums after the Indian had vanished, a process believed to be well underway. What distinguishes the preservationist movement of the 1920s is the idea that the persistence of American Indian culture—material culture and religious practices, in particular—evidenced the Indian’s resilience and that American Indians could positively contribute to Anglo American culture. In their search for a “usable past,” preservationists promoted Pueblo culture as evidence of America’s long and venerable cultural heritage.²⁴ Furthermore, preservationists argued that Pueblo arts were rooted in the American soil and thus were authentically American. In short, supporting the thriving artistic practices of American Indians was part of a larger cultural nationalist agenda.

Neither preservation nor assimilation were monolithic ideologies, and there were Indian and non-Indian supporters on both sides. Still, there were two pervasive and distinct ideological positions at play. Progressive era assimilationists constituted a politically powerful group, one that was influenced by “New Indians” who had been educated in white schools. These Progressive era reformers sought to counter mid-nineteenth century Indian policy, which was focused on eradication and removal. They

²⁴ Van Wyck Brooks, “On Creating a Usable Past,” *The Dial* LXIV (April 11, 1918): 337.

believed that to segregate American Indians from mainstream society was to intensify racial prejudice, and that to do so ran counter to American democratic principles. Reformers maintained that Indians would be better off, culturally and economically, if they were educated in white schools, taught Christian principles, allotted land, and encouraged to be productive members of American society. Progressive reformers demanded immediate and full citizenship for American Indians, with all the rights this status entails. In contrast, many conservative or traditional American Indians understood the notion of U.S. citizenship as a challenge to tribal sovereignty. As such, Native and non-Indian scholars have argued that the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act, which unilaterally conferred citizenship on all American Indians, was the pinnacle of assimilationist policy.²⁵

Anglo preservationists rarely touched on the issue of citizenship. Instead, they were focused on countering what they believed to be the cultural intolerance of the assimilationist position. Preservationists argued that American Indians should not be forced to acculturate and that federal policy should be sensitive to cultural difference. For 1920s preservationists, the Indian was not vanishing, and the federal policy of assimilation only served to degrade and oppress a rich culture and noble peoples.

The preservationist movement was riddled with a number of oversights and ideological inconsistencies. By “Indian” culture, preservationists generally meant “Pueblo culture,” a conflation not lost on the movement’s detractors. Furthermore, in spite of their benevolent intentions, they promoted an ethnocentric view of Native culture. Preservationists saw Indian art and ceremonial dance as a provocative model for

²⁵ Wildenthal, *Native American Sovereignty on Trial: A Handbook with Cases Laws, and Documents*, 30.

American culture at a time when the United States was trying to forge a cultural identity distinct from that of Europe's. Moreover, many advocates for Indian culture, particularly modernists, had much to gain from increased public sensitivity to marginalized forms of artistic expression. Arguably, the most problematic aspect of the preservationist movement was its promotion of segregation. Concerned with the effects of white exploitation, including federal policy and tourism, most preservationists embraced the idea that American Indians should be isolated from white cultural and economic intrusions. This position was at odds with the New Mexican intelligentsia's reliance on Pueblo and Hispanic day-labor, which they paternalistically saw as mutually beneficial. Furthermore, in order to generate publicity for their anti-assimilation campaign, preservationists brought Pueblo Indian artists to cosmopolitan centers on a number of occasions. For these reasons, preservationists were often derided as sentimentalists by reformers, and accused of trying to hold the Indian and his culture in a time warp for Anglo economic and social benefit.

My dissertation addresses sensitive issues surrounding cross-cultural tensions and identity politics. I have chosen with care the words that I use to describe various social, cultural, and ethnic groups in New Mexico, and therefore, it is worth explaining my thinking in choosing them. Following the lead of Wanda Corn, I use "America" to indicate "United States," and not the Americas or North America.²⁶ The tendency to do so has been derided as imperialistic since it obscures the continent's diverse social, cultural and political systems. My decision to use "America" was made to aid the flow of my text; for instance, using "American" as an adjective is less cumbersome than writing "...of the United States" when trying to describe an artistic or cultural trend.

²⁶ Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935*, xvii.

In choosing the terms “American Indian” and “Hispanic,” I have deferred to those scholars who identify themselves as such, assessing the most recent consensus among these scholars. In using the term “American Indian,” I take my cue from Devon A. Mihesuah, who uses “American Indian” and “Native” interchangeably.²⁷ Mihesuah explains that many Native peoples find the term “American Indian” offensive because it is a label assigned by Euro-Americans. While many indigenous people of the United States prefer “Native” or “Indigenous,” she uses “American Indian” because it is most recognizable to Americans. “Native American,” Mihesuah argues, refers to anyone born in North America, including those with no relation to tribes.²⁸ When possible, I have tried to distinguish Native peoples by tribe or nation. The Pueblo include those peoples who inhabit the nineteen remaining pueblos in New Mexico (located in the northern part of the state), and the Hopi who live in thirteen villages in Arizona.²⁹

While acknowledging that there are American Indians who refer to themselves as Indians, particularly outside of academia, in this dissertation, “Indian” is used to denote an Anglo-centric, mythologized conception of America’s aboriginal people. “Indianness” similarly points to those qualities that make up an “authentic” Indian, as

²⁷ When using the term “Native” to refer to American Indians, as Mihesuah, I capitalize the word. Devon A. Mihesuah, *So You Want to Write about American Indians?: A Guide for Writers, Students, and Scholars* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), x. Also see Michael Bird, “What We Want to Be Called: Indigenous People’s Perspectives on Racial and Ethnic Identity Labels,” *American Indian Quarterly* 23, no. 2 (Spring, 1999): 1-21, Devon A. Mihesuah and Angela Cavender Wilson, eds., *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

²⁸ Mihesuah, *So You Want to Write about American Indians?: A Guide for Writers, Students, and Scholars*, xi-xii.

²⁹ Alfonso Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, ed. Frank W. Porter III, *Indians of North America* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992), 17. The nineteen Pueblos are generally broken up into three different linguistic groups: The Tanoan (Taos, San Ildefonso, Tesuque, San Juan Isleta, Picuris, Sandia, Santa Clara, Nambe, Pojoaque, Jemez), the Keresan (Acoma, Cochiti, Laguna, Santo Domingo, Zia), and the Zuni (Zuni). Tanoan is divided into three distinct dialects: Tiwa (spoken at Taos Pueblo), the Tewa, and Towa. The Hopi live in thirteen villages in Arizona and have a distinct history in which Spanish culture is much less pronounced. “Pueblo” refers peoples, whereas “pueblo” points to the stone and adobe dwellings and villages in which the Pueblo people live.

was constructed by white America during the early twentieth century. Many of the artists studied in this dissertation couched their discussions of Indians in primitivist language. The concept of “primitive” art, as it refers to pre-civilized, non-Christian, non-western, non-developed peoples, is also a cultural construction. Like Sally Price, I will use “Primitive” (with a capital “P”), as opposed to the more cumbersome “primitive” (with quotation marks), to denote this construction;³⁰ this is in keeping with the notational conventions that underwrite the use of “Other” in post-colonial discourse.³¹

The term “Anglo” originated in the Southwest region of the United States—which I simply refer to as the “American Southwest” or the “Southwest”—and generally designates non-Spanish, non-Indian, U.S. citizens of white European decent.³² This is how I use the term. The term “Hispanic” came into usage in the 1970s and 1980s and is most commonly applied to Spanish-speaking and Spanish-surnamed people in U.S. Andrew Lovato notes that the term is used widely by U.S. media and government, and classifies people according to their ancestors’ native language rather than by their culture, racial make-up, or geography.³³ As Lovato explains, “Hispanic” problematically refers to people from at least twenty-one separate Republics, each with their own culture and history. Jorge Iber and Arnoldo De León argue that many university people, labor leaders, and political activists prefer the more politicized “Latino.”³⁴ Like Iber and De León, I use the term “Hispanic” in its non-politicized sense.

³⁰ See Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*.

³¹ See Said, *Orientalism*.

³² Edward P. Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America* (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 1970), 101. Similarly, the Oxford English Dictionary defines Anglo as a person of English or non-Latin European origin, especially one who resides in the United States.

³³ Andrew Leo Lovato, *Santa Fe Culture: Preserving Identity in a Tourist Town* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 32.

³⁴ Jorge Iber and Arnoldo De León write, “critics of the word associate ‘Hispanic’ with Spain and colonialism, linking it with the Spanish oppressors of the native Indian people...these critics tend to

Dissertation Preview and Contribution to the Field

Chapter one, entitled “Ernest L. Blumenschein’s ‘A Strange Mixture’: Illustrating the Politics of Difference at the Turn of the Century,” sets the stage for the rest of the dissertation. Focusing on an 1898 illustration and article by Blumenschein published in *Harper’s Weekly*, I investigate Anglo attitudes towards American Indians living in the Southwest at the turn of the century. Blumenschein’s illustration, “A Strange Mixture” (fig. 1.1), and article, “Swift Arrow’s Tale,” in which the artist gave an account of the San Geronimo Feast Day at Taos Pueblo, are encoded with constructions of Indianness rooted in ethnography, the politics of assimilation, and ethnic tourism. Through these works, the artist classified and hierarchically organized the ethnic types he encountered in the Southwest. Throughout the next two decades, Blumenschein and his academically trained peers in Taos repeated the visual motifs and ideological underpinnings present in Blumenschein’s 1898 text and image. It was against this paradigm of Indianness that 1920s artist-advocates reacted. Blumenschein was among these dissenters, having changed his position towards assimilation during the mid-1910s.

Chapter two and three fast-forward to the late 1910s and discuss Marsden Hartley’s production of essays, paintings and pastels in New Mexico. Chapter two, entitled “‘A Rapturous Defense’ of ‘Red Man Ceremonials’: Marsden Hartley’s Politicized Essays,” hones in on the numerous articles that Hartley wrote between 1918 and 1922, in which he called attention to the aesthetic merits of Indian dance and criticized the federal policy of assimilation. While the Religious Criminal Code of 1883 had long legalized federal persecution of American Indian religious practice, the mid-

be more politicized than most others in Hispanic communities and may opt to call themselves ‘Latinos,’ a term associated with the struggles waged by the poor and powerless.” Jorge Iber and Arnoldo De León, *Hispanics in the American West* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006), 9.

1910s witnessed an intensified campaign against Pueblo ceremonials, which were deemed immoral by Indian superintendents and by many Christian residents of New Mexico. I argue that Hartley's essays were a reaction against, and an effort to raise public awareness of, the attempt to suppress Pueblo dances. Hartley's essays were written before the preservation movement hit its stride in the 1920s, and are among the earliest published pleas for political and cultural sensitivity towards Pueblo religious practices. They helped to foster consciousness among the American avant-garde about the problems that Pueblo Indians faced.

Hartley opposed assimilation, but he is not aptly characterized as a preservationist. His writings came before the preservationist movement. Like the preservationists, Hartley celebrated the aesthetic and social value of American Indian art and shared their view that American Indian culture needed to be isolated and protected from Anglo cultural and economic intrusions. However, whereas preservationists believed that American Indians and their culture could flourish through significant changes in Indian policy, Hartley never wavered from the fatalistic idea that America's Native population was doomed to vanish. Hartley's essays bridged the gap between turn-of-the-century attitudes towards American Indians and those adopted by preservationists in the 1920s and 1930s. Furthermore, these essays are indicative of many of the conundrums embedded in artists' advocacy for Indian culture. Preservationists celebrated Indian art as being of equal or greater import than Anglo American art; nevertheless, their essays and images tended to be ethnocentric. For instance, Hartley celebrated Pueblo culture, in large part, because he believed that it offered white artists a model of artistic authenticity.

Chapter three, “Marsden Hartley’s ‘Red Man’ and Red Land: Painting the Indian-as-Landscape,” turns to Hartley’s paintings and pastels, created between 1918 and 1920, which picture the New Mexican landscape. Using Hartley’s circa 1919 painting, *New Mexico* (fig. 3.1), as a springboard, this chapter investigates how the artist’s interest in Pueblo dance affected his perception of the New Mexican landscape. Hartley believed that Indian ceremonials celebrated and reified the Indian’s intimate connection with their native soil. For this reason, Hartley picked out Indian dancers as the most genuine American artists. In his landscape paintings, Hartley paints rhythmic and undulating natural forms and gives them bodily qualities. I argue that his landscape forms are abstractions of Indian dances and dancers. In these paintings, Hartley conflated the land, the Indian body and his own body. Moreover, Hartley was not simply trying to paint the Indian’s connection to the land; he endeavored to *perform* this connection in an attempt to create his own authentic form of American modernism.

Chapter four, “Unwrapping Ernest L. Blumenschein’s *The Gift*,” re-centers the discussion on political activism in the Southwest. Focusing on Blumenschein’s 1922 painting, *The Gift* (fig. 4.1), I explore how outrage over political assaults on Pueblo civil rights impacted the way in which the artist visualized Pueblo Indians. Subverting an iconographic paradigm widely adopted by his Taos peers—objectified Pueblo maidens with pots—the central actor in *The Gift* is a male figure who stares defiantly out at the viewer. Given his gesture and gaze, the man is neither passively accepting his objectification nor is he granting easy access to his culture; his body acts as a barricade between the Anglo audience and the Pueblo women behind him. While scholars assume that the title of *The Gift* refers to the centrally placed pot or pipe bag, I argue that it refers

to preservationist rhetoric; the gift is none other than the Indian himself. It is notable that *The Gift* was created the year that the Bursum Bill was introduced into Congress. Blumenschein's participation in the preservationist movement challenged him to rethink how he represented Pueblo Indians, and led him to create a number of paintings that are which are rife with ambiguities. These works challenge the viewer to look beyond the familiar and to ponder meaningful iconographic disjuncture. Although well-intentioned, *The Gift* presents a number of ideological challenges: while the central figure's body language implies Pueblo self-determination, the title undermines his agency. It is the artist who makes and gives the gift, implying the objectification of the subject.

Chapter five, "John Sloan's *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*: 'Spreading the Consciousness of Indian Art,'" concentrates on the artist's 1922 painting of Cochiti Pueblo's Corn Dance (fig. 5.1). Sloan created the majority of his paintings of Indian ceremonials between 1919 and 1924, a period that coincides with the BIA's persecution of Pueblo religious practices.³⁵ As Sloan became attuned to preservationist concerns, his paintings of Indian dance underwent significant compositional shifts. He increasingly eschewed ethnographic details and focused on capturing the *feel* and rhythms of the dances. Sloan also created more and more distance between the viewer and the dancers, as is evident in *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, where the Pueblo audience acts as a barrier between spectator and performers. Sloan allowed the viewer to watch the dance, but only from a respectful distance. This distancing speaks to Sloan's belief in cultural isolation,

³⁵ In this chapter, I argue that just as Sloan's activities as a Debsian socialist guided his artistic vision of 1910s New York City, his participation in the politics of preservation reverberate in his 1920s paintings of Pueblo Indians.

as was articulated in his essays about Indian art and dance.³⁶ Paradoxically, Sloan believed that the best way to preserve Indian culture was to isolate it from Anglo influences, be they political or commercial. And yet, would not the implied spectator of Sloan's paintings be Anglo? These issues are addressed in this chapter, as are Sloan's satirical etchings of Anglo tourists from 1927 and his participation in the *Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts* in 1931.

My dissertation ends by considering the iconographic and ideological legacy of the preservationist movement and artistic responses to this movement. By the time Georgia O'Keeffe arrived in New Mexico in 1929, the call for preservation had won popular appeal. In the early 1930s, under the new Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier—who had allied himself with the New Mexican intelligentsia in the 1920s—there was a reversal in Indian policy, in intention if not always in effect. The “Indian New Deal,” passed in 1934, encouraged cultural preservation, at least insofar as it was in keeping with what white America deemed to be culturally acceptable.

The epilogue, “Dreaming Indian: Georgia O'Keeffe's *Grey Blue & Black—Pink Circle*,” considers O'Keeffe's paintings of Indian ceremonials. By meditating on *Grey Blue & Black—Pink Circle [Kachina]* of 1929 (fig. 6.1), one of two paintings based on her impressions of Pueblo Indian dances, I explore the extent to which the artist's vision of Pueblo ceremonials was indebted to the preservationist movement. In this work, tongue-depressor-shaped forms are enclosed by pulsating circles; O'Keeffe portrays her

³⁶ In 1924, Sloan published an article in *Arts and Decoration* in which he argued that Indian dances and art were worth preserving because of their refreshing influence on Anglo culture. Sloan, “The Indian Dance from an Artist's Point of View.” Sloan's advocacy for Indian culture culminated with his presidency of the *Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts* (EITA). See John Sloan and Oliver La Farge, *Introduction to American Indian Art: Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts*, vol. Two volumes (New York: The Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts, Inc., 1931).

subjective impression of the ritual's rhythm and emotional impact by abstracting the Indian dancers and the beat of their drums. Although the O'Keeffe was not concerned with the political situation of Pueblo Indians, her dance paintings are a mature manifestation of the iconographic shifts ushered in by preservationist images and texts. Intentionally or not, she appropriated and then transformed compositional and iconographic motifs that had been established by artists a half-decade earlier. Her paintings were informed by the new paradigm of "Indianness" in high art, with all of its ideological complexities. Her view of Indian culture, while celebrating cultural pluralism, nevertheless was a sanitized perspective that met Anglo ideological needs.

Broadly speaking, this dissertation considers issues at the intersection of art and politics, and investigates the divergent ways artists and works of art can be "political." Blumenschein, Hartley, and Sloan each created texts and/or images that were overtly politicized. Hartley's New Mexico essays directly engaged the shortcomings of assimilationist policies, as did essays by Sloan and a public interview given by Blumenschein. Furthermore, both Blumenschein and Sloan created paintings that had explicit political meanings: along with numerous etchings, Sloan created two satirical canvases that ridiculed white exploitation of Pueblo culture; during the late 1910s and early 1920s, Blumenschein subverted standard iconographic motifs for representing the Pueblo people in an attempt to counter the objectification of Indian subjects. To be sure, I am not arguing that all paintings by artist-activists were necessarily propagandistic. Rather, I understand seemingly benign paintings of Pueblo Indians by artist-activists of this period as political in the following sense: the way in which these artists *understood* Pueblo culture and represented this subject in paint was guided by their commitment to a

preservationist platform. In short, whether or not they were intended to be political, paintings of the Pueblo people and their culture by artist-activists were often infused with a preservationist perspective.

Artists and art production in the Southwest became important in the debate between assimilationists and preservationists for a number of reasons. Most artists did not pretend to have concrete answers to contemporary political problems; rather, they sought to foster public awareness of the limitations of assimilationist policy, which they argued unlawfully suppressed the culture and religion of American Indians. They achieved this goal by writing articles, signing protests, and giving interviews, all of which was aimed at promoting Pueblo cultural expression. They also allowed their paintings of Pueblo Indians to be reproduced alongside politically charged essays. The intelligentsia, then, understood these paintings as reinforcing the anti-assimilationist message of their published texts. The publicity campaign to counter assimilationist ideology was successful. By the late 1920s, there was widespread support for federal policies that promoted, rather than suppressed, aspects of Native cultures.

With the arrival of vanguard artists in the Southwest after the outbreak of World War I, representations of Pueblo Indians saw a rapid iconographic and ideological shift. By focusing on this brief but volatile historical moment, this study underscores the extent to which this shift was not simply facilitated by artists' exploration of modernist aesthetic or primitivism, but rather was the product of the complex intersection of political activism, theories of perception, aesthetic experimentation, and identity formation.

Chapter 1

Ernest L. Blumenschein's "A Strange Mixture": Illustrating the Politics of Difference at the Turn of the Century

In the December 10, 1898 issue of *Harper's Weekly*, Ernest L. Blumenschein gave the magazine's national audience a detailed account of the feast day of San Gerónimo at Taos Pueblo. Blumenschein's illustration for this issue, "A Strange Mixture of Barbarism and Christianity—The Celebration of San Geronimo's Day Among the Pueblo Indians" (fig. 1.1, hereafter "A Strange Mixture"), is one of the artist's most well-known graphic works. Created during his first stay in Taos, a small community located in the New Mexican Territory,¹ it is his earliest published illustration of the Pueblo people, a subject on which he would later build his career as a painter. To accompany the illustration, the artist penned an article, entitled "San Geronimo: The Pueblo Indian Holiday: Swift Arrow's Tale" (hereafter, "Swift Arrow's Tale").² This article expanded on the subject matter represented in the illustration. Considered in tandem, the text and image offer a complex account of turn-of-the-century Anglo attitudes towards American Indians.

Blumenschein's illustration and accompanying text comprise the main focus of this chapter. The artist described in detail the events that he witnessed at the feast day of San Gerónimo; still, as is the case with any representation, the illustration is not an accurate record of historical reality or social practices. The text and image are as much

¹ In 1898, the New Mexico Territory was still fourteen years away from statehood.

² Ernest L. Blumenschein, "San Geronimo: The Pueblo Indian Holiday: Swift Arrow's Tale," *Harper's Weekly* (December 10, 1898): 1207.

about classifying Others in the Southwest, in a way that justified Anglo political and social practices, as they are about the feast day. Blumenschein relied on constructed types, which he employed to hierarchically categorize and organize the region's inhabitants. This structuring reveals culture tensions in the territory, which were exacerbated by an influx of Anglo Americans at the turn of the century. Together, the article and illustration act as a portal through which turn-of-the-century constructions of Indianness can be investigated, revealing their rootedness in ethnography, the politics of assimilation, and ethnic tourism. Blumenschein's visualization of the Pueblo people, imagined as a noble race of artistic ancients living in the present, was in keeping with popular paradigms of Indianness that pervaded visual culture production in the region for the next two decades.

“Swift Arrow's Tale”

Blumenschein's “A Strange Mixture” and “Swift Arrow's Tale” present the main events of the feast day of San Gerónimo, an annual fall celebration that takes place at Taos Pueblo. Through text and image, the artist conveyed both the history of the feast day and its contemporary manifestation. The specificity of the labels that accompany the illustration, which describe the events depicted, suggests that Blumenschein authored them. Thus, the illustration—image and copy—present the perspective of the artist. The narrative construction of the article is more complicated. In the text, Blumenschein presented two voices: his own and that of a young Pueblo man named Swift Arrow. The article opens with Swift Arrow's lengthy explanation of the origins of the feast day, which is followed by Blumenschein's own impressions of the celebration. Blumenschein

attempted to lend credibility to his article by reproducing Swift Arrow's dialogue in broken English, a common tactic used among turn-of-the-century journalists to authenticate their accounts of their encounters with Indians.³ While Swift Arrow may have been a real person with whom the artist spoke, it is important to remember that his words were mediated by Blumenschein. Tellingly, Swift Arrow's description of the feast day suggests a bias against Spanish-Catholic religious practices, and thus was in keeping with Anglo-Protestant values.

Swift Arrow's account outlines the history of the feast day. The article begins:

The Indian tells the story of his people and their holiday as we sit in the cool shade of our adobe house:

'Many years ago, when ground was new and rocks were wet, we hed good chief. When he die we hed big day, feast, every year on day he die. We was in dis Nord San Luis Valley somewhere den. Some hunters came here, and tell Indians fine place, so dey move here, my people, five hundred years ago. Oh! Full of game dis country; many buffaloes right here over dere, lots of deer an' wild horses. We hed squashes, beans, corn, plums, lots dings.'

Swift Arrow thus explains that the feast day has Indian roots. He also suggests that prior to Spanish conquest the aboriginal inhabitants were contented; they had access to plenty of water, produce, and game animals. With the arrival of the Spanish, Indian life was disrupted and violence ensued. A few paragraphs later, Swift Arrow continues:

'One day Spanyar came from de west, riding on one mule to Pueblo. (Dey [the Pueblo people] never before saw one mule or one cow. No goat, no sheep eeder.) Den dey say he come from somewhere else. Dis is some oder nation. Some of dem want to kill dat man. Some say no kill him, he good. So chief say no kill him. In a few years one troop come trading goods. Dey lives neighbors one mont'. Den dey say it good to be Cat'olic. De priests baptize on one day, when we all hed feast an' races.

³ Blumenschein also used this strategy in his 1898 *Harper's* article, "Behind the Scenes at a 'Wild West' Show," in which he described his interactions with Indian actors in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show playing at Madison Square Garden in New York City. See Ernest L. Blumenschein, "Behind the Scenes at a 'Wild West' Show," *Harper's Weekly* (April 30, 1898): 422. For more information about the power relations invoked in having Indian subjects speak in broken English, see Raymond William Stedman, *Shadow of the Indian: Stereotypes in American Culture* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982), 58-73.

After while dey got us to have dat feast and dances on last day of Se'tember, so dey call it San Geromino."⁴

In keeping with the title of the illustration, which points to the religious hybridity of the feast day, Swift Arrow's narrative elaborates on Spanish-Indian contact and the resulting tensions.

As is suggested in Swift Arrow's tale, San Gerónimo Feast Day has both Pueblo and Spanish roots. The fiesta corresponds with the fall harvest, a pivotal moment in the cycle of ceremonials observed by many divergent tribes in the Southwest. Being the most northwestern village of the nineteen New Mexican Pueblos, Taos Pueblo (or Tuh-tah, meaning our village) historically acted as an annual gathering ground where various southwestern tribes and Plains Indians met to exchange goods before winter and to celebrate the harvest.⁵ Frame five of Blumenschein's illustration, labeled "Last of the Wheat" (fig. 1.2), depicts the fall harvest and thus, intentionally or not, points to the feast day's Indian heritage.

In the late sixteenth century, long after the fall trading fair was in place, Spanish conquistadors arrived in the Taos valley and settled San Gerónimo de Taos, a small village near the pueblo. In 1619, using Indian labor, Spanish priests built the San Gerónimo mission at Taos Pueblo and established St. Jerome as the Pueblo's patron saint.⁶ According to San Juan Pueblo-born anthropologist, Alfonso Ortiz, the Taos

⁴ Blumenschein, "San Geronimo: The Pueblo Indian Holiday: Swift Arrow's Tale."

⁵ Alfonso Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, ed. Frank W. Porter III, *Indians of North America* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992), 64. These formalized annual trade fairs were held throughout the Southwest in the late summer and fall. The Ute and Comanche visited Taos, Pecos, and Picuris. The Navajos frequented Santa Clara, Jemez, and Acoma. Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, 64, 79. During this time, typically a truce was called between participating tribes. Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, 73.

⁶ The church was destroyed during the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. It was rebuilt in 1706 and again destroyed in 1847. The original site of the church is now a cemetery in honor of those who were killed inside its walls during its eighteenth-century destruction. The current church was built in 1850 on a separate sight within the Pueblo walls.

Pueblo fair was placed under the jurisdiction of local Spanish authorities in 1723.⁷ The fair was later moved to the last day of September to coincide with St. Jerome's feast day, at which time a feast and races were added to the celebration of the harvest.

Swift Arrow's narrative points to one of the most violent conflicts between the Spanish and Pueblo. He explains that in the years after the Spanish arrived in the region and attempted to convert the Pueblo people to Christianity, the native population rebelled, killing Spanish "priests an' teachers." The rebellion to which Swift Arrow refers is the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. This was a highly organized attack that united the Tewa-speaking Pueblos of Taos, Picuris, and Jemez, as well as the Keresan-speaking Pueblos of Cochiti and Santo Domingo, against the Spanish presence in the region. As a result of this uprising, almost all of the Franciscan priests in the Rio Grande region, along with 380 other men, women, and children, were murdered, and settlers were driven out of the areas surrounding Pueblo villages and Santa Fe.

The Pueblo Revolt was not unprovoked.⁸ The Pueblo people had endured decades of religious and cultural oppression under Spanish colonial rule. Since the Spanish *entrada* into the region, the tribes in the Southwest were converted, often forcibly, by mission friars who were intolerant of Native traditions.⁹ Ortiz writes that under Spanish control, for the slightest offense, Indians had their heads shaved, were whipped, detained, or even executed.¹⁰ Pueblo contempt for missionary efforts was

⁷ Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, 64.

⁸ For more about the Pueblo revolt, see Edward P. Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America* (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 1970), 54-60, Joe S. Sando, *Pueblo Nations: Eight Centuries of Pueblo Indian History* (Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishers, 1992), 47-82, David J. Weber, ed., *What Caused the Pueblo Revolt of 1680?* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999).

⁹ Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, 47.

¹⁰ Joe Sando argues that civic authorities also accused the missionaries of whipping Indians who failed to participate in Christian religious activities. Governors complained that such harsh punishments were a major cause of growing unrest and instigated a series of investigations between 1620 and 1680

intensified by a severe drought and famine during the late 1670s, which acted as catalysts for the Pueblo people's full-blown rebellion in 1680.¹¹

According to Swift Arrow, after the rebellion, "Quite a good while, 'bout t'irty year, the Spanyolers no come. No San Geronimo dace dose year." (In reality, the Spanish reestablished themselves in Santa Fe through the "Bloodless Conquest" thirteen years later, in September of 1692). Instead of the feast day, Swift Arrow claims that a celebration was held on the day of the Pueblo Revolt. He continues, "Den Spanyolers come back. Priests commence build church. We go an' be baptized. Become Catholic." Swift Arrow's narrative ends by explaining that the feast day serves merely as a "good time like Fourt' July. If we don't do nuttin' like dees, years will be longer." Thus, the feast day's religious and social significance is downplayed.¹² It is difficult to tease out what might have been Swift Arrow's position, if he did indeed exist, from that of Blumenschein's. While Swift Arrow's attitude towards the Catholic roots of the feast day corresponds with turn-of-the-century Anglo-Protestant prejudices against Spanish-Catholics, it is worth noting that his narrative could also speak to tension between the Pueblo people and local residents of Spanish descent.

Swift Arrow's narrative denigrates the importance of the feast day's Catholic roots. After claiming that the fiesta is just for fun, he says, "In the morning dat day we pay seex dollar to say mass, an' dollar an' half to cantor." The religiosity of the Mass is

into missionary brutality against the Pueblo people. Sando, *Pueblo Nations: Eight Centuries of Pueblo Indian History*, 61.

¹¹ Ramón A. Gutiérrez, "Did Franciscans Invite Martyrdom?" in *What Caused the Pueblo Revolt of 1680?* ed. David J. Weber (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999), 44.

¹² Ortiz explains that, in spite of their contempt for mission efforts, the Pueblo people found nominal participation in Catholic rituals to be consistent with older Native religious tenants. The Christian faith, when accepted, was regarded as a supplement to the ancient religious practices of the Pueblo. Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, 49-50.

denigrated; Indian participants must pay seven and a half dollars to witness the Mass and to hear liturgical chants and music. Indian conversion, Swift Arrow implies, was more about economics than faith. The negative connotations associated with money are reiterated at the end of Swift Arrow's tale: "San Geronimo is for make pleasure for everybody—white man, Indian, Mexican. Not like white man—make em pay fifty cents, one dollar, ten cents. All free." Unlike the white man, who would make one pay for participation in festivities, the residents of Taos Pueblo have made this event free for all who will come. Blumenschein ended this section of his article by noting that, after his story was told, "Swift Arrow wrapped his blanket around his body and over one shoulder, he was proud he was an Indian." Blumenschein's dignified Indian was above the greed of Spanish missionaries and Anglo businessmen, both of whom prostituted their religious and community events. Blumenschein presented the Pueblo Indian as noble, a point of view repeated in his illustration and narrative about the feast day.

"A Strange Mixture"

Blumenschein followed Swift Arrow's tale with his own impressions of the feast day, walking the reader through the events in chronological order. While this account coincides with many of the elements of his illustration, the organizational structure of the image is not chronological, but rather dictated by design and audience appeal. Blumenschein highlighted the aspects of the feast day that he found to be the most sensational, crystallizing them into accessible vignettes.

The format of “A Strange Mixture”—a central scene surrounded by smaller images—was a common layout in turn-of-the-century illustrations.¹³ By the time Blumenschein arrived in Taos, he was well-versed in the types of formats magazine editors found appealing. He began his artistic career as an illustrator, and he was frequently hired by America’s most prominent magazines, including *Harper’s Weekly*, *Collier’s*, and *McClure’s Magazine* through the 1910s. Indeed, it was his career as an illustrator that first brought the artist to the Southwest; in the early winter of 1897, he traveled to Northern Arizona on assignment for *McClure’s*.¹⁴ This experience inspired him to return to the region the following summer on a sketching trip with his friend Bert Geer Phillips.¹⁵ Supported by magazine commissions, in 1899 Blumenschein traveled to Paris to attend the Académie Julian where he trained as a painter.¹⁶ Between 1899 and 1909, the artist spent most of his time in Paris, marrying successful American artist, Mary Greene, in 1905. Before the birth of their only child in 1909, the Blumenscheins moved back to the U.S., settling in Brooklyn. It was not until the summer of 1910 that Blumenschein became a regular summer resident of Taos, spending the rest of the year in

¹³ Blumenschein also used this organizational scheme in a January 27, 1900 *Harper’s Weekly* illustration, entitled, “Sketches in Mexico.”

¹⁴ Charles C. Eldredge, “Ernest Blumenschein’s ‘The Peacemaker,’” *American Art* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 34-35, William T. Henning, *Ernest L. Blumenschein Retrospective* (Colorado Springs: Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1978), 10-11.

¹⁵ The story of Ernest L. Blumenschein’s arrival in Taos in 1898 is best described as a mishap transformed into legend. New York-based artists, Blumenschein and Bert Geer Phillips, American friends from the Académie Julian in Paris, struck out for Mexico from Colorado seeking “fresh material” for their canvases. A fortuitous wagon-wheel malfunction forced them to stop mid-journey near Taos. Enthralled with the picturesque landscape and peoples, the pair decided to go no further, and settled for the summer in the small town. Phillips decided to stay in Taos permanently, and Blumenschein returned to New York. Henning, *Ernest L. Blumenschein Retrospective*, 10-13.

¹⁶ Blumenschein previously had attended the Académie Julian in 1894. He had come to Paris that year to train as a musician, but found himself more drawn to the art classes that he attended at the academy. By 1897, Blumenschein was back in the U.S. Around 1899, Blumenschein decided that he wanted to return to Paris to train as a painter, which he was able to do with \$3000 that he had saved from his work as an illustrator. With the exception of a 1901 trip back to the U.S., Blumenschein remained in Paris until 1909. Throughout his time in Paris, the artist supported himself with magazine commissions. Ibid.

Brooklyn. In 1919, with an inheritance from Greene's family, the Blumenscheins bought a house in Taos and became permanent residents. It was at this time that Blumenschein turned his full attention to painting.

Returning to "A Strange Mixture," the illustration is divided into eleven frames, ten of which wrap around a larger central image. Each frame is numbered; corresponding captions are located at the bottom of the illustration. Blumenschein isolated various aspects of the feast day—rituals, races, important participants, and types of people in attendance—encouraging the viewer to reconstruct the whole event in his or her mind. The link between text and image in the illustration functioned like an ethnographic display in which isolated artifacts, explained by wall-text, were meant to represent a rich culture. The frames can be divided into two categories: representations of feast day activities and depictions of the exotic "Types" a tourist might encounter.

Blumenschein's article describes the events of the feast day in chronological order. My discussion of the imagery "A Strange Mixture" will follow the structure of the article so that the text and image can be addressed simultaneously. The following account of the feast day is taken from Blumenschein's article; historical and contextual details have been added when further explanation or elaboration is necessary.

According to Blumenschein, the celebration began with prayers, punctuated by planned "intervals of the noise of gun and drums." Frame four (fig. 1.3) depicts the drummer who was stationed by the door of San Gerónimo Chapel. At the drummer's sides were six gunners, one of whom is represented in frame eight (fig. 1.4). After the morning activities, a procession of five Indians walked out of the church bearing a small

wooden image, or *santo*, of San Gerónimo.¹⁷ Correspondingly, in frame three (fig. 1.5), five figures walk in front of an architectural structure; four Pueblo men, wearing white robes, hold a canopy over the head of a Pueblo woman, in black attire, who holds a *santo*.¹⁸ In the article, Blumenschein dismissively characterized the sacred object as a “block of wood,” a statement that belied the Pueblo people’s veneration of Catholic objects. Throughout the illustration and article, the importance of both Catholic and Pueblo religious rituals are downplayed. For instance, without reading the article or being familiar with southwestern architecture, it would not have been obvious that the procession occurred in front of a church, since Blumenschein erased the most obvious signifier of any Christian institution, a cross.

After the procession, Blumenschein described the morning’s main activity, a Mass, which is not included in his illustration; thus, the Catholic heritage of the feast day was further elided. Correspondingly, Pueblo spiritual life was hinted at but the full import of their religious activities was not discussed. Frame one (fig. 1.6) of the illustration, labeled “Entrance to an Underground Council Chamber,” depicts a circular kiva out of which climbs a barely discernable figure. This structure acts as an underground ceremonial chamber, and is used for religious rituals and community gatherings by the male members of Pueblo communities.¹⁹ Nothing about the illustration

¹⁷ *Santo* is Spanish for saint. A *santo* is a religious object created by a *santero*, or “saint-maker.” There are various types of *santos*, including *bultos* (carved statues or figures) and *retablos* (painted images of a saint on a flat surface). The *santo* in Blumenschein’s illustration is a *bulto*.

¹⁸ For more information about Pueblo attire see chapter four.

¹⁹ A kiva is a sacred semi-subterranean structure that is typically square or circular. Kivas are entered through a hole in the roof. These structures are characterized by over-sized ladders, which jet into the sky. The projecting ladder symbolizes the connection between the Pueblo and the heavens, a connection that is balanced by a hole in the kiva floor which symbolizes both the Pueblo connection with mother earth and references their creation story in which the original inhabitants emerged from the lower world. Suzanne Crawford and Dennis Kelley, *American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia*, Vol. 2 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 443-46. Taos has six kivas that are

or text suggests that the structure is a sacred space. Blumenschein either did not understand or ignored the Pueblo and Catholic religiosity central to the feast day. Similarly, the Anglo intelligentsia who worked in the region between the two World Wars often claimed to be drawn to the profound spirituality of Pueblo ceremonials, and yet they conveniently remove this spirituality from its Pueblo or Catholic contexts.

The morning Mass and procession were followed by what Blumenschein determined to be the focus of the day, the ceremonial footraces.²⁰ In his article, Blumenschein gave readers a lively description of the race, in which the North and South settlements of Taos Pueblo competed in a relay. This account reveals turn-of-the-century attitudes about the merits of assimilation. Blumenschein explained that the race was neck and neck until the fifth lap, when the crowd was surprised by a runner who, “speed[s] along like an American sprinter, head up, running on his toes, and a great gap opens rapidly between him and his opponent from the North.” (The close race was won through noble efforts of none other than Swift Arrow, who overcame the gap created by this Indian.) The reason given for the speedy runner’s excellence: six years of American education at the Carlisle Indian School.²¹ Blumenschein communicated his confidence in assimilationist policies, explaining that Indians benefited both mentally and physically

divided equally between the North and South sides of the Pueblo village. Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America*, 167.

²⁰ Running carries religious significance at Taos Pueblo, and the feast day race is considered to be a sacred event. Although shot through with Orientalizing and romanticizing language, anthropologist Peter Nabokov’s book, *Indian Running*, addresses the significance of running for American Indian communities. Citing Alfonso Ortiz (in conversation), Nabokov explains that the races in the Southwest seem to occur around the time of the changing of seasons. Peter Nabokov, *Indian Running: Native American History and Tradition* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1981), 40.

²¹ The Carlisle Indian Industrial School, located in Pennsylvania, was the first off-reservation government boarding school for American Indian children. Establish when assimilationist policies were gaining popularity, Carlisle was one of a dozen of schools throughout the U.S. that took part in the government’s “civilizing mission.” For more information see, David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995).

from a civilized education. The rhetoric of assimilation is also present in Blumenschein's representations "Types" in his illustration, a point to which I will return.

The illustration conveys little of the excitement and action articulated in Blumenschein's article. In the frames that include the race, none of the figures are depicted as running. In frame two (fig. 1.7), the artist represented the racers at the beginning of the course. Here, eight Pueblo men (only men could race) are lined up; behind them is the faint presence of a man seated on a horse who wears a hat. The presence of the rider is an enigma. He again appears in frame seven (fig. 1.8), labeled "Ready for the Race," suggesting that he might be some sort of race official. The North settlement of Taos Pueblo is the main feature in frame seven; in front of the pueblo, a large crowd has gathered to watch or participate in the race. The foreground of the frame is inhabited by Pueblo spectators, young and old. Again, the action of running is not portrayed in frame seven. Besides the possibly white or Hispanic rider, there is no evidence of non-Pueblo spectators at the footraces, a notable absence since tourists are represented in frames nine and eleven.

According to Blumenschein's article, the footraces were followed by dance and a feast.²² The artist only superficially described the dance, explaining that the racers put on moccasins and formed two "bodies of dancers." In this compact mass, Indians stand elbow to elbow, moving to the quickening rhythm of a big drum. Blumenschein suggested that ceremonial dances were improvisational, noting that "many of the crowd take up the infectious motion" as "naked boys and old men" join in. As the dance died down, the dancers and crowd retreated for a feast. Blumenschein's description of the

²² Many of the elements of the feast day that are described in Blumenschein's article are still practiced today. What is left out of Blumenschein's account is the vespers that takes place on the eve of San Gerónimo Feast Day, which are followed by a "Sundown Dance."

dance is but a paragraph, and says nothing about the significance of the dance or its meaning. In contrast, the dance received more attention in the illustration; it is the subject of the central and largest frame of “A Strange Mixture” (frame eleven, fig. 1.9). As Blumenschein’s article indicates, the post-race dance is not the primary focus of San Gerónimo Day, the footraces are. However, the illustration was intended to appeal to a broad Anglo audience in an era of sensational journalism and an Indian dance met these needs.²³

Whereas Blumenschein’s article describes the Indian dancers as two masses of bodies, in his illustration, the ceremonial is given more structure. There are two groups of dancers; each group is divided into two rows of male dancers who face one another. Adjacent to the dancers are three drummers. The dancers are all semi-nude, some with heavy body paint, whereas the drummers are fully clothed. As is the case with his depictions of the footraces, Blumenschein was unable to, or not interested in, capturing movement; the dancers’ feet barely leave the ground and the arm of one drummer is frozen well above the drum. The vignette is in keeping with ethnographic spectacles, such as the human exhibits on the Midway Plaisance of the 1893 World’s Columbia Exposition in Chicago (fig. 1.10), where exotic subjects were put on display as a source of entertainment for a predominantly white audience.

From the roof of the Pueblo structure in frame eleven, a crowd of Indian and non-Indian spectators watch the dance. Blumenschein indicated that tourism was already a

²³ Representations of Indian ceremonials were popular around this time, particularly in *Harper’s Weekly*. For more information about turn-of-the-century representations of Indian dance, see Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), 21-68. Also see Adolf Bandelier, *The Delight Makers* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1890). Although an account of ancient life in Frijoles Canyon, Bandelier’s book is titled after the “sacred clowns,” or Koshare, who perform at Pueblo ceremonials.

nuisance, noting that “old [Pueblo men] busily chase cameras away from the scene.” By the late 1890s, Pueblo Indians were central to the tourist industry in the Southwest.²⁴ Anthropologists Marta Weigle and Barbara Babcock explain that, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Santa Fe Railway²⁵ created a compelling identity for northern New Mexico and Arizona. The railway advertised the region’s primary tourist attractions as being its sublime natural wonders and its colorful, non-threatening Indian inhabitants, which proved to be a highly profitable marketing scheme.²⁶ Through books, pamphlets, and advertisements, the railway offered Anglo Americans an authentic yet safe encounter with Indians.

Particularly revealing is Blumenschein’s inclusion of prominently placed white women in urban dress in “A Strange Mixture.” Women sit on top of the portico, many of whom seek shade under umbrellas. A white woman conspicuously stands on the ladder between the portico and the lowest pueblo rooftop. She is set apart from the crowd, her outstretched arm further emphasizing to her presence. In frame nine (fig.

²⁴ Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past*, 100-02.

²⁵ The Atchison and Topeka Railroad was founded in 1859, changing its name to Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad (ATSF) in 1863. Soon afterwards, the ATSF became popularly known as “The Santa Fe.” In the 1880s and 1890s, the company struggled financially after overextending its resources in its appetite for new territory. By 1893, ATSF was bankrupt. As the company struggled out of receivership, its new president in 1896 began to rehabilitate the image of both the railway and the Southwest by sinking more resources into advertising. T. C. McLuhan and William E. Kopplin, *Dream Tracks: The Railroad and The American Indian 1890-1930* (New York: Abrams, 1985), 16-17.

²⁶ Weigle has published a number of texts that explore the symbiotic relationship between the Santa Fe Railway and the Fred Harvey Company, as well as their mutual efforts to sell the Southwest. See Marta Weigle, “From Desert to Disney World: The Santa Fe Railway and the Fred Harvey Company Display the Indian Southwest,” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 45, no. 1 (Spring 1989), Marta Weigle and Barbara A. Babcock, eds., *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway* (Phoenix, Arizona: The Heard Museum, 1996). Also see Edwin L. Wade, “The Ethnic Art Market in The American Southwest, 1880-1980,” in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, ed. George Stocking Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 169. Also see Dean A. Porter, Teresa Hayes Ebie, and Suzan Campbell, *Taos Artists and Their Patrons, 1898-1950* (Notre Dame, IN and Albuquerque, N. M.: Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame in conjunction with the University of New Mexico Press, 1999), Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

1.11), the other scene that includes tourists, one finds another centrally placed white woman. She can be found in the right foreground, wearing an urbane hat and blouse, the striped fabric of which mimics the body paint of the central Indian actors. This woman casually speaks to an Indian man, who is dressed in a long, dark robe. In both frames nine and eleven, the figure closest to the viewer is a male Indian whose back is turned. This is a standard compositional device used to suggest that the viewer is part of the crowd, drawing one into the drama. The presence of white women also served to familiarize the scene, encouraging the Anglo viewer to inhabit it. Blumenschein attempted to temper the exoticism of the feast day's rituals and the strangeness of the Indians by placing these women in close proximity to both. The inclusion of Anglo tourists, particularly women, would have reassured an East Coast audience that the spectacle was safe for Anglo consumption and entertainment. This dual representation of the Southwest, as both exotic and docile, was a common marketing scheme among railways to lure tourists to the region.²⁷ Thus, "A Strange Mixture" reads as a complex combination of tourist spectacle and ethnographic display.

Blumenschein wrote that the feast day concluded with the performance of the "Chiflonetes." These figures are unique to the Rio Grande region and can be loosely described as "sacred clowns." In Tiwa, the language spoken at Taos Pueblo, they are called "tshípu-nah" (or "ch'pu- nah"). They are also referred to as Koshare, a generalized

²⁷ Working from a postcolonial perspective, Barbara Babcock argues that Anglo representations of the Pueblo people, produce the colonized as a fixed reality, which was at once Other and yet entirely knowable and visible. As such, Pueblo people, particularly female potters, were simultaneously constructed as exotic and domestic. Barbara A. Babcock, "Mudwomen and Whitemen: A Meditation of Pueblo Potteries and the Politics of Representation," in *The Material Culture of Gender: The Gender of Material Culture*, ed. Katharine Martinez and Kenneth L. Ames (Winterthur: The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Inc., 1997), 263.

term used to describe the clowning societies found among all Rio Grande Pueblos.²⁸ As they are presented in Blumenschein's illustration, Taos's "Chiflonetes" wore breechcloths and painted their bodies with black and white stripes.²⁹ Blumenschein ignored the religious significance of these figures, focusing only on the "foolishness" of their humorous antics. While Koshare play a comedic role at ceremonials, they also have a serious social and religious function in the community. On the afternoon of the feast day, these figures perform skits between dances that satirize both Pueblo life and outside visitors. As a general rule, the humorous and witty antagonists make fun of everyone and everything. They have a dual function: they are religious leaders and their antics encourage social conformity.³⁰

Blumenschein concentrated on the Chiflonetes' performance of a comical "mock hunt," as is represented in frame nine of the illustration (fig. 1.11).³¹ The mock hunt was

²⁸ Each Pueblo is divided into two units that act as mirrors of each other, often referred to as the summer people and the winter people. At Zia, Laguna, Jemez, and Islets, clowning societies are organized in a similar fashion, with complementary *Koshare* (summer and maturing plants) and *Kurena* (winter and growing plants) societies. At Tanoan Pueblos, including Taos, the clowns are often referred to as *Kosa* and *Kwirena*, names that are related to the Keresan clown associations. All of these societies engage in some form of buffoonery, and serve as a kind of "sergeant-at-arms" who preserve social order, even as they undermine it. Larry Nesper, "Clowns and Clowning," in Suzanne Crawford and Dennis Kelley, eds., *American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia, Vol. 1* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 182-83. For more about Tanoan clowning societies, see Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America*, 171-72. The Koshare will also be discussed in chapters two and five.

²⁹ The Koshare at Taos also paint black circles around their eyes, and thus they are also referred to as "black eyes."

³⁰ Alfonso Ortiz, "Ritual Drama and the Pueblo World View," in *New Perspectives on the Pueblos*, ed. Alfonso Ortiz (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), 145-46. Also see Virginia Moore Roediger, *Ceremonial Costumes of the Pueblo Indians: Their Evolution, Fabrication, and Significance in the Prayer Drama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 36.

³¹ The religious aspects of hunting for most American Indian people are based on a cooperative, or mutualistic, relationship between humans and animals. Many American Indians believe that one must respect the organisms one relies on to survive. Before, during, and after an animal is killed, the hunter must act in a properly humble and respectful manner. Ceremonials that enact the hunt or worship animals are understood as an important part of showing respect to prey. Raymond Pierotti, "Hunting, Religious Restrictions and Implications," Crawford and Kelley, eds., *American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia, Vol. 1*. For more about the importance of hunting in Pueblo society, see Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America*, 159-62.

an elaborate skit during which the Chiflonetes followed imaginary tracks to a tall pole planted in the middle of Taos plaza. Once at the pole, they looked up to find booty of sheep and fruit hanging at the top. In frame nine, the pole has been cut off; the top of the pole, to which a sheep and another animal are attached, is found two frames above (fig. 1.12). The Chiflonetes in the illustration, who are surrounded by a crowd, shoot small arrows at the pole until it is time for the “pole climb.” The pole climb was the climax of the mock hunt, during which the actors comically shimmied up the greased pole to retrieve the booty at the top. Blumenschein deemed the whole act a bit tiresome, but concluded that the actions of the Chiflonetes “are another ray of light on the Indian’s character, and show that beneath the serious dignity of his severe face lies as sense of humor as keen as his white brothers.” Blumenschein’s assessment of the redeeming aspects of the “Indian’s character” are those that matched white values.

The Ethnographic Eye and the Politics of Types

The remaining frames of “A Strange Mixture” are devoted to the various “Types” of Others—Pueblos, Apaches, and Mexicans—one was likely to encounter at the feast day.³² Anglo-Americans were not among the Types represented. In these frames, Blumenschein displayed racial difference. Through the format, imagery, and rhetoric used in this illustration, Blumenschein was posturing as an ethnographic authority on the diverse cultures he encountered in the Southwest.

³² I will use Type(s), with a capital “T,” when referring to turn-of-the-century systems of racial classification.

The conception of Types is part of nineteenth-century anthropological discourse, with its focus on the classification of human populations.³³ Evolutionary theories guided the burgeoning field of anthropology, through which a conjectural history of the social organization of civilized societies was constructed.³⁴ Nineteenth-century anthropologists, most notably Lewis Henry Morgan, sought to scientifically reconstruct human prehistory, ranking human groups along a linear evolutionary path. In his 1877 book, *Ancient Society*, Morgan posited that human societies progressed through three distinct “ethnic” stages: Savage, Barbaric, and Civilized.³⁵ In his conflation of biology and culture, Morgan hierarchically ordered human progress, elevating contemporary racial characterizations to scientific theory in order to understand diverse cultures and to explain cultural difference.³⁶

³³ Carol Mukhopadhyay and Yolanda Moses, "Reestablishing 'Race' in Anthropological Discourse," *American Anthropologist* 99, no. 3 (September, 1997): 517-18. Theories of cultural evolution were also developed by Herbert Spencer and Edward B. Taylor. For a discussion of the factors that influenced Morgan's thinking, see Adam Kuper, *The Invention of Primitive Society: The Transformation of an Illusion* (New York: Routledge, 1988), Elisabeth Tooker, "Lewis H. Morgan and His Contemporaries," *American Anthropologist* 94, no. 2 (June 1992): 357-75. Morgan frequently corresponded and shared ideas with John Wesley Powell, Adolph Bandelier, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Charles Darwin.

³⁴ Robert F. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Knopf distributed by Random House, 1978), 51.

³⁵ Lewis Henry Morgan, *Ancient Society* (London: MacMillan & Company, 1877). The full title of Morgan's book is *Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization*. Morgan's three main stages of evolutionary progress were each divided into three additional stages: e.g. lower status of barbarism, middle status of barbarism, and upper status of barbarism. I will capitalize Savage, Barbaric, and Civilized when referring to ethnic categorization based on Morgan's scheme.

³⁶ Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*, 51. James Clifford explains that from the mid- to late nineteenth century, “culture” referred to a single evolutionary process. The ideal of autonomous individuality was believed to be the natural outcome of a long development that was assumed to be the basic, progressive, movement of humanity. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 93.

As early as the 1890s, Franz Boas challenged the imperialist and racist discourses that inevitably arose from Morgan's scheme;³⁷ nevertheless, evolutionary theories were widely embraced and had popular appeal through the first decade of the twentieth century. For instance "The Zone," a site of entertainment and encounter with exotica at the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, which was similar to the 1893 Columbian Exposition's Midway Plaisance, hierarchically ordered various ethnic groups based on how socially and racially evolved white organizers deemed them to be. The stronghold of "Raciology" was not successfully shaken until Boas' theory cultural of relativism was popularized in the late 1910s and 1920s.

The title of Blumenschein's illustration, "A Strange Mixture of Barbarism and Christianity," is a prime indication that the artist and editor were in tune with a popularized version of Morgan's theories.³⁸ The use of the word "barbarism" has a dual function. In conjunction with "Strange," it is sensationalized rhetoric typical of turn-of-the-century popular journalism and was intended to appeal to readers. The word "barbarism" also points to the classification of Pueblo Indians as promoted by followers of Morgan. Turn-of-the-century anthropologists classified Plains Indians as Savage, the lowest stage of development reserved for nomadic or semi-nomadic peoples who neither cultivate plants nor domesticate animals.³⁹ The Pueblo people, in contrast, were thought

³⁷ Franz Boas promoted the idea of "cultural relativism" or "historian particularism," which was based on the premise that cultural and physiological differences between racial groups were the result of unique social, geographic, and historical conditions. All cultures were understood as complete systems and were equally developed.

³⁸ It is difficult to know whether the illustration was titled by Blumenschein or a copy editor.

³⁹ This idea was widely accepted by late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century anthropologists. For instance, A.F. Fynn classified Plains Indians as being in the upper stages of savagery; the tribes living in New and Old Mexico were designated as being in the middle stages of barbarism. Fynn explained that, although the Indians of Rio Grande live in semi-civilized *condition*, they lacked a real phonic alphabet, "which anthropologists emphasize as a requisite for admission into the ranks of civilized or perhaps even semi-civilized society." A. F. Fynn, *The American Indian: As a Product of Environment*

to represent the second stage of development, Barbaric, because they lived in continuously settled residences, were agrarian, and had domesticated animals. The title of Blumenschein's illustration refers to turn-of-the-century practices of ethnic classification, as does his representation of Types.

Blumenschein's decision to include Types in his illustration was not unique, and is a device found in many period illustrations. For instance, Blumenschein rendered Indian, Mexican, and Cossack Types in his April 30, 1898 *Harper's Weekly* illustration, "Behind the Scenes at the 'Wild West' Show," for which he also wrote an accompanying article.⁴⁰ He again used this scheme in a January 27, 1900 *Harper's Weekly* illustration, which accompanied an article by Sylvester Baxter.⁴¹ This illustration, entitled "Sketches in Mexico," features the Types one might encounter in Guadalajara.⁴²

Most of the Types presented in Blumenschein's illustrations consist of only the heads of the figures. The artist assumed that readers would understand something about the character of his racial Types based on the physiology of their faces, a notion linked to the idea that the physical traits of a race pointed to intellectual and moral development. During the mid-nineteenth century, members of the scientific community accepted the notion of cranial size as an indicator of biological and social advancement, thus

With Special Reference to the Pueblos (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1907), 36-37. Fynn made clear that his use of the term barbaric was not an adjective, but rather evoked Morgan's system of classification. Fynn, *The American Indian: As a Product of Environment With Special Reference to the Pueblos*, 46.

⁴⁰ Blumenschein, "Behind the Scenes at a 'Wild West' Show," 422.

⁴¹ Sylvester Baxter, "A Great Mexican State," *Harper's Weekly* (January 27, 1900). Blumenschein also depicts "Types" in his illustrations for Waldon Fawcett's article, "Center of the World of Steel," published in the June 1901 issue of *Century Illustrated Magazine*. Among the figures depicted are a "Scotch engineer," "A roller-Hungarian," "A yardman-Italian," and "An engineer-Welsh."

⁴² The artist had never been to Guadalajara and used figure sketches created in the New Mexico Territory for this assignment.

conflating phrenology and science.⁴³ In *Crania Americana* (1839), Samuel Morton determined an ethnic group's capacity for evolution based on physiognomic traits, an idea that took hold in the scientific community.⁴⁴ George Gliddon and Josiah Nott's *Types of Mankind* (1854) expanded on Morton's ideas, defining Types as being determined biologically. They explained, "In speaking of Mankind, we regard as *Types* those forms which are independent of Climatic or other Physical influences."⁴⁵ One of the most obvious indicators of moral and intellectual faculties, according to Gliddon and Nott, was the size and weight of the brain, which they saw as reflected in the size and shape of the cranium. With cranial studies came racially biased conclusions. Gliddon and Nott argued that the Caucasian race had the most elongated cranial structure, which they determined to be an indication of superior intelligence. About the American Indian cranium, Gliddon and Nott argued, "Viewed from above, the anterior part of the brain is narrow, and the posterior and middle portion, over the organs of caution, secretiveness, destructiveness &c. [sic], very broad, thus lending much support to phrenology."⁴⁶ Thus, Gliddon and Nott implied that Indians were biologically determined to be violent and

⁴³ For more information about nineteenth-century racial categorizations, with particular focus on American Indians, see Robert Bieder, "The Representations of Indian Bodies in Nineteenth-Century Anthropology," *American Indian Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (Spring, 1996): 165-79, Robert E. Bieder, *Science Encounters the Indian, 1820-1880: The Early Years of American Ethnology* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, 1986), Philip Deloria, "Historiography," in *A Companion to American Indian History*, ed. Philip Deloria and Neal Salisbury (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 12, Reginald Horsman, "Scientific Racism and the American Indian in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *American Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (May, 1975): 152-68.

⁴⁴ Samuel Morton, *Crania Americana, A Comparative View of the Skulls of Various Aboriginal Nations of North and South America* (Philadelphia: J. Dobson, 1839). Morton sought to reveal racial hierarchies using a combination of phrenology and physical anthropology.

⁴⁵ Italics original to text. George Gliddon and Josiah Nott, *Types of Mankind* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & CO., 1855), 80. The two scientists recognized no substantial difference between *types* and *species* (81). The 1855 edition of this text, in its entirety, is available through the University of Michigan library's website. The full title of this publication is *Types of Mankind or Ethnological researches, based upon the ancient monuments, paintings, sculptures, and crania of races, and upon their natural, geographical, philological and Biblical History*.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 291.

shifty. Moreover, a race's cranial evolution was seen as manifest in the appearance of their facial features. For instance, Gliddon and Nott described Indians as possessing, "though in various degrees, the long, lank, black hair; the heavy brow; the dull, sleeping eyes; the full compressed lips; and the salient, but dilated nose."⁴⁷ These traits were seen as pointing to the Indian's cranial structure and therefore to their biological evolution.

By the turn of the century, racial typology had been popularized, as is evident in Blumenschein's "Types" represented in "A Strange Mixture." The artist included two frames devoted to the various types of Others one might encounter at the Pueblo celebration. Frame ten (fig. 1.13), labeled "Types—Pueblos," includes a full-length illustration of a Pueblo woman with a pot on her head, as well as the torso of a Pueblo man and two figure heads of Pueblo youth. In frame six (fig. 1.14), labeled "Types—Apaches and Mexicans," there are nine figures; the upper five are Apache Indians, the bottom four are Mexicans.⁴⁸ Strikingly, the heads and faces of the Pueblo figures are more elongated than those of the Apache (fig. 1.15) and Mexican Types, perhaps calling attention to the presumed racial inferiority of the latter two Types.

The faces of the Types are just one indication that Blumenschein's illustration was informed by evolutionary theories. Its format reiterates period assumptions about race. "A Strange Mixture" has a hierarchical structure. The Pueblo Types, categorized by Morgan as in a stage of middle barbarism, have been isolated in one frame. The Pueblo Types were placed above the frame containing the Apache and Mexican Types, suggesting that Blumenschein understood the Pueblo as being racially superior to both Apache Indians and Mexicans. While Morgan's scheme deemed people of Spanish

⁴⁷ Gliddon and Nott, *Types of Mankind*, 275.

⁴⁸ Although there are five sketches of Apache Types, there are only four different figures. One of the figures is represented from both the front and back.

decent to be more civilized than Indians, Gliddon and Nott presented an argument that supports Blumenschein's placement of Mexicans at the bottom of his hierarchy. The co-authors call attention to the research of J.S. Phillips, who explained, "The Mexicans, with small brains, were evidently inferior in resolution [to the Indians], in attack and defense."⁴⁹ Phillips further argued that the Apache and Comanche managed to effectively resist Mexican subjugation, even though Indians are technically less evolved, due to their "more manly traits of character."⁵⁰

The four Mexican figures in the lower register of frame six reiterate turn-of-the-century Anglo biases against the Hispanic population living in the borderlands. Three of the four Mexican figures look sternly at the viewer. The man on the far left represents a Mexican laborer. The woman with her elaborate jewelry and man with long braids are hybrid types, and display attributes popularly linked with both Mexicans and Indians. The man in profile, with a large sombrero pulled over his eyes, is a caricature of the shifty *bandito*, an outlaw typically of Mexican decent.⁵¹ As historian David J. Weber explains, as Anglos flooded the New Mexican territory in the late nineteenth century, "Mexicans were described as lazy, ignorant, bigoted, superstitious, cheating, thieving, gambling, cruel, sinister, cowardly half-breeds. As a consequence of their innate depravity, Mexicans were seen as incapable of developing republican institutions or

⁴⁹ J.S. Phillips was a contributor to Gliddon and Nott's book. Phillips quoted in *Ibid.*, 279.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ It is possible that Blumenschein was exposed to a similar stereotype at the Wild West Show he witnessed in New York, which featured Mexican *vaqueros*, elaborately dressed actors wearing sombreros and bolero jackets purported to be Mexican cowboys. This figure, therefore, could also represent a *vaquero*. Blumenschein's other Types, might also have been based on preconceptions formulated in New York. As Alex Nemerov has argued, turn-of-the-century New Yorkers had a wide-array of venues through which to be exposed to the imagery of Old West. Alexander Nemerov, "'Doing the 'Old America'": The Image of the American West, 1880-1920," in *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920*, ed. William Truettner (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art by the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 291-94.

achieving material progress.”⁵² Mexicans, in short, were understood to be no better than Savages. Weber and historian Arnolfo De León have both investigated the roots of such ethnocentrism.⁵³ In separate publications, they argue that negative attitudes towards Mexicans were an extension of Euro-American biases against Catholic Spaniards, which white Americas inherited from their Protestant forbearers. In part, this prejudice is an extension of the Black Legend, whereby the colonial English derisively characterized the Spanish government as authoritarian, corrupt, and decadent, and Spaniards as treacherous, greedy, fanatical, and lazy.⁵⁴

Another driving force of the prejudice against the Mexican population of the Southwest was turn-of-the-century attitudes towards racial mixture.⁵⁵ Spanish conquistadors arrived in the “Far North” (which, after American occupation, became known as the Southwest) in the 1590s with the expectation of finding material riches, human slaves, and heathen souls to save. With them came both Mexican and Spanish settlers, as well as Mexican-Indian servants and slaves. Hopes of riches were soon dashed, and the settlers were instead faced with the harsh reality of life in the high desert. During the seventeenth century, few Spanish made their way to the region; the exceptions tended to be church and government officials who were forced to spend a term of service on the frontier. As historians Arnolfo De León and Jorge Iber explain, within a generation or two after conquest, the fastest growing population in Mexico was *mestizo*,

⁵² David J. Weber, *Myth and the History of the Hispanic Southwest* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1988), 153.

⁵³ Arnolfo De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Towards Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983).

⁵⁴ Weber, *Myth and the History of the Hispanic Southwest*, 159. The Black Legend and its implications for the Hispanic population of the New Mexican Territory is also discussed by Patricia Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton, 1987), 234-38.

⁵⁵ See De León, *They Called Them Greasers: Anglo Attitudes Towards Mexicans in Texas, 1821-1900*.

the result of Spanish and Indian intermixing.⁵⁶ During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, population growth in the region mainly occurred through unions (willing and forced) between the settlers and the aboriginal population. It has been estimated that as much as ninety percent of the population was born in the Spanish territory by 1680, a large proportion of which was of mixed Indian-Spanish parentage.⁵⁷ Turn-of-the-century Anglo Americans in the New Mexico Territory often noted the inferiority of the “swarthy” *mestizo* population. As Weber explains, “it was generally agreed, [*mestizos*] had inherited the worst qualities of the Spaniards and Indians, resulting in a ‘race’ still more despicable than that of either parent group.”⁵⁸

Blumenschein gave visual clues that pointed to the supposed racial impurity of the figures in frame six. While the two most stereotypical Mexican figures—the laborer and *bandito*—have short, cropped hair, the Mexican man to the far left has two long braids, a visual rhyme with the hair of the Apache man located immediately above the Mexican figures. The appearance of the Mexican woman, wearing a large round medallion around her neck and beaded necklaces, recalls the decorated body of the full-length Apache figure. Her hair style, defined by the large ribbons on each side of her head, is echoed in the upper most Apache figure, whose head is turned away from the viewer. The central Apache man—wearing a hat and two side braids (the back of his head is represented immediately above)—acts as an intermediary between the Mexican figures and the Apache Indians. The skin of this figure is a shaded darker than almost all of the Mexican figures below; his dark skin, combined with his long hair, gesture towards his Indian

⁵⁶ Jorge Iber and Arnoldo De León, *Hispanics in the American West* (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006), 23.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁵⁸ Weber, *Myth and the History of the Hispanic Southwest*, 161.

heritage. However, his modern hat and collared shirt suggests that he is a cultural hybrid as well.

It is significant that Blumenschein placed the Apache and Mexican Types in the same register instead of combining all of the Indians in one register. This decision speaks to the complexity of Anglo attitudes towards Apache Indians. Blumenschein presented four different Apache Types in frame six. During the early nineteenth century, the Anglo popular press described Apache Indians in derogatory ways, characterizing them as dirty, unruly, and lawless.⁵⁹ By the turn of the century, as America's aboriginal population was forcibly subdued and no longer seen as a threat to white progress, images of the Apache were more ambivalent; in popular culture the Apache were typically constructed as depraved, whereas "fine" artists tended to present them in a more romanticized vein.

In turn-of-the-century dime novels, Apache Indians were still represented as blood-thirsty warriors. Stories about the savagery of the Apache rebels of the 1880s continued to capture the public's imagination through the early 1900s. For instance, in the January 14, 1899 issue of *Harper's Weekly*, General George A. Forsyth recounted 1882 events during which he tracked Apache rebels into Mexico. Forsyth described the raiders, who left a "bloody trail of dead men, woman and children to mark their course," as "[c]ruel, crafty, wary, quick to sense danger, equally active to discover a weak or

⁵⁹ As historian Edwin R. Sweeny notes, in general, there was little understanding of Apache culture, and "as far as whites were concerned, Apache were cruel and merciless, warlike and incorrigible." See Edwin R. Sweeny, "Mangas Coloradas and Mid-Nineteenth-Century Conflict, in Richard Etulain, ed., *New Mexican Lives: Profiles and Historical Stories* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press in cooperation with the U. N. M. Center for the American West, 2002), 132. According to Ortiz, the Apache reputation as sinister and savage was particularly intense in the Southwest and was in place long before Anglo contact. Before their conflict with the U.S. Army in the 1880s, the Apache Indians in the Southwest had known centuries of resistance, first against Spanish conquistadors, and later against Mexican settlers. Due to Apache, Navajo and Comanche raids on Mexican and Pueblo villages throughout the eighteen and nineteenth centuries, Alfonso Ortiz argues that by the end of the nineteenth century, the Pueblos were being championed by the Spanish as paragons of 'civilization' in contrast to the 'savage' Apache. Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, 79.

exposed place within his reach, tireless when pursued, patient in defeat, and merciless in success, seeking the maximum gain at the minimum risk..."⁶⁰ The Apache practice of fleeing to Mexico to avoid U.S. troops also helps to explain why Blumenschein grouped together the Apache and Mexican figures in "A Strange Mixture."

In frame six, Blumenschein represented three Apache heads. The figure in the upper-right hand corner is only seen from behind. He appears to be wearing a wreath of foliage, which suggests that he might be a participant in the ceremonial activities. To the right of this figure is a more distinctive character who stares directly at the viewer. This man, with his shoulder-length hair and a scarf around his head (fig. 1.16), was likely meant to recall the legendary warrior, Geronimo, perhaps the most-well-known Apache Indian among the American public. The inclusion of the Geronimo-type was an appropriate choice (and a play on words) considering the subject of the illustration is the feast day of San Gerónimo.⁶¹

Blumenschein's inclusion of the Geronimo-type would have appealed to the magazine's national audience as it evoked stories of the untamed Wild West. During the 1880s, the sensational stories about Apache rebels that filled American publications were largely focused on the activities of Victorio and Geronimo.⁶² Photographs and illustrations of Geronimo and his rebels were widely reproduced in periodicals during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (fig. 1.17). So popular was Geronimo and

⁶⁰ General George A. Forsyth, "An Apache Raid," *Harper's Weekly* (14 January 1899).

⁶¹ I refer to this figure as a Geronimo-type since the figure is a construction and does not represent the historical figure, Geronimo.

⁶² Mimbres Apache under Victorio resisted incursions onto their homelands in 1879 and 1880. The Apache, Geronimo, led Chiricahua rebels to continue warfare until 1886. In 1882, Geronimo and his followers fled their reservation and joined Victorio in Mexico. For the next four years, the United States Army tracked him down. In 1886, he surrendered and was imprisoned in Florida. During the mid-1880s, Geronimo's exploits were frequently covered by *Harper's Weekly*.

his legend that as a prisoner of war in Florida he drew tourists to Fort Pickens. Promoters of world's fairs quickly realized the marketing potential of the Apache prisoner and obtained permission from the War Department to put the warrior on display or force him to perform at their events. As a result, Geronimo participated in the Omaha Exposition of 1898, the Pan American Exposition at Buffalo in 1901, and the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.⁶³ By the time "A Strange Mixture" was published, the general public would have recognized an Indian man, with shoulder-length hair parted down the middle, and wearing a distinctive scarf, as being a reference to the mythic young Geronimo.

In contrast with the stereotype of marauding Apaches pervasive in popular publications, Indian warriors were more sentimentally cast as tragic heroes of the past in turn-of-the-century paintings. Art historian William Truettner argues that paintings by George Caitlin, Karl Bodner, and Alfred Jacob Miller represented Plains Indians as courageous, untamed, and free.⁶⁴ Similarly, the central Apache figure in frame six of "A Strange Mixture" is rendered as stately and noble. He stands tall, shoulders wide to give the viewer a full view of his attire, and looks off into the distance with an air of dignity. This man's demeanor contrasts with the other figures in the frame, most of whom have been given facial expressions that range from quizzical to aggressive. The noble character of the heroically posed central figure is reinforced by Blumenschein's textual description

⁶³ Geronimo also made an appearance at Theodore Roosevelt's inauguration parade in 1905 and was cast in a number of Wild West shows. In his autobiography, Geronimo states that he never willingly participated in such events, and habitually asked to be returned to his homeland in the Southwest. Geronimo's autobiography, *Geronimo: His Own Story*, is available on-line at <http://www.nativeamericans.com/Geronimo.htm>. Geronimo understood the commercial power of his name and legend and was able to glean a small profit from his Anglo oppressors during his detainment. At the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, the aging legend sold bows and arrows and autographed photos of himself.

⁶⁴ See William H. Truettner, "Science and Sentiment," in *Art in New Mexico, 1900-1945: Paths to Taos and Santa Fe* (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1986), 33.

of the Apache Indians attending the feast day, who the artist admired for their obstinacy in refusing the Spaniard's religion and for their gorgeous costumes.

While there is nothing particularly damning about Blumenschein's representation of Apache Types, his decision to group the Apache and Mexican figures implies an association between the two groups; the hierarchical structure of the illustration and iconographic clues suggest that both groups were less evolved, socially and perhaps biologically, than the Pueblo. Truettner argues that the nineteenth-century concept of Indianness, which was linked to the Plains Indians, personified the virtues of the untouched wilderness.⁶⁵ The nomadic and semi-nomadic Indians presented a moral and practical problem for national life. The nation was founded on the ideology that if a citizen was economically independent, and possessed land, he would be politically autonomous. Property was understood as the key to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The nomadic Indian was accused of claiming ownership to more land than he could use, impeding the white man's quest for cheap land. By the mid- to late nineteenth century, evolutionary theories and assimilationist ideas were simultaneously invoked. Historian Brian Dippie writes that Lewis Morgan stressed private property as a civilizing factor. Believing that social and cultural absorption offered the only hope for Indian survival, Morgan deemed allotment as essential for successful assimilation.⁶⁶

Savage, nomadic Indians stood in contrast to "good," more civilized Indians. The Pueblo people of the Southwest were seen as typifying the "good" Indian. With the "discovery" of southwestern Indian art and culture in the 1880s, a new perspective of

⁶⁵ William H. Truettner, "The Art of Pueblo Life," in *Art in New Mexico, 1900-1945: Paths to Taos and Santa Fe* (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1986), 59.

⁶⁶ Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1982), 165.

Indianness took hold, one which focused on aesthetic instinct and social stability.⁶⁷ Truettner surmises that Pueblo tribes were treated more favorably than Plains Indians because they were understood as more civilized. Pueblo people were understood to be more assimilable than Plains Indians due to their artistic, agrarian, and sedentary way of life, and because they had already been largely Christianized by the Spanish.⁶⁸ Whether viewed as subhuman or sublime, the lens through which Anglos understood their relationship to American Indians conformed to white America's political and cultural needs.⁶⁹

In "A Strange Mixture," Blumenschein accentuated the Pueblo people's already-formed tendencies towards Civilization.⁷⁰ The demeanor of the Pueblo figures (fig. 1.13) is more refined than their Apache and Mexican counterparts. Whereas the Apache and Mexican Types are dominated by assertive, masculine characters, the Pueblo figures are more passive, even feminine. The two adult Pueblo male figures—in opposite corners of

⁶⁷ Between 1871 and 1872, the abandoned Mesa Verde was found, photographed and surveyed by Anglo anthropologists, after which time the Southwest became a gold mine for scientists. As anthropologists studied the ancient life of North America, ethnologists became increasingly interested in living Pueblo peoples, who were understood as living links with the ancient cultures in the region. In order to better understand the past, ethnologists, such as Adolph Bandelier, studied contemporary Indians. Truettner, "Science and Sentiment," 20.

⁶⁸ Whereas the Plains Indians had been forcibly removed from their lands, Truettner notes that the Pueblo Indians were spared this fate and were less aggressively acculturated. Truettner, "Science and Sentiment," 18.

⁶⁹ Phillip Deloria explores shifting notions of Indianness in the U.S., arguing that changes in white conceptions of Indianness often reveal American cultural anxieties about national identity. Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 96. Also see Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*, Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

⁷⁰ Attesting to the affect that evolutionary theories had on Blumenschein's turn-of-the-century production is an October 28, 1899 *Harper's Weekly* illustration entitled, "The Advance of Civilization in New Mexico: The Merry-Go-Round Come to Taos." The illustration and its title are supposed to be a lighthearted invocation of the rustic nature of Taos and the naivety of the Pueblo Indians. Nevertheless, it is interesting that the most prominent carousel rider is a Pueblo man in a polka-dot shirt, presumably Americanized attire. Mirroring this figure is another Pueblo man, in more traditional garb, adjacent to the carousel, who rides a real horse. Surrounding this second man is a group of Indians, who are either gawking at the contraption or waiting to ride it. The illustration suggests that, for better or worse, once the Indian pays to ride, he will begin the civilizing process.

frame ten—look off into the distance; they were rendered as less threatening than were the male figures in frame six. The full-length Pueblo woman and the young child to her right gently engage the viewer. The woman's facial features are barely discernable and the young boy wears a playful smile. The skin of the Pueblo figures was more darkly shaded than the other Types, and their faces and bodies were more fully articulated; the Pueblo people were thus constructed as more stable than the transient Apache Indians and the mix-blood Mexicans. Blumenschein's illustration also presents three other signs of the Pueblo people's civility and their potential for absorption: their monumental architecture (Taos Pueblo is represented three times in the illustration), their agrarian lifestyle as witnessed in the harvest scene, and their artistic creations, evident from the pot on the Pueblo woman's head and her elaborately woven blanket. The art objects are particularly significant since Morgan determined art to be one of the two main indicators of the status of Civilization. The Pueblo people were thus imagined as prime candidates for assimilation.

Civilizing the Indian

Like "Strange Mix" and "Swift Arrow's Tale," a number of Blumenschein's other turn-of-the-century graphic works and writings point to assimilationist values. Before discussing these works, I will first outline the federal policy of assimilation, since it is against this policy that the interwar artists featured in the rest of this dissertation reacted.

During the mid- to late nineteenth century, a period that coincides with the Progressive Era, the concept of assimilation gathered mounting support from Indian and

non-Indian parties.⁷¹ Earlier in the century, U.S. policy had focused on removal, displacing thousands of American Indians onto lands that were often barely inhabitable. By the late 1880s, military resistance against Anglo expansion in the U.S. had all but ceased, and public sympathies swung in favor of Indians. This shift was fueled by accounts of Indian mistreatment, as was provocatively explored in Helen Hunt Jackson's 1881 *Century of Dishonor*.⁷² Indian agents were increasingly viewed as corrupt and reservations as places that robbed Natives peoples of any independence and dignity. In protest, a significant number of Progressive reform groups, many of which were Christian organizations, were founded.⁷³ Spurred by Morgan's social evolutionary theories, reformers believed that Indians could undergo the slow process of civilization, and that they should be integrated into the American civilization.⁷⁴ To become Americanized Christians, Indians had to be broken of their tribal ways, and thus reformers focused on suppressing Native ceremonials and challenging communal land ownership.

According to historian Wallace Adams, reformers believed that the reservation system perpetuated tribal outlook and institutions, and promoted dependency via the

⁷¹ Tom Holm's scholarship explores the tensions, contradictions, and conflicts within the assimilationist movement. For instance, he explains "New" Indians, most of whom had been educated in white schools, were among those who most staunchly supported assimilationist policies. Native reformers, such as Ely S. Parker, a Seneca from New York, and George Eastman (Ohiyesa), a Santee Sioux or Dakota Indian, believed that American Indians had the capacity and right to become productive American citizens. Tom Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 5, 64. American Indian reformers were often overly optimistic about implementation of federal policy. While allotment was promoted as a method of "Indian Emancipation," a way to get American Indians off reservations and allow them to work towards citizenship, in reality federal allotment laws were used to justify the exploitation and oppression of Native peoples.

⁷² Helen Hunt Jackson, *A Century of Dishonor: A Sketch of the United States Government's Dealings with Some of the Indian Tribes* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995, original published in 1881).

⁷³ Etulain, ed., *New Mexican Lives: Profiles and Historical Stories*, 135.

⁷⁴ Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era*, 8.

rationing system.⁷⁵ Land allotment, it was argued, would solve the majority of these problems; it would end communal land ownership and property-sharing, encourage the Indians to become industrious farmers, and thus would teach them the self-sufficiency they needed to become proper citizens. The campaign for assimilation culminated with the congressional passage of the General Allotment Act in 1887 under Senator Dawes, legislation which challenged tribal landownership by granting allotted lands to individuals. Popularly known as the Dawes Act, this legislation proposed to confer citizenship on those Indians who accepted allotted land. As the cornerstone of the federal Indian policy for nearly a half century, the Dawes Act determined how much land Indians would be given, if past treaties would be honored or violated, and whether or not Indians would become American citizens or remain aliens in their own country. Land remaining after allotment was purchased by the federal government, presumably with Indian consent, and sold to Anglo settlers; the sale price was held in trust for the “education and civilization” of former tribe members. Also held in trust for twenty-five years were the allotted lands, after which time the property would be conveyed to the new owner free of any charge.⁷⁶ The Dawes Act had disastrous consequences for American Indian sovereignty; modes of traditional collective land use were replaced with an Anglo-European system of individual property management.⁷⁷ Furthermore, by the time the act

⁷⁵ Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995), 16.

⁷⁶ The trust period, which extended to 1912, was considered part of a transition from tribal ownership of land, to federal supervision, to a state of freedom from all restrictions. By the 1910s, the shortcomings of the act had become broadly apparent, although it was not reversed until the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934. Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*, 169-75.

⁷⁷ Rebecca L. Robbins, "Self-Determination and Subordination: The Past, Present, and Future of American Indian Governance," in *Native American Sovereignty*, ed. John R. Wunder (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 293.

was repealed in 1934, American Indians had been deposed of two-thirds of their tribal lands.⁷⁸

Another major component of assimilationist policy was educational reform. Indians, Progressive reformers argued, had to be taught the knowledge, values, and habits of Christian civilization.⁷⁹ The Indian could be forced to own land through allotment, but this alone would not break him of his tribal ways. Believing that adult Indians were beyond help, reformers focused on Indian children, who were removed from their homes and sent to Anglo boarding schools across the U.S. The education of Indian youth would expedite the process of evolution; in accordance with Protestant values, boarding schools facilitated individualization, taught Indian children to do “productive” work, and Christianized students. In the words of Richard C. Pratt, a leader in the march for boarding school education for Indians, assimilationists sought to “Kill the tribe and save the man.”⁸⁰ According to Holm, assimilation, which he calls the “vanishing policy,” was just another form of Indian extermination.⁸¹

Blumenschein’s faith in assimilation is evident in his laudatory comments about the boarding-school educated Indian racer in his article “Swift Arrow’s Tale.” An assimilationist subtext is also present in a number of other texts and images

⁷⁸ Historian Patricia Nelson Limerick explains the disastrous consequences of the Dawes Act. In 1887, American Indians held 138 million acres of land. Over the next forty-seven years, 60 million acres were deemed to be “surplus” land that was “sold to white men.” Another 27 million acres transferred ownership from American Indian to non-Indian hands through sale. Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*, 198-9. Also see, Berkhofer, *The White Man’s Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present*, 169-75.

⁷⁹ Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928*, 17.

⁸⁰ Richard Pratt quoted in See Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Native American Sovereignty on Trial: A Handbook with Cases Laws, and Documents* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003), 26. This is a widely quoted statement.

⁸¹ Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era*, 3.

Blumenschein produced around the turn of the century. In a circa 1901 letter to a friend, the artist explained that there were two types of Indians in the Southwest, the artistic and picturesque Pueblo Indians and the dirty and useless wards who lived on reservations. Addressing Taos's capacity for inspiration, the artist described the Taos Indian as being, "real and themselves (not the unhealthy scrofulous specimens that Uncle Sam feeds, but self-supporting, clean-minded people who still have their same customs)."⁸² In the Southwest, these wards were the semi-nomadic Apache, or even the Navajo, who were thought to be a degenerative force to both Pueblo and Anglo societies.⁸³

Blumenschein more explicitly addressed assimilation in his cover image for June 17, 1899 issue of *Harper's Weekly*, entitled "Wards of the Nation- Their First Vacation from School" (fig. 1.18, hereafter "Wards of the Nation"). The illustration features a scantily dressed couple, replete with loin cloths, who look out from their primitive hut, which appears to be a Navajo Hogan (fig. 1.19). Are these the "unhealthy and scrofulous specimens" described in Blumenschein's letter? Walking towards the couple is a dark-skinned woman and child in Americanized dress, who have just emerged from a modern buggy.⁸⁴ A barely discernable crowd of traditionally dressed adults and nude children gawk at the buggy and driver, a glimpse of the child's fate had he not been granted a proper white education. The assimilated child, holding the hand of his surrogate guardian, walks towards his parents with an assured stride. While the father stands to greet the boy, the mother sits in the dirt, as does the dog next to her; an analogy between

⁸² Blumenschein quoted in James Moore, "Ernest Blumenschein's Long Journey with Star Road," *American Art* 9, no. 3 (Fall 1995): 18.

⁸³ Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past*, 100-02.

⁸⁴ At mission and government-run schools, native clothing was taken from children and replaced by Americanized dress. By 1913 it has been estimated that thirty percent of Hopis were dressing like whites, a trend which was particularly wide-spread among children. Kate Peck Kent, *Pueblo Indian Textiles: A Living Tradition* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 1983), 16.

the habits of the mother and the beast is implied, a connection strengthened by the visual parallel made between the woman's spotted skirt and the dog's spotted fur coat. Published in conjunction with this illustration was a paragraph-long article, which is also entitled, "Wards of the Nation- Their First Vacation from School."⁸⁵ Here, the editor lauded Blumenschein's illustration proclaiming:

No descriptive text can convey the good that results from the governments' Indians Schools throughout the country so well as a glance at the contrast between the primitive native and the neat, tidy children returning to the ancestral palace. Original sin may be ineradicable but education seems in a fair way to remove the aboriginal kind from our first installment of the 'white man's burden.'⁸⁶

Focusing on the merits of Indian schools, the author asserted that the illustration represents the results of the paternal government's efforts "to make good Indians by other than the time honored process of weighting them with lead." "Wards of a Nation" supported the idea that a white education would help Indians reach the lower status Civilization more quickly. Reinforcing this idea is the prominently placed pot found in the lower right-hand corner of the illustration. Although less civilized than the Pueblo, the Savages represented in this illustration also have an artistic tradition and thus exhibit promise for assimilation.

A Turn-of-the-Century Catch 22

In spite of their designation as "good" Indians, the Pueblo people were still subject to economic, cultural and religious oppression, which was codified by federal Indian policy and encouraged by Anglos who had economic interests in the Southwest. As was previously discussed, Blumenschein's visualization of the Pueblo people in "A

⁸⁵ No author is listed. The text was likely written by a *Harper's Weekly* editor.

⁸⁶ Ernest L. Blumenschein, "'Wards of the Nation- Their First Vacation from School' (illustration)," *Harper's Weekly* 43, no. 2217 (June 17 1899).

Strange Mixture” was impacted by a construction of Indianness perpetuated by the region’s tourist industry. The white female tourists in frames nine and eleven demonstrate to the viewer that exotic Pueblo ceremonials are safe for Anglo tourists. The Pueblo Types in frame ten articulate a similar message. It is significant that the only Pueblo figures to engage the viewer are the woman and the child. The feminine and infantine gazes were intended to have a pacifying effect.⁸⁷

The full-length Pueblo woman in frame ten, in particular, is an iconic type that was prevalent in popular culture and tourist ephemera (fig. 1.20) since the second half of the nineteenth century.⁸⁸ The decorative pot on the woman’s head and the elaborate blanket draped around her body imply a connection to the arts. These objects were intended as signs of civility. They were also intended to highlight the picturesque primitiveness of the Pueblo people. As historian Ruth B. Phillips explains, by the mid-nineteenth century, detached objects operated as a shorthand system for the signification of Indianness.⁸⁹ By the turn-of-the-century, Pueblo pottery was fast becoming a metaphor for the female body and a metonym for the Pueblo people.⁹⁰ As anthropologist

⁸⁷ Likewise, in John Sloan’s paintings of American Indian ceremonials, the figures who engage the audience also tend to be woman and/or children.

⁸⁸ Babcock thoroughly and provocatively explores the history of this imagery and its meaning in a colonial context. Babcock, "Mudwomen and Whitemen: A Meditation of Pueblo Potteries and the Politics of Representation," 253-80.

⁸⁹ Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from The Northeast, 1700-1900* (Seattle and Montreal: University of Washington Press and Montreal, Quebec McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 93.

⁹⁰ James Clifford sheds light on metonymic presentations, focusing on the context of museum collection and classification, in which objects made by the Other are often cut out of specific contexts and are made to stand for abstract wholes. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 220. In Molly Lee’s work on the aboriginal peoples of Alaska, she effectively applies the post-structuralist notion of metonymic representation to her anthropological findings. See Molly Lee, "Tourism and Taste in Alaska," in *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*, ed. Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher Steiner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 268.

Sylvia Rodríguez argues, conquest and colonization typically entail the objectification and dehumanization of subject populations.⁹¹

According to anthropologist Marta Weigle, along train routes throughout the Southwest, American Indians were “displayed, framed as technicians, craftspeople, curiosities, trophies, and/or scientific objects.”⁹² For instance, visitors to the Santa Fe Railway’s Indian Building at the Albuquerque depot first encountered ethnographic displays inside the building’s doors.⁹³ This museum then filtered visitors into a room in which real Indian craftspeople were creating such objects. Finally, eager tourists found themselves in a salesroom where they could buy objects similar to the ones just seen in the previous rooms. Weigle notes that the building leads the visitor through a chain of authenticity, which climaxes in a purchase that legitimates and commemorates this experience. With this elaborate staging, the company turned actual Indian peoples into atmospheric devices. Pueblo women were encouraged by railway officials to linger at train depots in order to greet incoming visitors and to sell their authentic goods, as is pictured in numerous turn-of-the-century postcards (fig. 1.21).

Two of the dominant subtexts found in “A Strange Mixture” and “Swift Arrow’s Tale”—assimilation and ethnic tourism—are contradictory. At the turn of the century, assimilation was widely embraced as the most humane way to deal with the Indian problem. Those in favor of assimilation, including Blumenschein, singled out the Pueblo people as an example of the native population’s potential for Civilization. In contrast, the

⁹¹ Sylvia Rodríguez, “Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Towards a Sociology of the Art Colony,” *Journal of Anthropological Research* 45, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 93.

⁹² See Weigle, “From Desert to Disney World: The Santa Fe Railway and the Fred Harvey Company Display the Indian Southwest,” 115.

⁹³ The symbiotic relationship between the Santa Fe Railway and artists in New Mexico, and the proliferation of the Pueblo maiden and pot imagery, is more thoroughly discussed in chapter four.

tourist industry in the Southwest was reliant on constructing the Pueblo people as Other, albeit as a non-threatening, approachable Other. Paradoxically, if the Pueblo were to become civilized Americans, then the tourist industry in the Southwest was likely to crumble.

While those artists who challenged assimilation and politicked for the preservation of American Indian culture in the 1920s were genuinely concerned about oppressive federal laws, preservationists often had a vested interest in maintaining the Pueblo people's difference. Not unlike the tourist industry, which preservationists tended to abhor, the cultural production of New Mexico's intelligentsia often relied on this difference.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Blumenschein's view towards assimilation shifted in the mid-1910s. He was among those artists in the 1920s who advocated for the preservation of Indian culture.

Chapter 2

“A Rapturous Defense”:

Marsden Hartley’s New Mexico Essays and Political Activism in New Mexico

I of course enjoyed the Indians and their dances and saw I think nearly all of the Indian dances, both at Taos and those all round Santa Fe. The Indian was not so popular as he is now among the esthetes and it was not always so easy to see the dances—that is you were let in if you were properly recommended. I wrote at the time a rapturous defense of the Indians and their dances which was published in ‘Art and Archaeology’—which seemed to be liked—chiefly by the archaeologists who were fighting the government—for there was a movement on then to stop the dances. This defense came out in a book called “Adventures in the Arts” with a preface by Waldo Frank.”

-- Marsden Hartley, *Somehow a Past*¹

When reflecting on his experiences in New Mexico in his autobiography, Marsden Hartley singled out his 1921 essay, “The Red Man,” as being particularly important. Characterized by the artist as a “rapturous defense of the Indians and their dances,” this essay was the opening chapter of his first book, *Adventures in the Arts* (1921).² The text had previously appeared in a January 1920 issue of *Art and Archaeology* as, “Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea For American Aesthetics,”³ and was one of six published essays in which Hartley meditated on the aesthetic and cultural significance of Pueblo Indian ceremonial dance.

¹ Marsden Hartley, *Somehow A Past: The Autobiography of Marsden Hartley*, ed. Susan Elizabeth Ryan (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1995), 97. Hartley’s idiosyncratic syntax and use of punctuation often make his writings difficult to read.

² In the *Adventures in the Arts* essay, the last two paragraphs of the *Art and Archeology* version were removed. Otherwise, the essays are exactly the same. Marsden Hartley, *Adventures in the Arts: Informal Chapters on Painters, Vaudeville, and Poets* (New York: Boni and Liveright, Inc., 1921).

³ Marsden Hartley, “Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics,” *Art and Archaeology* 9 (January 1920): 7-14.

While not traditionally thought of as a politically engaged artist, Hartley participated in the dialogue surrounding the negative effects of American Indian assimilation. This chapter will discuss Hartley's essays, published between 1918 and 1922, which were written in New Mexico, or address subject matter related to his time in the region, with particular attention paid their political subtexts. His New Mexico essays are important because they are among the earliest published pleas for an appreciation of Indian culture. They are politicized documents that reveal the artist's involvement with activism for Pueblo Indian civil rights in the late 1910s. They also speak to an interwar preoccupation with cultural nationalism and primitivism among the intelligentsia.

The American Avant-Garde and Hartley's New Mexico Period

Hartley arrived in the Santa Fe, New Mexico, on June 12, 1918. Depending on his audience, the artist gave different reasons for leaving the East Coast for an extended stay in the Southwest.⁴ In *Somehow A Past*, Hartley claimed that a rich patroness, who wanted private art lessons, drew him to the region.⁵ When the lessons fell through, the woman instead bought a large pastel from the artist, allowing him to remain in New Mexico. Hartley, at another point, told the editor of *Poetry* magazine that he needed peace and quiet, and a place to recover his health.⁶ Likewise, in his letters to Alfred

⁴ Biographic information about Hartley's career has been well-documented. See Barbara Haskell, *Marsden Hartley* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, in association with New York University Press, 1980), Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser, ed., *Marsden Hartley* (New Haven and London: Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum of Art in association with Yale University Press, 2002), Townsend Ludington, *Marsden Hartley: The Biography of an American Artist* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), Gail Scott, *Marsden Hartley* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1988). Thus, my biographical discussion focuses on Hartley's participation in radical intellectual circles and his time in New Mexico.

⁵ Hartley, *Somehow A Past: The Autobiography of Marsden Hartley*, 96.

⁶ Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 57.

Stieglitz from Maine, written in the months before he left for Santa Fe, Hartley explained that he sought a place that would vitalize his soul and re-spark his creative impulses:

I want to get down out of here and really get on my way to the southwest for in that lies the only salvation that is in evidence for me...I know that the only thin[g] left for me in the country is that which I hope to find down there, for I know now once and for all, that there is something deadly in the east, there is something sapping the vitality of one in all this lethargy of the soul that settles down on one here....I have got to go where I can see another face in nature, where she shall reveal [to] me at least one more facet of her involved countenance. People have done me out of my belief, perhaps nature will restore the proper sense, by revealing new sublimities. I rely on that utterly.⁷

Hartley held the East responsible for his artistic slumber. Going West and getting back to “untouched” nature, he believed, would awaken him.

At the Santa Fe train depot, Hartley was met by his old friend, socialite patroness and writer, Mabel Dodge Luhan, whose Taos compound he stayed at through October of 1918.⁸ This was not the first time Hartley had found himself embedded in Dodge Luhan’s circle. Hartley lived in Europe on and off between 1912 and 1915, and had first met Dodge Luhan through Gertrude Stein while he was in Paris (1912-1913).⁹ Between

⁷ Awkward sentence structure original to text. Marsden Hartley to Alfred Stieglitz, May 24, 1918, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531.

⁸ In 1918, Mabel’s last name was Sterne, the namesake of her husband, sculptor Maurice Sterne. Mabel changed her name with each of her four marriages. For the sake of clarity, throughout this dissertation, I will refer to Mabel as “Dodge Luhan.” Mabel Gason, was born into a wealthy banking family from Buffalo, New York. In 1900, at the age of twenty-one, she married her first husband, becoming Mabel Evans. Carl Evan died in a hunting accident in 1903, leaving Mabel to raise their son. By 1905, Mabel had taken a second husband, Edwin Dodge, an unhappy union that ended in divorce. In 1916, the artist Maurice Sterne became Mabel’s third husband. It was at the urging of Maurice that Mabel traveled to New Mexico in 1916, where she met Taos Pueblo Indian, Tony Lujan. When Maurice returned to New York, Mabel declined to join him, and settled in Taos. Soon after meeting, Mabel and Tony separated from their partners and were eventually married.

⁹ Hartley’s first trip to Paris was funded with the help of Alfred Stieglitz. On April 11, 1912, Hartley arrived in Paris, and, with the exception of a three week trip to Berlin, he painted in the city through May of 1913. On May 17, 1913, Hartley arrived in Berlin where he lived until November of 1913. On November 15, 1913, Hartley returned to New York until he could secure funds to return to Europe the following year. After a brief stop in London, by April 30, 1914, Hartley was back in Berlin where he remained until December 1915. Due to the outbreak of World War I, Hartley found it impossible to remain in Germany, and reluctantly returned to New York City, arriving on December 11, 1915 on the *S.S. Rotterdam*. See Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 26-45.

the winter of 1913 and spring of 1914, when Hartley returned to New York City in order to exhibit his work, he was a frequent participant in Dodge Luhan's Greenwich Village salon.¹⁰ Hartley, once again, departed for Europe in April of 1913, and stayed in Berlin until December of 1915, when the First World War forced him to repatriate. Upon his return to New York City, Hartley was again affiliated with Dodge Luhan's circle of artists, writers, and activists. In February of 1916, Hartley stayed with Dodge Luhan and her current husband, Maurice Sterne, at Finney Farm, their country home near Croton-on-Hudson.¹¹ Hartley's interactions with Dodge Luhan made an indelible mark on him. In *Somehow a Past*, he devoted a lengthy passage to his experiences at her Greenwich Village salon, commenting that she and her "entourage" were "full of life." In particular, he befriended John "Jack" Reed, whom he described as a "wonderful human being."¹² In 1916, Reed invited Hartley to rent his house in Provincetown, a haven for radically minded New York intellectuals, many of whom had been part of the Greenwich salon. In Provincetown, Hartley worked and socialized among this group of radicals, political reformers, and bohemians, which included Maurice Sterne, William Zorach, Max Eastman, Hutchings Hapgood, and Leo Stein.¹³

¹⁰ Ibid., 34.

¹¹ The artist, described as difficult by even his closest friends, overstayed his welcome at Finney Farm and was eventually asked to leave. Hartley's biographer, Townsend Ludington, writes that Dodge Luhan had become annoyed with the artist because there was "something solitary and unassimilable" in him. She recalled, "It hurt me more to have him there than to write him he must go!" Dodge Luhan quoted in Ludington, *Marsden Hartley: The Biography of an American Artist*, 131. At one point, Dodge Luhan characterized Hartley as a "gnarled New England spinsterman." Hartley quoted in Susan Elizabeth Ryan's "Introduction" for Hartley, *Somehow A Past: The Autobiography of Marsden Hartley*, 3. Nevertheless, Hartley was subsequently invited to stay with Dodge Luhan in Taos. In 1939, he also stayed with Dodge Luhan's son, John Evans, and his wife, Catherine Evans, in Maine. Ludington, *Marsden Hartley: The Biography of an American Artist*, 11.

¹² Hartley, *Somehow A Past: The Autobiography of Marsden Hartley*, 93.

¹³ Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 44. As early as 1907, Hartley was involved in avant-garde circles in which art production, philosophy, and politics intersected. According to Barbara Haskell, in 1907

Through his contact with the Dodge Luhan salon, Hartley befriended a number of important American leftists and activists. In *Somehow a Past*, Hartley recalled the volatile political environment of the Progressive era. He explained that Reed and Dodge Luhan were deeply involved in the famous Patterson strike and staged a pageant; but then, as he often did, the artist pleaded ignorance about the significance of the cause. About the pageant and Reed's involvement, Hartley claimed, "the meaning of which I never did know for I didn't know people for their ideas—any more than I do now. I knew them just for themselves—and painters and poets never thought of things of action I fear at the time."¹⁴ Hartley, continued, "The winter ended—a bit too theatrically I seem to recall, for Bill Haywood had come to talk [at the salon] and the next day the papers were full of the 'Big Sweep' or the exact headline was 'Society Matron Entertains Anarchists, etc.'"¹⁵

The Patterson strike of 1913 was a highly publicized protest by silk mill workers in Patterson, New Jersey, who demanded an eight hour work day and better working conditions. Hoping to publicize the event and to win public sympathy for the strikers, Dodge Luhan and John Reed organized the Patterson Strike Pageant, a theatrical event in which the silk workers reenacted the strike on stage at Madison Square Garden.¹⁶ On the opening night of the pageant, art historian Rebecca Zurier writes that 15,000 people

Hartley was invited to Green Acres, conceived as a place where artists, theologians, and social activists could exchange philosophies. Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 13.

¹⁴ Hartley, *Somehow A Past: The Autobiography of Marsden Hartley*, 93.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 94. Big Bill Haywood, an American socialist and prominent figure in the American labor movement, was the founder and leader of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Haywood was one of Dodge Luhan's most controversial guests. His presence at her salon underscores the how radical the salon was at the time.

¹⁶ Rebecca Zurier, *Art for The Masses: A Radical Magazine and Its Graphics, 1911-1917* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 107. Zurier writes that Reed persuaded his friend Robert Edmond Jones to design the sets, which John Sloan painted. Among the other members of the New York intelligentsia who helped with the pageant were Dolly Sloan, Margaret Sanger, Alexander Berkman, Walter Lippmann, and Hutchins Hapgood.

watched a cast of workers recreate the walkout, the mass meetings, the picket lines, the assault by police that had led to the death of one worker, and a funeral procession involving pallbearers carrying a coffin followed by 1,000 workers who marched through the audience onto the stage.¹⁷ It is unusual enough for Hartley to have been in the Dodge Luhan circle and not to have known the details of the pageant—the event occupied the attention of a number of his close friends for a lengthy period of time—but the claim is even more remarkable considering Jack Reed was arrested as a result of his participation in the strike, which intensified the media blitz surrounding the conflict. The strike, Reed's arrest, and the pageant were front page news nationwide for the duration of the strike.¹⁸ Throughout his life, Hartley professed to be politically naive, maintaining that he knew little about the tumultuous political events that swirled around him in spite of being embedded in politicized circles.¹⁹

When Hartley arrived in Taos in 1918, he again found himself in the company politically engaged intellectuals. Hartley was initially enthusiastic about Taos, and considered the landscape and its Native population to be the artistic and intellectual stimulus for which he had hoped. Nevertheless, as was typical of Hartley, he soon turned

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ A slew of articles about the strike and pageant can be found among Dodge Luhan's papers at Yale's Beinecke Library. For instance, see Rose Wattson, "The Patterson Strike from the Worker's Point of View," *New York Times* (Sunday, June 1, 1913). Mabel Dodge Luhan Papers, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 196.

¹⁹ Hartley maintained that he was politically unaware, whether involved in the Dodge Luhan's Greenwich salon, living in Weimar or Nazi Germany, or embedded in anti-assimilationist circles in New Mexico. Art historian Donna Cassidy writes that Hartley scholars tend to reinforce this construction describing him as oblivious to political realities. Cassidy notes, "By placing Hartley in the role of mythic modernist, art historians have thus placed him outside society: Hartley is isolated, therefore his work is too." Donna Cassidy, "The Invisibility of Race in Modernist Representation: Marsden Hartley's North Atlantic Folk," in *Seeing High and Low: Representing Social Conflict in American Visual Culture*, ed. Patricia Johnston (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 256.

sour towards the small mountain town.²⁰ Taos was too green, too mountainous, there were no mesas, it was too much like the East. Most irritating to Hartley was the Taos Society of Artists, who he impetuously described as, “impossible, dreadful painters, who are just nasty tongued, and talking all the time about someone.”²¹ In November of 1918, Hartley decided that he had to get out of this “mean little place.”²² Hartley, ever the hypochondriac, later noted that he was happy to leave since influenza had hit Taos just after he left. Taos—its art and its air—had become doubly infectious.²³ After leaving Taos, Hartley spent several bitter cold months in Santa Fe before fleeing to a resort in Pasadena, California, where he made contact with the area’s literary community. By June of 1919, Hartley had once again settled in Santa Fe. Before having to suffer through another unpleasant winter, in the late fall of 1919, the peripatetic artist returned to New York.

Dodge Luhan provided Hartley with his first contact with Pueblo Indians. The patroness often invited residents of Taos Pueblo to perform for her guests.²⁴ She also

²⁰ Throughout his life, Hartley was an artist on the move. Hartley met each new location with starry-eyed enthusiasm, reveling in the newness of landscapes and cultures foreign to him. As the newness of each place faded, so did Hartley’s enthusiasm for it, as is apparent from reading his letters to Alfred Stieglitz from Paris, Bermuda, New York City, Gloucester, Mexico, and even Maine. His long, effusive, egocentric letters, which quickly turn from agonizing to whining, often seem performative, if not disingenuous. For instance, see the following letters from Marsden Hartley to Alfred Stieglitz in Yale’s Beinecke Library, YCAL MSS 85: July 30, 1912 (box 22, folder 524), January 18, 1917 (box 22, folder 530), February 1, 1917 (box 22, folder 530).

²¹ Hartley to Stieglitz, July 20, 1918, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531.

²² Ibid.

²³ Many Hartley scholars claim that he left Taos due to an influenza epidemic. A letter from Hartley to Stieglitz suggests that the epidemic hit after Hartley had already left. Hartley wrote, “I am glad to be out of Taos in time, for no sooner had I arrived [in Santa Fe] than flu swept through that place and there has been a death rage of it ever since.” Hartley to Stieglitz, November 20, 1918, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531.

²⁴ In *Edge of Taos Desert*, Mabel recalls the first occasion she held such an event: “I asked Tony to make a dance in the garden and I invited all the Taos people I knew to come to it. I asked them for tea, not for an Indian dance, and the Indians were asked for a dance not for tea!” Mabel Dodge Luhan, *Edge of the Taos Desert: An Escape to Reality* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987, originally published in 1937), 154.

took Hartley to numerous ceremonials at various Pueblos. Dodge Luhan had a cultural and political agenda, one she was known to impose on her guests. In her 1937 memoir, *Edge of Taos Desert: An Escape to Reality*, Dodge Luhan wrote that she was fated to go to New Mexico to “save” the Indian.²⁵ This memoir, written over twenty years after she first arrived in Taos, is mythologizing and self-aggrandizing. Nevertheless, it provides insights into the environment that she cultivated during her first years in Taos and speaks to her particular brand of activism, which was infused with mysticism and self-righteousness. Dodge Luhan’s activities—political, artistic, and cultural—in New Mexico can be understood as framed by an imperative set by her second husband, Maurice Sterne. “Dearest Girl,” Sterne wrote to Dodge Luhan, as she recounted in her memoir:

Do you want an object in life? Save the Indians, their art-culture—reveal it to the world! ...That which Emilie Hapgood and others are doing for the Negroes, you could, if you wanted to, do for the Indians, for you have the entry...and above all, there is somehow a strange relationship between yourself and the Indian.²⁶

Dodge Luhan saw her purpose for being in New Mexico as a combination of social consciousness, self-discovery and spiritual awakening ordained by a higher force. In the memoir, Dodge Luhan described the spiritual purity, wholeness, and authenticity of the Pueblo people, qualities that she saw as articulated in the pulsating rhythms of their ceremonials. Her impressions of Pueblo culture were tied to her critiques of white society. Her perspective, in the eyes of many of her guests, was legitimated by her intimate “friendship” with Antonio (Tony) Lujan, a Taos Pueblo Indian, who later became her fourth husband. Dodge Luhan’s perceptions about the meaning and

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., xi.

importance of Pueblo culture influenced how her guests understood and constructed Pueblo Indians in their texts and images.

The “Secret Dance File” and Suppression of Pueblo Ceremonials in the 1910s

After the First World War, New Mexico became the meeting ground for America’s artistic vanguard, many of whom were in search of place where they could escape the ills of industrialization. Dodge Luhan was a major catalyst for bringing modernists to New Mexico.²⁷ Since she arrived in the region in 1916, she proselytized to her friends about region’s potential for spiritual rejuvenation. As she spent more time in Taos and with Tony Lujan, she became increasingly concerned about the religious and cultural oppression of Pueblo Indians.²⁸

As was discussed in chapter one, those in favor of assimilation hoped that Indians would vanish into the body politic as acculturated Americans. To achieve this goal, assimilationist policy focused on land allotment and education. Many Native peoples believed that their religion was organically connected with the land; ceremonials reinforced a people’s ties with a particular place and were seen as essential to the health of a tribe.²⁹ Fully aware of this connection, those in favor of assimilation also

²⁷ For a discussion of Dodge Luhan’s desire to create a modernist utopia in Taos, see Lois Palken Rudnick, *Utopian Vistas: The Mabel Dodge Luhan House and the American Counterculture* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996).

²⁸ New Mexico attracted a large number of independent women, many of whom had activist backgrounds and had forged professional or social reputations independent of their fathers or husbands. Many of these women had fought for women’s suffrage and were involved in issues of social welfare before World War I. Among them was Dodge Luhan, writer Mary Austin and journalist Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant. Austin and Shepley Sergeant were prominent figures in the preservationist movement. Flannery Burke, “An Artists’ Home: Gender and the Santa Fe Culture Center Controversy,” *Journal of the Southwest* 46, no. 2 (2004): 351+.

²⁹ Holm writes that Native dances are connected to “the changing seasons, to floral and faunal changes, or even the movement of the sun, the moon, the planets and the stars seen from the particular

aggressively tried to suppress American Indian religious expression. By the 1910s, there was a growing consciousness among the public that assimilationist policy was working towards a new form of Indian extinction, “culturecide.” “Giving up land,” historian Tom Holm writes, “meant the death of the tribal relationship with the spirit world, the disappearance of entire belief and value systems, and the loss of all tribal knowledge.”³⁰

In the 1910s, members of the New Mexican intelligentsia were disquieted over policy makers’ attempts to suppress Indian dances. Around the time Hartley arrived in the region, the federal government’s campaign to ban Pueblo ceremonials, in particular, had recently intensified. Hartley’s essays, in which he supported Indian dance, were penned during the same years that controversy was erupting over a series of government-sponsored investigations into allegations of immorality at Pueblo ceremonials.

The “Religious Crimes Code” of 1883, a Bureau of Indian Affairs’ policy, encouraged officials within the Indian service to prohibit ceremonial practices that might be contrary to accepted Christian Standards.³¹ Indian superintendents nationwide were authorized to use force and imprisonment to halt any Indian religious practices that they deemed to be immoral, subversive, or an impediment to the government’s “civilizing” policies. Legally justified by this code, in 1915 and in 1920, Indian superintendents collected affidavits from American Indian, Hispanic, and Anglo residents of New Mexico and Arizona, who testified to the lasciviousness of Pueblo ceremonials. These affidavits were sent to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and became popularly known as the

perspective within a tribal homeland.” Tom Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 38.

³⁰ Ibid., 24.

³¹ It was not until 1978, when the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) was passed, that Americans Indians were afforded the protection of freedom of religion.

“Secret Dance Files.”³² The documents garnered this name for two reasons. First, in the cover letter for the 1915 documents, Pueblo ceremonials were referred to as “secret dances.”³³ Second, in the cover letter for the 1920 documents, which were filed in 1921, it was suggested that affidavits be held under seal by the commissioner due to the “unprintable and unspeakable immoralities” they address.³⁴ Nevertheless, motivated by concern and/or by the documents’ sensationalism, the files were copied and unofficially circulated. By 1923, they had been read by a wide audience.

The first investigation was undertaken by P.T. Lonergan, Superintendent of Pueblo Day-Schools. In 1915, when Lonergan sent his findings to E.B. Merritt, the Assistant Commissioner of Office of Indian Affairs, he wrote:

Dancing is indulged in to a very harmful extent in practically all of the pueblos, but particularly those of the northern district formerly under Santa Fe. The dancers take up much valuable time and give the Caciques great influence over the other member of the tribe and the secret dances are immoral and should be stopped by force. Some of the most disgusting practices are indulged in, the particulars being so bestial as to prohibit their description.

The only policy to pursue is to entirely prohibit these dances, and if necessary destroy the kivas or estufas, where the ministers of the pagan religion induce the others to take part in them.³⁵

³² These files are now located in the Smithsonian Institution’s National Anthropological Archives. For a discussion of these documents see Margaret D. Jacobs, “‘Making Savages of Us All’: White Women, Pueblo Indians, and the Controversy over Indian Dances in the 1920s,” *Frontiers: A Journal of Women’s Studies* 17, no. 3 (1996): 178, Lawrence C. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 301.

³³ “Documentary Evidence establishing similar grossly immoral Practices among the Pueblo Indians—As Reported by Commissioner Lonergan to the Indian Office in 1915,” National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Manuscript 7070.

³⁴ “Affidavits of Indians residing at Polacca (First Mesa), Arizona—including one from Second Mesa—Regarding the Moral Character of the Hopi Ceremonials Dances,” National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Manuscript 7070.

³⁵ “Documentary Evidence establishing similar grossly immoral Practices among the Pueblo Indians—As Reported by Commissioner Lonergan to the Indian Office in 1915,” National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Manuscript 7070..

The report that Lonergan sent to the assistant commissioner was far more subdued than the signed protests that he had gathered from local Anglo and Hispanic farmers.

Marcario Garcia's October 29, 1915 letter most transparently sums up these documents:

I have seen for twenty years the Indians of Jemez and Sia [sic] pueblos dancing—fucking animals—like burros and cows and horses. I have seen this same thing in Jemez and Sia pueblos, Indian men and women also. This year I went to Sia, close to the church, the Indians did not see me, and I saw the Indians fucking like goats, burros and horses fucking—many men and women.³⁶

This passage captures the sensationalism of the 1915 testimonials, the majority of which were gathered from Hispanic ranchers in the region. Upon reading the report, it becomes clear that the complaints were only partially motivated by religious factors, Indian ceremonials being perceived as an affront to Catholicism. What seemed to most annoy those who submitted complains was that every time a Pueblo held a ceremonial, the public roads through the Pueblo's lands were blocked to all non-Indian traffic for anywhere from an hour to days.

The 1915 statements are far more boorish than the "official" affidavits taken by E.M. Sweet, the lead examiner for the 1920 investigation into accusations of Pueblo immorality.³⁷ Nonetheless, the message of both set of documents was the same—ceremonials were vehicle through which Indians act on their sexual urges, resulting in adultery, pedophilia, and promiscuous sex. In the 1920 affidavits, Indians are not simply described as "beast-like," numerous witnesses testified to the fact that Indians performed sexual acts with burros during the ceremonials.³⁸

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ This investigation was sponsored by the BIA. The affidavits were taken under oath in the presence of a witness, and were then notarized.

³⁸ Siventwa, a Hopi Indian from the village of Hano of First Mesa, and a Christian convert reported to E.M. Sweet, "At Sichomovi Village I saw a clown commit sexual intercourse with a female burro." "Affidavits of Indians residing at Polacca (First Mesa), Arizona—including one from Second Mesa—

The 1920 affidavits record statements of Anglo missionaries, Hispanic members of the community, as well as “New” or progressive Indians, most of whom had been educated at white boarding schools and were Christian.³⁹ A September 1920 letter from Evelyn Bentley to E.M. Sweet is a typical of the accounts of Indian improprieties. About a ceremonial dance at the Hopi Indian Reservation at Oraibi, Arizona, Bentley wrote:

Two clowns dressed as women came into the court. Their skirts were very short, not over eleven inches long. The men clowns would go up to them and try to pull the skirts down a little. The clowns who stood behind the women would try to pull the skirts down in the back but while doing so the skirts would flip up in the front. Then the clowns who stood in the front would stoop down and look up under the skirt as if looking at a woman’s private organs...⁴⁰

In keeping with many of the sworn affidavits taken by Sweet, Bentley’s account focused on the behavior of the Koshare, or sacred clowns. She implied that the performances of the Koshare were acts of public indecency, at best, and simulated sexual assault, at worst. Blinded by their bias against non-Christian rites, those who submitted testimonials often missed the irony of the Koshare’s performances. The Koshare did not mirror Pueblo behavior, as the affidavits suggested, but rather provided humorous social commentary that often skewered what they understood as inappropriate behavior among Anglos, Hispanics, or their own people. As writer and staunch 1920s preservationist, Mary

Regarding the Moral Character of the Hopi Ceremonials Dances,” National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Manuscript 7070.

³⁹ Most of the testimonials taken from American Indians in the region do not substantiate claims of sexual deviance. Instead, these documents tended to focus on the impropriety of ceremonial dress—e.g. men wearing nothing but cloth covering their “sex-organs” and women lifting up their skirts to dance—which were not in keeping with Christian rules of decorum. The Native testimonials also attempted to debunk the Hopi Snake Dance, in which Hopi priests held snakes in their mouths as part of the ceremonial dance. Many of the affidavits attested to the fact that the venom of the snakes was removed before the dance, and the snakes’ teeth were filed down. These statements were used to prove that Indian religious rites were based on trickery.

⁴⁰ Statement of Evelyn Bentley (September 30, 1920), “Affidavits of Indians residing at Polacca (First Mesa), Arizona—including one from Second Mesa—Regarding the Moral Character of the Hopi Ceremonials Dances,” National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Manuscript 7070. Bentley’s statement is part of a letter that she sent to the lead investigator. It was not considered to be an “official” affidavit because it was not notarized nor did she give her testimony in front of a witness.

Austin explained, “the social function of the [clowns] is to keep the community order, with whips of laughter. The humorous interludes often take the form of dramatic skits based upon the weakness and misadventures of the villagers.”⁴¹

The 1915 and 1920 investigations are but two examples of the federal government’s attempts to justify the religious persecution of American Indians in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Holm writes that the 1918 Board of Commissioners of Indian Affairs’ *Annual Report* complained that not only were ceremonial practices still intact, despite policy makers’ best efforts, there were reports of “revivals,” lascivious returns to paganism.⁴² In an attempt to quell ceremonial practices, the board pandered to hysterical patriotism stimulated by the First World War.⁴³ In what can be construed as a desperate measure, the *Annual Report* claimed that there was “good reason to believe that a considerable number of these Indians are covertly disloyal to the United States and have been victims of pro-German propaganda.”⁴⁴ Indian ceremonials were done to subvert the will of the government; they were not simply un-civilized and un-American, they were *anti-American*. Thus, it was the BIA’s patriotic duty to break up these “hotbeds of sedition.” The commissioner implored Indian agents across the country to stop the dances and to keep an eye on those artists, anthropologists, activists, etc., who showed an interest in preserving them.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Mary Austin quoted in Jacobs, “‘Making Savages of Us All’: White Women, Pueblo Indians, and the Controversy over Indian Dances in the 1920s,” 187. Original quote from *Lands of Journey’s Ending* (1924), 258

⁴² Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era*, 184.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Board of Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1918 *Annual Report* quoted in Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 185.

The affidavits that comprise the Secret Dance File and the BIA's 1918 *Annual Report* capture the intensity of the biases against American Indian religious expressions. In reading them, one has better appreciation for how progressive were Hartley's essays that celebrated Pueblo ceremonial dance as aesthetically, spiritually, and culturally valuable.

Hartley's New Mexico Essays

Hartley would have read about the campaign to suppress Pueblo ceremonials in local newspapers, and was exposed to the conflict through Dodge Luhan and Edgar Lee Hewett, anthropologist and director of the Museum of New Mexico.⁴⁶ The artists, writers, and activists who Dodge Luhan encouraged to visit Taos often joined in the fight against assimilation. For instance, as early as 1919, she was pleading with social activist, John Collier (the future Commissioner of Indian Affairs), to come to New Mexico to politick for the Pueblo Indians, which he eventually did.⁴⁷ Dodge Luhan encouraged her friends and guests to interpret Pueblo Indians in a way which would celebrate their cultural contributions and promote preservation. Dodge Luhan helped to mobilize the intelligentsia in Taos, while Hewett rallied Santa Fe based artists, writers, and anthropologists to support the anti-assimilationist cause. Indeed, it was likely the influence of both Dodge Luhan and Hewett that encouraged Hartley to pen numerous essays about the importance of Indian ceremonials.

⁴⁶ In order to draw artists to Santa Fe, Hewett gave them free studio space at the Museum of New Mexico. Among those who took advantage of this offer were Robert Henri, John Sloan and Marsden Hartley.

⁴⁷ Collier first arrived in New Mexico in 1920. He became involved with political activism in the region in 1922, with the outbreak of the Bursum bill controversy.

Between 1918 and 1922, Hartley published seven essays and one poem in which he meditated on different aspects of his experiences in New Mexico. Six of these essays offer interpretations of Pueblo ceremonials. In them, Hartley pleaded for greater sensitivity towards what he deemed to be the Indian's most important aesthetic contribution, dance. These essays will be addressed in the sequence in which they were first published in order to discuss their multifarious meanings and to contextual Hartley's shifting attitudes towards Pueblo ceremonials.

"Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama" is the first essay that Hartley published about his experiences in New Mexico. Printed in a February 1918 issue of *The Dial*, and reprinted in *El Palacio* in February of 1919, the text describes a number of ceremonials that Hartley had witnessed during his first months in Taos.⁴⁸ This essay was informed by a complex mix of aesthetic and political ideas, many of which were repeated and/or more fully worked out in his later essays.

Whether writing about the Corn Dance or the Dance of Mercy, in "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," Hartley declared Indian ceremonials to be an authentic aesthetic expression because he understood them as being rooted their makers' history and yet still timeless and universally significant.⁴⁹ To this effect, Hartley wrote:

In their dance is the tribal aesthetic expression of all these dignified significances; their dance is the gesture of the body which gives the meaning of the centuries, and their songs are the self-created melodies which they have sung to their deities for these thousands of years. They have completed their own civilization with a

⁴⁸ Marsden Hartley, "Tribal Esthetics," *The Dial* LXV, no. 777 (November 16, 1918), Marsden Hartley, "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," *El Palacio* VI, no. 4 (February 8, 1919): 53-55.

⁴⁹ Assessing the meaning of various Pueblo ceremonials and symbols with any specificity is difficult. Pueblo informants tend not to reveal sensitive points of dogma, and if they do, it is typically understood that such information will not be published. Lifelong participation in ceremonial activities is necessary for a valid understanding of the religious beliefs of each Pueblo. Byron Harvey III, "An Overview of Pueblo Religion," in *New Perspectives on the Pueblos*, ed. Alfonso Ortiz (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972), 213-14.

beautifully conceived esthetic, and out of this esthetic they have built a conduct that fits the day and the hour and the moment beyond even the reaches of infinity.⁵⁰

For Hartley, the power of ceremonial dance came from the Pueblo's history, as well as from the land. Hartley rooted Indian identity in their profound and genuine connection to the nature.

Hartley supported Indian dance both for artistic and political reasons. In this first essay, he countered assimilationist critiques of Indian ceremonials, emphatically arguing:

[Indian dance] is an organized rhythmic conception and esthetic composition, spirit and body harmonized to symbolize certain laws, faiths, even creeds, since all this tends towards the quality of worship in their so ardent desires. Thus the dance is not to these people a form of gay exercise; it is wholly a bodily conception of a beautifully lofty spiritual idea. It is the harmonization of every muscle of the body towards a rhythmical expression of the various ideas that inspire them—war, peace, fruition, among the themes...they are profoundly religious first of all and last of all and admit of no levity of intention or laxity of devotion.⁵¹

Indian ceremonials were thus presented as a dignified form of aesthetic expression. Pueblo dance, Hartley demanded, was not concerned with the profane, with amusement or sexual desire, but rather was a manifestation of the people's organic spiritualism. The essay concludes with a similarly politicized statement. "It is a bit pathetic," Hartley decried, "that a form so useful to them shall be forever nothing but a so-called dance of barbarism to us: that we shall see nothing in their rhythms except an idling of time and a too excessive energetic extravagance."⁵² In contesting the so-called barbarism of the Indian, Hartley challenged nineteenth-century classifications of race, which had informed Blumenschein's 1898 *Harper's Weekly* illustration and article. Hartley's declaration of the purity and civility of Indian ceremonials was repeated throughout in the next decade

⁵⁰ Hartley, "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," 55.

⁵¹ Ibid.: 53.

⁵² Ibid.: 55.

by the intellectual-activists who challenged federal policies that aimed to curtail Indian religious practices on moral grounds.

Another passage in “Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama” reveals Hartley’s concern with assimilationist attacks on Pueblo Indians. The artist only briefly discussed the Corn Dance, the San Gerónimo Feast Day at Taos, and the Hopi Snake Dance, all of which were among the most represented ceremonials by 1910s artists, photographers, and journalists. Curiously, Hartley spent the most ink describing the Dance of Mercy, a performance that lasted just under fifteen minutes. Why would the artist have focused so much attention on a dance that was so short in length and was relatively obscure in Anglo publications? About this dance, Hartley intriguingly wrote:

The pueblos patriotically offered their services for the Red Cross and gave one of their rarest dances on the evening of July 4, at the hour of sunset, certainly one of the most beautiful spectacles, brief though it was, which I have ever witnessed.⁵³

Largely due to their efforts during the First World War, by 1918 the Red Cross had become synonymous with American patriotism.⁵⁴ By calling attention to the patriotism of the Pueblo Indians, Hartley again countered assimilationist attacks on Pueblo civil rights. The same year this essay was published, the previously discussed Indian Affairs’ *Annual Report* labeled Pueblo ceremonials as anti-American.⁵⁵

Indian Affairs was not the only agent to describe Pueblo Indian culture and religion as being detrimental to American ideals. Between the 1880s and 1912, many residents of the New Mexico Territory had fought for U.S. Statehood, which was

⁵³ Ibid.: 53-54.

⁵⁴ In May of 1917, President Woodrow Wilson created within the Red Cross a War Council, entrusted with the duty of responding to the “extraordinary demands which the present war will make upon the Red Cross both in the field and in civilian relief.” Woodrow Wilson quoted in http://www.redcross.org/museum/history/00-19_b.asp. After the war, the organization continued to provide aid to civilians in war-torn countries.

⁵⁵ Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era*, 184.

routinely denied due to the region's dominant population of "mongrel" Mexicans and "heathen" Indians.⁵⁶ A 1905 *New York Times* article by Gilson Willets highlights the popularity of this perspective.⁵⁷ In his editorial, entitled "Most Un-American Part of the United States," Willets defended the U.S. government's refusal to admit New Mexico into the union, and supported his position with "facts gathered during a visit" to the region. Willets documented the "stupidity" of Mexican children and adults alike, who he labeled as "half-breeds," and described the savagery of the Pueblo Indians as being most evident in their annual Christmas dances. Willets claimed that, historically, a young female dancer was forced to spin until she dropped dead. While this "human sacrifice," this perversion of the Christian faith, was no longer practiced, according to Willets, the Pueblo people still participated in an "annual crime," forcing a young girl to be whipped for ceremonial purposes. New Mexico, he concluded, should remain a territory so as not to contaminate the rest America with its culturally and religiously foreign population. Although Hartley wrote "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama" six years after New Mexico was granted Statehood, many non-Indian residents in the region still regarded Indians as a corrupting force in their homeland, as is evident from the Secret Dance Files. Thus, Hartley's focus on the patriotism of the Pueblo dancers can be understood as a way to legitimate their culture as "American," as well as to support their right to the basic civil liberties theoretically granted to American citizens, such as freedom of religion.

⁵⁶ Architectural historian Chris Wilson argues there was an attempt among businessmen and politicians to "Americanize" the New Mexico Territory so that it would be granted Statehood. For instance, references to the Hispanic population in the popular press shifted from "from foreign and derogatory *Mexican* to Romantic and ennobling *Spanish*." See Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 67-74.

⁵⁷ Gilson Willets, "Most Un-American Part of the United States," *New York Times* (August 20, 1905): SM3.

Hartley's next two essays about New Mexico, "Aesthetic Sincerity" and "America as Landscape," were both published in December 1918 issues of *El Palacio* (December 9 and 21, respectively), a regional magazine that held articles written by artists, writers and scientists.⁵⁸ "Aesthetic Sincerity," which addresses Anglo art production in the region, was an attack on the Taos Society of Artists (hereafter, Taos Society). In this essay, Hartley bemoaned the insufficiency of paintings of the region by established Taos painters, deeming their work ineffective due to their reliance on Impressionist-derived aesthetics. This aesthetic choice, he contended, was incompatible with the solidity of the New Mexico landscape.⁵⁹ Hartley chastised, "They will have to realize that the country of the southwest [sic] is essentially a sculptural country."⁶⁰ As will be more thoroughly addressed in chapter three, Hartley considered the Europeanized vision of these academically trained artists to be inauthentic, and thus presented their artistic sensibilities as a foil to his own avant-garde ideas about forging an American art.⁶¹ This article, which can be spiteful in tone, is singularly focused on Anglo art production in the region. It is Hartley's only New Mexico essay that does not mention the region's Pueblo inhabitants.

Hartley opened his next essay, "America as Landscape" (1918), by proclaiming, "I am an American discovering America. I like the position and I like the results," a statement that calls attention to the text's cultural nationalist underpinnings. In the first part of the essay, Hartley repeated his scathing critique of the Taos Society, after which it

⁵⁸ *El Palacio* is the journal of the Museum of New Mexico, the School of American Research, the Archaeological Society of New Mexico, and the Santa Fe Society of the Archaeological Institute. It was an interdisciplinary forum in which artists, writers, and scientists exchanged ideas about southwestern topics.

⁵⁹ Marsden Hartley, "America as Landscape," *El Palacio* 21 (December 21, 1918): 340-42.

⁶⁰ Marsden Hartley, "Aesthetic Sincerity," *El Palacio* V, no. 20 (December 9, 1918): 332.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*: 332-33.

takes a more positive turn. Hartley theorized about a form of American modernist painting, arguing for a localized form of modernism that would celebrate the essence of American places. Pueblo ceremonials were held up as models for achieving such a rooted and authentic form of art.

In “American as Landscape,” Hartley more fully flushed out his ideas concerning the aesthetic purity of Indian “artists,” an idea that was first presented in “Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama.” “Races,” Hartley wrote, “have always invented their own esthetics as a racial necessity.”⁶² Indians made pots, danced, and wove blankets out of “the need for self-expression.” He continued, “[The redman] esthetic then is of the first significance because it is his. We whites have had to borrow quickly because we have no tradition and no racial background.”⁶³ According to Hartley, Anglo-American artists were slaves to the “fetish of Paris,” particularly to Impressionism, which was deemed by Hartley to be the most superficial of styles. In order to create something truly American, they needed to return home to “observe native excellencies.” The War, Hartley explained, had forced American artists to do just that.⁶⁴

In this essay, Hartley elaborated on the idea that American artists should look to the Indian’s process of art creation in order to best paint the American scene. He again envisioned Indian dance as being the most genuine art form in America because it was derived from nature and was passed down naturally from generation to generation. To this effect, Hartley explained:

⁶² Hartley, “America as Landscape,” 341.

⁶³ Ibid. In the titles for his essays, Hartley tended to refer to American Indians as “Red Man.” In the body of these texts he used “redmen,” “redman,” “Indian,” and sometimes “red man.”

⁶⁴ Hartley made a similar statement in “Aesthetic Sincerity,” in which he argued, “The war... has demanded originality of [the painter]. It has sent him back to his own soil to ponder and readjust himself to a conviction of his own and an esthetics of his own.” Hartley, “Aesthetic Sincerity,” 333.

[The Indian's] education is something that he gets out of the sky and the earth and the things that live with them, and he has tradition to prove his method. The white man's educational method is four hectic years in a university of cramming at the prescribed rhetoric that will fit his immediate materialistic case. Get-rich-quick is essentially the American habit, whether materially, spiritually, or intellectually.⁶⁵

Indian dancers were presented as wholly unlike contemporary artists, who were blinded by money and materialism, corrupted by the academy, and disconnected from the American soil.

The fourth and fifth essays that Hartley published about his New Mexico experiences are those with which I opened this chapter. "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics" (hereafter "Red Man Ceremonials"), which appeared in the January 9, 1920 issue of *Art and Archaeology*, was likely written while the artist was still in New Mexico and published in the months after he left. An abridged version of this essay, "The Red Man," appeared in *Adventures in the Arts* (1921), an anthology of essays about painting, literature, and performative art.⁶⁶ In both essays, Hartley repeated a number of ideas that he introduced in "Aesthetic Sincerity" and "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," but with more clarity and specificity. "Red Man Ceremonials" is his most well thought-out statement about the importance of Indian art.

⁶⁵ The awkward sentence structure is original to the text. Hartley, "America as Landscape," 341.

⁶⁶ Marsden Hartley, "The Red Man," in *Adventures in the Arts: Informal Chapters on Painters, Vaudeville, and Poets*. (New York: Boni and Liveright, Inc., 1921), 13-29. By deleting the last two paragraphs of the original text, Hartley shifted the focus of the essay from a cultural nationalist plea for an American aesthetic to an appreciation of Pueblo dance. *Adventure in the Arts* is divided into three sections—America's artistic legacy, the popular/performative arts, and important American writers. While Hartley, at times, referred to Indian ceremonials as the "spectacle of the ages," he placed his discussion of Indian dance in the section devoted to fine artists as opposed to grouping it with the performers celebrated in Part II of the book (e.g. vaudevillians, acrobats, actors, and equestriennes). Nevertheless, in his chapter on vaudeville, Hartley wrote: "I have but recently returned from the vaudeville of the centuries. Watching the kick and glide of very ancient performers. I have spent a year and a half down in the wonderful desert country of the Southwest. I have wearied, however, of the ancient caprice, and turned with great to old passion, vaudeville." Marsden Hartley, *Adventures in the Arts: Informal Chapters on Painters, Vaudeville, and Poets* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1972, originally printed in 1922), 162. Such statements complicate Hartley's celebration of Indian dance.

The essay is comprised of two parts. The first half elaborates on the aesthetics of Indian ceremonials dances. Here, Hartley recorded his observations and impressions of numerous ceremonials throughout the region, going to great lengths to demonstrate his “expert” knowledge of how various dances differentiate and how the same dance was performed differently from Pueblo to Pueblo. The second half of this essay turns to the social and political problems that plague New Mexico’s aboriginal population.

As he did in “Tribal Aesthetic Dance Drama” and “America as Landscape,” in these essays, Hartley again declared Indian ceremonials to be America’s most original and significant form of artistic expression due to the Indian’s ability to interpret his homeland. Hartley explained, “The redman proves to us what native soil will do. Our soil is as beautiful and as distinguished as any in the world. We must therefore be the discoverers of our own wealth as an esthetic factor, and it is the redman that offers us the way to go.”⁶⁷ The “us” to which Hartley was referring is American modernists, who he picked out as the artists with the greatest potential to create a new American art.

The second half of “The Red Man” and “Red Man Ceremonials” comprise Hartley’s most lengthy and decisive attack on assimilationist policy. These essays reference specific problems among the Pueblo people, including cultural oppression, poor health care, and poverty.⁶⁸ In an explicit critique of federal Indian policy, Hartley lamented, the Indian “is already in the process of disappearance from our midst, with the attempt towards assimilation.”⁶⁹ He continued in this vein:

It is with pain that one hears rumors of official disapproval of these rare and invaluable ceremonials... [The Indian] is a rapidly disappearing splendor, despite the

⁶⁷ Hartley, “Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics,” 14.

⁶⁸ For instance, in “Red Man Ceremonials,” Hartley noted that Tesuque Pueblo had been reduced to 75-80 individuals due to an influenza epidemic. Ibid.: 8.

⁶⁹ Ibid.: 12.

possible encouragement of statistics. He needs the dance to make his body live out its natural existence, precisely as he needs the air for his lungs and blood for his veins.⁷⁰

Denial of dance, the Indian's "racial gesture," Hartley contended, would result in eradication. Along this same line of reasoning, Hartley pleaded, "Depriving the redman of his one enviable gesture would be cutting the artery of racial instinct, emptying the beautiful chamber of his soul of its enduring consciousness."⁷¹ According to Hartley, to kill the Indian's dances—his spiritual imperative—was to kill the Indian. Thus, the Indian "needs protection rather than disapproval."⁷²

In conclusion of "Red Man Ceremonials," Hartley's advocacy for Indian ceremonial reaches a fevered pitch. Here, he connected part one and two of the essay; his plea for a unique American aesthetic is linked to the importance of lauding the cultural legacy of Indian ceremonials. Indian dance, he wrote, should be considered an aesthetic gift to American culture:

In the esthetic sense alone, then, we have the redman as a gift. As Americans we should accept the one American genius we possess, with genuine alacrity. We have upon our soil something to show the world as our own, while it lives. To restrict the redman now would be to send him to an unrighteous oblivion.⁷³

Hartley's invocation of "a gift" was a politicized statement that was aimed to counter the tenants of assimilation. This rhetoric was widely adopted by preservationists in the early 1920s, as will be discussed in chapter four.

Two years after Hartley left New Mexico, he published two additional essays about Pueblo dance in *Art and Archaeology* as part of a series entitled, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Red Man." Part I, published in March of 1922, is a meditation on "The

⁷⁰ Ibid.: 11.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.: 12.

⁷³ Ibid.: 13.

Great Corn Ceremony at Santo Domingo.”⁷⁴ Part II, published in September of the same year, concentrates on the “The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos.”⁷⁵ It is significant that these essays were published in 1922, a year marked by controversy over Pueblo lands in New Mexico. In response to the passing of the Bursum Bill—legislation that threatened to transfer title of contested Indian lands to non-Indian claimants—anti-assimilationists in the Southwest flooded publications nationwide with protests.⁷⁶ Most of these articles were focused on the merits of Pueblo art and dance and their beneficial impact on American culture. Due to the timing, *Art and Archeology*’s publication of these essays can be understood as politically motivated. In them, Hartley presented himself as a “devote and everlasting convert to the science of the redman... the redman as artist.”⁷⁷

“The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo” is one of Hartley’s longest and most difficult essays about Indian ceremonials. In keeping with his previous writings, Hartley generally addressed Indian aesthetics, repeating his admiration for the Indian’s innate connection to nature as was performed through dance. About the meaning of the Corn Dance, Hartley wrote that corn was the Pueblo people’s chief subsistence and therefore there were many dances that interpreted the significance of plowing and corn worship. The artist spent several more paragraphs describing the ornamentation of the dancers’ bodies. However, in spite of its title, only a small portion

⁷⁴ Marsden Hartley, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo," *Art and Archaeology* 13 (March 1922): 113-19. In this essay, Hartley “Redman” is used the title, where as in Part II, “The Fiesta of San Geronimo,” the title reads “Red Man.”

⁷⁵ Marsden Hartley, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Red Man, Part II: The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos," *Art and Archaeology* 14 (September 1922): 137-39.

⁷⁶ The Bursum Bill controversy, as it relates to art production in the Southwest, will be discussed in more detail in chapter four.

⁷⁷ Hartley, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo," 113.

of the essay is centered on the Corn Dance; the rest is comprised of comparisons between Anglo and Indian art production.

In this essay, Hartley's invocation of science, descriptions of Pueblo ritual activities, and assessments of modern art range from ambivalent and contradictory to illogical. For instance, in an attempt to explain his use of the term "scientific esthetics," Hartley wrote:

Art without some sort of symbolization is hardly realizable. So it is we have the highly deified and wholly worshipped mechanical era. Electricity is our new found deific principle. Therefore it is science and not religion or art [that] has become our modern necessity. Science has proven so much the imagination can not prove. It is, however, the imaginative principle keeping man as well as the artist alive.⁷⁸

A few paragraphs later, the way he uses the word "science" changes: "So it is that I speak of the esthetic of the redman as the science of the redman because it has been so exceptionally perfected for his own racial and therefore personal needs."⁷⁹ In these two passages, Hartley's appeal to science is inconsistent, as is his notion of instinct or intuition. In the first quote, he made a distinction between intellect and intuition, arguing that the modern mind was scientific in its intellectual approach to the world. Science was the modern age's new art and religion. In the second passage, Hartley used the term science as a loose reference to all creative production as was related to "racial instinct";⁸⁰ Indians' intuitive dances and the white man's intellectual modernist art were both scientific because they were rooted in each group's "race expression."⁸¹

⁷⁸ Ibid.: 117. Hartley's discussion of intellect and intuition is related to his interest in the philosophy of William James. Chapter three more fully explores Hartley's engagement with James.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Hartley, "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," 11.

⁸¹ Hartley, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo," 114.

In “The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo,” Hartley had difficulty deciding whether art of the mechanical age was of positive or negative value. At one point, about the deficiencies of modern art, Hartley wrote, “The modern artist is irreligious. That is his first barrier. He is superficial; that is his second.”⁸² Hartley implied that the modern world was spiritually bankrupt and thus its art was vapid, unlike that of the Indian dancer who was “part actor, part priest.”⁸³ This idea is in direct contradiction with an earlier passage in the essay in which Hartley wrote:

The attempt is this century, is the attempt on the part of the modern artist to ‘know’ esthetics in the sense of intellect rather than of religious symbol. Intellect instead of soul...Great art is now a type of mental calculus. There is need for an eye like the modern mind.”⁸⁴

Hartley suggested that modern art needed to mirror the modern mind; it needed to be intellectual, not intuitive.

One explanation for Hartley’s ambivalence towards a scientific-type of modern art expression is the artist’s engagement with New York Dada during the fall of 1920. Upon returning to New York from New Mexico, Hartley befriended Marcel Duchamp and Katherine Dreier, who appointed him as the secretary of the Société Anonyme founded earlier that year.⁸⁵ Art historian Barbara Haskell argues that, although Hartley was drawn to the energy of the group, “he never fully identified with the group’s frivolity or its intellectuality, both of which allowed him little room for painterly expression.”⁸⁶

⁸² Ibid.: 118.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.: 117.

⁸⁵ Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 61. Encouraged by this group, Hartley wrote “The Importance of Being Dada,” which was published the 21 November 1921 issue of *International Studio* and again as the epilogue of his book *Adventures in the Arts* (1921). See Marsden Hartley, “The Importance of Being Dada,” in *Adventures in the Arts: Informal Chapters on Painters, Vaudeville, and Poets* (New York: Boni and Liveright, Inc., 1921), 247-54, Marsden Hartley, “The Importance of Being Dada,” *International Studio* 74 (November 1921).

⁸⁶ Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 61.

This tension is resonant in “The Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo,” in which Hartley invoked the Dadaist interest in the machine age without any of the irony that someone like Duchamp brought to the topic. It seems as though Hartley was trying in earnest to convince himself of the merits of intellectual art production in the mechanical age when his artistic tendencies leaned towards creating an expressive art rooted in nature. Hartley’s admiration for instinctive forms of art production is evident in his effusive praise of the Indian’s intuitive “re-presentation” of the natural world.⁸⁷

The most surprising aspect of “The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo” is its opening sentence: “All primitive peoples believe in and indulge the sensuous aspects of their religion. They provide for the delight of their bodies in the imagined needs of their soul.”⁸⁸ Later in the paragraph, Hartley tempered this statement by explaining, “This pagan is not utterly hedonistic as might be imagined. He is not striving for pleasure as an end...He has shown us of today once and for all that religion in order to be a factor in experience must be pleasurable.”⁸⁹ This essay is shot through with overtly exoticizing and sexualizing language, which contradicts the tenor and message of his previous essays about Indian dances, in which he denied that there was anything sexual or erotic about these performances.

In his circa 1918-1920 essays, Hartley had accentuated the purity of Pueblo spirituality and aesthetic expressions in order to counter accusations made by Christian reform groups that derided ceremonial dances as exhibitions of lasciviousness and excess. Hartley’s “The Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo” was also in dialogue with

⁸⁷ Hartley, “The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo,” 114.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ He concluded the paragraph by arguing, “It is the primitive, therefore, who finds without the inclusion of the body there is or can be no satisfactory religious expression.” Ibid.: 113.

Protestant-Anglo sexual mores. However, whereas the earlier essays argued that Indian dances were not an affront to Christian values, in his 1922 essay, Hartley used pagan religion to undermine these values. In “The Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo,” the artist celebrated the unabashed and virtuous nakedness of Indian participants in ceremonials, arguing that Indians embraced the “sensuous frankness” of their bodies, whereas Christianity taught “abnegation of the body” and “brought us our Puritanism.”⁹⁰ Instead of clothing “ourselves with Christian prudery,” modern white society should learn a lesson from the Indian and embrace the sensuality of the body. These statements were driven by Hartley’s desire for a greater openness about sex and sexuality in American society. Undoubtedly, through this essay the artist was confronting and critiquing normative society and its prejudices against homosexuality. Hartley’s construction of Indianness shifted to meet the ideological and political aims of each essay, aims which changed depending on when and for what forum a text was created.

The sensuous language Hartley used in “The Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo” is intensified in his circa 1919 poem, “The Festival of Corn,” which was first published in a 1920 issue of *Poetry* magazine.⁹¹ Unlike the Pueblo ceremonials discussed in his 1918-1920 essays, which Hartley described as having a steady, monotonous beat, in this poem the dance comes to a frenzied climax. The poem’s language is heavily eroticized. Its zenith reads:

Beat of the tom-tom in my ears! Thud-thud of multitudinous
red feet on my solar plexus! Red fire burning my very

⁹⁰ Ibid.: 118.

⁹¹ This is Hartley’s only poem about Indian dance. It was included in a group of poems titled “Sun light Persuasions” (1918-1919), and was first published in the May 1920 issue of *Poetry* magazine. The poem was reprinted in 1929 anthology of poetry compiled by Alice Corbin Henderson. Marsden Hartley, “The Festival of Corn,” in *The Turquoise Trail: An Anthology of New Mexico Poetry*, ed. Alice Corbin Henderson (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928), 44-51.

eyelids with young red heats! The last saps of the
 red-man are pouring down my thighs and arms. The
 young red blood is dripping from the flanks of laughing
 red bodies aching with the sensuousness of the passing
 pagan hour.⁹²

The poet imaginatively merged with the Primitive dancer; bodies pulse, bodily fluids are excreted, sexual climax is suggested.⁹³ Whereas Hartley saw modern American society as curtailing his own sexual energy, Indian dance could revive it. Unlike his 1918-1919 essays, which were conceived as politicized meditations on the merits of Indian culture for more scholarly publications, his poem is a personalized, artistic expression intended for a different venue.

It is possible that “The Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo” is so frenetic, even schizophrenia, because parts of it were written at two different times. The sections of the essay that address science and the machine age seem to have been penned closer to the publication of the article. Written when the artist was temporally and spatially removed from his stay in New Mexico, these sections read like a manifesto of modern American art. The passages focused on the Corn Dance were likely written while Hartley was in New Mexico, as is supported by a sentence in which he wrote, “In the specific dance of yesterday (August 4th) at the Pueblo of San [sic] Domingo, one of the most beautiful, certainly of the pueblos [sic] of the Rio Grande, you had the largest spectacle,

⁹² Marsden Hartley, “The Festival of Corn,” in *The Collected Poems of Marsden Hartley*, ed. Gail Scott (Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1987), 63-67.

⁹³ This poem presents an imagined sexual encounter between Hartley and the “redman.” Much more could be said about Hartley’s New Mexico poems and essays in terms of his sexuality. For the purposes of this project, I have made a methodological decision to keep the discussion focused on the artist’s textual responses to federal Indian policy. However, the interpretive and contextual implications of his imagined merging with the “redman” warrants further elaboration in my future work.

both as to numbers and the sense of volume.”⁹⁴ The passages that elaborate on the actual dance are in keeping with the tenor of Hartley’s previous New Mexico essays, and reiterated his worry that current Indian policy was stamping out one of the America’s most important cultural expressions, ceremonial dance. Hartley lamented, “We know efforts are abroad to make the fatal compromise and therefore end for the world one of the most interesting race expressions known in the history of races.”⁹⁵

In last essay about New Mexico, “The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos,” Hartley refocused his attention on Pueblo religious activities. This essay is much more straightforward than is its companion article. Much like Blumenschein’s 1898 article, “Swift Arrow’s Tale,” Hartley walked the reader through the main events of the feast day of San Gerónimo at Taos Pueblo. Like Blumenschein, he determined the footraces to be the most important activity of the day, and spent a significant amount of time describing the racers, commenting on their body paint, attire (or lack of attire), and athleticism. Hartley also addressed the activities of the “Chifonetes,” the sacred clowns that were featured in Blumenschein’s article.⁹⁶ Also like Blumenschein, Hartley found that the skits and “pole climbing” performed by these actors were evidence of the Pueblo people’s “tribal gift for and appreciation of humour [sic].”⁹⁷ In contrast to Blumenschein, however, Hartley expressed an awareness of the important social and religious role that the Koshare played in the community, explaining that their activities were “singularly,

⁹⁴ Hartley, “The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo,” 114.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Blumenschein uses the term “Chiflonetes” to refer to the Koshare, whereas Hartley uses “Chifonetes.”

⁹⁷ Hartley, “The Scientific Esthetic of the Red Man, Part II: The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos,” 139.

the most sacred among the various expressions of these people, and is the one they do not allow photographed.”⁹⁸

In this essay, Hartley addressed the hybridity of the feast day. Two decades after Blumenschein published “Swift Arrow’s Tale” and “A Strange Mixture,” Anglo biases against the Hispanic population and Catholicism held strong. Hartley demeaned the feast day’s Catholic roots. The essay opens with Hartley’s proclamation, “What San Geronimo has to do with our American Indian will never be quite clear, and we shall never be able to reconcile the dance with the confessional.”⁹⁹ According to the artist, there was something “irrelevant and incongruous in the catholic [sic] adherence among these people,” and thus he concluded that Catholicism was a great perversion in the Indian’s religion. Hartley described Pueblo religion as being more dignified than the Catholicism practiced by the Hispanic community, writing that you see “almost a humorous discrepancy between the natural religion which is their own invention, and that of the penitente for example.”¹⁰⁰ Hartley claimed that the Catholic rituals enacted on the morning of Taos Pueblo’s feast day were seemingly irrelevant to the afternoon’s purely Native activities.

While it is evident that Hartley’s attitude towards Pueblo ceremonials and their relation to Anglo art and society shifted with time, one constant theme in all of his essays is his staunch admiration for Pueblo ceremonials as a unique, profound, and important

⁹⁸ Hartley continued, “It is likewise said to be a method invented by the tribe to console its members with jollity in the case of calamity, such as drought.” Ibid. By this time, the Pueblo people did not allow photography at most of their religious events. They were particularly averse about the ban on photography during the Koshare performances, in large part because the 1915 and 1920 investigations in to accusations of impropriety at Pueblo ceremonials had concentrated on the actions of the Koshare.

⁹⁹ Ibid.: 137.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. Hartley made similarly reductive and misinformed remarks in his 1922 essay about the Corn Dance, in which he implied that all of New Mexico’s Hispanic-Catholics were *Penitentes*, who were dedicated to flagellation, the “medieval principle of touring the flesh.” Hartley, “The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo,” 113.

form of cultural expression. Hartley's New Mexico essays also speak to a number of other interrelated perspectives: namely, the authority of art over science, cultural nationalism, and primitivism. These topics will be addressed in turn.

Privileged Access: Art versus Science

Hartley presumptuously argued that modernist artists were best equipped to paint, write about, and appreciate Indian dance: "It is the artist who is the most of all privileged to celebrate the scientific esthetic of the redman."¹⁰¹ Whereas, "Science looks upon [the Indian] as a phenomenon," Hartley maintained, "esthetics looks upon him as giant of masterful expression in our midst. The redman is poet and artist of the very first order among the geniuses of time."¹⁰² In order to support this position, Hartley created a dichotomy between his celebration of living Indian artistic practices and scientists' analytic treatment of the Indian. In "Red Man Ceremonials," Hartley demanded:

It is not enough to put the redman as a specimen under glass along with the auk and the dinosaur. He is still alive and longing to live. We have lost the buffalo and the beaver, and we are losing the redman, also, and all these are fine symbols of our own native richness and austerity.¹⁰³

Because they coveted ancient objects—timeless and fragmented remnants of Indian culture—anthropologists were accused of petrifying decontextualized moments from the Indian's past. In contrast, Hartley explained, artists were concerned with Indian dance, which could only be enacted and witnessed in the present. Indian rhythms could not be

¹⁰¹ Hartley, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo," 117. Hartley's position was particularly irreverent since his essays were published in *Art and Archaeology*, a journal supported by the scientific community in the region.

¹⁰² Hartley, "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," 12.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*: 13. The language used in this passage is highly ironic. Hartley drew a correlation between the extinction of animals and that of Indians, suggesting that the Indian is simply another one of white America's exploitable natural resources.

collected, analyzed, and placed under glass, they could only be experienced. Furthermore, Hartley argued that his focus on Indian dance was a more holistic way of understanding Indians because dances connected them to their community and to their land.

Hartley was dismissive of scientists' approach to studying Indians and of their preoccupation with material culture. In "Red Man Ceremonials," Hartley wrote, "If his pottery and his blankets offer the majority but little, his ceremonials do contribute to the comparative few who can perceive a spectacle we shall not see the equal of in history again."¹⁰⁴ Indian pots, blankets, and other items made for the tourist market were demeaned by scientists and artists alike to be poor quality, culturally hybrid kitsch. However, even "traditional" objects, taken more seriously by the scientific community, presented a problem for Hartley since he associated Indian material culture, past and present, with an "empirical" or anthropological perspective.

By placing dance at the top of a constructed hierarchy of Indian artistic production, Hartley was variously criticizing the tourist industry, anthropologists, and academic painters in the region. In his essays, Hartley derided the Taos Society's dedication to realism and their reliance on the pictorial trope of the posed Indian with artifacts.¹⁰⁵ Their work, Hartley groused, is focused on objective analysis and reportage, on external realities. This anthropological perspective, as Hartley saw it, stood in stark contrast with to a modernist vision, which was centered on a subjective, emotional, and/or intuitive approach to subject matter. And, Pueblo dance was the subject that was the best suited for such an approach. Significantly, Hartley's prioritization of ceremonial

¹⁰⁴ The awkward syntax is original to the text. Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Hartley, "America as Landscape," 340-1.

dance over material culture was widely adopted by artists throughout the next two decades.

In Hartley's essays, there is a tension between his celebration of Indian dance—an example of the thriving culture of Pueblo Indians—and his wholehearted belief that Indians and their culture were doomed to vanish. In the opening paragraph of "Red Man Ceremonials," Hartley argued:

It is significant that all races, and primitive peoples especially, exhibit the wish somehow to inscribe their racial autograph before they depart. It is our redman who permits us to witness the signing of his autograph with the beautiful gesture of his body in the form of the symbolic dance which he and his forefathers have practiced through the centuries, making the name America something to be remembered among the great names of the world and of time. It is the redman who has written down our earliest known history, and it is of his symbolic and esthetic endeavors that we should be most reasonably proud. He is the one man who has shown us the significance of the poetic aspects of our original land. Without him we should be still unrepresented in the cultural development of the world.¹⁰⁶

The Indian *will* depart, Hartley maintained. The best the race could do was to leave its "autograph," or legacy, in dance. Paradoxically, by choosing dance as the Indian's artistic autograph, Hartley insured that he would vanish without a trace. Whereas writers, painters, and craftspeople leave behind tangible artifacts, a dancer's performance, the most ephemeral of the arts, only resides in memory. If dance was the autograph of the vanishing Indian, an autograph reliant on real-time action, then when the Indian departed his autograph would disappear with him. Nothing would be left. In spite of Hartley's determination to separate his perspective from a scientific one, his fatalist view of the

¹⁰⁶ Marsden Hartley, "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," 7. Hartley reiterated this position in a number of other essays. For instance, in "Tribal Dance Esthetics," Hartley wrote, "We owe the presence of these forms in our midst, centuries old, to the divine idea of the necessity of survival. It is inherent in all mankind to want to write its autograph upon the face of the earth before returning to it again, and those who hold in any degree the spirit of preservation feel more impressively the need of recording them." Hartley, "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," 53.

vanishing Indian was the very same belief upon which salvage ethnography was premised.¹⁰⁷

Hartley's fatalist outlook was in keeping with late-nineteenth-century attitudes towards American Indians. Among those people who supported Indian causes, there were two pervasive and conflicting schools of thoughts: reformers and romantics. Both groups believed that Indians would vanish in one way or another. Reformers, many of whom were "New Indians," saw the Indian as becoming Americanized and modernized. These pragmatists applauded the deterioration of Indian culture, understanding cultural suppression as a necessary step in the Indian's evolution from savage to domesticated, productive citizen. In contrast, romantics, who nostalgically viewed Indians as noble savages, lamented the Indian's inevitable demise. Hartley was informed by the latter school of thought, which was a less popular point of view during the first decades of the twentieth century. According to historian Brian Dippie, from the romantic camp arose a contingent of thinkers who believed that Indian ways should be preserved.¹⁰⁸ These activists asserted that if the government's policy towards Indians was changed, if cultural preservation was legislated, America at large would benefit. The Indian past was usurped as America's past; contemporary Indian arts were understood as a unique form of American artistic expression. Saving Indian art, past and present, would serve to bolster America's cultural esteem. Hartley's attitude towards Indians inhabited the liminal space between the fatalist perspective of late-nineteenth-century romantics and the optimism of

¹⁰⁷ In the Southwest, Hartley mused, "There was a glimpse of this little spectacle of a great civilization, probably one of the finest in history, and soon, or comparatively soon, to pass out of existence, out of the ken of the visual world forever into a religious silence the dignity of which would be little appreciated in the new years to come." Ibid.: 54.

¹⁰⁸ Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1982), 274.

early-twentieth-century preservationists. While Hartley's essays presented assimilationist policy in a negative light, but he was not a preservationist, a movement that coalesced after he left the region. Hartley's unwavering belief that the Indian was doomed to vanish set him apart from the preservationist movement.

Cultural Nationalism: The "Americanization" of the Indian

If Indian culture was doomed, as Hartley believed, why bother to try to save it? What could be gained from slowing the process of acculturation? In "America as Landscape" and "Red Man Ceremonials" we find one answer. As was previously discussed, in "Red Man Ceremonials," Hartley argued that the "racial expression" of the Indian offered a model for Anglo modernists, which would help them create a more authentic art rooted in the land. This claim was driven by a real admiration for Indian dance, but also by widespread anxiety about America's cultural heritage.

The early-twentieth-century preoccupation with cultural nationalism informed Hewett's essay, in "America in the Evolution of Human Society," which was printed in the same issue of *Art and Archaeology* as "Red Man Ceremonials." In this text, Hewett challenged the claim that America lacked a great historical background:

The [Indian] life thus evolved was preeminently esthetic and religious, though these activities were so intimately organized with the industrial life and the social order that the result was a completely integrated culture. Thus America received and acted upon its first great wave of human population. The result was the *Indian*—the aboriginal of the New World—a people Americanized.¹⁰⁹

America—its natural environment—was designated as *the* agent of cultural production. Anyone upon whom this agent had acted, and anyone who responded to it, was thus

¹⁰⁹ Edgar L. Hewett, "America in the Evolution of Human Society," *Art and Archaeology* IX, no. 1 (January 1920): 4.

Americanized. According to Hewett, as the continent's newest residents, who were still *in the process* of Americanizing, white society should look to the continent's first wave of immigrants, Indians, as a model Americans.

In order to challenge the claim that America lacked history, Hewett generated from Pueblo art and culture a long and venerable ancient heritage for Anglo America, one which was distinct from Europe.¹¹⁰ Similarly, in "Red Man Ceremonials," Hartley argued that appreciating the aesthetic contributions of the Indian "would help a little towards proving to the world around us that we are not so young a country as we might seem, nor yet as diffident as our national attitude would seem to indicate."¹¹¹ Hewett and Hartley envisioned the Indian world as America in its pure form, untainted by European materialism and conflict.¹¹² How does white America free itself from the enslaving bonds of European cultural domination? By preserving and appreciating Indian culture. Hewett warned that if the Indian legacy was denied, the "Europeanization" of America would result.¹¹³ Usurping Native America's cultural past for Anglo needs was thus rationalized as ideologically legitimate, despite the intelligentsia's awareness of the centuries of oppression that American Indians had endured under European and Anglo-American rule.

The New Mexican intelligentsia walked a fine line between discrediting the colonial oppression of American Indian culture and partaking in a project of cultural imperialism. Hartley was no different. In a 1919 essay, Hartley wrote that white

¹¹⁰ Ibid.: 3-6.

¹¹¹ Hartley, "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," 13.

¹¹² Hewett, "America in the Evolution of Human Society," 5.

¹¹³ Ibid.: 6.

America's determination to spread across the continent was an act of imperialism, and one with grave results:

And yet [the Indian] is an unknown artist, and by the time we, the invaders of his country, have begun to glimpse at him in merest outline he will have disappeared and like the greatest of comedians and tragedians of time will have left a faint but precious memory in the consciousness of human beings.¹¹⁴

The disappearance of the American Indian was thus described as an act of aggression and American society as a destructive invader. This anti-imperialist stance is undermined throughout Hartley's essays. In "Red Man Ceremonials," Hartley stated that ceremonial dance must be appreciated because the Indian was the "only esthetic representative of our great country up to the present hour;" the Indian was "our first artistic relative."¹¹⁵ Hartley described Indian culture as "our" culture, Indian history as "our" history, Indian land as "our" land. Indian dance was thus appropriate as the artistic legacy of Anglo America. As is made evident in Hartley's decision to place his essay, "The Red Man," as the first chapter in his book that traced America's artistic lineage, Hartley's Indian was constructed as the aesthetic forbearer of Walt Whitman, Winslow Homer, Albert Pinkham Ryder, and of the artist himself.¹¹⁶

"Wrapping their cloaks around them"

Most of Hartley's New Mexico essays addressed the political situation in New Mexico, particularly the debate over American Indian assimilation. Still, Hartley was no expert on Indian policy. While he wanted to call attention to the fallacies of the

¹¹⁴ Marsden Hartley, "The Beautiful Neglected Arts: Satire and Seriousness," *The Little Review* VI, no. 2 (June 1919): 63.

¹¹⁵ Hartley, "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," 13.

¹¹⁶ These are the artists and writers that Hartley saw as forging an American tradition based on their connection to the native soil. See Hartley, *Adventures in the Arts: Informal Chapters on Painters, Vaudeville, and Poets*.

assimilationist position, he was less concerned with giving concrete solutions to social problems. Hartley saw his role as one of cultural enlightener; he would take the cause of the Indian to the American public.

In "Red Man Ceremonials," Hartley asserted, "The redman will perpetuate himself only by the survival of his own customs for he will never be able to accept customs that are as foreign to him as ours are and must always be; he will never be able to accept a culture which is inferior to his own."¹¹⁷ Thus, Hartley argued that assimilation was futile. He believed that public awareness and appreciation of Pueblo culture might slow the cultural extinction of the Indian, but it would not stop it. In the meanwhile, the best that could be done was to protect Indians from Anglo and Hispanic cultural and religious intrusions.¹¹⁸ In "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," Hartley explicitly presented an isolationist position:

And when they come to the housetops to watch their good father, the sun, pass down over a trembling horizon in his regally effulgent way, wrapping their cloaks around them, wrapping themselves obviously away from the contamination of a world so foreign to them—you feel with them also that their father is a godlike parent, bringing them nothing but good, if they but conduct themselves well in his radiance.¹¹⁹

By describing Indians as "wrapping their cloaks around them, wrapping themselves obviously away from the contamination of a world so foreign to them," Harley presented them as intemperate. Hartley's Indian retained his cultural dignity and purity by shielding himself from the modern world. The idea of segregation, or cultural isolation, became an important position among preservationists in the early 1920s.

¹¹⁷ Hartley, "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," 13.

¹¹⁸ Hartley's that Hispanic and Anglo culture were perverting influences is evident in his essay, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Red Man, Part II: The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos," 137.

¹¹⁹ The awkward sentence structure is original to the text. Hartley, "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," 54.

In her memoirs, Dodge Luhan similarly used the Indian cloak as a metaphor for Indian cultural isolation:

The Indian women were sheltered in their shawls, seemingly so comfortable and encompassed within them, so that their whole being was contained, not escaping to be wasted in the air, but held close protected from encroachments. How exposed we lived, I thought, so revealed and open! I longed for the insulation of the shawl and wore mine whenever I could.¹²⁰

Hartley and Dodge Luhan understood the Indian shawl as insulating the Indian; it kept him pure and protected him from the debasing forces of modernity. For Dodge Luhan, the Indian blanket was also symbol for the strength of Pueblo Indians' inner-lives. In her memoir, Dodge Luhan described Tony Lujan as an "Indian, whole, uninjured, and unsplit by the torture of combining in himself two opposing modes."¹²¹ Longing for the same state of isolation, Dodge Luhan often wrapped herself in an Indian blanket, as is captured in photographs (fig. 2.1).¹²² In doing so, Dodge Luhan presented herself as similarly whole and pure; her Indian blanket represented the moral and spiritual redemption she sought through her contact with Pueblo Indians. Hartley too sought the psychological isolation provided by the Indian cloak (fig. 2.2); in a 1918 photograph of the artist, like the Indian, he has wrapped his cloak around him.¹²³ He sits in the landscape, enshrouded in a black blanket, wrapped away from contamination of the world.

Hartley's identification with the Indian artist may have been one reason that he became involved in the debate over assimilation. In June 1919, while Hartley was still living in New Mexico, his essay, "The Beautiful Neglected Arts," was published in *The*

¹²⁰ Luhan, *Edge of the Taos Desert: An Escape to Reality*, 179.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 283.

¹²² This is a widely published photograph that was taken around 1918. The original photograph is located in Mabel Dodge Luhan Papers, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 196.

¹²³ This is a 1918 photograph of Hartley from Santa Fe, which is located in the Marsden Hartley Memorial Collection, the Bates College Museum of Art. Gail Scott, *Marsden Hartley: New Mexico 1918-20: An American Discovering America* (New York: Alexandre Gallery, 2003), n.p.

Little Review.¹²⁴ Although not solely focused on New Mexico, this essay still addresses Indian dancers. Hartley's vision of Indian dancers was guided by his perception of them as fellow marginalized artists. In this essay, the Indian dancer of the Southwest was counted among the "sadly neglected" artists, like the "plumber, the wire-walker, the aerial trapezist, the bareback rider, the fan-painter, the bronco-buster."¹²⁵ Of all these marginal artists, it was the Indian with whom Hartley most identified. In describing the Indian dancer, he wrote, "Here is the loneliest of the artists, and the most diffident, therefore the happiest in that he wants no other audience than his own kind."¹²⁶ This description could well have applied to Hartley himself.

Ever feeling alienated by critics and patrons, Hartley created an identity for himself in which he was the artistic brother of other underappreciated artists. In a poem that was included in his autobiography, *Somehow a Past*, Hartley described his life as "Cross 'tween a circus and a sacred affair."¹²⁷ He saw himself as the misunderstood modernist, as the vaudevillian, as the circus performer, as the "redman" dancer. By making a case for the cultural legitimacy and the Americanness of Indian art in his essays, he was making a similar case for his own artistic production.

Primitivism and the Pueblo Indian

Hartley's understanding of the Pueblo people was entwined with his interest in primitivism. For instance, his construction of Pueblo Indians as untainted peoples who

¹²⁴ Hartley, "The Beautiful Neglected Arts: Satire and Seriousness," 59-64.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*: 59.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*: 63.

¹²⁷ Hartley, *Somehow A Past: The Autobiography of Marsden Hartley*, 44. In another version of this poem, published at the end of his autobiography, Hartley implied that the "sacred affair" to which he was referring is an Indian ceremonial. He wrote, "this, a somehow past, image smitten, to the beating of perpetual drums." Hartley, *Somehow A Past: The Autobiography of Marsden Hartley*, 174.

needed to be protected from the corrupting forces of modernity was in keeping with primitivist rhetoric. Furthermore, Hartley idealized Pueblo Indian art production as embodying their spirituality and connection to nature. Wanda Corn succinctly captures the forces at work in Hartley texts:

Hartley's Indianism was a complex mixture of infantilizing veneration, and activism...he defended contemporary Indians against those who characterized them as idle or barbarian and their dances as ritualistic practices against those white authorities who sought to ban them as pagan and uncivilized.¹²⁸

This characterization could well be applied to most of the artists and activists featured in this dissertation, who understood Pueblo Indians through a primitivist lens.

Scholars have linked Hartley's New Mexico essays to his interest in Indian art, which was forged before the First World War.¹²⁹ However, Hartley's prewar and postwar notions of primitivism were not consistent, neither was the primitivist rhetoric within his New Mexico essays. His descriptions of America's Primitives varied with when, where, and for whom he was working.¹³⁰

In her investigation of Hartley's interest in primitivism while in Europe, art historian Barbara Haskell cites a letter written to Stieglitz in 1912, in which Hartley explained, "Modern art is now taking a plunge inward and men are revolting against

¹²⁸ Wanda Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1999), 255.

¹²⁹ Haskell explains that Hartley was introduced to primitive aesthetics prior to his trip to Europe, through Gallery 291 and *Camera Work*. However, it was Hartley's contact with Gertrude Stein, the Trocadéro Museum in Paris, and *Der Blaue Reiter* group in Munich, which resulted in a more extensive emersion into the ideas of primitivism. Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 27.

¹³⁰ Among those scholars who have addressed Hartley's engagement with primitivism are: Donna Cassidy, *Marsden Hartley: Race, Region, and Nation* (Durham, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2005), Wanda Corn, "Marsden Hartley's Native Amerika," in *Marsden Hartley*, ed. Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser (New Haven and London: Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum of Art in association with Yale University Press, 2002), Heather Hole, "'America as Landscape': Marsden Hartley and New Mexico, 1918-1924" (Princeton University, 2005), Patricia McDonnell, "'Dictated by Life': Spirituality in the Art of Marsden Hartley and Wassily Kandinsky, 1910-1915," *Archives of American Art Journal* 29, no. 1/2 (1989).

superficial ideas. Each man is trying to look to himself and see what he finds there.”¹³¹ Borrowing ideas from Kandinsky’s *On the Spiritual in Art*, Hartley continued, “the more elemental and primitive the people, the more inwardly intense have been the modes of expression... These primitive people have no mean ambition. They create out of spiritual necessity.”¹³² In similar letters to Stieglitz from London, Paris, and Germany, Hartley excitedly described his discoveries of Primitive art at various ethnographic museums.

A concept inextricably linked to modernism, primitivism finds its roots in the late-nineteenth-century work of Symbolists and Post-Impressionists. According to art historian Gill Perry, Primitive is a word that has been used since at least the nineteenth century to distinguish contemporary European society from less civilized ones.¹³³ A reaction to the processes of industrialization and urbanization, late-nineteenth-century artists sought out and idealized Primitive sources and societies, constructing them as pure, authentic, and untainted by modernity.¹³⁴ The category of Primitive art in modernism often refers to the production of objects by peoples who are non-Christian, non-Western, non-developed, and/or non-white, non-male, not sane, and not aged. This category not only collapses geography, but temporal logic; Primitives can be pre-civilized, ancients, or found in contemporary culture.

¹³¹ Hartley quoted in Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 27.

¹³² Hartley quoted in *Ibid.*

¹³³ Gill Perry, "Primitivism and The 'Modern,'" in *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction*, ed. Charles Harrison, Francis Frascina, and Gill Perry (New Haven: Yale University in association with The Open University Press, 1993), 5. Initially, the term referred to early Renaissance painters, but by the turn-of-the-century it expanded to include societies in Africa, South America, Asia, and Oceania.

¹³⁴ Primitive culture was treated with ambivalence—the art and culture of the Other was seen as pure, authentic, and uncorrupted, but also as barbaric and uncivilized. Homi Bhabha discusses at length the ambivalence embedded in the imperialist construction of a Primitive other. See Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994). Also see James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

Primitivism is a Eurocentric concept that is used to describe difference. It is the mechanism through which Western society designates a cultural group as Other, as a foil to Western values. As a result, those interested in primitivism tend to misrepresent cultures, objects, and social groups. Mythological imaginings of Others, as are reproduced in art and literature, tend to articulate Western fantasies.¹³⁵

An interest Primitive art usually manifested itself in two different ways. Some modernists were drawn to what they perceived to be the Primitive *approach* to art production, and thus sought to infuse their art with similar intuitive, naïve, and spiritual qualities. These artists tried to replicate the Primitive's direct, untainted and authentic mode of expression. Other modernists looked to Primitive art for its *formal values*. An interest in Primitive art coincided with widespread collecting by major museums in Europe's cosmopolitan centers, thus giving modern artists access to objects that were often procured from colonized territories.¹³⁶ Modern artists used these decontextualized Primitive artifacts to reinforce their prevailing aesthetic and ideological interests.¹³⁷ Primitive art was inflected with notions of the decorative, the expressive, and the authentic, values central to the modernist movement. Hartley's first foray into primitivism was focused on this formalist paradigm.

In November of 1914, distressed by the outbreak of the First World War, Hartley wrote to Stieglitz, "I find myself wanting to be an Indian—to paint my face with the symbols of race I adore[,] to go to the West and face the sun forever—that would seem

¹³⁵ See Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

¹³⁶ As James Clifford explains, aesthetic appropriation of non-Western Others raises ambiguous and disturbing questions about issues of race, gender, and power. Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, 197.

¹³⁷ Perry, "Primitivism and The 'Modern'," 55.

the true expression of human dignity.”¹³⁸ Around the same time, Hartley created his iconic “Amerika Series”—including *American Indian Symbols*, *Indian Fantasy* (fig. 2.3), and *Indian Composition*—which is dominated by fairly straightforward Indian motifs from popular culture, including tepees, suns/moons, bonnet Indians wrapped in blankets, canoes, bows, arrows, battle, shields, and campfires.¹³⁹ Mixing modernist formal inventions (e.g. Cubist spatial fragmentation), popular imagery from Americana (e.g. cowboy and Indian), and motifs from other cultures (e.g. Egyptian and Buddhist symbols), Hartley produced what Wanda Corn considers to be one of most inventive mediations on American culture.¹⁴⁰

That Hartley created his first paintings centered on theme of America’s Indians while he was living in Germany is not surprising. Germans had a long-standing fascination with the American Indian, and there is little doubt that this “Indianophilia” led Hartley to consider the motif.¹⁴¹ Stories involving Indians were tremendously popular in Germany, particularly the late-nineteenth-century novels of Karl May. At the Museum für Völkerkunde in Berlin, Hartley would have been able to see tepees, canoes, and totem poles. These objects reinforced Hartley’s notions of Indianness, as had been form in America through his exposure to dime novels and Wild West shows. Predictably, in his “Amerika Series” he painted the Indian as warrior, hunter, potter, peace-pipe smoker, and tepee and nature dweller. In keeping with the decontextualized environment of the

¹³⁸ Hartley to Stieglitz, November 12, 1914 (Berlin), Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 527. Wanda Corn had more success deciphering this passage than did I, thus I defer to her transcription of this letter. Corn, “Marsden Hartley’s Native Amerika,” 69. Corn appropriately describes this statement as a “self-absorbed declaration.” James Clifford writes extensively about the history of the Trocadéro. He explains that, before 1930, the Trocadéro was a “jumble of exotica. Its arrangements emphasized ‘local color’ or the evocation of foreign settings...” Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, 135.

¹³⁹ Corn, “Marsden Hartley’s Native Amerika,” 69.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

ethnographic museum, in his “Amerika Series” the artist conflated and collapsed time, tribe and geography.

As an artist who was seeking patronage in the United States, choosing a paradigmatically American motif would have helped him navigate his desire to stay in Europe with his determination to sell his work to U.S. patrons. As Corn succinctly puts it, “His America Series strengthened his identity as an American while simultaneously playing to Germans’ exaggerated stereotype of Indian life.”¹⁴² In spite of Hartley’s professed desire to “be an Indian,” his works were not inspired by what he perceived to be the intuitive mode of creation of the Primitive, but rather by the formal aesthetics of Indian art. He was trying to create a modernist style by infusing his works with the decorative patterning found in Indian textiles.¹⁴³

After Hartley repatriated to the United States, in his letters to Alfred Stieglitz, the artist articulated a strong desire to travel to the Southwest so that he could experience the landscape and interact with Indians. When he arrived in the region, Hartley described his impressions of Pueblo Indians in primitivist terms:

They are beautiful these people, and so loveable and one must admire them for the beautiful religious and moral as well as practical life they live. I hope to learn a great deal from them while here and shall hope to get a permit to paint the Pueblo for it is this and this only which makes the place remarkable among many. It is the perfect place to regain ones body and soul.¹⁴⁴

Through his encounters with Indians, Hartley believed he could revitalize his artistic energies.

¹⁴² Ibid., 77.

¹⁴³ Nevertheless, Hartley’s work, in Corn’s opinion had a strong hierarchical ordering, which she sees as decidedly European, not Indian, and thus related to Hartley’s famous series of Berlin War paintings. Ibid., 78.

¹⁴⁴ Hartley to Stieglitz, June 20, 1918, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531.

Whereas Hartley's European experimentation with primitivism was formal, in New Mexico his attention shifted to the second paradigm of primitivism, one which focused on process.¹⁴⁵ As was previously discussed, in his New Mexico essays, Hartley demanded that Anglo painters *not* adopt the Indian's aesthetics, which was not in keeping with the white "racial" temperament, but rather look to the Indian's *motivations* for artistic creation. In "American as Landscape," Hartley offered a mode of artistic creation that would result in an authentic vision of the American scene, a mode which he argued had been achieved by American Indians:

It seems to take courage likewise for most painters and observers, to get connected with their native land, American as landscape, as a country capable of inspiring and producing any type of greatness. It needs the calm of the redman himself to sit still and think, or to ponder generously as he walks the trail which his forefathers have worn for him in the rocks which we see around us everywhere in sections like this, of the watersheds of the Rio Grande."¹⁴⁶

From America's natural citizens, Hartley argued, modernists could also learn how to connect with their home soil.

Once in New Mexico, Hartley's notions about Indian Primitives did not completely map onto his experiences with the Pueblo people.¹⁴⁷ While Hartley's New Mexico essays recall the typical markers of primitivism—Indian as child-like, Indian as intuitive artist, Indian as natural or connected to nature, Indian as anti-modern—many of

¹⁴⁵ For a study of how American Indian art might have impacted modernist art production in the U.S. between 1910 and 1950, see W. Jackson Rushing, *Native American Art and The New York Avant-garde: A History of Cultural Primitivism* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995). While American artists were generally interested in primitivism, particularly after the 1913 Armory Show, I disagree with Rushing's assessment that the New York avant-garde was dependent on American Indian art and culture. The flattening of forms and abstract design in modernist canvases were not primarily influenced by Native American art, but rather an amalgamation of a general interest in primitivism and modernist aesthetic theories. Most painting by interwar modernists working in New Mexico do not evidence significant stylistic changes related to Pueblo *material* culture.

¹⁴⁶ Hartley, "America as Landscape," 341.

¹⁴⁷ Both Wanda Corn and Heather Hole have made this point. See Corn, "Marsden Hartley's Native Amerika", Hole, "'America as Landscape': Marsden Hartley and New Mexico, 1918-1924."

his primitivist ideas about New Mexico's aboriginal population differed from a European paradigm. Thus, I argue that primitivism, with respect to representations of Pueblo Indian, was adapted to address the region's distinct cultural, political, and geographical environment.¹⁴⁸

Hartley's descriptions of Pueblo Indians in his New Mexico essays relied on a paradigm of primitivism that was informed by cultural nationalism and political activism in the region.¹⁴⁹ In most of Hartley's writings about the Pueblo Indians (the exceptions being his poem, "The Festival of Corn," and the opening paragraph of "The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo"), there is a de-emphasis on the sexuality of the Primitive subject. As we will see throughout this dissertation, this position is almost unanimously adopted by modernists working in the Southwest in the early 1920s. If one were to compare a prototypical primitivist work from Europe, be it Pablo Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.)* or Henri Matisse's *Blue Nude* both of 1907, to almost any representation of Pueblo women (e.g. Blumenschein's *The Gift*, fig. 4.1), the differences are startling. Matisse, Picasso, Gauguin, and Kirchner, all painted highly sexualized Primitives, which reinforced notions of liberal sexuality in an attempt to challenge bourgeois sexual mores.¹⁵⁰ In contrast, American modernists rarely sexualized Pueblo Indians, particularly Pueblo women. It was not that American modernists never

¹⁴⁸ James Clifford, in reviewing the 1984-1985 MOMA show "Primitivism," explains that the catalogue reveals that there was not a coherent modernist attitude towards the primitive. Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, 196.

¹⁴⁹ Caroline Goesser's recent publication on the Harlem Renaissance demonstrates the complexity of primitivism in the United States. Goesser argues that Aaron Douglas's engagement with primitivism, as is evident in his mid-1920s graphic works, was a subversive venture through which he radically redefined the primitive identity associated with black art production. Caroline Goesser, *Picturing the New Negro: Harlem Renaissance Print Culture and Modern Black Identity* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2007), 55.

¹⁵⁰ Perry, "Primitivism and The 'Modern,'" 77. Similarly, this seems to have been Hartley's goal in his essay "The Great Corn Dance at Santo Domingo."

sexualized the Other; critical reviews of the paintings by female artists, such as Georgia O'Keeffe, and African American artists, such as Archibald Motley, were heavily laced with highly eroticized language.¹⁵¹ Why then, were Pueblo Indians not constructed in the same way?

As was suggested earlier in this chapter, the tendency to represent Pueblo Indians as modest is related to the assimilationist-driven accusations of immorality at Pueblo ceremonials. To sexualize the Indian subject was support claims of Pueblo excess and lasciviousness. The construction of Pueblo woman as chaste was particularly important in the political environment of the early twentieth century. According to anthropologist Margaret Jacobs, at the height of the assimilationist campaign, the federal government tried to alter American Indian marriage practices, housing structures, clothing, health care, burial, and the socialization of children.¹⁵² Reform organizations, often led by women, promoted civilizing and assimilationist programs that would uplift downtrodden Indian women, who progressives argued were degraded by their husbands, subjected to polygamy, and forced to marry and to bear children too young.¹⁵³ Indian women were also routinely characterized as promiscuous, incompetent housekeepers, and unfit mothers, all problems that could be rectified with Christianization and a solid Anglo education. In order to contests these claims, artist-advocates for preservation presented Pueblo women as attentive mothers, as good wives and homemakers. As Jacob points

¹⁵¹ For instance, see Edward Alden Jewell's review of an exhibition of Archibald Motley's work in 1928 and Waldo Frank's 1926 discussion of recent work by O'Keeffe. Patricia Hills, *Modern Art in the USA: Issues and Controversies of the 20th Century* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2001), 67, 70-71.

¹⁵² Margaret D. Jacobs, "Gender and Colonialism in the American West" (paper presented at the International Federation for Research in Women's History Conference, University of New South Wales, July 8, 2005), www.historians.ie/women/jacob.PDF.

¹⁵³ Jacobs cites a number of contemporary sources attesting to this perspective. Ibid.

out, preservations conceived of Indian woman as dignified, strong, and as playing an important role in Pueblo culture. In doing so, they challenged the view that Indian women were passive victims or active leaders in sexual immorality.¹⁵⁴ Preservationists argued that assimilationist policy, which they claimed was based on the behavior of Indian wards living on reservations, was ignorant of the “real” way of life of the Pueblo people. The Pueblo people, preservationists claimed, had closer-knit family ties and communities than Anglo Americans and were sexual innocents.¹⁵⁵ Indeed, about the Pueblo people, Dodge Luhan, preservationist extraordinaire, wrote:

[The Pueblo] never *think* sex—or talk *sex*. They all seem horrified at bringing it into speech, letter, and discussion as [the moral reformers] are doing here—they are *ashamed* to think ‘their pueblo’ could come under any such consideration. They have a strong natural modesty always. I have never seen a sign of sex exhibition in an Indian. They are...the purest people I know.¹⁵⁶

Through this statement, Dodge Luhan contested accusations of immorality by reformers, as Hartley had done in his New Mexico essays written between 1918 and 1920. Hartley’s descriptions of Pueblo morality in these essays is in keeping with how most modernists in the Southwest presented Indian sexuality through the 1930s.

¹⁵⁴ Jacobs, “‘Making Savages of Us All’: White Women, Pueblo Indians, and the Controversy over Indian Dances in the 1920s,” 188.

¹⁵⁵ Jacobs convincingly argues, “reformer’s concerns about Pueblo dances—that they encouraged promiscuity, adultery and divorce, and that they led to more open discussions of sexuality and an active sexual role for women—masked their anxiety over these very trends in white society.” Ibid.: 185. However, I disagree with Jacobs’s contention that, in contrast to reformers/assimilationist, “New Feminists,” who also tended to advocate preservation, lauded Pueblo ceremonials as emblems of sexual liberation. Ibid.: 180. As support for this claim, Jacobs points to the writings of Erna Fergusson, Mary Austin and Elsie Clews Parson. Fergusson argued that some of the Koshare’s sexual acts served as fertility rites, while Austin called attention to the social function of the Koshare’s sexually explicit skits. Austin and Parsons, according to Jacobs, saw Pueblo sexuality, as extolled in their dances, as more “natural” since, in the words of Austin, “procreation is still associated with worship.” All quoted in Jacobs, “‘Making Savages of Us All’: White Women, Pueblo Indians, and the Controversy over Indian Dances in the 1920s,” 187. None of these examples suggest that Pueblo women are *sexually liberated*, but rather that their sexuality is not profane.

¹⁵⁶ Luhan, *Edge of the Taos Desert: An Escape to Reality*, 179.

The Legacy of Hartley's New Mexico Essays

Hartley's New Mexico essays were among of the earliest published defenses of Indian ceremonials and played an important role in publicizing the merits Pueblo culture. Of these essays, "Red Man Ceremonials" made the most immediate and lasting impact. In the months after this article was published in *Art and Archaeology*, editorials in newspapers and periodicals nationwide reproduced large sections of the text. For instance, a March 1920 issue of *Current Opinion* lauded Hartley's "plea for a national esthetic consciousness" of the Indian, the "one true esthete of our country."¹⁵⁷ Illustrating the extent to which art and texts produced by modernists in the region were connected and were understood as similarly concerned with the promotion and preservation of Indian art, the *Current Opinion* article also reproduced John Sloan's painting *Ancestral Spirits*, with the following inscription: "Here is one of the ceremonies as depicted by John Sloan. We need not import Russian ballet, suggests Marsden Hartley, while such plastic and pantomimic beauty is native to our own continent."¹⁵⁸ In the body of the essay, the author explained that there is general ignorance about Indian dances among the American public and praised Hartley for fostering a national appreciation of this "disappearing splendor." A 1920 *El Palacio* article also lauded Hartley's ideas Pueblo ceremonials, reproducing large sections of the *Current Opinion* editorial.¹⁵⁹

Hartley himself picked out his essays about Indian dance as the most important product of his southwestern sojourn, as is evident in the passage from his autobiography with which I opened this chapter. While in New Mexico, Hartley bragged to Stieglitz, "I

¹⁵⁷ "The Red Man as the Supreme Artist of America," *Current Opinion* LXVIII, no. 3 (March 1920): 388.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*: 389.

¹⁵⁹ "Pageantry and Drama," *El Palacio* 8, no. 3/4 (March/April 1920): 86.

think my last article in *The Dial* ["Tribal Esthetics"] has made a big impression on the heads of the archaeological society here, who acclaim it the best thing ever written on the esthics [sic] of the indians [sic]..."¹⁶⁰ By October of 1919, Hartley fancied himself an expert on Indian aesthetics. Dr. Hewett, Hartley explained in a letter to Stieglitz, had recently read from his essays to a public crowd at Santa Fe's Museum of Fine Arts, during which Hewett proclaimed the artist to be a "true seer."¹⁶¹ "I am," Hartley continued, "the first painter to come down here and get the significance of the Indian. These papers are to come out as a series in Art and Archeology with photos of my own paintings. I have made a real impression on Hewett."¹⁶² The painting reproduced in this issue was *El Santo* (1919), a still life that includes blackware Pueblo pottery and that was sold to the Museum of New Mexico. It is interesting that this was the painting chosen for publication and purchase since the artist's essays promoted Indian dance over material culture. Hartley's proclivity for self-promotion elicits suspicion of the real impact of his work. Egocentricity aside, Hartley's essays about Pueblo ceremonials were indeed influential nationwide.

While Hartley repeated old tropes and perpetuated contemporary primitivist rhetoric, he also poignantly asked Anglo Americans to see Indian art, culture, and religion in a new, more appreciative, light. Hartley's descriptions of Indians and their dances—influenced by the politics of Indian policy, primitivism and cultural nationalism—impacted how the American intelligentsia thought about and represented Indian culture. In the ten years after these essays were published, Pueblo Indians would become popularly celebrated as a thriving group of cultural importance.

¹⁶⁰ Hartley to Stieglitz, January 8, 1919, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 532.

¹⁶¹ Hartley to Stieglitz, October 9, 1919, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 532.

¹⁶² Hartley to Stieglitz, October 9, 1919, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 532.

Chapter 3

Marsden Hartley's "Red Man" and Red Land: Painting the Indian-as-Landscape

I am an American discovering America. I like the position and I like the results. As a painter, I am impressed with the fact that America as landscape is, one may rightly say, untouched. I am getting my cue solely in the watersheds of the Rio Grande. I hear hints all around me of painted deserts, canyons, cliffs, and cliff dwellings, the original haunts of the redmen here precisely as they were before he discovered them, elementally at least.¹

--Marsden Hartley, 1918

In his 1918 essay, "America as Landscape," Marsden Hartley proclaimed that he was an American discovering America. The artist had good reason to print such a calculated statement of cultural nationalism. He was compelled to return home from Germany due to the First World War; once stateside, he struggled to find his place in the American art scene.

In 1911, Alfred Stieglitz had arranged for Hartley to study in Europe for one year. Aside from a short trip to New York City, the artist remained abroad through the outbreak of the war. While in Europe, Hartley had made his way to Berlin, where, since his arrival in May of 1912, he thrived personally and professionally. There he could be more open about his sexuality, he made contact with some of Europe's most progressive artists, and his paintings were critically well-received.² Hartley and Stieglitz, however,

¹ Marsden Hartley, "America as Landscape," *El Palacio* 21 (December 21, 1918): 340.

² Barbara Haskell, *Marsden Hartley* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, in association with New York University Press, 1980), 45.

were not seeing eye-to-eye about the benefits of the artist's extended stay abroad. Frustrated by Hartley's refusal to return home, an October 1913 letter from Stieglitz reveals that his patience was waning. The prodigal artist was cautioned: the money that was funding his European stay was American, and these patrons were wary of Hartley's disinterest in connecting with his homeland.³ Hartley was undeterred; a year later, he was still residing in Berlin via American financial support, and boldly wrote to Stieglitz that he had no intention of returning home.⁴ Nevertheless, by late-December of 1914, Hartley was forced back to the U.S. due to a food shortage in Berlin and a lack of money.

Once back in New York, Hartley faced an atmosphere of fierce anti-German sentiment. The artist was dismayed by what he deemed to be hysterical patriotism, which manifested itself as an affront to all things German.⁵ His prized Berlin "War Series" was met with a number of scathing reviews by New York critics due to his heavy-handed use of German militaristic imagery. Hartley prudently denied the personal and symbolic meanings of these paintings; nevertheless, when the works were shown in April of 1916 at Gallery 291, Henry McBride, art critic for *The Sun*, immediately recognized the thinly veiled references to the German army.⁶ More seriously, according to art historian Barbara Haskell, a *New York Times* correspondent came close to accusing the artist of a quasi-treasonous act for living in Germany and for immortalizing the Kaiser's

³ Alfred Stieglitz to Marsden Hartley, October 20, 1913, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 525. In a 1914 *Current Opinion* article, Hartley is among the American artists who were chastised by the author for having "deserted the land of their birth." "The Deceptive Lure of Europe for American Artists," *Current Opinion* LVI, no. 6 (June 1914).

⁴ Hartley wrote that he would stay in Berlin, in spite of an American embassy advisory that encouraged all Americans to return home. Hartley to Stieglitz, November 3, 1914, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 525.

⁵ Hartley had anticipated such an atmosphere even before he returned to the United States. See Hartley to Stieglitz, November 3, 1914 & November 12, 1914, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 525.

⁶ Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 54.

Royal guards.⁷ Hartley, who was particularly sensitive to harsh criticism, was left stunned and demoralized.

Between 1915 and 1918, Hartley followed a pattern of rootless relocation, living in New York, Croton-on-Hudson, Provincetown, and even Bermuda. In each new location, his spirits were initially lifted; inevitably, however, his enthusiasm faded into disappointment and depression. By 1917, as the U.S. entered the war, it became increasingly urgent for Hartley to define himself as American. In June of 1918, the artist set his sights on New Mexico. There, he undertook a campaign to rehabilitate his art and his reputation, sinking his energies into writing about and painting the American scene. It is in this context that Hartley wrote the proclamation with which I opened this chapter. In his New Mexico essays, Hartley willed himself to embrace his Americanness and attempted to define just what this Americanness entailed. A similar objective guided his paintings of the region.

In the previous chapter, I explored the political thrust of Hartley's New Mexico essays and argued that they were among the earliest published pleas for the preservation of American Indian cultural expressions. These essays provided a rhetorical foundation on which later artist-activists built their own texts that politicked for American Indian culture. I will now turn to Hartley's New Mexico landscape paintings, with particular attention paid to his 1919 oil, *New Mexico* (fig. 3.1). (Hereafter, *New Mexico* will be referred to as the Portland *New Mexico*).⁸ Hartley's "discovery" of an authentic America,

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ The titles for Hartley's landscape paintings have been taken from the following two catalogues: Patricia McDonnell, *Marsden Hartley: American Modern, exhibition at the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum* (Seattle: University of Minnesota, distributed by University of Washington Press, 1997), Gail Scott, *Marsden Hartley: New Mexico 1918-20: An American Discovering America* (New York: Alexandre Gallery, 2003). Since many of these paintings have titles that are the same or similar, when

as was discussed in his texts and is visually implied in his paintings, focused on two elements: the “untouched” New Mexican landscape, and the “red man,” who Hartley considered to be present in the land itself.⁹ Hartley painted the Indian-as-landscape; in his construction of the landscape, the artist visualized Indian dance as a catalyst by which the “red man” fused with the red land. This reading challenges the commonly held assumption that Hartley painted the New Mexican landscape “without reference to native culture.”¹⁰

Hartley’s impressions of Pueblo dance, as were articulated in his essays, affected how he experienced and painted the New Mexican landscape. In these essays, Hartley argued that Pueblo dance was genuinely American because it was rooted in the American soil. By painting the New Mexican landscape, Hartley tried to enact, or *perform*,¹¹ an analogous union between himself and the land in an attempt to create a form of American

possible, I distinguish each work by adding to its title a reference to its current location or medium. This work is located in the Portland Museum of Art, in Portland, Maine.

⁹ As I mentioned in chapter two, Hartley used both “red man” and “redman” to refer to American Indians in his essays. Throughout this chapter, when referring to Hartley’s conception of Indians, I will use “red man.”

¹⁰ Wanda Corn, “Marsden Hartley’s Native Amerika,” in *Marsden Hartley*, ed. Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser (New Haven and London: Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum of Art in association with Yale University Press, 2002), 82. Similarly, Heather Hole argues, “Once Hartley traveled to the Southwest, and began to paint landscapes, and not the stereotyped notion of the Southwest, he never painted the Indian body again.” Heather Hole, “‘America as Landscape’: Marsden Hartley and New Mexico, 1918-1924” (Princeton University, 2005), 21. And, Gail Scott writes, “Unlike so many of his contemporaries who came to the Southwest around this time, Hartley was not interested in representations or adaptation of Indian themes as subjects for his paintings.” Scott, *Marsden Hartley: New Mexico 1918-20: An American Discovering America*, n.p. Also see Gail Scott, ed., *The Collected Poems of Marsden Hartley, 1904-1943* (Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1987), 328.

¹¹ There is an important distinction to be made between my use of “performance” and “perform,” and Judith Butler’s theorization of “performativity.” See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990). Performativity is a politicized position through which Butler criticizes heterosexual assumptions in feminist theory. Butler postulates that “an internal essence of gender is manufactured through a sustained set of acts, posited through the gendered stylization of the body” (xv). Through repetitious enacting of gender, identity becomes internalized (152). Hartley’s performance of Indianness could never result in a similar internalization. Butler herself acknowledges the limits of her theory when dealing with issues of race, noting that her theory of performativity cannot be indiscriminately applied to colonial or post-colonial topics (ix).

modernist painting that was similarly rooted in a venerable landscape and thus authentic. In representing the Indian-as-landscape, Hartley helped to promote a new iconography for representing Indians, one which is resonant in many 1920s paintings of Pueblo ceremonial.

The Portland *New Mexico*, 1919¹²

In his oil painting, the Portland *New Mexico*, Hartley created an intriguing tension between dryness and fluidity. The work is awash with vibrant pigments that are, in places, sparingly applied, letting the canvas show through. The parched surfaces nevertheless glide; thin patches of colors merge into a slow moving current of greens, yellows, reds, and pinks. Emerging from this sea of pigment is a colony of intensely colored red mounds, fleshy forms bounded by lines of thick black paint. The aqua green patches floating around these desert islands provide the only hint of vegetation. Thick black paint encrusts the tips of the distant peaks, starkly dividing earth from sky, the latter of which is a pale reflection of the terrain below. The colors and handling of paint are emotive. Hartley endeavored to paint nature as he *experienced* it in order to capture its “essential reality.”¹³

Hartley’s sensuous interpretation of the southwestern landscape in the Portland *New Mexico* is not indicative of all his landscape paintings produced during his New

¹² In most publications, this work is dated as 1919, indicating it was painted during or just after Hartley’s stay in New Mexico. Hole, “America as Landscape’: Marsden Hartley and New Mexico, 1918-1924”, Scott, *Marsden Hartley: New Mexico 1918-20: An American Discovering America*. However, the Portland Museum of Art dates the work as 1919-1923, which implies that the work could have been completed in New Mexico, New York, or Germany. The work has none of the dark, even ominous, qualities of the New York or German *Recollections*. Its tenor and style date it closer to 1919. Thematically, stylistically, and ideologically, the work is the logical extension of Hartley’s New Mexico period.

¹³ Marsden Hartley, “Aesthetic Sincerity,” *El Palacio* V, no. 20 (December 9, 1918): 333.

Mexico period. In fact, Hartley's New Mexico landscapes in pastel and oil are aesthetically and ideologically diverse, the Portland *New Mexico* being among the most expressive. As a result, Hartley's interpretations of the region are often dismissed by critics as erratic, the result of the artist's failed attempts to paint a place with which he could not connect. It is more productive, however, to understand Hartley's ever-changing approach to the landscape as a *process* through which he digested (his word) his perceptions of and experience with New Mexico's overwhelmingly vast topography, while also trying to formulate an aesthetic that was both personally and nationally meaningful.¹⁴

Many of the central philosophical, aesthetic, and ideological concerns that guided Hartley's New Mexico texts and images are embedded in the Portland *New Mexico*. First, his New Mexico landscapes reveal his desire to capture the region's "essential reality," or a reality in which objective and subjective vision was united. In his pastels, Hartley first worked through this idea via the theories of Paul Cézanne and William James. In his landscapes in oil, Hartley expanded on this notion, and attempted to paint the land's vital impulse, revealing his continued interest in Henri Bergson's philosophy of *vitalism*. Second, Hartley's New Mexico production points to his understanding of the landscape as "embodied." Hartley's landscapes invoke the concept of embodiment in two distinct ways. Commingling theories of visual perception espoused by James and Bergson, Hartley sought to portray an experiential view of reality, one in which the artist and his subject acted upon one other. Thus, we can think of Hartley's paintings as performances of embodied perception, as is theorized by Marcel Merleau-Ponty, which

¹⁴ About the need to "digest" the landscape, Hartley wrote, "The sense of form in New Mexico is for me one of the profoundest, most original, and most beautiful I have personally experienced. It must be 'learned' in the sense of digesting, as one learns problems in geometry." Ibid.

results in the union of the subject-object.¹⁵ More concretely, Hartley anthropomorphized the landscape, sometimes describing its forms as bodily and attributing to these forms emotional states. Hartley personally connected with certain landscape forms, such as islands and mountains, which were portrayed by the artist as isolated and lonely. Therefore, these forms can also be understood as personifications of the artist; they are vehicles through which Hartley expressed his own fears and anxieties. Related to both notions of embodiment is a third concern that pervades Hartley's New Mexico landscapes: the conflation of the Indian and the land. Hartley perceived the Indian as being intimately and inextricably connected to the native soil, a perception with a long tradition in Anglo American texts and images. Significantly, Hartley understood this connection as being enacted in ceremonial dance, an idea that was frequently repeated in his New Mexico essays and was a guiding principle of his landscape paintings. These complex ideas coalesce in the Portland *New Mexico*.

Historiography: Marginalizing New Mexico

In her seminal 1980 catalogue for the Whitney Museum of American Art, entitled *Marsden Hartley*, Barbara Haskell set the tone for how subsequent scholars have approached Hartley's New Mexico landscapes. About the artist's landscapes in pastel, she assess, "While pleasant enough studies, these pastels display none of his expressive strength or abstract, decorative skill."¹⁶ Haskell classifies these works as almost direct transcriptions of sites in the region. Similarly, when addressing Hartley's landscapes in oil, Haskell argues that he painted the landscape "dispassionately, without intruding his

¹⁵ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964).

¹⁶ Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 58.

own feelings and emotions to the exclusion of objectivity.”¹⁷ Hartley’s New Mexico landscapes are deemed too literal, too tense, too subdued, and too impersonal for those scholars who find Hartley’s bright and loud pre-war German works to be his first artistic peak. In New Mexico, scholars argue, Hartley took a step backwards, turning away from modernist abstraction to represent the real.¹⁸

Like Haskell, most Hartley scholars argue that, while in New Mexico, the artist “fully adopts a realist and objective style,” in the words of Bruce Weber.¹⁹ Hartley is thus portrayed as trying to approach his subject without emotion and to evacuate his vision of subjectivity. Such a view misrepresents Hartley’s artistic intentions in New Mexico, and ignores theories about subjectivity and perception that were widely adopted by late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century modernists; theories that have been thoroughly discussed by scholars of European modernism.²⁰ As art historian Richard Shiff has explained with respect to critical misrepresentations of Paul Cézanne’s work, there is an important distinction to be made between “subjective” and “objective”

¹⁷ Ibid., 59.

¹⁸ See Ibid., 60. One of the first critics to make this claim was Elizabeth McCausland. In a 1960 exhibition catalogue, she described Hartley’s work as a “literal scientific transcript of nature.” Elizabeth McCausland, catalogue for *Marsden Hartley* (McMay Art Institute, San Francisco), found among the McCausland Papers, Archives of American Art, reel D273.

¹⁹ Bruce Weber, *The Heart of the Matter: The Still Lives of Marsden Hartley* (New York: Berry-Hill Galleries, Inc., 2003), 41. Likewise, Scott writes that, in New Mexico, Hartley sought a “new and much-needed objectivity and clarity.” Gail Scott, *Marsden Hartley* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1988), 69. A similar point is made by Bruce Robertson. See Bruce Robertson, *Marsden Hartley* (New York: Abrams in Association with the National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1995), 77.

²⁰ See Jonathan Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture* (MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, 1999), Richard Shiff, *Cezanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), Susan Sidlauskas, *Body, Place, and Self in Nineteenth-Century Painting* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Patricia MacDonnell’s discussion of Hartley’s engagement with Cézanne is notable among Hartley scholarship due to her nuanced treatment of what the American found provocative about the Frenchman’s approach to art making. Patricia MacDonnell, *Painting Berlin Stories: Marsden Hartley, Oscar Bluemner, and the First American Avant-Garde in Expressionist Berlin* (New York: Oxford, 2003), 70.

truths.²¹ Avant-garde artists, including Cézanne with his so-called fidelity to nature, believed that a subjective truth was as important as an objective one since every person saw the world through different eyes.²² As a devotee of Cézanne and as a modernist, Hartley was not attempting to render an objective or impersonal truth in his New Mexico works, but rather endeavored to capture a reality that entailed the simultaneous discovery of nature and self.²³

For Haskell, it was only after Hartley returned to New York, and revisited the subject of the New Mexican landscape, that he was able to powerfully translate this subject into paint.²⁴ Hartley scholars almost unanimously agree.²⁵ This presumption is consistent with arguments that insist the farther Hartley traveled away from his “home”—Maine/New England—the more at sea he was aesthetically and thematically (with the exception of his work in Berlin).²⁶ Hartley’s second artistic triumph, in keeping with a narrative that was first perpetuated by Alfred Stieglitz and his circle, could only occur in New England.²⁷ Hartley’s almost direct “transcription” of the landscape—terminology commandeered by critics from Hartley’s letters to Stieglitz²⁸—is thus deemed as an

²¹ Shiff, *Cezanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art*, 25.

²² *Ibid.*, 22.

²³ In his investigations of critical misrepresentations of Cézanne, Richard Shiff presents a similar argument. *Ibid.*, 223.

²⁴ Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 58.

²⁵ Gail Scott writes, “the full import of his experience is most evident in the paintings of New Mexico he did *after* he left the region.” Scott, *Marsden Hartley*, 69. Also see Robertson, *Marsden Hartley*, 77. In a small 2003 catalogue of Hartley’s New Mexico landscapes, Scott warms to these works, explaining that it was not Hartley’s intention to abandon abstraction altogether, but to marry it with “objectivity and clarity.” Scott, *Marsden Hartley: New Mexico 1918-20: An American Discovering America*.

²⁶ Heather Hole astutely points out that current scholarship glosses over the fact that much of Hartley’s “Maine” work was actually created in Nova Scotia. Hole, “‘America as Landscape’: Marsden Hartley and New Mexico, 1918-1924”, 12.

²⁷ Hole has noted this trend as well. *Ibid.*

²⁸ In January 1919 Hartley wrote, “I am finishing up the three or four canvases I began in Taos, which are nothing but true transcripts of places seen as I have a mania now for copying nature, believing it is

artistic failure, the direct result of his futile attempt to paint a location in which he, a son of Maine, did not belong.²⁹ Thus, Hartley's New Mexico work is derided "off track"³⁰ and "inconclusive."³¹

Criticisms of Hartley's New Mexico work stem from two entrenched ideas about early American modernism. First, there is a longstanding bias among scholars of American modernism against "regional" (e.g. non-East Coast) art production. In keeping with a position that Stuart Davis perpetuated after he worked in the region in 1923, scholars argue that New Mexico was simply not the right place for a serious modernist; it was a place for conservative and commercially minded artists who created "ethnographic" art.³² Second, scholars of early American modernism tend to privilege those moments in artists' careers that demonstrate a progression towards abstraction. Thus, much of the negative criticism of Hartley's New Mexico work is driven by the eclectic nature of his *oeuvre*. Hartley's career frustrates teleological ordering—he did not neatly work his way through realism and succeed with abstraction. Throughout his life, Hartley experimented with a wide range of aesthetic and ideological perspectives,

the only move to make for the time being." Hartley to Stieglitz, January 8, 1919 (Santa Fe), Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 8, box 22, folder 531.

²⁹ This is implied in Haskell's catalogue. Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 58. Robertson more forcefully makes this point, explaining, "Hartley bravely told himself that the truth lay in the land, but here again his reaction was less than inspired. His attempt to learn the landscape slowly, before he moved into a deeper vision, only betrayed the fact that he really felt nothing for it—as is evident in *New Mexico Landscape*." Robertson, *Marsden Hartley*, 77-78.

³⁰ McDonnell writes that the art Hartley created during the intermediary years between his Berlin War Series (circa 1914) and his late Maine painting (1930s) are "off track." McDonnell, *Painting Berlin Stories: Marsden Hartley, Oscar Bluemner, and the First American Avant-Garde in Expressionist Berlin*, 100.

³¹ Robertson, *Marsden Hartley*, 77.

³² In support of this claim, scholars often cite Stuart Davis, who had few positive words about his attempts to paint in New Mexico. Haskell quotes Davis as stating, "[T]he place itself was so interesting I don't think you could do much work there except in a literal way, because the place is always there in such a dominating way." Davis quoted in Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 58. Davis also derided New Mexico as "a place for an ethnologist, not an artist. Not sufficient intellectual stimulus. Forms made to order, to imitate." Davis quoted in Scott, *Marsden Hartley: New Mexico 1918-20: An American Discovering America*, n.p.

restlessly searching for an artistic voice that was at once rooted in the natural world, was personal, and could resonate with his audience.

Instead of understanding Hartley's New Mexico artistic production as a misguided turn from modernism, I propose that we investigate this body of work on its own terms. In paying closer attention to their theoretical and aesthetic nuances, and to their relationship to Hartley's writings, these works reveal themselves as provocative explorations of how to paint from nature and still infuse a work with meanings that are personal, regional, and national.³³

“Essential Reality”: Hartley's Landscapes in Pastel

Hartley gravitated towards pastels during his first weeks in New Mexico and continued working in this medium until he left the region in 1919. The artist moved to Taos in June of 1918, and stayed in the small town through October of that year. During this summer and fall, Hartley's work in pastel was prolific; only a handful of oil paintings were created during this period. In October, Hartley relocated to Santa Fe where he stayed until February 1919, at which time he fled to California for three months to escape the harsh winter. It was only after he returned to Santa Fe in the spring of 1919 that the artist began to focus his painterly attention on oils. As a result, pastels make up a large portion of his New Mexico *oeuvre*.

Arroyo Hondo, Valdez of 1918 (fig. 3.2) exemplifies Hartley's *in situ* pastels created near Taos. Named after an area located ten miles outside the small mountain town, the work appears to be an on-site sketch. Due to their portability, pastels were an

³³ I agree with Bruce Weber, who argues that Hartley viewed this new work as a progressive step forward, and not a “conservative retreat from abstraction.” Weber, *The Heart of the Matter: The Still Lives of Marsden Hartley*, 41.

ideal medium for Hartley as he explored the new terrain. Looking at *Arroyo Hondo, Valdez*, one can imagine the artist standing in the viewer's space, quickly capturing the major features of the land before him. The viewer's eyes are immediately drawn through the composition to Taos Mountain, a vibrant blue form that majestically resides in the background. Above the mountain is a grey line of storm clouds, regionally referred to as "walking rain." In contrast with the darkly rendered mountain, the pigment in the foreground is more loosely applied. Pastel is a medium that is well-suited for picturing desert topographies; it is effective in its ability to capture the muted tones and parched earth that characterizes the region.³⁴ To further accentuate the aridity of the land, much of the foreground of the composition was left bare; the use of manila-colored paper, on which earthy yellows, browns, and greens were sparsely applied, intensifies the sense of the earth's dryness.

Hartley's letters and writings from New Mexico reveal his renewed interest in the theories and art of Cézanne. Hartley had first immersed himself in literature about the French artist prior to the First World War. In the summer of 1911, having missed the Cézanne show at Stieglitz's Gallery 291, Hartley was reading Julius Meier-Graefe's monograph on the artist, and wrote to Stieglitz that he appreciated in Cézanne, "how personal one can become through striving to express the impersonal."³⁵ Hartley first saw

³⁴ Hartley brought to New Mexico a box of Girault's French pastels that he had purchased in Maine. Hartley to Stieglitz, June 20, 1918 (Santa Fe), Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531. Scholars have convincingly argued that Hartley chose to use pastels in New Mexico order to get the right color scheme and to accentuate the dryness of the landscape. See Jeanne Hokin, *Pinnacles & Pyramids: The Art of Marsden Hartley* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), 38, Hole, "'America as Landscape': Marsden Hartley and New Mexico, 1918-1924", 37.

³⁵ Hartley quoted in McDonnell, *Painting Berlin Stories: Marsden Hartley, Oscar Bluemner, and the First American Avant-Garde in Expressionist Berlin*, 70.

paintings by Cézanne in late 1911 or early 1912, at which time he was further exposed to the Frenchman's art and ideas through Max Weber.³⁶

It is tempting to make a formal comparison between Cézanne's work and Hartley's New Mexico landscapes, particularly since the American clearly had the French master in mind when approaching the subject in pastel. There is a loose, formal similarity between Hartley's pastels and a work like Cézanne's *Mont Sainte-Victoire* (fig. 3.3). The majority of Hartley's New Mexico landscapes are centered on a predominant mountain or mountain range, an illuminating choice since New Mexico is also marked by vast areas of flatland. As such, Hartley's *Arroyo Hondo, Valdez* could be understood as an homage to Cézanne's pictorial meditations on Mont Sainte-Victoire. The foreground hills in *Arroyo Hondo, Valdez* are rendered as a series of angular forms and the mountain in the background as a sculptural mass, its patches of white create a sense of angularity. In his 1918 pastels, Hartley was attempting to work out two related ideas, both of which he saw as indebted to Cézanne: the concept of solidity and of geometric essentials.

During his first year in the Southwest, Hartley was drawn to the concept of solidity, which he felt best characterized Cézanne's work. In his 1918 essay, "America as Landscape," Hartley wrote, "American painters must first learn to arrive at first-hand contact with [the landscape]. It shall not come by way of effete conventional methods. It is nearer in Cézanne because he ought to establish the quality of reality, the understanding of solidity."³⁷ In part, this statement was an attack on the academically-

³⁶ Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 22. During his first trip to Europe prior to the First World War, Hartley created a number of still life paintings in which he explored the French artist's principles. After these 1912 explorations, Hartley turned his attention to Cubism and German Expressionism.

³⁷ Hartley, "America as Landscape," 342. Earlier in the same essay, he wrote that he wanted to create "a sturdier kind of realism, as something that shall approach the solidity of the landscape itself." Hartley, "America as Landscape," 340.

trained members of the Taos Society, many of whom had adopted a style loosely indebted to Impressionism. Hartley argued that the essence of the Southwest's topography could not be evoked by such a surface style and that the landscape's sculptural qualities required an approach more akin to that of Cézanne, who Hartley understood as transcribing nature's "significant form."³⁸ Hartley fixated on the concept of solidity in order to present himself as avant-garde, to create a distinction between his work and that of academic artists in the region. One way to paint the land's solidity, Hartley believed, was to capture its essential geometric structure.

In his 1919 essay, "Beautiful Neglected Arts," Hartley explained his desire to represent the land's underlying geometry. He wrote, "Great art is born out of an understanding of life. The artist employs the inevitable harmonic law of the geometric principle of nature."³⁹ Hartley was experimenting with representing nature's universal structure, a scheme that has been attributed to Cézanne's work; nonetheless, comparing the visual manifestation of this idea in each artist's works yields only superficial information. It was not Hartley's intention for his works to *look* like Cézanne's; rather, Cézanne's ideas were a vehicle through which Hartley attempted to connect with nature. Thus, it is more productive to consider Hartley's interpretation of Cézanne's *process*, his approach to landscape painting. Also informative is scholarship that investigates Cézanne's techniques and attitude towards subjectivity.

³⁸ In his discussion of the shortcomings of New Mexico's artists, Hartley wrote, "but I do wonder for instance that the painters who are supposed to have an eye, a special eye for significant form, should miss so much of the esthetic significance of the so handsome forms in view." Hartley, "America as Landscape," 340.

³⁹ Marsden Hartley, "The Beautiful Neglected Arts: Satire and Seriousness," *The Little Review* VI, no. 2 (June 1919): 63.

Throughout his stay in New Mexico, Hartley wrote a number of letters to Stieglitz that serve to illuminate his artistic process. On November 20, 1918, around the time *Arroyo Hondo, Valdez* was created, the artist explained his new penchant for naturalism: “You see that I am copying nature for the present as closely as I can in my way, for that will be the only way I can get into the swing again for doing stronger things...The landscape here is simply superb, and the one thing that is necessary is to get it.”⁴⁰ While Hartley placed emphasis on representing nature with accuracy, *copying nature* was not his ultimate goal. Hartley’s *in situ* pastels were not intended as finished works; rather, through them he sought to orient himself to his new environment.⁴¹

In his discussion of Cézanne, Shiff argues that technical procedure can be a strategy intended to convey a preconceived message, and idea relevant to Hartley’s New Mexico pastels.⁴² The improvisational look of these pastels, Hartley’s focus on nature, and his claim to be “copying” this subject, all served to position him in the American art scene. Hartley understood Cézanne as an artist who was dedicated to nature and to his native soil, qualities that Hartley strove for in his New Mexico work. Much as Cézanne had spoken of becoming “classical” by way of nature,⁴³ Hartley would become American by way of nature. Not surprisingly, working from nature was a particular concern of the Stieglitz circle during this period. Art historian Wanda Corn explains that the Stieglitz

⁴⁰ Hartley to Stieglitz, November 20, 1918 (Santa Fe), Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531.

⁴¹ Such a process was typical of Hartley, who tended to absorb a place visually and mentally before painting it, often using preliminary drawing to do so. Hartley was not a *plein-air* painter, and thus his drawings were transformed into compositions in his studio. Kornhauser and Birkmaier note that Hartley often merged different sets of drawings into one painting. Stephan Kornhauser and Ulrich Birkmaier, “Marsden Hartley’s Materials and Working Methods” in Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser, ed., *Marsden Hartley* (New Haven and London: Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum of Art in association with Yale University Press, 2002), 268.

⁴² Shiff, *Cezanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art*, 199.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 125.

circle's favorite "code words" were "American," "Soil," and "Spirit": *American* was a term (or "brand-name") that the group used to gesture towards their dedication to creating a homegrown art, one that was *spiritually* driven and that was rooted in the American *soil*.⁴⁴ Thus, Hartley's return to landscape painting was a way to reconnect with this group. Not unlike Cézanne, through representing a site's unique features—e.g. the dryness of the land, the contours of Taos Mountain, the hints of vegetation between rolling hills, as is captured in *Arroyo Hondo, Valdez*—Hartley strove to indicate his submission to nature.⁴⁵ The improvisational *look* of these works substantiated this message.

In spite of Hartley's claim to be "copying" nature, his pastels were not intended to render a purely objective reality.⁴⁶ In keeping with his investigation of Cézannean principles,⁴⁷ he sought to present the union of his objective and subjective vision.⁴⁸ A

⁴⁴ Wanda Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1999), 31.

⁴⁵ Shiff, *Cezanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art*, 117.

⁴⁶ It is interesting that Cézanne also professed to be copying nature, to being painting what he saw. Jonathan Crary writes, in the last year of his life, Cézanne imaginatively reconfigured himself as mechanical, referring to himself as a "sensitized plate" and as a "recording machine." Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture*, 341.

⁴⁷ Hartley's understanding of Cézanne was one that met his artistic needs, and thus I use the term Cézannean to refer this assimilation and elaboration of ideas. My thinking on the issue of artistic influence has been nuanced by Michael Baxandall, who writes that "influence" is a "curse of art criticism," which renders passive the "inferential beholder" of a historical master. Baxandall encourages critics to use language that restores some agency to the painter, who actively engages an artist or work of art from the past. Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 58-59.

⁴⁸ Shiff explains that scholars have mistakenly linked the rendering of an impression to objectivity. He writes that this emphasis on an objective truth, on fidelity to nature, oversimplifies and distorts the decisive impressionist notion of truth, in which one's vision was both objective and subjective. Shiff, *Cezanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art*, 22. Similarly, Jonathan Crary argues, even as Cézanne sought "logic," his "study of nature" revealed to him "not objects and their relations but a nature never distinct from his own sensations and drives, a nature that was experienced as vibrations, animations, and chromatic reverberations." Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture*, 343.

year and a half after Hartley arrived in the Southwest, he further elaborated on his approach to the landscape in a letter to Stieglitz:

The work I am doing now anyone can 'see' if perhaps not fully understand. It has abstraction underneath it all now and that is what I was working towards and what I deliberately set out to do down here for this is the perfect realistic abstraction in landscape.⁴⁹

Hartley made a distinction between the superficial reality that one can see and nature's abstract and underlying structure, thus again invoking Cézannean ideas. These are ideas that he had been working out since he published "Aesthetic Sincerity" in 1918, in which he outlined what he felt should be the underlying principles of landscape painting. He explained, "there is among the sincerer types of ultra-modernists a convention towards the *essential reality*."⁵⁰ In making a distinction between "reality" and "essential reality," Hartley suggested that artists could create a more sincere form of representation by connecting with their subjects on a deeper level. Hartley continued, "Painters will have to learn to combine with a personal emotional reaction, a consistent relation of colour to the form that is visible here [in New Mexico]."⁵¹ To truly capture the landscape's underlying structure, one's vision of the subject had to be rooted in one's individual sensations and subjectivity. Hartley's ideas about representing nature were surprisingly consistent with Cézanne's. According to Shiff, what made Cézanne modern was that his determination to paint "what he sees" was not intended to be mimetic or imitative; rather, his vision and his technique was meant to express his own subjective temperament.⁵²

⁴⁹ Hartley to Stieglitz, October 9, 1919 (Santa Fe), Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531.

⁵⁰ My emphasis. Hartley, "Aesthetic Sincerity," 333.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Shiff, *Cezanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art*, 88. Cézanne expressed this position in a 1904 letter to a young admirer: "If the strong sensation of nature—as surely I have it—is the necessary basis of a conception of art...the knowledge of the means of expressing our emotion is no less essential, and is not acquired except through long periods of study." Cézanne quoted in Shiff, *Cezanne and the End of Impressionism: A*

Similarly, Hartley was drawn to the notion that objective and subjective perception could never be separated.

Cézanne was not the only source through which Hartley was exposed to theories of subjective perception, which were widely popularized during the late nineteenth century in Europe. America had its own champion of these ideas in William James, who theorized more systematically about the notions of subjective vision mentioned above. Art historian Patricia McDonnell convincingly argues that Hartley's prewar writings and art reveal his understanding of James's philosophy.⁵³ I contend that the artist continued to draw from this source through the 1920s; Hartley's interest in representing his sensations of, or subjective reactions to, nature in New Mexico was bolstered by his attraction to Jamesian ideas. Hartley had no tidy, unified philosophical approach to landscape painting in New Mexico. Thus, it is fruitful to explore the various intellectual tools that the artist turned to in order to make sense of, and transform into paint, a culture and topography unfamiliar to him.

By the first decade of the twentieth century, William James was something of an American cultural icon. The Harvard-trained philosopher posited a new vision of reality, one which theorized about the complexity of sensations. James developed a position that he called "radical empiricism," which was founded on the primacy sensation over claims

Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art, 188. About Cézanne's frequent use of the word "sensation" in his late letters, Shiff explains that "sensation" becomes analogous to "impression": "both experiences are simultaneously subjective and objective, interactions that imply the presence of both nature and self." Shiff, *Cezanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art*, 187-88.

⁵³ Patricia McDonnell addresses the impact this influence had on the artist's prewar German works. See Patricia McDonnell, "'Dictated by Life': Spirituality in the Art of Marsden Hartley and Wassily Kandinsky, 1910-1915," *Archives of American Art Journal* 29, no. 1/2 (1989): 33, McDonnell, *Painting Berlin Stories: Marsden Hartley, Oscar Bluemner, and the First American Avant-Garde in Expressionist Berlin*, 74-81.

about material reality.⁵⁴ Radical empiricism, distinct from everyday scientific empiricism, challenged the possibility of a detached study of the natural world. The world, for James, could never be frozen for absolute or objective analysis. He argued that the mere classifications of things, ontological truths, were “a most miserable and inadequate substitute for the fullness of the truth.”⁵⁵ In his 1890 treatise, *Principles of Psychology*, James reasoned, “*all reality, whether from the absolute or the practical point of view, is thus subjective, is ourselves...as thinkers with emotional reactions, we give what seems to us a still higher degree of reality to whatever things we select and emphasize and turn to* WITH A WILL.”⁵⁶ James proposed that any claims to truth would necessarily be affected by the mind of the observer since he saw the mind and nature as being inseparable.⁵⁷ James rejected the distinction between mind and matter, between subject and object, and instead accepted a world of experience.⁵⁸ Thus, James promoted an *experiential* view of reality.

⁵⁴ Henry Adams, "William James, Henry James, John La Farge, and the Foundations of Radical Empiricism," *American Art Journal* 17, no. 1 (Winter, 1985): 60.

⁵⁵ William James, "The Sentiment of Rationality (1879, 1882)," in *William James: The Essential Writings*, ed. Bruce E. Wilshire (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 26.

⁵⁶ Italics and capitalization original to the text. William James, "The Principles of Psychology (1890)," in *William James: The Essential Writings*, ed. Bruce E. Wilshire (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 141. Similarly, in "The Sentiment of Rationality," James countered a purely analytic approach to the world by explaining, "Any philosophy which annihilates the validity of the reference by explaining away its objects or translating them into terms of no emotional pertinency, leaves the mind with little to care or act for." James, "The Sentiment of Rationality (1879, 1882)," 36.

⁵⁷ James was responding to a longstanding debate between rationalists and empiricists. According to both camps, there are two sources of knowledge: experience (privileged by empiricists) and pure thought (promoted by the rationalists, such as Descartes). For an empiricist, such as James, to claim that one "knows" something is to have "experienced" it. Thus, James promotes pragmatism, which holds that we have no access to Truth; instead we can only know the world through our experience of it. For more information, see Bruce E. Wilshire, ed., *William James: The Essential Writings* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984).

⁵⁸ Adams, "William James, Henry James, John La Farge, and the Foundations of Radical Empiricism," 66. Also see "William James," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, plato.stanford.edu/entries/james.

The Jamesian conception of the mind-world relation had a significant impact on modern art.⁵⁹ Painters like Hartley were responsive to the idea that one could not objectively paint reality; rather, one's perception of the world was necessarily affected by how the mind shaped reality as one experienced it.⁶⁰ The notion of an experience independent object was de-emphasized; instead, concentration was focused on the internal action of consciousness through which one encounters the world. Those artists affiliated with Alfred Stieglitz were drawn to the idea that one's perceptions of the surrounding world—one's experiential reactions to the objects before one—produced the most accurate notion of reality.⁶¹ By the early 1910s, Hartley had read extensively from James's *Principles of Psychology*, and, as McDonnell had shown, the artist's prewar aesthetic theories reveal his interest in radical empiricism.⁶²

Whereas most scholars understand Hartley's work in New Mexico as breaking from such philosophical concerns,⁶³ I argue that the artist had a continued interest in the theories of James during his stay in New Mexico.⁶⁴ This interest was carried into the

⁵⁹ I say "Jamesian" because artists tend to be selective in their emphasis on ideas from philosophical texts, often simplifying or molding these ideas to meet their aesthetic needs. This issue is addressed by Michael Baxandall. Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*, 76-78.

⁶⁰ William James, *Principles of Psychology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981, originally published in 1890), 924.

⁶¹ James argued, whereas pragmatists conceive of reality as "still in the making," rationalists believe that reality is "ready-made." William James, *Pragmatism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979, originally published in 1907).

⁶² Patricia McDonnell addresses the impact this influence had on the artist's prewar German works. See McDonnell, "'Dictated by Life': Spirituality in the Art of Marsden Hartley and Wassily Kandinsky, 1910-1915," 33, McDonnell, *Painting Berlin Stories: Marsden Hartley, Oscar Bluemner, and the First American Avant-Garde in Expressionist Berlin*, 74-81.

⁶³ See McDonnell, *Marsden Hartley: American Modern, exhibition at the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum*, 56. Also see, Robertson, *Marsden Hartley*, 75.

⁶⁴ In a 1918 letter to Stieglitz, Hartley dramatically wrote that in order to recreate himself, "I want to give up all worthless intellectual and philosophical deductions, to get into the flow of things again..." Hartley to Stieglitz, August 1, 1918 (Taos), Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531. In spite of this statement, Hartley is working through the New Mexico landscape both intellectually and philosophically. In this letter, Hartley was trying to separate himself from his aesthetic concerns while

years after he left the region. In his 1921 essay, "Dissertation on Modern Painting," explained: "Art is the exact personal appreciation of things seen, heard, or felt in terms of itself. To copy life is merely to become the photography of life, and so it is we have the multitude in imitation of itself ...To illustrate external things means nothing"⁶⁵ Once again, Hartley explained that a good artist did not copy the world as he *saw* it, but rather represented the world as he *experienced* it. In keeping with a Jamesian notion of experience, and its potential for understanding a greater reality, Hartley argued that an artist's rendering of the world had to be the result of his own subjective perceptions, of *things seen, heard, or felt in terms of itself*. A year later, Hartley reiterated the importance of an experiential view of reality. Cézanne and Whitman, he wrote, were among the most provocative artistic models because they "have voiced most of all the imperative need of essential personalism, of direct expression out of direct experience..."⁶⁶

Throughout his time in the Southwest, Hartley grappled with how to paint what he deemed to be the sculptural quality of the New Mexican topography—a quality that he argued "conservative" artists had failed to see—while also capturing his unique, subjective perception of the landscape. As he spent more time in the region, his interest in solidity broke down and became secondary to a pervasive dynamism; as a result, his works became more organic and fluid. This transformation is manifest in Hartley's 1919 pastel, *Landscape No. 8* (fig. 3.4), in which there is interplay between solidity and

in Berlin, where he explored Kandinsky's concept of "inner necessity." The letter can be understood as motivated by the artist's struggle to regain Steiglitz's confidence. Hartley implied that he would no longer follow his inner necessity, but rather would work from nature, from his home soil.

⁶⁵ Marsden Hartley, "Dissertation on Modern Painting (1921)," in *On Art*, ed. Gail Scott (New York: Horizon Press, 1988), 68.

⁶⁶ Marsden Hartley, *Adventures in the Arts: Informal Chapters on Painters, Vaudeville, and Poets* (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1972, originally printed in 1922), 36.

fluidity. Hartley's experimentation with the notion of solidity is evident in his use of thick black outlines and in the rigidity of the triangular mountains. Nevertheless, the composition is not static. The geometric patches of color that lay in the flat foreground crawl up the angular mountainscape, becoming more organic as they ascend. The masses of oranges and pinks then crystallize, transforming into dark peaks of blues and greens. The animated quality found in passages of *Landscape No. 8* is more fully realized in Hartley's landscapes in oil. In his oils, he became increasingly comfortable with depicting a dynamic and experiential reality, and explored the notion of an embodied landscape.

Hartley's Pulsing Realizations

In Hartley's New Mexico landscapes in oil, he animated the land, imagining nature as a living organism. This perspective took time to develop. In his 1919 painting, the Curtis *New Mexico Landscape* (fig. 3.5),⁶⁷ Hartley continued to grapple with issues that he was trying to work out in pastels like *Landscape No. 8*. The Curtis *New Mexico Landscape* seems fraught: one feels the tension between the artist's desire to render the "solidity" of the landscape, to give it structure, and to paint a more intuitive and organic vision. The Curtis painting retains some of the qualities found in *Landscape No. 8*, including strong black outlining, swatches of vibrant colors, and geometric shapes. The foreground is defined by a flat plain, on which rests multicolored shrubbery and rectangular forms. These forms are repeated in the wall of the curving arroyo, or river bed, and in the barn-like elements that reside beyond the arroyo. Through these geometric

⁶⁷ This work is located in the Curtis Galleries, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The title most often listed is *New Mexico Landscape*. Scott, *Marsden Hartley: New Mexico 1918-20: An American Discovering America*, n.p.

elements, Hartley attempted to give the composition structure; nevertheless, this structure was undermined by his conflicting desire to capture the rhythmic current of nature. The dried bed of the arroyo is painted as a river of earth that flows towards the viewer. From the land in the distance grows a supple colony of triangular hills. The landscape in the Curtis work is painted as organic and pulsing, or, one might say, as vitalistic.

Hartley's landscapes in oil present a vitalistic conception of nature. Many of those American intellectuals who were drawn to the theories of James in the first decade of the twentieth century, also had an interest in the ideas espoused by the French philosopher, Henri Bergson. James met Bergson in London in 1908, and is largely credited with introducing the Frenchman's ideas to American academic circles soon thereafter.⁶⁸ The Stieglitz circle artists, including Hartley, were taken with Bergson's writings.⁶⁹ Notably, extracts from Bergson's writings were published in 1911 and 1912 issues of *Camera Work*.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Bergson and James were intellectual allies. James, in fact, was the first scholar to attempt to prepare an English translation of Bergson's *Creative Evolution*. Bergson gave a lecture at Columbia University in 1912, and returned in 1917 to give another at Vanderbilt. After his U.S. introduction, Bergson's work became immensely popular, as is evident from numerous articles published about him in *The New York Times*, including (in chronological order): "The Latest "Philosophy's Popularity" (April 16, 1911); "The Latest Philosophers" (August 20, 1911); "New Philosophy in London" (October 22, 1911); "What Makes Us Laugh?" (March 2, 1912); "Bergson Says World Needs a New System of Ethics (March 10, 1912); "Henri Bergson (May 26, 1912); "Bergson Believes in Intuition" (February 7, 1913); and the list continues.

⁶⁹ According to Elizabeth Kornhauser, Hartley read broadly from Bergson while in Paris in 1912, which complimented his admiration of the ideas of James. Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser, "Marsden Hartley, 'Gaunt Eagle from the Hills of Maine'," in *Marsden Hartley*, ed. Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser (New Haven and London: Wadsworth Athenaeum Museum of Art in association with Yale University Press, 2002), 18. McDonnell also investigates Hartley's engagement with Bergson. See McDonnell, *Painting Berlin Stories: Marsden Hartley, Oscar Bluemner, and the First American Avant-Garde in Expressionist Berlin*, 52. A number of scholars discuss the Stieglitz Circle's attraction to Bergson's theories. See Sarah Greenough, "From the American Earth: Alfred Stieglitz's Photographs of Apples," *Art Journal* 41, no. 1 (Spring, 1981): 46-54, Judith Zilczer, "'Light Coming on the Plains: O' Keeffe's Sunrise Series," *Artibus et Historiae* 20, no. 40 (1999): 191-208.

⁷⁰ Henri Bergson, "An Extract from Bergson" [From *Creative Evolution*], *Camera Work* no. 36 (October 1911), 20-21. Henri Bergson, "What is the Object of Art" [from *Laughter*], *Camera Work* no. 37 (January 1912), 22-26.

In his 1907 book, *Creative Evolution* (translated into English in 1911), Bergson presented a theory of vitalism, which relied on two intertwined concepts: “duration” and the *élan vital*. Challenging the notion of “clock time,” which is mathematical and objectively measurable, Bergson posited the concept of “duration,” or the individual, subjective experience of time. “Duration,” Bergson explained, “is the continuous progress of the past which gnaws into the future and which swells as it advances.”⁷¹ Duration is the prolongation of the past into the present, active and irreversible.⁷² This concept was certainly well-suited for a place like New Mexico, which had become a symbol of America’s archaic past; the region was produced as a signifier of what Homi Bhabha calls the “discursive past-in-present.”⁷³ Thus, Hartley’s New Mexico landscapes can be understood as swelling with the continuous past; a past, in Bergsonian terms, that follows every instance and is felt by one in his consciousness in the present.

While the concept of duration is relevant to Hartley’s New Mexico work, Bergson’s interrelated theory of the *élan vital* is more powerfully evoked. The term *élan vital*, which loosely translates as vital impulse, vital impetus, or vital force, was coined in Bergson’s *Creative Evolution* and is the driving concept of vitalism. Bergson theorized that a vital impulse or “current of life” ran through, and could be activated in, all matter.⁷⁴ Bergson believed that all living things, animal and vegetable, were generated from the same “original impetus of life,” and thus that all life was connected.⁷⁵ “Regarded from this point of view,” Bergson wrote, “*life is like a current passing from germ to germ*

⁷¹ Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution* (New York: Cosimo, Inc., 2005, originally published in 1911), 7.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 20.

⁷³ Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 186.

⁷⁴ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 277.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 97, 113.

through the medium of a developed organism."⁷⁶ For Bergson, animal (including humans) and vegetable matter represented the two great divergent developments of life; although the plant is distinguished by its "fixity and insensibility, movement and consciousness sleep in it as recollections which may awaken."⁷⁷ It is intuition that gives one access to a thing's internal reality, to the vital impulse that lies dormant in it.⁷⁸ Bergson's focus on intuition was similar to James's emphasis on experience; both intuition and experience offered a means for connecting with a reality, which both philosophers argued could not be rationally described and defined.

As was discussed with respect to James, most Hartley scholars argue that the artist turned away from philosophical concerns after the First World War. However, his New Mexico essays reveal his continued interest in Bergsonian ideas. In "Aesthetic Sincerity," he wrote that painters should "submit to the idea of personal reaction via nature," they should "consult the rhythms of nature as they exist."⁷⁹ Hartley believed that nature's impulses could be understood if one was committed to a subjective, or experiential, vision of the world before one. Hartley worked through similar ideas in *Adventures in the Arts* (1921).⁸⁰ In a chapter entitled, "Cézanne and Whitman," Hartley argued that the French master's successfully evoked a vitalistic tendency in nature:

⁷⁶ Italics original to the text. Ibid., 32.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 131.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 165. A challenge to the notion that intellect and intuition were diametrically opposed, Bergson argued that the world could only be experienced, and thus understood, through both. He explained, "*There are things that intelligence alone is able to seek, but which, by itself, it will never find. These things instinct alone could find; but it will never seek them.*" Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 167. Whereas an intellectual approach could only yield external and empty knowledge, it is through the intellect that one knew what to seek. Even while Bergson aimed to bridge the schism between intellect and instinct, instinctive knowledge was privileged, since Bergson believed that such knowledge is rooted in the very unity of life. Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 184.

⁷⁹ Hartley, "Aesthetic Sincerity," 333.

⁸⁰ Hartley, *Adventures in the Arts: Informal Chapters on Painters, Vaudeville, and Poets*. This book is a compilation of essays based on ideas that the artist had been working out for a number of years. For

...that trees and hills and valleys and people were not something sitting still for his special delectation, but that they were constantly aspiring to fruition, either physical, mental, or let us say spiritual, even when the word is applied to the so-termed inanimate objects. He felt the 'palpitaney,' the breathing of all things, the urge outwards of all life towards the light which helps it create and recreate itself.⁸¹

For Hartley, Cézanne's work captured the palpable life force in all things, animate and inanimate. Cézanne's hills, trees, people *breath*; they aspire to come to life. Later in the same essay, Hartley continued with a vitalistic interpretation of Cézanne's still lifes. They are not "cold studies of inanimate things," he explained, "they are *pulsing realizations* of living substances striving towards each other, lending each other their individual activities, until his canvases become, as one might name them, ensembles of animation, orchestrated life."⁸²

Like his essays, Hartley's landscape paintings evidence his interest in vitalism. In the Curtis *New Mexico Landscape*, the land is infused with the *current of life*: the earthen floor shifts and moves, the land slowly stirs from its petrified state. These qualities were more fully worked through in the oils that Hartley completed around the time he left New Mexico. Through them, Hartley attempted to connect with the land, to awaken in it its consciousness and movement.⁸³

instance, the chapter on vaudeville was also published in 1920 in *The Dial*. Marsden Hartley, "Vaudeville," *The Dial* (March 1920).

⁸¹ "Cézanne and Whitman," Hartley, *Adventures in the Arts: Informal Chapters on Painters, Vaudeville, and Poets*, 33.

⁸² My emphasis. Ibid. Jonathan Crary sees a similar connection. He writes that Cézanne's late paintings "fulfill, perhaps extravagantly exceed Bergson's hypothesis of an 'attention to life' in their disclosure of a world that resolves itself 'into numberless vibrations, all linked together in uninterrupted continuity, all bound up with each other, and traveling in every direction like shivers through an immense body.'" Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture*, 357.

⁸³ Art historian Gray Sweeney argues that a vitalistic view of nature has a long tradition in American landscape painting. He explores what he calls "emblematic personification" as an important trope in the work of Thomas Cole and the Hudson River School. J. Gray Sweeney, "The Nude Landscape

“Red Man”/ Red Land

As Hartley became more familiar with the landscape, why did his focus shift from an emphasis on solidity and structure to the experimentation with the visualization of vitalism, through which his landscapes became more fluid and organic? Hartley's shifting perception of the land can be rooted in his enthusiasm for Pueblo dance. For Hartley, the union between Indian and nature was both performed and reified in their ceremonial dances. Hartley understood Indian dance as being in sync with nature's rhythms; he believed that Indians had an innate understanding of the vital force of life. To this effect, Hartley wrote about the Santo Domingo Corn Dance: “[The Indian] is necessary to himself, therefore necessary to the principles of human expression. The sense of beauty is a *vital essential*, since nature has shown him the way.”⁸⁴

Hartley's animated, or even anthropomorphic, vision of the New Mexico landscape is related to his conflation of the Indian body and nature. Hartley painted the Indian-as-landscape; the sights, sounds, and feelings evoked by Pueblo ceremonials, as were described in his essays, found their visual equivalents in his landscape paintings. In his New Mexico essays, Hartley wrote about Indian ceremonials in visual terms; the rhetoric he used to describe these events in his texts parallels the pictorial language used in his art. I am not suggesting a one-to-one relationship between a particular text and painting. Rather, I argue that Hartley's understanding of Pueblo ceremonials and his construction of Indianness guided how he conceptualized the landscape in paint.

Painting: Emblematic Personification in the Art of the Hudson River School," *Smithsonian Studies in American Art* 3, no. 4 (Autumn 1989): 42-65.

⁸⁴ My emphasis. Marsden Hartley, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo," *Art and Archaeology* 13 (March 1922): 117.

As was discussed in chapter two, Hartley's essays about Indian ceremonials were premised on the primitivist idea that Pueblo people had an intuitive understanding of and a natural connection to the land.⁸⁵ To this effect Hartley wrote:

[H]e is at all times the natural actor, the natural expresser of indications and suggestions derived from the great theme of nature which occupies his mind, and body, and soul. His acting is invented by himself for the purposes of his own, and it is nature that gives him the sign and symbol for the expression of life as a synthesis.⁸⁶

The Indian dancer was thus constructed as an innate artist, a "natural actor," who instinctively drew his art from the rhythms of nature. The Indian not only consulted nature, he *was* nature. In the watersheds of the Rio Grande, Hartley imagined the Indian as ever-present. Similarly, he believed that ceremonials dances were not simply rituals that mimic natural phenomena, they were natural. Hartley described the Pueblo Dance of Mercy as, "written in the very language of the sun and the moon and the sky, the birds and the flowers, rain and running rivers, and that it was in this tongue that they might surely speak with each other to a perfect understanding."⁸⁷ Nature inhabited the Indian, it was part of who he was, and it was only through nature that the Indian could articulate the meaning of his existence.

This construction of Indianness was popular among artists, writers, and anthropologists working in the 1910s and 1920s. For instance, in an article contemporaneous to "Red Man Ceremonials," anthropologist Edgar Hewett claimed, "The [Indian] race took its character from the soil. Its physical being, its unique

⁸⁵ While the land-Indian connection is in keeping with primitivist ideas, it is also relevant to American Indian religion. According to Dozier, in the traditional Pueblo world view, life is interrelated, balanced and interdependent. He writes, "Man is partner with nature and takes part in a reciprocal relationship with the natural world." Edward P. Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America* (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 1970), 151.

⁸⁶ Marsden Hartley, "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," *Art and Archaeology* 9 (January 1920): 9.

⁸⁷ Marsden Hartley, "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," *El Palacio* VI, no. 4 (February 8, 1919): 54.

mentality, related intimately to nature.”⁸⁸ Hewett was drawing from theories of environmental determinism, which ethnologists used to explain the unique aspects of Indians’ physiology and culture. The idea that a race’s environment played a significant role in its biological and social development was popular during the first decades of the century. For instance, in his 1907 book, *The American Indian*, A. F. Fynn, who was working within a framework of evolutionary theory, argued, “Environment reaches to the very heart of the life experiences of both the individual and the race. Latitude, oceans, plains, forests, rivers, heat, humidity, and a score of other physiographical influences, general and local, are ever present to modify human pursuits, progress, and destiny.”⁸⁹

The conflation of the Indian and nature was not unique to primitivism or to early-twentieth-century anthropology. This trope has a long tradition in American literature and art, and is particularly rooted in expansionist imagery from the nineteenth century. In mid-nineteenth-century landscape paintings of the American West, representations of Indians were coded by the needs of imperialist expansion and intensifying nationalism. Expansionist aims were legitimated by representations of the “bad” Indian—savage and uncivilized—who were linked to the untamed wilderness. Manifest Destiny demanded that the landscape/Indian be aggressively subdued for the sake of American progress.⁹⁰ As the landscape was dominated and domesticated, it was believed that the Indian would quietly vanish via extinction or absorption. By the late-nineteenth-century, images of savage Indians were less popular, as “good” Indians, celebrated as a children of nature,

⁸⁸ Edgar L. Hewett, “America in the Evolution of Human Society,” *Art and Archaeology* IX, no. 1 (January 1920): 4.

⁸⁹ A. F. Fynn, *The American Indian: As a Product of Environment With Special Reference to the Pueblos* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1907), 8.

⁹⁰ William H. Truettner, “Ideology and Image: Justifying Westward Expansion,” in *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920*, ed. William Truettner (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art by the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 44.

took hold of the public imagination. The shift in imagery, as William Truettner has shown, coincided with a decrease in violent conflicts between Anglos and Indians.⁹¹ The “good” Indian was perceived as being at one with the natural landscape, a connection that was idealized among those who lamented white society’s subservience to industrial production, urbanity, and materialism.

The link fostered between the American Indian and the land was wrapped up in the nation’s struggle to establish for itself unique an identity and a noble heritage. Angela Miller argues that with no ancient history of its own, during the eighteen and nineteenth centuries, the virtues of Anglo American society were drawn from the continent itself.⁹² By the turn of the century, a new twist was added to this myth. As was discussed in chapter two, cultural nationalists pointed to America’s majestic topography as a source of national pride, but also argued that America too had a long and venerable ancient heritage exemplified by the American Indian, particularly the Pueblo Indian. Indians—children of nature and first peoples—were thus Americanized.

Hartley expanded on the Indian-land connection. In his essays and paintings, he explicitly conflated the *body* of the “red man” with the red land. In “Red Man Ceremonials,” Hartley wrote, “[The Indian] has for so long decorated his body with the hues of the earth that he has grown to be a part of them. He is a living embodiment in color of the various tonal characteristics of the landscape around him.”⁹³ It is significant

⁹¹ Ibid. Also see Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Art of Industrialization, 1800-1890*. (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1986).

⁹² Angela Miller, *Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825-1875* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 22.

⁹³ Hartley, “Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics,” 10. Similarly, in a 1918 letter to Stieglitz, Hartley wrote that he wanted to get away from Taos so he could paint the “chocolate brown” mesas, which were surrounded by blue and “Indian red” earth. Hartley to Stieglitz, June 24, 1918. Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531.

that Hartley referred to American Indians as “redmen” well after the popularity of this term had waned.⁹⁴ Was he calling attention to the redness of the Indian in order to link the Indian and New Mexico’s red land (the region is known for the redness of its soil)? Or, was the artist attempting to evoke the picturesque qualities of his subject?⁹⁵ Hartley’s recollections of ceremonials were couched in pictorial language, and thus are surprisingly suitable as descriptions of his landscape paintings. Take, for instance, Hartley’s impressions of the Dance of Mercy as recounted in “Tribal Esthetic Dance Drama”:

[The dance’s] protagonists are two men of excellent physique, and of very gifted powers of expression—the body of each of them painted in halves, one half of warm tawny reddish earth tone with black stripes painted tigerlike at intervals down the entire right half; the other half a light greenish hue; eyes heavily striped with blue and yellow rays with small dots of red now and then close to them—each holding a strange kind of shield shape, or rich colors, somewhat decorated, with many trappings suspended from the head-dress.⁹⁶

Hartley’s descriptions of Indian ceremonials repeatedly referenced the redness of Indian dancers, the earthen tones of their body paint, the green accents provided by the branches they held, and the delicate balance of black and white that characterized the dances. As the artist stood in front of the land, and tried to capture its essence, his experiences at Indian ceremonials influenced his vision. Indeed, the description of the Dance of Mercy finds a visual equivalent in the Portland *New Mexico*. The center of the composition is focused on a striking geological formation of “tawny reddish earth tone” that is characterized by “tigerlike” black stripes. The color scheme of the painting—with its

⁹⁴ After 1900, “Indian” was the term most often used in the popular press. The intellectual community, in particular, tended not use “red man.” By 1921, John Sloan and Mary Austin referred to American Indians as “Amerindian.”

⁹⁵ I use “subject” in this case as a reminder of the power relations Hartley invoked when referring to the Indian as a “red man.”

⁹⁶ Hartley, “Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama,” 54.

light greenish hues, yellow rays, and stripes of blue in the distant sky—further overlaps with Hartley’s description of the Dance of Mercy.

The Portland *New Mexico* is analogous to descriptions of ceremonial dancers in Hartley’s other essays as well. It evokes those “strong muscular bodies, fine specimen of manly vigor, superbly painted in earthen hues of deep Indian red, pale ochrous [sic] yellow, light brown and soft tawny pink, some of them tinted with stone grey, and touched now and then with tints of sinister blue,” as Indian dancers were portrayed in his essay, “The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos Pueblo.”⁹⁷ Hartley’s vivid description of the “red man” painted for the Tesuque Buffalo Dance, in his essay “Red Man Ceremonials,” also synchronizes with the Portland *New Mexico*. About the dance, he noted:

You find even the white starlike splashes here and there on backs, breasts and arms coinciding splendidly with the flecks of eagles-down [sic] that quiver in the wind down their black bodies, and the long black hair of the accompanying hunter, as flecks of foam would rise from waterfalls of dark mountainous streams....⁹⁸

In the Portland *New Mexico*, one finds splashes of white in the foreground, on the geological formation in the middle ground, and on the distant peaks. The thick black stripes down the sides of the mountainous forms now recall black hair against dark bodies. The luminous crimson landscape is the anthropomorphized dancing “red man.”

In Hartley’s 1919 poem, “The Festival Corn,” he more provocatively linked the Indian body and nature. As was presented in chapter two, the climax of the poem reads:

Beat of the tom-tom in ears! Thud-thud
of multitudinous red feet on solar
plexus! Red fire burning very eye
lids with young red heats! The last saps
of the red-man are pouring down

⁹⁷ Marsden Hartley, “The Scientific Esthetic of the Red Man, Part II: The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos,” *Art and Archaeology* 14 (September 1922): 137.

⁹⁸ The awkward sentence structure is original to the text. Hartley, “Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics,” 10.

thighs and arms. The young red blood
is dripping from the flanks of laughing
red bodies aching with the sensuousness
of the passing pagan hour.⁹⁹

The poem calls to mind the Portland *New Mexico*, as well as Hartley's sensuously painted 1919 Newsprint *New Mexico Landscape* (fig. 3.6).¹⁰⁰ The latter work seems to glow with an intensity that mirrors the imagery of the poem. Shades of red and pink pour down the swelling corporal forms. The glowing yellows of the setting sun are reflected in the earth. Sky, mountains, and desert floor merge into a unified, expressive composition. The far hills, subtly outlined in black and grey, touch the expansive vermillion and yellow sky. In the middle of the composition one finds families of flaccid peaks, bodies encased in, and defined by black paint, drifting in a sea of pigment.

While Hartley was taken with the picturesque qualities of Pueblo ceremonials, he was even more struck by the unique rhythms of their drums and dancers. It was rhythm, in fact, that Hartley found to be the most important, original, and provocative aspect of Indian ceremonials. To this effect, in "Red Man Ceremonials," Hartley wrote:

It is the incomparable understanding of their own inventive rhythms that inspire and impress you as a spectator. It is the swift comprehension of change in rhythm given [to] them by the drummers, the speedy response of their so living pulsating bodies, the irresistible rapport with the varying themes, that thrills and invites you to remain close to the picture. They know, as perfect artists would know, the essential value of the materials at their disposal, and the eye for harmonic relationships is as keen as the impeccable gift for rhythm that is theirs.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Marsden Hartley, "The Festival of Corn," in *The Turquoise Trail: An Anthology of New Mexico Poetry*, ed. Alice Corbin Henderson (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928), 49. Also see Marsden Hartley, "The Festival of Corn," in *The Collected Poems of Marsden Hartley*, ed. Gail Scott (Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 1987). This poem is a meditation on the Santo Domingo Corn Dance. It is interesting that Hartley used highly sexualized imagery. The poem seems to be in the tradition of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, a book that Hartley read repeatedly as a young man. The poem is suggestive of same-sex love and recalls Whitman's "Song of Myself."

¹⁰⁰ Oil on newsprint mounted to canvas. Private Collection.

¹⁰¹ Hartley, "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," 10. In a 1922 essay, Hartley reiterated this position, writing that Indians "are all rhythmists of the first order. You will go far to find a better sense of original rhythms than is displayed by the redman. He is unquestionably

For Hartley, the Indian was an artist of the first order because he drew from the earth inspiration for the rhythms of his dance. Hartley tried to capture the tempo and rhythm of Pueblo ceremonials in his landscape paintings, yet again evoking the connection of the Indian and the land.¹⁰² The Portland *New Mexico* evokes the rhythm of ceremonial dance; the distant peaks keep the tempo of drums, a rhythm that is repeated in the successive black lines of the central red land formation. Hartley's allusions to the rhythmic structure of ceremonial dances are even more apparent in the Curtis *New Mexico Landscape* and the Whitney *New Mexico Landscape* of 1919-1920 (fig. 3.7). In the Curtis work, the mounds throb in successive order, metrically coming to a soft crescendo. This quality was intensified in the Whitney work; behind the arroyo, hills pulse in measured succession, swelling and surging into a frenzied climax. The mountain peaks in the distance find their double in the clouds above; the stark lines created by the clouds perhaps meant to visualize the phenomena of "walking rain." Both paintings encourage a synesthetic response; each mound becomes a beat, the mountain range becomes the drummer's rhythm to which the "living pulsating bodies" respond.¹⁰³

one of the finest dancers of history." Hartley, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Red Man, Part II: The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos," 139.

¹⁰² Nearly all Pueblo songs contain repetitious patterns of pitches. Songs are either steady in tempo or gradually speed up and become subtly louder; they are subdivided by accents in percussion accompaniment or in a change the in volume of the singers' voices. Music in ritual or ceremonials often functions to mediate between man, the spiritual realm, and the physical world. Chris Goertzen, "Song," in Suzanne Crawford and Dennis Kelley, eds., *American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia*, vol. 3 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 1004. Drums also play a central role in Pueblo ceremonials. Certain types of powers are said to reside in the drum, which are called forth when the drum is "given voice" by its player. Erica Hurwitz Andrus, in Crawford and Kelley, eds., *American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia*, 249. For more about Pueblo religion, see Byron Harvey, III, "An Overview of Pueblo Religion," in Alfonso Ortiz, ed., *New Perspectives on the Pueblos* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972), 197-217.

¹⁰³ Hartley, "Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics," 10.

Like the Portland *New Mexico*, there is something organic, if not bodily, about both the Curtis and the Whitney works. As previously mentioned, in his essays and poems about Pueblo ceremonials, Hartley saw the rhythms of Indian dance as in-sync with the pulse of nature. This rhythmic pulse informed the structure and imagery of Hartley's poem, "The Festival of Corn." In one passage Hartley wrote:

A girl, a boy, a girl, a boy, a girl.
A man, a boy, a man, a boy, a man.
Long lines of wondrous dark flesh
Turning towards the ash-gold dancing place.

Pom, pom, pom, pom, pom, pom:
The rawhide drum was muttering, as the macaw
Feathers of the ceremonial rod waved
In the summer wind.
Crimson macaw-tails, and a coyote's skin
Were trembling to the aria of the young corn.¹⁰⁴

The poem's language and layout simulates long lines of dancers, who move in measured unison to beating drums. The Whitney work also visualizes the succinct movement of the Indian dancers. The arroyo wall in this painting is composed of successive blocks of earth that fall in-line like a row of nude dancers. As one moves into the background of the composition, the measured cadence of the arroyo loosens and the tempo becomes more fluid and intuitive in the bouncing hills. Similarly, in the Curtis *New Mexico Landscape*, the pulsing rhythmic hills strive towards and flow with each other, as if keeping the tempo of the *pom, pom, pom* of a beating drum. The receding space in both works is spatial and temporal. In the distance, the dancing hills retire from the scene, much like Hartley's Indian dancer, who departed "carefully to the beating of drums,

¹⁰⁴ Hartley, "The Festival of Corn," 45-51.

leaving emotion to round itself out gradually until he disappears, and silence completes the picture for the eye and the brain.”¹⁰⁵

As is evident in Hartley’s paintings and texts, he was not merely interested in conveying the succinct rhythms of the dance, but in the unions which resulted—the union of dancer and dancer into one communal body, and the symbiotic union of the dancers and the land. In the aforementioned poem, the individual dancers—“A girl, a boy, a girl, a boy, a girl. A man, a boy, a man, a boy, a man”—become one “line of dark wondrous flesh.” For Hartley, the ceremonial dancer was important as an individual *and* as an essential member of the communal ritual. To this effect, in “Red Man Ceremonials,” Hartley described the Indian dancer as “a powerful unit of the group in which he may be performing...He is leading soloist and auxiliary in one.”¹⁰⁶ Correspondingly, in his oil paintings of the New Mexican topography, Hartley attempted to capture the union of individuals units into one formation through rhythm, as is visualized in the Whitney and the Curtis works. In the Whitney painting, the units of the arroyo wall become a procession of dancers; through this communal gesture, the single units are transformed into one unified, natural body. In the Curtis *New Mexico Landscape*, individual hills are also important units in the totality of the mountain range.

¹⁰⁵ Hartley, “Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics,” 9.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

The Embodied Land: Anthropomorphism and Personification¹⁰⁷

Hartley perceived the land as anthropomorphized. His landscape paintings abstracted the Indian body as in-step with vital impulse of nature. Continuing in this vein, Hartley also painted the land as personified—it was suggestive of his own body.

Throughout his life, Hartley described landscape forms as evoking feelings with which he empathized. Take, for instance, the motif of the mountain.¹⁰⁸ In looking at a catalogue of Hartley's work, it is apparent that mountains were an important symbol for the artist; they occupied his imagination before he arrived in New Mexico, and he continued to meditate on the theme long after he left, most famously in his series of paintings of Mount Katahdin from the early 1940s.¹⁰⁹ While in Taos, the artist was drawn to Taos Mountain, the most sacred of places for the Taos Pueblo Indians.¹¹⁰ Taos Mountain is associated with the indigenous mystic spirit and is considered to be a conduit to the divine.¹¹¹ Hartley created a number of pastels focused on this subject, including

¹⁰⁷ In accordance with the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, I use these terms in the following ways. To “anthropomorphize” is to ascribe human characteristics to nonhuman things. “Personification” is the attribution of personal qualities to a thing; the representation of a thing or abstraction as a person.

¹⁰⁸ Generally speaking, mountainous landscapes have been a prominent feature of American landscape painting since the nineteenth century. As Angela Miller explains, in the work of the “Hudson River School” there is a prevailing mountain-centered iconography, a patriarchal symbol in American landscape painting. Miller also discusses the rich Judeo-Christian meaning of mountain iconography: in the Old Testament, mountains were places of access to divine knowledge; for early Protestants they were an emblem of spiritual travail and aspiration. Miller, *Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representation and American Cultural Politics, 1825-1875*, 265-66. Heather Hole argues that Hartley's Taos pastels differ from nineteenth-century landscape. His works do not visualize an “all encompassing view”—there is no “empire of the eye.” Hole, “‘America as Landscape’: Marsden Hartley and New Mexico, 1918-1924”, 48. Nevertheless, the symbolic significance of certain landscape forms—mountains, canyons, etc.—as popularized by nineteenth-century painters, would not have been lost on Hartley who was keenly interested in the history of art.

¹⁰⁹ See Haskell, *Marsden Hartley*, 14-23, 73-82. Hartley's first paintings centered on mountain forms, created between 1908 and 1910, were inspired by the landscape of Maine. Hartley returned to this theme in New Mexico (1818-1919), in Southern France (circa 1925-1929), New Hampshire (1930), and once again in Maine (circa 1940-1942).

¹¹⁰ Generally speaking, mountains are a special land form for many Native peoples. See Crawford and Kelley, eds., *American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia*, 952.

¹¹¹ Hokin, *Pinnacles & Pyramids: The Art of Marsden Hartley*, 38.

Arroyo Hondo, Valdez. He also intended to dedicate an entire book of poetry, entitled *Altitudes*, to Taos Mountain.¹¹² “Every poem,” Hartley wrote to Harriet Monroe, “will have some reference to Taos Mountain, either as the subject of, an apostrophe, or as the special confidant of self.”¹¹³ In referring to Taos Mountain as a “confidant,” an entity that he could confide in, Hartley imagined it as anthropomorphized.

To understand the full symbolic power that the mountain held for Hartley, it is useful to look to a series of his unpublished essays.¹¹⁴ “On the Subject of the Mountain” was written in the format of a letter addressed to two deceased artists, Giovanni Segantini (1858-1899) and Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918).¹¹⁵ Notably, Segantini and Hodler were among those artists who Hartley deemed as exemplary in his 1918 essay, “Aesthetic Sincerity,” due to their ability to capture their personal reactions to the land, particularly in their paintings of mountains.¹¹⁶ While the undated essay was written after Hartley left New Mexico, it illuminates the potent meaning of the mountain for him. He explained, “The mountain is the embodiment of the esthetic as well as the spiritual...A mountain is not a space, it is a thing, *it is a body* surrounded by illimitable ethers, it lives its own life

¹¹² I have not been able to locate these poems. I have never seen them reproduced, nor could I find them at the Yale’s Beinecke Library or at the Archives of American Art. Hartley may have intended to write them, but never got around to it. Hartley did write a number of other poems when living in the region, which have been grouped under the title “Sunlight Persuasions.” This collection of poems includes “Festival of Corn.” See Scott, ed., *The Collected Poems of Marsden Hartley, 1904-1943*.

¹¹³ Marsden Hartley to Miss Monroe (n.d.), McCausland Papers, Archives of American Art, reel D267.

¹¹⁴ In his “Dissertation on Modern Painting,” Hartley argued that while artists should work from nature, “Symbolism can never quite be evaded in any work of art because every form and movement that we make symbolizes a condition in ourselves.” Hartley, “Dissertation on Modern Painting (1921),” 68-70.

¹¹⁵ Marsden Hartley, “On the Subject of Mountain,” Marsden Hartley Papers, Archives of American Art, reel 1368 (© Yale University).

¹¹⁶ Hartley, “Aesthetic Sincerity,” 332.

like the sea and the sky...”¹¹⁷ The anthropomorphized mountain was imagined as alive. This vitalistic view of nature paved the way for Hartley’s personification of landscape forms. In the concluding sentence of “On the Subject of the Mountains,” Hartley projected onto the solitary mountain his own image: “Mountains are things, entities of a grandiose character, and the one who understands them best is the one who can suffer them the best, and respect their profound loneliness.”¹¹⁸ The mountain thus took on life-like qualities that reiterate the image Hartley had created for himself as an alienated, suffering artist.¹¹⁹

The island was another landscape form that had potent meaning for Hartley. And, he also transformed islands into a vitalistic emblem, which is, surprisingly enough, relevant to his work in New Mexico. Hartley’s writings and paintings about New Mexico frequently alluded to water. In “Hypnosis of Water,” an essay written after the artist left New Mexico, he described the Southwest in the following terms: “the deserts are ‘liquid’ in appearance-- limpid in their quality of light...”¹²⁰ This imagery is in keeping with Hartley’s New Mexico landscape paintings, in which the desert floor doubles as a sea and the mountains as islands. The arroyo in the Curtis *New Mexico Landscape* is a channel of

¹¹⁷ My emphasis. Marsden Hartley Papers, Archives of American Art, reel 1368 (© Yale University). In this essay, Hartley wrote that his ideas also applied to the work of Cezanne, whom he described as being a follower of Giovanni Segantini and Ferdinand Hodler.

¹¹⁸ Marsden Hartley, “On the Subject of Mountain,” Marsden Hartley Papers, Archives of American Art, reel 1368 (© Yale University).

¹¹⁹ Hartley’s letters to Stieglitz make it clear that the artist was riddled with anxiety about money and critical acclaim. To give one example, on November 20, 1916, Hartley asked Stieglitz to help to connect him with patrons. “I must save self,” Hartley wrote, “since nothing or no one can or will save me.” In this letter, Hartley self-consciously acknowledged that his letters were often characterized by “persistent wailings.” Hartley to Stieglitz, November 20, 1916 (Provincetown), Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 529.

¹²⁰ Marsden Hartley, “Hypnosis of Water,” n.d., Marsden Hartley Papers, Archives of American Art, reel 1369 (© Yale University). This association was common in writings about the Southwest. For instance, A.F. Fynn wrote, “There are great stretches of plains, the very embodiment of monotony. Standing on some elevation, one may look out over an immense level region as over an ocean.” Fynn, *The American Indian: As a Product of Environment With Special Reference to the Pueblos*, 55.

gliding land. In the Whitney work, Hartley's allusions to water are made more literal. The arroyo is streaked with blue, this vibrant color being reasserted in the peaks and fully articulated in the sky. The desert land in the Portland *New Mexico* also has been given a liquid quality. The center formation becomes an island and the mountains in the distance climax into wave-like peaks. In the Newsprint *New Mexico Landscape*, the association between desert and water is also suggested; the expressive flow of the Portland work becomes a desert deluge, a torrential seascape in the Newsprint painting. In the latter work, the visual analogy made between desert floor and water is more literal; Hartley painted the space around the mountains in sea green. This ocean of green pigment meets the far hills, which undulates and crests into thick lava-like waves.¹²¹

It is significant that the central land forms in the Newsprint and the Portland paintings are evocative of islands of red earth. Throughout his life, Hartley wrote poems about the solitary island. For instance, just prior to traveling to New Mexico, the artist penned a series of poems from a British military hospital in Bermuda (circa 1916-1918) entitled, "Ironies Out of St. George."¹²² In his poem, "I am an Island," Hartley made explicit his identification with the island, as well as his understanding of landscape forms as anthropomorphic. The poem begins:

I am an Island—
 My mother was a mountain once
 My father is the sea—
 Some days I hear my mother grow
 And I see my father froth
 And frighten me somewhat
 They have so many other children now

¹²¹ Bergson's language was pictorial, as was James's. In his discussion of both duration and the *élan vital*, Bergson frequently used water imagery to make palpable his ideas. For instance, he referred to duration "a stream against which we cannot go. It is the foundation of our being, and, as we feel, the very substance of the world in which we live." Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 45.

¹²² Scott, ed., *The Collected Poems of Marsden Hartley, 1904-1943*.

I do not count—
 Some are ships and some are men
 Of no account
 We lose them everyday—
 They say!
 I have no doubt
 'Tis so!
 I can not grow
 Because my father hates
 My mother so.

This poem conveys a sense of desperation, possibly related to the catastrophic loss of human life due to world war and to Hartley's own chronic illnesses. In the poem, the artist-island is the product of mother-mountain and father-sea, two repressive entities that terrify, alienate, and even destroy their earthly children. As is evident, the symbolic meaning of landscape forms shifted for Hartley with time and context in order to meet his emotional and artistic needs.

At least two decades after the Bermuda poems were written, Hartley again anthropomorphized and personified the island in verse. In one stanza of "Voice of the Island," a poem that relates to the tragic death of his intimate friend Adelard, Hartley associated the island with loneliness, much as he did the mountain:

Islands live their life single,
 usually
 single bliss, single depravation, single
 connotation
 every now and then the mind takes them
 shakes them, punishes them, almost
 breaks them
 with the blowing out of the breath of their men
 dark takes them to obsanguious solution
 leaves islands shivery, quaking, toils
 lonesome heart—breaking.¹²³

¹²³ Marsden Hartley, "Voice of the Island," Marsden Hartley Papers, Archives of American Art, reel 1320 (© Yale University).

The island, once again, was presented as a personification of Hartley himself. It is also suggestive of other human subjects: a lost lover, mother, father.¹²⁴ Similarly, in his New Mexico paintings, the island referenced multiple subjects—Hartley, Indian, marginalized artists, and so on.

Although written long after the Newsprint *New Mexico Landscape* was created, “Voice of the Island” beautifully articulates the power of Hartley’s sunset vision. In keeping with Hartley’s tendency to anthropomorphize mountains and islands in his poems, the mountain-islands in this painting can be read as embodied—they evoke both Hartley’s body and the Indian body. The work is populated with numerous island-like mountain forms, and yet each cluster seems isolated. The work is riddled with tension, particularly evident in the smudged colors in the foreground, which refuse to coagulate into landscape forms. The pigment around the clusters threatens to swallow them, to erase their existence. This painting is in keeping with Hartley’s created artistic persona as a suffering artist, as an island living his single life, “lonesome heart—breaking.”

Embodied Perception and Performance

In a 1922 discussion of Indian ceremonials, Hartley proclaimed, “nothing in art shall endure or in life for that matter, without the explicit inclusion of the body.”¹²⁵ Just as Indian dance was inseparable from the Indian body, a provocative painting had to invoke the inclusion of the artist’s body. This was an idea on which Hartley’s New

¹²⁴ In the poem, “Islands in Penobscot Bay,” Hartley wrote that people were evocative of islands and islands of people, and reiterated the idea that islands are alone. Marsden Hartley, *Androscoggin* (Portland, ME: Falmouth Publishing House, 1940), 23-24. These themes are also prevalent in the following poems: “The Lonely Return to the Lonely, the Divine to the Divine” and “Indian Point” both published in Marsden Hartley, *Sea Burial* (Athens, PA: The Riverside Press, 1941), 14, 17.

¹²⁵ Hartley, “The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo,” 118.

Mexico landscapes in oil were premised. Thus, one might see Hartley's mode of representation as embodied perception. Maurice Merleau-Ponty's book, *The Primacy of Perception*, is a useful framework for unpacking the theoretical significance of Hartley's approach to the New Mexico landscape. Merleau-Ponty specifically addresses how embodied perception affects art production, writing, "It is by lending his body to the world that the artist changes the world into his painting."¹²⁶ The philosopher argues that painting is inextricably tied to who the painter is; one does not simply see the world in front of him, his perception of the world is entwined with the presence of his body in it. "This precession of what is," he explains, "upon what one sees and makes seen, of what ones sees and makes seen upon what is—this is vision itself."¹²⁷ Although published in the 1960s, decades after Hartley's death, Merleau-Ponty's ideas are a more systematic theorization of ideas to which Hartley was drawn. One reason for this anachronistic overlap is because we find a heritage for Merleau-Ponty's ideas about perception in the work of James and Bergson.¹²⁸

Before I continue, there is an important distinction to be made between "embodied perception" and "embodied formalism." In her study of modernist criticism, Marcia Brennan investigates the notion of the body as a primary vehicle of signification in early American modernism, as was promoted by Stieglitz and his circle of artists and

¹²⁶ Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*, 162.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 188.

¹²⁸ James and Bergson were building on theories of perception that can be traced to the eighteenth-century philosophies of Kant. A preoccupation with the bodily experience of space proliferated in late nineteenth-century writings about vision. As Susan Sidlauskas explains, writers and theorists posited that human subjects did not simply *perceive* space, but rather actively experienced space as an extension of the body. Sidlauskas, *Body, Place, and Self in Nineteenth-Century Painting*, 12. In theories of "the corporeal subjectivity of the viewer" as Jonathan Crary terms it, the human body became the active producer of optical experience. Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 69. Crary also investigates the "modernization of subjectivity" in the second half of the nineteenth century. See Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle, and Modern Culture*.

critics. This discursive tendency, which she labels as “embodied formalism,” is the vehicle through which “corporeal elements often become conjoined with abstract and naturalistic forms.”¹²⁹ In keeping with this presupposition, in 1924, Paul Rosenfeld described Hartley’s New Mexico landscapes in bodily terms, in this case as representing the degenerate homosexual body:

And New Mexico, with its strange depraved topography: earth-forms fitting into each other like coupling organs; strawberry-pink mountains dotted by poison-green shrubs, recalling breasts and wombs of clay; clouds like sky-sailing featherbeds; boneyard aridity, is in [Hartley’s] pastels and oils done in the southwest [sic].¹³⁰

Predictably, Rosenfeld saw the throbbing mounds as breasts and wombs, feminizing language usually reserved for the “womanly” works of Georgia O’Keeffe. I would like to shift away from a literalized and gendered reading of the “body as sign.”¹³¹ Hartley’s landscape forms, in spite of Rosenfeld’s limited assessment, were conceived as being more than representations of male and/or female reproductive organs. I would like to leave room for the idea that the body that Hartley was painting was not simply his own, that his landscape forms were meant to evoke multiple subjects, including his body, the Indian body, and even the unification of the two.¹³² Thus, the notion of embodied

¹²⁹ Marcia Brennan, *Painting Gender, Constructing Theory: The Alfred Stieglitz Circle and American Formalist Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 8.

¹³⁰ Paul Rosenfeld (from *Port of New York*, 1924), quoted in *Ibid.*, 164-65. Both Marcia Brennan and Jonathan Weinberg have argued that, due to Hartley’s sexual orientation, his work tended to elicit critical responses that were transparently encoded with homophobia. Brennan, *Painting Gender, Constructing Theory: The Alfred Stieglitz Circle and American Formalist Aesthetics*, 157-8. Jonathan Weinberg, *Speaking for Vice: Homosexuality in the Art of Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, and the First American Avant-Garde* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 201-05.

¹³¹ Stieglitz circle artists, Brennan writes, tended not to create literal representations of the body, rather their works can be read as “a sign of the body” in the context of Stieglitz circle criticism. Brennan, *Painting Gender, Constructing Theory: The Alfred Stieglitz Circle and American Formalist Aesthetics*, 97.

¹³² I, like Randall Griffey, would like to extend a discussion of Hartley’s work beyond a presumed inherent homoeroticism. See Randall Griffey, “Encoding the Homoerotic: Marsden Hartley’s Late Figure Paintings,” in Kornhauser, ed., *Marsden Hartley*, 212.

perception is useful because it theorizes about the *process* through which artists attempted to paint the world as they saw it, or rather, as they experienced it.

Returning to the notion of embodied perception, this philosophical idea finds its roots in Bergson and James. As was previously discussed, Jamesian radical empiricism was based on the premise that in one's understanding of reality, the subject could not be separated from the object, a phenomenon that James argued had not been adequately explained by "representative theories of perception."¹³³ In *Essays on Radical Empiricism*, James elaborated on the implications of an experiential view of reality: "As 'subjective' we say that the experience represents; as 'objective' it is represented. What represents, and what is represented, is here numerically the same."¹³⁴ Mind and matter affect one other; the object is molded by the artist's perceptions, and perceiver is molded by the act of perceiving the object. This idea resonates with the philosophy of Bergson, who argued that it was essential for an artist to place "himself back within the object by a kind of sympathy, in breaking down, by effort of intuition, the barrier that space puts up between him and his model."¹³⁵ Perception, for Bergson, was not merely physiological; it entailed the engagement of the body and one's consciousness in the present.

¹³³ William James, "Essays in Radical Empiricism (1904)," in *William James: The Essential Writings*, ed. Bruce E. Wilshire (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 166-67.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 171.

¹³⁵ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, 194. While James's work is clearly a logical precursor to the notion of embodied perception, it is Bergson who Merleau-Ponty lauds in his book. In the chapter "Eye and Mind," Merleau-Ponty specifically points to Bergson as someone who was on the threshold of discovering the idea that forms come to be visible only through the mind's eye, that external reality is only the envelope of things. Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*, 182-3. Bergson's science of wholeness, in which all matter, animate and inanimate, is interconnected by the original impetus of life was invoked by Merleau-Ponty, who writes, "what vision teaches us: namely, that through it we come in contact with the sun and the stars, that we are everywhere all at once..." (187). Merleau-Ponty also invokes Bergson's idea of duration (186).

Hartley's writings suggest that he understood the act of perception as being embodied, or resulting in a union between the subject and the object.¹³⁶ In his essay, "On the Subject of Mountains," he wrote, "To understand the mountain one must have a feeling for it, one must know it, sense in it all its moods and aspects, the affirmation and the negation....To face the mountain, have it pour into one to however slight a degree, is to have one's fibers strengthened and one's blood revived."¹³⁷ Thus, Hartley's perception of the mountain shaped it, but the mountain also shaped Hartley. By painting the mountain, Hartley was the mountain. Because he painted the island, he was the island. Because he perceived the Indian, he was an Indian. Because he perceived a union between the Indian and the land, he enacted this union.

In a passage from *Laughter*, reprinted in a 1911 issue *Camera Work*, Bergson asked, "Could reality come into direct contact with sense and consciousness, could we enter into immediate communion with things and with ourselves...or rather we should all be artists, for then our soul would continually vibrate in perfect accord with nature."¹³⁸ Hartley attempted to engage in a similar *communion with things* in his New Mexico landscape paintings. In them, the artist was not simply *representing* the union between the Indian and the land, his paintings were the visual equivalents of dancing; they were *performances* through which he attempted to forge his own intimate connection with the land.¹³⁹ Thus, the Portland *New Mexico* and the Newsprint *New Mexico Landscape* can

¹³⁶ This idea is also pertinent to Hartley's Maine landscapes from the 1930s, and serves to connect these two moments in Hartley's career. The notion of embodied perception with respect to Hartley's late landscape warrants further exploration.

¹³⁷ Marsden Hartley, "On the Subject of Mountain," Marsden Hartley Papers, Archives of American Art, reel 1368 (© Yale University).

¹³⁸ Henri Bergson, "An Extract from Bergson," *Camera Work*, no. 36 (October 1911): 22.

¹³⁹ I am not arguing that Hartley was "playing Indian." Leah Dilworth has suggested that modernists in New Mexico took part in a kind of "aesthetic 'playing Indian,'" a point she supports by looking at Hartley's "Amerika" Series. Notably, her argument overlooks the fact that the series was created in

be understood as complex imaginative performances through which Hartley sought to merge his body with both the Native body and the landscape. Through these performances, Hartley was determined to present himself as an authentically American artist.

Performing Indianness- Performing Americanness

I would like to end this chapter where it began, by considering Hartley's proclamation in "America as Landscape"—"I am an American discovering America"¹⁴⁰—which I labeled as a calculated statement of cultural nationalism. Whereas in the previous chapter, I explored the socio-political underpinnings of such rhetoric, I would now like to consider the more personal implications that this position had for the artist. To do so, it is useful to think of his essays as also being performances, which were driven by his personal and professional needs and desires. I like the term performance because it does not undermine Hartley's sincerity, but calls attention to the notion that his cultural nationalist position was a construction.

Hartley concluded "Red Man Ceremonials" with the following appeal: "A national esthetic consciousness is a sadly needed element in American life. We are not

Berlin, four years before the artist lived in New Mexico. Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), 175. Dilworth also supports her claim with a frequently cited letter from Hartley to Stieglitz, which reads, "I find it [death due to war] personally- the most unspeakable humiliation every offered to a sincere human being. I find self wanting to be Indian—I paint my face with the symbols of that race I [adore] so ..." Hartley to Stieglitz, November 12, 1914, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 527. Hartley's desire to "be Indian" is tied to the primitivist notion that pre-civilized peoples live a simple, more noble existence. After Hartley spent time in New Mexico, the artist rejected the notion that Anglos should mimic the art or lifestyle of Indians (which he accused Mabel Dodge Luhan of doing). While Hartley idealized the aesthetic purity of Pueblo art and culture, his art from the New Mexico period shows no evidence of adopting any of the formal conventions of Pueblo material culture.

¹⁴⁰ Hartley, "America as Landscape," 340.

nearly as original as we fool ourselves into thinking. We imbibe superficially, and discard without proper digestion the food that we are ignorant of.”¹⁴¹ Contemporary American painters had not yet found their way; their works were not original and were not relevant to their native soil.¹⁴² As was discussed in chapter two, Hartley offered a solution. In “America as Landscape,” he wrote, “It takes courage likewise for most painters to sit patiently and observe, to get a connection with their own native land, American as landscape, as a country capable of inspiring and producing any type of greatness.”¹⁴³ Indians, Hartley proclaimed, had done just this and thus had established an aesthetic consciousness of their own. Hartley presented Indians as America’s original artists, the first in a long line of “genius,” whose arts were imbued with the American spirit, who had “worked out their artistic destinies on home soil,”¹⁴⁴ whose legacy of localized art production was continued by the likes of Whitman, Ryder, Homer, Davies, Stieglitz, and Hartley himself.¹⁴⁵

When one considers Hartley’s tenuous place in the American art scene, the vehemence with which he attacked American art production (particularly the Taos Society) and the arrogance with which he claimed that his own vision was more genuinely American is startling. In the beginning of this chapter, I discussed the friction between Hartley and Stieglitz caused by the artist’s adamancy about staying in Berlin. I also addressed the harsh criticism that Hartley’s paintings had faced after he returned

¹⁴¹ Hartley, “Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics.”

¹⁴² This point is made in a number of Hartley’s essays. For instance, in “Aesthetic Sincerity,” Hartley wrote, “there is no use in attempting to apply the convention of Paris or Munich or Dresden to the redman, or to the incredibly beautiful landscape of New Mexico and the Southwest. Our pictures if we are to be respected, will have to somehow ‘look like’ the place.” Hartley, “Aesthetic Sincerity,” 332.

¹⁴³ Hartley, “America as Landscape,” 341.

¹⁴⁴ Hartley, *Adventures in the Arts: Informal Chapters on Painters, Vaudeville, and Poets*, 157. This comment was made in reference to Homer, Martin, Fuller and Ryder. However, Hartley made parallel statements about the Indian’s aesthetic contributions in his many of his other essays.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

home. In this context, it is no coincidence that Hartley's celebration of "discovering America" and his call for a modernism rooted in the American soil mirrored Stieglitz's ideological and artistic aims.¹⁴⁶ Hartley's exuberant search for an American art, in part, was a strategy to create a public persona intended to solicit support from both Stieglitz and his other American patrons.

The disparity between Hartley's public essays and his personal letters is telling.¹⁴⁷ After Hartley's return to the U.S., he often lamented his repatriation in his letters to his friends. In a September 19, 1919 correspondence with Stieglitz, Hartley wrote, "If I don't get back to Berlin this fall then I will take what I have and go to Bermuda and live where I am told it is very cheap."¹⁴⁸ Similarly, while in New Mexico, Hartley wrote to Stieglitz, "I am preparing myself in all ways for the thing that I really have in mind, and that is to take up again my European career, which is to be the important thing."¹⁴⁹ This letter, which was written around the same time Hartley published his cultural nationalist essays, goes on to imply that if the war had not interrupted his life, he would still be in Europe.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935*, 31.

¹⁴⁷ Hartley's letters written in Germany prior to World War I described the U.S. as a place where he had to reluctantly go in order to secure funds to stay in Europe. To this effect, in 1913 Hartley wrote to Franz Marc, "I am going to New York with one idea and that is to get money enough to live on for two years here and I hope strongly to do it. There is plenty of money there. It needs only the right interest..." Marsden Hartley to Franz Marc, n.d. (November 1913), reprinted in Patricia McDonnell, "Marsden Hartley's Letters to Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky 1913-1914," *Archives of American Art Journal* 29, no. 1/2 (1989): 42.

¹⁴⁸ Marsden Hartley to Alfred Stieglitz, September 19, 1916, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 529.

¹⁴⁹ Hartley to Stieglitz, January 8, 1919, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 532.

¹⁵⁰ A half year later, Hartley reiterated his desire to go to Europe "for a spell" as soon as possible: "I have got to keep going where I feel myself alive, or else perish. The American temper is not exhilarating enough in art life." Hartley to Stieglitz, July 7, 1919, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 532. Hartley's desire to return to Europe intensified through the following year. From Gloucester, Hartley again pleaded with Stieglitz, "I must get back to Europe. I can't starve at the great moment of my life...I want to float and write and get the flavor of the sublime joke since the war is so beautifully at an end." Hartley to Stieglitz, August 2, 1920, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 533.

How do we make sense of the contradictions between Hartley's public optimism for American modernism, as was published in his essays, and his deep desire to return to the place he felt most alive, Germany, as was articulated in his letters? It would be imprudent to assume that Hartley's letters represent his "authentic" feelings; like his published essays and paintings, Hartley's letters were often performative, guided by what he thought would appeal to the recipient. Often, he was angling for money, reassurance, or some other form of support. It is more likely that Hartley felt conflicted by his desire to connect with his homeland and the level of personal and professional comfort he felt in Germany. To understand cultural nationalism between the wars is to grapple with a nexus of motivations, which includes economic interests, politics, and public image making.

Hartley had to convince his U.S. patrons of his Americanness, but he also had to convince himself. Ever conscious of his financial situation and his need for support in the U.S., the artist sought to rehabilitate his reputation in America through his New Mexico paintings and essays. The artist genuinely wanted to connect with his home country.¹⁵¹ If he could not feel this connection then he would perform it. In order to do so, he looked to those whom he thought being "American" came most naturally, America's Indians. Thus, through his paintings, poems and essays, Hartley played out a fantasy of identification. The Indian, the true American artist, became a parallel for the artist himself—oppressed, marginalized, misunderstood. Hartley claimed the Indian as

¹⁵¹ It is in this spirit that he proclaimed "There are no false notes in my private Americanism" in a 1938 essay. Marsden Hartley, "Is There An American Art (c.1938)," in *On Art*, ed. Gail Scott (New York: Horizon Press, 1982), 200.

his artistic brother.¹⁵² “It is from the redman,” Hartley explained, “I have verified personal significance. I have learned that originality is the sole medium for creation.”¹⁵³ Hartley’s view of Indian dance was ultimately egocentric and ethnocentric. He placed emphasis on Indian “creativity,” “personal significance,” “artistic genius,” attributes that were celebrated most among America’s artistic avant-garde. Hartley’s New Mexico essays argued for the development of an American art scene that would celebrate marginalized art forms. If the Americans could embrace their Indian artists then modernists would surely follow. It is with this hope in mind that Hartley endeavored to put his theories into practice and made an earnest effort to connect with his native soil.

The Legacy of “Indian-as-Landscape” Paradigm

The idea of the Indian-as-Landscape, as was described in Hartley’s essays and is manifest in his landscape paintings, had broad appeal in modernist circles. Thus, Hartley helped to perpetuate a different, more contemporary, but nonetheless equally mythologized, notion of Indianness. In his essays, the artist argued that ceremonials exemplify the Indian’s intimacy with the land. Drawing from this idea, in their rhythmic and undulating natural forms, Hartley’s landscapes offered a new way to picture the Indian, one that abstracted Indian dance and dancers, one in which the Indian dancer was embodied in the land. In the decade after Hartley left New Mexico, there was an ideological and aesthetic shift in Anglo representations of American Indians. Paintings of heroically posed Indians and their objects—a trope indebted to anthropology and tied to assimilationist policy—were deemed touristic and *passé*. As more modernists arrived in

¹⁵² Hartley, “The Scientific Esthetic of the Redman, Part I: The Great Corn Dance Ceremony at Santo Domingo,” 117.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*: 119.

the region, representations of ceremonial dance became the dominant subject of paintings and essays about the Pueblo people. Hartley's New Mexico landscapes in oil were centered on evoking the rhythm, the feel and his subjective impressions of Indian dances, a goal widely adopted in the 1920s by modernists working in the region, including John Sloan, Ernest L. Blumenschein, John Marin, and Georgia O'Keeffe.

Chapter 4

Unwrapping Ernest L. Blumenschein's *The Gift*

In his New Mexico essays, Marsden Hartley treated members of the Taos Society of Artists with disdain. By the time Hartley arrived in Taos, many of these academically trained painters had established what he most desired, national recognition and monetary stability, and had done so by creating sentimentalized paintings of Indians. In "America as Landscape," Hartley wrote, "I heard the remark once this summer as being a stout conviction on the part of certain painters who have essayed to devote themselves to redman subjects, that the art of America would spring from their given spot." This "bit of egoism," he disparaged, "is hardly true however, for merely following the Indian around, applying Parisian literary poses to him, attaching redman titles, is not a sufficient guarantee."¹ In Hartley's estimation, academic painters in Taos confused painting the posed Indian with comprehending the region and creating an American art. His critique was spurred by what he perceived to be the group's insularity and unabashed commercialism, as well as by their conservative artistic temperament.

Since Ernest L. Blumenschein and Bert Geer Phillips first visited in Taos in 1898, they had encouraged friends and acquaintances, many of whom they had met in the academies of Europe and the U.S., to paint in the Southwest.² By the early 1910s, a

¹ Marsden Hartley, "America as Landscape," *El Palacio* 21 (December 21, 1918): 340-1.

² Arriving in Taos in 1893, Joseph Henry Sharp was the first of the future members of Taos Society to paint in the region. Sharp told Blumenschein and Phillips about his experiences in New Mexico while they were all studying at the Académie Julian in Paris. Nevertheless, Blumenschein was adamant that he and Phillips were responsible for drawing artists from Chicago and New York to Taos. The year

colony of artists determined to paint Pueblo Indians had coalesced in Taos. In 1915 this group organized into Taos Society of Artists (hereafter the Taos Society).³ The purpose of the Taos Society was to provide its members with profitable venues for their work throughout the country. Members planned yearly traveling exhibitions, which opened in New York City and worked their way west. Individual artists from the group also sent their paintings to juried exhibitions, including the National Academy of Design, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and the Society of Independent Artists. Reviews for Taos Society shows were positive for the first half decade of the society's existence. However, by the early 1920s, support for their work dwindled, and in 1927 they disbanded.

It was during the height of the Taos Society's popularity that Blumenschein created *The Gift* (fig. 4.1), the painting on which this chapter is focused. This work was an immediate critical success. In 1923, the large canvas was sent to juried exhibitions at the National Academy of Design and the Corcoran Gallery of Art. The recipient of a number of prestigious honors, *The Gift* was awarded the National Art Club Medal in 1923, which came with a three hundred dollar prize. That same year, the work was

after Blumenschein and Phillips first visited the region, Eanger Irving Couse and Oscar E. Berninghaus arrived from St. Louis. William Herbert Dunton came from New York City in 1912. These six artists constitute the founders of the Taos Society. Dean A. Porter, Teresa Hayes Ebie, and Suzan Campbell, *Taos Artists and Their Patrons, 1898-1950* (Notre Dame, IN and Albuquerque, N. M.: Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame in conjunction with the University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 20. For information about academic training of the Taos Society, see Julie Schimmel, "From Salon to Pueblo: The First Generation," in *Art in New Mexico, 1900-1945: Paths to Taos and Santa Fe* (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1986), 43-56.

³ For histories of the Taos Society of Artists, see Mary Carroll Nelson, *The Legendary Artists of Taos* (New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1980), Porter, Ebie, and Campbell, *Taos Artists and Their Patrons, 1898-1950*. There are very few articles and books that are focused on Blumenschein's work. Most notable among these publications are Charles C. Eldredge, "Ernest Blumenschein's 'The Peacemaker'," *American Art* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2001), William T. Henning, *Ernest L. Blumenschein Retrospective* (Colorado Springs: Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1978), James Moore, "Ernest Blumenschein's Long Journey with Star Road," *American Art* 9, no. 3 (Fall 1995). Furthermore, the Phoenix Art Museum is planning a 2008 exhibition of Blumenschein's works.

purchased for an impressive two thousand dollars through the National Academy of Design's Ranger Fund.⁴ As was stipulated by the fund, the work was first given to the Forth Worth Museum of Art, and, upon the artist's death, it was acquired by what is now the Smithsonian American Art Museum (hereafter SAAM). By the time *The Gift* was selected for the Ranger Fund, Blumenschein was no stranger to accolades. In 1912, his *Wiseman, Warrior and Youth* received the National Academy's Isidor Medal for the best figure composition; in 1917 he received the Art Institute of Chicago's Potter Palmer Gold Medal for *The Chief Speaks* (fig. 4.2); and in 1922, *Superstition* was awarded one of the National Academy's highest honors, the First Altman Prize. Blumenschein also received a number of subsequent academic prizes: his 1925 painting, *Sangre de Cristo Mountains*, won the National Academy of Design's Second Altman Prize for landscape, and *The Burro* of 1929 was also selected by the National Academy's Ranger Fund, and eventually acquired by the Smithsonian American Art Museum.⁵

Hartley's negative assessment of the Taos Society has been widely adopted in the literature about the art of the Southwest, particularly among anthropologists and art historians of American modernism.⁶ Taos Society paintings are often used to illustrate a

⁴ According to www.measuringworth.com, \$2,000 in the year 1922 has the same purchasing power as \$24,043 in the year 2006. The Henry War Ranger Fund was initiated in 1919 by the National Academy to stimulate public interest in the work of living American painters. At the Academy's juried exhibitions, the Painting Awards Jury purchases one painting through this fund. The award stipulates that the painting will be donated to a nationally recognized museum, which is selected by the Awards Committee.

⁵ I have compiled Blumenschein's exhibition records with the help of the Gerald Peters Gallery and using the Blumenschein Papers at the Archives of American Art (reels 269 and 270). I would like to thank Julie Schimmel, Catherine Whitney, and the Gerald Peters Gallery for generously granting me access to their extensive files on Blumenschein. In particular, Julie Schimmel provided me with her research on Blumenschein's exhibition history and a chronology of his career.

⁶ See Sylvia Rodríguez, "Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Towards a Sociology of the Art Colony," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 45, no. 1 (Spring 1989), Sharyn Rohlfen Udall, *Modernist painting in New Mexico, 1913-1935*, 1st ed. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico

narrative about the symbiotic relationship between ethnic tourism and academic painting in the region. As a result, these works are neutralized, their nuanced meanings flattened. While a significant number of Taos Society canvases, particularly those that were sold to corporate businesses, tended to mirror the needs of the tourist industry, members of the group also created compositions that did not conform to popular formats and iconographies. Taos Society artists often adapted their subject matter and pictorial language depending on audience and market. Furthermore, the Taos Society was neither insular nor monolithic, and was made of up artists with different personalities and artistic temperaments. While E. Irving Couse, Julius Rolshoven, and Oscar E. Berninghaus remained faithful to compositions consisting of sentimentally posed Indians rendered in a conservative style, other members of the group were more compositionally and stylistically innovative. Joseph Sharp, known for producing some of the group's most clichéd paintings and a favorite artist among corporate clients (e.g. the Santa Fe Railway), also created a number of works that explore interactions between Anglo artists and Indian models. By the 1920s, Walter Ufer was generally less interested in romanticizing Indian life, and painted many provocative canvases that investigated the impact of Americanization on the Pueblo people. Blumenschein created canvases that challenged popular pictorial paradigms and he was open to the formal innovations of modernism. He was supportive of many of the younger artists working in Taos who were experimenting with modernist aesthetics, including Martin Hennings and Kenneth

Press, 1984), Marta Weigle and Barbara A. Babcock, eds., *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway* (Phoenix, Arizona: The Heard Museum, 1996).

Adams, both of whom joined the Taos Society in the mid-1920s.⁷ Furthermore, when Blumenschein was the president of the Taos Society (circa 1921-1922), he invited John Sloan, Robert Henri, A.B.O Nordfeldt and Randall Davey to join the group's national circuit. While the Taos Society's activities and corporate patrons are relevant to the study of any of its members, it is also important to investigate each artist's work on its own terms. Doing so encourages one to take into consideration both the familiar, the similarities between an artist's work and popular imagery from visual culture, and the strange, how an artist altered, expanded on, or subverted visual tropes.

The paintings Blumenschein produced during the late 1910s and early 1920s, when he stepped outside the bounds of an academic style and subject matter, highlight his versatility as an artist. Using Blumenschein's 1922 painting, *The Gift*, as springboard, this chapter will begin with a discussion of the relationship between the Taos Society, anthropological work in the region, and assimilationist rhetoric. For over three decades, Blumenschein grappled with this nexus of influences: before he settled in Taos in 1919, these factors helped to shape his vision of Pueblo Indians; by the late 1910s, his paintings began to challenge these ideological and aesthetic forces; and, during the early to mid-1920s, Blumenschein's attempt to subvert popular imagery of the region in a number of his paintings, an objective fueled by the movement for the preservation of American Indian culture.

I contend that *The Gift* can be understood as engaged in the debate over the federal Indian policy of assimilation. In particular, this work was part of the dialogue surrounding the controversial 1922 Bursum Bill, a piece of legislation that sought to

⁷ Henning and Adams were admitted into the group in 1924 and 1926, respectively. The group's other notable members included William Herbert Dunton, an original member whose canvases featured cowboys, and Catherine Critcher, the group's only female member, who was admitted in 1924.

resolve land claims in New Mexico in favor of non-Indian claimants who had taken possession of large portions of the Pueblo's irrigated land. In response to this bill, Anglo intellectuals and the All-Pueblo Council undertook a nationwide publicity campaign that attacked the premises and legal mechanisms of assimilation. As a result of this movement, the Bursum Bill was overturned. The debate over assimilation informed the title and the iconography of *The Gift*. By considering the work's compositional intricacies, I aimed to recover its socio-political sub-text in order to enrich and expand the discourse concerning the art of both the Taos Society and the Southwest.

War Chief in Times of Peace

The Gift features a monumentally posed Pueblo man who looks out at the viewer. He is wrapped in a white robe, wears a long pink shirt, beaded leggings, white moccasins, and clinches a beaded pipe bag.⁸ The man's torso is set in front of densely painted foliage, which is broken by a highlighted space that lead the viewer's eyes through the trees, giving one a glimpse of front gate of the Church of San Geronimo at Taos Pueblo. Sitting behind the man is a group of Pueblo woman who chat among themselves. Mimicking the shape of the women's bodies is a prominently place large pot.

In 1925, Blumenschein gave the following description of *The Gift*: "The story is nothing—perhaps there is a fiesta and the principal figure is about to present to a visiting guest [with] the deerskin beaded bag as a token of friendship between tribes."⁹ Taking

⁸ Beaded leggings tend to be associated with male Plains Indians, but they were worn by both men and women from tribes all over the mid-West, Southwest, and Rocky Mountain region. Like those worn by the central figure, leggings traditional to the northern Rio Grande region often included fringe on the outside or up front.

⁹ Ernest L. Blumenschein to Mrs. Schenber (sp?) of the Fort Worth Museum of Art, November 5, 1925. Curatorial files, Smithsonian American Art Museum.

this statement at face-value, *The Gift* is a narrative work that represents an interaction between two Indians elders—the central figure and an unseen Indian in the viewer's space.

Historically, this narrative seems to makes sense. As anthropologist Sylvia Rodríguez explains, pre- and post-contact, Taos was a commercial and religious meeting ground for peoples from the South along the Rio Grande corridor and the eastern Plains, a fact reflected in Taos ceremonial and material culture.¹⁰ While beaded items, such as leggings, moccasins, and pipe-bags, are most often associated with Plains Indians,¹¹ such items were also owned by residents at Taos Pueblo and by other Pueblo tribes. In fact, Taos Pueblo and the Jicarilla Apache have a kinship relationship.¹² Historian Alfonso Ortiz writes that in the early nineteenth century, when the Jicarilla, known for their beadwork, were being forced off their Colorado lands by encroaching American settlers, the tribe broke into smaller groups seeking refuge at Taos and Picuris Pueblos, as well as with the Ute.¹³ In addition, as was discussed in chapter one, Taos Pueblo has held an annual trade fair for centuries, which brings together diverse peoples, resulting in the exchange of objects and cultural modes. As is evident in turn-of-the-century photographs taken at Taos Pueblo (figs. 4.3 & 4.4), it was not uncommon for residents to be wearing beaded moccasins and leggings.

¹⁰ Sylvia Rodríguez, *The Matachines: Ritual Symbolism and Interethnic Relations in the Upper Rio Grande Valley* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 17.

¹¹ Marsha C. Bol, "Defining Lakota Tourist Art, 1880-1915," in *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*, ed. Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher Steiner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 225.

¹² In conversation with Elizabeth Cunningham she pointed out to me that the Jicarilla headquarters (now at Dulce) were once located at Cimarron, just over the mountains from Taos Pueblo.

¹³ Alfonso Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, ed. Frank W. Porter III, *Indians of North America* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992), 64, 79.

Blumenschein's description of intertribal exchange can be partially understood by considering the painting's history. According to Blumenschein's records, *The Gift* is an over-painted canvas, the current composition encompassing elements from a circa 1919 work entitled, *The War Chief in Times of Peace*.¹⁴ The original painting was included in the Taos Society's traveling show in 1920 (list price, \$1500), but went unsold and thus was over-painted in 1922. Blumenschein's "War Chief" likely refers to what is locally known as a "War Captain," or in Tiwa, *xùm+tówana*, the collective title for the twelve men that comprise the War Captain and his staff.¹⁵ The War Captain, which is one of the twenty-two elected civil positions in the Taos system of governance, works in tandem with the Pueblo's Governor. While the Governor has jurisdiction over the internal and every day activities of the Pueblo, the War Captain is responsible for monitoring activities outside the boundaries of the Pueblo proper in the reserve at large. The War Captain acts as both a diplomat and a guardian; therefore, art historian James Moore posits that he would logically be the person to deal initially with outsiders when formal visits took place.¹⁶

¹⁴ Again, I would like to thank Elizabeth Cunningham for calling my attention to this information. SAAM's curatorial and registrar's files do not mention this fact. However, a condition report from the registrar's files states, "There is a raised flanking inter-layer cleavage of paint exposing areas of under-paint to the right of the main standing figure," which is in keeping with Cunningham's information, as is a 2007 radiograph of the work that will be discussed in the body of this chapter.

¹⁵ *Xùm+tówana* more accurately translates as 'chase officers.' One of the War Captain's important duties is to lead the rabbit hunt, a function that continues today. He also decides when ranges fences need repairing or expansion, when new grazing areas are needed, rotates stock, watches the boundary lines and infringements on these boundaries (Taos Pueblo and non-Indian), patrols the forest areas for unauthorized visitors (particularly around Blue Lake), acts as a lookout for forest fires, and acts as a game warden. The Governor has jurisdiction over land disputes and water rights. M. Estellie Smith, "Governing Taos Pueblo," *Contributions in Anthropology* 2, no. 1 (December, 1969): 16. For information about the function of the Taos Pueblo War Captain see, Smith, "Governing Taos Pueblo," 16-18. The position of the War Captain was created by Spanish authorities after the Pueblo Revolt. Edward P. Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America* (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 1970), 170.

¹⁶ In conversation with James Moore, June 2007. It was Moore who encouraged me to investigate Pueblo governance systems, and brought to my attention the function of the War Captain.

The identity of the central figure in *The Gift* cannot be definitively determined, and it is difficult to say whether or not Blumenschein knew the Pueblo War Captain in 1919. James Moore has suggested that the figure might be a composite of Geronimo Gomez (also known as Star Road) and Jim Romero, two models from Taos Pueblo with whom Blumenschein frequently worked.¹⁷ How well Blumenschein knew his models prior to moving to Taos is unclear. Moore explains that soon after establishing permanent residency in the summer of 1919, Blumenschein established ties with a number of his models whom he hired as day-laborers. For instance, Gomez did all of the carpentry, cabinetwork, and painting for the artist's home.¹⁸

The name and concept of "War Captain" likely would have been lost on an East coast Anglo audience. However, the term "War Chief," a misnomer for this position used by Anglo residents in the region, was more consistent with popular notions of Indianness. In keeping with this title, one wonders if, in the 1919 composition, the central figure wore a feathered-bonnet, a prop used in a number of Blumenschein's other 1910s paintings, including *The Peacemaker* (1913, fig. 4.5) and *Taos Indian with Jug* (1913, fig. 4.6), and *The Chief Speaks* of 1917. The beaded items feature in *The Gift*, as well as the buck-skin legging and the large pot, were also popular signifiers of Indianness, and were prevalent in the work of Taos Society artists, such as paintings by Eanger Irving Couse (fig. 4.7) and Joseph Sharp (fig. 4.8). Looking at the aforementioned 1910s paintings by Blumenschein, one could also speculate that the figure in *War Chief* in

¹⁷ According to Moore, Gomez was elected as Lieutenant Governor in the mid-1930s and as Governor in the 1950s. In conversation with James Moore, June 2007. Moore has done extensive work on Taos Pueblo models. He agrees that a positive identification of the figure is difficult.

¹⁸ Moore, "Ernest Blumenschein's Long Journey with Star Road," 9. Gomez was painted and photographed by many Taos artists, including Julius Rolshoven, E. Irving Couse, Bert Geer Phillips, and Joseph Sharp. Ibid.: 17-20.

Times of Peace was originally set in front of a vast, open landscape, and that the dense foliage, which is more modernist in its temperament due its flattening effect, was added when the work was repainted. In the spring of 2007, *The Gift* was x-rayed by the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Conservation Department.¹⁹ Unfortunately, the top layer of paint is too thick to reveal what might have been the original composition. What is certain is that Blumenschein decided to alter the canvas in some way and to change the work's title in 1922.

Judging from title, the original composition was meant to evoke a readable narrative. By altering the composition and giving the painting an allegorical title, the meaning of the new composition became less transparent. Returning to the seemingly straightforward description of *The Gift* that Blumenschein gave in 1925, when considered in conjunction with the painting, it is actually quite puzzling. Interesting is the artist's use of "perhaps" and his claim that the "story is nothing." Both phrases seem coy and challenge the narrative he gives in the rest of the statement. Furthermore, Blumenschein's suggestion of exchange between two Indians is curious. The work's protagonist, then, would have to be interacting with an unseen Indian figure located in the viewer's space. Since the painting was intended for a white audience at juried shows—Blumenschein's large canvases, in this case 40 ¼ x 30 ¼ inches, were earmarked for academic annuals—the spectator would have to "play Indian" to enact this narrative.²⁰ What's more, the figure's gesture and demeanor is not one of amicable exchange. In

¹⁹ In June of 2007, I had the opportunity to discuss a radiograph of this painting with the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Senior Conservator, Stefano Scarfetta, and with William Truettner, Senior Curator. I am grateful for their insightful comments.

²⁰ This term was popularized by Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

short, *The Gift*'s narrative, as was described by the artist, would have been lost on the painting's primary audience, cosmopolitan Anglo spectators.

Blumenschein's description of *The Gift* speaks to the work's ambiguity and points to the intentionality of that ambiguity. One wonders what were the artistic and socio-political factors at play in the 1920s, which motivated Blumenschein to reconceptualize his 1919 canvas? In order to answer this question, it is helpful to begin with a discussion of paintings by Taos Society artists and of ethnic tourism in the Southwest. This discussion will provide a counterpoint for Blumenschein's *The Gift*.

The Taos Society of Artists and Ethnic Tourism in the Southwest

During the last two decades, many art historians, historians, and anthropologists who have studied the art of the Southwest have focused on artists' role in fostering tourism in the region.²¹ In particular, the Taos Society's relationship with the Santa Fe Railway, which often purchased their works and reproduced them for a mass audience, has been thoroughly explored.²² In this vein, anthropologist Sylvia Rodríguez writes:

²¹ Notable publications that explore the link between artistic production in the Southwest and ethnic tourism include Barbara A. Babcock, "Pueblo Cultural Bodies," *The Journal of American Folklore* 107, no. 423 (Winter 1994), Sandra and Suzan Campbell D'Emilio, *Vision and Visionaries* (Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, Gibb-Smith Publisher, 1991), Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), Molly H. Mullin, *Culture in the Marketplace: Gender, Art and the Value of the American Southwest* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), Rodríguez, "Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Towards a Sociology of the Art Colony.", Edwin L. Wade, "The Ethnic Art Market in The American Southwest, 1880-1980," in *Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture*, ed. George Stocking Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

²² Porter, Ebie, and Campbell, *Taos Artists and Their Patrons, 1898-1950*, Marta Weigle, "From Desert to Disney World: The Santa Fe Railway and the Fred Harvey Company Display the Indian Southwest," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 45, no. 1 (Spring 1989), Weigle and Babcock, eds., *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway*, Michael E. Zega and John E. Gruber, *Travel by Train: The American Railroad Poster, 1870-1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).

The Santa Fe art colony was both the product of and a stimulant to the growth of tourism...This art colony was the mechanism by which a harsh environment and inequitable social conditions became symbolically transformed into something mysterious, awesome, transcendent.²³

Although focused on artists working in Santa Fe, this statement is an apt characterization of many canvases by Taos Society artists, particularly those created between 1900 and 1920 that were purchased by the Santa Fe Railway. William Haskell Simpson, the railway's general advertising agent after 1900, understood the value of corporate image-making and realized that strong visual images would attract tourists to the region.²⁴ Simpson quickly latched onto many of the academic painters of Taos, whose romanticized visions of the Southwest perfectly met the railway's advertising needs.²⁵ Paintings by Couse, such as his 1914 *Wal-si-see, Good Medicine* (fig. 4.9), resonate with Rodríguez's reading. A Santa Fe Railway favorite, the company purchased and reproduced more paintings by Couse than by any other Taos artist. This painting, for instance, was reproduced in the railway's 1914 calendar (fig. 4.10). Its format—a contemplative, semi-nude Indian "buck," seated in a shallow, rustic space, surrounded by

²³ Rodríguez, "Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Towards a Sociology of the Art Colony," 78.

²⁴ Under Simpson's guidance, the Santa Fe Railway was one of the first companies to use art in its advertising campaigns, bringing some of the nation's most famous painters, including Thomas Moran, to key locations along The Santa Fe's lines. For more information see, T. C. McLuhan and William E. Kopplin, *Dream Tracks: The Railroad and The American Indian 1890-1930* (New York: Abrams, 1985), Porter, Ebie, and Campbell, *Taos Artists and Their Patrons, 1898-1950*.

²⁵ Simpson created a successful symbiotic relationship between business and art. Artists benefited from railway publicity and the railway acquired a corporate image based on original, romantic paintings of Indians. The railway acquired its first painting in 1903. In 1905, Simpson, bought three paintings; during the subsequent decade, he purchased 262 works from residents of Santa Fe and Taos. The railway calendar was initiated in 1907. Couse's work was the featured painting for the railway calendar in the following years: 1914, 1916-1918, 1921-1938. See the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Company Calendar's website: http://qstation.org/Company_Calendars/. To have a painting chosen for The Santa Fe Railway's annual calendar was immensely profitable largely due to the publicity the calendar generated. 300,000 calendars were circulated annually to homes, schools and offices throughout the United States. D'Emilio, *Vision and Visionaries*, 21. Also see Keith Bryant, Jr., "The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway and the Development of the Taos and Santa Fe Art Colonies," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 9, no. 4 (October 1978): 437-53.

artistic implements and/or objects—was a pictorial cliché that Couse regularly duplicated throughout his career, as did several of his peers. The railway found this scheme for representing Pueblo Indians immensely appealing. Thus, Taos Society paintings played an important role in exoticizing the region for a national audience during the first two decades of the twentieth century.

Upon first consideration, *The Gift* seems to follow artistic precedents for representing the Pueblo people, particularly Pueblo women. Despite appearances, the central figure is male. While residents of the Southwest might recognize the figure as such, most viewers today read the figure as female.²⁶ For instance, in a catalogue for the SAAM traveling exhibition, *Lure of the West* (2000), the author misread the central figure as a “stern Native American woman.”²⁷ This is largely because the work’s iconography parallels popular imagery of Pueblo women posed with *ollas*, or water jugs. As anthropologist Barbara Babcock notes, “Whether in 1880 or 1980...a traditionally dressed Pueblo woman shaping or carrying a water jar or *olla* is *the* representation of the Pueblo.”²⁸

²⁶ This is particularly true the further one moves away from the Southwest. Initially, I too assumed the figure was female.

²⁷ Amy Pastan, *Lure of the West: Treasures from the Smithsonian American Art Museum* (New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 2000), 20. It is likely that Pastan assumed the figure was female for the reasons I give in the body of this paper, and because the figure is designated as female in SAAM’s curatorial files. When the work was acquired by the National Collection of Fine Arts (now SAAM), the author of the object record describes the figure in the following terms: “(specific): female/American Indian/New Mexico/ Taos. (Description): A wrinkled Indian woman with arms folded stands in front of and with her back to a line of younger Indian women. A large ceramic pot is at her left. The limbs of a tree form the background.”

²⁸ Or rather, as Babcock continues, the *olla* actually “*the* metonymic misrepresentation of Pueblo culture, for in 1992, or even in 1922, few Pueblo women dressed like this or walked around with pots on their heads unless they were paid to do so.” Babcock, “Pueblo Cultural Bodies,” 41. Also see Barbara A. Babcock, “Mudwomen and Whitemen: A Meditation of Pueblo Potteries and the Politics of Representation,” in *The Material Culture of Gender: The Gender of Material Culture*, ed. Katharine Martinez and Kenneth L. Ames (Winterthur: The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Inc., 1997), 253-80.

Representations of Pueblo women in native attire, draped in blankets, and holding or standing next to elaborate pots, were popularized in the late nineteenth century and still pervasive during the early twentieth century, as is evident from postcards (fig. 1.20), photographs (fig. 4.11), and paintings, such as Walter Ufer's *Going East* of 1917 (fig. 4.12). Historically, the Pueblo people used clay pots as vessels. However, even before the railway's arrival in the region in the 1880s, the Pueblo were using industrially produced vessels rather than pottery to store and carry goods and water. By depicting Pueblo women carrying clay pots, artists and photographers attempted to recreate the Pueblo people's pre-industrial way of life. Such imagery was in keeping with the pervasive turn-of-the-century idea that the Pueblo were domestic, agrarian Primitives, living in the present.

The pot is a symbol of a Primitive lifestyle, but, paradoxically, it also gestures towards modern consumer culture. T.C. McLuhan argues that as railroad travel to the Southwest became more popular, the marketing and sale of Pueblo pottery was geared towards the arts-and-crafts industry and parlor tastes of the East.²⁹ Indian culture was transformed into a highly salable commodity. Railway ephemera often featured pot-carrying and pot-decorating Pueblo women (fig. 1.21), types that one might find selling their goods at train depots.³⁰ As anthropologist Edwin Wade explains, upon arriving in the Southwest, tourists were encouraged by the railway to acquire quaint mementos from

²⁹ McLuhan and Kopplin, *Dream Tracks: The Railroad and The American Indian 1890-1930*, 44-45. Barbara Babcock explains that Pueblo pottery was one of the primary trade items in the Southwest for centuries. Barbara A. Babcock, "'A New Mexican Rebecca': Imaging Pueblo Women," *Journal of the Southwest* 32, no. 4 (Winter 1990): www.digital.library.arizona.edu.

³⁰ The caption on the postcard reads, "Pueblo Indians Selling Pottery," copyright 1902, the Detroit Photographic Company (DPC). The DPC handle much of the Santa Fe and Harvey Company's promotional images.

Pueblo vendors and railway gift shops in order to authenticate their encounters with Indians.³¹

In many early-twentieth-century images that depict Pueblo women with pottery, the subject is both objectified and commodified. Walter Ufer's 1916 painting, *Taos Girls* (fig. 4.13), features three pots placed at the feet of the three Pueblo woman. Using visual rhyme, the beautiful black pots are analogues to the women's bodies, which are almost totally covered by their black shawls. The Pueblo women were imagined as precious objects among objects.³² Through such depictions, anthropologist Barbara Babcock argues that Pueblo women became "receptacles of desire and containers of cultural value for Anglo viewers, consumers, and scholars."³³ The conflation of female Pueblo body and vessel is also evoked in Blumenschein's *The Gift*, or rather in its under-painting. The radiograph of *The Gift* registers only one obvious compositional change;³⁴ Blumenschein transformed what was once a second large pot into two seated female bodies. In *The Gift*, these two bodies melt together into one vessel-like form. So pervasive was the parallel between objects and Others that in Hartley's 1920 still-life, *El Santos* (fig. 4.14), the pot can be read as signifying the Pueblo people even without the inclusion of the object's maker or user. The objects featured in this painting—a *retablo*, a black pot, and a richly patterned blanket—act as surrogates for Hispanic and Pueblo peoples.³⁵ The

³¹ Wade, "The Ethnic Art Market in The American Southwest, 1880-1980."

³² This painting was reproduced for the Santa Fe Railway's 1985 calendar. McLuhan and Kopplin, *Dream Tracks: The Railroad and The American Indian 1890-1930*, 27.

³³ Babcock, "Pueblo Cultural Bodies," 42.

³⁴ I was unable to obtain a digitize copy of this radiograph before the completion of this dissertation.

³⁵ The pot's color and shape suggest that it is a piece of blackware produced at San Ildefonso Pueblo. The same type of pot is represented in Ufer's *Taos Girls*. In the pot is a yucca plant, which is local to the region. The object with a representation of Christ carrying the cross is a *retablo*, which is a *santo*, or an image of a saint, which has been painted on wooden board. The blanket could be Navajo in origin. A 1918 letter from Hartley to Stieglitz reveals that the artist chose these objects from Mabel Dodge Luhan's collection and painted them in her hallway. Hartley explained, "I have begun to paint

metamorphosis from Indian to pot in Anglo paintings supports anthropologists Babcock and Marta Weigle's argument that white painters transformed Americans Indians and their products into objects of desire, "fetishized and anesthetized for the colonial gaze."³⁶

The seated Pueblo women, who surround the central figure in *The Gift*, are also in keeping with touristic representations of Pueblo Indians.³⁷ These women, draped in brightly colored blankets, look down at their laps, suggesting that they are artisans. The beautiful pot adjacent to them is one product of their labor. Leitmotiv of Indian as creator was repeatedly displayed at fairs, museums, tourist sites and in visual culture, as is famously pictured in Edward S. Curtis's photograph of the Hopi potter, Iris Nampeyo (fig. 4.15).

Blumenschein was no stranger to imagery of Pueblo women posed with pots, as is evident in his 1898 illustration, "A Strange Mixture" (fig. 1.1). *The Gift* exemplifies the notion of intertextuality, or what art historian Michael Camille more appropriately terms "intervisuality," the process of visual culture production whereby one image generates another by visual association.³⁸ Intervisuality posits traffic of imagery between high art and mass culture. This concept challenges the structuralist idea that high art has an internal language. Instead, it presupposes that all genres of visual culture build on and

now, and have several good pastels finished, and two large still lifes on the way that I am doing in the hallway at Mabel S's." Marsden Hartley to Alfred Stieglitz, July 20, 1918 (Taos), Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 85, box 22, folder 531.

³⁶ Weigle and Babcock, eds., *The Great Southwest of the Fred Harvey Company and the Santa Fe Railway*, 4.

³⁷ The woman in profile looks strikingly similar to the woman in Blumenschein's *Indian Girl* and *Albeida of Taos*. *Albeida of Taos* was also reproduced in the 1923 Malkus article, "What is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?"

³⁸ Michael Camille, *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 339.

challenge one another.³⁹ Intervisuality is also relevant for an image's reception. As Camille explains, "viewers seeing an image recollect others which are similar to it, and reconfigure its meaning in a new context according to its variance."⁴⁰ *The Gift* points to Blumenschein's awareness of and conscious reworking of visual tropes that pervaded art production in New Mexico. Consider, for instance, *The Gift* in relation to Curtis's photographs of Taos Pueblo women from 1905, including "By the Cottonwoods" (fig. 4.16).⁴¹ Blumenschein's *The Gift* was in dialogue with the tradition of the picturesquely posed Pueblo female placed in a nature setting. Like Curtis, Blumenschein situated his figure in front of a leafy forest, perhaps playing with the primitivist idea that Indians are in-tune with nature. However, the artist did not simply adopt this paradigm. Through iconographic alterations—by featuring a *male* actor, posed in a tense and closed-off stance—he challenged the Pueblo-woman-with-pot prototype. When considered within an intervisual paradigm, *The Gift*'s distortion of iconographic tropes suggests a shift in meaning.

The Gift's monumentally posed man, who actively engages the viewer, challenged the construction of the Pueblo people as passive Primitives. Many scholars see Blumenschein's art as a mechanism that served to reinforce the "staged authenticity" of

³⁹ My thinking on the issue of intertextuality also has been enriched by Abigail Solomon-Godeau, who explored this idea to great effect in an October 31, 2007 lecture at the University of Kansas entitled, "Image of Desire: Femininity, Modernity, and Birth of Mass Culture in 19th Century France."

⁴⁰ Camille, *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England*, 339.

⁴¹ This was among the photographs that Curtis published in his twenty volume portfolio, *The North American Indian*. The portfolios were published between 1907 and 1930; "Taos Water Girls" was published in the 1926 volume. Through this project, Curtis intended to document the daily life, beliefs, ceremonies, and customs of Indians before they "vanished." Northwestern has digitized the portfolio in its entirety. See www.curtis.library.northwestern.com. For an interesting discussion of Curtis's work with respect to the political context of the early twentieth century, see Shannon Egan, "'Yet in Primitive Condition': Edward S. Curtis's North American Indian," *American Art* 20, no. 3 (Fall 2006): 59-83.

the region, and as endorsing Western fantasies about Primitive culture.⁴² In contrast, I argue that *The Gift*, like a number of other canvases Blumenschein created during the late 1910s and 1920s, confronted the simulacra of primitiveness and pointed to cross-cultural tensions in the region. Paying careful attention to *The Gift*'s unexpected and contradictory moments reveals the work's engagement with social, cultural and political issues.

Active Subjects and Passive Objects

The Gift's centrally placed figure and *olla* gestures towards the iconography of Pueblo women with pots; however, other pictorial elements subvert this paradigm. The artist plays with audience expectation; the viewer is drawn in by the familiar and then sidelined by iconographic syncopations. Despite its similarities to images of Pueblo women with *ollas*, the central figure is undoubtedly male. *The Gift* was reproduced as the cover image for a 1923 article in *McClure's* magazine by Alida Sims Malkus with the following inscription: "The Taos Indian, in *his* white deerskin robe, is distinctive among the brightly blanketed tribes."⁴³ The identification of the figure as male is confirmed by early-twentieth-century photographs.⁴⁴ His attire—long smock, white robe, and hair parted and pulled to the sides—was common among Taos Pueblo men (figs. 4.17 & 4.18).⁴⁵

⁴² The term "staged authenticity" was popularized by Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976). Also see Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past*.

⁴³ My emphasis. Alida Sims Malkus, "What Is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?" *McClure's Magazine* 55, no. 2 (April 1923).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*: 85-90.

⁴⁵ At the turn-of-the-century, Pueblo men wore shoulder blankets, belts, and leggings, as well as hair ties and breechcloths over Mexican style pants and shirts. Although Taos men were known for wearing traditional white shawls, this item was also worn by Pueblo women. Similarly, Pueblo men

Blumenschein provided visual clues to differentiate the gender of the figures in *The Gift* by creating a series of dichotomies. The standing protagonist's white robe and parted hair is contrasted with the seated female figures' darker, colorful shawls and heavy bangs. As is the case in *The Gift*, in early-twentieth-century paintings and photographs featuring Pueblo women, the figures tend to wear dark blankets as shawls over a dress (figs. 4.11, 4.13, 4.16 & 4.19).⁴⁶

The gender of the central figure in *The Gift* is important, particularly with respect to his demeanor. As was previously mentioned, in early-twentieth-century visual culture, display was the main purpose of pot-and-Indian imagery. In ephemera and photographs featuring Pueblo women posed with pots, the subject often looks into the viewer's space (figs. 1.20 & 4.16); the feminine gaze was not perceived as a threat to Anglo viewers. Notably, male and female Indians were represented in different ways in Anglo paintings. Whereas ephemera produced in the region often featured female Indian artisans, paintings of this subject are less common; Taos Society artists, for instance, tended to paint male Pueblo artisans.⁴⁷ In paintings of male Indians, such as Couse's *The Potter* (fig. 4.7) and Sharp's *Prayer to the Buffalo* (fig 4.8), the subject almost never engages the viewer. The

cloaked themselves in textiles of a variety of hues. Kate Peck Kent, *Pueblo Indian Textiles: A Living Tradition* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press, 1983), 12-13.

⁴⁶ Women of Taos were popularly represented in solid black shawls, but they also wore white, solid-colored, and patterned blankets. Pueblo women traditionally wore woolen dresses of dark brown or black, the natural color of sheep. Blue dresses were also worn, the color achieved by dying wool with indigo, and later with aniline dyes. After Spanish contact, the use of wool and new dyes changed the appearance of Pueblo textiles. Pueblo men adopted Spanish-style white cotton pants, slit up to the kneed on the outer seam, whereas the style women's of clothing changed little during Spanish occupation. See Virginia Moore Roediger, *Ceremonial Costumes of the Pueblo Indians: Their Evolution, Fabrication, and Significance in the Prayer Drama* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 121-22. With the arrival of the Santa Fe and the Denver & Rio Grande Railways after 1880, factory produce dresses and mantas often replaced traditional clothing for everyday wear. Kent, *Pueblo Indian Textiles: A Living Tradition*, 16.

⁴⁷ In the first decades of the twentieth century, Pueblo potters tended to be female. However, there were also a number of prominent male potters, including Maria Martinez's husband, Julian Martinez.

male Indian creator is presented as psychologically and temporally isolated. This visual paradigm constructs the Indian artisan as pure, authentic, and untainted by modernity, while at the same time it objectifies the subject.⁴⁸

Sharp's and Couse's paintings can be understood as perpetuating anthropological and assimilationist perspectives. In keeping with the anthropological practice of salvage ethnography, which was concerned with recouping a record of what was left of a culture before it disappeared, Sharp's and Couse's pictorial creations endeavored to reconstruct the life-ways of the vanishing Indian. Salvage ethnography can be linked to assimilationist policy since it was through this policy that Indians would fade into American citizenship. In many Taos paintings, the fetishized Indian figures, coveted and displayed, inhabit non-spaces that seem of no particular time. The objects in these paintings are as important as, if not more important than, the figures themselves. In the early twentieth century, it was generally presumed that Indians were doomed to vanish; therefore, objects would be all that was left to represent Indian culture.

While current anthropological literature focuses on the objectification of Pueblo *women* in visual culture, paintings that feature *male* Indians, such as those mentioned above, also presented the Indian subject as exotic objects for display. In numerous academic paintings from Taos, a parallel is drawn between the beauty of the pot and that of the male Indian, as is palpable in Bert G. Phillip's 1918 painting, *The Secret Olla* (fig. 4.20). Placed atop a chest, next to an exquisite black Pueblo pot, a young Indian boy looks contemplatively into the pot's interior. The semi-nude boy seems to be pondering cultural loss or emptiness, and/or the past. Due to the youth's placement on a chest used

⁴⁸ Babcock notes, "subject-producers-of-objects" are less representations of Pueblo likeness than of Anglo desire 'to fix the Other in a stable and stabilizing identity' (Ownes 1983: 75)." Babcock, "Pueblo Cultural Bodies," 47.

to display art objects, he becomes a coveted object among other objects. Such blatant objectification of Indian men is particularly evident in paintings by Couse, as in *The Pottery Vendor* of 1916 (fig. 4.21). Here, an Indian man, whose rigid body looks as if it has been petrified, both helps to display objects and is presented as an object on display.

When compared to standard Anglo paintings of *male* Indian figures with objects, Blumenschein's *The Gift* again evades standard compositional motifs. In contrast with the prevalent iconographic paradigm of passive, contemplative Indian men, the central man in *The Gift* engages the viewer with a stern, if not aggressive, glare. The artist intensifies our focus on the figure's gaze by situating his head in front of dense, leafy foliage. The man's expression is one of skepticism, even guarded hostility; he is neither passive, welcoming, nor naïve. He was cast neither as a creator nor a contemplative figure. He is neither physically nor psychologically isolated. He stands to meet the viewer, suggesting that he is a citizen of the present, not a relic of the past. Through the man's pose and gaze, Blumenschein implied his agency and thus attempted to thwart the subject's objectification.

In its challenge to popular representations of male Pueblo Indians, *The Gift* is not unique among Blumenschein's oeuvre. The artist created a number of canvases in the early 1920s in which male figures aggressively confront the viewer. One such work is *Star Road and White Sun* (fig. 4.22), about which James Moore argues that the male gaze acted as a socio-political signifier. In the Tiwa language, the phrase *si 'a' ma'* translates as "stares a lot" or "stares always/continuously," which is behavior described as unusual or aggressive. Moore contends that the defiance, even anger, of the two men in this

painting would have been readily understood in the cross-cultural milieu of the American Southwest.⁴⁹

Moore links the assertive gazes of *Star Road* and *White Sun* to political turmoil and shifting socio-cultural behavior at Taos Pueblo. By closely reading the figures' modes of dress (traditional versus Americanized), confrontational gazes, and gestures (the younger man rests his arm on an "unseen but strongly implied" barrier), Moore explains that the work referenced inter-tribal generational conflict. Moore places particular importance on the controversy over peyote use at Taos Pueblo, but writes that the work's meaning is also relevant to the politics of American Indian assimilation.⁵⁰ I argue that the dress and demeanor of the central figure in *The Gift* is also socially and politically meaningful, and points to political tensions surrounding the debate over assimilation and to the preservationist movement.

The Bursum Bill and Artist-Activists

In the early 1920s, two assimilationist campaigns outraged and mobilized the Pueblo people and the intelligentsia in the Southwest. First, brewing since the late 1910s (e.g. the Secret Dance Files), but intensifying in the early 1920s, was the attempt to curb tribal ceremonial practices, which Charles Burke, Commissioner of Indian Affairs,

⁴⁹ Moore, "Ernest Blumenschein's Long Journey with Star Road," 9. In a market flooded with representations of objectified and pacified Pueblo Indians, Moore argues that the uncompromising gazes of *Star Road* and *White Sun* likely caused discomfort among an East coast audience, as is revealed by the work's provenance. The work had an impressive exhibition record, and thus Blumenschein had initially hoped to sell the painting for \$2,500 to \$2,000. By 1926, he offered the work to Haskell Simpson for \$1,200. The work never found a major patron, and Blumenschein eventually sold it to Albuquerque High School for \$250. Moore, "Ernest Blumenschein's Long Journey with Star Road," 8.

⁵⁰ In his interpretation of the work, Moore privileges the peyote controversy over the assimilationist debate, explaining that the younger figure's American hat and jeans, and his blue and red neckerchief, are symbols of his participation in peyote practices of the Native American Church. Moore, "Ernest Blumenschein's Long Journey with Star Road," 24.

deemed as immoral, a challenge to productivity, and even un-American. Hartley's New Mexico essays, I have argued, were a response to the early stages of this campaign. Second, and more relevant to *The Gift*, is the controversy surrounding the Bursum Bill, which was quickly and quietly passed through Congress in 1922.

The Bursum Bill, the popular name for the Pueblo Indian Land Act, was drafted by Senator Holm O. Bursum of New Mexico with the support of Albert Bacon Fall, Secretary of the Interior.⁵¹ Land ownership had been a long contested issue in New Mexico (Territory and State). Under Spanish rule, in 1680, Indian land grants were secured by the region's Pueblo tribes. In 1858, these grants were confirmed by Congress.⁵² Over the next half century, tribal lands were legitimately and illegitimately inhabited by non-Indian settlers, most of whom occupied the land without title.⁵³ By the early 1900s, conflicting claims to land ownership and water rights were a widespread problem in New Mexico, which the Bursum Bill purported to resolve. As long as a settler had enjoyed "peaceable possession" of Indian land since 1900, the bill would give the claimant title to that land.⁵⁴ Those whose had settled on Indian land post-1900 could file for title and would be allowed to purchase the land.⁵⁵ The Bursum Bill left no room for land claims to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Legitimate or not, the claims of all settlers who had asserted themselves on the land prior to 1900 would be recognized as legal.

⁵¹ Albert Bacon Fall was a former Republican Senator from New Mexico.

⁵² For more information see Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America*, 107-8. In 1858, a Pueblo delegation traveled to DC to receive patents to their land, which were handed to them by President Lincoln, along with inscribed, silver-headed canes. These canes are still held by tribal leaders and are understood as a symbol of U.S. governmental sanctioning of Pueblo sovereignty.

⁵³ Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1982), 275.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ According to historian Brian Dippie, 60,000 to 340,000 acres of Pueblo land were in dispute, and the bill encompassed the interest of some 3,000 non-Indian claimants. Ibid.

This Bursum Bill was approved by Congress on July 20, 1922. Strategically introducing the bill into Congress in the days before the session ended, thus insuring that there would be no time for hearings, Bursum claimed that the Public Lands Committee, the Secretary of the Interior, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and the Pueblo people were all in favor of the bill. The Pueblo people had not been consulted. Thus, under false pretenses, the Senate approved the bill without debate and forwarded it to the House, which took no action before the session expired.⁵⁶

Whereas Bursum labeled non-Indian residents living on Indian lands as “settlers,” the anti-Bursum Bill camp called them “squatters.” The Pueblo people consider their lands to be tribal property and thus communal. Tribal lands, it was argued, could not be legitimately sold to outsiders and must have been obtained through deceit. Critics of the bill claimed that only a handful of settlers had legitimately obtained small tracts of land.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the Bursum Bill’s detractors understood it as a perversion of assimilationist allotment laws and argued that it would legislate outright land extortion. The bill also was seen as a decisive blow to tribal government since internal disputes were to be adjudicated by federal courts.

The intelligentsia in New Mexico was particularly vocal about protesting the Bursum Bill. Holm argues that the preservationist movement began in the artist-intellectual community of Taos, and found its champion in social activist, John Collier, who eventually became the Commissioner of Indian affairs.⁵⁸ Collier, who had first

⁵⁶ Lawrence C. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 216.

⁵⁷ Activists proposed the Jones bill, which promised to design a committee that would review land claims on a case-by-case basis so that settlers who had acquired land lawfully could retain their land.

⁵⁸ Tom Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 182. Stella Atwood, chair of the General Federation of

visited the region in 1920 at the bequest of Mabel Dodge Luhan, returned to Santa Fe in 1922, just after the Bursum Bill was approved by the Senate.⁵⁹ Part reformer and part visionary poet, Collier was the perfect person to mobilize the intelligentsia. It was only after Collier became involved that the movement coalesced into a powerfully organized campaign and thus reached a wider audience.⁶⁰

One of Collier's first goals was to inform the Pueblo people about the bill, which he did with the aid of Mabel Dodge Luhan's husband, Antonio (Tony) Lujan from Taos Pueblo. As Lujan and Collier moved from Pueblo to Pueblo along the Rio Grande corridor, the Pueblo people rallied together.⁶¹ The first meeting of the All-Pueblo Council occurred on November 4, 1922 at Santo Domingo Pueblo, where 121 delegates from twenty Pueblos met to deliberate about the bill. The council produced and circulated to the press the "Appeal of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico to the People of the United States," which was conceived as an "appeal to the American people for fair play and justice and the preservation of our pueblo life."⁶² In order to further publicize

the Women's Clubs' Indian Welfare Committee, was a central instigator of opposition to the bill and was also instrumental in involving John Collier in the debate. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy*, 276.

⁵⁹ John Collier was drawn into Dodge Luhan's circle before the First World War by Hutchings Hapgood and Fred Stein (the Director of the People's Institute). Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform*, 38-41. Collier had a history of political activism. As a young man in New York City, he worked at the People's Institute, a settlement house serving Jewish and Italian immigrants. In 1919, he left New York for California, where he became the head of an adult education center. David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995), 229. While in California, Dodge Luhan bombarded him letters pleading with him to visit her in Taos. After Collier lost his job in California, he decided to visit Taos on his way to Mexico, arriving on December 11, 1920 and remaining for five months. By the time his visit was over, he believed that the Pueblo people had much to teach modern civilization.

⁶⁰ In 1923 Collier founded the American Indian Defense Association (AIDA), a primary voice of the preservationist movement. Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era*, 182.

⁶¹ Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform*, 218.

⁶² "Appeal by the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico to the People of the United States," Mabel Dodge Luhan Papers, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 196, box 94, scrapbook. The address was translated and

opposition to the bill, in the winter of 1922, Collier traveled with a delegation of Pueblo Indians to New York and Washington, DC.⁶³ This tactic was successful; newspapers nationwide published editorials that covered the activities of the Pueblo delegation, articles which also criticized the bill and federal Indian policy. Through this controversy, the assimilationist-preservationist debate was brought into the national spotlight

The campaign against the Bursum Bill resulted in a public awakening to the limits of assimilationist ideologies. As a result, artists, writers, and scientists in New Mexico, many of whom were not typically described as political, became active participants in the debate. In 1922, Blumenschein was among those people who signed the "Protest of Artists and Writers Against the Bursum Indian Bill," which demanded that Congress repeal the bill, pleading, "We ask this for the sake of the Pueblos...[who] are now threatened with the loss of their lands and of their community existence. We ask it even more for the sake of Americans themselves, as a test of national honor."⁶⁴ Among the other signatories were a large number of nationally recognized artists and writers, including Mary Austin, Willa Cather, Hamlin Garland, John Sloan, Alice Corbin Henderson, Harriet Monroe, Edgar Lee Hewett, Witter Bynner, and D. H. Lawrence. Many of these same people bombarded newspapers and magazines with articles about the

written down by Father Schuster, a local priest, and typed by Collier in the form of a press release. Ibid., 220. Among the Dodge Luhan papers at Yale's Beinecke Library are two other documents that were written in protest of the Bursum Bill: a petition by Pablo Johnson, who chastises the federal government for stealing Indian land, and, "The Appeal of the Acomas." The latter document argues that the bill would result in significant losses of tribal land, and explains that the bill was passed without Pueblo knowledge. It also provocatively proclaims that the Acoma would refuse to accept the jurisdiction of federal courts on the matter.

⁶³ Ibid. The trip was financed by Dodge Luhan and Amelia White. On January 14, 1923, the Pueblo delegates appeared at the People's Institute in New York, where Collier delivered a speech entitled, "The Impending Destruction of the Pueblos—the Oldest Democracy in the World." Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform*, 237.

⁶⁴ "Protest of Artists and Writers Against the Bursum Bill," Mabel Dodge Luhan Papers, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 196, box 98, scrapbook.

possible disastrous effects of the bill.⁶⁵ Like Hartley's politically engaged essays written less than a half decade earlier, many of these articles addressed the merits of Indian culture, as well as the economic, political and social problems that Pueblo communities faced.

In the press surrounding this debate, the Pueblo people were promoted as the most noble of America's aboriginal population. As was printed in a 1923 *New York Times* editorial, the Pueblo were extolled being monogamists, family oriented (the wife is the "mistress of the home" and there is a "reverence of women"), tender parents, loyal to the U.S., hospitable and community oriented, Christians, wonderful dancers, and fine artists and poets.⁶⁶ Some combination of these traits was repeated in most Anglo articles that politicked against the Bursum Bill. Furthermore, for vanguard artists and writers, the Pueblo's communistic way of life, and their ability to unite art and life, made them an example of an anti-modern utopian society. According to historian Patricia Limerick, Collier tied Indian salvation to white salvation, as did many advocates of Indian preservation.⁶⁷ Collier referred to Taos as the "Red Atlantis," a community that was socially cohesive, spiritual, balanced, and ecologically conscious, and thus he presented the Pueblo community as a foil to the materialism and spiritual corruptness of white

⁶⁵ As a result of the publicity campaign led by Collier and Atwood, Commissioner Burke's office was overwhelmed with protests against the Bursum Bill. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform*, 220. In response, Albert Fall publicly ridiculed the preservationist movement as a propaganda campaign, describing it as insidious, untruthful, malicious, and even criminal libel. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy*, 279.

⁶⁶ "New Struggle Ahead of Congress on Disposal of Indian Land," *New York Times* January 21, 1923, XX4.

⁶⁷ Patricia Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton, 1987), 201.

culture.⁶⁸ This utopian message is metaphorically suggested in *The Gift*. The women behind the central figure are grouped tightly together merging into one communal body. Whether created by preservationists or reformers, depictions of the Pueblo people in texts and images were a reflection of what Anglos wished that white America would become; Pueblo culture acted as mirror to what Anglos found lacking in, or more accurately, depleted from American society.

Evidently, the preservationist movement was not without its problems and paradoxes. In keeping with the ideological position that informed Blumenschein's 1898 illustration, "A Strange Mixture," 1920s artist-activists continued to perpetuate a hierarchy of difference. Pueblo Indians were granted a privileged status over New Mexico's Hispanic population. The recall of the Bursum Bill in 1923 was a blow to local ranchers.⁶⁹ A large contingent of Hispanic ranchers in New Mexico had good reason to want the bill approved, since many had farmed the land in dispute for generations. In a 1927 letter to an Albuquerque newspaper, A.B. Renehan, an attorney for Hispanic and Anglo landholders attempting to confirm land claims, conveyed his clients' feelings of social inequity: "Millions for the Indians, not one cent for the poor devil of a Mexican, Spanish-American and Anglo Saxon who have made the Indian desert bloom as the

⁶⁸ John Collier, "The Red Atlantis," *Survey* 49 (October 1922). He also published a number of other articles around the time of the Bursum Bill controversy. For instance, see John Collier, "Plundering the Pueblo Indians," *Sunset* 50 (January 1923).

⁶⁹ The power of the Old Guard in New Mexico, which included Anglo lawyers, ranchers, and businessmen, and to which Senator Bursum was a member, was eroding as liberals moved to the region after WWI. As a result, the Old Guard increasingly relied on a base of Hispanic voters to maintain power. Thus Bursum Bill, in part, was intended as a political strategy to illicit the support of New Mexico's large contingent of Hispanic voters. Kenneth Dauber, "Pueblo Pottery and the Politics of Regional Identity," *Journal of the Southwest* 32, no. 4 (Winter 1990): <http://digital.library.arizona.edu/jsw/3204/pueblo.html>.

rose.”⁷⁰ Hispanic ranchers saw the defeat of the Bursum Bill as yet another instance in which their interests were overlooked in favor of those of Pueblo Indians.⁷¹

The Pueblo people also were given privileged status over America’s other Indians, as evident in the artists and writers’ protest against the Bursum bill, which described the Pueblo people as “probably the most industrious and deserving of all our Indian wards.”⁷² In their writings, Anglo activists often argued that the Pueblo people were wholly unlike the nation’s other Indians, described as nomadic and uncivilized, and thus were worthy of Anglo support. The same activists who celebrated Pueblo culture for its nobility often repeated demeaning and racist stereotypes in describing non-Pueblo peoples. For instance, in a 1924 *Forum* article, one commentator argued, “The Pueblo Indians of New Mexico represent a civilization far higher than that of the Cherokee, and in many respects, superior to our own—serene, imaginative, communal.”⁷³ When advocating for the preservation of “Indian” culture, preservationists typically meant “Pueblo” culture.

Paradoxes aside, in terms of American Indian civil rights, the movement to overturn the Bursum Bill was successful on a number of fronts. In November of 1923, after Congress was back in session, Senator William Edgar Borah of Idaho requested that the bill be recalled since it had been passed under false pretenses during the last hectic days of session. Soon thereafter, the bill was over-turned. The debate was also effective

⁷⁰ Quoted in Ibid.

⁷¹ Dozier writes that the legal status of Pueblo people sometimes brought benefits to them that adversely affected their Hispanic neighbors. This was the case with land disputes, but also with special services, such as health, education, and welfare assistance, from which the Hispanic community was often excluded. Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America*, 113.

⁷² “Protest of Artists and Writers Against the Bursum Bill,” Mabel Dodge Luhan Papers, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 196, box 98, scrapbook.

⁷³ Percy Mackaye (Miami University, Oxford, Ohio), “Efforts to Deprive the Pueblo of Their Ancient Heritage,” *New York Times* (December 9, 1922), 11.

in spurring Collier's life-long interest in Indian policy reform.⁷⁴ Furthermore, the controversy was a major challenge to assimilationist policy. The publicity surrounding the debate resulted in widespread skepticism towards the government's actions with regard to Indian policy, and in an increased awareness of American Indian social and political problems.

Indian Giving

The Gift was painted (or rather repainted) in 1922, the same year the Bursum Bill controversy erupted. Although Blumenschein had supported assimilationist policy at the turn of the century, by the 1910s, he had reversed his position. His faith in assimilation was replaced by a desire for Indians to hold onto their traditional ways.

Blumenschein was engaged in the campaign against assimilation. As was just discussed, he lent his signature to the 1922 "Protest of Artists and Writers Against the Bursum Indian Bill" (fig. 4.23). This was not the first time that Blumenschein had taken a public stand against the BIA. In 1919, the *Albuquerque Evening Herald* interviewed Blumenschein and Bert Geer Phillips about the merits Indian art, excerpts of which were published in the May 24, 1919 issue of *El Palacio*.⁷⁵ In this interview, the two artists harshly criticized the government's civilizing mission, specifically calling attention to the fallacy of superintendent Lonergan's attempts to alter Indian modes of dress. Remember, it was Lonergan who, in 1915, sent to the Bureau of Indian Affairs testimonials that supposedly documented acts of immorality at Pueblo ceremonies. In keeping with a

⁷⁴ Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform*, 244.

⁷⁵ Ernest L. Blumenschein and Bert Geer Phillips, "Appreciation of Indian Art," *El Palacio* VI, no. 12 (May 24, 1919): 178-79.

statement made by Hartley, in this interview, Blumenschein argued that Indian dance was among the best forms of dance in the world, perhaps even surpassing the Russian Ballet.⁷⁶ Blumenschein was particularly distressed over the Americanization of Indian dress, which he saw as a signifier of cultural loss. To this effect, Blumenschein explained:

[The young Indian] learns to wear our ugly conventional dress...As he takes on American costumes he will inevitable discard the habits and characteristics of his forefathers. Is he any better a citizen then? I have lived with these people for years, I have found them a fine intelligent race who have developed a distinctive and absolutely original art...⁷⁷

For Blumenschein, Pueblo dress signified their cultural heritage and Pueblo art evidenced their civility.

There is strong evidence to suggest that *The Gift's* title and iconography was recognized as politically meaningful among the New Mexican intelligentsia. *The Gift* was reproduced as the cover illustration for a 1923 editorial written by Alida Sims Malkus, entitled "What is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?" (fig. 4.24). This article was an emotionally charged exposé intended to solicit public opposition to the Bursum Bill. Malkus wrote, "[Pueblo] arts are a true expression of soil and environment. This is the distinctive and indigenous art of America—a priceless *gift* to our country."⁷⁸ Couching their protests in a cultural nationalist agenda, preservationist literature routinely invoked the notion of Pueblo culture as gift to America, citing Pueblo arts as proof of the nation's long and venerable cultural heritage. This was a trend well before *The Gift* was created. As was presented in chapter two, Hartley used the same idiom in his 1920 article, "Red Man Ceremonials," in which he asserted, "In the esthetic sense alone, then, we have the

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.: 179.

⁷⁸ My emphasis. Malkus, "What Is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?"

redman as a *gift*.⁷⁹ Similarly, in the aforementioned 1919 interview with Blumenschein and Phillips, Phillips argued that the BIA was responsible for the “destruction of the Indian’s gifts to the world.”⁸⁰ In short, *The Gift*’s title was in tune with the rhetoric of the preservationist movement.

In keeping with Blumenschein’s 1925 narrative description of *The Gift*, scholars tend to read the work literally, seeing the pipe bag and/or the pot as “the gift,” which is intended for an unseen receiver.⁸¹ Such a reading is not substantiated by the composition. The central figure clutches the pipe bag, holding it close to his body; he neither covets a newly acquired object, nor seems willing to give it up. In an alternate interpretation of the work, one which takes into account the context of the preservationist movement, I argue that the gift is the Pueblo man himself, or more symbolically, the Pueblo people. Considered in this context, the composition and iconography of *The Gift* can be more thoughtfully interpreted.

Previously, I argued that central figure’s assertive glare implies his agency. This idea is reinforced by the presence of the pipe bag, which is used to store and transport a peace pipe. The ceremonial peace pipe was popularly known as a signifier of an impending treaty, truce, or peace.⁸² For instance, in a Chicago newspaper’s coverage of the Bursum Bill controversy, the author noted that Stella Atwood and Collier had brought Indians to Washington, DC to protest the bill and, “To smoke the pipe of peace with the

⁷⁹ My emphasis. Marsden Hartley, “Red Man Ceremonials: An American Plea for American Esthetics,” *Art and Archaeology* 9 (January 1920): 7-14.

⁸⁰ Blumenschein and Phillips, “Appreciation of Indian Art,” 178.

⁸¹ Pastan, *Lure of the West: Treasures from the Smithsonian American Art Museum*, 20.

⁸² The idea that the Sacred Pipe was only used for peaceful purposes is a common misnomer; it was also used during times of war and raiding. The Sacred Pipe is a means for requesting assistance for martial activities; it was used to bring groups together as allies, as well as to bring former enemies together for peace. Jordan Paper, “Sacred Pipe,” in Suzanne Crawford and Dennis Kelley, *American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia*, vol. 3 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 941.

great white father, hold a solemn pow-wow and plea for desert lands in the Southwest that has been theirs for thousands of years.”⁸³ The phrase to “smoke the peace pipe” was used in American vernacular as an indication of the resolution of both Indian (intertribal and Anglo-Indian) and non-Indian socio-political conflicts.⁸⁴ While the pipe bag in *The Gift* acts as a symbol of the Pueblo man’s ability and willingness to seek resolution or peace for his people, his demeanor suggests that he will do so only on his terms.

The prominently placed pot is also in keeping with advocacy for preservation.⁸⁵ Craft production was cited as an example of Pueblo industriousness. To counter claims of Indian laziness and non-productivity made by assimilationists, most notably by Commissioner Burke, Anglo advocates for Pueblo culture routinely picked out pot making as the most artistically worthy and economically viable of tribal industries. During the 1920s and 1930s, a number of philanthropic organizations were formed in New Mexico with the intention to “save” American Indian art from aesthetic and structural ruin.⁸⁶ These organizations acted under the assumption that if Pueblo art should die or degenerate, so too would the uniqueness of the Pueblo people.⁸⁷ Thus, the creation of high quality pots was understood as a means through which Pueblo Indians

⁸³ Paul Sifton, “Pueblo Indians Send Emissaries to Washington.” This clipping has a hand-written inscription that reads, “Chicago. Jan. 13,” and was found among the Mabel Dodge Luhan Papers, Beinecke/Yale, YCAL MSS 196, box 94, scrapbook.

⁸⁴ For instance, an August 4, 1912 *New York Times* article, titled “Theatre Employees [sic] Smoke Peace Pipe,” reported on a settlement between theater managers and musicians and stagehands.

⁸⁵ The pot is either black, or black and brown, and was likely made using the “smudging technique.” The exact identification of the pot’s origins is difficult, since the details on the pot are not clear. It was probably not made in Taos. Based on its shape and color, the pot looks to be from Santa Clara or San Ildefonso. The object was probably owned by the artist.

⁸⁶ These organizations include the Southwest Indian Art Association, the Museum of Northern Arizona, and the Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts (see chapter five). See Wade, “The Ethnic Art Market in The American Southwest, 1880-1980,” 176. The Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts, of which John Sloan was president, also was formed to offset the destructive path of the curio industry. See chapter five.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 180.

could become economically independent and sustain their traditional way of life, while also contributing to American culture. In the words of John Sloan, “The American Indian is willing and competent, given a market, to earn a congenial and lucrative living through his art, with benefit to himself and the country.”⁸⁸ The pot in *The Gift*, then, acts as a metonym for Pueblo artistic creation and for the Pueblo people themselves. As such, it is also “the gift” in a metaphorical sense.

The symbolic meaning of the pot in *The Gift* reveals some of the ironies embedded both in *The Gift* and in the preservationist movement. Assimilationists picked out the Pueblo people as being the most civilizable of America’s Indians because of their legacy of artistic production. As one commentator explained, “heathen basket weaving” could be replaced by “Christian embroidery.”⁸⁹ Conspicuously, those in favor of preservation *also* supported their position by calling attention to Pueblo art production, similarly arguing that it evidenced Pueblo civility and productivity. In contrast, however, preservationists proposed that it was for this reason that Pueblo culture deserved to be *saved*. In short, Pueblo pot-making was a powerful symbol for agitators in both camps. Preservationists’ support of Pueblo pottery also held a tenuous place in the commercial nexus of ethnic tourism. As was discussed earlier, the metonymic pot was used to great effect by the tourist industry to promote the Southwest as a place where Americans could have an exotic yet safe encounter with docile Primitives. Many preservationists considered the tourist industry to be as corrupting an influence as federal policies. And

⁸⁸ John Sloan and Oliver La Farge, *Introduction to American Indian Art: Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts*, vol. Two volumes (New York: The Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts, Inc., 1931), 53.

⁸⁹ Mrs. Datus E. Meyers of San Diego quoted in, “Our Duty to the Indians: A Symposium,” *Forum* LXXI, no. 4 (April 1924): 552-53.

yet, by promoting Pueblo arts and fostering a market for Indian objects in cosmopolitan centers, Anglo activists intensified tourism in the region.

Looking to the popular press, we find that these preservationist conundrums were not lost on the movement's detractors. During the 1920s, *Forum* magazine featured articles that presented both sides of the debate over federal Indian policy. In its March 1924 issue, the magazine held a virtual symposium in which renowned writer, Mary Austin, argued for preservation, and the Board of Indian Commissioner's first female member, Flora Warren Seymour, presented the merits of assimilation.⁹⁰ Seymour and those who supported her position dismissed the intelligentsia as sentimentalists, and argued that preservationists could do their best to keep Indians in "glass jars" (a term popularly used), but inevitably Indians would be absorbed by civilized American society. As Mr. Herbert Welsh, President of the Indian Rights Association, contended, "Any effort to keep them as a separate and unchanged people for purposes of artistic or literary study or archeological observation, though the temptation to do so is strong and fascinating, is doomed to failure because it is contrary to the natural tendency of our best civilization."⁹¹ In response, preservationists challenged the ideology of the vanishing

⁹⁰ See Mary Austin, "Our Indian Problem. Part II- The Folly of the Officials," *Forum* LXXI, no. 3 (March 1924): 281-89. This debate was summarized in "Our Duty to the Indians: A Symposium," 551-58. In subsequent months, the magazine also published responses to the debate by the original participants, as well as by other interested parties. See Witter Bynner, "Truth About Indians," *Forum* LXXI, no. 5 (May 1924): 689, Flora Warren Seymour, "Mrs. Seymour Replies," *April 1924* LXXI, no. 4 (April 1924): 547-48. So heated was the debate surrounding the symposium, the following November, the magazine summarized the "wealth of additional material" that had been sent to its editors. See "A Cycle on the American Indians: A Symposium," *Forum* LXXII, no. 5 (November 1924): 711-15.

⁹¹ "Our Duty to the Indians: A Symposium," 555. Similarly, Dr. J. Walter Fewkes, Chief of the Smithsonian Institution's the Bureau of American Ethnology, wrote, "The law of survival of the fittest applies to the growth of culture that determines the state of civilization." "A Cycle on the American Indians: A Symposium," 714.

Indian.⁹² They argued that Indians were part of a living, thriving culture, which should be appreciated, not destroyed. As Witter Bynner demanded, “Let it be said at once and for all that the Indians are not numerically a vanishing race. On the contrary, their number has increased during the last decade.”⁹³ Similarly, Alice Corbin Henderson stressed, “[Indians] are not to be considered a moribund race who should in decency be allowed to die a natural death.”⁹⁴ Furthermore, as Austin explained, if it were not for assimilationist policy, Indian culture would not be doomed in the first place.⁹⁵

In a more compelling criticism, assimilationists also questioned the intelligentsia’s motivations for supporting Pueblo culture. One commentator charged:

Unfortunately, many of those who seek to conserve the old Indian thought...are in reality exploiting these matters for their own advantage, or at best for the benefit of strangers. Robbed of dignity and sincerity by the consciousness of an audience, the native art and worship is prostituted to the level of a commercial venue.⁹⁶

Assimilationists skeptically noted that those in favor of preservation were the very same people whose economic viability was dependent on representing or studying Indians. Indeed, as anthropologist Kenneth Dauber explains, by the 1920s, Pueblo Indians had

⁹² Beginning in the early 1920s, the idea that the Indian was vanishing was seriously challenged. For instance, Percy Mackaye of Miami University in Ohio explained, “[Pueblo] culture is not a thing of the dead past; it is here, living—a consummation of long ages, for us to respect and emulate if we can.” Percy Mackaye, “Efforts to Deprive the Pueblo of Their Ancient Heritage,” *New York Times* (December 9, 1922): 11. In the same vein, Malkus wrote, “The Pueblos have a future. They are not considered to be a moribund race who should in decency be allowed to die a nature death.” Malkus, “What Is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?” 85. Malkus repeated this position in a 1923 *New York Times* article. See Alida Sims Malkus, “Those Doomed Indian Dances,” *The New York Times* (April 8, 1923): SM 1.

⁹³ Witter Bynner, “II-From Him That Hath Not,” *Outlook* (January 17, 1923): 125.

⁹⁴ Henderson quoted in Alida Sims Malkus, “Are the Pueblo Indians to be Robbed of Their Heritage?” *Current Opinion* (February 1, 1923): 213. Henderson’s remark was likely a response to an article by D.H. Lawrence in which he wrote, “The end of the Pueblos. But at least let them die a natural death. To me the Bursum Bill is amusing in its bare-faceness—a cold joke. It startles my English mind a little to realize that it may become law.” (Lawrence indeed began the paragraph with “The end of the Pueblos.”) D.H. Lawrence, “Certain Americans and an Englishmen,” *New York Times* (December 24, 1922): 51.

⁹⁵ Austin, “Our Indian Problem. Part II- The Folly of the Officials,” 287.

⁹⁶ “Our Duty to the Indians: A Symposium,” 555.

become the center of the regional economy; tourism brought money to activists for Indian culture, many of whom made a living painting and writing about “authentic” Pueblo Indians.⁹⁷ These financial incentives may be one reason that interests of the Hispanic community were overlooked during the Bursum Bill debate. Dauber argues that during the early 1920s, the Hispanic community was not a tourist attraction and thus did not have a “constituency reliant on their survival.”⁹⁸

Blumenschein, like most intellectuals who advocated for preservation, was attuned to criticisms of the preservationist position. The meaning of *The Gift* was intended to be both challenging and ambiguous. For instance, the work’s title encourages the viewer to ponder iconographic disjuncture. The Pueblo people are presented as the gift, but the viewer is not given full access to their society or culture. Arms crossed, lips pursed, and furrowed brow, the demeanor of the central figure is standoffish.⁹⁹ His body acts as a physical and psychological barrier between the spectator and the women behind him. The figure’s traditional dress and terse body language articulates his desire to hold steadfast to his tribal ways. His stance implies dignity, and more importantly, autonomy. The Pueblo man does not welcome the Anglo viewer into his world, demanding that she maintain a respectful distance. Furthermore, whereas the viewer has access to Pueblo artistic products, or the pot, she cannot see their method of production. The act of creation is hidden from Anglo eyes. The viewer is also denied access to the women’s bodies, seeing only their faces and their shawls.

⁹⁷ Dauber, “Pueblo Pottery and the Politics of Regional Identity.”

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ In conversation, architectural historian Carla Yanni pointed out that the posture of the central figure recalls the iconography of carved dime-store Indians, which are often posed with a stern demeanor and crossed-arms. This similarity is another instance of intervisuality in western visual culture.

Looking more carefully at the canvas, strange details become manifest; male figures, whose attire is similar to that of the central figure, appear to rise out of the ground and emerge from the trees (fig. 4.25). Several of these mysterious partial figures are out of scale with respect to their position within the canvas. Since *The Gift* is an over-painted canvas, it is possible that some of these figures are residual forms from the original painting. However, upon close inspection of the painting, it is apparent the forms are not palimpsests; they were either intentionally incorporated in or added to the over-painted canvas. Blumenschein's inclusion of this ghostly brigade of figures further complicates the work's meaning, leaving the viewer to ponder more questions. Why were these figures kept or included? Are they watchful guardians, like the main figure, protecting both Pueblo people and their culture? Are they ancestral spirits? The power of this work comes with its ambiguity, with questions that can be meditated upon, but do not admit definitive answers.

Blumenschein's decision to paint the central figure as a barrier between the viewer and the Pueblo speaks to preservationists' belief in segregation. This position was expressed by Hartley in his New Mexico essays, and was frequently repeated in 1920s publications. For instance, a 1924 *New York Times* editorial asserted, "Few have paid any real attention to the Indians' own plea—that they be left alone, to live their own lives without interference from those who would destroy their culture or make them change their religion."¹⁰⁰ In keeping with this segregationist mentality, the Pueblo man in *The Gift* bars entrée to his world. He will decide what Anglo society may take and what it may see. And yet, it is still Blumenschein who offers the gift.

¹⁰⁰ "Giving the Indians A Chance," *New York Times* November 9, 1924, E6.

In order to explore the ideological complexities of *The Gift*'s title, I would like to turn briefly to theoretical investigations of gift exchange. Philosopher Alan Schrift has argued that the question of the gift is a political one that addresses fundamental issues of inter-subjective interaction.¹⁰¹ This idea is in keeping with those put forth by sociologist-anthropologist Marcel Mauss, who is credited with initiating early-twentieth-century thinking about gifts and giving. Mauss's essay, *The Gift (Essai sur le don)*, first published in 1924, offers insights into cultural notions of gifting that are contemporaneous to Blumenschein's work.¹⁰² Gifting, such as potlatch, is a mode of exchange that was associated with what Mauss labeled as Archaic and Primitive societies.¹⁰³ Blumenschein's title, then, is a double entendre: it presents the man as a metonymic gift; it also designates the subject as Primitive, as one who participates in communal gifting. Mauss explained that the invocation of the gift, despite its positive associations, is ideologically flawed. A gift, in theory, is voluntary and disinterested; in fact, however, a gift is a formal pretence, a transaction based on obligation and economic self-interest. To give, Mauss contended, was to show one's superiority.¹⁰⁴ With respect to so-called Primitive societies, Mauss's Marxist driven theory evacuated gifting of its religious function for aboriginal peoples, and therefore does not illuminate the practice of

¹⁰¹ Alan D. Schrift, ed., *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity* (New York: Routledge, 1977), 18.

¹⁰² Ibid., 4.

¹⁰³ Mauss wrote that gifting is "a system of economic prestations between the component sections of 'primitive' and what we might call 'archaic' societies." Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1967, first printed circa 1923-1924), 1. He further explained, "Gift-exchange, as typified by the potlatch, was popularly associated with American Indian communal practices; inherent to a potlatch, at which a member of a tribe gives away all of his possessions, is the obligation to repay." Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, 40.

¹⁰⁴ Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, 1.

“giveaways” in American Indian societies.¹⁰⁵ However, Mauss’s ideas are helpful for deconstructing Anglo notions of gifting, and thus yield insights into Blumenschein’s use of the word “gift.”

Mauss’s theories encourage one to consider the power relationships implied by the title, *The Gift*. Despite the fact that the artist described the painting as representing intertribal exchange, as a white artist creating for a white audience, the exchange enacted could only be between two Anglo parties. What then, was Blumenschein’s gift? The Pueblo people? An awareness of Pueblo culture? The painting itself? What did the artist expect in return, and who was indebted to him? By invoking the rhetoric of the gift, Blumenschein offered to white Americans something that was not his to give. Even while the artist attempted to confront Anglo mythologies, he unwittingly reinforced many of the paradigms adopted by his Taos peers. In order to give something, one must have “something” to give. Thus, inherent in referring to Pueblo culture as “the gift” is the objectification of the subject.

The New Mexican intelligentsia played a significant role in overturning the federal policy of assimilation, and yet the preservationist movement was by no means an unequivocal success. Preservationists often failed to see the contradictions between their advocacy for cultural isolation and their well-meaning interference in Pueblo political and cultural affairs. Furthermore, in spite of their benevolent intentions, preservationists often assumed the authority to decide what counted as authentic Indian culture, which

¹⁰⁵ For many Native communities, the reciprocal relationship formed through gifting creates both personal ties and ties with the universe. In most Native worldviews, because the earth provides for the people, the people are beholden to that system of care and giving. In short, giveaway ceremonies meet a variety of spiritual and social needs. Suzanne Crawford and Dennis Kelly, “Giveaway Ceremonies,” in Suzanne Crawford and Dennis Kelley, eds., *American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia*, vol. 1 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 345.

undermined their claims in support of Pueblo self-determinacy. These paradoxes are resonant in *The Gift*. The painting's message of Indian agency is destabilized by a seemingly innocuous inclusion. The details on the pot are intriguing (fig. 4.26); the reflections on it do not correspond with what is around it. The white does not match the pipe bag, and the artist curiously added a bright square patch of light, which appears to be the reflection of his studio window. This inclusion has two interpretive implications. First, it can be read as a trace of Blumenschein's authorial presence. Through this insertion, was the artist connoting that he was another watchful guardian? Second, it suggests that Blumenschein did not intend for the work to be read as a window onto reality. Through this device, he was calling attention to the fact that the work was a studio painting, that the scene was an artistic construct. Blumenschein experimented with this notion in a number of his other paintings, including *The Chief Speaks*.

Who's the Chief?

The Gift's iconographic idiosyncrasies—e.g. the reflection on pot and Indian men who lurk among the trees—suggest that Blumenschein intentionally encoded the work with ambiguity. *The Gift* is not unique in this respect. Blumenschein created a number of canvases between the late 1910s and the 1930s that evade straightforward interpretations, including *The Chief Speaks* of 1917 (fig. 4.2), *Superstition* of 1921, *Ourselves and Our Taos Neighbors* of 1931 (fig. 4.27), and *Jury for Trial of a Shepherd for Murder* of 1936. *The Chief Speaks* is particularly interesting because it is one of the Blumenschein's earliest monumental canvases in which he played with compositional disjuncture and activated the gaze of the painting's Indian subjects. In this

work, Blumenschein called attention to notion of painting as a construction, and broached the subject of Anglo-Indian interactions in Taos.

If not visually scrutinized, one might misread *The Chief Speaks* as a typical, mythologizing painting of Indians. Its central figure has some of the markers of the stereotyped Indian: war-bonnet and imperial looking tunic. As such, the work is in keeping with a number of other paintings Blumenschein created in the 1910s, including *The Peacemaker* (fig. 4.5) and *Taos Indian with Jug* (fig. 4.6)

In the cross-cultural milieu of the Southwest, feathered headdresses carried with them complex associations. This highly symbolic object was developed by Plains Indian tribes, such as the Dakota, the Sioux, and the Apache. As a result of trade, migration and removal, feathered headdresses were sometimes worn by members of Hopi, Navajo, and Pueblo tribes. For instance, participants in the Comanche Dance, enacted at various Rio Grande Pueblos, wore war-bonnets to emulate and celebrate the fierce warrior spirit of the Plains Indians.¹⁰⁶ Feathered bonnets were also worn during Tiwa Eagle Dances (fig. 4.28).

Blumenschein's frequent inclusion of war-bonnets in his 1910s paintings probably had more to do with Anglo expectations of Indianness than it did with an interest in cultural accuracy. For the American public, the war-bonnet was arguably the most recognizable sign for the warrior-Indian and the West. Indians wearing war-bonnets were prolific in Wild West Shows (fig. 4.29) and in illustrations for dime-novels, popular literature (fig. 4.30), newspapers, and magazines. It cannot be coincidental that Blumenschein made his paintings more marketable for purchase by the Santa Fe Railway by including figures wearing war-bonnets. "The Chief" was the name given to the main

¹⁰⁶ See McLuhan and Kopplin, *Dream Tracks: The Railroad and The American Indian 1890-1930*, 71.

line of the Santa Fe Railway that ferried passengers to the Southwest. The distinctive logo for this line was the head of a war-bonnet clad Indian chief set next to the Santa Fe Railway's cross-in-circle logo (fig. 4.31). As was previously discussed, the railway's advertising agent, William Haskell Simpson, liberally purchased paintings of picturesque Indians for the railway, often gravitating towards those works that featured Indian chiefs in emblematic war-bonnets.

In a 1926 letter to Simpson, Blumenschein offered the railway many of his "top-notch" paintings, including *Deer Dance*, *Superstition* and *Taos Entertains the Cheyenne* (for two thousand dollars each), and *October*, *The Peacemaker*, and *Star Road and White Sun* (for twelve-hundred dollars each).¹⁰⁷ In what James Moore describes as a calculated sales pitch, Blumenschein wrote to Simpson, "Large paintings are not often executed now-a-days, but the list I enclosed is of pictures too big for homes. They were painted for exhibitions and I have made my reputation on them."¹⁰⁸ Predictably, Simpson purchased *The Peacemaker* for the railway's Los Angeles Ticket office since the war-bonneted figure mirrors the railway's logo. This was probably no surprise to the artist. When negotiating his first purchase from Blumenschein, Simpson requested a painting with an Indian standing in front of Taos pueblo. The resulting work, *Taos Indian Holding Water Jug*, is dominated by a figure wearing a war-bonnet. In spite of these sales, Blumenschein's transactions with Simpson were less profitable and stable than those of his Taos peers, in large part because the artist was less comfortable placating Simpson's

¹⁰⁷ I have not come across a work by Blumenschein entitled *Deer Dance*. It is possible that Blumenschein changed the title to *Moon, Morning Star, and Evening Star*. While *Enchanted Forest* also features the Deer Dance, it was painted long after 1926.

¹⁰⁸ 1926 correspondence between Blumenschein and William Haskell Simpson quoted in Moore, "Ernest Blumenschein's Long Journey with Star Road," 7-8.

compositional and aesthetic demands.¹⁰⁹ While Simpson bought dozens of works from Sharp and Couse, Blumenschein only sold three paintings to the railway.¹¹⁰

By the late 1910s, Blumenschein began to question the iconography of Taos Society paintings. As was previously discussed, this inquiry could have been motivated by the artist's increasing hostility towards assimilationist policy, but it can also be linked to a number of other factors. Because Blumenschein had difficulty working with Simpson, the artist may have felt less pressure to create images that were marketable to the railway. Moreover, there were so many pictures of romanticized Indians produced in Taos that it would have been financially beneficial for Blumenschein to distinguish his work from that of his peers. Furthermore, there was an influx of modernists to the region around World War I, whom Blumenschein not only befriended, but who influenced his subject matter and style. Modernists treated with skepticism and derision academic paintings of Indians, deeming them cliché, conservative, and stale. Spurred by any combination of these reasons, Blumenschein manipulated the iconography of the war-bonneted Indian chief in *The Chief Speaks*. The title and costume of the central figure encourage the viewer to misread the painting. It is only through close looking that the identity of the figures comes into focus, thus destabilizing one's initial reading.

The Chief Speaks features three Indian men posed in front of a panoramic landscape. The viewer's immediate impression is that the title refers to the central figure. Through iconographic nuances, Blumenschein undermined the viewer's expectations of what signifies a "chief." The title implies the act of speaking, and yet, the central figure

¹⁰⁹ Porter, Ebie, and Campbell, *Taos Artists and Their Patrons, 1898-1950*, 29-30.

¹¹⁰ In 1913, Blumenschein offered to create a work for Simpson based on size, which resulted in *Evening at Taos Pueblo*, which was purchased by the railway. Blumenschein could not convince the railway to buy another until 1926. *The Peacemaker* was Simpson's final purchase from the artist.

has pursed lips and looks heroically off into the distance. The elderly man next to him, wearing a vibrant red, patterned blanket wrapped around his waist, has his mouth open in a gesture of speaking. It is this aged man, not the central figure, who is the chief. The composition perplexes a hierarchical reading based on the placement and the size of the figures; the elderly chief is the most diminutive in stature and stands farthest from the viewer. The chief and his companion both engage the viewer; the younger man does so with particular intensity. Through their gestures of looking and talking, this pair acts as a foil to the passive, rigidly posed central figure.

The central figure in *The Chief Speaks* is not the chief, and thus the composition is left open to questions about this figure's identity and the painting's meaning. I argue that *The Chief Speaks* was intended to comment on the very act of painting in the Southwest. It is a painting of the artist's studio, which Blumenschein imagined as the natural landscape of Taos. The central figure is represented as what he is, a model. Since the Indian elder must be speaking to someone and the model must be modeling for someone, the presence of the unseen artist is implied. Thus, *The Chief Speaks* was building on a long tradition of paintings of the artist's studio, which Blumenschein would have been exposed to through his extensive academic training, including canonical paintings such as Diego Velazquez's *Las Meninas*, or, more pertinently, Jan Van Eyck's *Arnolfini Portrait*, in which the artist's presence is also hinted at but is not fully revealed.

In *The Chief Speaks*, Blumenschein presented himself as a *plein air* painter, and thus fashioned for himself an artistic persona. In actuality, the artist typically made preliminary sketches outdoors, but painted the landscape and figures in or just outside his studio. These studio paintings were created from a composite of sketches, as is most

evident in the background of *The Chief Speaks*. The church in the painting is San Francisco de Assisi Church located at Ranchos de Taos (fig. 4.32), which was a popular tourist attraction and artistic subject long before Georgia O'Keeffe immortalized it in paint. Ranchos de Taos is a small town approximately ten miles from Taos Pueblo. The distance between the church and the mountains in *The Chief Speaks* seems to have been compressed, which makes one wonder if Blumenschein intended the viewer to read the setting as being Taos Pueblo. Blumenschein inserted the church at Ranchos de Taos in a number of other paintings that represent Taos Pueblo Indians, possibly because it is bigger and arguably more picturesque than Pueblo's mission church, San Geronimo.

In *The Chief Speaks*, the artist was both refashioning art historical models and playing with standard iconographies found in Western paintings. The contemporary Pueblo dress of the peripheral figures stands in contrast to the clichéd war-bonnet and classicizing drapery of the central actor. This pair was supposed to represent present-day Indians from Taos Pueblo; their presence was meant to undermine the authenticity of the central figure in stereotyped costume. Through the juxtaposition of the two types of Indians—mythologized model and real citizen—Blumenschein was commenting on the artifice of Indianness in the paintings produced in the region.

As more avant-garde artists arrived in the region, the habit of posing Indians in clichéd garb was widely ridiculed in texts (e.g. Hartley's New Mexico essays) and images. For instance, John Sloan satirized Taos Society painter, Julius Rolshoven, in *Rolshoven Painting an Indian* of 1920 (fig. 4.33). Wearing a crisp white shirt and tie, and seated in the shade of an adobe structure, Rolshoven paints a heroically posed Indian model. The Indian figure wears a traditional looking war-bonnet, but otherwise his white

shirt and pants are in-keeping with contemporary attire. Sloan humorously contrasted the modernity of the Indian's clothes and the setting in which he was placed with the staleness of his pose and headdress. Similarly, in contrast with paintings that attempted to erase the boundaries between real and unreal, *The Chief Speaks* seems to be about the very process of fabricating the real. The artist was grappling with what Anglo artists should paint and how. Blumenschein was not the only Taos Society artist concerned with these issues, as is evident in a painting by Walter Ufer entitled *Fantasies* (fig. 4.34). Ufer's work suggests that the subjects of his realistic looking paintings are studio concoctions. The picturesque landscape is being created with little reference to the outside world. Ironically, *The Chief Speaks* is itself a simulacrum of authenticity, since all three Pueblo men would have been studio models.

The Chief Speaks is a remarkable painting for a number of other reasons. The work presents the following scenario: the unseen artist, painting an Indian model, is approached by two Indians who look directly at the viewer. One of these men, who may have been either the Governor or War Captain at Taos, has come to engage the artist in conversation. There are a number of paintings by Taos artists that represent Indian models as models. Sharp found this theme particularly compelling. In his painting, *Studio Visitors* (fig. 4.35), three Indian men ponder the artist's latest painting. Ambivalent are their reactions, however; they could be variously praising or deriding the merits of the work. It is important that none of these figures address the viewer (or the artist). They have been allowed in the artist's space, but there is nothing to suggest that the unseen artist is concerned with what they have to say. None of the figures speak to the artist, and the painting looks to be almost finished. Unconventional, then, is

Blumenschein decision to paint the Indian figures in *The Chief Speaks* as interacting with the white viewer/artist. Moreover, while male Indian subjects were occasionally allowed to look out at the viewer, they were rarely given a voice. What the elderly chief is saying, however, is less clear. Have the two peripheral figures separated themselves from the group behind them to discuss with the painter the merits of the painting? Sketching, photographs, and painting the Pueblo people, particularly on their land, was often forbidden or only allowed if a fee was paid. Is the chief making sure that no rules are being broken, or that the model and the tribe have been appropriately compensated?

The Chief Speaks encourages one to contemplate the extent to which artists and Indians participated in mythologized notions of Indianness. This issue intrigued Blumenschein as early as 1898, when he covered Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show at New York City's Madison Square Garden for *Harper's Weekly*.¹¹¹ In the resulting article, "Behind the Scenes at a 'Wild West' Show," Blumenschein addressed the role that the Indian actors played in the staging of authenticity. The text is an odd combination of sensationalizes story-telling and eye-witness reporting. Blumenschein explained that when he went back stage to sketch the Indian crowd for *Harper's*, they asked him for money, taking advantage of what at first appeared to be an exploited position. The savvy Indian workers, the article suggests, capitalize on their status as cultural commodities in order to survive. Blumenschein concluded, "The curtain is redrawn—the curtain with the distant blue mountains, the blue pine-trees, and the blue tepees. Before, it is the romance and pleasure; behind, the reality and labor. Both sides are interesting."¹¹²

¹¹¹ Ernest L. Blumenschein, "Behind the Scenes at a 'Wild West' Show," *Harper's Weekly* (April 30, 1898): 422.

¹¹² Blumenschein, "Behind the Scenes at a 'Wild West' Show," 422.

A number of recent scholars have explored the dialogic nature of American Indian culture and commodity production. Ruth B. Phillips, for instance, investigates “transcultural synthesis,” or cultural blending caused by the trade of goods and modes across cultures.¹¹³ Following Phillips’s lead, Trudy Nick probes notions of “cultural purity” embedded in aboriginal studies. Nicks considers the active roles adopted by the colonizer and the colonized in cross-cultural encounters.¹¹⁴ She argues that rhetoric of cultural purity—particularly promoted in the museum industry in which Native artifacts that are deemed as culturally pure are distinguished from those which have been supposedly tainted by modernization—fails to deal with how Native populations creatively respond to new situations. In particular, Nicks’s research illustrates the extent to which the Canadian Kahnawake people recognized and accommodated tourists’ preconceived ideas about Indian Others in determining how they represented themselves.

In keeping with these anthropological perspectives, there is evidence to suggest that Pueblo peoples, long familiar with navigating intercultural encounters, actively created an image that would appeal to tourists to ensure economic viability.¹¹⁵ Pueblo models should not be one-dimensionally presented as passive victims who were forced by exploitative Anglo artists to pose for paintings that skewed their cultural heritage. As was discussed with respect to *The Gift*, by the 1920s, a number of men from Taos Pueblo were professional models. While artists often supplied models with props, Pueblo

¹¹³ Phillips investigates aboriginal souvenir production as a transcultural process and explores Natives’ role in reinventing notions of Indianness. Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from The Northeast, 1700-1900* (Seattle and Montreal: University of Washington Press and Montreal, Quebec McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 10.

¹¹⁴ Trudy Nicks, “Indian Villages and Entertainments: Setting the Stage for Tourist Souvenir Sales,” in *Unpacking Culture: Art and Commodity in Colonial and Postcolonial Worlds*, ed. Ruth B. Phillips and Christopher Burghard Steiner (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999), 315.

¹¹⁵ See McLuhan and Kopplin, *Dream Tracks: The Railroad and The American Indian 1890-1930*.

Indians also owned the intra-tribal objects they modeled with. It is reasonable to assume that Indian models played an active role in controlling their painted image, acting as cultural brokers, and that they were cognizant of the socio-cultural implications of doing so.¹¹⁶ Blumenschein, who conceived of a number of his models as friends, was at least aware of the issue of exploitation. By painting Indian figures with pro-active gazes, which implied their agency, Blumenschein may not have reversed hegemonic relationships, but he certainly called attention to them.

Ourselves and Our Taos Neighbors

Anglo artists in Taos who promoted the preservationist cause felt sympathy for Pueblo Indians; however, this does not necessarily mean that they treated the Pueblo people with equality.¹¹⁷ In spite of their activism for American Indian causes, Anglo artists in New Mexico often glossed over the power relations between themselves and their Pueblo models, guides, and house servants, understanding such relations as mutually beneficial.¹¹⁸ Rodríguez explains, “The artists described their relationships with natives in glowing, if paternalistic terms, devoid of critical reference to the daily workings of pervasive inequality, their own privileged position within the local order, or their role in perpetuating it.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ As James Moore writes, the “models knowingly participated in the artifice of many of the paintings that were produced, even as they also struggled between the desire to hold fast to tradition and the pressure to succumb to assimilation.” Moore, “Ernest Blumenschein's Long Journey with Star Road,” 20. Elizabeth Hutchinson explores identity politics with respect to American Indian artists and models. See Elizabeth West Hutchinson, “Modern Native American Art: Angel DeCora's Transcultural Aesthetics,” *Art Bulletin* 83, no. 4 (December 2001): 740-57, Elizabeth West Hutchinson, “When the ‘Sioux Chief's Party Calls’,” *American Art* 16, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 40-66.

¹¹⁷ William Truettner and I had a number of provocative discussions about this issue.

¹¹⁸ Rodríguez, “Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Towards a Sociology of the Art Colony,” 83.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*: 85.

The shaky ground on which Anglo supporters of preservation stood is evident when one considers the relationship between Anglo artists and Pueblo models. Blumenschein's close friend, Bert G. Phillips, was arguably the most politically active of the Taos Society when it came to supporting Indian civil rights. He helped to secure Taos Pueblo's rights to Blue Lake and to establish as national forest the land around the Pueblo.¹²⁰ With no hint of irony, it has been noted by scholars that Phillips liked to paint Indians because he discovered that they "had developed the patience to sit for hours without moving at all. He learned to take advantage of this, turning out more work in a day than he had ever considered [possible] in New York."¹²¹

The pervasiveness of exploitative attitudes towards models is also evident in letters written by Theodore Wores, who lived in Taos during the summer and fall of 1917. While in Taos, Wores worked closely with members of the Taos Society, including Blumenschein. In his letters home, he wrote that he was advised by Taos artists to, "Never pay more than 25 cents an hour or a dollar for a morning" to his models.¹²² As art historian Stephen Becker explains, Wores' principle guide and model was Ralph Martinez from Taos Pueblo. Wores paid Martinez \$1.50 per day to be his model, driver (including horses and staff), and interpreter. Becker writes that Martinez's interactions with Wores were finically beneficial for him and his family.¹²³ Nonetheless, Wores was getting a bargain. In a 1917 letter, the artist wrote, "I saw a fine black earthenware jar such as the Indians use for carrying water...I bought it for \$1.50

¹²⁰ Ibid.: 88.

¹²¹ Sherry Clayton Taggett and Ted Schwarz, *Paintbrushes and Pistols: How the Taos Artists Sold the West* (New York, NY: Distributed to the Book Trade by W. W. Norton, 1990), 111.

¹²² Theodore Wores quoted in Stephen Becker, ed., *Theodore Wores in the Southwest* (San Francisco: California Historical Society & Heyday Books, 2006), 66.

¹²³ Martinez also acted as an agent for Wores, hiring other models, who, Becker speculates, were likely member of Martinez's extended family. Ibid., 68.

(cheap).”¹²⁴ Furthermore, in these letters, Wores noted that his models were “panting” in the heat or “turning green,” which speaks to the strenuous conditions under which they were asked to work.¹²⁵ Hierarchical power relations are also invoked by Wores’ tendency to described Martinez in his letters as “my Indian.”¹²⁶

While Anglo artists often befriended Pueblo Indians, non-Anglos were still understood as peripheral subjects of the white community, as is perceptible in Blumenschein’s *Ourselves and Our Taos Neighbors* (fig. 4.27).¹²⁷ A guide for this group portrait indicates that the figures include, Ward Lockwood, D.H. Lawrence, E. Irving Couse, Victor Higgins, Walter Ufer, Leon Gaspard, Oscar Berninghaus, Burt Harwood, Bert Geer Phillips, Kenneth Adams, Mabel Dodge Luhan, Tony Lujan, Mary Austin, the three Blumenscheins, and “Indian Friends of Taos.”¹²⁸ It is notable that all of the Anglo sitters are named, whereas, aside from Tony Lujan, the Indians located in the margins of the canvas are anonymous. Moreover, the Anglo figures register portrait likenesses, whereas the Indians are generalized types. Eerily, the face of the seated male Indian is incomplete, and both Indian men have been given non-specific, mask-like features. The Indian woman who sits in front of these men could be Popsthee Romero, who frequently modeled for Blumenschein. However, this identification cannot be made solely based on

¹²⁴ Theodore Wores quoted in Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 79. Becker downplays the exploitative implications of this statement by noting, “However, Wores worked under the same conditions as his models.” This is not at all the case. As the photographs reproduced in Becker’s book suggest, Indian models in Taos were often posed outside the artist’s studio. Whereas a painter could work under the shade of a portico, models stood the direct sun for lighting purposes. Furthermore, a good model had to keep still for a long period time, whereas an artist could move around, drink water, and so on. Being an artist’s model is a strenuous endeavor, and would have been particularly difficult in the unforgiving heat of a high desert summer.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 66.

¹²⁷ Blumenschein revisited this composition a number of times between 1931 and 1937.

¹²⁸ Ernest Blumenschein is located in the striped red shirt. His wife is to his right, and daughter sits in the chair next to her mother. Blumenschein Collection, The Fray Angélico Chávez History Library, AC354, box 7, folder 9.

the painting, since the woman looks towards the floor, obscuring her facial features. The Anglo population in Taos was reliant on their Indian neighbors as models, laborers and servants. And yet, *Ourselves and Our Taos Neighbors* suggests that the Taos Pueblo Indians were important, not as individuals, but rather as an anonymous Primitive community. Art historian Charles Eldredge argues that the work inverts the customary primacy of American Indian subjects in the works of the Taos Society.¹²⁹ While this is certainly true, the painting's underlying message is more poignant. In spite of their fixation on Indian subject matter, the work highlights the centrality of the Anglo community in Taos. In this painting, Blumenschein anesthetizes the Taos Pueblo community, rendering its individuals faceless and voiceless.

As is frequently the case with Blumenschein's works, *Ourselves and Our Taos Neighbors* frustrates one, coherent reading. In spite of the centrality of Anglo intellectuals, the composition does not present an idealized image of this community. Although Blumenschein was a master at representing the figure, the portraits in this work were awkwardly painted, which manifests a certain tension. Only the two figures located in the far left corner are interacting with each other. In spite of their close proximity to one another, the rest of the figures seem psychologically isolated. The tension resonant in the figures is exacerbated by the exposed wooden beams in the background, which seem to be buckling under the weight of the building. The sense of uneasiness captured in this painting presents a surprisingly adverse image of Taos's intellectually community.

From a twenty-first-century perspective, Anglo activism for Indian cultural preservation and civil rights could be dismissed as self-serving and patronizing. Most

¹²⁹ Eldredge, "Ernest Blumenschein's 'The Peacemaker,'" 34-42.

scholars are prepared to agree with Sylvia Rodríguez, that the Taos colony “functioned to convert the disparity between social reality and touristic fiction into a highly marketable set of images.”¹³⁰ Although this perspective is relevant to a significant number of paintings created by Anglo artists in the Southwest, it should not be applied wholesale to all Anglo art production in the Southwest. As we have seen, Blumenschein was not erasing inequitable social conditions in many of his painting. Through the inclusion of visual ambiguities, a number of his paintings pointed to social and political issues without providing simple answers. Like many Anglo artists who worked in New Mexico in the 1920s, Blumenschein took part in two interlocking traditions: one of criticism and the other of conquest.¹³¹ The complex and ambiguous meanings of *The Gift* and *The Chief Speaks* highlight the artist’s exploration of cross-cultural interactions. In many of his paintings, Blumenschein attempted to challenge hegemonic political and cultural structures, even if this intention often buckled under the weight of deeply engrained mythologies and ethnic hierarchies.

¹³⁰ Rodríguez, "Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Towards a Sociology of the Art Colony," 80.

¹³¹ Philip Deloria makes a similar point when addressing D.H. Lawrence’s time in New Mexico. Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 4.

Chapter 5

John Sloan's *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*: "Spreading the Consciousness of Indian Art"¹

Reviewing a 1927 retrospective of John Sloan's work, one *New York Times* critic quipped:

The only story he tells really well is the one about New York, its streets and their struggles with snow and rain and the girlish beauty of Spring... the West never was meant for John Sloan. In New York he seems at home. In New Mexico he seems a guest driven by a desire to show his appreciation of his host's beauty.²

Frustrated by the criticism that he was no longer creating "Sloans," the artist proclaimed in his 1939 treatise, *Gist of Art*, that there was no such thing as a "typical Sloan."³ "Plague on the classifiers anyway," he decried. Sloan's frustration was warranted. Since the late 1910s, critics have allowed the artist to be little other than a painter of New York life.⁴ While canonically celebrated as a member of the "Ashcan School," Sloan had a long and prolific career outside the city. In 1919, encouraged by his mentor, Robert Henri, Sloan and his wife Dolly drove to New Mexico in pursuit of new subject matter that would revitalize his career. Between 1919 and 1950, Sloan spent every summer but

¹ Sloan quoted in Molly H. Mullin, "The Patronage of Difference: Making Indian Art 'Art, Not Ethnology,'" *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 4 (November 1992): 395. This brochure is located in the School of American Research (SAR), Amelia Elizabeth White Collection (AEWA), box 1.

² L.K., "Sloan's Art Seen in Retrospective Exhibition-- Work by Bernard Karfiol, Dickinson, Phillips and Others Now on View," *New York Times* (February 20, 1927): X10. The show was held at Kraushaar Galleries.

³ Sloan wrote, "There is now a prevailing idea that I am no longer painting 'Sloans' because I am also doing figures and portraits. These subjects are just as much a part of my life experience as the teeming streets of New York." John Sloan, *Gist of Art* (New York: American Artists Group, Inc., 1939), 16.

⁴ By the early 1920s, Sloan was already irritated with critics' refusals to take seriously his New Mexico work. In 1922 issue of *El Palacio*, Sloan remarked, "People want to make me a painter of New York life. That is what they know of me and what they expect. They like to pigeonhole artists and make them paint always the same things, so when they see a picture they can say, 'Oh, I know that picture; that is by So and So.'" "Artists Headed for Santa Fe," *El Palacio* 12, no. 12 (June 15, 1922): 169-70.

one in Santa Fe. There he created hundreds of accomplished works that picture the region's landscape and its Pueblo, Anglo and Hispanic inhabitants.⁵

Sloan's 1922 painting, *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo* (fig. 5.1) will act as a portal through which to investigate his under-explored artistic and political activities in New Mexico. After introducing *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, I will broaden my discussion to Sloan's paintings of Pueblo Indians created between 1919 and 1921, his first three years in the region. The artist's initial visualization of this subject was guided by how it had been represented in academic paintings and tourist ephemera. As Sloan became increasingly aware of problems caused by Anglo contact with Pueblo Indians, he struggled with how best to picture ceremonial dance. By 1922, Sloan's paintings of Pueblo dance had undergone significant compositional shifts; these shifts, I argue, speak to the political context of early 1920s New Mexico. Throughout his life, Sloan's artistic output was influenced by his social and political beliefs and activities. Sloan's dedication to Debsian socialism in the early 1910s impacted his production of visual culture, and his pre-war concern for worker's rights set the stage for his activism for American Indian civil rights and culture. During the 1920s and 1930s, Sloan was among those members of the New Mexican intelligentsia who contested the federal Indian policy of assimilation.

Throughout his thirty seasons in Santa Fe, Sloan periodically painted Pueblo subject matter. Between 1919 and 1924, he focused on the theme of ceremonial dance with particular intensity. These years coincide with the BIA's attempts to suppress Pueblo religious practices. Sloan's thematic focus on Indian dance did not recur until 1927, the year after the Harvey Company inaugurated its immensely popular "Indian

⁵ The Sloans embarked on this cross-country motorcar trip with Randall Davey and his wife. In 1920 the Sloans purchased a house on Garcia Street in Santa Fe, where they spent four months a year.

Detour,” which brought tourists to the region in record numbers. That year, Sloan created a number of satirical etchings that targeted Anglo tourists at Pueblo dances. These etchings criticized the negative impact tourism was having on the Pueblo people. For Sloan, federal Indian policy and the tourist industry were equally culpable for assimilating Pueblo peoples. Sloan’s crusade against the tourist industry climaxed with his involvement in the 1931 *Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts*, an exhibition of Indian objects that traveled throughout the country.

John Kraft and Grant Holcomb have examined *what* Sloan painted while he was in New Mexico, describing the various themes he adopted.⁶ Building on such examinations, I will examine *why* the artist chose to focus on certain motifs and the reasons for his compositional decisions: Why are most of Sloan’s representations of Pueblo Indians focused on their ceremonials? What aspects of Pueblo life did he ignore, erase, distort?⁷ What does Sloan’s art and writing tell us about how early-twentieth-century Americans understood Indians living in the Southwest? How are his East Coast and Southwest works ideologically related to one another? Such questions point to a critical reassessment of Sloan’s work.

⁶ James Kraft and Grant Holcomb provide good overviews of Sloan’s work in the Southwest. James Kraft and Helen Farr Sloan, *John Sloan in Santa Fe* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Services, 1981). Grant Holcomb, "John Sloan in Santa Fe," *The American Art Journal* X:1 (May 1978): 33-54.

⁷ Alexander Nemerov’s reading of the work of Frederick Remington encourages art historians to not only write about what is represented in an image, but also to explore what has been erased. Alexander Nemerov, "'Doing the 'Old America'": The Image of the American West, 1880-1920," in *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920*, ed. William Truettner (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art by the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991), 284-343.

Dance at Cochiti Pueblo

Cochiti Pueblo is the northernmost Keresan Pueblo in New Mexico, located twenty-two miles south of Santa Fe. Overlooking the Rio Grande, Cochiti is surrounded by the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the north, the Sandia Mountains to the south, and the Jemez Mountains to the west.⁸ In *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, the swelling peaks of the mountains are painted in shifting tones that reflect brilliant blue sky above and the soft, beige earth below. The viewer's eye is drawn from the dirt surface of the plaza's entrance, beyond the central crowd to the pueblo structure, to the mountains behind, and finally up into the distant sky. The pueblo becomes an extension of its natural surroundings. This scenic backdrop is the stage upon which the main attraction is set: in the central courtyard, the viewer catches a glimpse of Cochiti's annual Corn Dance.

Corn or *tablita* dances are among the communal ceremonials of the Keresan, the linguistic group to which Cochiti belongs.⁹ The Keresan's principle rituals have been built around weather control, illness, warfare, maintenance of flora and fauna, the coordination of communal activities, and the promotion of communal harmony.¹⁰ According to anthropologist and historian, Edward Dozier, a native of Santa Clara Pueblo, the Corn Dance is associated with the feast day of the Pueblo's patron saint in

⁸ Sloan painted the mountains near Cochiti closer than they actually appear in person. About *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, Sloan wrote, "In 1922, the same year that I painted *The City from Greenwich Village*, I did *The Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*. Both of these pictures are of subjects which I had studied off and on for several years; painted from memories and sketches. Most of the landscapes were started on the spot, directly from nature, with further work done back at the studio...." John Sloan quoted in Kraft and Sloan, *John Sloan in Santa Fe*, 31.

⁹ The Pueblo people speak three completely unrelated languages: Tanoan, Zunian, and Keresan. Keresan, also known as Keres, groups together the closely related dialects spoken at Cochiti, Laguna, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Santo Domingo, Acoma and Zia Pueblos.

¹⁰ Edward P. Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America* (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 1970), 151.

virtually all of the Keresan pueblos.¹¹ This is the case with one of Cochiti's several Corn Dances, which occurs on July 14, St. Bonaventure's Feast Day. Corn Dances are also performed by various Pueblos three other times a year (a Pueblo may hold more than one Corn Dance). These ceremonials celebrate the planting, growing, and harvest of corn.

The Corn Dance is among those rituals within the sacred area of ceremonialism that are open to Hispanic and Anglo viewers.¹² Photography and sketching is strictly prohibited. During his first season in New Mexico, Sloan was confronted with the seriousness of this rule. Helen Farr Sloan, the artist's second wife, documented Sloan as explaining:

Indians don't like to be photographed when performing their sacred ceremonies—but I found myself in trouble when I started to draw during one of the dances. The governor of the pueblo was called over to see what I was doing and wanted the drawing destroyed. After this I respected their feelings, and always worked entirely from memory.¹³

¹¹ Ibid., 184.

¹² Non-Pueblo tourists are only allowed to witness select ceremonials. Dozier categorizes traditional Pueblo ceremonials into four groups. The first group consists of sacred rites, or ceremonials, restricted from the view of non-association members; these include the rites of the medicine, clown, and hunt associations, preparatory rites for communal ceremonials, as well as rites connected to birth, death, puberty, and marriage. Sacred rites may have a public aspect for the townspeople, but outsiders are not generally welcome. The second group consists of semi-sacred rites, including the Corn Dance, which has both secret and public components. The public component can typically be viewed by tourists. The third group, village association ceremonials, also has sacred and private preparatory aspects, the public aspect being considered as entertainment. These include game animal and dances. The final group consists of house or courtyard dances; these secular performances, which often burlesque white tourists, are also considered to be entertainment. Ibid., 82-85, 197.

¹³ "Helen Farr Sloan—Notes," John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, box 251. In Sloan scholarship, the "Helen Farr Sloan—Notes" are often simply referred to as "Notes." This material is almost always treated as if it documents Sloan's own words. I have made a methodological decision to call attention to the fact that Helen Farr Sloan, the artist's second wife, had a hand in their creation. Before they were married, Helen Farr took her notes from Sloan's classes at the Art Students League, along with those of other students, and transformed them in Sloan's treatise, *Gist of Art*. Helen subsequently continued to record her conversations with Sloan, as well as the lectures and interviews he gave to scholars and journals. These notes were used, with Sloan's approval, for publications that accompanied exhibitions of his work in 1945 and 1946. In 1950, Farr Sloan compiled all of the material that she had collected into a book of 355 typed pages (the "Notes"). Importantly, this document is comprised of Sloan's ideas filtered through and edited by Farr Sloan and should be acknowledging as such. For information about these "Notes" see Rowland Elzea, *John Sloan's Oil Paintings: A Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. two (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1991), Peter Morse, *John Sloan's Prints: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Etchings, Lithographs, and Posters* (New

The Pueblo people are sensitive to how and by whom their culture is represented. Ironical, then, was the tendency of artist-activists in the early 1920s to focus on the subject of ceremonial dance.

The length of the middle-ground of *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo* is occupied by performers enacting the Corn Dance. Rows of costumed men and women move in unison, dancing across the plaza in an orderly fashion. Their rhythmic movement is captured by their synchronized body gestures and by the clapping hands of the audience. Obscuring part of this line of dancers is a group of men who, although not part of the formal ceremony, also keep rhythm with the dance. The female dancers wear traditional dark *mantas*, a woven wool overdress, leaving the left shoulder bare. On their heads are tablets; it is for this reason this ceremonial is also referred to as the *Tablita* Dance. The male dancers wear beige kilts, moccasins, and a single feather in their hair; the rest of their exposed bodies (legs, torso, and faces) are painted blue. By painting the dancers in sky-blue and adobe-beige, Sloan made palpable the primitivist idea that the Pueblo people were innately connected to nature. Near the dancers, a man holds a tall banner, described by the modernist painter, Dorothy Newkirk Stewart, as “emblematic of all life: eagle and macaw feathers are seen, ocean shells are said to be attached, a fox fur hangs over a strip like the dance kilt of hand-spun native cotton.”¹⁴

Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 45. In the John Sloan Collection, many of Sloan's papers have had editorial comments added to them in pencil, which are in Farr Sloan's handwriting. These comments have been added to documents that pre-date John and Helen's relationship. It would be easy to mistake these comments as being written by Sloan. The role that Farr Sloan has played in shaping current scholarship on the artist warrants close examination.

¹⁴ Dorothy Newkirk Stewart, *Handbook of Indian Dances* (circa 1940). A copy of this handbook, containing colorful handmade blockprints, is located in the Dorothy Stewart Papers, Archives of American Art. Stewart was a modernist painter and printmaker, who arrived in New Mexico around 1925.

The participants in the Corn Dance are surrounded by Indian spectators: in front of the pueblo structure, at the far side of the courtyard, men and women watch the dance from under the shade of a branch-covered portal. The foreground is flanked by two groups. To the left, resting in the shade of an adobe structure, sit and stand costumed Cochiti men, women and children who take a break from the festivities. To the right, a costumed Cochiti man rests his hand on a white horse carrying a Navajo spectator, who sits next two other Navajo men. In early-twentieth-century visual culture, Navajo men were often represented wearing headbands, turquoise and silver jewelry, and on horseback, the latter of which is an allusion to their nomadic ways (fig. 5.2).¹⁵

The viewer is situated in a liminal position in the composition, neither being an outsider nor part of the crowd. Women and young girls are situated closest to the viewer. The standing woman looks out into the viewer's space; the women below her sit in relaxed poses. The presence of these figures serves to put the viewer at ease without necessarily inviting her into the composition. The seated women and child form an exclusive semi-circle. The male dancers adjacent to these women, who stand with their arms crossed and backs to the viewer, further establishes a barrier between viewer and dancers. Sloan creates a tension between closeness and distance; the viewer's closeness to the Pueblo spectators indicates that she is not an intruder, but neither is she an insider since she is held at bay from the painting's primary subject. One is allowed to gaze upon the dance, but only from a respectful distance. Nevertheless, the opening between the figures in the foreground suggests an avenue for *psychological* entry into the drama.

¹⁵ About this work, Sloan noted in *Gist of Art*, "This ceremonial Corn Dance of the Cochiti Indians brings a large crowd to the pueblo. The horsemen on the right are visiting Navajos." Sloan quoted in Patricia Janis Broder, *The American West: The Modern Vision* (Boston: Little Brown, 1984), 60.

Sloan's compositional choices in *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo* were ideological significant, which becomes apparent when one considers Sloan's earliest paintings of Indian dances. The iconographic and compositional changes Sloan made between 1919 and 1921 are related to the artist's greater sensitivity towards the socio-political situation of Pueblo Indians.

The Popular Southwest: Sloan's 1919 Images of Pueblo Indians

In a 1919 letter to Robert Henri, Sloan enthusiastically wrote that he had already created thirteen canvases in New Mexico (that year, he would complete twenty-four in total). He continued, "We saw the Corn Dance at Santo Domingo—very good[.] I have 3 paintings from that occasion. The Daveys are back from the Hopi Snake Dance in Arizona...Dr. Hewett has asked Dolly and me to go with them (in your Ford) to the dance at San Ildefonso next week Sept. 6."¹⁶ Attending Indian ceremonies in New Mexico was something of a right of passage for new visitors, particularly artists. It would have been unique cultural experience for most Americans who visited the region. Since the mid- to late nineteenth century, Pueblo ceremonial and cultural practices had been featured in fine art and popular culture (fig. 5.3). By the second decade of the twentieth century, particularly pervasive were representations of Pueblo Indians by members of the Taos Society.¹⁷

¹⁶ Letter from John Sloan to Robert Henri, August 24, 1919. Bernard Perlman, ed., *Revolutionaries of Realism: The Letters of John Sloan and Robert Henri* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 246.

¹⁷ In the years before Sloan arrived in the region, Taos Society works were widely exhibited in academy shows and at private galleries throughout the country. Once in Santa Fe, Sloan would have seen their work at the Museum of New Mexico, which frequently spotlighted their work.

When working out a formal strategy for his first paintings of Pueblo dance, including *Ancestral Spirits* of 1919 (fig. 5.4), Sloan relied on established compositional paradigms. Through the mid-1910s, most images of southwestern Indians used a visual language that was similar to ethnographic display, as is conspicuous in E. Irving Couse's 1903 painting, *Moqui Snake Dance* (fig. 5.5), which was transformed into a lithograph for a Harvey Company book by the same title.¹⁸ Couse chose to represent what was considered to be the most bizarre and barbaric of contemporary Indian rituals, the Hopi Snake Dance, during which priests handle the reptiles in their mouths. Adopting an anthropological perspective, akin to exhibitions of tribal culture at World's Fairs (fig. 5.6), Couse documented the exotic customs of "vanishing" Primitives. He froze the action, so that the viewer could take in every detail; there are snakes on the ground, in figure's hands, in their mouths; one can clearly see the face paint and costumes of the two central dancers. Sloan used a similar compositional approach in his *Ancestral Spirits*. Sloan's work captures wildly gesticulating, elaborately painted Koshare in stop-action poses. Like Couse, Sloan attempted to document the details of the spectacle; the work's up-close, static view gives it an ethnographic feel. Sloan repeated many of these compositional elements in his other 1919 dance paintings, including *Eagle Dance* (fig.

¹⁸ The Moqui, or Moki, are known today as the Hopi. Couse's painting, *Moqui Snake Dance*, was an early Santa Fe Railway acquisition under Simpson, and is the product of a trip to Hopi Mesa in Arizona that was funded by the company. In 1903, the painting was transformed into a color lithograph for a railway publication entitled, *The Moki Snake Dance*, first published in 1898. By 1903, when Couse's illustration was included, there were approximately 55,000 copies of the book in circulation. Dean A. Porter, Teresa Hayes Ebie, and Suzan Campbell, *Taos Artists and Their Patrons, 1898-1950* (Notre Dame, IN and Albuquerque, N. M.: Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame in conjunction with the University of New Mexico Press, 1999), 24-33. For a lengthy discussion of Snake Dance imagery see Leah Dilworth, *Imagining Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), 21-26.

5.7).¹⁹ Once again, two central figures are frozen mid-step. In all of these paintings, the viewer is placed at ground level, giving her unfettered access to the Pueblo people and their sacred rituals. Indian ceremonials were offered up as a spectacle for anyone's enjoyment.

Whereas in 1919, Sloan created numerous canvases in which he pictured Pueblo ceremonial dances, when he returned to Santa Fe in 1920, he abandoned this theme. Based on visual evidence, there is good reason to believe that the artist was starting to consider the implications of painting Indian subject matter. *Rolshoven Painting an Indian* (fig. 4.33) is Sloan's only painting from 1920 which features an Indian figure. As was discussed in chapter four, in this satirical painting, Sloan critiqued the Taos Society artists' practice of painting Indian models in clichéd poses and costumes. This painting also articulates Sloan's worries about the relationship between Anglo artists and Indian models. Like many modernists, as Sloan spent more time in the region, he went to great lengths to distinguish his work from that of the Taos Society, in spite of the fact that he was included in the group's exhibition circuit for two years (1920-1921). Sloan found the group's academic artistic practices unsettling. In 1939, he criticized, "I have deep respect for the religious culture of Pueblo Indians, but I have tried to assume a *real* understanding of their spiritual life. Some artists have painted picturesque portraits of Indians, treated them like costume models. I find that point of view very offensive."²⁰

¹⁹ In *Gist of Art*, Sloan described the subject of this work in the following terms: "An unforgettable ceremonial which displays at its best the Indian's deep harmony with all nature. Simple, unimitative, but profound. This performance is by the Eagles of Tesuque." Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 263. Written two decades of the work was painted, in this book Sloan used primitivist language to describe the dance.

²⁰ Sloan quoted in Broder, *The American West: The Modern Vision*, 56. Helen Farr Sloan recorded the artist as similarly stating, "...I never brought an Indian into the studio to pose. I never saw any reason to do so, having no interest in the 'picturesque' or costume type of painting." Elzea, *John Sloan's Oil Paintings: A Catalogue Raisonné*, 245. Elzea quotes Sloan, but the citation shows that the statement was taken from the "Helen Farr Sloan—Notes."

When Sloan returned to the theme of Indian dance in 1921, his compositions registered his attempts to distinguish his perspective from what he deemed to be the sentimentalized, even exploitative, vision of academic artists. To do so, he looked seriously at modernists aesthetic and theoretical values.

After the landmark 1913 Armory Show, Sloan immediately recognized the importance of what he called the “ultra-moderns.” He was drawn to modernist experimentation with form and color, their liberation from subject matter, and their interest in Primitive art. About the impact show had on him, Sloan remarked, “the blinders fell from my eyes.”²¹ Sloan claimed that modernism served to liberate him from a realist artistic paradigm and argued that after the show he could look at pictures without seeing subjects for the first time. “I was free to enjoy the sculptures of Africa and prehistoric Mexico,” he continued, “because visual verisimilitude was no longer important.”²² Like Blumenschein, Sloan was open-minded about modernism and was friendly with a number of prominent American modernists who were working in the region in the late 1910s and early 1920s, including Marsden Hartley (fig. 5.8).

Sloan tried to delicately balance his desire to portray actual events with his wariness of an analytic perspective. Helen Farr Sloan recollected Sloan as explaining:

In painting the Indian dances I tried to observe the costume and ritual with care—not so much as an ethnologist would, but because I don’t like to change the truth of things—This does not mean that I didn’t approve of paintings by other artists who used the dances as a basis for more abstract or modern designs—But that has never

²¹ Sloan quoted in Rowland Elzea and Elizabeth Hawkes, *John Sloan: Spectator of Life* (Wilmington: Delaware Art Museum, 1988), 20. Prior to the Armory Show, Sloan was already interested in the geometric structuring of Cezanne’s paintings and Hardesty G. Maratta’s color theories, which encouraged him to experiment with form and color. Nevertheless, the Armory Show made an indelible impact on the artist. See Sloan’s November 5, 1911 diary entry. John Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, ed. Bruce St. John (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 575.

²² Sloan quoted in Elzea and Hawkes, *John Sloan: Spectator of Life*, 20.

been my own way of seeing. I prefer to hide the abstract consciousness of design under the cloak of description.²³

Sloan tried to navigate the space between the scientific paradigm adopted by many southwestern artists and the abstractions created by the region's modernists. Like the modernists, Sloan saw the scientific community as presenting superficial or artificial realities. However, his dictum to paint from life required more specificity than did modernists' abstractions. Sloan endeavored to paint his subjective reaction to ceremonials while being mindful of rooting them in place.

While not specifically addressing academic painting in the region, in a 1919 letter to the editor of *Forum* magazine, Sloan again made clear his allegiance to both modern art and primitivism, and his disdain for those who did "objective" or "eye-sight painting."

Sloan wrote:

I am convinced that the recent art movements (which might be called "Picasso and Cubism", although this would be a very abbreviated listing of the forces at work) are healthy evidences of a return to the great underlying and undying art urges of the race.

The degenerate pseudo-scientific-eye-sight-painting which is being conserved by the official and institutional art organizations of the world will not long be able to resist this cure,—the disease is not chronic,—in fact the so-called conservative point of view is really a very modern sickness; and the so-called Modern Movement is nearly related to the ancient art of mankind.²⁴

Beginning in the 1920s, Sloan believed that he could distinguish his perspective of New Mexico from an ethnographic one by considering modernists concerns—aesthetic, political, and theoretical. Academic artists tended to create paintings that placed the viewer intimately close to the subject, and that aspired to document the Indian's costume and material culture with a verisimilitude that would lend authority to their construction of an imagined reality. Modernists, in contrast, professed an interest in an essential and

²³ "Helen Farr Sloan---Notes," John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, box 251.

²⁴ John Sloan, "Letter to the Editor of *The Forum*," *Forum* LXXIC, no. 1 (July 1925): 149.

subjective reality. Artist-activists tended to center their representations of the Pueblo people on dance. Preservationists believed that dances, unlike Pueblo objects, could not be bought and sold; that dances could not be collected and analyzed in a laboratory.

As Sloan reconceptualized the subject of Indian dance, his love of the modern dance performances, which he frequently attended in New York City, may have been a factor. Late in his life, the artist drew a comparison between Pueblo ceremonials and the artistic expression of Isadora Duncan (fig. 5.9).²⁵ As Sloan recollected in 1949, “The first time I saw the Santo Domingo Corn Dance, I felt the same strong emotion from the rhythm of the drums and the primitive intensity of that age-old ritual dance that I experienced when I saw Isadora Duncan fill the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House with her great personality.”²⁶ Indian dances were not to be dissected and displayed, but to be absorbed and appreciated much like a modern dance performance. Sloan’s 1919 works suggest that capturing this *strong emotion from the rhythm of the drums* was something with which he struggled.

When Sloan revisited the theme of Pueblo dance in 1921, his works underwent significant compositional shifts. This year, Sloan once again painted the Eagle Dance, including *Eagles of Tesuque* (fig. 5.10).²⁷ As in the 1919 version, Sloan froze two

²⁵ Sloan was introduced to the art of Isadora Duncan around the same time he was steeped in socialist ideas. In his November 16, 1909 diary entry, he wrote about his first experience of an Isadora performance: “We saw Isadora Duncan dance. It’s positively splendid! I feel that she dances a symbol of human animal happiness as it should be, free from the unnatural trammels. Not angelic, not materialistic—not superhuman but the greatest human love of life. Her great big thighs, her small head, her full solid loins, belly—clean, all clean—she dances away civilization’s tainted brain vapors, wholly human and holy—part of God.” Sloan, *John Sloan’s New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 352.

²⁶ John Sloan, “Introduction” to John Collier, *American Indian Ceremonial Dances: Navajo, Pueblo, Apache, Zuni* (New York: Bounty Books, 1972). This book was originally published in 1949 under the title *Patterns and Ceremonials of the Indians in the Southwest*.

²⁷ About this work, Sloan wrote, “Within nine miles of a Europeanized city, for three hundred years the little Pueblo of Tesuque has made a noble fight against combined poverty and civilization. The

primary dancers in mid-step. However, the details of the scene—particularly the figure's costumes and faces—are less clearly defined. Sloan was less interested in documenting the specifics of the event. Furthermore, the composition began to suggest movement, as is seen in the line of Indian drummers; these figures have bent knees and the drummer's hands are in varying stages of drumming. The viewer's placement is less intimate than it was in Sloan's 1919 paintings. She hovers in an ambiguous space, which is neither low enough to be at ground-level nor high enough to be from the roof of a pueblo structure. She cannot imagine herself walking into the scene. By reworking the format of his paintings of Pueblo dances, Sloan attempted to counter what he perceived to be the exploitative gaze of the academic artists and to ally himself with a more culturally sensitive perspective.

Sloan's compositional alterations were not unique to the artist. With the arrival of progressive artists to the region, representations of Pueblo Indians underwent a rapid iconographic and ideological shift. During the early to mid-1920s, paintings of Pueblo ceremonials became less documentary and more focused on capturing the feel and rhythm of the dances. Furthermore, artists increasingly created spatial and physiological distance between the viewer and the Indian subjects. For instance, Blumenschein created a series of paintings of Pueblo dances during the early 1920s that were in keeping with this trend. These paintings will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion of this dissertation. Artists' participation in the preservationist movement helps to explain these widespread iconographic and ideological changes.

population is small and on the day when we saw this ceremony a mere handful appeared as spectators." Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 265.

The political meanings of Sloan's paintings of Pueblo ceremonials will be carefully considered within the context of his participation in the preservationist movement. But first, I will demonstrate that there is a precedent for his politicized vision by critically reevaluating the artist's prewar paintings of New York's working class.

Sloan's Pre-War Work and Democratic Socialism

Sloan's interest in political causes was cultivated in New York City the decade before he headed west. Thus, his production of images from the late 1900s and 1910s is an appropriate starting point for a discussion of the interplay of art and politics in his work. Prior to the First World War, Sloan's compositional choices were often guided by his deep-seated interest in American Democratic Socialism. Whether or not Sloan explicitly intended his paintings to be read as political, they are informed by his socialist beliefs.²⁸

As early as 1906, Sloan's diaries reveal that he was awakening to social injustices. Sloan was not alone; the decade was defined by widespread discontent and

²⁸ Scholars have long debated the nature of Sloan's prewar socialist activities. Today, most art historians concede that Sloan was a socialist, but this point of view took almost thirty years to popularize. John Bullard and David Scott's 1971 publication was among the first to address at length Sloan's role in the Progressive movement. David W. Scott and E. John Bullard, *John Sloan, 1871-1951* (Boston and Washington, DC: Boston Book and Art in conjunction with the National Gallery of Art, 1971). Patricia Hills and Rebecca Zurier have demonstrated a link between Sloan's politics and his prewar artistic production. Both scholars argue that Sloan placed his artistic talents in the service of his socialist beliefs as an *illustrator* of socialist magazines. However, they maintain that, as a *painter*, Sloan shied away from political or social content. See Patricia Hills, "John Sloan's Images of Working-Class Women: A Case Study of the Role and Interrelationships of Politics Personality and Patrons in the Development of Sloan's Art, 1905-1916," in *Reading American Art*, ed. Marianne Doezema and Elizabeth Milroy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), Rebecca Zurier, *Art for The Masses: A Radical Magazine and Its Graphics, 1911-1917* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988). Throughout his life, Sloan's own statements with regard to socialism and his artistic production varied tremendously. Such statements need to be contextualized. For instance, fear of the Espionage Act and Sedition Act, and later McCarthyism, all of which successfully persecuted leftist artists, likely affected the extent to which Sloan was willing to broadcast his prewar socialist activities.

social protest focused on the poverty and exploitation of the working class.²⁹ In 1908, socialist and journalist, Charles Wisner Barrell, lent Sloan a copy of an interview with Eugene Victor Debs, the democratic socialist leader, which had been published in *Everybody's Magazine*.³⁰ Debs was the founder of the Democratic Socialist Party and the American Socialist Party, and was five times a U.S. presidential candidate (1904, 1908, 1912, and 1920, the last time from prison). Democratic socialism propagated the ideals of socialism within the context of a democratic system. Debs was largely responsible for ushering in the golden age of American socialism between 1900 and 1920; at its climax in 1912, the American Socialist Party had 120,000 members.³¹ In 1909, soon after attending a lecture given by Debs, Sloan and his wife Dolly joined the American Socialist Party.³²

Sloan was a Debs man. Like thousands of other Americans who became socialists at this time, Sloan's allegiance to the party was centered on his faith in the ideas espoused by its charismatic spokesperson. Debs, who took an emotional rather than an intellectual approach to socialism, was a politician for those suspicious of politics.³³ Debsian socialism was an indigenous hybrid that blended Marxist ideas with the American liberal tradition. Historian Robert Fitrakis explains that Debs's ideas can be understood as the secularized descendants of evangelical Protestantism. In his quasi-

²⁹ Donald Drew Egbert and Stow Persons, eds., *Socialism and American Life*, vol. 1 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1952), 284.

³⁰ John Loughery, *John Sloan: Painter and Rebel* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1995), 145.

³¹ Robert J. Fitrakis, *The Idea of Democratic Socialism in America and the Decline of the Socialist Party* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993), 8. Also see Egbert and Persons, eds., *Socialism and American Life*, 281.

³² Sloan was also influenced by the anarchist, Emma Goldman, whom he heard lecture a number of times in 1909. Emma Goldman supported anarchism, syndicalism, and free love. Goldman thought that art had an obligation to propagandize about social injustice, a point which Sloan disagreed with in his diaries. See Sloan's November 12, 1911 diary entry, in Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 578.

³³ Jean Y. Tussey, ed., *Eugene V. Debs Speaks* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1970), 33-37, 245.

religious speeches, Debs argued that socialism was the next abolitionist movement and that redemption for the ills of industrialization could be found only through conversion to socialism.³⁴ A united working class would use the ballot to take collective control of the means of production, ending wage slavery and class rule.³⁵

Sloan's understanding of the tenets of socialism was far from sophisticated, but his belief in the socialist cause was genuine. He attended socialist events, supported labor strikes, and three times ran for office on the Socialist ticket. From 1911 through 1913, Sloan was the Socialist Party candidate for New York State Assembly, and in 1915 he ran for judge.³⁶ According to the artist, he even placed copies of *Appeal to Reason* on the benches in Madison Square Garden, "in the hope of spoiling someone's peace of mind."³⁷ Sloan began to donate drawings to socialist magazines in 1909, and in 1912, he became the pro-bono art editor for *The Masses*, a radical publication, devoted to art and class struggle, run by intellectuals.³⁸

The Masses was a non-doctrinaire, socially-conscious, anti-capitalist artistic and literary socialist magazine.³⁹ While on the magazine's editorial board, Sloan worked

³⁴ Fittrakis, *The Idea of Democratic Socialism in America and the Decline of the Socialist Party*, 9-15.

³⁵ See Debs, "The Outlook for Socialism in the United States" (1897), "The Socialist Party Appeal" (1908), and *Walls and Bars* (1927), all reproduced in Tussey, ed., *Eugene V. Debs Speaks*.

³⁶ Rebecca Zurier, Robert Snyder, and Virginia Mecklenburg, *Metropolitan Lives: The Ashcan Artists and Their New York* (New York: National Museum of American Art in association with W.W. Norton and Company, 1995), 43 & 179.

³⁷ From Sloan's diary entry for July 24, 1910. Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 443.

³⁸ Sloan submitted pro-bono drawings to a number of other socialist magazines, including *Call*, *Appeal to Reason*, *Coming Nation*, *Progressive Women*, and *Il Proletario*. Zurier, *Art for The Masses: A Radical Magazine and Its Graphics, 1911-1917*, 179.

³⁹ The magazine's credo reads: "This Magazine is Owned and Published Co-operatively by Its Editors. It has no Dividends to pay, and nobody is trying to make Money out of it. A Revolutionary and not a reform magazine; a Magazine with a sense of Humor and no Respect for the Respectable; Frank; Arrogant; Impertinent; searching for the True Causes; a magazine directed against Rigidity and Dogma wherever it is found; Printing what is too Naked or True for a Money-making Press; a Magazine whose final Policy is to do what it Pleases and Conciliates Nobody, not even its Readers—There is a field for this Publication in American Help us find it." Reproduced in *Ibid.*, xvi.

closely with outspoken radicals, such as John Reed, Max Eastman, and Art Young, all of whom were also contributing editors. As art editor, Sloan convinced many of the country's best artists and cartoonists to contribute to the magazine without pay, including Stuart Davis, George Bellows, Boardman Robinson, Maurice Becker, and Glen Young. Most of the sixty-three graphic works that Sloan completed for *The Masses* were humorous or lightly satirical; however, he also completed a handful of scathing propagandistic drawings, the most famous of which is, "Ludlow, Colorado," the cover illustration for magazine's June 1914 issue (fig. 5.11). A powerful visual indictment of social injustice and brutality against striking miners and their families, this illustration articulates Sloan's outrage after National Guardsmen and private militia working for the Rockefeller-owned Colorado Fuel and Iron Company torched a tent colony of strikers, killing eleven children and two women. The work features an armed miner, standing on the remains of the victims of the Ludlow Massacre, holding the charred body of a child.

Many of Sloan's works are in keeping with the Debsian platform.⁴⁰ Debs was focused on wresting political and economic control from what he deemed to be the parasitic capitalist class, a class Sloan often satirized as haughty and foolish. In his 1907 painting, *Gray and Brass* (fig. 5.12), Sloan parodied New York's "fat-cats." Out of the shadowy mass of faceless vagrants, a man in a cap addresses the lavishly dressed carriage riders, possibly in pursuit of spare change.⁴¹ The corpulent women dismissively turn up

⁴⁰ For a summary of Debs's platform see his "Letter of Acceptance" in Tussey, ed., *Eugene V. Debs Speaks*, 234.

⁴¹ In his 16 September 1907 diary entry Sloan wrote, "...took a start on an idea which crossed me yesterday, a brass-trimmed, snob, cheap, 'noveau rich' laden automobile passing the park." Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 154. In *Gist of Art*, Sloan retrospectively recollected, "I well remember how earnest was my intention to bring out the pomp and circumstance that marked the wealthy group in the motor car. The car, gray trimmed with much brass gave me the title for my picture." Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 42.

their noses; Sloan portrayed the group as smug, self-satisfied, and oblivious to their surroundings. The message is clear: New York's economic elite, who enshroud themselves with misguided pomp and circumstance, either fail to see, or refuse to acknowledge, the harsh social conditions for which they are culpable.⁴²

Sloan also shared Debs's skepticism towards federal government and his belief that war was a capitalist scheme serving the interests of the rich at the expense the poor. Debs opposed to all wars but one—class war. In his famous 1918 Canton speech, Debs proclaimed that the master class always declared the wars, while the subject class fought the battles. "The master class," Debs argued, "has all to gain and nothing to lose, while the subject class has had nothing to gain and all to lose—especially their lives."⁴³ In a similar vein, Sloan protested in *Gist of Art*, "I don't like war. What do millions of innocent people go out and get killed for?—to protect the economic interests of the few."⁴⁴ This stance was repeated in a September 1914 illustration Sloan created for *The Masses*, entitled "His Master" (fig. 5.13), a copy of which hung in Debs's prison cell.⁴⁵ A soldier, whose entrails hang out of his legless body, crawls towards a fat capitalist comfortably seated in an armchair. Unconcerned with the carnage behind him, the man says to the soldier, "You've done very well. Now what is left of you can go back to work." By substituting the word "work" for "war," Sloan made it clear that capitalist interests were at stake in the First World War.

⁴² Snyder and Zurier note that Sloan's works show sympathy with the poor and contempt for idleness of the wealthy. Zurier, Snyder, and Mecklenburg, *Metropolitan Lives: The Ashcan Artists and Their New York*, 80 & 110.

⁴³ This anti-war speech was delivered on June 16, 1918, in Canton, Ohio's Mimsilla Park. As a result, Debs spent thirty-two months in prison under the Espionage Act.

⁴⁴ Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 4. This view had been formed and articulated thirty years earlier, as is evident in Sloan's September 30, 1909 diary entry in which he wrote, "Parades like this make the 'patriotism' which furnished soldiers, workers to kill the workers [so] that capital may hold its upper hand." Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 337.

⁴⁵ Zurier, *Art for The Masses: A Radical Magazine and Its Graphics, 1911-1917*, 69.

Recruiting, Union Square of 1909 (fig. 5.14) can be understood as an extension of Sloan's anti-militarism.⁴⁶ Sloan's diary describes the square as a place where tired vagrants fill the benches while military recruiters try to trick them out of their freedom. Recruiters were known to heavily recruit the poor, convincing them that enlisting would improve their condition; recruitment posters often promised "board, lodging, clothing, and baths."⁴⁷ In this painting, a meticulously dressed recruiter speaks to a comparatively disheveled man, who has arisen from the faceless, unemployed crowd. The vagrant holds a wrench behind his back, implying that he is a skilled worker who has had a run of bad luck. Across the plaza, Sloan highlighted the presence of three women, who turn to look at the dashing recruiter: joining becomes all the more enticing. Two children seem mesmerized by the recruiter's advertisement, further stressing the effectiveness of the government's propagandistic razzle-dazzle.

It has been argued that Sloan's New York paintings were focused on the subject of working class women—as in *Three A.M* (fig. 5.15)—as a way to decisively separate his paintings from his politics. Art historian Patricia Hills contends, whereas images of working class men would have been read as politicized, painting women was Sloan's way of establishing political neutrality in his art.⁴⁸ And yet, Deb's commitment to women's suffrage, equal pay in the workplace, and his stance against the criminalization of

⁴⁶ Although titled *Union Square*, the painting is based on a scene that the artist witnessed in Madison Square. In a May 1909 diary entry, he described origins of this painting: "Loafed about Madison Square where the trees are heavily daubed with fresh green and the benches filled with tired bums. In the center near the fountain is a US Army recruiting sign, two samples of our military are in attendance but the bums stick to the freedom of their poverty. There is a picture in this--a drawing or etching probably." Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 311.

⁴⁷ Zurier, Snyder, and Mecklenburg, *Metropolitan Lives: The Ashcan Artists and Their New York*, 17.

⁴⁸ See Hills, "John Sloan's Images of Working-Class Women: A Case Study of the Role and Interrelationships of Politics Personality and Patrons in the Development of Sloan's Art, 1905-1916," 342.

prostitution was of central interest to Sloan. Both Debs and Sloan were fixated on the plight of working women, particularly prostitutes. Debs believed that prostitutes were not morally degenerate, but rather were victims of America's capitalist system.⁴⁹

Although not overtly propagandistic, many of Sloan's images of working class women were informed by Debs's Progressive era politics. Set within a small, sparse interior, *Three A.M.* depicts two working-class bachelorettes sharing a quiet moment of dignified camaraderie.⁵⁰ The prominently placed feather cap and the late hour suggest that at least one of these women is a prostitute. The nose and hands of the woman standing at the stove are red, a sign Sloan often used to indicate a drunkard. This woman's white nightgown stands in stark contrast to the dark cave-like background, pointing to the woman's innocence despite her unfortunate situation. She is a Mary Magdalene type, with her long and untied hair, and her loose nightgown which falls off of her shoulder. Around the same time he painted *Three A.M.*, Sloan was observing the proceedings at the local night court. In his diary, Sloan seethed about the social injustice he encountered; he complained that "poor little drunkards" received heavy fines and jail time for prostitution, condemned by the very men whom they serviced.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Debs had utter contempt for judiciary systems. As a city clerk, he refused to assess fines on prostitutes since the police, the pimps, and the customers were not also arrested. See <http://www.eugenevdebs.com>, official site of the Eugene V. Debs Foundation.

⁵⁰ About this work, in *Gist of Art*, Sloan commented: "Night vigils at the back window of a Twenty-third studio were rewarded by motifs of this sort....Some of the lives that I glimpsed I thought I understood. These two girls I took to be sisters, one of whom was engaged in some occupation that brought her home about this hour in the morning. On her arrival the other rose from her slumbers and prepared a meal. This picture is redolent with the atmosphere of a poor, back gaslit room. It has beauty, I'll not deny it; it must be that human life is beautiful." Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 220. He also mentions this work in his diaries. See Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 308-09.

⁵¹ In his May 25, 1909 diary entry Sloan wrote, "After which I dropped into Jefferson Market night police court... My heart melted one minute and grew red hot the next. These petty offences with their small fines great sums paid in jail at the rate of one day's imprisonment for \$1.00 fine are dreadfully hard. Poor little women, habitual drunkards, get 'fine \$10.00' off hand with a kindly smile from the

Despite the grim reality of their lives, *Three A.M.* focuses on the women's resilience. As Sloan once explained to Helen Farr Sloan, "I saw people living in the streets and on the rooftops of the city...I never pitied them, or idealized them, or sought to propagandize about poverty. I felt with them but I did not think for them."⁵² To pity the disenfranchised was to demean them and to deny them agency.⁵³ This perspective paralleled Debs's, who placed the responsibility of social revolution in the hands of the workers alone. For Debs, the working class had the intelligence and fortitude to topple capitalism, without the need for bourgeois intercessors. *Three A.M.* can be read as a depiction of working class solidarity, on which Debs pinned his hopes of social redemption.

The First World War was the breaking point for the surging tide of socialism in the United States.⁵⁴ Sloan left the party in 1916, disillusioned with the inability of European socialism to stop the war, and by the American party's increasing intolerance of pluralistic views. As Debsian Socialism gave way to Bolshevism, Sloan felt alienated from his socialist peers, who more aggressively insisted that artists imbue their works

judge—good humored! They have no vote." Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 313-14. Sloan's indignation at what he saw was both political and personal, as his wife was concurrently seeking treatment for alcoholism.

⁵² John Sloan quoted in Zurier, *Art for The Masses: A Radical Magazine and Its Graphics, 1911-1917*, 143. In Zurier's footnotes, the source for this quote is "Helen Farr Sloan." I assume it was taken from her "Notes." For this reason I have quoted the citation as being filtered through Farr Sloan.

⁵³ In contrast, Richard Fitzgerald believes that by painting a happy working class Sloan reinforced the status quo. As a sentimentalist, he argues, Sloan was part of the structure of oppression. Richard Fitzgerald, *Art and Politics: Cartoonists of The Masses and Liberator* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1973), 140. A similar argument is represented in Hills, "John Sloan's Images of Working-Class Women: A Case Study of the Role and Interrelationships of Politics Personality and Patrons in the Development of Sloan's Art, 1905-1916," 343.

⁵⁴ Sloan was part of a mass exodus from the American Socialist Party, whose numbers dramatically dwindled with the outbreak of World War I and Debs's imprisonment.

with propagandistic messages.⁵⁵ After Sloan left the party, however, he did not turn his back on politics. Sloan voted strictly from the socialist ticket up until Debs's premature death in 1926.⁵⁶ Furthermore, through the 1930s, Sloan's activism, writings, and art speak to a Debsian preoccupation with human suffering, equal rights, and government by consent. The artist continued to advocate for the civil rights of the disenfranchised and this activism informs his New Mexican paintings.

The "Dance Imbroglia"

When Sloan arrived in New Mexico in 1919, he was immediately drawn to the aboriginal population; their tradition of communal living, and what he perceived to be their seamless integration of art and life, resonated with his socialist sympathies.⁵⁷ It was not uncommon for a connection to be made between "reds" and the "red man."⁵⁸ For instance, this association was made by George Law, a frequent anti-assimilationist commentator in *Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine*:

⁵⁵ Reflecting on his decision to leave the Socialist Party in 1950, Farr Sloan recorded Sloan as saying, "I had great hopes for the socialist parties up until the time when the First World War broke out in 1914. Then I saw how they fell apart. Some of the leaders were killed; the emotional patterns of national pride set one country against another. I became disillusioned." Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 382.

⁵⁶ Van Wyck Brooks, *John Sloan: A Painter's Life* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons LTD., 1955), 91.

⁵⁷ For instance, Sloan commented, "Indians have a great traditional base. They work together with the same feeling of being part of a community that inspired the unknown artists of the great Gothic period." Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 21. Socialists often idealized the Gothic era as a period of productive artistic collaboration.

⁵⁸ Richard Slotkin demonstrates that long before socialists saw a positive connection between their ideologies and Indian society, the popular press negatively associated the working class and Indians. In the mid- to late nineteenth century, Slotkin explains, workers were described as Indian "savages in their propensity for violence and evasion of toil, using strikes and mobs to block access to businesses and public squares just as Indians had used violence to block railroad access to the West." Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment: The Myth of the Frontier in the Art of Industrialization, 1800-1890*. (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1986), 342. For more about the connection that was made between "reds" and "redmen" see Alan Trachtenberg, "Dreaming Indian," *Raritan* 22, no. 1 (2002): 58-79.

Among us are thinkers who preach collectivism, socialism, communism...These natives of the Southwest were socialists from the start. They were Marxians before Marx had ancestors. When discovered by the white race they were in possession of an elaborate, complete and workable system of communism. This they still possess, and it is for this reason that they do not wish to participate in the white man's life.⁵⁹

Many of members of the intelligentsia, who had participated in socialist causes prior to World War I, challenged federal Indian policy the following decade. Certainly, Sloan did not need to be a socialist in order to fight for the rights of American Indians. However, there is an interesting parallel between prewar activists in New York and interwar activists in New Mexico. Many of the most vocal opponents of assimilationist policies, including Mabel Dodge Luhan, John Collier, Dolly and John Sloan, and Mary Austin, had propagandized for an increase in wages and improvements in social programs for the working class during the 1910s, and thus were veterans in the struggle for the rights of the disenfranchised.⁶⁰

In the early 1920s, Sloan was among those activists who successfully protested the federal policy of assimilation. In 1922, he signed and helped circulate the "Protest of Artists and Writers Against the Bursum Indian Bill" (fig. 4.23). More significant, with

⁵⁹ George Law, "Playing Square with the Pueblo Indians," *Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine* LXXVII, no. 6 (June 1921): 2. Turn-of-the-century ethnologist, A. F. Fynn, made a similar analogy, writing, "One of the most striking characteristics of the government and social life of early races is communism." A. F. Fynn, *The American Indian: As a Product of Environment With Special Reference to the Pueblos* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1907), 107.

⁶⁰ In separate articles, Flannery Burke and Margaret Jacobs write that the campaign against Indian assimilation was largely fueled by a handful of matriarchs with activist background—including Mabel Dodge Luhan, Mary Austin, and Dolly Sloan. Both authors see this movement as linked to gender politics during the 1920s. Flannery Burke, "An Artists' Home: Gender and the Santa Fe Culture Center Controversy," *Journal of the Southwest* 46, no. 2 (2004): 351+, Margaret D. Jacobs, "'Making Savages of Us All': White Women, Pueblo Indians, and the Controversy over Indian Dances in the 1920s," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 17, no. 3 (1996): 178-208.

respect to Sloan's paintings of Pueblo ceremonials, was his involvement with what has been labeled by historian Tom Holm as the "dance imbroglio."⁶¹

In the late 1910s, proponents of assimilation intensified their campaign to ban American Indian ceremonials. In chapter two I argued that Hartley's New Mexico essays were a response to this intensification. In the Southwest, Indian superintendents and BIA officials initiated a series of investigations into reports of obscenities, cruelty, violence, and depravity at Pueblo ceremonials. In sworn affidavits and testimonials, witnesses testified that "clowns" at these events simulated sexual intercourse with Indian women or livestock, and that their skits enacted adultery, prostitution and divorce.⁶² These documents were supposed to be kept under tight seal due to their graphic content; however, by 1923 copies of the files had been widely circulated as the "Secret Dance Files."⁶³

According to historian Lawrence Kelly, early in his administration as Commissioner of the Indian Affairs, Charles Burke was encouraged by missionaries, the Indian Rights Association, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and Indian superintendents to institute a ban on American Indian dances. At first, Burke explained to the Indian Rights Association that it was not the BIA's policy to prohibit all dances, arguing that many of their qualities—refinement, art, and healthful exercise—were not inconsistent with civilization.⁶⁴ As protests and political pressure grew more

⁶¹ Tom Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 184.

⁶² Jacobs, "'Making Savages of Us All': White Women, Pueblo Indians, and the Controversy over Indian Dances in the 1920s," 178.

⁶³ Lawrence C. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1983), 302.

⁶⁴ Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era*, 185-6.

intense, however, Burke changed his position. The Secret Dance Files, with their sensationalized tales of salacious acts, were a primary catalyst for Burke's decision to restrict dances. Burke seems to have uncritically accepted these reports, failing to investigate their merits.

On April 26, 1921, Burke in conjunction with Albert Fall, Secretary of the Interior, circulated a document addressed to all Indian Superintendents. This document, entitled *Circular 1665*, proclaimed:

The sundance and all other similar dances and so called religious ceremonies are considered 'Indian Offenses' under existing regulations and corrective penalties are provided. I regard such restrictions as applicable to any (religious) dance which involves . . . the reckless giving away of property . . . frequent and prolonged periods of celebration . . . in fact, any disorderly or plainly excessive performance that promotes superstitions, cruelty, licentiousness, idleness, danger of health, and shiftless indifference of family welfare. In all such instance, the regulations should be enforced.⁶⁵

In this circular, Burke did not denounce all American Indian dances, and advised Indian superintendents to repress only those which were "apt to be harmful." In particular, Burke placed restrictions on religious rituals involving self-torture, destruction of property, giveaways, drug use, immoral relations between the sexes, or that interfered with productivity.

When American Indian ceremonial practices persisted, particularly in the Southwest, the YWCA and Indian Right Association increased their pressure on the BIA. In 1922, at a missionary conference, Burke was persuaded to draft a supplementary circular that placed further restrictions on American Indian ceremonials. On February 14, 1923, *Circular 1665* was reissued with several amendments:

⁶⁵ Excerpts from the Circular 1665 were widely reproduced. See Hugh A. Studdert Kennedy, "The Indian and Religious Freedom," *The Independent* 116, no. 3953 (March 6, 1926): 267.

Indian dances be limited to one day in the midweek and at one center of each district; the months of March, April, June, July and August being exempted (no dances in these months). That none take part in the dances or be present who are under 50 years of age. That a careful propaganda be undertaken to educate public opinion against the (Indian religious) dance.⁶⁶

By restricting when and where ceremonials could be held, who could participate, and what rituals could be enacted, the circulars were tantamount to banning American Indian religious practices altogether.

In conjunction with the amended circular, on February 24, 1923, Commissioner Burke broadcasted a "Message to All Indians" (fig. 5.16), part of which read:

I could issue an order against these useless and harmful performances, but I would rather have you give them up of your own free will, and, therefore, I ask you in this letter to do so. If at the end of one year the reports which I receive show that you are doing as requested, I shall be glad, for I shall know that you are making progress -- but if the reports show that you reject this plea, then some other course will have to be taken.⁶⁷

The letter was a thinly veiled threat that implied if American Indians did not willingly cooperate, they would be forced to comply.

1924 marked the Pueblo people's breaking point. In early April of that year, Taos Pueblo authorities withdrew two boys from a government sanctioned school for eighteen months of religious instruction. As a result, on April 18, Burke accompanied the superintendent for the Northern Pueblos on a trip to Taos Pueblo. While there, Burke issued an order requiring all Pueblo boys to return immediately to the government sanctioned school.⁶⁸ As a result, in May of 1924, the All-Pueblo Council reconvened to

⁶⁶ Ibid. For more information about the circulars see Jacobs, "'Making Savages of Us All': White Women, Pueblo Indians, and the Controversy over Indian Dances in the 1920s," 178-79, Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform*, 303-04.

⁶⁷ This document can be found in National Archives and Records Administration. Also see Kennedy, "The Indian and Religious Freedom," 267-68.

⁶⁸ While the Pueblo were the among the most active American Indian nations to protest federal policies, it is important to keep in mind that federal policy was neither localized nor tribe specific.

protest Burke's actions.⁶⁹ With the support of Collier, the council circulated a memorandum addressed to the United States. Focusing on the issue of religious liberty as protected by the U.S. constitution, this document was a declaration of religious freedom.⁷⁰ To this effect, the first two paragraphs read:

We have met because our most fundamental right of religious liberty is threatened and is actually at this time being nullified. And we make as our first declaration the statement that our religion to us is sacred and is more important to us than anything else in our life. The religious beliefs and ceremonies and forms of prayer of each of our Pueblos are as old as the world and they are holy. Our happiness, our moral behavior, our unity as a people and the peace and joyfulness of our homes are all part of our religion and are dependent on its continuation.

To pass this religion, with its hidden sacred knowledge and its many forms of prayer, on to our children is our supreme duty to our ancestors and to our own hearts and to the God whom we know. Our religion is a true religion and it is our way of life.⁷¹

In a statement of defiance, the Pueblo council further proclaimed that they would not yield to "religious persecution"; they would neither change their ceremonial practices nor abandon the religious instruction of their youth.

Through the mid- to late 1920s, the Pueblo people and non-Pueblo sympathizers continued to rally support for Indian religious freedom. In March of 1926, the *Independent* reported that Pueblo Indians, with the support of the Collier's Indian Defense Association of Central and Northern California, were moving up and down the Pacific Coast, "seeking to call attention to the alleged religious persecution that their

⁶⁹ There is some disagreement over whether or not Collier convened this second council. Regardless, Collier played a substantial part in its organization and had influence on the session. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform*, 52, E.A. Schwartz, "Red Atlantis Revisited: Community and Culture in the Writings of John Collier," *American Indian Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (Fall 1994): 507+.

⁷⁰ Alfonso Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, ed. Frank W. Porter III, *Indians of North America* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992), 106-07.

⁷¹ Document quoted in Cash Asher (American Indian Defense Association), "Pueblo Indians Fear For Their Religion," *New York Times* (July 13, 1924): XX12.

people have suffered for several years at the hands of the Indian Bureau.”⁷² In March of 1927, in conjunction with the Society of Independent Artists annual exhibition, Pueblo Indians performed at New York City’s Waldorf.⁷³ John Collier, accompanied by John Sloan, explained to the crowd that the performers were “living artists...their arts, their song, and their dances are part of their daily life, of their work, of their housekeeping. Art and religion are deeply part of their daily life.”⁷⁴ To suppress Pueblo dances and religion, Collier argued, was to destroy an entire peoples.

Hartley’s New Mexico essays evidence the intelligentsia’s distressed over attempts to suppress American Indian ceremonial practices during the late 1910s.⁷⁵ However, it was not until the outbreak of the Bursum Bill controversy that the intelligentsia in the region coalesced into a unified front. Just as it became evident that the bill would be repelled and that the preservationist campaign had been effective, Burke’s circulars were leaked to the public.⁷⁶ In 1924, Sloan surmised that the reason Burke was so zealously focused on Pueblo Indian religious practices was to punish them and their white supporters for successfully challenging the Bursum Bill.⁷⁷ The circulars

⁷² Kennedy, "The Indian and Religious Freedom," 267.

⁷³ "Indian Dance at Art Show: Two Appear in Full Regalia at Independent Exhibition," *New York Times* (March 21, 1927): 3.

⁷⁴ John Collier quoted in *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ In 1918, the same year that Hartley published his first New Mexico essay, John Nilsen Laurvik, Director of the Palace of Fine Arts in Santa Fe, also addressed Indian policy in an article about recent paintings by William P. Henderson. Laurvik lamented “In fact, many of the Indian agents have done everything possible in their power to discourage them. In spite of this it is a religious ceremony, the Indian has clung to it through all these vicissitudes.” John Nilsen Laurvik, "Wm. P. Henderson's Paintings of American Indian Dances," *Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine* LXXII, no. 3 (September 1918): 24.

⁷⁶ Kelly notes that Burke played innocent, arguing that his circulars were never intended for the more civilized Pueblo Indians, a false statement that is belied by the fact that, to others, he confided that he found the Snake dance disgusting. Kelly, *The Assault on Assimilation: John Collier and the Origins of Indian Policy Reform*, 309.

⁷⁷ John Sloan, "The Indian Dance from an Artist's Point of View," *Arts and Decoration* VXX: 3 (January 1924): 17.

served to fuel dissent against the BIA. The intelligentsia immediately turned their collective attention to countering the campaign to suppress Indian religious practices.

As they did with the Bursum Bill, this group again flooded national publications with articles about the shortcoming of BIA policies and about the merits of Indian cultural and religious practices. Collier linked the goals of the Bursum Bill with that of the suppression of the Pueblo ceremonials. In a letter to the *New York Times*, reproduced in the *Christian Century*, Collier argued that religious persecution was guided by economic interests. "The war against Pueblo religions," Collier proclaimed, "is a war to expropriate the Pueblos from their lands in the cheapest way."⁷⁸ Pueblo lands were worth millions, and the Pueblo people would never give up their land as long as they retained their religion.

Sloan added his voice to protests over federal religious intolerance. In a 1924 issue of *Arts and Decoration* Sloan wrote, "The Indian Dance from an Artist's Point of View: An Answer to an Attack Upon These Ceremonies of the Southwest as Immoral and Degrading," in which he attacked the BIA and the YWCA for attempting to ban or to alter ceremonial practices.⁷⁹ Sloan explained that he had painted in the Southwest for years and had "yet to observe a single incident of anything 'degrading, vicious, and demoralizing' in these ritual dances."⁸⁰ The artist went on to dissect Burke's reasons for banning dances and countered attempts to slander preservationists; he explained that ceremonials were not immoral, that Indians did not make money off of them, that ceremonials did not take the Indian away from his work any more than did white

⁷⁸ John Collier, "Do Indians Have Rights of Conscience?," *Christian Century* 42 (March 12, 1925). This article is cited in Schwartz, "Red Atlantis Revisited: Community and Culture in the Writings of John Collier."

⁷⁹ Sloan, "The Indian Dance from an Artist's Point of View," 17, 56.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*: 17.

holidays, that smoking a peace pipe was no more harmful than the consumption of alcohol by whites, and that writers and artists were not merely supporting the cause for their own personal advantage. Sloan concluded, “But I still hope that the value of the Indian to this country, their philosophy, their art, their dignity, their immense inspiration to modern artists and writers, will be recognized by the Indian Bureau and that what is left of this beautiful, early civilization will be allowed to survive with its *soul* as well as its body intact.”⁸¹ Like Hartley, preservationists in the early 1920s intermingled political protest with both cultural nationalist and primitivist rhetoric.

Paintings, literature and essays that meditated on Pueblo dance proliferated at the very moment when Pueblo religious freedoms were being most seriously challenged. It was between 1919 and 1927 that artists, writers, and scientists in the Southwest—including Alice Fletcher, Mary Austin, Alice Corbin Henderson, and Marsden Hartley—became more acutely interested in researching, writing about, and representing Pueblo dance and music. Many of the texts and images created during the years of the dance imbroglio, particularly those created by advocates for preservation, can be understood as being politically meaningful.⁸² Paintings of Pueblo ceremonials by artist-activists were reproduced in articles that protested federal Indian policies. In chapter four, we saw that Blumenschein’s *The Gift* was used as the cover image of Alida Sim Malkus’s April 1923

⁸¹ Ibid.: 56.

⁸² Scholars often argue that Anglo artists represented Indian subjects in order to make their works marketable. However, most modernists, like Sloan, had a hard time finding a market for their New Mexico paintings. Haskell Simpson, for instance, never purchased the less traditional New Mexico works of Henri, Sloan, Marin, Bellows or Hartley for railway ephemera. Sloan’s statements in *El Palacio* (1922) and *Gist of Art* (1939) quoted in the first paragraph of this chapter speak to this fact. While patronage of Taos Society works has been thoroughly investigated, less attention has been paid to the reception and patronage of modernist canvases in New Mexico. Such an investigation will add an important layer to the study of art production in the Southwest.

McClure's article, "What is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?"⁸³ That same month, Blumenschein's *Corn Dance* and Sloan's *Eagle Dance* and *Ancestral Spirits* were reproduced in Alida Sims Malkus's April 8, 1923 *New York Times* article, "Those Doomed Indian Dances."⁸⁴ In this article, Malkus derided Burke's circulars and his open letter to American Indians as unjust. To counter Burke's claims that Indian dancers were debased, Malkus spotlighted the beauty and cultural merits of various Pueblo ceremonials. Sloan's *Ancestral Spirits* and *Eagle Dance* were again reproduced in the April 28, 1923 issue of *Literary Digest* (fig. 5.17), in conjunction with an article that also attacked Burke's policies.⁸⁵ Through their paintings, artist-activists hoped to celebrate ceremonial dance and to raise public awareness for the preservationist cause.

Dance at Cochiti Pueblo's Preservationist Sub-Text

In *Dance of Cochiti Pueblo* of 1922, Sloan expanded on the compositional strategies for representing Pueblo ceremonials that he had developed in 1921 paintings, such as *Eagles of Tesuque* (fig. 5.10). In *Eagles of Tesuque*, Sloan created distance

⁸³ Alida Sims Malkus, "What Is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?," *McClure's Magazine* 55, no. 2 (April 1923).

⁸⁴ Alida Sims Malkus, "Those Doomed Indian Dances," *The New York Times* (April 8, 1923): SM 1. The *New York Times* printed a large number of articles in support of Indian dances between 1923 and 1926. These articles were often penned by renowned artists, writers, and scientists. For instance, see: John Collier, "The American Congo," *Sunset* 50 (August 1923), John Collier, "Our Indian Policy," *Sunset* 50 (March 1923), John Collier, "The Pueblos' Last Stand," *Sunset* 50 (February 1923), Edgar L. Hewett, "Pueblos Harmed by Club Women Champions, Says Head of Museum," *New York Times* (December 14, 1924): XX21, F. W. Hodge (Museum of the American Indian), "Indian Dances Defended," *New York Times* (December 20, 1923): X12, F. W. Hodge, "Letter to the Editor: Rites of the Pueblo Indians," *New York Times* (October 26, 1924): 16, D.H. Lawrence, "Indian Dance and Entertainment," *New York Times* (October 26, 1924): SM3. The title of Collier's article, "The American Congo," implies a parallel between the infamous colonial administration of Belgian Congo and that of the BIA. Schwartz, "Red Atlantis Revisited: Community and Culture in the Writings of John Collier," footnote 55.

⁸⁵ "Taking the Indianism Out of the Indian," *Literary Digest* (April 28, 1923). This painting also appeared in the January 1920 issue of *Art and Archeology* that featured Hartley's "Red Man Ceremonials."

between the viewer and the dancer; still, one has an unobstructed view of the dancers. This sense of distance was accentuated in *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, in which one's view of the dance has been partially obscured. Furthermore, in the 1922 work, the dancers in the central courtyard are surrounded by Indians on all sides. To see the dance, one must navigate the space between the Pueblo and Navajo figures in the foreground. As is similar to Blumenschein's *The Gift* (fig. 4.1), the Indian men standing in the foreground of Sloan's work, one of whom also has his arms crossed, create a barrier between Anglo and Pueblo worlds.

Sloan's decision to distance the viewer from the religious activities in the courtyard had political implications. As was discussed in chapters two and four, cultural isolation, or segregation, was a central preservationist idea. In his 1924 *Arts and Decoration* article, Sloan argued, "It seems, to me that if anything is going to be stopped in connection with these ceremonials, and I say this with great regret, stop the *attendance* to the dances; if necessary, don't allow us to see them. Keep them for the Indian."⁸⁶ The main activity in *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, the Corn Dance, is barely discernable to the Anglo viewer, and thus is in keeping with Sloan's belief that the best way to protect the Indian is to isolate him from outside forces.

In his 1924 *Dancers in the Dust* (fig. 5.18), Sloan further exaggerated the distance between Anglo spectator and Pueblo by placing the viewer at a high-vantage point, perhaps from the roof of a pueblo.⁸⁷ From this position, the viewer gets an overview of the range of activities occurring in the Pueblo's courtyard. Two long rows of dancers,

⁸⁶ Sloan, "The Indian Dance from an Artist's Point of View," 17.

⁸⁷ About this work, Sloan explained, "Corn Dance, Santo Domingo, enveloped in a swirl of dust. Eyes, mouth, and ears filled with the gritty particles, but the show must go on." Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 276.

who move in unison, perform the Corn Dance, as is indicated by the distinctive tablets on the heads of alternating figures. Close to the dancers is a man holding a tall banner, like the one found in *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, who is flanked on both sides by more dancers and a drummer. In the distant middle-ground, one can make out a kiva, which seems abnormally large in size, and beside which stand more spectators. In the background, figures sit atop and under a portico. In the foreground is a tight, exclusionary circle of Indian participants. In *Dancers in the Dust*, the viewer sees a lot without really seeing much at all. All of the details of the performance—the dancer's costumes, individual participants, Indian spectators, the pueblo's architectural features—are obscured by an expressive rendering of dust. Sloan attempted to hermetically seal the ritual from the outside world. The dust cloaks the dancers from the distant viewer and the modern world. This painting is an apt visualization of Hartley's isolationist vision of Pueblo Indians as "wrapping their cloaks around them, wrapping themselves obviously away from the contamination of the world so foreign to them."⁸⁸

Sloan's paintings of Pueblo dances highlight a preservationist conundrum. Sloan believed that the best way to preserve Indian culture was to segregate it from Anglo influences. And yet, would not the implied viewer of his paintings be Anglo? How does Sloan justify his own presence at these events? An answer to these questions is revealed by Sloan's 1921 etching, *Snake Dance* (fig. 5.19). Most commonly known are Sloan's 1927 etchings that satirize Anglo tourism in the region (to be discussed later). In this 1921 etching, however, the Anglo audience at the dance is presented as subdued, attentive and respectful. Sloan's inclusion of a self-portrait in the lower-left hand corner helps to explain the demeanor of the non-Indian spectators. Sloan is the man wearing

⁸⁸ Marsden Hartley, "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," *El Palacio* VI, no. 4 (February 8, 1919): 53.

spectacles, who is dressed in appropriate western garb (in contrast to the city-dress of the tourists whom he ridicules in his 1927 etchings). The artist placed himself intimately close to the three Indian men in the foreground, implying his privileged status as an invited guest. Sloan has his hands clasped together; the Anglo man to his left sits with his hands behind his back. Sloan and his peers are there to observe the ritual, and not to sketch, take pictures, or disturb it in any way. Snakes scurry towards the audience, and yet the Anglo spectators do not recoil, nor do they react to the central figure with the snake in his mouth. Sloan is not a thrill-seeker; he maintains a cool and reverential demeanor befitting the seriousness of the ritual. While Sloan thought of himself as a consummate spectator, he never considered himself to be a tourist. He did not perceive his presence at Pueblo dances as being intrusive. A similar stance was presented in Hartley's New Mexico essays, and was common among artists in the region who believed that they had the right to witness the work of Indian "artists." Unlike vulgar tourists, artists argued that they were understanding and appreciative of Pueblo ceremonial arts.

Sloan's self-identification as a "spectator of life," as opposed to a gawker, was formed long before he arrived in the Southwest. Outraged by the behavior of his friends, who openly gawked at the working class people they could see from Sloan's New York apartment window, in his July 6, 1911 diary entry, the artist rationalized his practice of observing these same people:

I am in the habit of *watching every bit* of human life I see out windows, but I do it so that I am not observed at it. I 'peep' through real interest, not being observed myself. I feel that it is no insult to the people you are watching to do so unseen, but that to do it openly and with great expression of amusement is an evidence of *real vulgarity*.⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Sloan, *John Sloan's New York Scene: From the Diaries, Notes and Correspondence 1906-1913*, 549.

As Patricia Hills notes, Sloan justified his role as a sensitive voyeur by explaining that in doing so, he neither condescended, nor put himself in a position of superiority; as an artist, he had a right to “peep” if he did so in the spirit of respect, without violating the humanity of the subject.⁹⁰ It seems unlikely that the people he watched, New Yorker or American Indian, would have bought into his logic.

Returning to the preservationist sub-text of *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, the prominently placed child in the foreground, who is wearing a costume like that of her guardians, was also ideologically significant. Through the 1920s, Pueblo children continued to be sent to Anglo boarding schools in large numbers. Through a white education, the federal government hoped to break these children of their tribal ways. In protest, preservationists argued that Indian youth should be educated by their communities since their cultural instruction was understood as central to a tribe’s viability.⁹¹ Sloan’s depiction of Cochiti children in ceremonial costumes served to assure the viewer that the future of the Pueblo was secure.

Charles Eldredge has made a similar case for Blumenschein’s 1913 painting, *The Peacemaker* (fig. 4.5). Eldredge argues that the presence of the Indian boy in the foreground suggests that the artist was becoming wary of an assimilationist perspective by the early 1910s. In his 1899 illustration, “Wards of a Nation” (fig. 1.18), Blumenschein had praised the merits of assimilation by contrasting a clean, well-dressed

⁹⁰ Hills, “John Sloan’s Images of Working-Class Women: A Case Study of the Role and Interrelationships of Politics Personality and Patrons in the Development of Sloan’s Art, 1905-1916,” 331.

⁹¹ See Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995). Also see Bryan H. Wildenthal, *Native American Sovereignty on Trial: A Handbook with Cases Laws, and Documents* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2003), John R. Wunder, *Native American Sovereignty* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999).

Americanized Indian boy with his semi-nude parents. In contrast, in his *The Peacemaker*, created fourteen years later, the dignified, semi-nude Indian youth becomes a symbol of a rising generation.⁹² By painting Indian children in traditional attire, artist-activists implied that assimilationist policies were failing and that Pueblo culture was still being passed down to the youngest generation.

It is also significant that Sloan chose to depict the child in *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo* as being nurtured by a community of women. As was discussed in chapter two, assimilationists routinely characterized Indian women as licentious, incompetent housekeepers, and unfit mothers.⁹³ For this reason, they needed to be Christianized. In contrast, preservationists claimed that the Pueblo people had a sense of familial and community unity that had been lost in industrialized society. Pueblo women were thus presented in preservationist art and literature as attentive mothers, good wives and homemakers, and the Pueblo people as communal nurturers of the young and the aged.

Dance at Cochiti Pueblo reinforced preservationist concerns in a number of other ways. Sloan's greater emphasis on movement and rhythm in his dance paintings was also meaningful in terms of the cause. The dancers and the audience in the middle ground of the painting were subtly animated. As was previously addressed, the gesture of the dancers' legs and clapping hands of the peripheral group of figures gives one a sense of the rhythm of the dance. By placing the main action at a distance, documentary interests were usurped by Sloan's subjective vision of both the communalism and evocative power of the ceremonial. In his *Dancers in the Dust*, Sloan was even more focused on capturing

⁹² Charles C. Eldredge, "Ernest Blumenschein's 'The Peacemaker'," *American Art* 15, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 38, 41.

⁹³ Jacobs, "'Making Savages of Us All': White Women, Pueblo Indians, and the Controversy over Indian Dances in the 1920s," 188.

the intuitive, harmonious, rhythmic, and communal qualities of Indian dances. Ethnographic details are lost in the dust and wind; instead Sloan attempted to render the ceremonial's essence, conveying its vibe through his loose, vigorous brushwork. The repetitive forms of the dancers, the swirling dust and wind, evokes a sense of drama that is absent in Sloan's 1919 paintings.

Conveying the rhythm and emotive power of ceremonials was a key theme in anti-assimilationist and preservationist texts. In 1918, Hartley wrote that Indian rhythm, which he described as inspired by the Indian's connection to nature, was central to Pueblo rituals. He further explained, "Even as a spectator you are made to feel that every movement...is of impressive significance."⁹⁴ Couched in cultural nationalist terms, preservationists presented Pueblo dance, in which Indians' gift for rhythm and body movement was enacted, as their greatest artistic contribution to American culture. Pueblo dance was picked out as the Indian's supreme aesthetic achievement at the very moment when American Indian ceremonials were being most aggressively attacked.

Not Funny Clowns

In Anglo representations of Indians, the subject was often molded into what white America wanted, or needed, them to be.⁹⁵ In spite of their sensitivity to Pueblo culture, paintings and texts by preservationists in the Southwest were no different, as is apparent in Sloan's representations of Koshare. Most Anglo descriptions of the Koshare picked out their humorous skits as being the most remarkable part of their performances, as was

⁹⁴ Hartley, "Tribal Esthetics Dance Drama," 53.

⁹⁵ See William H. Truettner, ed., *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820-1920* (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art by the Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991).

the case with Blumenschein's 1898 illustration, "A Strange Mixture," and article, "Swift Arrow's Tale," and with Hartley's 1922 essay, "The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos."⁹⁶ Sloan, in contrast, all but erased the social importance of the Koshare as mischief makers and satirists, instead presenting only their more serious religious function.

Sloan's paintings of Koshare include, *Ancestral Spirits* of 1919, *Dancers in the Dust* of 1930 (5.20),⁹⁷ and *Grotesques at Santo Domingo* of 1923 (fig. 5.21). The artist published statements about each of these paintings in his 1939 treatise, *Gist of Art*. About *Ancestral Spirits*, also titled *Koshare*, Sloan wrote:

A preliminary of the Corn Dance at Santo Domingo is the reenactment of an ancient ceremony in which the ancestral spirits consult on the coming dance, scouting for enemies. Assured on this point the Koshare proceed slowly through the Plaza and return to the kiva and the dancers come forth for the ceremony.⁹⁸

Sloan explained the ritual enacted by the Koshare before ceremonial dances took place, when these figures surveyed the space where the dance would be held. Also in *Gist of Art*, Sloan described his painting, *Koshare in the Dust*, as representing, "A group of dancers who typify the spirits of the ancestors and are mistakenly called clowns. Their bodies, covered with white clay striped with black and earth-red."⁹⁹ Technically speaking, Sloan was correct; the Koshare are not "clowns."¹⁰⁰ However, they do have a humorous function that Sloan never mentioned in print nor did he represent in his art.

⁹⁶ Ernest L. Blumenschein, "San Geronimo: The Pueblo Indian Holiday: Swift Arrow's Tale," *Harper's Weekly* (December 10, 1898), Marsden Hartley, "The Scientific Esthetic of the Red Man, Part II: The Fiesta of San Geronimo at Taos," *Art and Archaeology* 14 (September 1922).

⁹⁷ In *Gist of Art*, *Koshare in the Dust* is dated as 1933. Based on its medium, tempera with oil-varnish glazes on panel, it was painted after 1928. Helen Farr Sloan recalled seeing the canvas when she visited the Sloans in Santa Fe in 1930 (Elzea, 327). The artist did not live in Santa Fe in 1933, so it seems likely the painting was painted in 1930, as Farr Sloan suggested.

⁹⁸ Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 260.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ According to Ortiz, *Kushare* is the Keresan name for this ceremonial figure, *Kosa* is the name used in Tewa language, and *Tabosh* is used in Towa. See Ortiz, *The Pueblo*.

Every Pueblo has at least traces of two esoteric orders of clowns, important religious figures who take part in the more serious aspect of a Pueblo's ceremonials, as well as contribute comedic interludes, entertainment that is secular in nature. The ridicule of the Koshare serves to entertain and enforce social conformity, but also inverts hegemonic power structures. Koshare satirize the audience at Pueblo ceremonials, particularly Anglo spectators. Thus, Sylvia Rodríguez understands clowning and cosmic gestures as important subversive act against one's oppressors; they are an "ongoing way of coping with and commenting on the historical structures of ethnic domination."¹⁰¹ As a skilled satirist and someone who also ridiculed tourists, one wonders why Sloan did not pick up on, or ignored, the defiance imbedded in the Koshare's skits.

Sloan did not distinguish between social and religious ceremonies, nor did he discriminate between the roles played by varied actors in the rituals. Take, for instance, *Koshare in the Dust*, a rare post-1920s painting of Pueblo dance by the artist. In this work, the setting—landscape, architectural structures, audience—is completely abstracted. We are made to focus solely on the Koshare, who are absorbed in the rhythm of the dance. By clouding the dancers in dust, or earth, Sloan made palpable the connection between land and Indian, an idea rooted in primitivism. Like Hartley, Sloan was drawn to what he believed to be the Indian's harmony with nature and the aesthetic purity of Indian dance, as well as to its energy. And, like Hartley, Sloan tried to capture these values in his paintings. Sloan's representations of the Koshare are similar to his paintings of the Corn Dance, the Eagle Dance, and so on. Sloan universalized Pueblo ceremonials, flattening out social, cultural, and religious nuances. About this tendency,

¹⁰¹ Sylvia Rodríguez, *The Matachines: Ritual Symbolism and Interethnic Relations in the Upper Rio Grande Valley* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 143-44, 56.

Alfonso Ortiz writes, “Even well-meaning whites sometimes tended to view Pueblos as romantic abstractions rather than flesh-and-blood individuals...their support often had as much to do with their own ideas and interests as it did with what was best for Indians.”¹⁰² Even as preservationist tried to project a more cultural sensitive vision of American Indians, their representations of Pueblo culture were often skewed to fall in line with a white utopian vision of authentic Indianness. Sally Price argues that even the best-informed commentators can be seduced by the mythologizing image of Primitive artists as “purified bearers of human consciousness and as survivors of our lost innocence.”¹⁰³

There is another possible explanation for Sloan’s unilateral focus on the seriousness of Koshare performances. Sloan may have made a calculated decision to obscure the sardonic and caricatural acts of the Koshare. The rituals found most offensive to moralists in the region, as was documented in the Secret Dance Files, were the Hopi Snake Dance and the actions of the Koshare. Because assimilationist protests were largely focused on the lasciviousness of the Koshare, Sloan might have glossed over the aspects of their performances that were being misconstrued by those unsympathetic to Pueblo religion. While this strategy explains Sloan’s sanitized descriptions of the Koshare in the early 1920s, it does not account for why he maintained this position long after assimilationists’ attacks on Pueblo culture had largely subsided.

Sloan’s 1923 painting, *Grotesques at Santo Domingo* (fig. 5.21), supports the idea that the artist highlighted profundity of the Koshare as a strategy for countering attacks on their performances. Based on the word “grotesques” in the title, we can assume that Sloan knew of the negative characterizations of the Koshare; his inclusion of this word

¹⁰² Ortiz, *The Pueblo*, 105.

¹⁰³ Sally Price, *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*, Second ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 31-32.

encourages the viewer to, at first, read the Indian dancers as such. In the middle ground of the composition perform six Koshare, painted in black and white and wearing loin cloths. They are situated in front of a sacred space, the kiva, from which they emerged. On top of the kiva is a dignified looking Pueblo man, who stoically presides over the scene. The Koshare, who move in subtly synchronized unison, are subdued, particularly when compared to the gesticulating and chaotically organized Koshare in Sloan's 1919 *Ancestral Spirits*. Who then, are the grotesques?

About *Grotesques at Santo Domingo* (hereafter *Grotesques*), Sloan wrote, "I think I am in a position to inform the reader that the grotesques in the picture are in the immediate foreground. The word could not be well applied to the Koshare whose actions and chant and dress make them more humanly natural."¹⁰⁴ The painting ridiculed tourists at Pueblo rituals. Notably, this is Sloan's only satirical *painting* that is centered on the theme of Pueblo rituals; it is also his only Indian dance painting with prominently placed tourists. In the foreground of *Grotesques* one finds a crowd of Anglo tourists; the women wear stylish hats, dresses and jewelry. The attention of this audience is divided; attracting as much attention as the ritual is the woman in a blue-dress in the background, who immodestly sits on the ground with her knees open, thus revealing her knickers. Three Anglo women in the left foreground crane their necks, looking around the dancers, to leer at the woman's act of immodesty. In this painting, Sloan highlighted the profundity of the Koshare's performances by presenting them as a foil to the undignified Anglo audience. Without Sloan's commentary on *Grotesques* (published fifteen years after the painting), one wonders if anyone outside of Sloan's peer group would have gotten the joke. If satire is a communicative act that relies on the cooperation of both the

¹⁰⁴ Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 270.

author and the audience, were Sloan's satirical works readable to a broad audience, or were they simply inside jokes?

There is reason to believe that those involved with the preservationist movement would have understood Sloan's message. The meaning of *Grotesques* relied on a rhetorical strategy popular during the Pueblo dance controversy. As a way to defend Pueblo rituals against accusations of immorality, preservationists often cited the dignity of the Primitives as a lesson to the indecency of the "civilized." As one 1924 *New York Times* article explained, "A few individuals have attempted to bring pressure to break up the religious life [of the Pueblo] on the ground that some of these dances were 'immoral,' such persons would undoubtedly be astonished to learn that many Indians look upon our own dancing as grossly indecent."¹⁰⁵ Similarly, Martin Vigil of Tesuque Pueblo told an interviewer, "our dances are not wicked like you people....You come down to any Pueblo, visit our dances, we don't hug each other when we dance...we dance about five feet apart, not like you people."¹⁰⁶ Commentators who supported preservation deemed jazz music and popular dance to be far more salacious than Pueblo ceremonies. In a frequently repeated comment made by Hartley, which was quoted in chapter two, the artist accentuated this point by making an analogy between Indian dance and the most aristocratic of the performative arts, the ballet.¹⁰⁷ Correspondingly, Sloan's *Eagle Dance*

¹⁰⁵ "Giving the Indian A Chance," *New York Times* (November 9, 1924): E6.

¹⁰⁶ Martin Vigil quoted in Jacobs, "Making Savages of Us All: White Women, Pueblo Indians, and the Controversy over Indian Dances in the 1920s," 192.

¹⁰⁷ Hartley was quoted as saying, "We need not to import Russian ballet while such plastic and pantomimic beauty is native to our own continent." Hartley cited in "The Red Man as the Supreme Artist of America," *Current Opinion* LXVIII, no. 3 (March 1920). In this article, Hartley's statement was placed under a reproduction of John Sloan's *Ancestral Spirits*. Blumenschein repeated the connection between Indian dance and Russian ballet in his 1919 interview with the *Albuquerque Evening Herald*, reproduced in Ernest L. Blumenschein and Bert Geer Phillips, "Appreciation of Indian Art," *El Palacio* VI, no. 12 (May 24, 1919).

was reproduced with the sub-titled “Our Aboriginal Ballet” in a 1924 issue of *Literary Digest* (fig. 5.17).¹⁰⁸

“Knees and Aborigines”

After 1924, Sloan took a three year hiatus from representing Pueblo Indians ceremonials, possibly because the motif had been adopted by so many artists in the region due to the publicity generated by the dance imbroglio. 1927 marked the artist’s return to the subject, but this time on paper instead of on canvas. Tourism had spun out of control. In his 1924 article Sloan griped, “Frequently the audiences that are drummed up by the adjacent towns are rude and unappreciative, often insulting to the Indian.”¹⁰⁹ On July 29, 1926, Sloan wrote to Robert Henri complaining that the region had been “spoiled by the Harvey System to some degree.”¹¹⁰ Sloan despised tourism for the same reason he protested against federal Indian policy, because of its assimilating effect on Pueblo Indians. Furthermore, Sloan saw tourists as blindly consuming Indian ceremonials with little regard for their beauty or profundity.

Sloan’s stewing irritation towards tourism came to a boil in the late 1920s. Sloan’s return to the theme of Indian dance coincided with the year that the Santa Fe Railway and its close associate, the Harvey Company, launched their immensely popular “Indian Detours” (fig. 5.22), which herded thousands of tourists to once remote Indian villages.¹¹¹ Thousands upon thousands had their first “authentic” experience of the

¹⁰⁸ “Taking the Indianism Out of the Indian.” In this article, the author cites a chief from the Yakimas as complaining that Indians should not be forced to give up their dances while white people are still allowed to perform their own dances.

¹⁰⁹ Sloan, “The Indian Dance from an Artist’s Point of View,” 56.

¹¹⁰ Perlman, ed., *Revolutionaries of Realism: The Letters of John Sloan and Robert Henri*, 311.

¹¹¹ The Indian Detours were launched on May 15, 1926. Sylvia Rodríguez argues these tours were a paradigmatic form of ethnic tourism, in which the primary attraction is the cultural exoticism of the

Southwest under the auspices of these excursions. Sloan was incensed over this lure for newcomers and he unleashed his anxieties and agitation towards the tourist industry in a series of satirical etchings, namely *Indian Detour* (fig. 5.23) and *Knees and Aborigines* (fig. 5. 24).

Sloan sarcastically described *Knees and Aborigines* as, “A civilized audience when skirts were at their height, viewing the more modestly dressed savages at a pueblo [sic] Indian dance.”¹¹² As with *Grotesques*, the dignity and sincerity of Indian culture act as a foil to Anglo immodesty, materialism and ambivalence. The setting is similar to that of *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*. The viewer’s gaze is funneled past the adobe structure in the foreground, to the dancers in the middle ground, and rests on the figures adjacent to the adobe structure in the background. The mountains in the distance are barely articulated; the Indian’s connection to nature has been broken. Based on the costumes of the dancers and the work’s setting, the etching appears to be a reinterpretation of *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*. Sloan refashions the utopian vision of his 1922 painting into a kitschy, touristic nightmare. Whereas in *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, the dance is presented as isolated and remote; in the etching, the dancers are placed intimately close to the viewer and the Anglo tourists, and yet there is no intimacy. One’s gaze is interrupted by throngs of tourists, who dangle from the pueblos, gawk at the dancers, lackadaisically smoke

local population. Sylvia Rodríguez, "Art, Tourism, and Race Relations in Taos: Towards a Sociology of the Art Colony," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 45, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 77. T.C. McLuhan notes that during the Indian Detours, Santa Fe Railway guides interpreted the landscapes and spectacles for the tourists as part of their corporate image making. In the Santa Fe Railway’s version of the Southwest, there was no poverty, severe drought or overgrazing; railway’s construction of the region carefully excluded any evidence of the harshness of human existence. See T. C. McLuhan and William E. Kopplin, *Dream Tracks: The Railroad and The American Indian 1890-1930* (New York: Abrams, 1985), 44-46. Also see Marta Weigle, "Southwest Lures: Innocents Detoured, Incense Determined," *Journal of the Southwest* 43, no. 4 (Winter 1990): <http://digital.library.arizona.edu/jsw/3204/lures/lures.html>.

¹¹² Sloan quoted in Morse, *John Sloan's Prints: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Etchings, Lithographs, and Posters*, 255.

cigarettes, and lounge on tree stumps and on each other. The cosmopolitan crowd is less interested in the dance than in socializing among themselves. Equal is their interest in looking and being looked at. Most of the women wear fashionable dresses that are deemed by the artist as inappropriately short, judging from the work's title. One can see up the skirts of a number of the women sitting atop the foreground pueblo, who haphazardly cross their legs.

Sloan's vitriol towards tourists at the dances was extended to the entire tourist industry in *Indian Detour*. In this etching, Sloan again satirized the intrusive, insensitive and unappreciative nature of Anglo tourists at Indian dances. But this time, Sloan laid blame on the companies that brought tourists to the dances. The Santa Fe Railway relied on Harvey cars and buses to ferry tourists to various locations throughout the region (fig. 5.25). In Sloan's etching, the menacing effects of the tourist industry have been more fully articulated. The threatening, beastlike Harvey buses look as though they are about to devour the central dancers. In them are tourists who are too lazy, scared, or disinterested to step outside. The dancers are overwhelmed by the number and size of the vehicles that encircle them. Except for the Indian dancers, the only other discernable Indians are located on and around the distant pueblos, alienated from their own ritual. The Anglo mob segregates the dancers from the altar on which the Pueblo's patron saint rests. Anglo flappers dance in the foreground, trivializing the religious importance of the ritual they have intruded upon.

Interesting is the contrast between Sloan's paintings, in which he edited out the presence of tourists, and his etchings, in which tourism was so forcefully inserted. Sloan's idyllic visions of Pueblo purity and his satirical critiques of cultural contagions

are two sides of the same coin; both were driven by his belief in the politics of preservation.

The Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts

Sloan's concern over the degenerative effects of tourism continued through the 1930s, at which time he became involved in the promotion and preservation of American Indian art. In 1931, Sloan and Oliver La Farge became the spokesmen for the *Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts*, commonly known as EITA, and wrote the introduction for the show's catalogue (fig. 5.26). Sloan was named as the organization's first president. Sponsored by the College Art Association, the EITA opened in New York City and subsequently circulated to cities in the Midwest and to Venice. The show was a huge public success, both widely attended and favorably reviewed. Its organizers aimed to celebrate American Indian art as the "first truly American Art," and proposed that the Indian objects should be understood as *art* not *ethnology* (unaware that both concepts are Western constructions).¹¹³ Organizers claimed that the Indian objects included in the show were picked for their aesthetic value instead of for scientific study.¹¹⁴ While the show's publicity materials present an antagonism between art and ethnology, in fact the

¹¹³ Ironically, more than half of the scholars who contributed essays to the exhibition catalogue were ethnologists, and many of the catalogue essays focused on historical and social matters, as opposed to aesthetic ones.

¹¹⁴ Twelve Pueblo Indians and two Navajo were brought to Manhattan to discuss their art, and to meet the press. Sloan's biographer, John Loughery, notes that on the evening of the opening of the exhibition, Sloan gave a radio talk. The exhibition was widely covered by art critics. Walter Pach published an article in the *New York Times* favorably reviewing the show. More surprising, however, is that even the surly and conservative Royal Cortissoz of the *Herald-Tribune* had only praise for the exhibition. Loughery, *John Sloan: Painter and Rebel*, 308. The exhibition's publicity materials were heavily quoted in the press. See, for instance, "Art of the Indians to be Shown Here: Comprehensive Exposition of Work of Many Tribes Will be Open to the Public Tuesday," *New York Times* (November 29, 1931).

exhibition was the product of an amicable coalition between artists, anthropologists, and art patrons.¹¹⁵

Sloan's interest in American Indian art was not new. In the winter of 1920, after his second season in New Mexico, as president of the Society of Independent Artists, he included in society's annual exhibition watercolors by Awa Tsirah and Crecencio Martinez, two young artists from San Ildefonso Pueblo.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, EITA was not the first effort to collect American Indian art. The Indian Arts Fund (IAF) was founded in 1925 in Santa Fe to collect traditional Pueblo pottery. Objects chosen by the organization's Anglo board members, including Amelia White, Elizabeth Sergeant, Mary Austin, and Mabel Dodge Lujan, were intended to provide a reference for contemporary potters and to develop a market for traditional pottery.¹¹⁷

Returning to the EITA, the purpose of the exhibition was not merely for the sake of aesthetic appreciation and awareness of Indian art. The show had commercial and political implications and was a reaction to assimilationist policies and dominant cultural hierarchies. The show's more socially conscious goal was to stimulate public awareness of Pueblo culture as part of one solution to their economic and political problems. In his 1932 EITA Annual Report, Sloan explained, the "object of the Association is to win the aesthetic appraisal of Indian art, as a means of awakening public appreciation, so as to encourage the Indians to continue to develop art, and create an enlarged market for the

¹¹⁵ Mullin, "The Patronage of Difference: Making Indian Art 'Art, Not Ethnology'," 397.

¹¹⁶ "Painting by Indians in New York," *El Palacio* VIII, no. 3 & 4 (March and April, 1920): 79. The watercolors were donated by the Museum of Fine Arts in Santa Fe and by Mabel Dodge Luhan.

¹¹⁷ Kenneth Dauber, "Pueblo Pottery and the Politics of Regional Identity," *Journal of the Southwest* 32, no. 4 (Winter 1990): <http://digital.library.arizona.edu/jsr/3204/pueblo.html>.

same.”¹¹⁸ Sloan felt that American Indian artists were not paid the value of their authentic art. As a result, they were forced to demean themselves with cheap curio production in order to survive. To this effect, Sloan complained, “Looking upon the Indian himself as a curio, with the cast of mind failing to recognize the high artistic value of the best Indian products...the tourist will not pay the price which any craftsman must ask for the mere time, labor and materials involved in his work.”¹¹⁹ Sloan thought it important to promote Indian art, both for the sake of cultural awareness and to “better the economic conditions of the living Indian artists of the country,” which would “have a beneficial effect on their morale.”¹²⁰ The show’s organizers paternalistically endeavored to reinvest the Indian with a sense of pride in his culture and craftsmanship, the quality of which, they believed, had been diminished by Anglo contact. The EITA was a way that Sloan could attempt to counter what he found to be the two most viral entities to threatened Pueblo cultural viability: cultural intolerance and cultural commodification.

The EITA had a number of positive effects. Anthropologist Molly Mullin sees the exhibition as challenging ethnographic claims of cultural purity and the cultural hegemony of major art museums. Through the 1920s, Indian objects were mostly viewed as ethnological specimens or cheap souvenirs.¹²¹ The show confronted the idea that Indian art was the exclusive provenance of natural history museum and radically proposed that Indian artists be represented in major art museums. In doing so, the

¹¹⁸ “1932 Annual Report of the EITA,” Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts: Organizational Records, John Sloan Collection, Delaware Museum of Art, box 41. The previous year he explained, “The success of Exhibitions cannot fail, we believe, to better the economic conditions of the living Indian artists of the country and have a beneficial effect on their morale.”

¹¹⁹ John Sloan and Oliver La Farge, *Introduction to American Indian Art: Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts*, vol. Two volumes (New York: The Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts, Inc., 1931), 21.

¹²⁰ “1931 EITA Annual Report,” Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts: Organizational Records, John Sloan Collection, Delaware Museum of Art, box 41.

¹²¹ Dauber, “Pueblo Pottery and the Politics of Regional Identity,” <http://digital.library.arizona.edu>.

exhibition confronted the ethnocentric notion that only art linked to European or Euro-American tradition was worthy of the title “art.”¹²² The show’s organizers were also open-minded about what was included in the exhibition. Mullin argues that by proposing to focus on aesthetics, the organizers attempted to counter claims of authenticity made by ethnologists. For instance, when praising the more modern, bright baskets made by Hopi and Jicarilla Indians, the catalogue asserted that Indian culture could not be held in a time-warp, it could not be expected to remain unchanged.¹²³ Even while Sloan and La Farge acknowledged that it was difficult to draw a distinction between “what is, and what is not, truly Indian” and admitted that what was included in the show was largely a matter of taste, the organizers still made decisions about what had “the Indian feeling” and what was one of the Indian’s “many silly things.”¹²⁴

In the EITA catalogue, Sloan and La Farge declared, “one thing must be said with emphasis, for the guidance of any white man who wants to buy something really Indian...if it not be well made and truly made, and evidence of fine workmanship, and in good taste, it is not really Indian.”¹²⁵ Like most preservationists, the show’s organizers assumed the authority to decide what counted as authentic Indian culture. Sloan and La Farge implied that an authentic Indian does not produce kitschy tourist art for monetary gain; real Indians created real Indian art, which was carefully hand-crafted.

¹²² Mullin, “The Patronage of Difference: Making Indian Art “Art, Not Ethnology,”” 404.

¹²³ Ibid.: 406. Mullin also writes that, despite paternalism, the organizers’ relationship with Indian artists was typically congenial. Leadership in Indian communities tended to support promise to bring some economic reward and prestige to their communities. American Indian artists also often welcomed the opportunity to sell works directly to the public. The patron-Indian relationship was not without its problems. The work of some Indian artists was met with acclaim at the expense of that created by other members of their community. Furthermore, the status of “fine” artist can only be conferred on a few individuals, limiting the number of American Indians that could profit from the EITA’s proposed market.

¹²⁴ Sloan and La Farge, *Introduction to American Indian Art: Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts*, 25.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Paradoxically, the preservationist notion of Indianness and support of cultural isolation precluded the Indian's direct participation in the commodities market from which Sloan and others hoped Pueblo artists could benefit. Furthermore, EITA's promotion of Indian art served to increase the value of such objects in the market place, thus attracting more buyers, thus causing the further production of kitsch for the tourist market.

While Sloan believed that Anglos could learn much from the mythologized Indian, he thought that the best way to preserve Indian culture was to protect it from outside influences. The EITA organizers were faced with a dilemma that Philip Deloria sees as embedded in the modern attraction to Indian Primitives: how to preserve the boundaries that marked exterior/authentic Indian, while still being able to gain access to the Indian's organic purity to make it one's own.¹²⁶

Better Mouse Traps?

By 1937, Sloan's optimism for the future of Pueblo culture had dimmed. This year he created two more etchings and one painting which commented on the undesirable effects of tourism. In all three images, Sloan confronted the negative impact that the promotion of Indian material culture was having on Pueblo Indian culture and society.

In his 1937 etching, *Black Pot* (fig. 5.27), Sloan depicted a Pueblo Indian woman awkwardly juggling two tourist pots and two children, while an Anglo woman, wearing a tacky Santa Fe style belt, carefully examines one pot as if to ascertain its authenticity.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 155.

¹²⁷ In Helen Farr Sloan's notes from 1945, she recorded Sloan as describing the work as follows: "The potter's art bridges the gap between two civilizations." About these quotes, Peter Morse explains that Helen Farr Sloan gathered her notes on comments that Sloan had made about his etchings and typed them up for a 1945 exhibition of his work at the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago. Sloan then approved or corrected Farr Sloan's typed copy. Farr Sloan told Morse that her husband

The small size of the pots suggests they are cheap curios, which, as Sloan and La Farge chided, were “made for the gullible white man.”¹²⁸ The tourist would rather buy “knick-knacks” than “genuine Indian articles.”¹²⁹ The Indian man in the etching, who seems like a relic of the past with his blanket wrapped around him, stares out at the viewer as if in protest. This etching suggested that Indian participation in the tourist market had caused an imbalance in their otherwise harmonious lives.

Sloan’s 1937 painting, *Better Mouse Traps?* (fig. 5.28), and his etching with same title (fig. 5.29), again commented on the adverse effects that the curio market was having on the Indian. The “mouse trap” is the road-side shack where Indian curio traders sell their goods. The “mouse” is the mouse-shaped car, presumably full of tourists, which speeds along the highway. The cheese that will catch this mechanical mouse is both the small pots and the Indians themselves. In *Gist of Art*, Sloan explained, “Small groups of Indians from Santo Domingo erect these shelters along the Albuquerque highway in hopes that some passing traveler may be tempted to buy their pottery.”¹³⁰

Sloan again elaborated on the meaning of the painting in a letter to a buyer, describing the work in a way that was intended to solicit a positive reaction. Sloan wrote:

Painted in Santa Fe, 1937. I had, at the time, spent nineteen summers in New Mexico and had seen the old Santa Fe trail grow from rutted roads to surfaced highways. At points along the roadside near the pueblo [sic] of Santo Domingo, temporary shelters of cottonwood boughs are built sheltering small groups of Indians. Pots of various shapes are displayed outside with hopes of attracting passing tourists. We never saw a car stop although some undoubtedly some do. The picture with the modern speedway to Albuquerque cutting the desert and the family resting in the

often changed her notations out of respect for the audience instead of for the sake of accuracy. He edited those comments that he deemed too politicized or inappropriate for a public audience. Morse, *John Sloan's Prints: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Etchings, Lithographs, and Posters*, 9.

¹²⁸ Sloan and La Farge, *Introduction to American Indian Art: Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts*, 9.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Sloan, *Gist of Art*, 332.

shade, suggests the timeless calm of the Indian in the face of time-saving efforts of modern civilization.¹³¹

Sloan's optimistic description of this work is betrayed by its iconography. *Better Mouse Traps?* comments on the dangers of the curio trade and has a marked sense anxiety and isolation. The idle Indian family, which sits in a vast and barren landscape, has ventured away from their community to sell curios in order to survive. This sense of isolation is more dramatic in the etching, in which the Indian man sits alone. The vulnerability of the group in the painting is made clear by the child, who stands precariously close to the highway. She looks as if, at any moment, she will run in front of the speeding car to catch the dog that is situated across the road. The objects that the Indians sell are cheap curios, as is apparent by their small size and quantity. If Pueblo pottery acted as a metonym for the Pueblo people in Anglo visual culture, then the kitschy curios in this painting suggests Sloan's pessimism about what he perceived to be the lamentable deterioration of Indian culture and society.

While the commercialism of Indian culture may have weighed heavily on Sloan's mind, the political situation of American Indians in the 1930s had improved. As we will be discussed in the epilogue, American Indian art and culture surged in popularity nationwide during the late 1920s. In 1933, John Collier became the Commissioner of Indian affairs and quickly transformed BIA policy. Under his Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, American Indian culture was supported to a far greater extent. Sloan's

¹³¹ Letter quoted in Elzea, *John Sloan's Oil Paintings: A Catalogue Raisonne*, 367. About this work, Sloan wrote, "The world has certainly made a path close by the Indian artist's door, but since the world passes at a rate from 60 to 80 miles an hour, patronage is scarce" (JS 1945). He also commented, "Someone had written: 'If a man excel in anything, even if it only be in making better mouse traps, the world will make a path to his door'" (Dart 103). Both of these statements are quoted in Morse, *John Sloan's Prints: A Catalogue Raisonne of the Etchings, Lithographs, and Posters*, 331.

pessimism aside, his art and activism helped to ferried in significant changes in how the general public perceived American Indians.

Conclusion

In a field that tends to segregate artists into distinct categories—Academic, Realist, Modernist, and so on—the aesthetic and ideological overlap in works created by artists with diverse temperaments is often elided. During the 1920s, Ernest Blumenschein, John Sloan, and Marsden Hartley were each driven by a desire to represent Pueblo Indian culture and religion in a way that was sensitive to growing concerns over the suppression of American Indian cultural and religious expression. Coinciding with the critical years of the debate over federal Indian policy, vanguard artists and writers working in New Mexico turned their attention to cross-cultural tensions in the region and/or attempted to capture their subjective responses to Pueblo culture. Through their co-mutual interest in countering the politics of assimilation, many of these artists exchanged ideas about the merits of Indian culture, as well as modes of representation. They experimented with various compositional strategies, playing with subject matter, color, perspective, and form, in order to meet their ideological needs.

It is not coincidental that around the same time Pueblo Indian religion was under attack, there was intense experimentation with painting Indian ceremonial dance and with capturing its feel and rhythm. Briefly returning to Blumenschein's work from the early 1920s makes salient how pervasive was this focus on Indian dance and how powerfully seductive was the call for a subjective, rather than an objective, vision. Like Sloan, Blumenschein created his only series of paintings in which he represented Pueblo dance during the critical year of the preservationist movement. In his *Dance at Taos* of 1923

(fig. 6.1) and *Moon, Morning Star and Evening Star* of 1922 (fig. 6.2), the artist attempted to capture his personal response to Pueblo ceremonial dances, featuring their communalism and rhythm.¹ These paintings are unique among his *oeuvre*, which, until the early 1920s, was dominated by images of Indian figures, posed with objects, placed in relatively shallow, stage-like compositions.

In the late 1910s, just as the preservationist movement was gaining steam, Blumenschein spoke favorably about Indian dances and chided the federal government for trying to ban them. In his 1919 interview reproduced in *El Palacio*, the artist detailed the vivid colors that characterized Pueblo ceremonials, focusing on the beauty of the costumes that were worn. Although sympathetic to the idea of preserving Indian culture, his 1919 perspective was still fundamentally guided by an interest in documenting the tangible aspects of the dance.² After the preservationist movement had made its mark, and ideas about subjectivity had proliferated, Blumenschein's understanding of the important qualities of Pueblo ceremonials changed markedly. Late in his life, Blumenschein wrote about *Moon, Morning Star, Evening Star*:

It is a very moving experience to witness the deer dance at Taos... On returning from the dance late in the evening, I got to work on my first (and most important) impression of the dance. It must convey the character and sentiment of the scene and of course the emotional reactions of the artist. Without these emotions, the genuine feelings aroused in creative men, a picture becomes just a mere statement of a reporter and not a work of art.³

¹ Blumenschein's dance paintings also include *Taos Entertains the Cheyennes* (c. 1920) and *Indian Dance* (c. 1923). He revisited this theme in 1946 in his painting, *Enchanted Forest*.

² Ernest L. Blumenschein and Bert Geer Phillips, "Appreciation of Indian Art," *El Palacio* VI, no. 12 (May 24, 1919): 179.

³ Ernest L. Blumenschein, "Story of Painting Entitled 'Moon, Morning Star and Evening Star,' (for the Gilcrease), Blumenschein Papers, Archives of American Art, reel 269, frame 1158.

Significant is Blumenschein's use of the words "impression," "emotional," "sentiment," and "feelings," all of which gesture towards his interest in painting his subjective response to the dance.

In *Moon, Morning Star, Evening Star*, Blumenschein forayed into new artistic territory. He pulled back from his tight focus on a posed Indian subject, as is seen in paintings like *The Gift* (Fig. 4.1), and created a sense of distance by positioning the viewer above the scene, just as Sloan had done in his 1920s dance paintings (fig. 5.1). By painting a tightly gathered community of figures, whose bodies are rhythmically repeated around a central oval of dancers, Blumenschein tried to evoke the tempo and rhythmic organization of the ritual. There is something organic or earthly about the dancers, whose costumes transform them into animals. Like Sloan and Hartley, Blumenschein sought to convey the Indian's union with nature through ceremonial dance. Similar concerns informed Blumenschein's *Dance at Taos*, in which he painted four lines of anonymous Indian dancers. Individual dancers transform into one communal body, which is an amalgamation of rhythmically repeated forms. It is interesting that as the intensity of the intelligentsia's participation in the preservationist movement subsided, so too did Blumenschein's pictorial explorations of Indian dances.

It is worth noting that any number of artists could have been used to support the claim that artists' involvement in the preservationist movement impacted their production in the region. For instance, among the other artists who experimented with the motif of Indian dance between the watershed years of the controversy over American Indian ceremonies were B. J. O. Nordfeldt, Jan Matulka, Gerald Cassidy, Gustave Baumann, Will Shuster, Frank Applegate, and Joseph Sharp. Preservationists popularized this motif

among artists and writers, and thus paintings of ceremonial dance continued to be popular through the early 1930s, as is seen in works by Emil Bisttram, Norman Chamberlain, John Marin, and, as will be discussed in the epilogue of this dissertation, Georgia O'Keeffe. Literature about Pueblo art and culture also proliferated during the late 1920s and 1930s, when lengthy books about this topic were published by Leo Crane, Erna Fergusson, Elsie Clews Parsons, and others.⁴

By focusing on problems at the intersection of art and politics, this dissertation has aimed to critically reevaluate what it means for a painting and an artist to be political. The work and activism of Blumenschein, Sloan, and Hartley are representative of the range of responses to issues surrounding the preservation of Indian culture during the 1920s. A discussion of texts and images produced by these artists underscores the idea that it was not necessary for an artist to paint overtly propagandistic paintings in order to be “political.” Hartley’s essays about Indian ceremonials were overtly engaged with the politics of the preservationist movement; his paintings of the New Mexico landscape, which were impacted by his understanding of Pueblo dance, were also politicized, but more subtly so. John Sloan, who had been a social activist prior to the First World War, explicitly politicked for Pueblo culture in a number of his essays and created a handful of satirical paintings and etchings that ridiculed Anglo exploitation of Indian culture. And yet, most of Sloan’s paintings of Pueblo ceremonials were infused with a preservationist perspective without being openly propagandistic. Blumenschein, like Hartley, is not typically thought of as a “political” artist, and yet he publicly ridiculed the Bureau of

⁴ Leo Crane, *Desert Drums: The Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, 1540-1928* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1928), Erna Fergusson, *Dancing Gods: Indian Ceremonials of New Mexico and Arizona* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1957, originally published in 1931), Elsie Clews Parsons, *Pueblo Indian Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939).

Indian Affairs and signed petitions in support of American Indian culture. Like Sloan, his participation in the movement altered the way he saw and painted Pueblo Indians in the 1920s.

The New Mexican intelligentsia contributed to a change in federal policies regarding American Indians in the 1930s, as will be discussed in the following epilogue. Nevertheless, most artists involved in the preservationist movement were not focused on offering political solutions; rather, they concentrated on fostering public awareness of the harsh consequences of assimilation. By creating images that evoked the emotional and spiritual profundity of contemporary cultural and religious practices among America's "Indians" (by which they meant "Pueblo Indians"), they believed that their art and texts would have a positive impact on the public's perception of Native peoples. As such, these artists were countering what they saw as the exploitative, anthropological, and sentimentalizing paintings created by conservative artists in the region.

Prior to the campaign for preservation, images of Pueblo Indians had an anthropological feel in which artists attempted to record or reconstruct the Primitive way of life of a vanishing peoples. This paradigm can be tied to the policy of assimilation, whereby Indians and their culture would vanish as they became acculturated American citizens. In these paintings, passive, introspective Indians and the objects of their creation were placed in realistic looking yet imagined spaces in which geography and time were collapsed. This mode of representing the Pueblo people was challenged by the publicity generated by advocacy for preservation.

With the endorsement of America's vanguard artists and writers, American Indian culture won popular acceptance by the late 1920s. Evolutionary theories about Indians'

racial inferiority lost public support; if American Indians could produce something of aesthetic value, then it was hard to see them as unevolved. Furthermore, what had once been construed as the “backwardness” of Indian life was seen in a more positive light; Primitive ways were something to be celebrated.⁵ The preservationist-driven media blitz, during which magazines and newspapers published essays and reproductions of paintings by artist-activists, promoted a new conception of Indianness. At a time when the religious rights of American Indians were being debated, preservationists argued for the merits of Indian ceremonials, calling attention to the innovative rhythms and profundity of Pueblo dance and to its rootedness in the American soil. Using language infused with primitivist rhetoric, the New Mexico intelligentsia commingled their political platform for Native civil rights with a cultural nationalist agenda, describing Indians as natural, artistic, dignified, communal, and American. While activists’ vision of Indians tended to be ethnocentric, and Indian art and culture was appropriated for cultural nationalist needs, the preservationist movement led to greater public awareness of American Indian culture and political problems, which eventually resulted in changes in federal Indian policy.

⁵ Tom Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 126.

Epilogue: Dreaming Indian

This dissertation has argued that the preservationist movement, as publicized through images and essays authored by the New Mexican intelligentsia, fostered a change both in federal Indian policy and in how painters visualized Pueblo Indians. I will end by considering the political and artistic impact of this movement.

Intervisuality and the work of Georgia O'Keeffe

The aesthetic and ideological shifts in paintings of Pueblo Indians is made palpable by considering Georgia O'Keeffe's 1929 *Grey Blue & Black—Pink Circle* [*Kachina*] (fig. 7.1).¹ Painted during her first season in New Mexico, it is one of two canvases in which O'Keeffe visually interpreted Pueblo ceremonials. This motif was again explored in her painting, *At the Rodeo* (fig. 7.2), created the same year. Much has been said about O'Keeffe's paintings with respect to gender theory, the Stieglitz enterprise, the formation of an American modernism and cultural nationalism. How O'Keeffe, through her work and activities in New Mexico, was able to carve out an artistic and social space for herself, one that challenged the critical view of her as "woman artist" and Stieglitz circle artist, has been carefully considered in O'Keeffe

¹ "Kachina" is also spelled "Kadcina." The word is a close approximation of the Keresan and Hopi designation for these spirits. According to Dozier, the Keresan also use an alternative term, "Shiwana," but still recognize the term "Kadcina." Dozier further explains that Anglos, Hispanics, and non-Pueblo Indians are often barred from attending the Kadcina rites at Rio Grande Pueblos, which tend to be held in secluded places. However, Western Pueblos, such as the Hano and Hopi, often allow visitors to watch the Kadcina's performances. Edward P. Dozier, *Pueblo Indians of North America* (Prospect Heights: Waveland Press, Inc., 1970), 156.

literature.² My focus will be different; I would like to meditate on *Grey Blue & Black—Pink Circle* [*Kachina*] (hereafter *Kachina*) in terms of its formal relationship to paintings by artist-activists for Indian culture.

It is important to highlight the fact that I am not arguing that O’Keeffe was involved in the preservationist movement or that *Kachina* was intended to be a political painting. O’Keeffe’s paintings of Pueblo ceremonials did not explicitly *respond* to the preservationist movement. Rather, O’Keeffe’s way of understanding and painting Pueblo Indians was informed by a preservationist perspective. In painting *Kachina*, she interpreted motifs popularized during the early 1920s. *Kachina* and *At the Rodeo* can be understood as products of an intervisual context, through which one image often generates another by visual association. By considering a work within an intervisual paradigm, as Michael Camille explains, the “possibilities of interpretation become less textually stratified and suggest a multiplicity of different available readings for different spectators.”³ O’Keeffe’s representations of Pueblo ceremonials, therefore, can have an aesthetic relationship to preservationist canvases without carrying overtly political meanings.

The iconography of O’Keeffe’s *Kachina* can be rooted in a preservationist-driven understanding of Indianness. The work’s subtitle, “Kachina,” makes explicit the painting’s ceremonial subject. In Pueblo communities, kachinas are represented and symbolized in dolls and as masked ceremonial dancers who performed highly specialized

² See, for instance, Marcia Brennan, *Painting Gender, Constructing Theory: The Alfred Stieglitz Circle and American Formalist Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), Wanda Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1999), Bram Dijkstra, *Georgia O’Keeffe and the Eros of Place* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

³ Michael Camille, *Mirror in Parchment: The Luttrell Psalter and the Making of Medieval England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 339.

dances.⁴ Generally, kachinas are understood as spiritual manifestations of deceased ancestors who now reside in landscape forms. They are called upon to bring rain, good harvest, and to ensure a proper balance of the cycles of life.

In O'Keeffe's *Kachina*, concentric circles pulsate around a number of cylindrical forms that are grouped together in the center of the canvas.⁵ These forms, abstractions of Indian dancers, line up behind one another, moving the viewer's eyes deeper into the canvas. Each form is slightly askew, suggesting movement. The concentric circles do not simply circumscribe these forms, the pulsating rings both envelope and emanate outward from them. This work is an abstract visualization of Indian dancers who are synchronized with the rhythmic pulse of unseen drums. O'Keeffe's evocation of rhythm in her paintings of Indian dances was not lost on her critics. Edward Alden Jewell praised *After the Rodeo* in the following terms: "another glowing design, is dedicated to throngs; it is the sort of abstraction that springs from a beating heart, or from many beating hearts, not the cold improvisational mathematics."⁶

Through O'Keeffe extensive letters to her husband, Alfred Stieglitz—written at rate of up to two a day—we have a rich account of her initial impressions of New Mexico, the Pueblo Indians, and their ceremonial dances.⁷ O'Keeffe and Rebecca Strand

⁴ Suzanne Crawford and Dennis Kelley, eds., *American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia*, vol. 2 (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2005), 429.

⁵ In conversation with William Truettner, he poignantly noted that this painting is overtly erotic. Thus, it provides an interesting parallel to Hartley's more sensual texts about Pueblo dances, as well as to his New Mexico landscape paintings through which he enacted a union between himself, the Indian, and the land. These analogies warrant further research.

⁶ Edward Alden Jewell, "New O'Keeffe Pictures," *New York Times* (February 9, 1930): X12.

⁷ These letters were not made public until May 2006, and are housed at Yale's Beinecke Library, YCAL MSS 85. While O'Keeffe was in New Mexico, she and Stieglitz were going through a troublesome time in their relationship. As a result, they both frequently sent long, personal letters that detailed their anxieties, heartbreak, and anger, along with the activities of their daily lives. O'Keeffe seems to have been working out her feelings about her relationship with Stieglitz and trying to reconcile what she believed to be his betrayal (Georgia O'Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, July 4, 1929, box

arrived in Santa Fe on April 20, 1929. By May, Mabel Dodge Luhan had offered the two women rooms at her Taos home, where O’Keeffe stayed for two seasons. O’Keeffe’s letters show that she was particularly fond of Dodge Luhan’s Pueblo Indian husband, Tony Lujan, whom she called the “crowning glory” of the Dodge Luhan compound.⁸ In her letters, O’Keeffe wrote long, effusive passages about his appearance and demeanor, and about her fascination with his frequent drumming.

During her first season in Taos, O’Keeffe frequently attended Pueblo ceremonials with Dodge Luhan and Strand, which she described for Stieglitz in her letters.⁹ O’Keeffe’s painting, *After the Rodeo*, was inspired by a dance that she had witnessed in Las Vegas, New Mexico. On July 8, 1929, O’Keeffe wrote to Stieglitz:

...we got in late last night—after a wonderful day—drove through that country that just touches my heart—and I was in a wonderful neutral state all day—it was very perfect—Those Indians with their drums—like a heart beat from the center of the earth—and sometimes they sing wonderful things—Their presence is something very alert and silent—It was a very beautiful day.¹⁰

O’Keeffe found drumming to be the most provocative aspect of Pueblo dances and chants. *Kachina*’s evocation of the repeated rhythms of beating drums is its defining characteristic, and is in keeping with representations of Pueblo Indians by artist-activists from the early 1920s. O’Keeffe’s synesthetic vision, which evokes the sound of the

85, folder 1718). In the letters she exclaimed, “I feel like I am someone new here” (May 6, 1929, box 85, folder 1714) and “I just feel like expanding here” (Georgia O’Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, June 14, 1917, box 85, folder 1717).

⁸ Georgia O’Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, May 5, 1929 Alfred Stieglitz\Georgia O’Keeffe Archive, YCAL MSS 85, box 85, folder 1714.

⁹ O’Keeffe’s letters from her first season are particularly significant with respect to her paintings of Pueblo ceremonials. In 1930, O’Keeffe spent more time alone, making a concerted effort to socialize less and spend more time on her work (Georgia O’Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, July 19, 1930). During this year, O’Keeffe distanced herself from Dodge Luhan and the social activities at her host’s compound. As a result, she attended fewer Pueblo ceremonials during her second season in New Mexico.

¹⁰ Georgia O’Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, July 8, 1929, Alfred Stieglitz\Georgia O’Keeffe Archive, YCAL MSS 85, box 85, folder 1718.

drum, is akin to Hartley's Whitney *New Mexico Landscape* (fig. 3.7), in which each hill becomes a beat, and the mountain range the repetitive sounds of ceremonial drums, the "pom, pom, pom" that he described in his poem, "The Festival of Corn." This rhythmic structure also present in Blumenschein's paintings of Indian dance (fig. 6.2).

In her letter Stieglitz, O'Keeffe likened the sound of the drum to the earth's heartbeat. (Jewell seems to have adopted her language in his review of *At the Rodeo*.) O'Keeffe believed that this beat was infused with the Indian's connection to what Hartley had described as the land's "vital essence." The circles at the center of the work are painted in ethereal pinks and blues; the paleness of the colors gives them an otherworldly feel. As they pulse outward, the rings' colors darken into sky blues and vegetative greens; they become increasingly more concrete and earthly. In O'Keeffe's vision, the rhythm of beating drums links Indians' psyche and spiritual life to the earth that surrounds them. *Kachina* thus expanded on a motif that was popularized by Anglo-Americans a decade early; Hartley's New Mexico essays and paintings also meditated on the connection between the Indian and the land, a union that he saw as reinforced by ceremonial dance; this idea is similarly evoked in Sloan's *Dancers in the Dust* (fig. 5.16) and in Blumenschein's dance paintings (fig. 6.1).

Kachina and *At the Rodeo* are distinctive among O'Keeffe's 1929 New Mexico paintings. Her most famous works from 1929 and the early 1930s, paintings of cow skulls and crosses (fig. 7.3), have a static and iconic feel. Her dance paintings, in contrast, are more abstracted and evocative of movement. O'Keeffe use of perspective in her dance paintings was also different. Whereas in her cross and skull paintings, she tended to combine a closely cropped view of an object with a distant landscape, in the

dance paintings, the viewer has no contact with a reality that is near or far. They are psychic visions in which O'Keeffe is dreaming Indian. In this way, O'Keeffe's dance paintings can be understood as an intensification of the isolationist mentality promoted by preservationists.

In *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo* (fig. 5.1), Sloan created distance between the viewer and dancers, and yet the artist tried to retain a psychological connection. This interplay between near and far is again manifest in *Dancer in the Dust*, in which Sloan's use of perspective further removes the viewer from the dancers' space, while still encouraging the one to meditate on the subjective aspects of the dance. In a similar fashion, John Marin, who arrived in New Mexico the same year as O'Keeffe, endeavored to capture the rhythm, energy and movement of Indian dances in numerous watercolors. In *Dance of the Santo Domingo Indians* of 1929 (fig. 7.4), Marin also adopted a distant perspective that segregates the viewer from the space in which the dance is enacted. This distance was intensified by his inclusion of a painted abstract frame; the viewer can observe, but not participate in, the ritual. The motif of physical segregation is taken to an extreme in O'Keeffe's *Kachina*; the abstracted dancers are completely distanced and isolated from the material world.

Kachina is less about an actual dance than it is about O'Keeffe's subjective response to the dance. Artists connected with the preservationist movement were concerned with both representing the particular and the subjective, and thus tended to root their representations of ceremonial dances in the locus of a dance's performance. The titles of Sloan's paintings indicate that he was presenting specific dances enacted at specific Pueblos, a goal reinforced by his insertion of meaningful details in the figures'

costumes and in the paintings' settings. Hartley argued that ceremonials were provocative due to their rootedness in a particular location, because they were a product of the soil on which they were performed. While O'Keeffe's inclusion of the words "Kachina" and "Rodeo" in the titles of her paintings of ceremonials subtly hinted at each painting's subject matter, the paintings themselves do not refer to a particular dance or Pueblo. Her visions are isolated from time, space, and place. As such, O'Keeffe universalized the spirituality of Indian ceremonials to a greater extent than did her modernist peers who were painting a half decade earlier.

Unlike the preservationists, who tried to balance their purified notion of Indianness with their understanding of the real political and social problems facing Pueblo Indians, O'Keeffe was less concerned about Pueblo economic and social problems. In May of 1929, Tony Lujan asked Dodge Luhan and her guests to attend a gathering of Pueblo elders. As O'Keeffe explained to Stieglitz:

Tony wanted us to go to a meeting of the old men of his Pueblo—they were meeting about some indian [sic] trouble and would all sit about and talk it over—no one wanted to go with him as far as I could make out—everyone was almost unable to move...Finally, Beck decided to go and two others—I lay across the foot of the bed—trying to remember what you had written to me that would interest Beck and Mabel—Tony got up with a grunt—in his light blue sweater, red blanket and boots—and announced that he was tired too—it was the funniest thing you ever saw—I just had to get up and go along—his remark was too much for me—The drive in the night was beautiful—A big closed car—The indian [sic]—and this country at night—its [sic] certainly curious. It was funny too—that he wanted us to go because of course we couldn't understand a word that was said. Well—that was that—he told us about it..."¹¹

As the urgency of Pueblo Indian social and political struggles seemed to dissipate, the intelligentsia's attention was divided. While some artists continued to advocate for American Indian culture, such as John Sloan, most newcomers to the region did not.

¹¹ Georgia O'Keeffe to Alfred Stieglitz, May 6, 1929, Alfred Stieglitz\Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, YCAL MSS 85, box 85, folder 1714.

Perhaps this is evidence of the success of the preservationist movement. By 1929, popular opinion supported the preservation of Indian culture; among the Anglo intelligentsia, Pueblo culture was understood as being safe from its assailants.

O'Keeffe's *Kachina* can be understood as manifesting aesthetic and ideological shifts in representing Indians that were ushered in by preservationists. Consciously or not, she appropriated and then transformed compositional and iconographic tropes that had been established by artists a half-decade earlier. Her paintings were informed by a new paradigm of "Indianness" in art, with all of its positive attributes, its fallacies and its paradoxes. Her view of Indian culture, while celebrating cultural pluralism, nevertheless was a sanitized perspective that met her own personal and artistic needs.

John Collier's "Indian New Deal"

With the support of the body politic, the fight against the assimilation of American Indians during the 1920s culminated with the "Indian Reorganization Act" (IRA), which Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law on June 18, 1934. The IRA was driven by John Collier, who became the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933. Collier's "Indian New Deal" put a stop to land allotment, permitted the organization of tribal governments, and allowed Native tribes to incorporate and to partially consolidate their lands.¹² Most scholars agree that it was a "watershed" development American Indian civil rights; assaults on American Indian ways of life diminished, boarding schools were deemphasized in favor of day schools, tribal quasi-states were allowed to exist,

¹² Tom Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 188. Also see Patricia Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: Norton, 1987), 202.

Indian art was patronized and protected, and tribes garnered some autonomy in managing the natural resources they possessed.¹³

In spite of these positive changes, as historian Patricia Limerick aptly puts it, sorting out the merits of Collier's administration and the IRA can be an "exercise in bewilderment."¹⁴ Collier's scheme for tribal reorganization is arguably the most controversial part of his program. Under this scheme, decision making and selection of leadership was supposedly placed back in the control of American Indians through the creation of "tribal councils." These councils, however, were not based on Native traditions, but on the American democratic principle of majority rule.¹⁵ This paradigm was structurally antithetical to consensual rule, the most common form of decision making among American Indian nations. Furthermore, Collier's model of tribal governance gave the BIA the authority to approve or disapprove decisions made by the tribal councils. In short, a democratic façade was on the paternalistic impositions of the IRA.¹⁶ While Collier's scheme "temporarily rescued Indian communities from federal abuses and helped the Indian people to survive the Depression," in the words of historian E.A. Schwartz, Collier "also damaged Indian communities by imposing his own social and political ideas on them."¹⁷

¹³ Holm, *The Great Confusion in Indian Affairs: Native Americans and Whites in the Progressive Era*, 193. Although the preservationist movement paved the way for Collier's administration, as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Collier was not a preservationist. Collier was against the rapid assimilation of American Indians and for the protection and promotion of Indian culture, but he did not share the preservationists' focus on cultural isolation or segregation. He promoted the gradual integration of Indians in to American society. E.A. Schwartz, "Red Atlantis Revisited: Community and Culture in the Writings of John Collier," *American Indian Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (Fall 1994): 507-31.

¹⁴ Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*, 202.

¹⁵ Rebecca L. Robbins, "Self-Determination and Subordination: The Past, Present, and Future of American Indian Governance," in *Native American Sovereignty*, ed. John R. Wunder (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1999), 295.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 293.

¹⁷ Schwartz, "Red Atlantis Revisited: Community and Culture in the Writings of John Collier," 507.

Dreaming Indian

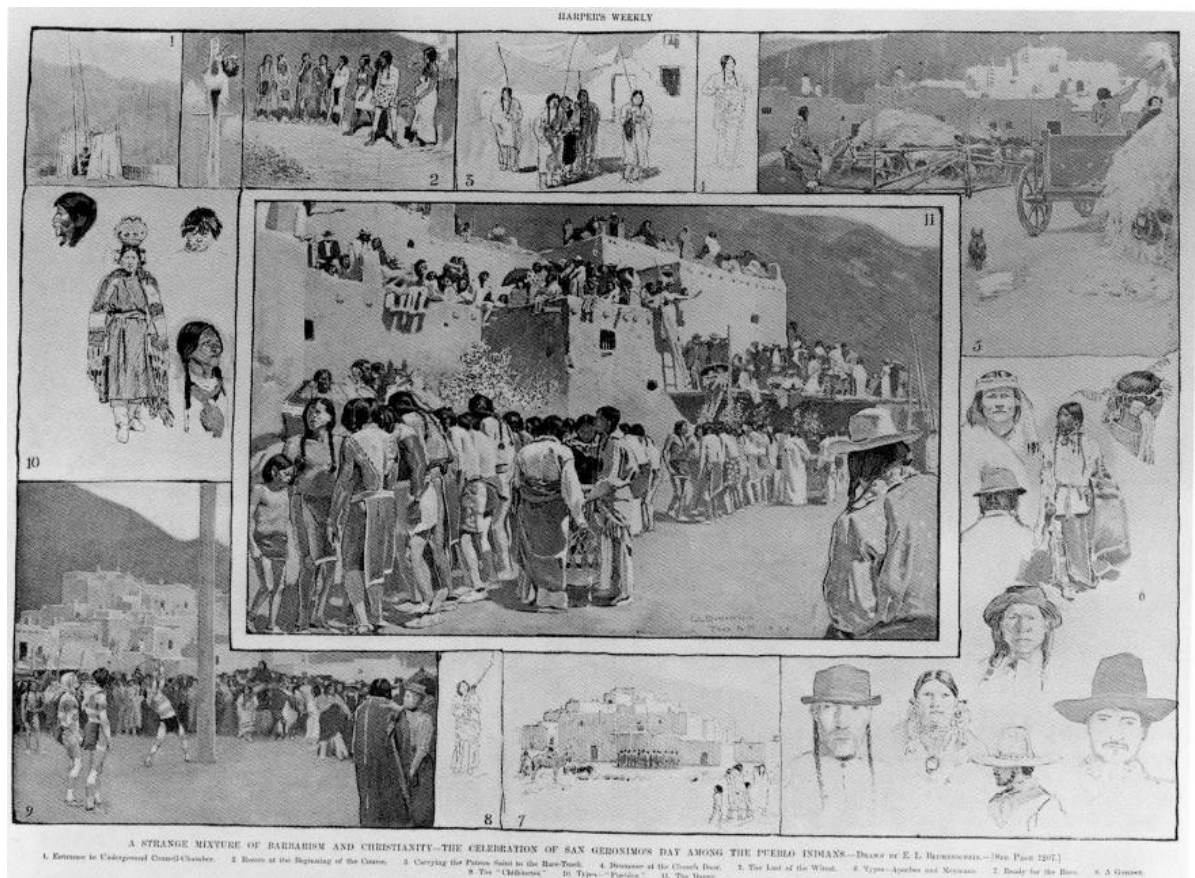
The controversies surrounding Collier's reforms highlight the ideological complexities of the preservationist movement. The "Indian New Deal" encouraged cultural preservation insofar as it was in keeping with what white America deemed to be culturally acceptable. Similarly, it is difficult to sort out the positive changes facilitated by the movement for preservation from its paternalism and ethnocentricity; even the most sensitive representations of Pueblo ceremonials by white artists-activists, which were intended to encourage public appreciation of Pueblo culture, were constructed within the framework of primitivism and guided by a cultural nationalist agenda. As Alan Trachtenberg argues in his essay "Dreaming Indian," in the 1920s "dreaming Indian became a way of dreaming American, dreaming oneself *national*."¹⁸ Preservationists believed that "Spreading the consciousness of Indian art in America affords [a] means by which American artists and patrons of art can contribute to the culture of their own continent, to enrich the product and keep it American," as John Sloan reasoned in 1931.¹⁹ Thus, between the two World Wars, artist-activism for the preservation of Indian culture was part of the tangled path that led from the imagined Indian to an American identity.²⁰

¹⁸ Alan Trachtenberg, "Dreaming Indian," *Raritan* 22, no. 1 (2002): 58.

¹⁹ Sloan quoted in Molly H. Mullin, "The Patronage of Difference: Making Indian Art 'Art, Not Ethnology,'" *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 4 (November 1992): 395. This brochure is located in the School of American Research (SAR), Amelia Elizabeth White Collection (AEWA), box 1.

²⁰ Trachtenberg provocatively inquires, how can we make sense of the tangled path from "Indian (imagined or faux) to American identity"? Trachtenberg, "Dreaming Indian," 58.

Chapter 1

**Figure 1.1**

Ernest L. Blumenschein,

"A Strange Mixture of Barbarism and Christianity—The Celebration of San Geronimo's Day Among the Pueblo Indians," published in *Harper's Weekly* (December 10, 1898).

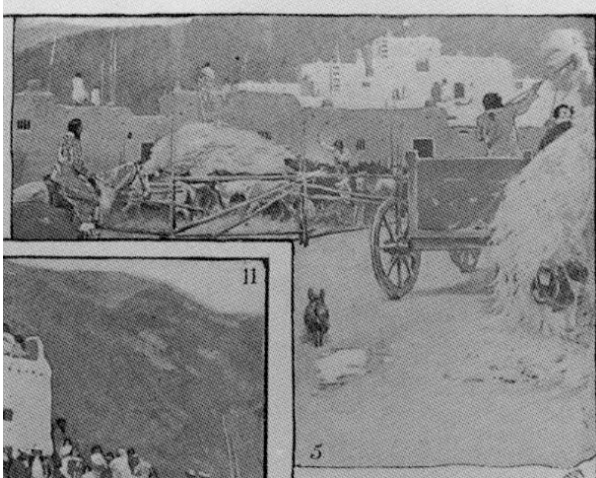


Figure 1.2
Frame five: "Last of the Wheat"

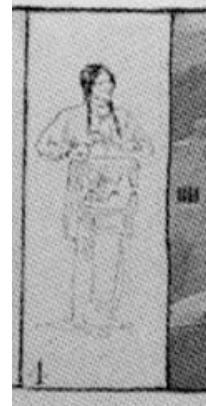


Figure 1.3
Frame four: "Drummer at the Church Door"



Figure 1.4
Frame eight: "A Gunner"



Figure 1.5
Frame three: "Carrying the Patron Saint to the Race Track"

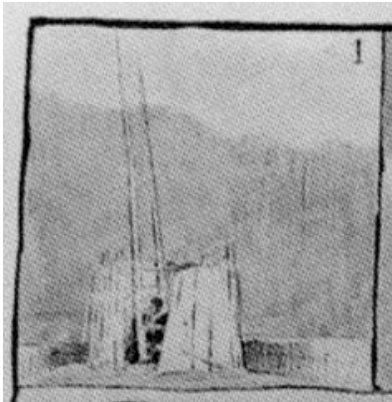


Figure 1.6
Frame one: "Entrance
to an Underground Council Chamber"

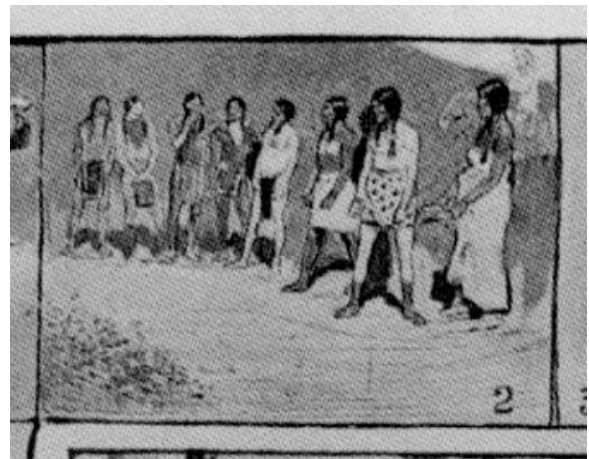


Figure 1.7
Frame two: "Racers at the
Beginning of the Course"

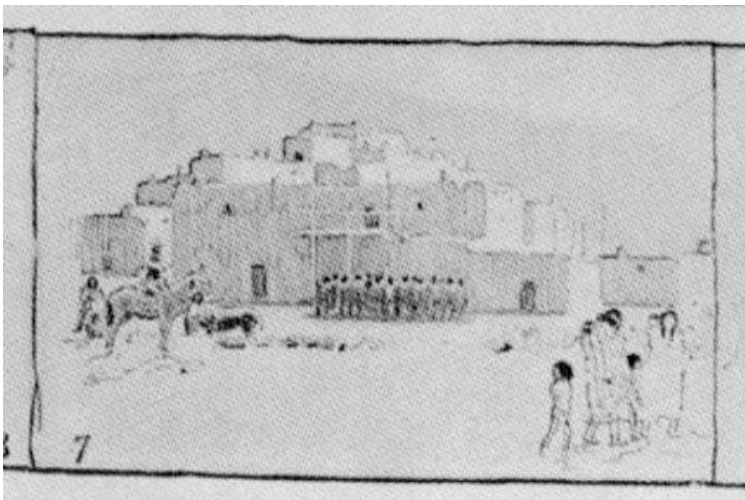


Figure 1.8
Frame seven: "Ready for the Race"

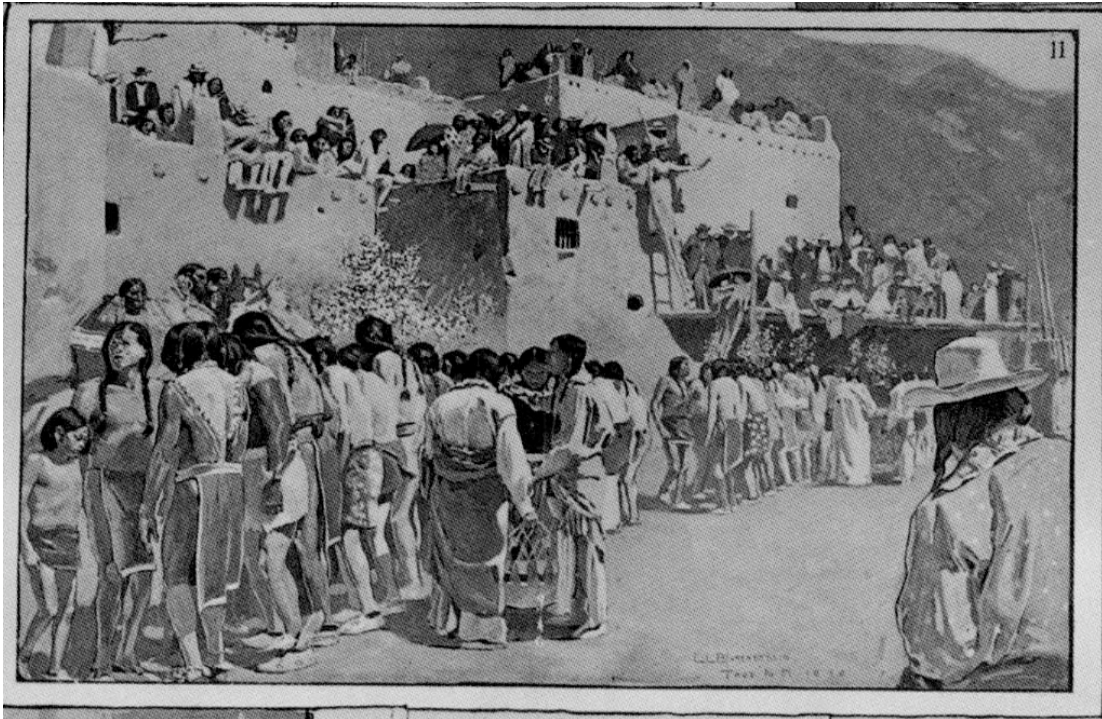


Figure 1.9
Frame 11: “The Dance”



Figure 1.10
Charles Graham, watercolors reproduced in, *From Peristyle to Plaisance: The World's Fair in Water Colors* (1893).

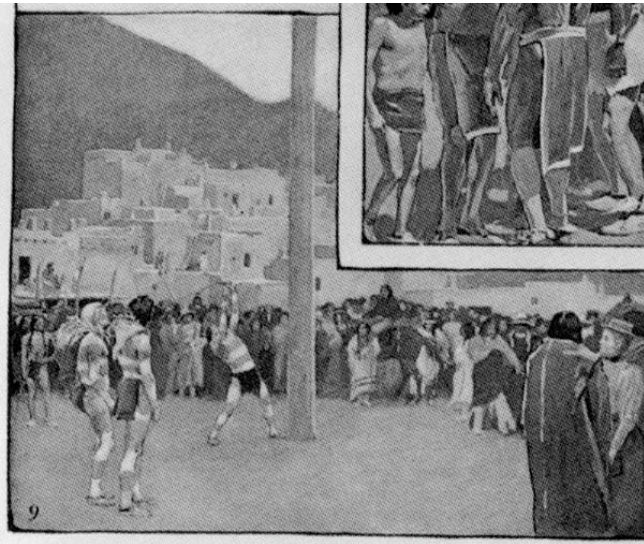


Figure 1.11
Frame nine: "The Chiflonetes"

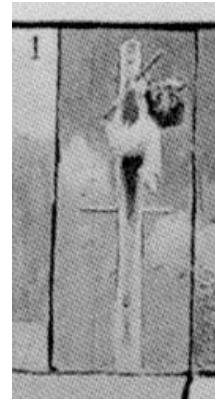


Figure 1.12
Detail of "booty"



Figure 1.13
Frame ten: "Types—Pueblos"



Figure 1.14
Frame six: "Types—Apaches and
Mexicans"



Figure 1.15
Detail, frame six: Apache Type



Figure 1.16
Detail, frame six: Apache Type

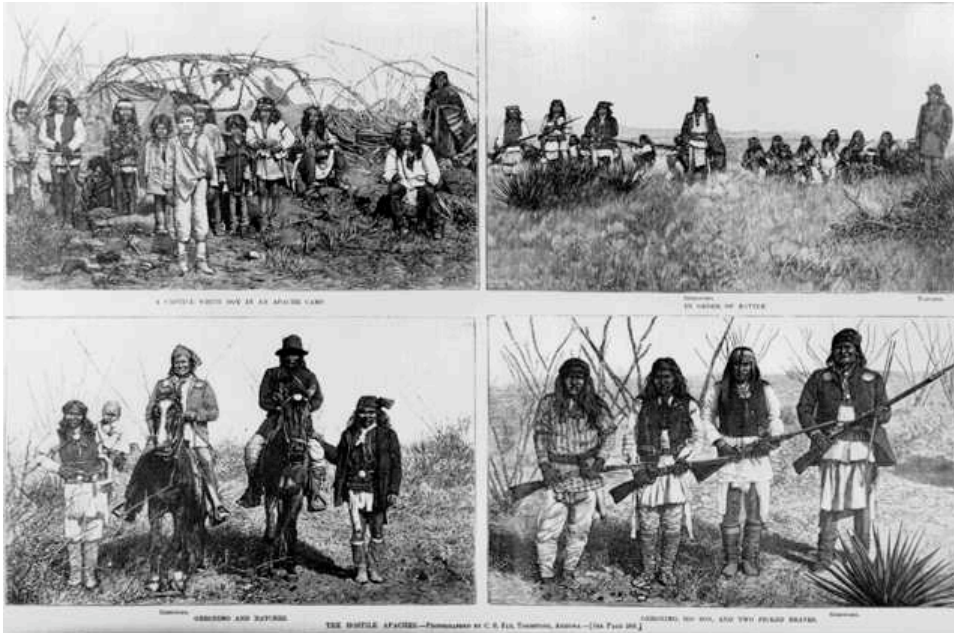


Figure 1.17
Harper's Weekly (April 24, 1886).
Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, X-32957.

Four scenes from Crook's campaigns against the Native American Chiricahua:
Top left: "A Captive White Boy in an Apache Camp"
Top right: "In Order of Battle" (Geronimo, Natchez, and armed warriors.)
Bottom left: Geronimo (left) and Natchez on horseback, flanked by two men,
Bottom right: "Geronimo (far right), His Son, And Two Picked Braves"

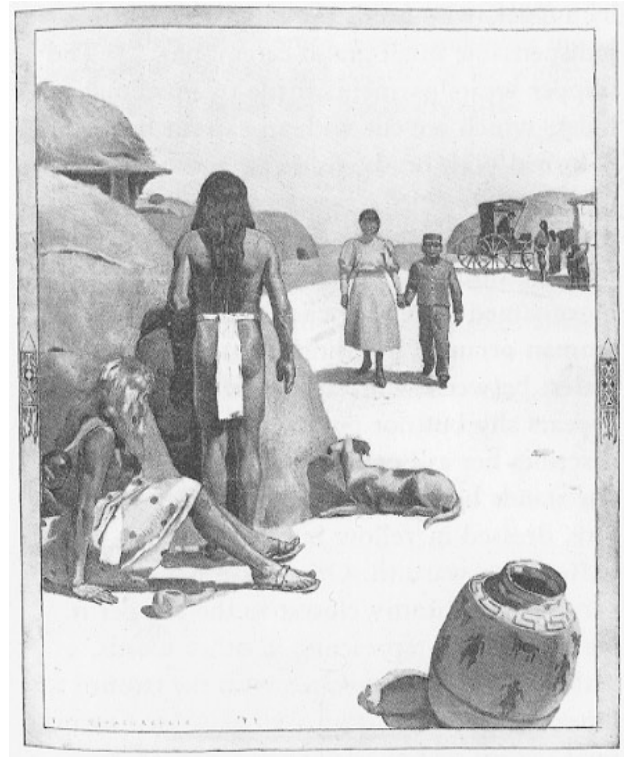


Figure 1.18
Ernest L. Blumenschein,
“Wards of the Nation,”
Harper’s Weekly (June 17, 1899).



Figure 1.19
Arizona Frasher’s Fotos, “Navajo Hogan and family, circa 1910-1930.
Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, X-33165.



Figure 1.20

Santa Clara Pueblo Women, c.1900-1910, postcard.
Detroit Publishing Company



Figure 1.21

Selling pottery at Pueblo of Laguna, c. 1902, postcard. Detroit Publishing Company.

Based on a c. 1902 photograph. Detroit Publishing Company Photograph Collection, Library of Congress, No. 014437.

Chapter 2



Figure 2.1

Mabel Sterne (later Dodge Luhan) and Tony Lujan, 1918.

Mabel Dodge Luhan Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT.



Figure 2.2

“Marsden Hartley,
Santa Fe,” 1918.

Bates College
Museum of Art,
Lewiston, ME.



Figure 2.3

Marsden Hartley, *Indian Fantasy*, “Amerika Series,” 1914, oil on canvas, 46 11/16 x 39 5/16 in. North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, NC.

Chapter 3

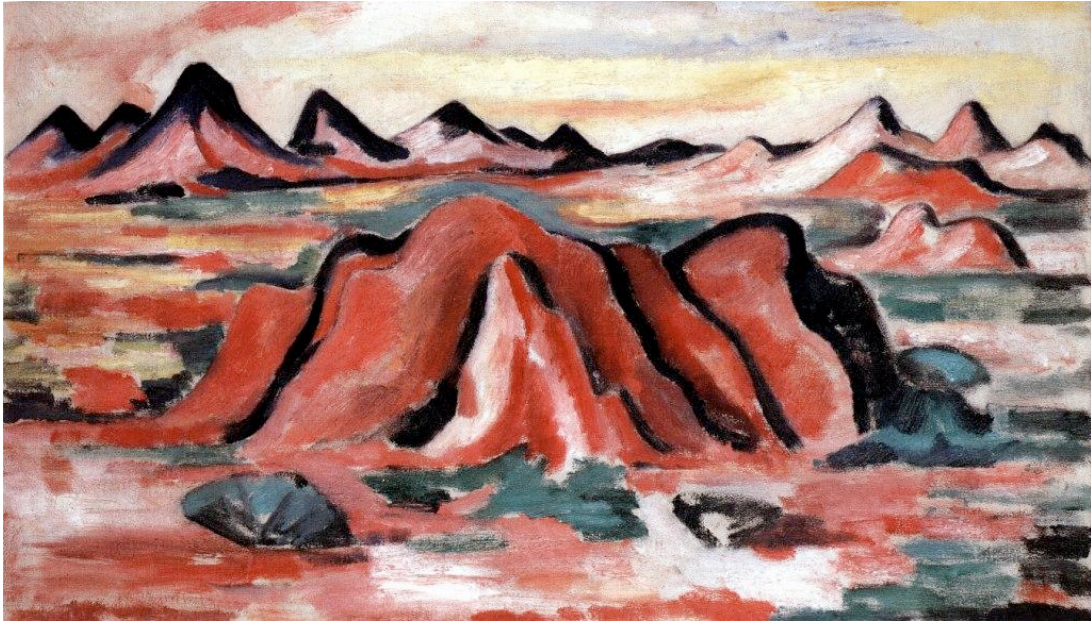


Figure 3.1

Marsden Hartley, *Portland New Mexico* (published title: *New Mexico*), 1919, oil on canvas, 20 ¼ x 30 ½ inches. Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME. Image courtesy of Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME.

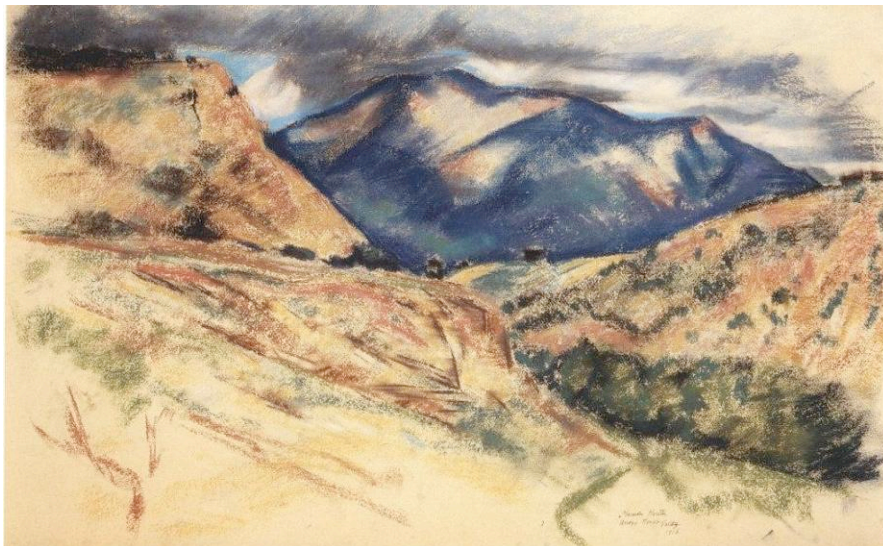


Figure 3.2

Marsden Hartley, *Arroyo Hondo, Valdez*, 1918, pastel on cardboard, 17 ¼ x 27 5/8 inches. Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, Minneapolis, MN.

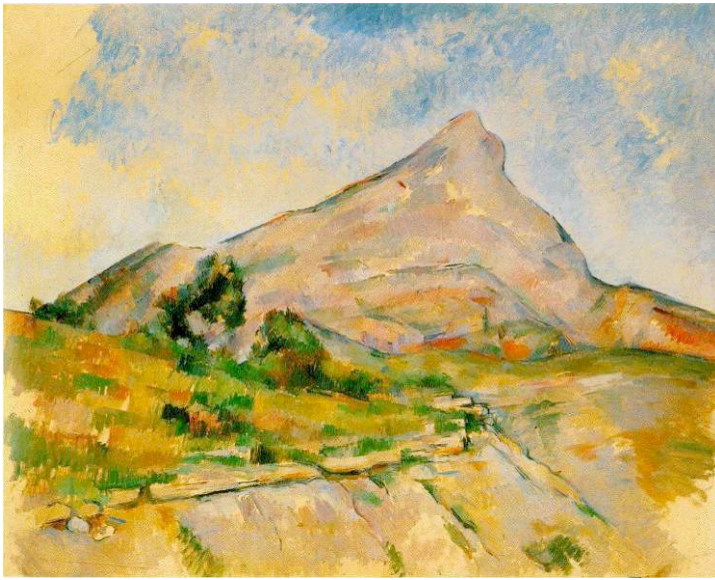


Figure 3.3

Paul Cézanne,
Mont Sainte-Victoire (La Montagne Sainte-Victoire), c. 1897-98,
 oil on canvas, 31 7/8 x 39 1/2 inches. The Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Russia.



Figure 3.4

Marsden Hartley, *Landscape No. 8*, 1919, pastel on paper, 17 5/8 x 27 7/8 inches.
 Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, Minneapolis, MN.

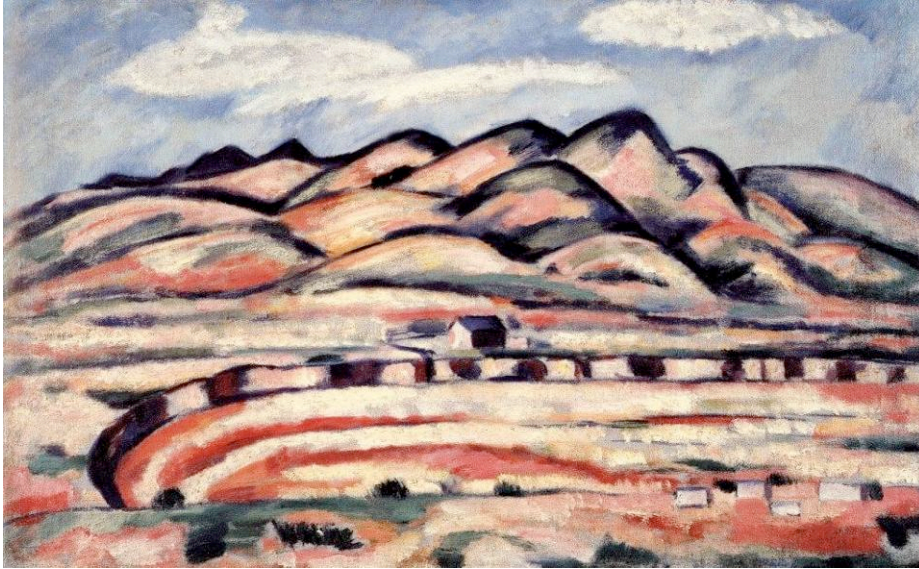


Figure 3.5

Marsden Hartley,

Curtis New Mexico Landscape (published title: *New Mexico Landscape*),
1918, oil on canvas, 20 x 32 inches. Curtis Galleries, Minneapolis, MN.

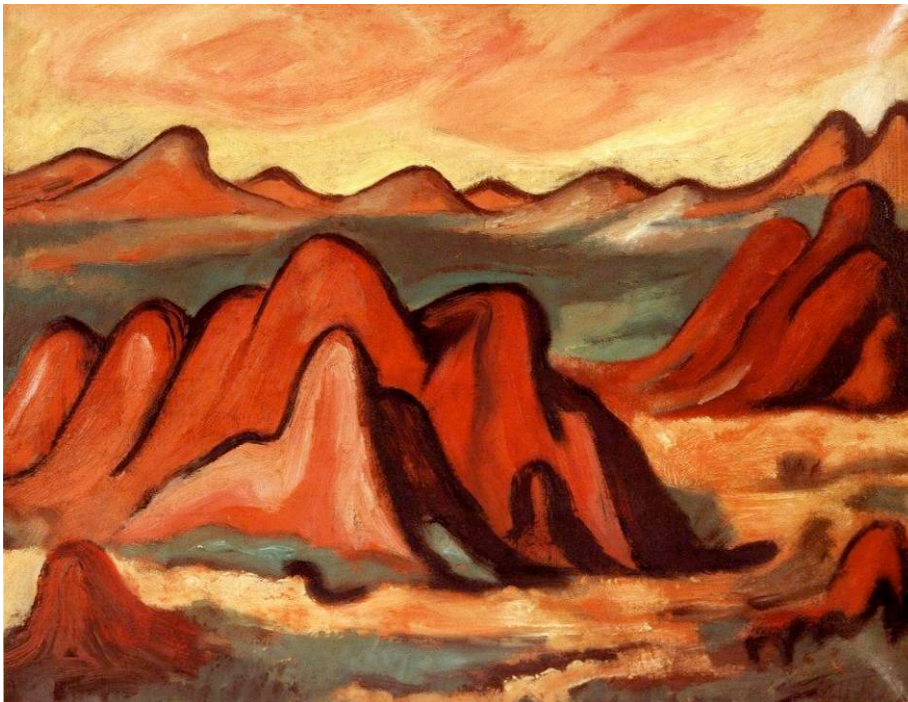


Figure 3.6

Marsden Hartley, *Newsprint New Mexico Landscape* (published title: *New Mexico Landscape*), circa 1919, oil on newsprint tacked to canvas, 28 ¾ x 37 inches. Private Collection.



Figure 3.7

Marsden Hartley, Whitney *New Mexico Landscape* (published title: *Landscape, NM*), c.1919-1920, oil on canvas, 28 x 36 inches. Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

Chapter 4



Figure 4.1

Ernest L. Blumenschein, *The Gift*, 1922, oil on canvas, 40 ¼ x 30 ¼ inches. Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC. Image courtesy of the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

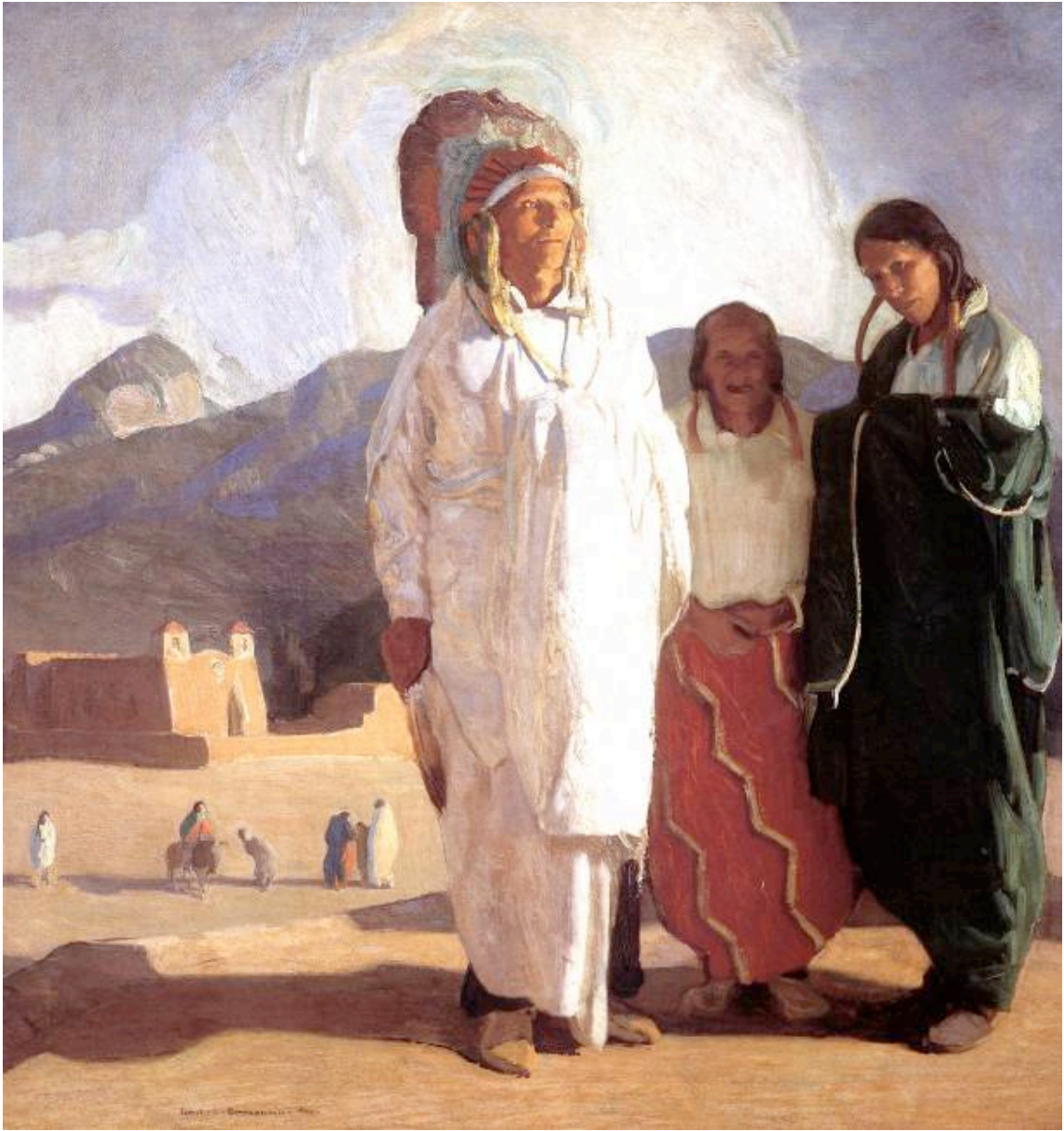


Figure 4.2

Ernest L. Blumenschein, *The Chief Speaks*, 1917, oil on canvas, 47 x 44 ½ inches. Private Collection.

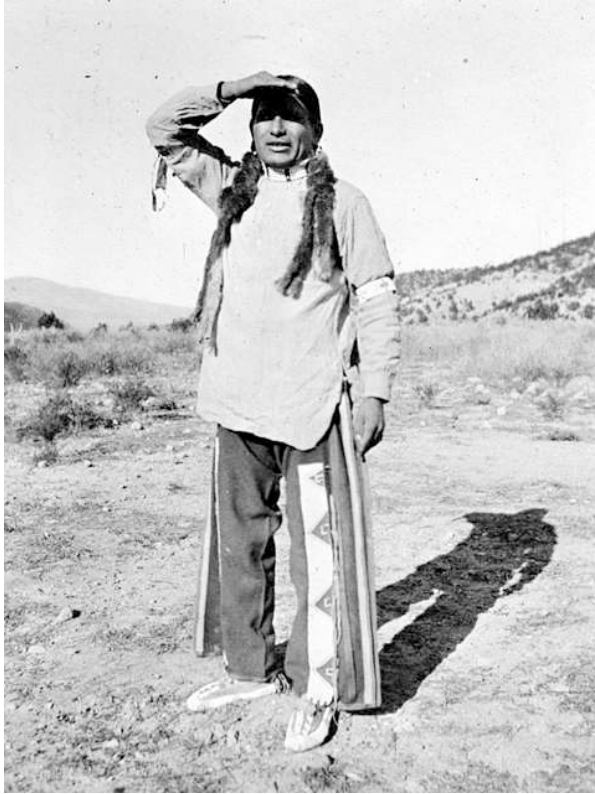


Figure 4.3

Horace S. Poley, "Santa Clara Indian," c. 1910-1920, photograph. Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, P-1524.



Figure 4.4

George Beam, "Taos Indians," circa 1910-1920, photograph. Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, GB-7898.



Figure 4.5
Ernest Blumenschein,
The Peacemaker,
1913,
oil on canvas,
44 x 54 inches.
Anschutz Collection,
Denver, CO.

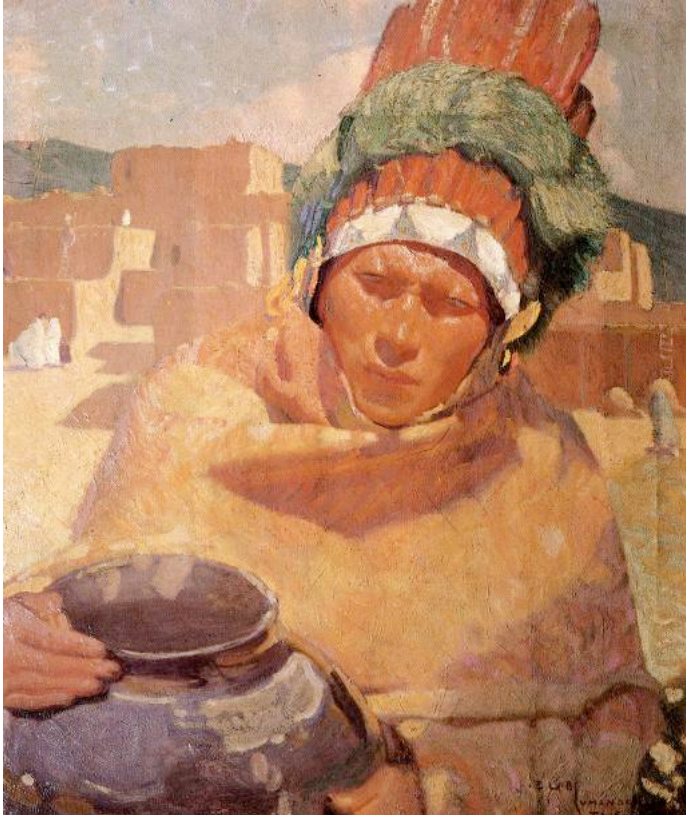


Figure 4.6
Ernest L. Blumenschein,
Taos Indian with Jug, 1913,
oil on canvas, 30 x 25 inches.
Gerald Peters Collection.



Figure 4.7
E. Irving Couse,
The Potter, circa 1926,
oil on canvas, 30 x 36 ¼
inches. Private Collection.

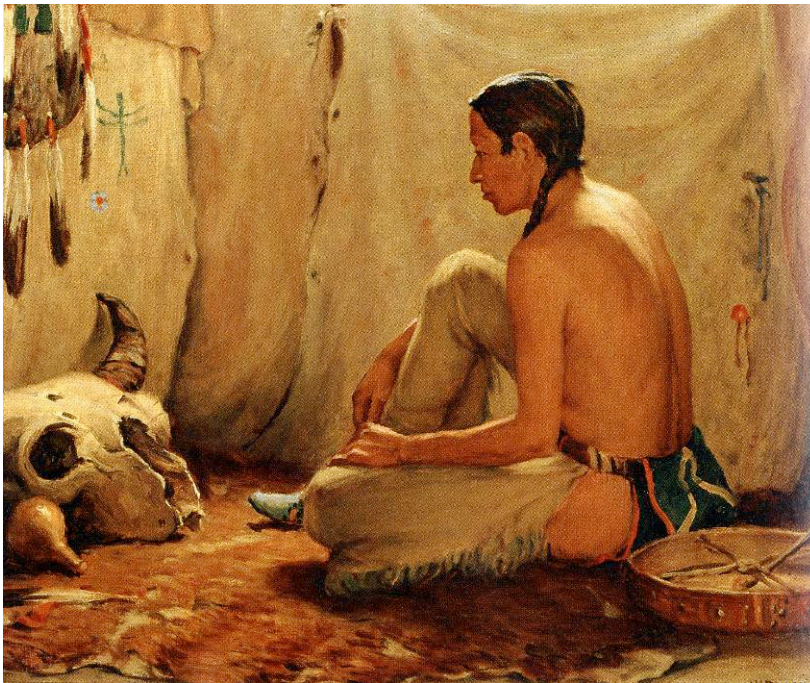


Figure 4.8
Joseph Sharp,
Prayer to the Buffalo,
n.d., oil on canvas, 20x
24 inches. Buffalo Bill
Historical Center,
Cody, WY.



Figure 4.9
E. Irving Couse,
Wal-si-al (Good Medicine), circa 1912, oil
on canvas,
21 x 24 inches.
Atchison, Topeka and
Santa Fe Railway,
Chicago, IL.



Figure 4.10
E. Irving Couse, *Wal-si-al (Good Medicine)*, 1914,
as printed in The Santa Fe Railway's 1914 annual calendar.



Figure 4.11
Edward S. Curtis
“Zuni Girls at River,” 1903, as
published in his 1926 book *The North
American Indian*.



Figure 4.12

Walter Ufer, *Going East*, 1917, oil on canvas, 51 x 51 inches. Eugene B. Adkins Collection, Tulsa, OK.



Figure 4.13

Water Ufer, *Taos Girls*, 1916, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 inches.

Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company, Fort Worth, TX.

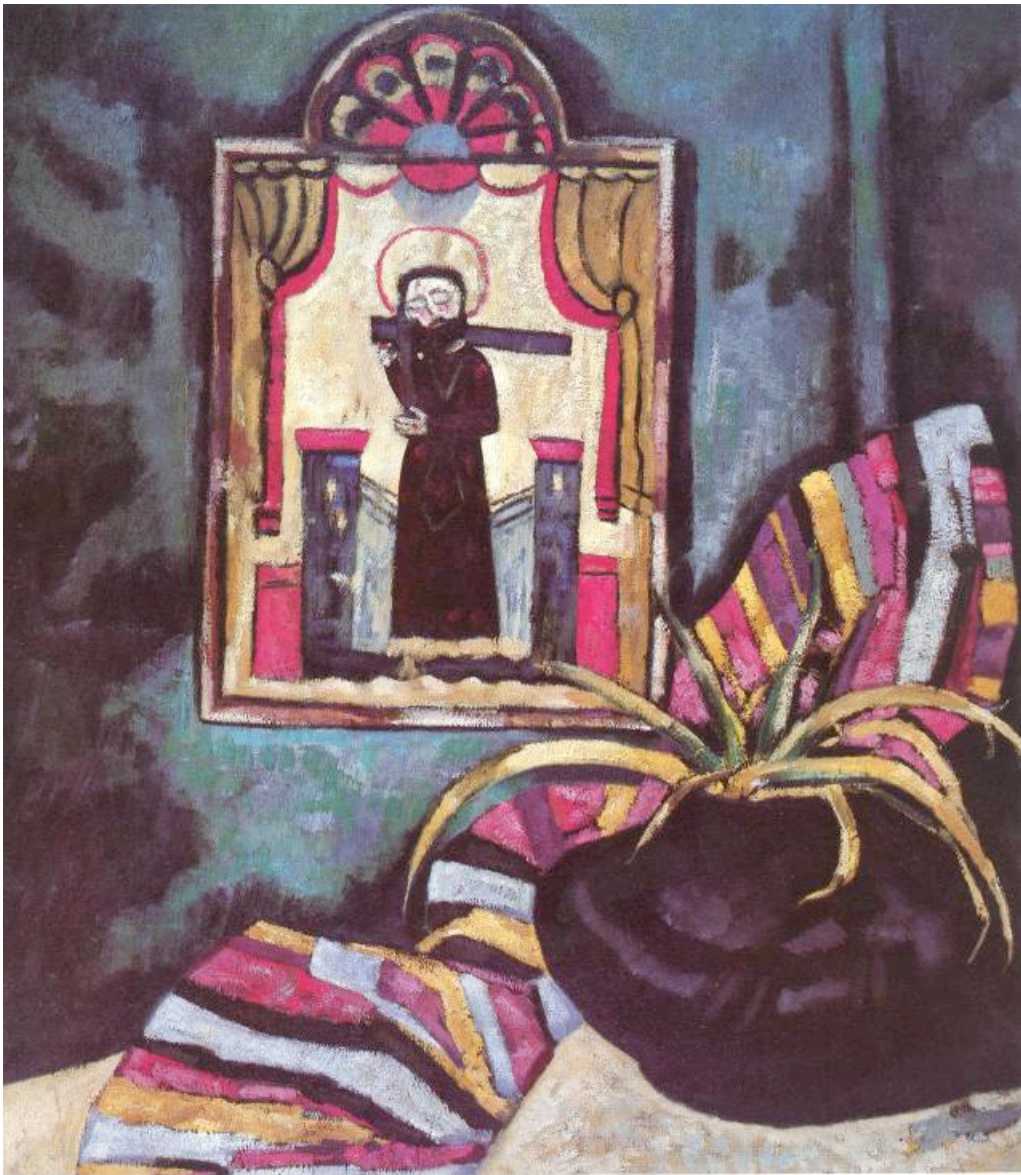


Figure 4.14

Marsden Hartley, *El Santo*, 1919, oil on canvas, 36 x 32 inches. Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, NM.



Figure 4.15

Edward S. Curtis,
“Nampeyo Decorating Pottery,”
circa 1900, photograph. National
Anthropological Archives,
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, DC.



Figure 4.16

Edward S. Curtis,
“By the Cottonwoods,” 1905,
Palladium silver print, 7 7/8 x 5
7/8 inches. Anthropological
Archives, Smithsonian
Institution, Washington, DC.

(Photograph was later published
in Curtis’s 1926 book, *The North
American Indian*)



Figure 4.17

Kohlberg and Hopkins, "Taos," circa 1890-1900, photograph. Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, X-30056.



Figure 4.18

George L. Beam, "Antonio Romero," 1917, photograph. Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, GB-7859.

Figure 4.19
 Horace S. Poley,
 Taos Man and Wife,
 1925, photograph.
 Western History
 Collection, Denver Public
 Library, P-259.

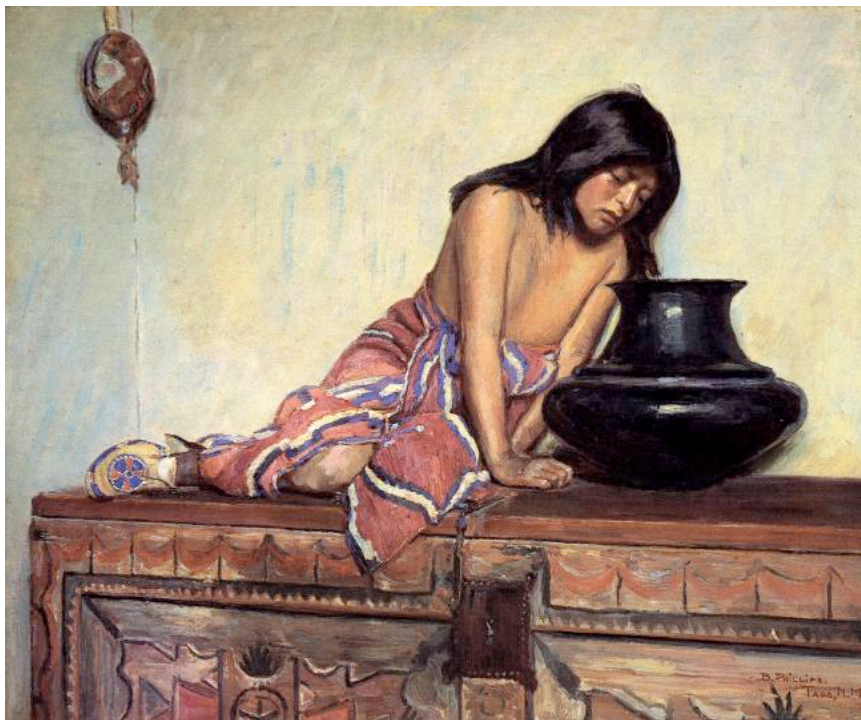


Figure 4.20
 Bert Geer Phillips,
The Secret Olla,
 c. 1917,
 oil on canvas,
 25 x 29 inches.
 Atchison, Topeka &
 Santa Fe Railway,
 Chicago, IL.



Figure 4.21
 E. Irving Couse,
The Pottery Vendor, 1916,
 oil on canvas, 46 x 35 inches.
 Christy Lee Fine Arts



Figure 4.22
 Ernest L. Blumenschein, *Star Road and White Sun (El Hijo)*, circa 1920,
 oil on canvas, 41 ½ x 50 ½ inches. The Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque High School
 Collection, Albuquerque, NM.

The Protest of Artists and Writers Against the Bursum Indian Bill

"To the American Public:

"When legislation affecting the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico has been introduced in Congress by a senator from that state, with the alleged support of the Indians and apparent approval of the Indian office; when it has been briefly questioned by Senator Borah and then accepted by the Senate unanimously, the American public might suppose the legislation known as the Bursum Indian Bill to be an act dealing justly with the Indians and bringing credit to the state and nation responsibly concerned.

"As it happens, the American public would be deceived. The bill, which has passed a misinformed Senate and is now before the house, is grossly unjust to the Indians, violates every official protestation that the government is their protector, and is, moreover, in such imminence of becoming law that only that vaguely accessible power, the public, can prevent a great wrong.

"The Indians, helpless politically, have issued, with one voice from all the pueblos, a dignified but moving manifesto, asking fair play.

"Adding our voice to theirs in this emergency, we, the undersigned, who have had an opportunity to study conditions among the villages and to understand the faithless provisions of the projected law, and who intend doing our best to expose the facts, call upon the American people to protest immediately against the impending Bursum Indian Bill, whether in its present form or with disingenuous amendments. We ask this for the sake of the Pueblos, who, though probably the most industrious and deserving of all our Indian wards, are now threatened with the loss of their lands and of their community existence. We ask it even more for the sake of Americans themselves, as a test of national honor.

(Signed)

F. G. APPLGATE
MARY AUSTIN
JOZEF BAKOS
RUTH LAUGHLIN BARKER
GUSTAVE BAUMANN
E. L. BLUMENSCHN
WITTER BYNNER
GERALD CASSIDY
INA SIZER CASSIDY
JOHN COLLIER
ALICE CORBIN
RANDALL DAVEY
FREMONT ELDER
CHARLES K. FIELD
LEON GASPARD
STEPHEN GRAHAM
ZANE GREY
WM. PENHALLOW HENDERSON
ROBERT HENRI
VICTOR HIGGINS
DANA JOHNSON
C. GRANT LA FARGE
D. H. LAWRENCE
RALPH MEYERS

HARRIET MONROE
WILLARD NASH
B. J. O. NORDFELDT
ELSIE CLEWS PARSONS
SHELDON PARSONS
B. G. PHILLIPS
OLIVE RUSH
CARL SANDBURG
LEW SARETT
ELIZABETH SHEPLEY SERGEANT
J. H. SHARP
WILL SHUSTER
JOHN SLOAN
MABEL STERNE
WALTER UFER
CARLOS VIERRA
HARRIET WELLES
STEWART EDWARD WHITE
WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE
CHARLES ERSKINE SCOTT WOOD
VACHEL LINDSAY
MAXFIELD PARRISH
EDGAR LEE MASTERS
HENRY HERTON KNIBBS

Figure 4.23

"Protest of Artists and Writers Against the Bursum Indian Bill," 1922. Mabel Dodge Luhan Collection, Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT: YCAL MSS 196, box 94. (Blumenschein's name has been highlighted by this author.)



"The Gift," by Ernest L. Blumenschein, painter of the Taos Society of Artists, revealed the presence of the Pueblo Indian in the Southwest.

What Is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?

America's Opportunity to Practise at Home Her Ideals for Little Peoples
By Alida Sims Malkus

IN the early part of November, 1922, there was a great upheaval of feeling among New Mexico Americans, both the white and the negro-coloured. For the first time in two hundred and fifty years, the Pueblo Indians stood before a bill for their lands and communal lives. Not since the great Pueblo uprising against the Spaniards in 1540 had these Indians been asked to accept a new order.

In September, 1922, a bill purporting to settle the century-old dispute between the Indians and the white settlers on their lands was introduced in the Senate by Senator Hawley of New Mexico, and passed by that body.

In December the bill was recalled for further consideration and a bill which did not differ materially from it was introduced in the House by Representative Snyder.

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Figure 4.24

Ernest L. Blumenschein, *The Gift*, as reproduced in Alida Sims Malkus, "What Is to Become of the Pueblo Indian?" *McClure's Magazine* 55:2 (April 1923), p. 85.



Figure 4.25

Digital manipulation of Blumenschein's *The Gift*.

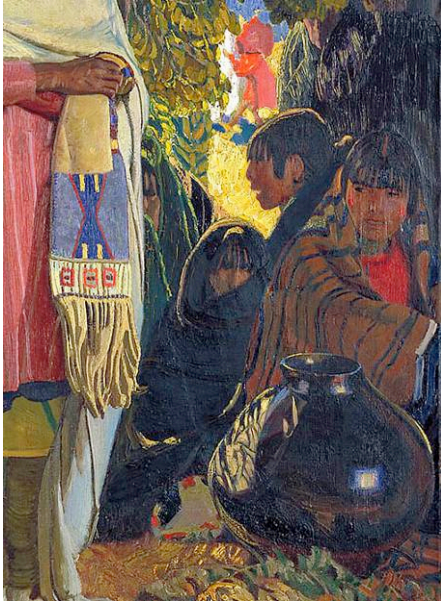


Figure 4.26
Detail, Blumenschein, *The Gift*, 1922.

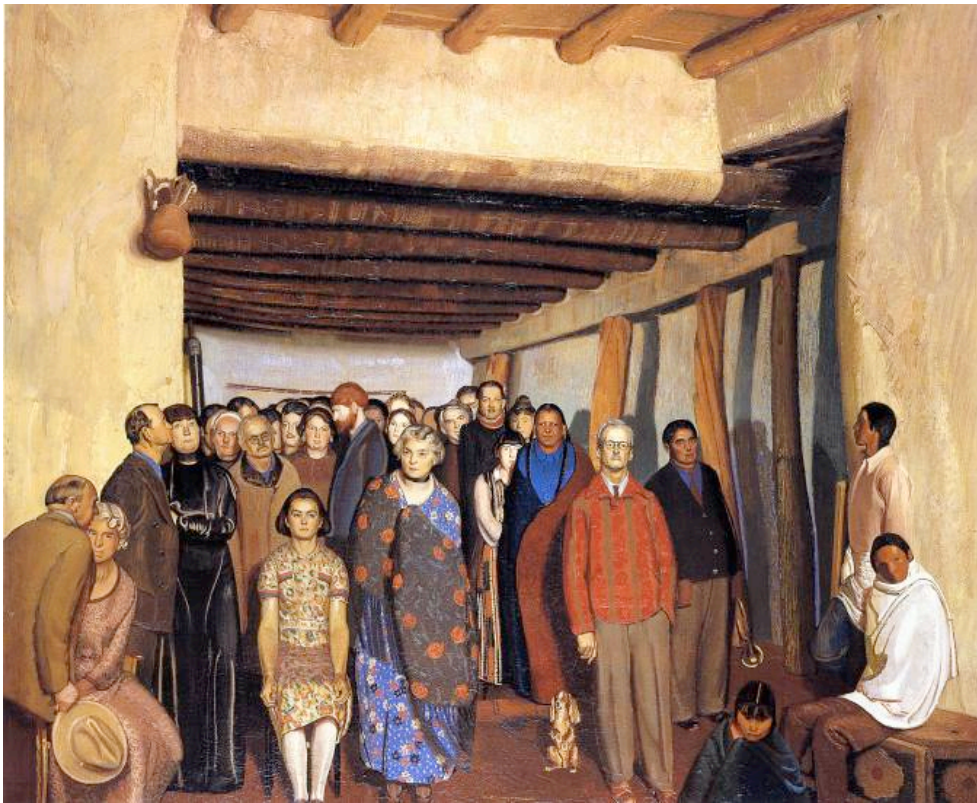


Figure 4.27
Ernest L. Blumenschein, *Ourselves and Our Taos Neighbors*, circa 1931-1938, oil on canvas, 41 x 50 inches. Stark Museum of Art, Orange, TX.



Figure 4.28

R.L. Campbell,
Eagle Dance, Taos Pueblo, 1902, photograph.
Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, X-30065.



Figure 4.29

“Buffalo Bill Cody and Red Cloud,”
circa 1897, photograph.
Denver Public Library, Western History Photographs, NS-196

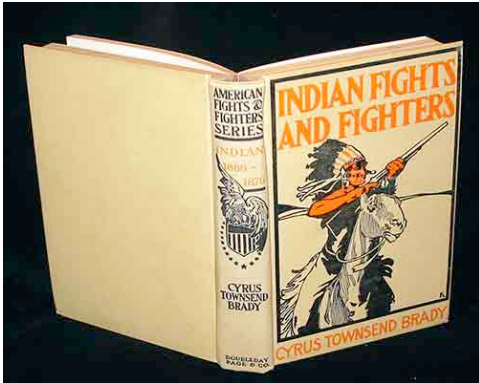


Figure 4.30

Cover illustration for.

William Townsend Brady's *Indian Fight and Fighters*, first published in 1904.



Figure 4.31

Santa Fe Railway postcard (left) and poster (right)



Figure 4.32

John Collier, Francisco de Assisi Church, Ranchos de Taos, December 31, 1942. Getty Images



Figure 4.33

John Sloan, *Rolshoven Painting an Indian*, 1920, oil on canvas, 21 x 25 inches. Anschutz Collection, Denver, CO.



Figure 4.34

Walter Ufer *Fantasies*, n.d. oil on canvas, 42 x 38 inches. Stark Museum of Art, Orange, TX.



Figure 4.35

Joseph Sharp, *Studio Visitors*, n.d., oil on canvas, 25 ¼ x 39 ¾ inches. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK.

Chapter 5

**Figure 5.1**

John Sloan, *Dance at Cochiti Pueblo*, oil on canvas, 1922, 22 x 30 inches. Delaware Museum of Art, Wilmington, DE. Image courtesy of the Delaware Art Museum.



Figure 5.2

Harry H. Buckwalter, "Navajo Family," circa 1880 -1910, photograph. Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, X-33035.

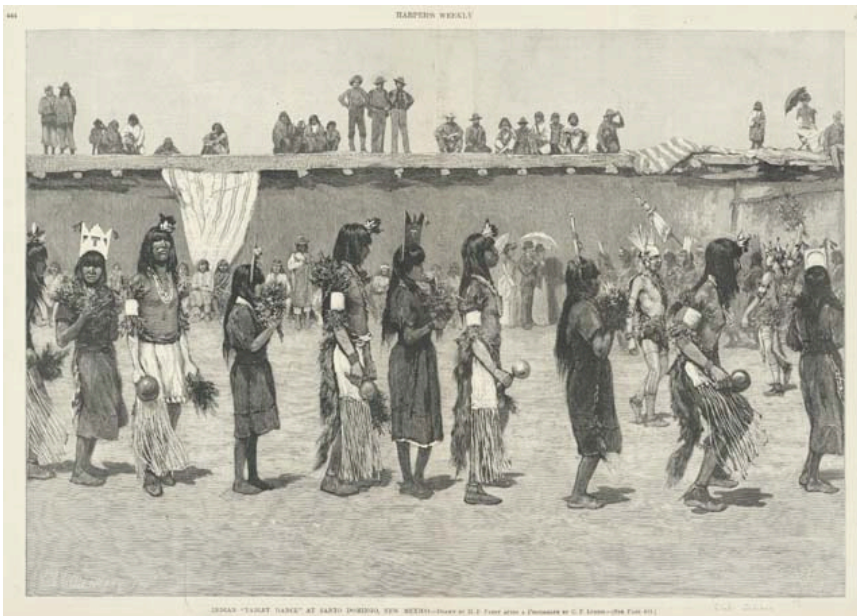


Figure 5.3

Henry François Farny, "Indian 'Tablet Dance' at Santo Domingo," after photograph, *Harpers's Weekly* (June 7, 1890). Western History Collection, Denver Public Library, Z-3284.

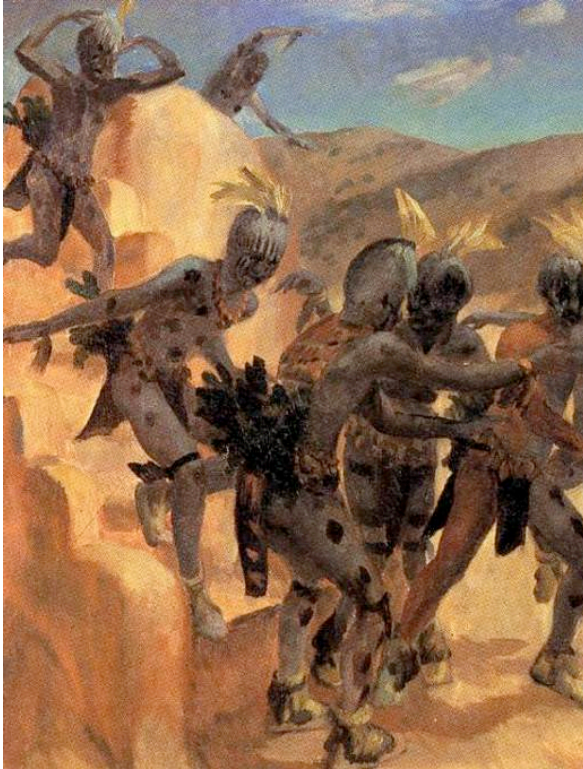


Figure 5.4

John Sloan, *Ancestral Spirits*, 1919, oil on canvas, 24 x 20 inches.

Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, NM.



Figure 5.5

E. Irving Couse, *Moqui Snake Dance*, 1903, lithograph, printed in a Harvey Company book by the same name. Original painting, *Moki Snake Dance*, c. 1903, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches, Anschutz Collection, Denver, CO.



Figure 5.6
 “Snake Dance,” 1904
 World’s Fair, St. Louis.



Figure 5.7
 John Sloan, *Eagle Dance*, c. 1919-1921, oil on canvas, 20 x 24 inches. Private Owner.

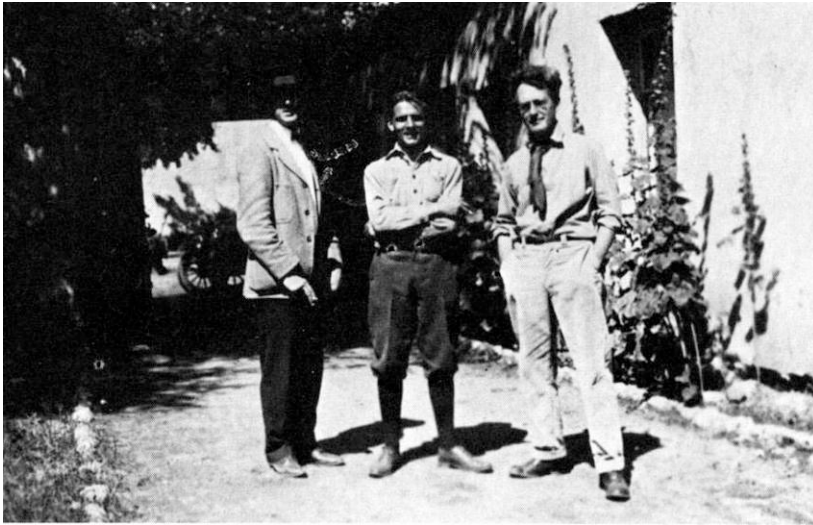


Figure 5.8

Left to Right, Marsden Hartley, Randall Davey, John Sloan, Santa Fe, 1919. John Sloan Collection, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, DE.



Figure 5.9

John Sloan, Isadora Duncan 1919, etching on paper.



Figure 5.10

John Sloan, *Eagles of Tesuque*, 1921, oil on canvas, 26 x 34 inches. Colorado Springs Fine Art Center, Colorado Springs, CO.

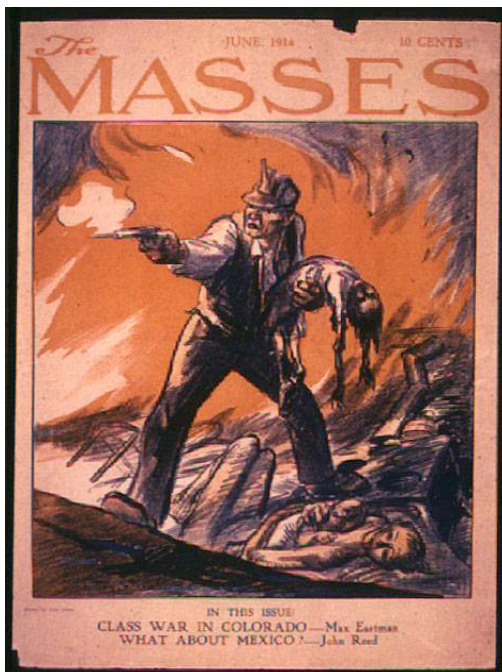


Figure 5.11

John Sloan, "Ludlow, Colorado, 1914," cover for *The Masses*, June 1914.



Figure 5.12

John Sloan, *Gray and Brass*, 1907, oil on canvas, 22 x 27 inches. Private Collection.

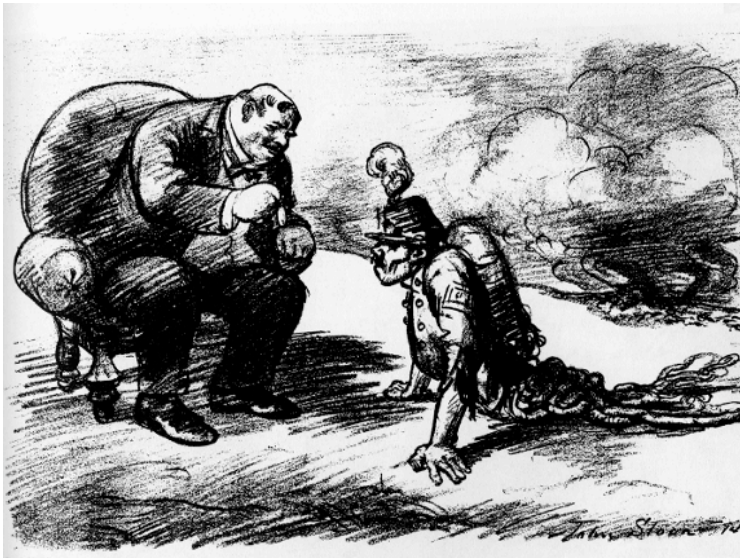


Figure 5.13

John Sloan, "His Master: You've done very well. Now what is left of you can go back to work," *The Masses* 5 (September 1914): pp. 12-13.



Figure 5.14

John Sloan, *Recruiting, Union Square*, 1909, oil on canvas, 26 x 32 inches. The Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, OH.



Figure 5.15

John Sloan, *Three A.M.*, 1909, oil on canvas, 32 x 26 ¼ inches. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA.

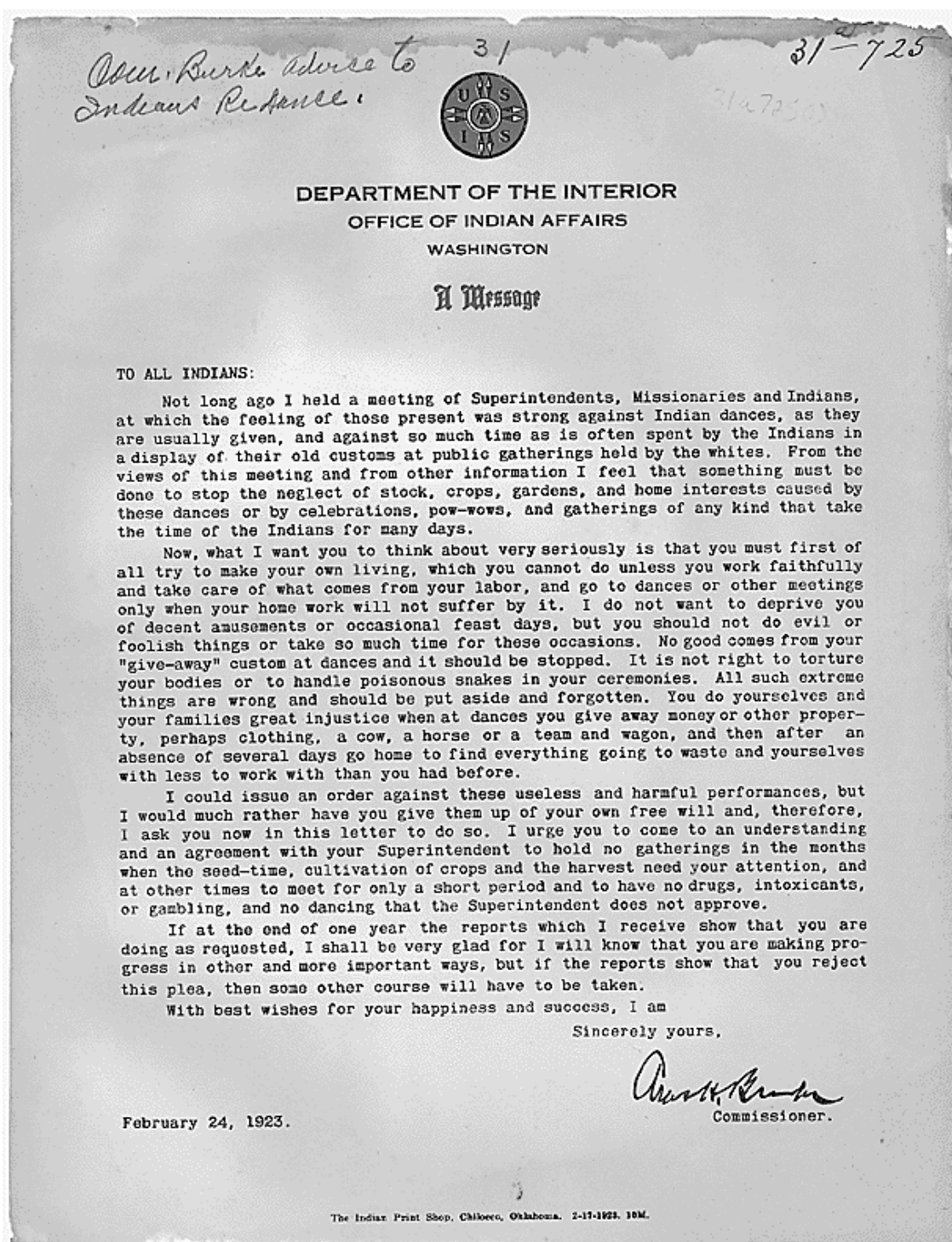


Figure 5.16

Commissioner Burke, "Message to All Indians," February 24, 1923. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.

LETTERS - AND - ART

LITERATURE DRAMA MUSIC FINE-ARTS EDUCATION CULTURE

TAKING THE INDIANISM OUT OF THE INDIAN

DANCING HAS BEEN A RELIGION with the Indian for uncounted centuries; but he is given a year to think of some other way of expressing his religious emotions, or else. . . . The threat is left unexpressed, but the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Mr. Charles H. Burke, has become convinced that the Indian spends valuable time dancing that he might give to industry, and that he gives away too many

that the time "wasted" by the Indian does not compare with the length of the white man's "vacation," and the gifts that seem to Mr. Burke but mere improvidence would not bear mentioning with the lavishness of our Christmas giving. The *Tacoma Ledger* seems to take the order as entirely analogous to an interference with a white man's dances. We read:

"The Commissioner believes that the dances have a bad influence upon the wards of the nation in that they have a tendency to perpetuate the pagan rites of the red men and thus to lead their thoughts away from the benefits of civilization as it is displayed by the white men who surround them.

"Now come the chiefs of the Yakimas with a retort to the Indian Commissioner and this retort would seem to indicate that the noble red man has an observant eye as well as a highly developed sense of justice. If a thing is good for the paleface why is it not good for the Indian, is the question propounded to the federal official.

"You tell us in other ways to look to the white man," say the Yakimas. "You say farm as the white man does and save your money as the white man does, and the like. When you stop the white men from dancing we may begin to think dancing an evil and will also stop dancing, but why should the poor Indian stop his dances when the white man does not stop his?"

"When the Indian dances there is a separation of the sexes. The movements are individual, passing from stately measure to a condition of positive frenzy. The squaws furnish the music with their tom-toms and while the dances are all symbolic they are never suggestive. Can the same thing be said of the white man's dances, especially in this day of

turkey trots and like jazz terpsichorean performances? "It is argued that the dance arouses all of the Indian's warlike instincts. That might have been true in the days before the red man had become fully subjugated by the white man. To-day even ghost dances mean no more to the Indian than does folklore to the children of the most highly civilized races. The modern dances in vogue throughout America are infinitely more dangerous to the morals of their participants than could be the tribal dances of the Indian.

"When one considers the defiance of law displayed by so many white men—when one notes the activities of the bootlegger and the moonshiner, one is to be pardoned if he should believe that it is not well for the Indian that he should look too closely to the white man as an example to be followed."

The corn dance and the snake dance of the Hopi Indians are the ones especially singled out as evil. "It is not right to torture your bodies," says Mr. Burke in his form letter, "or to handle poisonous snakes in your ceremonies. All such extreme things are wrong." A letter address to the *New York Tribune* by Edith M. Dabb, director of Y. W. C. A. work among Indian



Courtesy of the New York "Times."

OUR ABORIGINAL BALLET.

John Sloan here preserves for posterity the Eagles Dance Ceremonial, now threatened by the Indian Commissioner. Painting in the collection of Frank C. Osborn.

things from the promptings of his ancestral religious nature that he ought to keep for his own welfare. Mr. Burke is a South Dakota man, and knows the Indian from personal contact. But the *Boston Transcript* complains that Mr. Burke "looks at them from the point of view of a race totally hostile to what may be called their Indianism," and is actuated by the effort, once charged against a superintendent of the Carlisle Indian School, that it is "the Government's duty to 'kill the Indian (in the Indian) and put a white man in his place.'" The order of the Commissioner, tho rather vaguely expressed, seems to strike at everything but the Indian's material interests. At least so it is understood by the newspapers that have commented on the matter, nearly all in favor of the Indian and against the Commissioner. The American Indian Defense Society has registered a protest against the Commissioner's stand, saying that the Indians, under this compulsion, "would be compelled to abandon their traditions and religious ceremonies which are as old as the race itself." The *Rochester Herald* points out

Figure 5.17

John Sloan, *Eagle Dance*, reproduced in "Taking the Indianism Out of the Indian," *Literary Digest* (April 28, 1923).



Figure 5.18

John Sloan, *Dancers in the Dust*, 1924, oil on canvas, 22 x 27 inches. Fenn Galleries.



Figure 5.19

John Sloan, *Snake Dance*, 1921, etching on paper.



Figure 5.20

John Sloan, *Koshare in the Dust*, 1930, tempera with oil-varnish glazes on panel, 20 1/8 x 26 inches. Gerald Peters Gallery.



Figure 5.21

John Sloan, *Grotesques of Santo Domingo*, 1923/1926, oil on canvas, 30 x 36 inches. Kennedy Galleries. Image courtesy of the Delaware Art Museum.

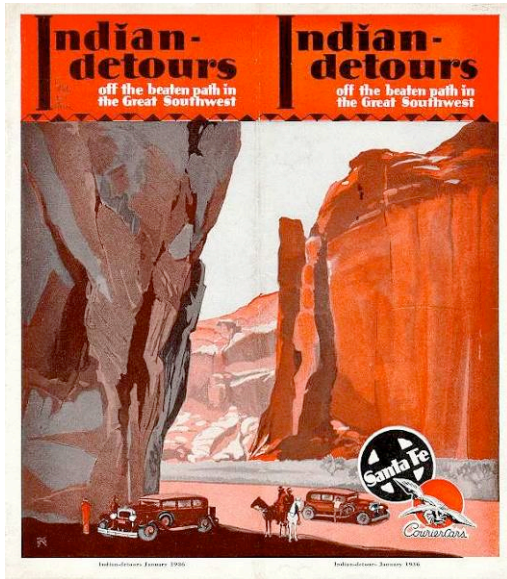


Figure 5.22

Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway Company, "Indian-detours: Off the Beaten Path in the Great Southwest" (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1936).



Figure 5.23

John Sloan, *Indian Detour*, 1927, etching on paper 6 x 7 inch plate. Kraushaar Galleries, New York, NY.



Figure 5.24
John Sloan, *Knees and Aborigines*,
1927, etching on paper, 6 x 7 inch
plate.



Figure 5.25
“Harvey Car” circa 1930s
In the Southwest, the Harvey car was emblazoned with a “Thunderbird” logo. The first fleet
of seven passenger Packards were painted “Tesuque” brown.

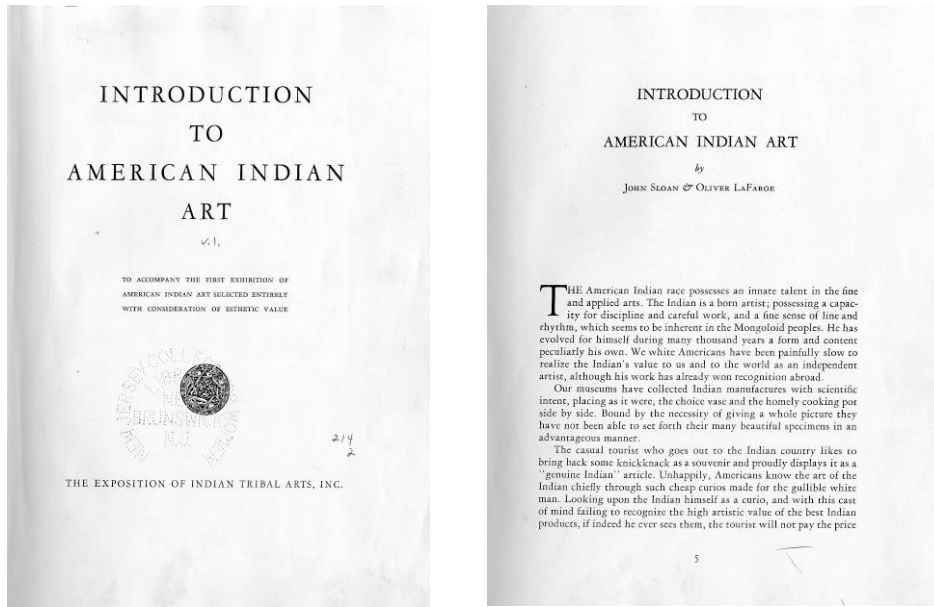


Figure 5.26

Title page, John Sloan and Oliver La Farge, *Introduction to American Indian Art: Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts*, (New York: The Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts, Inc., 1931).



Figure 5.27

John Sloan, *Black Pot*, 1937, etching on paper, 6 x 4 inch plate. Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts, San Francisco, CA.

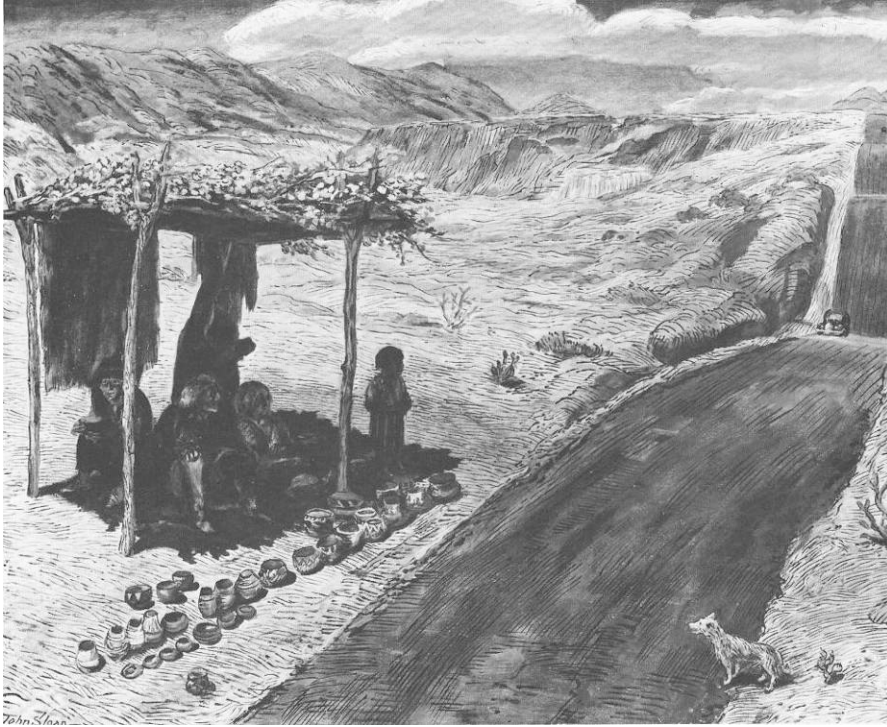


Figure 5.28

John Sloan, *Better Mouse Traps? (Indian Art by the Highway)*, 1937, tempera with oil-varnish glazes on panel, 24 ¼ x 30 ¼ inches. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK.



Figure 5.29

John Sloan, *Better Mouse Traps?*, 1937, etching on paper, 4 x 6 inches plate.

Conclusion



Figure 6.1

Ernest L. Blumenschein, *Dance at Taos*, 1923, oil on canvas, 24 x 27 inches. Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, NM.

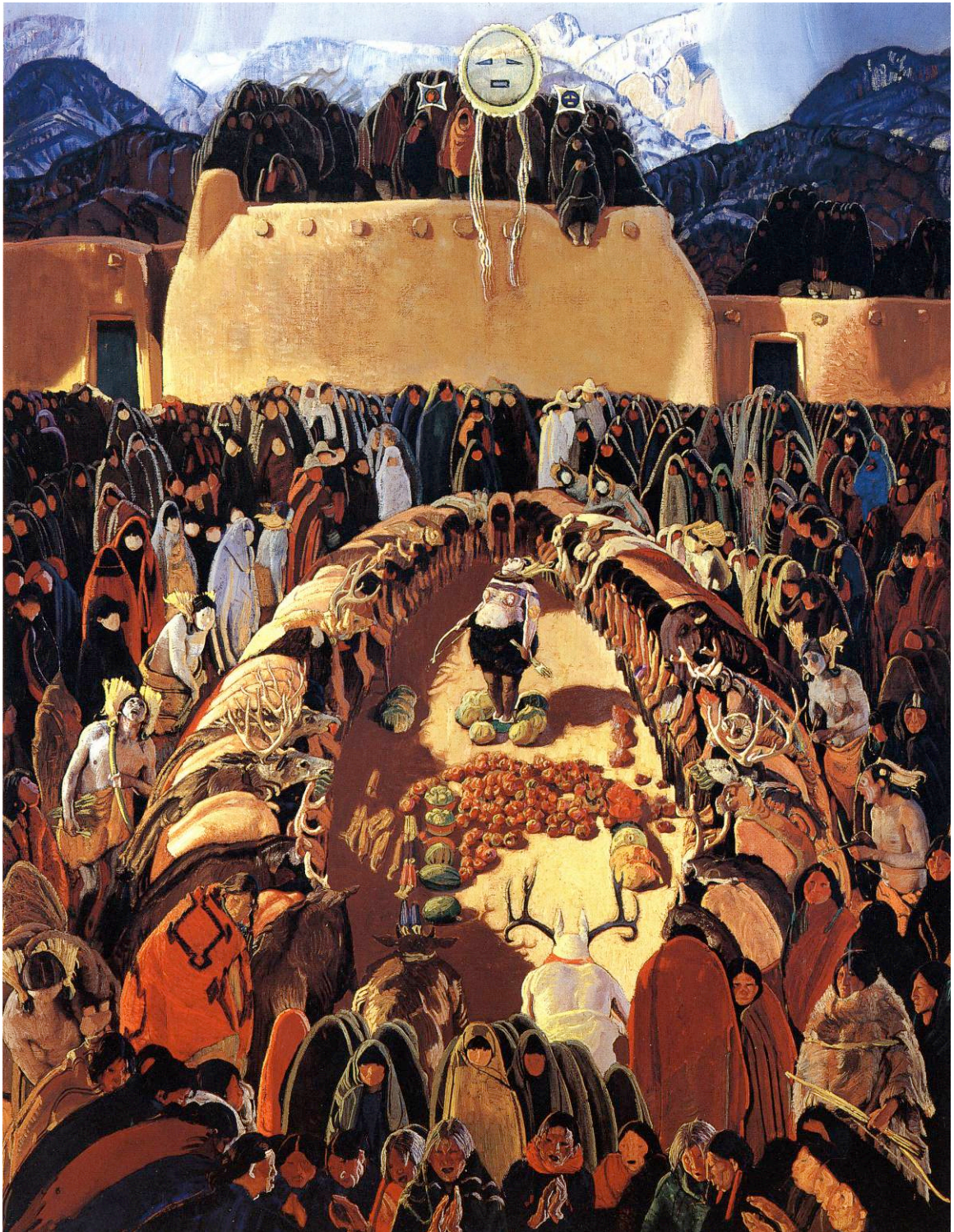


Figure 6.2

Ernest L. Blumenschein, *Moon, Morning Star and Evening Star*, 1922, oil on canvas, 50 x 40 inches. Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK.

Epilogue



Figure 7.1

Georgia O'Keeffe, *Grey Blue & Black—Pink Circle [Kachina]*, 1929, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches. Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX.



Figure 7.2

Georgia O'Keeffe, *At the Rodeo*, 1929, oil on canvas, 40 x 30 inches. Fukuoka Cultural Foundation, Fukuoka, Japan.

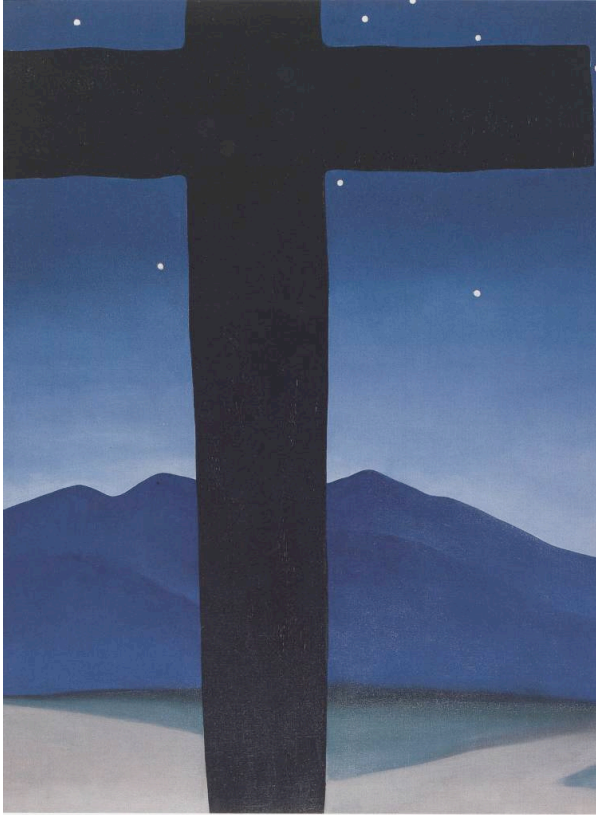


Figure 7.3

Georgia O'Keeffe, *Cross with Stars and Blue*, 1929, oil on canvas, 40 x 30 inches. Private Collection.



Figure 7.3

John Marin, *Dance of the Santo Domingo Indians*, 1929, watercolor and charcoal on paper, 22x 30 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY.

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