

CHAPTER 3  
**The Regional Culture Signature  
of the Braden Art Style**

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The motifs, imagery, and lexical meanings found among the Osage and cognate tribes of the Dhegiha Sioux have become a productive source of readings for Braden style motifs and compositions (Brown 2004, 2007b; Diaz-Granados 2004; Diaz-Granados and Duncan 2004; Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2000, 2004; Hall 2004; Kehoe 2007; Reilly 2004). Each new identification strengthens the conviction that the culture pattern of the Dhegiha Sioux has a great deal to say about the content of the Braden style. Additional support comes from an analysis of the larger cosmological context of Dhegiha-speaking culture. With these cosmological insights taken into consideration the Braden style emerges more forcefully as bearing the imprint of Dhegiha Sioux and by extension that of neighboring tribes occupying the eastern wooded margins of the Great Plains. Widening of the cultural perspective helps supply an Upper Mississippi Valley origin for the Dhegiha Sioux that archaeological data have yet to support in a conclusive way. One goal of this chapter is to summarize the literature on Braden style readings and cast these into a larger picture. This task allows me to enlarge on a major theme of the Dhegiha and their close cognates—the centrality of death and rebirth as partly embodied in the Earth-Sky duality that is particular to these closely related groups.

**The Braden Style**

The Braden art style is the name for the form of image-making that has come to be identified quintessentially with the Southeastern Ceremonial Complex, although we now realize that it is only one of several distinct styles composing this complex (Brown 2004, 2007c). The style has been explored in several sets of data: engraved shell cups from Spiro (Phillips and Brown 1978), the Eddyville-style shell gorgets (Muller 1989), and the Cahokia-style carved

stone figurines (Emerson 1989, 1997a, 1997b; Emerson et al. 2003). For the present it suffices to emphasize a stock of distinctive matters of content. This includes the personification of different divine powers (that is, embodying spiritual powers in human form), the emphasis on the Birdman in the Morning Star cycle, Earthmother, and a common use of a stock of visual metaphors (Brown 2007c; Phillips and Brown 1978; Reilly 2004). Representations often taken for warriors are more comfortably interpreted as the cosmic combat of the four heroes against the forces of death (Brown 2007b; Brown and Dye 2007).

The style is expressed in both two and three dimensions and on a broad range of media, including painted, engraved, and carved marine shell, freshwater shell, pottery, copper, pipestone, and the rock walls of caves and shelters (Brown 2004; Phillips and Brown 1978). Its homeland was the American Bottom and neighboring lands together with a portion of the Prairie-Woodland borderlands within the Upper Mississippi Valley. A broad distribution is delineated by rock-art identified at Picture Cave in eastern Missouri and at Gottschall Rockshelter in southeastern Wisconsin.

The Braden style has undergone secular changes over a span of 300-plus years. Early expression of this style has been radiocarbon dated at both of these two rock sites within the Emergent Mississippian period (Diaz-Granados et al. 2001; Salzer 2005; Salzer and Rajnovich 2001:4, 40-41). Robert Hall (2004:98) has pointed out that falconoid symbolism in the form of effigy mounds has deep roots extending into the pre-AD 1050 period. The Classic Braden expression of this style appears to have emerged at Cahokia by the Lohmann phase, although it is more commonly found in Moorehead-phase contexts (Brown and Kelly 2000). The final, Late Braden expression is manifest in the following Sand Prairie phase (Brown 2007c; Brown and Kelly 2000). In the Late Braden style such distinctive features of Birdman as the hawk-billed human nose and the circular scalp lock make their appearance (Brown 2007a, 2007c). A recognizable form of this style in the McAdams gorget type continues into the fourteenth century. These shell gorgets provide a logical bridge to the primordial life theme of the spider in postcontact times. In the early twentieth century select, high-status Osage women were tattooed on the wrist with similar spider imagery. Complementary war-related motifs were tattooed on the chests of male warriors (La Flesche 1918).

Although the Braden style was identified mainly through an analysis of the engraved shell record from the Spiro site in eastern Oklahoma, it composes

a distinct minority of the site's collection. In some instances Braden material has been reworked locally in the Craig style, but not the other way around. The Craig style qualifies as locally Caddo by numerical superiority and various iconic connections (Brown 1989). From this and other perspectives it is apparent that the Spiro engraved shell collection is composed of a mixture of distinct styles united by a set of common themes. Different strands of archaeological evidence point to a source of production for the Braden style many miles away in the Mississippi River Valley and centered at the great town of Cahokia near St. Louis (Brown and Kelly 2000; Muller 1995, 1999). A very different set of expectations was entertained by workers in the Mid-South region (Howard 1968; Waring 1968b; Williams and Goggin 1956; Willoughby 1932). To them the SECC was a unified complex most fruitfully interpreted in terms of beliefs and practices of Muskogean-speaking peoples in the Mid-South. Alex Krieger's (1945) criticisms of this perspective called attention to regional distinction operating within the SECC corpus. His critique applies equally to those that place the origin of the collections solely at Spiro itself. Only decades later did art styles enter seriously into consideration of the different regional sources of engraved shell as well as other objects (Knight 2006; Muller 1979, 1989, 1995, 1999; Phillips and Brown 1978, 1984). Of those sources the North Caddoan and Upper Mississippian ones dominate; the Mid-South area contributed relatively little.

### The Dhegiha Sioux

The Omaha, Osage, Quapaw, Ponca, and Kansa are five "cognate" tribes that speak closely related languages and occupy the eastern margins of the Great Plains. A great similarity of beliefs and practices makes this block of tribes a convenient unit for comparison. At the same time it is important to bear in mind that similarities are shared with neighboring groups in the Prairie-Plains (Hultkrantz 1973). La Flesche (1939) specifically referred to the Otoe and the Pawnee as having religious customs nearly identical with the Osage.

All were composed of exogamous patrilineal clans organized into earth-sky social moieties aligned with a series of oppositions, including the south and north directions. Omaha kinship terminology emphasized the consistent patrilineal bias of these groups. The combination of these two features of social organization clearly separated them from their neighbors (Murdock 1955). This distinctive organization of male descent groups is not found in

tribes of the Great Lakes, East, or Southeast (Brown 1991). Each group or clan possessed its own name and a set of personal names, connected either by an identifying symbol or to symbols belonging to the rites they controlled (Barnes 1984; Ensor 2003; Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:38).

The Dhegiha language group includes Omaha-Ponca, Osage, Kansa, and Quapaw (Rankin 1988). Less closely related was the Chiwere language group, including the Otoe, Missouri, and Iowa, with Winnebago as a more remote outlier (Goddard 1996:322). The Dhegiha and the Chiwere are distinctly defined by the adoption in common of the earth-sky moiety organization of their respective societies. The kind of cosmivision implied by this organization is closely linked with cosmogonic myths that have distinctive associated compositions and imagery (Hultkrantz 1973).

The Dhegiha also define themselves in terms of an idealized dispersion within the Mississippi River Valley watershed. The Omaha take a name that means the "against-the-current" or "upstream" people, and the Quapaw correspondingly are the "downstream" or "with-the-current" people, referring to the Mississippi River (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:35-36). Likewise they have mutually compatible accounts of how the component tribes split apart after once having belonged to a single entity occupying a location at or near the mouth of the Ohio with the Mississippi River in one account (Dorsey 1886; Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:37). These accounts, however, appear to be less about history in the Western sense and more about structural relations among the groups. In this regard they have to be distinguished from cosmological origin accounts that stress upper-world tribal origins (summarized by DeMallie and Parks 2001; see also Hall 1989).

The relevant reference group is one known or strongly implicated in the occupation of the Upper Mississippi River Valley in precontact times. This group consists of Dhegiha-speaking Siouans that have a traditional, near-eponymous connection with this river system. When French explorers encountered these Central Siouans in the seventeenth century, however, they were residing in the Prairie-Plains area and west of the main valley of the Mississippi (Brown and Sasso 2001; Henning 2001, 2007). In the past other groups may have been associated with the Dhegiha; but with the exception of the Skidi Pawnee, we lack clues about such associations.

In his survey of language family movements over time, Michael Foster (1996) accepts the archaeological assessment that the Dhegiha came from

the Mississippi Valley (Henning 2007:75). An extensive precedent exists for considering the Mississippian cultures of the Mississippi Valley (particularly near the junction with the Ohio) to be the ancestors of the Siouans—particularly the Dhegiha and Chiwere (including the Ho-Chunk) branches of the Siouan linguistic family (Goddard 1996:322; Myers 1992).

It is not difficult to connect the Dhegiha Sioux to the archaeology of the Prairie Peninsula and to the great townsite of Cahokia. Numerous archaeologists have cited parallels with Dhegiha beliefs and practices to interpret details in architectural and settlement patterning and the conspicuous planting and removal of tall poles (Fowler 1996; Gartner 1996; Hall 2004:100; Holley and Koepke 2003; Kehoe 2007; Kelly 1996, 2003; Kelly et al. 2008).

Objections to the connection between the Dhegiha and Middle Mississippian cultures derive from positions staked out by both culture area classifications and archaeological taxonomies. Neither of these positions is sympathetic to the thesis of this chapter. Ethnologists have been content to regard the Plains tribes as having remote cultural connections to the Mississippi Valley because of their investment in a semimobile way of life with a less complex form of governance than found in the sedentary tribes of the Southeast. The priority placed on the degree of settlement mobility and concomitant cultural practices has erected impediments to connection making. As a consequence scholars have turned to the beliefs and practices of Southeastern cultures when the subject of Cahokia's descendants is considered (Mochon 1972). Archaeologists show complementary preferences. They connect the Omaha to the Upper Mississippian Oneota, a taxon without mounds and widely regarded as having a history that is separate from, albeit parallel with, the complex cultures of Cahokia and Middle Mississippian (Griffin 1952, 1995; Henning 2007). Diaz-Granados and Duncan (Diaz-Granados 2004; Diaz-Granados and Duncan 2004; Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2000, 2004), Hall (2004), and Kehoe (2007) are conspicuous exceptions to this orientation.

### **Dhegiha Sioux Cosmology**

The Dhegiha Sioux have long been recognized as standing apart from other tribal organizations in the roles that their cosmology plays: in rites relating to success in war (framed in terms of defense of tribe members from

external threats) and in their emphasis on promoting life-supporting processes—above all in the preservation of the tribe (Hollinger 2005). To these we can add the strong preference for personifying spiritual forces, whether animate or inanimate. Fletcher and La Flesche (1911:68–69) state:

In the Omaha and the four cognates there appear to be certain stable characteristics which indicate a common ideal of organization, as the two divisions of the tribal circle and the functions pertaining to each; the ceremonies connected with warfare and the awarding of war honors. There seems to be also a common type of religious ceremonial for the recognition of those cosmic forces which were believed to affect directly the life of man, as the rites attending the naming of children and the class of names given, and the customs relating to birth and death.

Like most of their neighbors the Sioux conceive of the universe as tripartite: “Upper World” (placed in the empyrean or highest heaven), this terrestrial world, and “Beneath World” (located beyond underlying waters) (Lankford 2007d). Each was dominated by spirits that could move among the three worlds and could assume the guise of humans on any occasion (Reilly 2004). All spirits could materialize in human form, albeit with telltale features identifying their true identity. The Osage self-depiction of the cosmos is a useful basis for discussion. However, it is uncertain how far the details of this view applied to other Dhegiha Sioux.

Osage cosmology was drafted by a tribesman for J. Owen Dorsey (1885:357) in what has to be a unique diagram. The three parts of the universe are graphically delineated. The empyrean Upper World was occupied by important stars, the sun, and the moon. The Pleiades, the Big Dipper, the Milky Way, and the Morning Star were among the stars. In the lowest register of this Upper World were war clubs flanking a rainbow. A transition to this world was marked by the four world levels that humankind descended to reach the earth. Beneath the lowest level was the red oak tree they landed upon when they fell into “This World.” Centered beneath the tree trunk was a shaft that was left unexplained by the draftsman. It undoubtedly represented the passage to the “Beneath World,” usually closed off from access above by water. Commonly, the inhabited middle world was likened to an island surrounded

by primordial waters. In the Osage diagram the borders to this world are not indicated one way or another (see Fig. 2.1b).

In keeping with the layered universe the center of the middle world was demarcated on a regular basis by planting a cosmic pole at the center of the camp circle. The He'dewachi ceremony, the Omaha version of the Sun Dance, is a well-described example. According to Fletcher and La Flesche (1911:251–252), this ceremony is an ancient increase rite “related to the cosmic forces as revealed in the succession of night and day and the life and growth of living things.” The Osage were reputed to have an analogous ceremony (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:260).

The procedures used to install the pole bring together a diverse set of cosmological principles. The tree is treated as a human. The woman bearing the “Mark of Honor” “captures” the tree and makes cuts into four sides, one for each of the four directions. As Robin Ridington describes it:

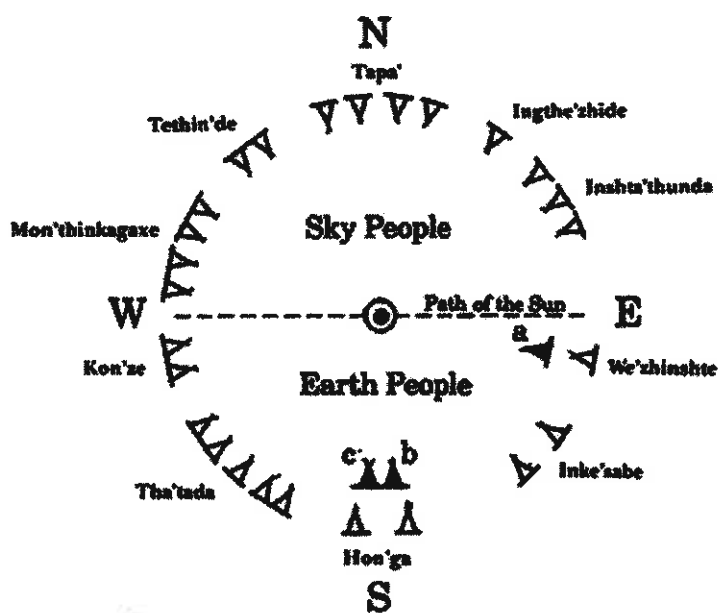
Two men with hereditary rights painted the pole in bands of black and red to signify night and day, thunder and death, and earth and sky. They dug a hole for the pole at the center of the *hu'thuga* and heaped the dirt from the hole to the east. Between this heap and the pole they cut a figure into the earth. It was a circle open to the east. This figure, known as *uzhin'eti*, was used as an earth altar. (Ridington and Hastings 1997:65)

Another occasion for the construction of such an altar was the sacred ceremony of painting the Sacred Pole (Ridington and Hastings 1997:65).

The obvious parallels to the archaeological Woodhenge at Cahokia reinforce the significance of Dhegiha insights into Mississippian-period architecture and settlement organization. These and other parallels have been described and commented upon from many different perspectives (Fowler 1996; Gartner 1996; Hall 1997, 2004:100; Holley and Koepke 2003; Kehoe 2007; Kelly 1996, 2003; Kelly et al. 2008).

### The Camp Circle as a Representation of the Cosmos

Before continuing with the sacred rites that were controlled by individual clans, it is important to learn how the camp circle embodied Dhegiha



**FIGURE 3.1.** The Sacred Camp (*hu'thuga*) Circle of the Omaha during the He'dewachi (from Ridington and Hastings 1997:Fig. 14). Adapted from Myers, *The Birth and Rebirth of the Omaha* (1992:Fig. 3). Courtesy of the University of Nebraska State Museum.

cosmovision centering around the earth-sky moiety social division. The Omaha camp circle will be used as the primary point of reference because it offers a concise version of these principles (Fig. 3.1). The Osage offer a similar version that is too complex to be dealt with in the present chapter (Bailey 1995). The information that we have for the other three tribes bears out the thesis that each is a variant on the same set of themes, although hardly any clan information has survived about the Quapaw.<sup>1</sup>

During the summer buffalo hunt the entire tribe assembled in a camp circle. It is in this settlement mode that the camp circle becomes an epitome of the cosmological and sociological functions of the dual division. The significance of the summer buffalo hunt was its importance to the supply of food. A great deal of the tribe's food security rested on its success (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:137).

Among the Omaha the ceremonial form of the camp circle was viewed conceptually simply as a "tribal house" that not only encompassed all the clans but also imposed a strict clan order within the circle (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:137). Each family's dwelling stood within the circle, where individual clan members would sit within a lodge. The male and female sides of



the house replicate the location of the sky and earth moieties. The entrance to the camp circle opened to the east during the summer when tribal ceremonies were being conducted. At other times the opening pointed in the direction of travel. Even then, the order of the tents remained firm regardless of the orientation.

As in so many societies the clans (and to a certain extent the family) were the social unit of primary allegiance. In a way this allegiance was represented by the wealth-creating capabilities of particular descent groups (Ensor 2001, 2003). They were distinguished among tribal lineages as "subclans," which possessed special rites and privileges. These were socially prominent lineages that constituted social houses in the Claude Lévi-Strauss sense (Beck 2007). The tents of prominent men displayed symbols that referred to the rights and obligations of clans or subclans (Dorsey 1894:Fig. 170). The path to chiefship lay in the capacity of the groups to accumulate wealth.

In this light the tribe looks more like a coalition of clans, whose mutual interdependence was structured by important rites parceled out among its participants. Each clan (and subclan) exercised exclusive control over its rites and bundles. The only rites not controlled by individual clans were under the control of sodalities (such as the Shell Society) and were part of the He'dewachi ceremony. Unity was created by interweaving complementary rights and interests. The order of the clan within the circle became a cosmologically ordained way of maintaining collective cohesion in the face of countervailing fissiparous tendencies.

### The Earth-Sky Division

The earth-sky dual division was a Dhegiha Sioux means for organizing certain clan functions that were cosmologically grounded (Bailey 1995:33; Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:68-69). At a basic level this organization separated tribal ritual into two mutually supportive groups. Åke Hultkrantz expressed it succinctly:

[On the south side] the rites and duties of the Earth people concern the physical welfare of the nation, the food supply, the governing power and the maintenance of peace. It is even possible to discern, as Müller [1956:156, as cited by Hultkrantz] suggests, in the arrangement of the Earth clans and their rites, the progression of the summer season: the

first thunder of the spring, the planting of the red maize, the buffalo hunt, the thanksgiving at the sacred pole after the hunt . . . [On the opposite side] The Sky people, on the other hand, took care of those rites by which supernatural aid was sought and secured, rites which were connected with the creation and the spiritual support for man in life and death. In this way the Sky moiety rites also gave a supernatural sanction to the Earth Moiety rites, putting them into effect. The union between the Sky powers and the Earth powers by which all living creatures were once created was thus symbolized and perpetuated in the organization of the tribe, and its meaning was continually present in the minds of the people by the rites and the interrelation of clans and moieties. (Hultkrantz 1973:21)

Tribal functions were divided between the north/sky and south/earth sides in very specific ways. For the Omaha the "northern half" or sky moiety was composed of five member clans; the southern half or earth people likewise had five clans (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911). The placement of each clan tent tended to be dictated by cosmological logic, although it should be stressed that rites and duties controlled by each clan or subclan did not divide ritual responsibilities neatly and without overlap. The specialized knowledge of clans and subclans was created and disappeared as these social units rose and fell in numbers.

Each of the clans on both sides of the camp circle entrance controlled factors in the day-to-day well-being of the tribe. The earth side controlled the Sacred War tepee that once held the most important of the five war bundles. The tepee also housed a sacred cedar pole associated with the war power of the Thunderer as manifested through lightning. This spirit was said to live in a forest of cedars. Bird skins kept within the bundles received their power from the Thunderer (Dorsey 1884:319-320; Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:218-219, 229, 403-416, 452-458).

On the opposite side of the camp entrance stood the clan of the sky moiety, controlling rainfall and moisture-providing nourishment in general. By tapping into the thunder powers of both moieties this arrangement emphasized the impact of both cosmic forces and religious observances. Thunder signals the beginning of the growing season and is thereby a logical prelude to a season with plenty of plant food.

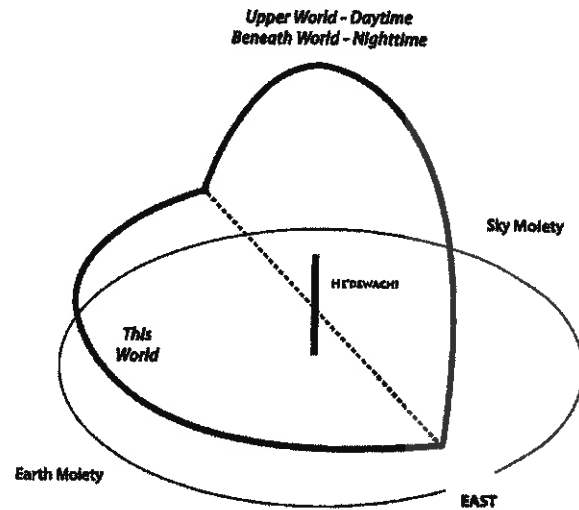


FIGURE 3.2. Reconstructed cosmogram of the Omaha, based on the Sacred Camp (*hu'thuga*) Circle of the Omaha during the He'dewachi.

Viewed from a different perspective the two moieties are not coordinate. The earth-sky moiety organization fits a three-tiered universe. Robert Hall (2004:98–100, 2005) has argued how this could have worked logically. The three cosmic levels have been collapsed onto two dimensions by placing the path of the sun (or the ecliptic) onto the earthen plane (Fig. 3.2). This step locates the male or the sky moiety on the north side of the circle, opposite the female or earth moiety on the south. Hall argues that this leads also to quadrants, presumably representing the seasons, by placing the north at the center of a twofold division of the sky moiety side (Hall 1997, 2004:98–100). These quadrants were invoked explicitly in the Omaha ritual prelude to the intermoiety ball game. In a mythic allusion to the cardinal directions the Omaha referred to the fiery trails of the Thunderbirds that created burnt paths emanating in four directions from the cosmic pole center (Ridington and Hastings 1997:99–104). Omaha and other Dhegiha ritual performances are replete with directional references.

The upper direction is really a conceptualization of both the day and night sky. But it is the path of the sun that provides the rationale for the communitywide ceremonies. The Osage once prayed to the sun two times a day: at midday and sunset. The Omaha provide even greater support. High-status women are tattooed with the Mark of Honor on their forehead and throat in a ceremony that reaches its culmination at high noon, when the impregnating



**FIGURE 3.3.** The "mark of honor," redrawn from photograph (Ridington and Hastings 1997:Fig. 19).

power of the sun reaches its culmination (Fig. 3.3) (Ridington and Hastings 1997:159–165). While the tattooing ceremony was underway, women lay on their back aligned with the path of the sun and with their head to the west.

The question immediately arises: what has happened to the Beneath World? Its absence from the camp circle might seem to be a fatal weakness to the model considered here. But if the Beneath World was rotated into the night sky when the sun had set, the contradiction can be resolved. Just such a rotation is implied by Fletcher and La Flesche (1911:507) when they state: "By the union of Day, the above, and Night, the below, came the human race and by them the race is maintained. The Tattooing . . . [is] an appeal for the perpetuation of all life and of human life in particular." This is precisely represented by the incorporation of both the nighttime and daytime skies into the Sky side of the circle (see Hall 1997:107–108).

This uppermost direction is expressed within the two-dimensional camp circle by placing the zenith position at the north end of the east-pointing camp circle. For the Omaha the sun exerts its maximal strength at its zenith and by extension its virility as well. The star powers are located at precisely this point in the circle. The deer clan (Tapa', a name for the constellation Pleiades) occupied the north or sky side (Ridington and Hastings 1997:120–121). The Deer clan members were custodians of the thunder and the star rites, both male sources of procreation. This clan's control of ceremonies related to

the powers of the stars underscores the connection (Ridington 1987). Lankford (2007c:259) elaborated upon the significance of this constellation in the Southeast: "Its easy recognition in the sky, coupled with its ability to mark various important points in the agricultural growing season, should produce an almost universal representation among tribal peoples." Morning Star is just that mythic source for the Osage. In contrast, however, the Omaha had preserved little of the lore of this star when Dorsey and Fletcher and La Flesche undertook their interviews.

At the south point in the camp circle stood a clan with other kinds of bundle power. This is where the sacred pole tent stood that housed "Venerable Man." Next to it was the tent of the sacred white buffalo hide (Tethon'ha). Both stood in front of the lodges of the subclans that controlled the rites of each. The pole of Venerable Man was propped at a 40-degree angle, pointing toward the Pole Star. The song that accompanied its rites evoked the sun while representing the Thunderbird. It also stood for chiefly authority (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:102). Ridington (1987:156) interpreted this union of opposite sources of fertility as constituting a cosmic complement. Hall (2005) has argued that Venerable Man was propped at an angle close to the 42-degree angle observed on 15 August, the very date on which the Omaha closed the camp circle and moved into their fall villages to harvest their mature crop of maize.<sup>2</sup> The rites of the sacred white buffalo hide ensured the perpetuation of the buffalo herds (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:284–309; Hall 1997:77–85; Liberty et al. 2001:409).

The male and female principles of procreation are expressed in terms of the duality of male and female, father and mother, the sun and the moon, the Morning Star and the Evening Star, and the sky and the earth moieties. Anomalous as it might appear, these opposing principles do make their home jointly in the sky. If the sky is the home of the Upper World by day and the home of the Beneath World at night, the sky can be visualized as being jointly occupied by these principles (Duncan, personal communication). A shared space can be seen in Omaha ideology, wherein the sun, particularly at high noon, lies at a location that is conceptually analogous to that of the giant sun bier—their term (Osage as well) for the Big Dipper constellation visible at night. Lankford (2007c:152–159) observes that among many of the agricultural Plains groups the Big Dipper was equated to a giant bier carried across the sky. A quotation from Ridington expresses the cultural significance of the camp circle configuration:



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The *hu'thuga* reveals the entire circle of creation, the continuous motion of an ongoing creative process. It expresses the thought that lies behind all outward appearance. It gives voice to the mythic idea that human beings were born of a union between the Sky people and the Earth people. This mythic union is not something that happened long ago and far away from everyday experience. Rather it is enacted over and over again in the ceremonies through which the tribe renews its own existence, renews its form of government, and renews its relationship to the buffalo, to the maize, to the seasons, and to the forces of day and night. (Ridington and Hastings 1997:110)

Not surprisingly, symbolic rebirth was conceptualized even more actively. The calumet ceremony, which in the eighteenth century became a widespread ceremony of ritual adoption, was more than a tool for easing the reception of guests (Hall 1989, 1997). At its historic core it was about conferring symbolic rebirth on a particular individual. It used two calumet stems, each with duckbills and other animal parts incorporated into the stem and with feather fans suspended from the shaft. This assembly amounted to the distillation of power made possible by the ritual contributions of specific clans (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:376-401; La Flesche 1939). The owl tufts contributed by the deer clan were the finishing touch.

### Dhegiha Symbolism

The recognition of Dhegiha Sioux myths and religious symbolism in specific images is already well advanced. Rock-art has provided images of the Dhegiha Birdman and Earthmother (Diaz-Granados 2004; Diaz-Granados and Duncan 2000, 2004; Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2000, 2004). Duane Esarey (1987, 1990) argued that engravings on shell gorgets of the Braden/Eddyville style or the McAdams type that bear spiders fit the beliefs and practices of the Osage far better than those of the distant Cherokee. He anticipated the regional contextual approach advocated in this chapter.

In a pathbreaking paper Guy Prentice (1986) contended that the Birger Figurine represented "Mother Corn" or "Our Grandmother." Diaz-Granados (1993:341, 343-345, 354; Diaz-Granados and Duncan 2000:217, 219-220, 236-237) argued for the "Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies" as a Siouan deity.

This particular divinity—called Earthmother here—can be identified among a broad range of tribes in the Northern Plains and Eastern Woodlands, including the Dhegiha Sioux. Emerson (1989, 1997a, 1997b) contributed an expansion on this identification. Of particular significance for these identifications is the graphic concordance between the details incorporated into these figurines and the story lines in the oral traditions of the Eastern Plains. Earthmother hoeing the back of the puma-serpent recalls her gift of agricultural plants to humankind. The squash growing from the monstrous serpent is a visual realization of that gift. Her backpack reminds us that in some myths she brought seeds to humankind in a bag (Prentice 1986).

The lineup of deities extends well beyond what has been identified to date (Reilly 2004). We have to recognize that the red fireclay figurines associated with Cahokia depict numerous different deities. Some remain to be identified. For example, the “Crouching Warrior” pipe figure from Shiloh appears to represent a deity in the precultural or “wild” period of his career (Reilly 2004:133, Fig. 15). Others are likely to be added to the list. Figural identities are easily distinguished among the diverse activities and costumes depicted in Braden art. The connections to Dhegihan cosmology are facilitated by the emphasis on representation of spirits through human form. The transformation to and from an animal or cultural object and a human form is recounted many times in Dhegiha and Chiwere mythology. In this respect we have to include the neighboring Pawnee as well. This leads to a distinction articulated in Ho-Chunk/Winnebago myths between the human form of a spirit and its “natural” form (Radin 1948). In the instance of the Omaha the “natural form” extends from animals to inanimate objects. In myths such as “How Big Turtle Went on the Warpath” the companions of the mythic warrior turtle turn into a “comb,” an “awl,” a “pestle,” a “firebrand,” and a “buffalo bladder” (Welsch 1981:203–216). In commenting on the frog effigy pipe Reilly (2004:135) argued that it “perfectly illustrates the episode in which the companions of Morning Star return, resume their animal forms, and visually manifest the animal powers.”

What appear to be set scenes representing episodes from a myth can be found in some sculpture, rock-art, and shell engraving (Brown 2007b). Reilly (2004) has identified at least three myth cycles among the many combinations in human costumery. Two of the three mythic cycles identified, the Morning Star Cycle and the Earth and Fertility Cycle, are depicted

prominently in the Braden style; the third cycle, the Path of the Souls, is present, albeit weakly (Emerson 1982, 1989; Knight et al. 2001; Lankford 2007a, 2007b). The importance of these cycles rests on the specific powers that the myths charter. These powers are sustained as long as the capacity to exercise them remains in place (Brown 2007b). Some of the key human/animal spirits are singled out for extended discussion below in order to highlight two kinds of cultural connection: the prominence of earth-sky duality and the employment of a distinctly Dhegihan code for identity.

### **Dhegiha Cosmograms in Imagery**

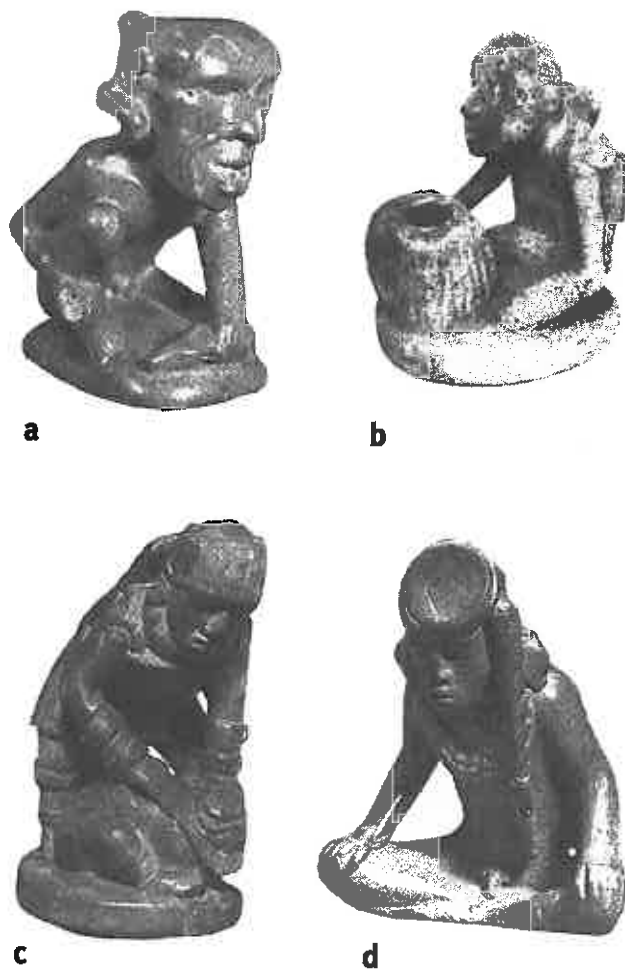
#### **MORNING STAR AND HUMAN FERTILITY**

The Morning Star Cycle is built around the predawn appearance of a bright asterism in advance of the rising sun. The star is very prominent between November to February during the season of dormancy, when food is difficult to procure. The end of this season comes as a great relief, and it is understandable that the rejuvenation of plant and animal life is associated with human health and reproduction. Fertility in general is not what the Morning Star cycle is all about; rather it applies specifically to human life in its multiple aspects, including health, safety, and the protection of one's family. This cycle is particularly important because it places death as a preordained end that normally contains the germ for a new birth. The regular appearance of this bright star in the predawn sky, interrupted by its disappearance, likewise has given rise to narratives of life and death among the deities, phrased in distinctive Amerindian manner as high-stakes gaming (Brown 2007c; Hall 1997; Radin 1948).

The hawk is the principal animal form of Morning Star. Other icons are the forked eye surround, the Long-Nosed God maskette, the chunky stone, the chunky pole, and the calumet staff. The images created in Classic Braden style clearly reference a hawk. In certain instances, a true falcon is portrayed by the diagnostic presence of a notch located midway in the upper bill. Birdman is found on sculpture, rock-art, and shell engraving (Brown 1996: vol. 2, 523; Diaz-Granados 2004:143) (Fig. 3.4d).

An important bridge to the past exists in the elbow catlinite pipe belonging to the Omaha pole bundle that has a stylized eye incised deeply into the side of the stone pipe stem (Ridington and Hastings 1997:Fig. 21a, b). Four of these lines stream back from the forward-placed eye. They could represent



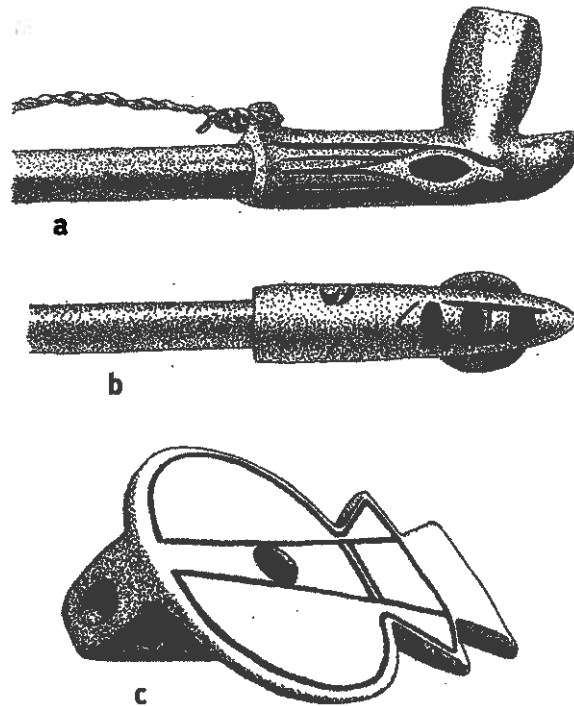


**FIGURE 3.4.** Braden-style divinities in sculpture (scale varies). (a) Grizzlyman, red claystone, height 23.4 cm, Sam Noble Natural History Museum, LfCrI B99-3. Identifying iconic elements are the hunched back, double hair-knots, bossed forehead, snarling mouth, and deer head in the left hand. Reproduced courtesy of the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History, Norman, Oklahoma. (b) Earthmother, limestone (?), height 25 cm, Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian 18/9112. Identifying iconic elements are the sacred bundle basket, basket in the right hand (behind basket), ear of corn in the left hand, and burden basket on her back. Reproduced courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian. (c) Turtleman, red claystone, height 24.8 cm, Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian 21/4088. Identifying iconic elements are the armor plates on the dorsal and ventral torso, helmet, and mace-shaped weapon cleaving the face of a smaller victim grasped at the foot. Reproduced courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of the American Indian. Photograph reproduced with permission of John Bigelow Taylor. (d) Birdman, red claystone, height 22.5 cm, University of Arkansas Museum UAM 47-2-1. Identifying iconic elements are the sacred bundle worn on the head with the plate inside uncovered, a single long hair braid, the necklace rope of shell beads, long-nosed ear maskettes, and a cape covered in feathers or scalps. Reproduced courtesy of the University of Arkansas Collection, Fayetteville. Photograph reproduced with permission of John Bigelow Taylor.

an unusual four-pronged “weeping eye” or could conform to the typical two-pronged form if the four lines are regarded as outlining the edges of each prong (Fig. 3.5a). The red color of the pipestone is deemed to be appropriate for honoring life (Ridington and Hastings 1997:152). Charcoal in the incisions provides a contrast with the red color of the catlinite (Ridington and Hastings 1997:144).

A related symbol of human fertility is the Long-Nosed God depicted as maskettes in the ears of Birdman/Morning Star (Hall 1997:145–154). Mythically the masks had the capacity to make faces on demand. This animate property suggests that they were minor spirits in their own right. Duncan and Diaz-Granados (2000, 2004:201) have advanced the thesis that they stand for the twin “Children of the Sun.”

An important life symbol present is the bilobed arrow emblem. Hall (1989) has elaborated on the history of the bilobed arrow, which has the calumet as its postcontact elaboration (Hall 1989, 1997:48–58). The feature that signifies continuity is the “arrow” in name and imagery. The name makes sense in terms of its reconstructed history (Brown 2007a; Hall 1989). The arrow shaft in pre-Columbian images is fitted into a drawn bow. The ends of the bow are



**FIGURE 3.5.**(a) Pipe of the Sacred Pole, side view; (b) Pipe of the Sacred Pole, bottom view; (c) Pipe of the White Buffalo. All redrawn from Ridington and Hastings 1997:Fig. 21a, b.

decorated with tufts of feathers (Phillips and Brown 1978:86). In later images the tufts are transformed into feather fans in the context of the arrow shaft separation into two calumet-style staffs.

While the sacred hawk/falcon has a central place in Osage cosmology, this bird has been marginalized in Omaha belief. As observed above, it has not been eliminated either in myth or in symbol.

#### EARTHMOTHER AND VEGETATIVE FERTILITY

Long-competing symbols of vegetative fertility are the puma and the serpent. The human counterpart of these two animals, and perhaps their controlling deity, is Corn Mother or Earthmother (Fig. 3.4b). They appear to have divided powers of fertility. In the Pawnee legend of Owl Medicine, the power of the puma and serpent is represented by their avatar the owl (Dorsey 1906:206–207). Their opposite was Morning Star, as represented by the Sacred Hawk in the Osage legend of the Patient Warrior (La Flesche 1939:9–11). The vulvar motif has been shown to be a recurrent symbolic representation of this female deity (Diaz-Granados 1993, 2004; Diaz-Granados and Duncan 2000). Another associated object is the lidded chest that probably depicts a deep floatweave sacred bundle. The Siouan “Old-Woman-Who-Never-Dies” is the mother of all things in the heavens and the Middle World, also known as the Corn Mother or Earthmother, depending on the group, location, and associated oral tradition (Diaz-Granados and Duncan 2004:143; Townsend and Sharp 2004:30).

In the White Buffalo Hide ritual equipment of the Omaha is a stone pipe bowl of the disk form that reveals the connection of the “keyhole” motif with female fertility (Ridington and Hastings 1997). It contrasts with the prow shape of the elbow pipe accompanying the pole bundle described above in connection with Morning Star. The flat circular disk has a forward projection that makes its outline resemble a keyhole (Fig. 3.5c). The outline duplicates the shape of the small sacred circle surrounding the cosmic pole in the camp circle center and the altar created to the immediate east from the dirt taken from the hole. The pipe bowl hole mimics the architecture of hole for the pole and the earthen altar. These correspondences between the sacred circle and the disk-bowl pipe provide a basic continuity in ritual female earth symbolism between the Omaha of today and the precontact past.

Earthmother holds power over fertility of the vegetative kind. One can posit two aspects to Old Woman: as the bearer of a backpack containing

agricultural seeds and as the guardian of a major sacred bundle represented by a large lidded box she protects either by sitting next to it or by laying her hands on it. The Birger Figurine and Schild Pipe are outstanding examples of the former (Emerson 1997a:205–206; Reilly 2004:133, Fig. 17a, b). The Westbrook, the Keller, and the West Figurines (based on the artistic restoration in Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2004:Figs. 12–14) and the so-called Mortar Figure pipe are examples of the latter (Burnett 1945:12–13; Emerson 1989:55; Reilly 2004:Figs. 1, 16). In the Westbrook Figurine we have “Corn Mother” as the provider of domestic plants (Reilly 2004:133, Fig. 1). To gain an appreciation of the potential interconnection of these images with other cycles, Reilly (2004:134, Fig. 17a, b) has placed them into the Morning Star myth cycle.

#### TURTLEMAN AND WARFARE

While the Morning Star spirit constitutes a certain vision of battle tied to human regeneration, Turtleman embodies outright prowess (Brown 2007b; Brown and Dye 2007). Turtle is a warrior figure embodied in red stone statuary (Brown 1996; Radin 1948). The figures sculpted in stone depict the defeat of a captive (Fig. 3.4c). They bear their turtle identity in the warrior’s distinct carapacelike body armor protecting the front and back of his torso. The rounded helmet recalls the shape of a turtle’s head. The “Conquering Warrior” pipe figure represents a warrior hero (Dye 2004:198–199, Fig. 16a–b; Reilly 2004:133). I interpret the two Crouching Warrior effigy pipes found at Spiro as representing the hero Turtle. This great mythic war captain among the Omaha, Osage, and Ho-Chunk figures in at least two separate myth cycles. The figures sculpted in stone depict the defeat of a captive.

Fletcher and La Flesche (1911:38) point out that a turtle group is present in each tribe (Omaha, Osage, Kansa, and Quapaw) as a “subclan,” charged as “the keepers of the turtle rites of the tribe” (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:38). The myth “How Big Turtle Went on the Warpath” was collected from the Omaha (Welsch 1981:203–216). Big Turtle is a great warrior who led a team of warrior spirits to battle. They overcame their adversaries by changing into their innate form as an animal, an object, or a force of nature. Armed with the power of fire or a rock or a turtle, they could outperform any of their human adversaries. Fletcher and La Flesche (1911:332) add other survival-conferring details to turtle’s power. Swallowing a turtle’s heart will make one’s heart strong. “The turtle is hard to kill; even when the heart is cut out it

will still quiver and the turtle's head will be able to bite after it is severed from the body" (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:332).

Osage warriors paid dearly for the privilege of being tattooed. The patterns created were declared to be aspects of warfare. Louis Burns (1985:133) lists the sacred ceremonial knife, the sacred pipe, and the thirteen sunrays. The sacred knife tattoo ran vertically down the chest. The sacred pipes slanted upward away from the knife over shoulders. The thirteen sunrays ran parallel with the pipes from the chest and over the shoulders.

### GRIZZLYMAN

Yet to be placed into a particular cycle is the power that I have called "Grizzlyman" (Brown 2004:122). The sole exemplar of this deity is a figurine of red claystone from Spiro converted into a pipe (Brown 1996; Emerson et al. 2003) (Fig. 3.4a). The Braden style is unmistakable. This figurine combines features of dwarfism (the hunched back and enlarged head with prominent bossing on the sides of the forehead) with an open, gap-toothed, snarling mouth and a pair of hair-knots that Richard Zurel (2002) has shown to be signature markers of the grizzly bear in frontal view. What is relevant here is the presence of a naming symbol in the figurine composition: the deer head is clasped in its left hand. This kenning for "deer head" or *tapa'* is the name for the constellation Pleiades (La Flesche 1932). Here we have a deity that resides in or more plausibly embodies the constellation itself. The combination of body features and deer head suggests some sort of arch-shaman. Reilly (2004:133, Fig. 18), however, has identified this "Grizzly Man" with the leader of the Giants. How Grizzlyman and the Giants are related remains to be studied.

### SPIDER AND PRIMORDIAL LIFE

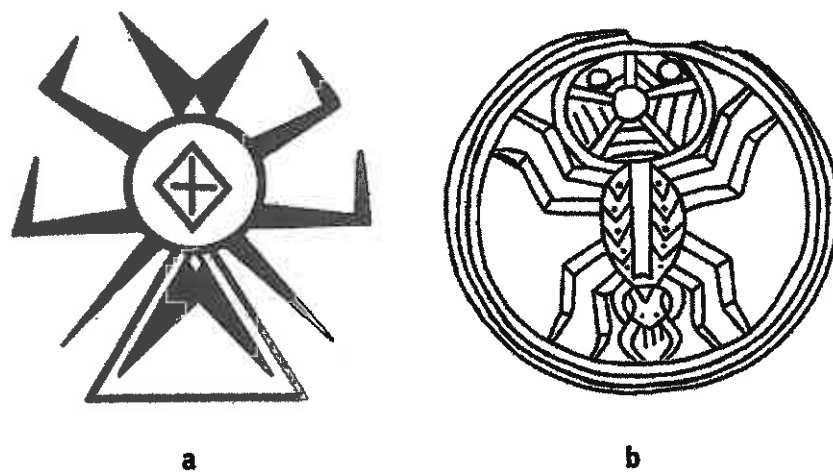
The spider and its web are an icon for life as a primordial principle. Both are sometimes associated with Earthmother (Fig. 3.6) (La Flesche 1918). The spider motif on gorgets can be related to the spiderweb spun by Earthmother (Diaz-Granados 2004; Diaz-Granados and Duncan 2004; Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2000, 2004). Osage believe the spiderweb is a snare, *ho e ka* (Fig. 3.7). According to La Flesche (1932:63), it is "a term for an enclosure in which all life takes on bodily form, never to depart therefrom except by death. It stands for the earth which the mythical elk made to be habitable by

separating it from the water." In other words, it "refers to the ancient conception of life as proceeding from the combined influences of the cosmic forces." Among the Pawnee, Spider Woman is equated with the lunar deity and with the cultivation of squash (Prentice 1986:258, citing Dorsey 1906:211–213). Prentice (1986:251–254) has covered the wide-ranging variations of this deity in the Eastern Woodlands.

Louis Burns (1985:133) described an elaborate tattoo on a high-status woman's chest, back, and arms. She "had two small circles tattooed, one over the other, centered between the eyebrows. Her chest, back arms, hands, and lower legs were tattooed with geometric designs. These were stylizations of the sun, moon, stars, and the earth from which all life originated. Running from her shoulder and down her arm to the wrist were symbols representing life in all forms descending to earth." The possibility that late nineteenth-century Omaha and Osage uses of the tattoo (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:397; La Flesche 1925:Pls. 15, 16, 17) are a continuation of Late Braden images needs to be pursued (Phillips and Brown 1978:Pl. 55).

#### THE SERPENT AND THE AFTERWORLD

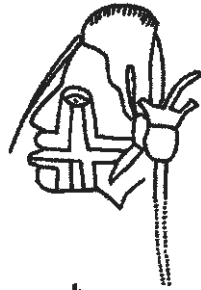
The serpent and the puma stand as different forms of the life-taking spirit/deity (Brown 1997). Lankford (2007d) has argued that universally the "Great Serpent" is made to represent the Beneath World. When it is displayed as winged, he contends, the reference is not to the serpent's appearance but



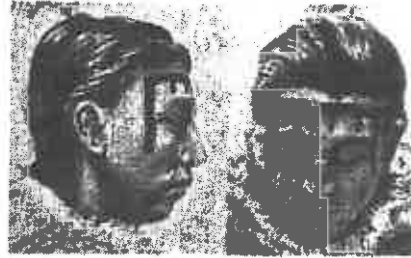
**FIGURE 3.6.** Spider imagery through the ages: (a) a conventional image of the spider tattooed on the backs of both hands of Osage women of honor (La Flesche 1921:106); (b) McAdams-type shell gorget (Holmes 1883).



a



b



c

**FIGURE 3.7.** *Ho e ka* in early usage and in the Late Braden style: (a) *ho e ka* variation according to Burns (1985:Fig. 12); (b) *ho e ka* image from a Late Braden engraved shell cup surface (Phillips and Brown 1978:Pl. 55); (c) *ho e ka* painted on the face of the Xo' ka in the Osage Rite of Vigil (La Flesche 1925:Pls. 16, 17).

to the snake flying in the night sky (Lankford 2007d). This identification of the wing as a locative makes the wingless image conform more closely to the Beneath World serpent known from Southeastern myth and dovetails nicely with Reilly's argument (2004, 2007c) that certain other images from Spiro are also locative signs for depicting the Beneath World spirits in the night sky. Lankford (2007a) has elaborated on the winged serpent and Piasa as such a night sky deity. The winged serpent is emblematic of Lankford's (2007a, 2007b) cult of the Path of the Souls. This cycle is present as a distinct iconic system in the Hemphill and Craig styles sometime around AD 1275, about the same time the oblong-shaped scalp emblem emerges (Brown 2007a). The feature that helps isolate this particular image from serpents in general is the "lazy J" or "rocker-rail" curve to its lower edge. Lankford (2007d:206) has argued that this distinctive bow-shaped curvature to the snake "belly" mimics one way of connecting the stars in the constellation of Scorpio. This constellation rises only just above the horizon during the summer months. The deities connected with night and death have sky identities even though they may be thought of primarily as Beneath World powers. A well-known representation combined the puma and serpent with wings to become the Piasa of postcontact times in the Upper Mississippi Valley (Brown 1997; Phillips and Brown 1978). As a life-taking monster this spirit was widely feared. This

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cycle is presumably connected with the motifs of skulls and long bones. It is contemporary with the appearance of the winged Piasa, the terrace rainbow motif, and the circular scalp lock (Brown 2007a).

### COMPLEXITIES

Not everything is straightforward. Indeed, many perplexities remain. On the cultural side there is the fact that spirits/deities have what could be considered overlapping domains. For instance, life, birth, and fertility are shared in certain ways among the spider, Birdman, Earthmother, and even the serpent. Conversely, many different narrative cycles involve the same key spirit of Earthmother (Prentice 1986; Reilly 2004). This multiple involvement is likely to be more pervasive than we can document today. All of this is complicated by shifts that have taken place through time in the meaning and context of specific icons among different compositions (Brown 2005).

On the symbol side complexity is manifest in the blurred distinctions in images that appear to have very different histories or origins. An outstanding case is the seemingly vague distinction between the Sacred Hawk and the Thunderbird. Whereas the Sacred Hawk is derivative of the twelfth-century falcon, the Thunderbird of postcontact times is associated with the powers of thunder and lightning. As an all-encompassing conflation of birds it has dominated the discussion of bird symbolism in precontact times. Indeed, given the level of discussion to date, one might even assert that they are simply two faces to the same entity.

Such a stance ignores the fact that the Omaha, the Osage, and the Ho-Chunk never confuse the two major avian spirits. Among them the Great Thunderbird is the swallow-tailed kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) or "blackhawk." Blackhawk also figures prominently in Osage rites, along with four other kinds of hawk. The skins in the Omaha Sacred War Pack include this bird (Fletcher and La Flesche 1911:412-413). This leaves the Sacred Hawk to be assigned to another species.

One solution to the problem of discrimination is to decide on the basis of ideologically sensitive attributes. The Thunderbird figures as a cosmic instrument in the perpetual battle between the forces of the sky (and life) and earth (and death). If this is held to be a primary role for the Thunderbird, then the behavior of the swallow-tailed kite fits the bill. This bird preys upon snakes and is frequently sighted in wetland areas seeking out these reptiles. I might add that the bald eagle feeds on fish and can be viewed as another instrument



of Above World forces arrayed against those of the Beneath World. With these behavioral attributes in mind the courageous combat of the Sacred Hawk as it is celebrated in legendary combat with the night owl fits an entirely different bird (Brown 2007b; La Flesche 1939:9–11). This legend is recorded for both the Osage and Omaha (Welsch 1981:234–237). Of the power-diving hawks, the peregrine falcon holds top marks, although some of the other species of true falcons (American kestrel, prairie falcon, merlin) could also perform this hunting behavior. Thus, conceptually at least, the hunting behaviors of the various bird species help sort out their potential attachment to distinct powers.

Robert Warren's (2007) compilation of Thunderbird images did not recognize the forked tail as a distinctive marker. Instead, he illustrates the fantail of the hawk, which is particularly prominent when breaking flight. These shell effigies are more likely to be Birdmen than Thunderbirds in the strict sense of the term, particularly when they bear spots on the breast and even collar markings. Their dated age is likewise contemporary with Birdman imagery to the Woodland East. Warren found that these carved shell images were distributed among the Missouri River agricultural sites as early as the Initial Middle Missouri Variant (AD 1000–1200) and were more common throughout the Extended Middle Missouri Variant (AD 1200–1400). Even more than the engraved shell and copper repoussé images of hawks these relatively small but ubiquitous shell images have a distribution that is very telling about the significance of hawk (or falcon) symbolism throughout the Eastern Plains and the Middle Missouri Valley. They make their presence at precisely the time when the more exclusive images were being created in the Mississippi Valley.

One observation will be offered on the appearance of the same icon or spirit in more than one thematic cycle. Earthmother and Birdman are implicated in this example. A prominent icon shown with Earthmother is the deep-set chest/bundle she appears to guard. Is there something significant contained within such a large bundle? A plausible answer to the question comes from the depiction of Birdman with Phillips's "founce" worn around his midriff (Phillips and Brown 1978:Fig. 268). This article looks suspiciously like a basket burst through the top and bottom, with the warps and wefts carefully delineated. James Duncan (personal communication) has pointed out that Birdman could be depicted in the process of emerging from the basket—perhaps coming to full size in the process. Note that Kent Reilly (2007a,

personal communication) has identified as a bundle the small, thin flat-tablet worn on Birdman's forehead. If this narrative line has merit, it would be a case for a linkage between the Earthmother and the Birdman mythic cycles. It is not irrelevant that in Duncan's reconstruction of the Osage pantheon Earthmother stands in the parental role with respect to Morning Star and other deities, whose common characteristic is that they rise and fall in the heavens in a way that fosters their birth and death as a trope (Duncan and Diaz-Granados 2000).

### Conclusion

Cosmivision is such a strong manifestation of cultural ideology that arguably it is highly resistant to changes induced by European colonization. Consequently, associated imagery is presumed to be likely to carry across that event and well into the present (Brown 2007b). In the Dhegiha Siouan case cosmivision provides a bridge from the nineteenth-century present to the Braden art style past in the absence of an archaeologically demonstrated bridge. Finding ancient material traces of beliefs for which we have no intelligible texts depends greatly on an adequate characterization of Dhegihan cosmogony. Not only do belief and practice have to transfer to material culture, but a control of the relevant iconography is required as well. The Omaha were taken as representative to simplify the argument. A more complete study should make use of additional material and that of the other Dhegiha as well—particularly the Osage.

The regional framework adopted here follows the now-recognized patterning of Mississippian-period art styles. By assuming that these styles are material manifestations of specific languages, meanings can be inferred for particular iconographic contexts and, by projection, the devices of specific languages. This framework also reinforces a model of social geography that reminds us that—given the large spaces involved—there had to be more limited fields of communication than the entire subcontinent (King 2007a, 2007b, 2007c; Knight 2006; Reilly 2007c).

The earth-sky duality is deemed to be critical in Dhegihan cosmology because it underwrites an ideology of warfare as a prelude to human reproduction. The imagery discussed here is not restricted to the Prairie-Forest border and the Upper Mississippi Valley. The essentials of the belief system and cosmology are widely shared throughout the East. However, the

principles embodied in the earth-sky dualism have created a specific version of this system that is linked visually to the Braden style. Examples of this style are particularly strong in representing the Sacred Hawk (as Morning Star) and the Earthmother cycles, both of which are strongly related to plant, animal, and human generation. Multiple connections link the two. Both are displayed in bundle rites under the control of clans associated with the Sky moiety, which (as I have explained) see the night sky and daytime as phases of the same principle.

The creating of human figure identity through the deployment of distinctive dress (and undress) and the use of ancillary symbols is a characteristic of the Braden style. To a virtually unparalleled extent, far greater attention is paid to symbols that identify not only a particular deity but also its particular place in mythic time. Dhegiha still honor these spirits, albeit not divorced from a human aspect.

#### NOTES

**AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:** I am grateful for the critical comments offered by Carol Diaz-Granados, James Duncan, John Kelly, and George Lankford. The insight they provided has improved the chapter.

1. The only other groups that adopted the earth-sky ideology were the Algonkian-speaking tribes of the Illinois, Miami, and Menominee, who plausibly had extended contact with Siouan-speaking peoples before the arrival of the French (Brown 1991:88–89).

2. The date has another potential significance: the Pole Star is angled approximately the same as the ecliptic, thus making Polaris and the sun approximately equidistant from an alignment projecting directly above the He'dewachi post.

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