

# Algonquians in Context: The End of the Spirituality of the Natural World

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“When we have a sermon, sometimes ten or twelve of them, more or less, will attend, each having a long tobacco pipe, made by himself, in his mouth, and will stand awhile and look, and afterwards ask me what I was doing. . . . I tell them that I admonish the Christians, that they must not steal, nor commit lewdness, nor get drunk, nor commit murder, and that they too ought not to do these things . . . . They say I do well to teach the Christians; but immediately add, *Diatennon jawij Assyreoni, hagiowisk*, that is, ‘Why do so many Christians do these things?’”

— Dominie Johannes Megapölenis  
Rensselaerswyck, 1644

“. . .the chronic practice of describing man as a tool-using animal conceals some of the very facts that must be exposed and reevaluated. Why, for example, if tools were so important to human development, did it take man at least half a million years . . . to shape anything but the crudest stone tools? Why is it that the lowest existing peoples . . . have elaborate ceremonials, a complicated kinship organization, and a finely differentiated language, capable of expressing every aspect of their experience?”

— Lewis Mumford, 1966

“An ecosystem is a discrete community of plants and animals, together with the nonliving environment, occupying a certain space and time, having a flow-through of energy and raw materials in its operation, and composed of subsystems. For convenience of analysis, an ecosystem can be separated into its physical and biological components, although one should bear in mind that in nature the two are completely intermeshed in complex interactions. And from the standpoint of cultural ecology, there is a third component: the metaphysical or spiritual.”

— Calvin Martin, 1974

The intricate details of the first European steps in the Hudson Valley were momentous, fearsome, audacious, and even heroically comic in some of the telling. Yet, large though their ambitions were, little did these few dozen men from a small country far away know that the handsome harbor they entered and the valley behind it lay on the edge of a continent vaster and more resourceful than anything heretofore known to civilized man. The *St. Pieter*, *Fortuyn*, *Tijger*, *Nachtegael*, and other immediate successors to Henry Hudson's *Halve Maen*<sup>1</sup> crossed the Upper Bay to Manhattan Island as if entering the very maw of Tchi Manito, the Indian godhead or Great Spirit, a force of nature so ubiquitous its spirituality was everywhere in this vast new land.

The fierce competition between Adriaen Block, the first of the Dutch traders and also the region's principal cartographer, and Thijs Mossel, a trader for a rival group of Amsterdam merchants, operatic in its Old World blusterings, was made all the more humorous by the fact that they were arguing over a store thousands of miles wide filled with millions of animals worth harvesting. There was more, vastly more than enough for all, despite the arguing, and still some disgruntled players rose up and stole a ship for themselves, sailing off to the West Indies after leaving enough trinkets for their countrymen to trade. One ship burned accidentally at its Manhattan mooring, another was built virtually on the spot from the immense bounty of natural resources at hand; traders came and were killed in misunderstandings with the Indians, and still the trade continued unaffected by these little dramas.<sup>2</sup> Yet for all their intensity in pursuit of the pelts given up by the Indians for mere trinkets, the details of this New World, like the trees of the forest, hid an even larger reality that diminished these men and the grand ego of a world they came from. Huddled with their flagons of warm beer in the crude enclaves they created, first at Manhattan and later at Fort Orange, the Europeans who were so intensely focused on the profits of the pelt trade did not see the integrated, natural reality that loomed all around them. They walked through their roughly hewn doorways into a landscape of trees the Indians had scorched and burned to make maizefields, or that they themselves had hacked at and felled with crude and inefficient axes.<sup>3</sup> The entire fractured landscape was served up as a fitting metaphor for the broken world they were creating. They were not "discovering" a New World: they were dismembering an old one.

There was little sense of sanctity for the land to the Europeans of Galileo's time. They arrived with the trappings of a history that was centuries in the making, their appearance in America coinciding with the dissolution of the medieval world view brought about by the Reformation. Now was a time for man to willingly embrace the mysteries of an unknown world with the new tools of



Detail from Olin Dows' mural in the Rhinebeck Post Office.

science, time, and capitalism, each of them aspects of practical utility in the new Protestant ethos. The Dutch in particular were masters of the *utile*, having forged a nation literally from the sea. The original sense of *geopiet* that characterized man's relationship to the land under the old order was now gone, its origins abstracted into practicality, and in this foreign context the land was reduced to mere troublesome scenery. Adriaen van der Donck (1620-1655), of all the Dutch the most intellectual and learned, could remark at how the great falls at Cohoes might have inspired a Roman or a Greek in inspirational verse, but he could never evoke that poetry himself. Perhaps they had had it in an earlier time, but for now the Europeans lacked an essential innocence of spirit by which the Indians had assimilated with the natural world. They were in a completely alien landscape; an amazing one, remarkable at times, yet ultimately nothing more than a background for the larger drama of their own ego, a background to be altered, mangled, or ignored at will. All became abstracted in the headstrong pursuit of the guilder, and the ultimate abstraction was of the people themselves, into *wilden menschen*, "wild men," not like the "Turks, Mamelukes, and Barbarians" of the Old World, whom the Dutch called "Heathen," but further removed from the human reality; a part of the landscape was all. More sympathetic than most, van der Donck justified the name *wilden* for those "who are not born of Christian parents" because of their strange religion, marriage practices, and laws "so singular as to deserve the name of wild regulations."<sup>14</sup> Given such a worldview and context, it is not surprising that the process of dehumanization that unfolded constituted not simply a sad and inevitable commentary on the meaning (and meanness) of European colonialism, but on the morality of the men who drove the process as well. Why did so many "Christians" do these things? The question never occurred to them.

The lifestyle patterns of both Munsee and Mahican Indians living in the Hudson Valley at the time of contact (1609) reflected characteristics far more advanced than any earlier cultures. The needs of these two Algonquian cultures were as basic as their predecessors', but by now they had manifested spiritual as well as material aspects. Exactly when a teleological dimension came to exist, or how, is unknown, but the process must have developed slowly over centuries.<sup>5</sup> As with the Paleo-Indian, awe, wonder, and fear toward aspects of the natural world had to have been common to later cultures, and were gradually translated, however crudely at first, into spiritual dimensions and religious forms, although the evidence of such manifestations in the Hudson Valley is poor prior to Late Woodland time.<sup>6</sup>

By the time of Columbus's discovery of America, the religious outlooks of the Hudson Valley Algonquians were relatively sophisticated. Mahicans believed that the soul went westward upon leaving the body, where black otter and bearskins were worn and the souls of their forebears were there to joyously greet them. They felt death was evil, "the offspring of the Devil," and could not understand the odd Western notion that God had control over death as well as life.<sup>7</sup> Advanced societal organization evolved with population growth and the needs of people living closer together and sharing common expectations and anxieties. A richer array of natural resources reduced the time needed for subsistence activities.<sup>8</sup> The people's store of common events, stories, heroic actions, and tragedies grew naturally and enriched the fabric of their lives and heritage. Eventually collective knowledge was memorized and periodic conferences evolved for those charged as keepers of the memory to recite the stories and expose the heritage to the youth, who were expected to remember it and pass it along in their day. The strung beads kept by



FELICIA RITTERS

Detail from Olin Dows' mural in the Rhinebeck Post Office.

the headman were used as mnemonic devices to recall and relate this oral tradition;<sup>9</sup> it is ironic as well as significant that these beads, very early in the Dutch period, became abstracted into *sewan*, a new form of currency.<sup>10</sup>

The transformation of the practical and immediate into the spiritual and imaginative lay ultimately in the native's relationship to the ecosystem and its creatures and forces,<sup>11</sup> for the spiritual world of the Algonquian cultures was identical with the world around them. Such was not the case for these new arrivals. The European stepped into a physical world that was mute, incapable of dialogue or communication, but the same world to the native American was vibrant with an active spirituality in which the cognizance of humans was shared by bears, turtles, wolves, even the rocks around them. Trees had thought, language, magic powers. The sun was an "elder brother," the earth, moon, wind, and other aspects of nature cherished also as relatives.<sup>12</sup> The beaver was the mythical earth brother who lived in a separate nation and could not be taken by hunters without its own amiable consent. This was religion, a pantheism perhaps, but unknown to the Western world.<sup>13</sup> Natives knew the difference between man and animal:

" . . . they were not fuzzy in their systematic thought. However, they were capable of more than systematizing. They also conceived of a world in which plants, animals, pictures, words, actions, as well as humans, storms, and sunlight had the potential of power and life. All entities in the Indian world view were potentially equivalent. A word could stand for the thing it spoke of; a human in animal skin could be the animal."<sup>14</sup>

Native perceptions of reality included an array of supernatural beings of varying benefit or danger whose existence was essential to native survival in the ecosystem. Nanahboozho, the son of the West Wind (Mudjekeewis), was the Mahican legendary hero (Gluscap to the Micmacs) and "first" Algonquian in the mythic sense. A Tchi Manito was common to all Algonquian cultures, as was an evil spirit (Mahtantu to the Lenape, Windigo to other Algonquians) that put the thorns on bushes and made flies, mosquitoes, reptiles, and useless plants.<sup>15</sup> Munsees called their beneficent godhead Kishelēmukong ("Our Creator"), placed him in the twelfth layer of the heavenly realm, and had an array of manētuwāk ("spirits") or lesser gods that served as spirit helpers. Manētuwāk "grandfathers" and "grandmothers" guarded the four directions and the seasons. The Mësingw or Living Solid Face (always depicted with a face painted half black and half red, signifying the opposite nature of things) took care of animals, provided hunters with food, and rode the forest on the back of a deer; this deity was extremely

important in Minisink rituals and burials.<sup>16</sup> Some deities held both good and bad functions, a sophisticated concept that reflected a dual nature of reality. Thunder beings (Pèthakhuweyok), which looked like huge birds with animal heads, were responsible for watering the crops but were also unpredictable and dangerous. The manëtutètak (or wèmahtèkënis), “little people” like the Mahican pukwujinnee, stood a foot tall, helped those lost in the woods (especially children), and had the power to grant great stamina or longevity to any who saw them, but could also injure those who did wrong. Snow Boy endangered children with frostbite but also gave hunters the means to track animals and cross water in winter. Doll Beings (Ohtas) were important manitous for some Munsee families (not all), who had to dance with or “feed” their Doll once a year or face dire consequences. Munsees also had Wehixamukes, a trickster hero known to the English as Crazy Jack or “the Delaware Sampson,” who was substantially the same legendary figure as the Mahican Moskim or Tschimammus: foolishness was an aspect of his personality.<sup>17</sup>

As this abbreviated assemblage of minor Munsee deities suggests, the average Indian in the Hudson Valley before contact faced a complex array of mental choices, many of them potentially life-threatening, in reconciling their lives with the natural environment. A psychologist might ponder theories on the origin of modern consciousness in the right- and left-brain activities these choices might engender, yet in reality the complexity was simplified by communal familiarity with the mythologies, basic beliefs in dreams and visions, and by the existence of personal guardians who assisted the natives. “The vision,” C. A. Weslager noted, “was the point of contact, a line of communication between the supernatural world and the sphere of everyday life.”<sup>18</sup> For some, these visions were singular, epiphanic, and life-defining; for others, they were matters of a particular moment, yet all were intuitive perceptions of sympathetic relationships that existed between the physical and the metaphysical worlds.

Communal integrations of these mythological aspects of Native American culture with the ecosystem occurred in various rituals that coincided with the planting of corn, summer growth, the fall harvest, winter hunts, and the like. The rituals might be expressed as a dance ceremony lasting from one to a dozen days. Among Munsees, special occasions called for a buffalo dance, bread dance, woman dance, and others; a war dance was called kinte-kaying (according to Rutenber). The August corn celebration seized the men, as one Dutchman observed, in “a universal torment,” in which they “run like men possessed, regarding neither hedges nor ditches, and like mad dogs resting no where except from sheer inability.” The most important ritual was occasioned by the fall harvest, in

Munsee culture a Gamwing, or “Big House” ceremony, in which the universe and the earth were depicted over a twelve-day duration. (Twelve was a special number for the Munsee and corresponded with the twelve carapaces of the turtle’s shell. It was the age at which a boy became a man or, if it was his fate, had the vision that defined his future course; the shaman or *kitzinacka*, for example, was determined at this age.) The Big House ceremony began with ceremonial attendants (*ash-kah-suk*), who swept the floor twelve times with turkey wings, to clear the path to heaven. They also painted the carved faces (*Mesingw*), passed the twelve prayer sticks, kept fires going and otherwise assisted the ceremony participants. The ceremonial hut contained twelve faces carved on posts, not to be worshipped as the idols of pagans or revered as in Christian rituals, but as witnesses who carried the prayers to the Creator. Men and women participated, all painted for the occasion, but they were segregated and remained silent; a tortoise shell rattle was used by those reciting a vision. The twelfth night, called *ah-tay-hoom-ween*, was reserved for women to recite their visions.<sup>19</sup>

One common myth that helps to explain the sympathetic attitude natives had toward animals has all these creatures identical in ancient time, looking and speaking like humans. Another states that with the advent of hunting man diverted from nature and began killing too many animals, who retaliated by sending the flies and mosquitoes to create diseases—but the plants took pity on the humans and provided them with remedies.<sup>20</sup> (This myth is particularly relevant in our context because the mass harvesting of beaver pelts signaled the demise of the Indian spiritual world.) Now, whenever a man faced an animal, the process of subduing the animal’s spirit was more important than the taking of the carcass: an apology was made, or the animal might even be berated for allowing the man to position himself for the kill.<sup>21</sup> The actions of groups and individuals on the hunt, the aspect of the native alone in the woods, the various harvest festivals that brought bands together in seasonal sharing and thanksgivings, and the most rudimentary aspects of daily life were all ways of acting in consort with the fellow (mythic as well as physical) creatures of the wild.<sup>22</sup>

This familiarity made the natives acute observers of the environment. Their traps, for example, were highly effective because they were based on detailed observation of animal habits. The average Algonquian woman was expert on the astronomical world<sup>23</sup> and integrated that world into the community mythos, where (in Mahican myth) a treasure-box of storms and sunshine was presided over by an old squaw, *Minnewawa*, who made the day and night and cut up the old moons to make the stars. She gave light to the fireflies to help the little men of the woods (*pukwujinnee*) raise Morning Star into the sky. She also climbed the

Ontiora to hang the moons, and when hunting was over, she let her people know by tipping the crescent moon up “so that a bow could be hung upon it.”<sup>24</sup>

Native perspicacity extended to all aspects of the natural world in ways that are frequently marvels of detail. A common Algonquian tale about the origin of tobacco pits Nanahboozho against a giant who guarded tobacco in one of the mountain cloves.<sup>25</sup> Nanahboozho steals the tobacco and in the ensuing struggle pushes the giant off the mountain, transforms him into a grasshopper, and derisively names him Pukaneh, after the “dirty” saliva of both the chewed tobacco and a grasshopper’s defensive mechanism of expectorating a sticky brown substance that smells like nicotine.<sup>26</sup> An attention to detail also allows the native temperament to view the world’s broader perspectives in intimate terms, as in the Indian summer legend. Nanahboozho gives us those hazy days of late autumn when he returns each year to see how things are going, slumps across a few mountains, and has a big smoke.<sup>27</sup>

This integration of native life and spirituality with the ecosystem eventually proved so profound that survival as a people depended upon it. The decimation of the local beaver population within a few decades after Henry Hudson’s arrival graphically demonstrated the symbiotic relationship between man, his spiritual world, and the environment. When the mythical earth brother gave “amiable consent” to its own virtual extinction, the virtual extinction of the original people was the logical and unforgivable corollary. This was a process of abstraction similar to that which the Europeans themselves had undergone in the Reformation, yet in the New World, because the choice was not conscious, the results were calamitous. Indians literally became apostates in the practice of the pelt trade, displacing their traditional respect for an animal brother in a blind embrace of shiny replacements. With the loss of the old worldview went the old taboos. The interior wilden landscape, like the bogs and ponds of the real world left uncompleted in their evolutionary process by the loss of an essential component (the beaver), was now transformed into the ghastly wreck of a collapsed mythology. A bizarre new reality rendered the old native ways and cures ineffective,<sup>28</sup> affirming the destruction of the natural world in the destruction of the people themselves. Huge mortalities from sickness and epidemic added a symbolic and palpable horror to the situation. When the mythical earth brother became as commonplace a commodity as a skinned, scraped, smelly pelt, an essential moral relationship between man and beast was destroyed. The native universe, like Galileo’s at the same time, was irrevocably changed: a terrible beauty was born.<sup>29</sup>



## Endnotes

- 1 The first demonstrable effort to explore the Hudson Valley for merchantable commodities began in May of 1611 when the *St. Pieter* under skipper Cornelis Rijser was chartered by Arnout Vogels (1580?-1620), an Amsterdam merchant with an interest in furs, and two merchant brothers, Leonard and Francoys Pelgrom. Simon Hart, *The Prehistory of the New Netherland Company: Amsterdam Notarial Records of the First Dutch Voyages to the Hudson*, Amsterdam, Holland (1959), tr. Sibrandina Geertruid Hart-Runeman, 20. On January 17, 1612, also apparently under Vogel's authority, Adriaen Block purchased in Amsterdam a 55-last spiegelship called the *Fortuyn* (with a "long beak head, high rising aft, and flat stern"), sailed to "Virginia," and returned "a better voyage even than last year." (Virginia and "Terneuff" were Dutch euphemisms for New Netherland.) Francoys Pelgrom (1574-1616) to his wife in Brno (Prague), July 20, 1612, quoted in Hart, 21, 73-74; Van Cleaf Bachman, *Peltries or Plantations: The Economic Policies of the Dutch West India Company in New Netherland, 1623-1639*, Baltimore (1969), 6, n. 15. Bachman, 6, n. 13, says that Vogels was "likely" part of the group in 1612. Johannes de Laet (1582-1649), a respected historian and director of the West India Company, asserted that a ship sponsored by Amsterdam merchants did visit in 1610. This might have been the 100-last *Hoope*, which sailed to the West Indies and traded along the coast under Vogels' authority, but Vogels also traded in Canada with French partners and no direct evidence places the *Hoope* in Hudson Valley waters. Laet, "From the 'New World,'" in J. Franklin Jameson, ed., *Narratives of New Netherland, New York* (1909), 28; this was repeated in Holland's 1660 "Deduction" on its disputes with the English, DCHSNY, II, 133; see Bachman, 4; Hart, 15-17. The *Tijger*, under Block's command, and the *Nachtengal* under Mossel sailed here in the fall of 1613; Hart, 25, Bachman, 7; Oliver A. Rink, *Holland on the Hudson: An Economic and Social History of Dutch New York*, Ithaca (1986), 40-41.
- 2 The *Tijger* burned one night at its mooring at Manhattan, so Block had a small jacht, the *Onrust*, built from the plentiful forest resources. Meanwhile, crew members from the *Tijger*, disgruntled that Block was trying to resolve his bitter differences with Mossel, took the *Nachtgael* in a bloodless coup. Pieter Franssen (or Fransz) came over with the *Vos* ("Fox") in early 1614 but was killed in an unknown trading incident; Jan de Wit succeeded him as skipper and simply continued the trade. Hart, 29-30, 97-98.
- 3 The axes used by the early Dutch weighed more than four pounds each, had brittle iron heads that frequently cracked in the cold, and were fitted with a thin steel blade in need of frequent sharpening. A smaller, lighter felling ax was not introduced until the 18th century. See Charles F. Carroll, "The Forest Society of New England," in Brooke Hindle, ed., *America's Wooden Age: Aspects of its Early Technology*, Tarrytown (1975), 18-19.
- 4 Adriaen van der Donck, *A Description of the New Netherlands*, ed. Thomas F. O'Donnell, Syracuse (1968; originally published in 1655), 20. On the distinction between pagan, heathen, and savage, see Christopher Vecsey, "American Indian Environmental Religions," in Christopher Vecsey and Robert W. Venables, eds., *American Indian Environments: Ecological Issues in Native American History*, Syracuse (1980), 37. Although Robert Juet, an Englishman, had used the word, the term "Indian" was not common in the Dutch Hudson Valley. The French called the original native inhabitants sauvages, peaux-rouges ("redskins"), or, when polite, indigènes ("natives"). The Dutch called the natives wilden menschen ("wild men"), shortened to the wilden. The English called the Virginians "savages" and translated the Dutch term the same. Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America: The Northern Voyages A.D. 500-1600*, New York (1971), 428; Mrs. John King Van Rensselaer, *The Goede Vrouw of Mana-ha-ta: At Home and in Society 1609-1760*, New York (1898), 2; Alice P. Kenney, *Stubborn for Liberty: The Dutch in New York*, Syracuse (1975), 25; *A Description of the New Netherlands*, 73-74; Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from its Beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744*, New York (1984), 49 (n. 6), 50.
- 5 New York Algonquian artifactual remains are sparse on this subject, but the lesson of Owasco spiritual development may provide a clue. James A. Tuck has suggested that the presence of miniature pots and pipes at Owasco sites prefigure later Iroquois "dream-guessing," a soul-enriching practice;

- Owasco face and antler carvings also may anticipate the Iroquois False Face Society or other social or curing organizations within that culture. Their lack in pre-Owasco archaeology suggests that more sophisticated Iroquois spiritual development began during the Owasco period. See Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace: Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America*, Ithaca (1993), 49-50.
- 6 On the antiquity of Munsee myths, see John Bierhorst, *Mythology of the Lenape: Guide and Texts*, Tucson (1995), 8, 30, 39; C. A. Weslager, *The Delaware Indians: A History*, New Brunswick, N.J. (1972), 92-93, 97. A turtle creation myth finds one of its oldest expressions in Munsee myth (Bierhorst, 28-29, 71, 12) and was among the earliest recorded by Europeans; see Jameson, ed., *Narratives of New Netherland*, 77-78.
  - 7 Nicolaes van Wassenaer, "First Settlement of New-York by the Dutch," in E.B. O'Callaghan, M.D., ed., *A Documentary History of the State of New York*, Albany (1850), III, 45-46.
  - 8 "One estimate of subsistence activity per day is two to four hours for primitive hunters." Christopher Vecsey, "American Indian Environmental Religions," 8.
  - 9 Shirley Dunn, *The Mohicans and Their Land 1609-1730*, Fleischmanns, N.Y. (1994), 32-36.
  - 10 Lewis Mumford considered the creation of money (and by extension the rise of capitalism) in the same historic context as the "abstraction" of reality that emanated from the Reformation—"and in money they achieved a calculus for all human activity"; *The Golden Day: A Study in American Literature and Culture*, New York (1968; 1926), 9. Sewan (which the English, borrowing from Narragansett Indians, called "wampum" after introduced to the currency by the Dutch) soon became that calculus in the Hudson Valley.
  - 11 Calvin Martin's definition of "ecosystem" introduces this section. "The European Impact on the Culture of a Northeastern Algonquian Tribe: An Ecological Interpretation," in *William and Mary Quarterly*, 31 (January 1974), 5.
  - 12 "According to Lenape [Munsee] Indian belief, all things had spirits: animals, insects, trees, air, even rocks; therefore, everything had to be respected and cherished." Herbert C. Kraft and John T. Kraft, *The Indians of Lenapehoking*, South Orange, N. J. (1991), 30.
  - 13 Weslager, *The Delaware Indians*, 66, calls the native application of spiritual facets "a pantheistic concept in which the entire world was under the control of invisible beings." All aspects of the environment were equally endowed with spirituality by native Americans, but each aspect had its own characteristics that were unique in their various manifestations and quite specific to the natural world they represented.
  - 14 Vecsey, "American Indian Environmental Religions," 36, 16.
  - 15 E. M. Ruttenber, *History of the Indian Tribes of Hudson's River*, Albany (1872), II, 362-363, tells a tale about the origin of the Steppingstone Islands that once stretched from the bottom of the Hudson Valley and were used by the evil spirit to escape Indians who drove him from Long Island; furious, he stood at Cold Spring and hurled rocks all over Connecticut. In Ruttenber's time, one of those little islands was still called "Satan's Toe," a name used by James Fenimore Cooper in the title of his best novel depicting a Hudson Valley setting. See also Theodore Kazimiroff, *The Last Algonquin*, New York (1982), 179.
  - 16 One found in a Minisink burial site dated to A.D. 1380±55. Herbert C. Kraft, "Late Woodland Settlement Patterns in the Upper Delaware Valley," in Jay F. Custer, ed., *Late Woodland Cultures of the Middle Atlantic Region*, Cranbury, N. J. (1986), 115.
  - 17 See Bierhorst, *Mythology of the Lenape*, 8-10, 21-27; Nora Thompson Dean, "The Spiritual World of the Lenape or Delaware Indians," in Catherine Coleman Brawer, ed., *Many Trails: Indians of the Lower Hudson Valley*, Katonah (1983), 36; Kraft and Kraft, *The Indians of Lenapehoking*, 29-30; Herbert C. Kraft, *The Lenape or Delaware Indians*, South Orange, N. J. (1991), 46; Nicholas Shoumatoff, "The Algonkian Spirit," in Brawer, *Many Trails*, 37. Manëtu is a Unami (or southern) Delaware word; the -ou form was a New France contribution. Alexander F. Chamberlain, "Algonkian Words in American English: A Study in the Contact of the White Man and the Indian," in *Journal of American Folklore*,

- 15 (1992), 247.
- 18 The Delaware Indians, 68.
- 19 Richard C. Adams, *The Delaware Indians: A Brief History*, Saugerties (1995; 1906), 8; Ruttenber, I, 28-29, n. 2; Weslager, *The Delaware Indians*, 66, 69-71; Kraft and Kraft, *The Indians of Lenapehoking*, 31; Julian Harris Salomon, *Indians of the Lower Hudson Region: The Munsee*, New City (1982), 24, 27; Ives Goddard, "Delaware," in Bruce G. Trigger, ed. (William C. Sturtevant, gen. ed.) *Handbook of North American Indians: Volume 15 Northeast*, Washington (1978), 220. Weslager's Figure 11 (p. 70) is a diagram of the places taken up by the participants and some of the ceremonial properties of the Big House Ceremony. On the kitzinacka, see Wassenaer, "From the 'Historisch Verhael,'" in Jameson, ed., *Narratives of New Netherland*, 68.
- 20 Dorothy M. Reid, *Tales of Nanabozho*, New York (1963), 85-88.
- 21 See, e.g., Reid, *Tales of Nanabozho*, 48. A missionary among the Delawares watched a native deliver a "curious invective" to a bear before dispatching it; the missionary asked if the bear understood his words, and the native responded, of course: "Did you not observe how ashamed he looked while I was upbraiding him?" The Poems of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, New York (n.d.), 126, n. 1. (Longfellow was quoting Rev. John Heckewelder, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, I, 240.)
- 22 In anthropological terms, Vecsey, 10-11, distinguishes three ways in which native Americans "integrated" their spiritual world into the real one: primary integration such as talking to animals they hunted or coinciding agricultural festivals with stages of plant growth; secondary integration, such as atomistic shamanism in hunting; and morphological or symbolic integration by referencing natural phenomenon into myths or rituals.
- 23 Vecsey, "American Indian Environmental Religions," 9. "The women there are the most skillful stargazers; there is scarcely one of them but can name all the stars; their rising, setting; the position of the Arctos, that is the Wain, is as well known to them as to us, and they name them by other names." Wassenaer, "From the 'Historisch Verhael,'" in Jameson, ed., *Narratives of New Netherland*, 69.
- 24 See Charles Hayes, ed., *From the Hudson to the World: Voices of the River*, n.p. (1978), 22, 31; Emelyn Elizabeth Gardner, *Folklore from the Schoharie Hills*, New York, N.Y. (1977; 1937), 18. Minnewawa spoke in thunderclaps.
- 25 Reid, *Tales of Nanabozho*, 83. Tobacco was used in sacred rites and blessings as well as for consumption; Delawares occasionally mixed it with sumac in a concoction called kinnikinnick. See Weslager, *The Delaware Indian*, 58.
- 26 This was an Ojibway tale, but common to all Algonquians. Egerton R. Young, *Algonquin Indian Tales*, New York (1903), 240-242. Naturalist Spider Barbour, who had a fascination with grasshoppers while growing up in Ohio, recalled the admonishments of adults: "Don't pick up those grasshoppers—they'll spit tobacco juice at you!" (Personal communication.)
- 27 Young, 255-256.
- 28 In all northeastern cultures, the principal health treatment was sweating, in a lodge or bath (pimēwakān in Munsee) built near a stream out of saplings covered with clay and heated with rocks carried in from a communal fire—literally an earthen oven. In another telling irony, the pimēwakān proved entirely the wrong remedy when the European smallpox struck, because the sweating prevented the pox pustules from drying. A description of the sweat lodge is found in Kraft, *The Lenape or Delaware Indians*, 14. See also Kraft and Kraft, *The Indians of Lenapehoking*, 33; Goddard, "Delaware," 219; Weslager, *The Delaware Indians*, 51; and Charles Wolley, *A Two Years' Journal in New York and Part of its Territories in America*, Harrison (1973; 1701), 54.
- 29 See Vecsey, "American Indian Environmental Religions," in Vecsey and Venables, eds., 29; Calvin Martin (to whom I am indebted for the apostasy concept), "The European Impact on the Culture of a Northeastern Algonquian Tribe: An Ecological Interpretation," *William and Mary Quarterly*, (January 1974), 25. William MacLeish sees the ruined beaver ponds as "the first signs of European corporate power." *The Day Before America*, New York (1994), 188.