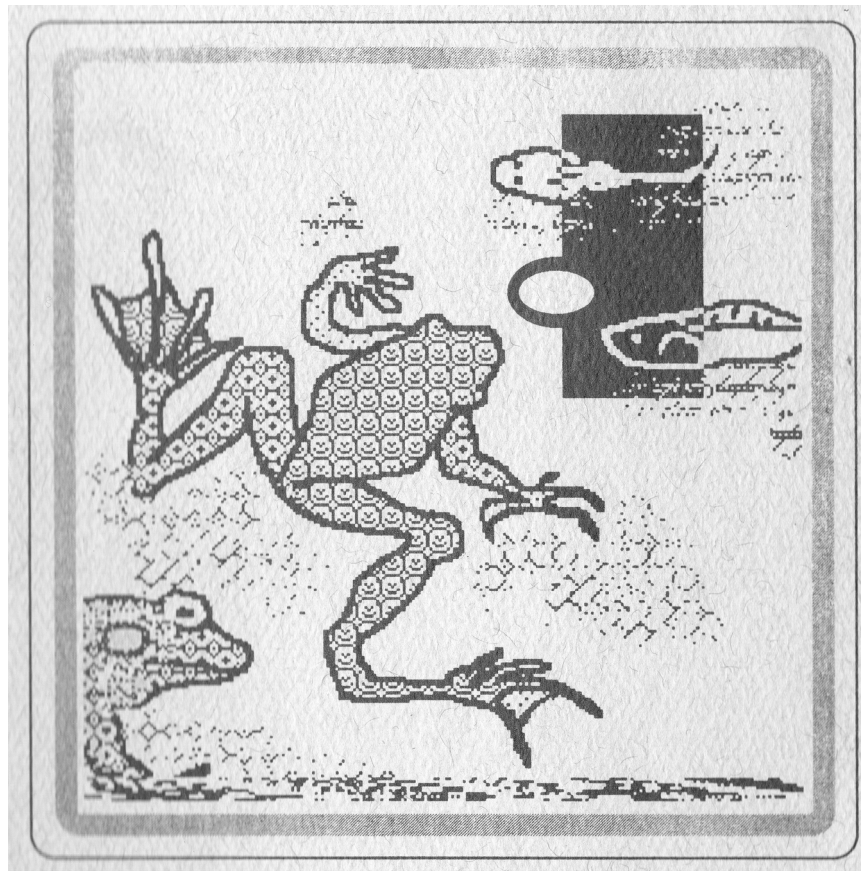


When Frog Stole the Waters

When Frog Stole the Waters

Frog Symbolism



Dr. John Anderson

Native American Mythology

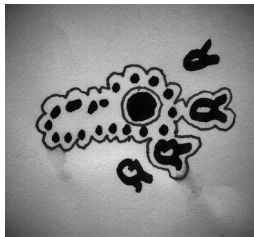
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When Frog Stole The Waters



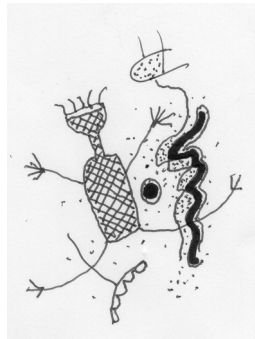
When Material Well-being Floods the Middle World

(Cornucopia Tales)



© 2020 Second Edition,
1996 first edition

John M. Anderson has published numerous books on native American mythology from the western United States. This book is the second in a four book series which began with *The Fast Thinker*, a study of Kootenai Indian gambling ethics featuring a very smart Frog.



Native American mythology, Folk Lore, Frogs, Cornucopia, drought, Transformation of First People, Water Animals, Coyote, California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Maine, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick (Canada), Native American: Chumash, Karok, Kootenai, Pomo, Kalapuya, Passamaquoddy, Micmac, Yakima.

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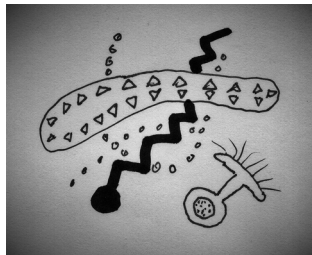
' This chronicle takes the reader on an exciting adventure into the field of Native American folklore. Following the tradition of Joseph Campbell and John Peabody Harrington, Anderson draws from a wealth of authentic stories, legends and oral histories recorded from respected tribal elders.

Everyone should read for themselves and their children the folklore series of Dr. John Anderson. This book delves into the symbolism of ancient frog stories from around the world. Like a skipping stone, the reader is whisked away to savor legendary samplings from California, Washington, and Oregon, as well as along the Atlantic seaboard and across the water in Europe. His multicultural approach helps people share in a greater sense of global heritage.

Dr. Gregory Schaaf,
Director, Center for Indigenous Arts & Cultures,
Santa Fe, New Mexico

"My interest in John's books connects with my work as a story teller. His writings help me to 'think' about Chumash folk tales from new perspectives. I am especially pleased with this new book, because it brings forward the rich symbolism of the frog in native California lore."

Pilulaw Khus,
Chumash Elder and story teller,
Santa Barbara County schools, Southern California





Frogs

In the first book in this series, the awkward Frog triumphed in a race against the fastest runner in the world, the Antelope. The Frog leader was proclaimed a hero by his people.

In this second publication, Anderson responds to questions from readers wanting to better understand why native Americans honored the lowly frog in their folk tales. Did the frog have a special status that most of us never learned about?

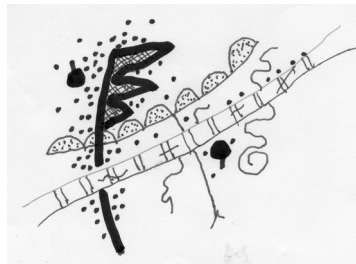


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Help Preserve The Frogs

Ancient man venerated the frog, associating it in myth with the blessings of abundant crops and drinking water. Frogs are found all over the earth, having adapted remarkably to diverse environments. Because they breathe through both their skins and lungs, they are especially susceptible to pollution.

Many species of frogs are now becoming endangered and face extinction. They serve as bellwether species whose demise forewarn us of serious imbalance in our water supply. Contributing greatly to their high death rate are deforestation and destruction of the world's wetlands.

Introduction

Habitat for frogs needs to be preserved in our modern world of rapid development. One way to gain public support for protecting wetlands where frogs live is to educate people about the deep reverence in which the frog is held in native American mythology.

The frog, often called Frog Woman in the tales featured in this text, was the ruler of fresh waters in the ancient world. She guarded the springs and creeks, and ordered them to dry up when she was offended by the foolish behavior of humans.

In some native American stories she simply sat on an opening to a spring and became bloated as she swallowed all of the water rather than letting it escape into the stream bed. In some related tales, however, Frog Woman is described as a great weaver. She collected the water in a giant basket which she expanded in size as the water rose higher and higher in her container.

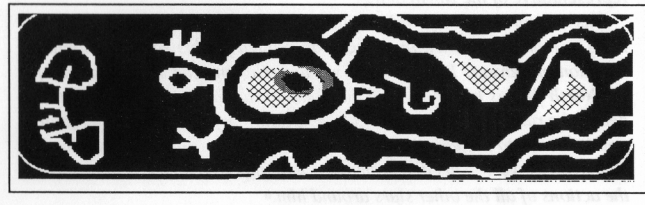
A drought resulted from her impoundment of the waters, and the people began to suffer greatly. Frog-woman remained indifferent to their plight, no matter what prayers were chanted by the spiritual leaders. Finally a cultural hero, a man of action, took up the challenge and succeeded in locating Frog's secret hoard of water. He pleaded with Frog, but was ignored. Finally, he resorted to stabbing the bloated frog or ripping open her basket and thus releasing the pent up waters.

These events take place in mythic time. The escaping waters rush down the stream beds and rapidly erode the land. As a result, the cultural hero becomes known as the World Transformer. Mythic time comes to a close, but not before the First People are transmuted. They become the animals of the contemporary ecology, including many fishes, crabs, and shellfish of our stream and ocean environments.

The first book in this series features a heroic racing Frog. The stories in this sequel provide confirmation of the frequent appearance of influential frogs in native American mythology.

*John Anderson
September 1996*

Chapter one



The Frog Is a Clever Animal



The first book in this series is called *The Fast Thinker*. In the opening narrative, told by a Kootenai Indian, the frog's leader challenged the fastest runner in the world, the Antelope, to a race. Variants of this racing story are told by native peoples from across the world.

The slow-moving Kootenai Frog won the race by cheating the Antelope. He ordered his followers to hide in the reeds of the nearby river so they were concealed just one hop apart. None of the frogs became tired during the race, as each had to jump only a short distance until the next took over. Since all frogs looked alike to the arrogant Antelope, he never suspected that he was running against a multitude of competitors; and he lost his wealth and his pride as a result.

At first consideration, frogs seem odd candidates for heroic roles. They do not seem to be of special importance in the scheme of things. They live in swamps and backwaters located far from the important affairs of towns and human government centers.¹ Yet in story after story, they cleverly overcome physically stronger rivals. In the frog and antelope racing story, you might say that the rural hick out-thought the city slicker, and he did this effortlessly without even exerting himself.²

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Astronomical Riddles

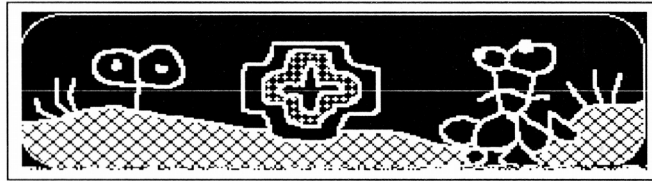
I proposed in book one of this series that the Kootenai Frog story could best be understood as a riddle with an astronomical solution. According to this interpretation the Frog, who never showed any remorse for cheating his opponent, overcame all his obstacles because he was a representative of the North Star.³

This interpretation not only explained the seeming indifference of the Frog to human morality, but it also accounted for his secluded habitat and non-movement. In many of the world's religions, the remote locale of the North Star is believed to be the home of the most powerful celestial deity, the ruler of the sky. Typically, this non-moving deity is the creator god.⁴ In Plato's theology, for example, he is described as the Greek Unmoved Mover.⁵ This deity remained motionless, and yet he controlled the actions of all the other stars around him.⁶

In the tales that follow, the Frog once again appears as an important folk persona. Although both male and female frogs are shown to be immensely forceful, none of them are praised as brilliant thinkers. Instead, the shared theme in this selection of stories is the frog's hoarding of all the fresh waters of the world, causing tragic droughts. The streams dry up and the people begin dying of thirst. The selfish frogs remain frustratingly indifferent to the suffering of others. At such times of crisis, cultural heroes come forth who announce that they will explore the world until they discover the cause of the catastrophic droughts.



Chapter Two



Pomo Frog Stories

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Dedicated amphibiophiles celebrate the status of frogs in ancient mythology. They, and other students of the frog, are not surprised at all when admiration is shown in folk lore for these wetland dwellers.

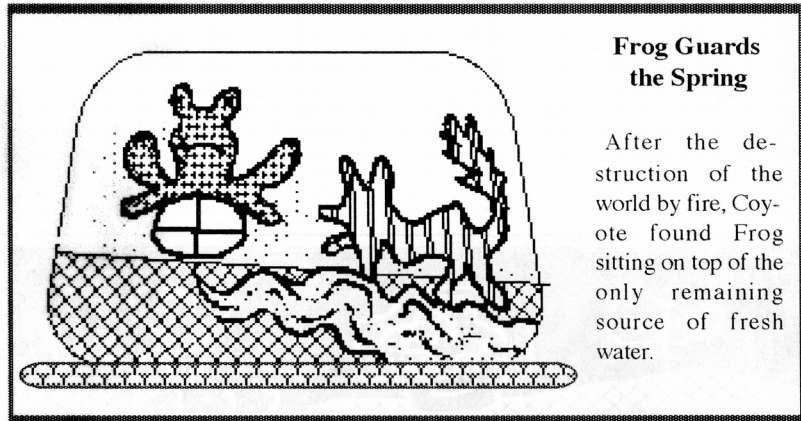
Pomo Indian myths celebrate the important role played by the frog in mythic times. Frog was not a great racer or a brilliant intellectual in their stories, but rather a potent water spirit, fundamentally impacting the lives of the Pomo in times of life-threatening drought.

Frog Hoards All the Water

A surprising number of Pomo folk stories describe how, in mythic times, Frog disturbed the social equilibrium by drinking up huge quantities of water. The lives of the rest of the animals of the world were threatened, as a drought swept the land. The trees and grasses became so dry that when a fire was started in the brush, it could not be controlled. The flames spread and spread, until the whole world was burning.⁷

A classic example of such a world conflagration story was told by the Pomo narrator J. Beatty in 1904. He described in this tale how the First People were destroyed by the antics of Trickster Coyote, when in one of his scheming episodes he set the world on fire and then climbed up into the heavens to escape the holocaust. Descending slowly back down after the earth began to cool, Coyote discovered that he had not planned well. All the fresh water was gone! He was dismayed at this

development and began wandering all over, looking for water to drink. He found none until he happened upon Frog who was guarding a spring near the present town of Ukiah, California. Coyote asked politely for a drink, but Frog refused to move from his place over the magical spring which held all the remaining water in the world.



Realizing that he could not move Frog from the source of water, Coyote finally gave up and traveled all the way to the Pacific Ocean to take a drink. At this time, the ocean was still fresh, and Coyote became grossly bloated as he drank and drank. He returned inland, struggling across the dusty hills which were still dried up from the world fire. Eventually Coyote threw up all the water in his stomach, creating Clear lake which became a primary fishing site for the inland Pomo.⁸

Other Pomo Tales

This narrative is not unique in Pomo lore, but fits into a popular series of water hoarding tales associated with drought and world burning. In most of these stories, the Frog remains an unmoving character who callously refuses Coyote's pleading for water.⁹ Coyote begs in desperation, but the water guardian remains unsympathetic.¹⁰ Coyote tries and tries to push and shove the unmoving Frog but finally has to give up and take a long journey to find an alternative source of water.

In most narratives this secondary source is the ocean, which was still fresh in mythic times. Coyote is forced on a long trek and is exhausted when he finally arrives at the ocean. Lacking discipline he cannot refrain from over drinking, however, and gets sick to his stomach while traveling inland to the Clear Lake valley.¹¹ Here he either throws up the water or has his bloated belly pierced so the water is released in a flood.¹² Thus it is Coyote (or someone who pierced his belly) who introduces water back into the Pomo parched earth, not Frog who continued to hoard her source of water.¹³

A European version

Cornucopia myths associating frogs and toads with the unleashing of water are not restricted to North America Indian lore. The Grimm brothers of Germany, for example, recorded an interesting variant of this narrative type.

In this tale, the hero is challenged to discover why a magic fountain which flowed with wine has gone dry. The hero goes down to hell and learns from the devil that: "A toad is sitting under a stone in the fountain. You must find it and kill it, then the fountain will give plenty of wine again."

Note that this Germanic hero is associated with other water imagery. He is born, for example, with his caul over his head, the membrane protecting the fetus. Like Moses, he is set adrift to die on a river but is found by a miller who raises him. And finally, he triumphs over his greedy adversary by tricking him into ferrying souls across the river near hell.¹⁷

Frog, named *Kawo*, is described in many of these tales as a weaver of baskets. She is often associated with *Cakawolo*, the Salamander who is another Pomo water persona.¹⁴ The two of them were the only people who were not killed by the world fire.¹⁵ Not surprisingly, neither of them showed the least sympathy for the suffering of Coyote who started the fires.¹⁶

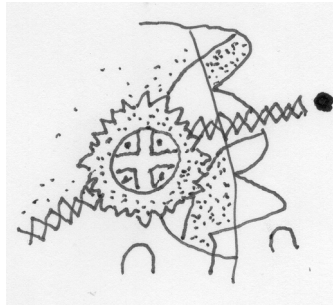
Classic Pole Star Symbolism

In all of these tales, we can see numerous clues suggesting an association of Frog with the unmoving North Star. So let us turn to another narrative where the frog's immobility is further emphasized.

In this tale, Coyote burns the dance house of a Pomo village, in retaliation for the killing of his mother by hot rocks. He became very thirsty after the fire, and began looking for water. Eventually, Coyote stumbled upon Old Frog-woman and immediately begged her for water. Frog-woman replied that she had none, reassuring him with the plea: "I am so thirsty that I cannot produce any saliva."¹⁸ Since Frog was a renowned basket maker, who relied on saliva to soften her weaving stems so they would bend properly, Coyote felt compassion for his host. Reluctantly, he said good-by and trotted off to the southwest, where Frog-woman assured him he could find water in a pond.¹⁹ Here Turtle told him to return to Frog-woman, advising Coyote that Frog had deceived him.²⁰

Coyote was shocked to find Frog contentedly weaving a new basket when he went back.²¹ He was furious at her deception and demanded that she move over. Frog replied, "I cannot get up. I am very old and lame."²² That is why I have no water, I cannot walk about to get it." Coyote was so suspicious that he threatened to kill Frog if she did not show him the water. She tried to win his sympathy by complaining that she was so immobile that she could not even lie down when she tried to sleep.²³

Coyote became impatient with Frog-woman's excuses and threatened to shoot her in the heart. She reluctantly moved over a few hops, to reveal "cool water directly under her."²⁴

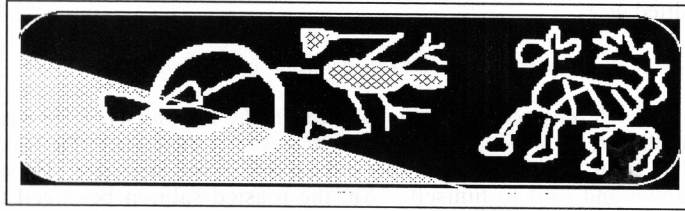


Coyote hoards the Water

In the above story, as in a series of related Pomo tales, Coyote showed no restraint once he located water but gulped it down. His gluttony led to a bellyache and a vomiting of the water which caused a flood. In a variant of the above story, for example, Coyote found Frog Woman guarding the world's water while weaving a huge basket.²⁵ She denied that she had any water, so Coyote left her to look elsewhere.

As he reached the hilltop, however, Coyote looked back and saw a glint of the water in the sunlight. Rushing back in anger, he threw Frog Woman off the spring and drank up all the water at once. Coyote thus replaced Frog as the hoarder of water. He dragged his huge belly on the ground, until he lay down in exhaustion. Soon a girl came along, and jabbed Coyote "just below the floating ribs with a sort of cane which she carried." The water ran out, filling much of the Clear Lake drainage.²⁶

Chapter Three



A Chumash Frog Story

Xuse Suluemeait was a Chumash Indian. His people speak Chumashan which is a distinct language from Pomo, yet they share many mythological traditions including frog lore.

A particularly interesting Chumash story involves Coyote and Frog. One day Coyote was very hungry when he came upon a fire which Frog had built near the road. Frog was slowly roasting a salmon, and its tail was sticking out of the ashes. Suluemeait prepared his audience for Coyote's behavior at this point by explaining that Coyote was a real scoundrel. "Sometimes he pretended to be deaf or blind, and he feigned anything he thought might be advantageous for his purpose."²⁸ Thus it was not surprising that Coyote showed no self discipline. He just walked over to the fire and began talking to himself about the wonderful smelling salmon.

Soon Xelex, the hawk, flew overhead and circled three times.²⁹ Coyote interpreted this encircling as an omen, giving him permission to eat Frog's dinner. So he ate all the salmon, except the bones which he quickly buried back under the coals so as to hide his theft. Then, with a very full belly, lazy Coyote fell asleep under a nearby tree.

"While he was sleeping, Frog, whose fish Coyote had eaten, came to get the salmon. He took hold of the tail and pulled it out of the ashes, only to find a skeleton left. Frog exclaimed, "Ah, in all the world there is only one person who could have done this -- Coyote! But never mind. I won't urinate now, and all the springs will dry up. Coyote will be thirsty and thus I'll pay him back!" Frog withdrew into his house and tied the door shut, and the springs soon dried up.³⁰

The ritual name for spring water is 'Frog Urine'

Frog Woman Is Queen of the Waters

In another Chumash tale from the Santa Barbara area of California, Frog was a female married to Coyote. She became exasperated with Coyote's selfishness and ordered the springs to stop flowing and the streams to become dry.

Lazy Coyote sent each of their sixteen sons farther and farther in search of water, but none could be found. So Coyote became desperate and went himself. When his futile search took him to the top of a deep canyon in the mountains, Frog released the pent up waters in a sudden flood which swept foolish Coyote all the way to the ocean. Ashamed, Coyote turned himself into a *Laxux* fish and his sixteen sons were transformed as well, proving that Frog was indeed "queen of the waters."³⁴

"Pretty soon Coyote woke up, and he was thirsty.³¹ He went to the stream to get a drink, but there was only dust where the water had been. He went to another stream and it was also dry. He sat down and said to himself, 'Ah, the roasted salmon belonged to Frog.' He hurried off to Frog's house, and when he arrived there he stood outside the door and shouted, 'Frog, give me some water! I'm dying of thirst!' Frog didn't answer. Again Coyote shouted, 'Frog, give me some water, I can't stand it any longer!' Frog still didn't answer, and finally Coyote said, 'I give up. Frog, just you wait!'"³²

So Coyote decided to get revenge, and he set Frog's house on fire.³³ It exploded into flames and burned to the ground. To Coyote's amazement, Frog emerged from the ashes unharmed. He had protected himself by digging a big hole and urinating into it. When he was forced to urinate, all the streams and rivers flowed with water once again. So Coyote rushed over to take a drink, and then came back to talk to Frog. To his surprise Frog announced that he didn't blame Coyote for the whole affair. Instead, he declared that Hawk was responsible and offered Coyote some wise advice.

"Don't cheat or deceive any poor soul," Frog cautioned while prophesying that Coyote would soon meet a woman.³⁶ This turned out to be Pack rat, who became suspicious and withdrew into her home when Coyote appeared. Coyote lacked the discipline to follow Frog's good advice, which included the admonition to speak to strange women only outdoors where one is in public view. But Coyote wanted to eat Pack rat, so he tried to get in her home. Failing to gain entry, he set her house on fire (while pretending that he only wanted to kill any rattlesnakes that might be in the dwelling).

The slow moving Pack rat tried to escape the flames, but Coyote

caught her in his jaws. As he opened his mouth to brag of his victory, Pack rat slipped from his mouth and escaped down a nearby hole.³⁷ By failing to heed Frog's advice, Coyote remained hungry.

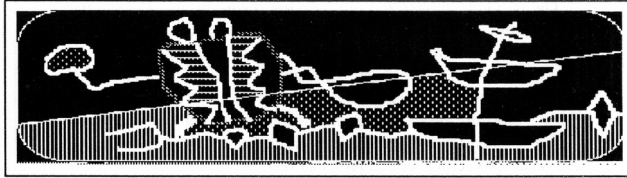
For further discussion: see Drought in the glossary.



The Pack Rat As a Hoarder

The narrator emphasized the weaving theme by introducing the Pack Rat in the final passages of the tale. The Pack Rat is called *Ci* in Chumash, and it is a renowned 'weaver' of nests which get as wide as three feet. The *Ci* builds these structures with intertwined twigs and other plant fibers and then fills the enclosure with all kinds of found things. Basically a nocturnal animal, the Pack Rat is drawn to crystals and other objects which shine in the night.³⁵ Coyote's reference to a rattlesnake protecting her den probably refers to the crystals which are 'sharp' and possess great powers.

Chapter Four



An Algonquin Frog Story

This Algonquin story from New England is virtually identical to Pomo myths featuring the Pacific frog. Just as in the Pomo tradition, all the water creatures of the Atlantic seaboard were created when Frog's waters were released.

This narrative takes place in mythic time, when all the fresh water in the creeks of the North Atlantic coast dried up. It was recorded by Tomah Josephs, who learned it from his Passamaquoddy and Micmac relatives.³⁸ It tells how a north Atlantic folk hero named Glooskap defeated a monstrous Bullfrog.³⁹

A terrible drought threatened the existence of many Algonquin towns, so the tribal leaders appointed an investigator to explore the stream above their village until he could determine what was blocking its flow. After he had traveled three days he found that a dam had been raised, so that no water could pass. He questioned the people maintaining the dam, as to why they had made this mischief. They told him to go and see their chief, the Bullfrog. The hero found him laying in the mud "more a monster than a man, though he had a human form."⁴⁰ For he was immense to measure, like a giant, fat, bloated, and brutal to behold. His great yellow eyes stuck from his head like pine-knots, his mouth went almost from ear to ear, and he had broad, skinny feet with long toes, exceedingly marvelous."⁴¹

The visitor politely asked the Bullfrog to release water for those living downstream, but the monster refused in a terrifying voice, letting only a trickle loose from his dam. Returning home, the investigator watched as the creek dried up again within a few days.

Glooskap felt pity for the people, and decided to come to their rescue. He went upstream to the Bullfrog's village, where the townspeople were impolite to him. Offering the hero only a tiny cup of dirty water, they explained that the Bullfrog kept almost all of it for himself. Glooskap became angry and insulted the Bullfrog calling him a "Thing of Mud."⁴²

But the awesome Bullfrog refused to be intimidated. The demon sat immobile, until the distraught hero thrust a spear into his belly, releasing a mighty flood of water which rushed out over the middle earth to fill its creeks and rivers.⁴³ Glooskap seized the monster in his mighty grip, permanently marking his back with wrinkles, and threw him contemptuously into the rushing flood waters.⁴⁴ Immediately, all of the villagers (the First People) living at the Bullfrog's dam were magically turned into the animals of the contemporary wetlands, such as the crabs, frogs, leeches, and fish.

Tomah Josephs ends this story with a passage remarkably similar to Pomo tradition: "And the river came rushing and roaring on, and they all went head-long down to the sea, to be washed into many lands over all the world."⁴⁵

Glooskap As Variant of Coyote

The Algonquin cultural hero called Glooskap may spring from roots in very ancient North American mythology. Like Coyote in western tribal myth, this Atlantic coastal hero played an important part in designing the first humans. He named the animals, and assigned each to their proper ecological niche. Charles Leland was so impressed with the Glooskap persona that he described him as a "divinity."⁴⁶ Leland's praise went so far as to describe him as "the ruler of both men and beasts."⁴⁷

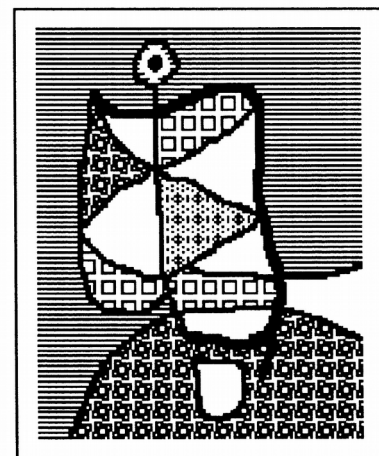
The Loons were Glooskap's favorite messengers, praising him as an earth

Prophetic Heroes End the Drought

After he assigned all the animals to their proper place in the environment, Glosskap also created humans. He subsequently became (like Coyote in the Chumash tales) the protector of humanity. It was thus inevitable that he would come in conflict with Bullfrog when he cut off fresh water from humans.

On the Pacific coast the Chumash Indians called Coyote *Sipisiwas*, meaning a diviner, and the Algonquin *Glooskap* on the Atlantic coast was also admired as a diviner. "He sees everything, the narratives tell us, with his inward eye."⁵²

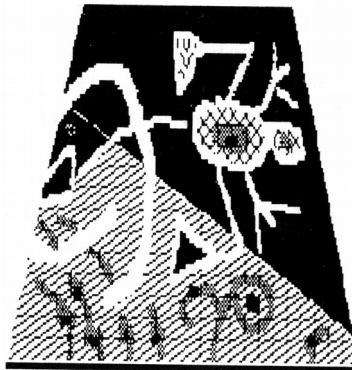
Only such great heroes, with their prophetic powers, could have succeeded in locating and releasing the impounded waters of the remote Water Monster and put an end to mythic time.



transformer, and calling him the Subtle One (and, interestingly enough, the Deceiver) because he was guileful in the way he told the truth.⁴⁸

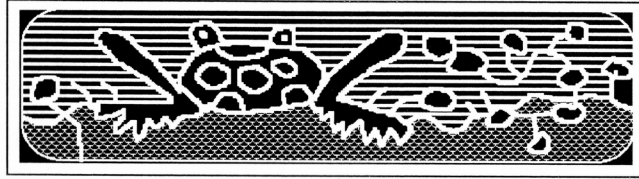
"And Glooskap, being crafty, told the truth and yet lied; for his name was the Liar, yet did he never lie for evil or aught to harm."⁴⁹

According to a related story cited by Erdoes and Ortiz the home of Glooskap's is located at the southern edge of the world, where he lives without growing old.⁵⁰ Sometimes Glooskap gets tired of running the world, ruling the animals, regulating nature, and instructing people how to live moral lives. When in his most pessimistic moods Glooskap tells humanity: "I'm tired of it. Good-bye, I'm going to make myself die now." Paddling off in his magic white canoe, he then disappears in misty clouds. But, like Coyote in western tribal tales, this Atlantic champion of humanity always comes back. "He cannot abandon the people forever" the Erdoes/Ortiz narration reassures the reader, "and they cannot live without him."⁵¹



The hero threw Bullfrog
into the rushing water

Chapter Five



A Kalapuya Frog Story

An Oregon Folk Tale⁵³

Native peoples from all across the continent used woven dams to trap fish and divert water for irrigation. Dam symbolism is often associated therefore with basket weaving in native folk lore. The Bullfrog's dam had to be washed out by the floodwaters in the Algonquin story, for example, before the First People could be transformed into the water animals of the world.

In previous stories, we learned that the Pomo and Chumash associated Frog with basket weaving, but do any of the other western tribes directly link the frog with dam making as in eastern narratives? The answer is "Yes." The Kalapuya people of the Willamette valley of Oregon provide an especially informative example of this tradition. Their frogs are directly linked to dam building.⁵⁴

Kalapuya narratives describe how, long ago, the frog people controlled all the fresh water in Oregon. Thus, when anyone wanted water to drink or cook with, they had to go and beg some from the frogs. Coyote was out hunting one day when he found a dead deer. One of the deer's rib bones looked just like a big dentalia shell, and Coyote picked it up and admired it.⁵⁵ He decided to take this treasure to the frog people.

Coyote came up. "Hey, frog people, I have a big dentalia shell. I want a big drink of water; I want to drink for a long time." The greedy frogs gathered around Coyote and carefully inspected his dentalia shell. "Give us your lovely deer rib," said the frog leader, "and you can drink all you want." Coyote gave them the shell and began drinking from the frog's fresh water which was impounded by a large dam.

"I'm going to keep my head down for a long time," Coyote explained, "because I'm really thirsty. Don't worry about me." "Okay, we won't

worry," answered the unsuspecting frog people. Coyote began drinking. He drank for a suspiciously long time. Finally one of the frog people said, "Hey, Coyote, you sure are drinking a lot of water there. What are you doing that for?" Coyote brought his head up out of the water. "I'm thirsty."

The frog accepted this explanation but after a while another of the water guardians complained, "Coyote, you sure are drinking a lot. Maybe you better give us another shell." "Just let me finish this drink," said Coyote, putting his head back under water.

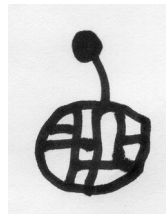
The frog people wondered how anyone could drink so much water. They didn't like what was happening. They thought Coyote might be doing something improper again.

Coyote was digging out under the dam all the time he had his head under water. When he finished, he stood up and said, "That was a good drink. That was just what I needed." Immediately the dam collapsed, and the water rushed down into the valley and quickly filled the creeks and rivers and waterfalls.

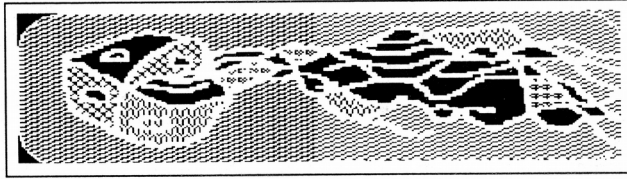
The frog people were very angry. "You have taken all the water, Coyote!" "It's not right that one people have all the water," Coyote called back as he scampered away from his pursuers. "Now it is where everyone can have it."

*Coyote did that. Now anyone can go down to the river
and get a drink of water or some water to cook with,
or just swim around.⁵⁶*

* The Kalapuya population was decimated by epidemics
introduced by whites in 1824.⁵⁷



Chapter Six



The Cornucopia

Readers familiar with European mythology might recognize the unleashing of the waters as having a parallel in Greek tales. Although these narratives do not feature Frogs, their emphasis on the unleashing of food (and other forms of pent up material wealth) strongly suggest a common mythological tradition.

Greek narratives about Hercules are reminiscent of American Coyote and Glooskap tales. A well-known Greek story features the river god Achelous, for example, who had the ability to turn himself into a serpent or a raging bull.⁵⁸ One day Achelous challenged Hercules to a contest, to see who would win the hand of a beautiful woman. Unfortunately the river god offended Hercules, who claimed descent from mighty Jove, and they began to fight. During their fourth engagement, Hercules overthrew his challenger in a wrestling match. The river immediately turned into a serpent and escaped. When caught once more, he turned into a bull, but was again defeated. Hercules broke off one of his horns, which was respectfully consecrated by the Naiades who presented it to the goddess Plenty. This goddess made the magical horn her own, and called it the cornucopia.⁵⁹

Hercules was charged with twelve mighty challenges in his life. The most interesting of these, for our discussion, was a water test. In this trial, Hercules was commanded to overcome the Greek water-monster called the Hydra.⁶⁰ Greek descriptions of Hercules' triumph over this awesome demon are remarkably similar to Coyote's and Glooskap's releasing of the waters by defeating the monster Frog.

Like the American Frog demons, the Hydra dwelt in a swamp above a spring, which he blocked so as to cause a drought over all the land. This water source was called Amymone after a woman who first located its source.⁶¹ Neptune, the god of the sea, fell in love with her and opened up the well with his magic trident.⁶²

Hercules was determined to end the drought and reopen the Amymone well. He fought with the water demon, but he was like a man trying to

stop a leaking faucet. Every time he cut off one of the nine heads of the monster, it grew two more. Thus the term *Hydra* has come to mean any persistent or ever-increasing evil. Hercules became increasingly desperate until he remembered that only the middle of the demon's nine heads was immortal. He stopped cutting off the other heads and burned them instead. Then the hero took the immortal head and buried it under a huge rock (the pole star?).⁶³

Cornucopia is a Greek term, meaning 'a Horn of Plenty'. It refers to a mythological goat's horn, which wells over with fruits and grains that pour from its mouth.⁶⁴ Instead of overflowing with evil as did the Hydra, this horn was a positive source of influence on the lives of humans. At one level, it can be understood as a symbol for the breast which gives milk to mammalian young. This magical horn was in the possession of the Greek Goat called Amalthea, whose milk was used to nurse the god Zeus. Jupiter used his divine powers to endow this horn with the magical ability to become filled with whatever the possessor wished.⁶⁵

A Yakima Cornucopia Tale

Let us examine two final native American folk tales about the unleashing of water, to try to better understand ancient American narratives and their similarities to Greek lore. The Frog does not

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Birth Motifs

Study of birthing symbolism is fundamental to the understanding of the cornucopia class of myths. The squatting woman, using gravity to help birth her child, looks like a frog with her legs sticking up in the air.⁷¹ The bursting forth of the primal waters parallels the breaking of the water sac in mammals, releasing new life into the world.

The Salish peoples of the American northwest and nearby Canada, for example, carved spindles depicting frogs in the squatting or 'hocker' posture. A woman in this position has her knees bent high, for birthing.

In Salish mythology, Toad is linked with spinning which is a woman's occupation, associated with weaving and the moon. Since the Salish Moon controls the female menses, it regulates the monthly flooding of blood from the womb. The Moon likewise controls the monthly pattern of the tides, which regulate shellfish and other wetland life forms during the harvesting seasons.

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appear in either story, but the water demons who replace the Frog have many similar attributes.⁶⁷ It is clear from the plots, that the critical unifying theme in all these stories is the bursting forth of life's fecundity following the unleashing of the waters.

The first story is a Yakima tale in which Coyote is killed and thrown into a river after behaving shamefully toward his son. Feeling guilty after he is resurrected, Coyote decided to make up for his evil ways by tricking the five sisters who held all the ocean salmon in a dam at Wishram, on the Columbia river.⁶⁸ If an opening could be made in this dam, it would allow the salmon to swim upriver bringing life-giving food to a huge region of the Columbia drainage.

Karok Nicknames

"When Indian boys did brave deeds, they were called sons of Coyote. When Indian girls were very wise in their ways, they were called the daughters of Coyote."⁶⁶ Is this Karok tradition not like Greek parents telling their children, they are Sons of Hercules? In both traditions, the parents recognize the human frailties of their offspring but encouraged them to struggle to accomplish great deeds in spite of their many limitations.

Coyote began his scheming by transforming himself into a baby, floating down to the dam.⁶⁹ One of the female dam guardians found him and brought Coyote to their home. The five sisters discussed what they should do with this new addition to their household. None of them had compassion enough to adopt him as their own child, so they decided to raise Coyote as a slave for hauling water.⁷⁰

As a result of his low status, Coyote quickly became disgruntled. So when the sisters left to dig camas, he changed back into his Coyote body and ran to the dam. Careful to avoid observation, he began digging a hole to let the salmon through. Each day he did this he wore out a digging stick, and the observant sisters became increasingly suspicious.

On the fifth day, Coyote knew he was at the end of his efforts. He was desperately working on the last little bit of his hole when the sisters charged down to the dam and began to beat him on the head with a big club. Normally this would have incapacitated anyone, but Coyote had fooled them. In a mirror image of the Hydra, Coyote had stolen five of the sister's soup ladles and placed them on his head like caps. He was thereby transformed into a multi-headed being. The guardian sisters took turns beating and beating on the ladles, but had a hard time cracking through all of them; the spoons were made of horn and were fortunately very tough. Just as the last ladle was shattered, Coyote broke open the dam, releasing the fish and allowing himself to escape in the confusion of the rushing waters.⁷²

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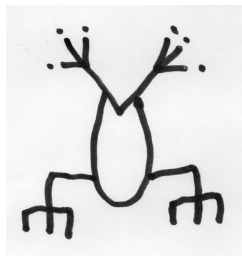
A Karok Cornucopia Tale

From Northern California

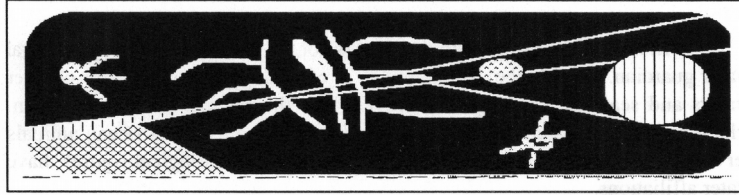
The Karok people of northern California tell a variant of the Yakima tale.⁷³ In this narrative, the mouth of the Klamath river had been dammed ever since the transformation the world.

No Frog appears overtly in this story, but it features two greedy old women with numerous frog attributes. The Creator originally instructed these women to guard the heavenly fires. They were so incompetent as fire guardians, however, that they soon allowed Coyote to steal the celestial fire. Their real interest was to monopolize the element water (which put out fire). They harassed the Creator until he told them the secret by which the dam regulating the fisheries could be opened and closed. The "bothersome old things" soon disobeyed the Creator and closed the dam, even though they had promised to share their fish with the humans. "With their sharp, greedy eyes, the hags kept watch over the dam night and day." Thus a terrible drought came over the land, and there was no food for the Karok.

It was Coyote who finally came to the rescue of humanity. He had to be clever, for he had previously stolen fire from these two old women and they distrusted him. Now he wanted to ensure that human fishermen had access to the bounty of the fishes of the blue waters.⁷⁴ He began to sing a love song, and the foolish women invited him into their house. Once inside their home, Coyote had no further problems. He stole the secret of opening the dam, and let the salmon upriver so the people could have food.



Chapter Seven



Frog Symbolism

After reading this selection of Frog narratives, the reader cannot help but be impressed with the primary importance of the Frog in native American folk lore.

Repeatedly in these tales, the frog (or a water demon with frog-like characteristics) was depicted as the guardian of all the fresh water in the springs and wetlands of the world. Often the frog was called Frog Woman. When all was going well, she was honored and respected. But in times of severe drought, Frog Woman (or her male counterpart) was demonized and Coyote, or some other cultural hero, challenged her. In almost all these tales, however, the hero could not get the Frog (as the water monster) to move, i.e. he could neither displace her physically nor emotionally. She remains unsympathetic and immobile, in spite of the hero's pleas for mercy.

Eventually the hero discovered that Frog held the fresh waters back by weaving, either a basket or a dam. He saved humans from dying of thirst by destroying the basket or dam, or in some cases by stabbing the demon's bloated stomach which substituted symbolically for a dam. In a number of tales, Coyote stole the fresh waters by drinking large amounts of water. Soon he became equally bloated and was released from his self-inflicted suffering only after someone else burst his stomach.

With the destruction of the dam, the impounded fresh waters were released in a flood. The rushing waves carved out a new landscape and also dispersed a plethora of wetland animals which thereafter become food for humans. In their fecundity, the impounded waters were thus similar to the European Cornucopia, the horn of plenty which fed the world and brought joy to both the gods and humanity.

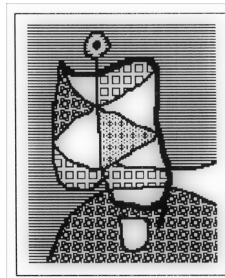
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In native American myth the Frog is not the only important supernatural water guardian. The Snake, for example, is often depicted

as the ruler of river waters and seasonal flooding.⁷⁵ The Eagle is the ruler of the thunderstorm, which brings rain waters down to Mother Earth.⁷⁶ And various ocean animals serve as the ruler of the salt waters.⁷⁷ All of these mythological figures have water affiliations.

But the Frog remains the preeminent native American symbol celebrating the fecundity of quiet wetlands. And in this role she is also associated with human pregnancy whereby the female impounds fertile waters in the womb. When the water sack bursts, the rushing waters precede the birthing of the child, thereby reenacting the mythic events celebrated in Frog tales.

The mythic age comes to an end with the transformation of the landscape, the transmuting of the First People into the food animals of the modern world. Yet, after all these changes the Frog dwells in the backwaters, sitting on a log or lily pad and catching her food with her long tongue without moving her body. She thus demonstrates her supernatural association with the non-moving North Star, which teaches the virtues of humility and patience.⁷⁸



Other Books In This Series

Coyote Outwits the Swordfish

The third book in this series. It features a Chumash racing tale which is remarkably similar to the Kootenai story. In this humorous narrative, wily Coyote visits the House of the Swordfish, which is located in the ocean off the California coast. Coyote creates numerous magical 'duplicates' of himself, and they help him triumph over the greedy Swordfish.

When Humans Were Enslaved By The Frogs

The fourth book in this series will feature native American frog tales in which humans are enslaved by the Frogs. The downtrodden humans regain their freedom, only after Coyote intervenes.

Appendix A

When Demons Rule California

A book by John Anderson, first edition 1998

(From the glossary of Chumash demonology terms)

Demons: Water (fresh) The Frog is the guardian of springs and wetlands who becomes a demon during drought (hoarding of water). The Snake is the guardian of rivers, and the flooding caused by overflowing rivers... The *Anaxixi* were "old men" demons (with frog-like characteristics), who controlled the flow of fresh water springs [December's Child, 289; Qiliqutayiwit]; '*Anax'i*' means 'an old man' (Samala, 52; 'a elder').

Toad The toad is associated with toadstools, rotting vegetation, and physical decay in Chumash folk lore. *Kopkop* means 'a toad' in Tsmuwich (14). *Kopkop* (Samala, 185). Compare *Yogskop*, meaning 'to crouch like a toad', with one's knees drawn up; *Yuq* refers to the lower body (Samala, 461).

Ixmay

John Anderson, Second edition 2018

This Tsmuwich folk tale by X. Suluemeait features Frog, flooding, and the abundance of life. Abused by Coyote, Frog dried up all the water in the Taynayan creek. When she let loose these waters, Coyote was washed down in the flood into the ocean in front of the Shyuxtun (Santa Barbara) beach. Coyote's many sons transformed into "both animals and plants important to humans in the new earthly ecology created y the flood" (Ixmay, Anderson, 30)

The Fast Thinker

John Anderson, 1994

Frog "In Frog-Woman, we see another heroic characterization of the frog. In apparent shamanic reference, Frog-woman swims far into the Pacific ocean to bring back a captive Kootenai [woman] to her family. Capable of living in two worlds (Land/sea and symbolically the normal world and supernatural) Frog has special powers.

"The Frog...is an ideal candidate for a pole-star characterization since it sits for hours on a lily pad or a floating log, relying on its camouflage to protect it from predators. Inactivity is in fact its strength, for if it moved or twitched impatiently it would draw attention to itself. The Frog's perch in the middle of the pond is withdrawn from the busy activities of most other animals, who race about in their busy schedules like the stars of the night sky race around the non-moving celestial pole.

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Endnotes

1 If an award was given for the most admired animal-of-the-year, few Americans would rush forward to champion the lowly frog for such an honor.

These unobtrusive amphibians have slimy skins, no tails, long awkward legs which flail out during their seemingly inefficient swimming. To make matters worse, they call out in the night in a percussive croaking voice which few listeners appreciate when they are trying to fall asleep.

In fact, their call is so distinctive that many peoples use their night voice to name the frogs. *Onomatopoeia* is a Roman term adopted by Americans for the naming of animals after their 'calls.' The term *Frog*, for example, imitates the "Frrr-oooo-gg, Frr-ooo-gg!" cacophony of these wetland dwellers. See *Frog* in the glossary for native American examples of frog-naming onomatopoeia.

2 One of the significant ways the Frog is a remarkable animal is in her hunting habits. She catches her prey, without even moving!

A Clackamas tale from the Portland area of Oregon, provides a classic example of this feeding behavior. It features a demon ("Skookum") with many frog characteristics (including a tongue so long he just extends it to wrap around victims and draw them in). This demon caught and ate all the townspeople of the cultural hero, except his mother and himself (Ramsey, Coyote, 94). The hero killed the demon by asking him to put his finger in a crack in a log, and then withdrawing his ax. The demon was thus immobilized (a north star theme).

In a related tale which Ramsey calls "The Skookum's Tongue" Coyote saves the Clackamas from a "terrible Skookum" who was raiding their town. Ramsey defines *Skookum* as a Chinook term meaning 'an evil spirit', 'a demon'. [The term is found throughout the American Northwest, having been spread by traders using the Chinook trade jargon. In this case his den "was about two miles away, but his tongue was so long that he just stretched it out and caught people with it at will." Coyote saved the townspeople by cutting off the demon's tongue. He then buried it on the west side of the Clackamas falls, where the Americans later uncovered it while building a dam at the site (Coyote, 94).

The amazing Frog tongue appears frequently in the art of other tribes in this region. The Frog is often depicted with a long tongue, which extends into the mouth of another figure (a Raven, Bear, etc.). Ceremonial tobacco pipes, far to the north among the Haida, for example, featured the Frog with his long tongue stretching into the mouth of a human spiritual leader. (Perhaps the Frog was transferring 'wisdom' to the human? Were the frogs eaten directly, as psychotropic agents or were

they associated indirectly with psychotropic mushrooms?).

Frog clans are found among many coastal Northwest peoples, including the Tlingit of Alaska. One of the most famous Chilkat ceremonial houses in the 1820's, for example, was called Frog House. Many elaborately carved religious rattles depict frogs, with long tongues extending into the mouth of a spiritual leader. A variant depicts the frog tongue (located in the mouth of a human), extending outward into the mouth of a third persona (e.g. a Thunderbird).

3 In *The Fast Thinker*, I argue that: "Perhaps the most intriguing commonality between all of these narratives is the theme of slow movement. I suspect that the triumph of the slow moving racer, over a faster rival, had celestial connotations, linked to the heavenly axis in the night sky. When one looks to the sky in much of North America, for example, the only non-moving spot in the sky is the celestial axis (called the North Star)" (Anderson, 21).

4 "Keeping this model of the night sky in mind, " I argued, "it would not be surprising if native peoples chose non-moving or slow-moving animals to depict a powerful person" (Anderson, *Fast Thinker*, 23).

Folk lore animals who use their brains to overcome a challenger in a race are often the Frog and Turtle. In a Nez Perce variant, for example, the Turtle is the clever thinker, who outsmarts a great runner. Like the frogs cited in this text, the Nez Perce Turtle is emulating the North Star.

5 In Plato's theology, the creator deity causes all the other movement in the cosmos, while he remains without motion himself.

6 See *The Fast Thinker* for further discussion of this issue (Anderson, 22).

"Did the Hedgehog's non-moving defense symbolize the pole star in the folk tales of pre-Christian Europe? Did the Kootenai Frog learn from the Creator deity the trick of letting the Antelope race about, while he remained virtually motionless and in control of the situation? Were the Hedgehog and Frog not behaving in a "royal" manner like the kings of Europe who sit on their thrones and let subordinates come to them." Were they not, in effect, pole star simulators?"

7 Barrett calls such conflagrations the World Burnings.

8 "Coyote Destroys the World By Fire," told by John Beatty, in the central Pomo dialect, in 1904 (Barrett, Pomo, 111).

9 Frog Woman refused Coyote water (Barrett, Pomo, 123, "Coyote Burns the World," told by Bob Pot in 1906, northern Pomo dialect).

10 In a related Pomo tale, both Frog-woman and Waterdog refuse Coyote water after the world burning (Barrett, Pomo, 124; "Coyote Creates Clear Lake," told by Jocie Kylark, central Pomo dialect, 1904).

11 Frog hides the water from Coyote in a related Pomo tale. Coyote finds it elsewhere, and vomits it into Clear Lake.

(Barrett, Pomo, 122; "Coyote Burns the World and Creates Clear Lake, Charley Brown, northern Pomo dialect, recorded in 1904. Also see "The Burning of the World and the Creation of Clear Lake," as told by Captain Bill, northern Pomo dialect, circa 1904 (126).

12 Coyote was so satiated in another Pomo narrative that he sat down for a rest.

The Pomo deity *Kuksu* came upon the bloated Coyote and stabbed him in the belly with a big skewer (used for pinning on a head-dress for a dance). All the water in Coyote's belly rushed out, creating Clear Lake (Barrett, Pomo, 120).

13 Coyote came to this place and asked for water but Frog said that they had none. But "she was sitting over the water all the time" (Barrett, Pomo, 124).

14 "The Burning of the World and the Creation of Clear Lake," (Barrett, Pomo, 126).

This Pomo story was told by a Pomo headman ("captain") named Bill, who spoke the northern Pomo dialect, circa 1904. His tale is remarkably similar to the Passamaquoddy and Micmac Bullfrog story cited by Leland (the Bullfrog built "a dam", 116). The Pomo Bullfrog guarded a large supply of water, and Coyote drank every bit of it and became ill. Bullfrog cut his swollen belly open with an obsidian knife, filling Clear Lake.

15 "Frog and Waterdog were the only people not destroyed by the great World-fire."

The special association of the Frog and the holocaust of the world burning is widespread in the folk lore of the peoples of the Pacific coast. Among the Haida of Queen Charlotte islands, for example, the Frog is linked in myth with volcanic eruptions which send rivers of fire down upon guilty towns.

16 See Weaving in glossary for further discussion of the relationship between Frog and basket making.

17 (Grimms, 111; "The Devil With the Three Golden Hairs" "Aha," said the Devil, "if only you knew. There is a toad sitting under a stone in the fountain. If you kill it, the wine will flow again", 110).

18 (Barrett, Pomo, 168).

19 The southwest is the direction of the setting sun during the late fall and early winter.

Some Chumash myths identify the slow moving Turtle as the ruler of the Land of the Dead. We know that the dying Chumash Sun sought the Land of the Dead, as the culmination of its journey at the winter solstice. Perhaps in both Pomo and Chumash folk lore, Turtle represented the sun as it's heat was diminished by the drenching of the fall and winter rains.

20 See Turtle in the glossary for additional information.

21 Weaving and saliva are often linked in these releasing-of-the-water myths. See Basket in glossary for further discussion.

22 Once again, the Frog is depicted as lame and thus suggesting the (unmoving) North Star as an astronomical association.

23 "She was so lame that she could not move and had to sleep and work and do everything that she did right where she was sitting" (Barrett, Pomo, 168).

24 (Barrett, Pomo, 170; "Falcon Kills the Kilak Family," as told by Lee Peters, central Pomo dialect, circa 1904). Association of the Frog with the north (Pole Star) is not uncommon in native American folk lore. Perhaps the Pomo Frog woman was located in the north, like the Water Monster in Algonquin myth (Erdoes/Ortiz). Or consider the Yakima, for a western cultural example. In their story called "Frogs & Grizzly Bear Contend Over the Division of Light and Darkness" (Hines, Ghosts, 22) the "wise" Frogs, chased by the Grizzly Bear, hopped down the north side of a mountain to hide in a swamp (23). Like the Frogs in numerous other native stories, they hid under the mud, so the grizzly could not catch them.

Grizzly was very mad at the frogs, because their nocturnal croaking kept him from sleeping. Thus began a nightly race, with the Grizzly chasing the ever vigilant frogs to the mud flats where the frogs easily

hid. "Frogs were not tired, never got tired." (24). They kept up their song, and collectively (like the Kootenai frogs) overcame a physically stronger adversary!

25 See Weaving in the glossary for further discussion.

26 "Coyote Burns the World In Revenge For the Ill Treatment of His Children," told by Bill Coon, in the central Pomo dialect, in 1904 (Pomo, 116).

See *A Circle Within the Abyss* for a discussion of Coyote as the Monster Slayer of Chumash mythology (Anderson, 26: "Coyote also serves as a Monster Slayer"). Chumash folk tales are filled with descriptions of Coyote's heroic battles with the primordial demons which were prevalent at the end of the *Moloc* period of mythic time.

27 (Blackburn, December, 166; as told by Suluemeait, who used the colonial name Juan Justo; also *Xusto, Xustu*; Blackburn called this narrative "Coyote's Search".

28 Note that Coyote's deceptions included acting like a frog by lying in the mud so he could "look out to see if people were approaching or to see if he could hear anything" (December's Child, 167; "Coyote's Search).

29 In Chumash myths, three warnings are typically given before a disaster strikes.

Hawk was a person of authority in Chumash myths, and his three encirclings would normally be understood by the audience as a warning against crime. Four is the Chumash ritual number, signifying completion so it is unclear to me why Frog blamed Hawk instead of Coyote for this completion.

30 (Blackburn, December, 167).

See *Enememe's Friends* (Anderson,, fifth edition 1998) for another Chumash folk tale which refers to fresh water as urine. Footnote 21 of this text explains, for example, that the Turtle's urine symbolized the fresh waters of the fall rains. See Urine: Frog in the glossary for a discussion of frog urine symbolism.

31 *Qiwini* means 'to dry up', in Chumash (Tsmuwich, 25; same root as *Axwiwik*, 'to be dry' (59). *O'* means 'to be thirsty' (Tsmuwich, 85).

32 (Blackburn, December, 168).

33 As in the World Burning stories of the Pomo, catastrophic fire is associated with the Chumash Frog.

34 (Blackburn, December, 204; "Coyote and His Sons").

The Laxus refers to a fish called a sheephead (Tsmuwich, 61). Note that Harrington does not identify a Chumash narrator for this tale, providing only the information that the story came from the seaport of *Shyuxtun*, which once stood at the harbor at Santa Barbara, California.

35 The Chumash call the Wood Rat *Chi* (Tsmuwich, 70; *Ci* is the Samala variant as in *Shish Uch'i* a place name meaning 'the den of the woodrat'). *Ci*, meaning 'to be sharp', is probably the root, as in *Xiliw* meaning 'a crystal' (41). Note that the Wood Rat (also called a Pack Rat) often collects crystals.

36 Coyote was on an adventure of good will at the beginning this tale, trying to locate the missing daughter of Eagle. But he could not persist in his good behavior and tried to eat Pack Rat when he came upon her.

37 (Blackburn, December, 172).

38 (Leland, Algonquin, 114; by Tomas Josephs, "How Glooskap

Conquered the Great Bull-Frog").

39 My purpose here is not to equate Glooskap with the Coyote character of the western tribes but rather to draw the reader's attention to significant common traits of the two narrative traditions.

Both the Atlantic and Pacific characters are probably based on a common ancient heritage, beyond human recollection. But the reader should remember that Glooskap's stories differ in significant ways from Coyote tales. Unlike the Coyote persona of western folk lore, for example, Glooskap never deceived people out of malice.

40 For further discussion, see Demon: Water in the glossary.

41 (Leland, Algonquin, 115). In a related Passamaquoddy story, the foul nature of the Frog demon is made even more explicit. This story focuses on a different community that had only one spring, which ran dry. They sent a man north to locate the creeks source and get more water. Near the source he found a village of people with webbed hands and feet (frogs), who told him where to find the Water Monster which held back the water. "And he had fouled the water and made it poisonous, so that stinking mists covered its slimy surface." The monster announced that he did not care that the humans were dying of thirst, frightening away the visitor (Leland, Algonquin, 182).

Highly negative descriptions of the water guardian extend north into the mythology of the Canadian Algonquin. Speck, for example, cites a Malecite tale in which the guardian is a "demon" named *Aglabem*. This water guardian offered the cultural hero only a drink from his wash water! ("The Impounded Water," *Journal of American Folk-lore*, XXX, No. 2, 480) Note that some two thousand Malecite currently live in Maine and nearby Canada.

42 (Leland, Algonquin, 119).

43 See Skewer in the glossary for further discussion

44 The Passamaquoddy Bullfrog is similar to the Toad, with rough skin.

Perhaps the Bullfrog's rough skin symbolized salt water animals, whose flesh rotted quickly and could easily poison a careless human. See Toad in the glossary for discussion.

45 (Leland, Algonquin, 119).

46 (Leland, Algonquin, the term "divinity" appears in the Glooskap section of the table of contents).

Blackburn described the Coyote figure of Chumash myth as the "supernatural coyote of the upper world" (December, 343). This description can be confusing as both the earthly Coyote (*Xuxaw*) and the celestial Coyote (*Snilemun*) were supernatural. Only *Snilemun*, however, is found in the Upper World.

47 (Leland, Algonquin, 106). Note how the Coyote of the western tribes compares to the Algonquin Glooskap (the crafty one).

Glooskap was the Elder Brother in Algonquin myth, the ruler of both men and beasts (107; he was "a spirit," "the greatest magician"). Leland denies, however, that Glooskap was the highest Algonquin deity who was the golden Eagle (107; thus Glooskap was called the Lord by earthly creatures, but the Algonquin "chief" was Eagle).

Note how this classification corresponds to the division of the Chumash House of Fate, where Coyote and Eagle are the heads of the two competing teams which determine the fate of humanity. Coyote, like Glooskap, is sympathetic to the sufferings of humanity while the Eagle is more distant and unsympathetic. The unmoving Frog which hoards the

waters in Chumash myth is almost certainly associated with the Eagle which resides in the unmoving North Star.

48 The Mudhen, called the *Ksen*, played a similar role to the Algonquin Loon messengers. The Chumash provincial councils, for example, appointed eight *Ksen* officials to serve as messengers to associated town councils. They spread the news from the central government, and reported back to the governor on local events

49 Leland's "Liar" is probably not an accurate translation of the original native title for this cultural hero (Algonquin, 106).

Glooskap should be described as an enigmatic story teller, and at worst a deceiver. But he was only a deceiver to those who were ignorant of the gods, and thus easily deceived. See Glooskap in the glossary for further discussion.

50 "Glooskap lives, somewhere at the southern edge of the world" (Erdoes/Ortiz, Myths, 181; "Glosscap Fights The Water Monster", narrator unidentified).

Compare Erdoes/Ortiz's Glosskap personality to the Chumash celestial Coyote who never grows old and is associated with the south sky (probably the star Sirius). Passamaquoddy demon described by Erdoes/Ortiz has webbed feet and a bloated stomach. It is remarkably similar to Pomo demons who hoarded water.

51 (Erdoes/Ortiz, Myths, 181). This description of the periodic disappearance of Glooskap suggests a celestial association.

Perhaps Glooskap's magical white canoe represents the star Sirius, which is the brightest star in the southern sky. Sirius appears and disappears from the early evening sky in a predictable pattern, depending on the seasons. Note that in *The Fox Jumps* (Anderson, 1994) I suggest that the Chumash Coyote Star (*Snilemun*) is Sirius.

52 (Leland, Algonquin, 182). Coyote also saw with his inner eye (prophecy) in Chumash folk tales. And readers should not be puzzled by such cross-cultural comparisons. Pan-tribalism is a powerful cultural force in the 1990's, not only among California native populations but also among those along the Atlantic coast.

Chumash people whom I have met have expressed interest in cross-cultural comparisons, especially where they reveal common mythological elements which could be found from coast to coast in ancient times. The releasing-of-the-primal-water myths are fascinating examples of shared cultural heritage on this continent.

53 (Erdoes/Ortiz, Myths, 355; "Coyote Takes Water From the Frog People." This version was told by Barry Lopez in 1977).

54 A Pomo dam story features Coyote as the father of Thunder who built a fish dam which was so strong that it held whales without breaking.

Coyote coveted his daughter-in-law and began to seduce her through a series of tricks. Thunder eventually learned of his father's outrages and decided to punish him by sending Coyote to a magical snake dam and killing him there. Meanwhile, Thunder's wife bore a child, and Thunder exiled her to the seashore. Remorseful, Thunder later tried to win his wife back by offering gifts of jewelry which were continuously refused. By the end of the tale, she was transformed into a Seal, and Thunder remarried, choosing Mallard Duck for his new mate.

The Pomo narrator does not say directly whether the snake dam broke, but the title hints that it did and contributed to the creation of "all forms of sea life." ("Thunder Kills Coyote and Creates All Forms of Sea

Life" by Bill James, a Central Pomo from Garcia River, 1906, Barrett, Pomo, 193)

55 This rib of a deer is a variant of the "skewer" used in many related tales to pierce the skin of the bloated Frog (who coveted all the world's fresh water).

The Deer brought death in Chumash mythology, so as to prevent overcrowding of the world. The use of a deer rib in this tale thus probably has death connotations, i.e. the newly born animals released with the waters were destined to die. See Skewer in the glossary for further discussion. Note that dentalia shells in this tale were very valuable because they were used as money in much of California.

56 Like Snilemun, the Chumash Coyote, the Kalapuya Coyote was a benefactor of the physical needs of humanity.

57 The Kalapuya spoke a Penutian language, like many of their neighbors who were driven out of the Willamette Valley of Oregon by white settlers.

58 Acheron was the Greek river in Hades, across which Charon ferried the souls of the dead (root is *Achos*, meaning 'pain', thus the river of woe).

59 (Bullfinch, Mythology, 216).

60 *Hydra* was a Greek water demon, whose name has the root *Hydor* meaning 'water'.

61 Amy is a female name, with the Roman root *Amare*, which means 'to love'.

62 Neptune is a Roman variant of the Greek god Poseidon, the ruler of the waters.

63 Was this high (heavenly) rock of Greek mythology the North Star?

64 See Cornucopia in glossary.

65 (Bullfinch, Mythology, 217).

66 "When Indian boys did brave deeds, they were called Sons of Coyote. When Indian girls were very wise in their ways, they were called the Daughters of Coyote" (Fisher, California, 102).

67 This Yakima story is called "Coyote, his Son, and Salmon," (Hines, Ghosts, 121).

68 This river probably symbolizes the Milky Way which leads to the Land of the Dead and eventual reincarnation.

The Wishram dam was like the baskets woven by the Frogs in other cultural tales from the western states. See Basket in the glossary for further discussion.

69 Coyote had recently died, in the beginning of this narrative. As a newly reincarnated person, Coyote was thus only a newborn baby washed by the waters of the broken water sac.

70 The five sisters may represent five months of the year, when the salmon are relatively rare in the river system?

71 The birth canal flooded by the breaking of the water sac in mammals is equivalent to the river banks, which channel the flooding waters down to the sea. This flooding of water precedes the 'birthing' of new life.

72 Conway cites this narrative, identifying the dam as the Dalles and stating that the defeated sisters became swallows, whose annual spring appearance thereafter announced the beginning of the Chinook Salmon upriver migration (Hines, Ghosts, 125)

73 (Fisher, California, 96; "How Coyote Put Salmon In the Klamath

River"). The Karok of northern California speak a Hokan language, like their Pomo whose mythology is remarkably similar to the Chumash of southern California. In the late 1980's the Karok (over 2,000 population) were the largest federally recognized tribe in the state.

74 (Fisher, California, 96). In this tale, the Karok narrator commented explicitly on the mirror imagery of the sky and ocean at the time of the world transformation. "The ocean (in the new earth ecology) will be the blue sky upside down - only more runny - being water."

75 The Hopi Snake dance, for instance, focuses on bringing the rains which will fill the gullies and washes with flowing waters (Waters, Hopi, 321). In comparison, Turtles and Frogs are associated with springs.

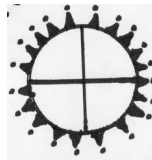
76 See *A Circle Within The Abyss* (Anderson 1993) for a discussion of Eagle in Chumash theology. In footnote 10, Eagle is linked to the North Star, a place without Black Mystery.

77 See *The Swordfish Race* (Anderson 1996) for a discussion of the Swordfish as the Chumash ruler of the sea.

Compare the Chumash Mermaid (daughter of the North Star) to Halibut Man of the Northwest coast, who unleashed a cornucopia of salt water food animals when he was tricked into opening the door to his 'house.' In Chumash narratives, it is the Mermaid who became the ruler of the animals and plants of the sea.

78 See *A Circle Within The Abyss* (Anderson, 1993) for a discussion of the North Star as the place of entrance of all physical body into the universe (16).

This phenomenon is, of course, the original 'outpouring' which set the stage for all other cornucopia events.



Glossary

Tsmuwich: page citations reference the Barbareno Chumash dictionary of Mary Yee. *Samala*: page citations reference the *Samala* dictionary published by the Santa Ynez reservation.

ALGONQUIN A large native American language family, including the Passamaquoddy and Micmac whose Frog stories are discussed in this text.

BASKETS See Weaving: baskets for further discussion.

BULLFROG A solitary frog, whose name comes from its loud (thunderous) voice.

- The bullfrog is the largest frog in North America, native to both eastern and western states. See Part four for the Algonquin bullfrog story. Compare Frog.

CHUMASH A Chumash-speaking people, living along the coast and on the islands north of Los Angeles, California. They were once the largest native American tribe in the western states.

CORNUCOPIA A horn of plenty, which is featured in numerous European folk tales. Compare Purge, Dam.

- The bursting forth of plenty from the cornucopia is cognate of the bursting of the birth sac in mammals. A Chumash *Wisay* is a conical shaped fishing basket, serving as a horn-of-plenty shaped container filled with fish.

COYOTE The Trickster character of myth, among the western tribes. Terms 'Ashak'a' means 'coyote' in Tsmuwich (4). This term may share a common root with *Aqniywus* which means 'to want' (Tsmuwich, 3). *Axnacnac* meaning 'to be greedy' in Samala (91) is a related term.

The Samala term for Coyote is *Xuxaw* (452, *Huhaw*).

DAM Compare Demon: dam, Cornucopia: As Birth Sac, Weaving: Basket, Seat, North Star.

Terms: '*Ikumese*'s means 'a dam' (Samala, 140; *Ikumes* means 'to dam a stream'; the root term *Mes* means 'to cross' with the connotation that a dam crosses fully across a stream). *Mes* means 'to cross over' (Tsmuwich, 17).

DEMON: DAM Many of the native American 'cornucopia' tales are based on the breaking of a dam, which releases the riches of the river for the benefit of humans. See Demon: Water (lame) for further discussion.

The Karok narrative identifies such a dam at the mouth of the

Klamath River. See part six for the Algonquin Bullfrog dam tale, and part five for the Kalapuya dam tale. Compare Demon: water (lame).

DEMON: SLAYER The cultural hero is the demon slayer, such as Coyote and Glooskap who kill the water demon who dammed up the waters of the world. Compare Demon: Water.

DEMON: WATER A recurring theme in these Frog tales is the cultural heroes encounter with a demon, who is repeatedly depicted as a water monster. Compare Demon: Water (lame), Demon: Dam, Frog Woman, Water: Guardian.

Terms: The Algonquin hero Glosscap fought a "water monster". (Leland, Algonquin, 115). Compare Frog, Frog Woman (the Pomo name for the demon who caused drought), Toad, Salamander.

The *Hydra* is a Greek water demon.

DEMON: WATER (LAME) Many native American water demons are either slow moving or lame, e.g. the Pomo Frog Woman who cannot move from her spot (hiding the desperately needed fresh waters of the world). Compare Seat and North star, Drought, Water: Guardian.

DROUGHT A primary threat to humanity occurs when rainfall is low and thus the streams were without adequate flow. Compare Fire: World, Thirst: No Saliva.

Terms: *Q'iwini* means 'to dry up' (Tsmuwich, 25) (Samala, 292). *Axwiwik* means 'to be dry' (Tsmuwich, 59). *K'imin* means 'to be dry' (Samala, 503).

- Pomo myths refer to a World Fire which takes place during a period of drought, destroying most of the established order in the world of humanity. Note that the unimpregnated womb of mammals may have symbolized drought, since they lacked the water which characterized the impregnated water sack.

EAGLE The Eagle is the great guardian of the (entrance into) the upper world in native American mythology, from the Pacific to the Atlantic.

Terms: The Yakima Eagle was called *Quoh Why-am-mah'* (Hines, Ghost, 31; *Wah-yah-mah*, 33) The Chumash called him *Slow* (Blackburn, December, 95). *Slo'w* (Samala, 312, Eagle).

- In many folk traditions, like that of the Chumash, the Eagle is unmoving and causes thunderstorms with its wings. The unmoving Frog (a water persona in native myths) is probably associated with the Eagle (an air persona), through the World Axis.

FIRE: WORLD DESTRUCTION BY A mythological holocaust which sweeps through the known world. See Drought for further discussion.

FIRST PEOPLE The original occupants of the earth, in large segments of native American myth. Compare Myth for related Chumash terms.

Terms: *Molmoloqiku* is the Chumash name for the First People (Tsmuwich, 342).

- The Chumash First People "became animals after the Flood" (Blackburn, December, 342).

- When mythic time ended, Coyote transformed the earth and magically metamorphosed the First People into the animals, plants, and physical sites of the contemporary world.

FROG Smooth skinned, long tongued, amphibians. They have protruding eyes, and are predominantly aquatic. In native mythology frogs often control fresh water sources, such as springs and wetlands. Compare Demon: Water, Demon: Dam, Water: dog.

Terms: Many native American terms for frogs are onomatopoeic,

i.e. sound like the various night calls of frogs. *Kawo* means 'frog' in Pomo (also *Xawo*, Bartlett, Pomo, 547); also *Tsawa'tak* means 'a frog' (532).; thus *Cakawolo* referring to a Salamander, called the water dog by Americans). *Waqaq* means 'a frog' in Chumash (Tsmuwich, 32) and may be a variant of *Weqec* which is a Samala Chumash term for a small (tree?) frog. *Waq'aq* means 'frog' in Chumash (Tsmuwich, 37). Note how similar this name is to *Macq* (Bella Coola), *Alo' quat* (Yakima), and *Pakwa* (Hopi).

Pomo terms: *Dano-Kawo* is the name of Pond Woman, a Pomo supernatural being (Bartlett, 532; probably has the same root as *Kara* meaning 'a pond': probably refers to Bullfrog Woman). *Ka-tca* means "Water Man" in Pomo, Barrett, 544).

Discussion of terms: Human women squatting to give birth probably were symbolized by the frog in native folk lore. Like the Frog of mythology, pregnant women hoarded water (in their wombs) and released life when it gushed forth. *Naqsusu* means 'to squat' in Samala (234); it may have a common root with *Yuqna'n* meaning 'to lie on one's back' (and placing one's legs in a frog-like position (Samala, 461)). Thus *Yuqskop* means 'to crouch', i.e. to have ones legs drawn up; as in *Kookop*, the toad (461).

- Frogs are active at night, when humans are asleep. In many native American folk tales Frog hoards the world's waters and causes great suffering among humans (drought).

FROG: URINE See Urine: Frog for discussion of fresh water symbolism.

FROG: VOICE Numerous native American narratives describe how the frog call brings rain. Thus rasping instruments appear in many songs and dances featuring the frog.

FROG: WOMAN A Pomo name for the 'lame' Frog demon who held the world's water from humanity. Compare Demon: Lame, Demons: Water.

- She wove baskets (which were used to hold back the world's waters).

- The Chumash Frog Woman was the "queen of the waters."

GLOOSKAP The Algonquin hero who defeated the Frog demon. Also spelled *Glooscap* (Erdoes, American, 365).

GREED The Frog and various Water Monsters are greedy characters, hoarding all the waters of the world.

Terms: *Axnacnac* means 'to be greedy' (Samala, 91).

Discussion of terms: The English root of *Hoard* means 'to cover', thus 'to hide' (Clairborne, 219). The Indo-European root of *Hoard* means 'to pen something in', as in Frog's basket dams which hold back the world's waters.

- The ethical issues raised by greed will be discussed in *Greed Rules the World*, a sequel to this text (Anderson; to be released at a later date).

- The Swordfish were such gluttons that they only ate whale meat (Swordfish Race, Anderson).

- Coyote sometimes also hoards the waters in native California myths.

GUARDIAN: WATER See Water: Guardian.

HOARD See Greed.

KALAPUYA A native American cultural group, whose homeland is in the Oregon valley called Willamette by the Americans. See part five for their Frog story.

KAROK A native peoples living along the Klamath river in

northwestern California. They spoke Hokan, like the Pomo.

KOOTENAI A native peoples living on the Kootenai river in Montana, Idaho, and nearby Canada. Also spelled *Kutenai*. See part one for a discussion of Kootenai Frog racing lore.

MICMAC Atlantic coast native Americans with close ties to the Passamaquoddy. See Passamaquoddy for further discussion.

MONSTER See Demon: water.

MYTH Narratives told about mythic time, and its transformation into mundane time of the contemporary world. See First People & Coyote as the world transformed.

Terms: *Timoloqichas* means 'a myth' (Samala, 370, a fable'). The root *Timoloqin* means 'to tell a story', 'to tell an old tale').

Comparative terms: *Timoloqinas* means a "story felt to be true" (Blackburn, December, 343). *Inas* may be a variant of *Inu*, meaning 'to be true'.

PASAMAQUODDY Atlantic coast native American culture, members of the Algonquian language family. Their bull-frog stories are discussed in in part four.

POMO A Hokan speaking people of northern California, the Pomo occupy parts of the Russian River drainage north of San Francisco. See Karok for linguistic relatives.

PURGE A main theme of these frog stories is the purging of the Frog, in a violent release of the impounded waters. Compare Cornucopia.

Terms: *Purge* has the same root as *Pure* (meaning 'to cleanse') and probably the same root as *Puke* (meaning 'to vomit').

Pash means 'to vomit' (Tsmuwich, 22; thus *Uxmalpash* means 'to make oneself vomit with buckets of ocean water', 36). *Pas* (Samala, 266). *Uxmalpas* means 'to take an emetic, such as drinking seawater to induce vomiting (Samala, 408).

- In many stories, the frog (or a substitute animal such as Coyote) is pierced with a spear to release the waters, but in others the hoarding character vomits up the waters. In both cases, the animal is being purged, or cleansed of its bloated and unnatural condition.

SALAMANDER An amphibian, often associated with the Frog in native American folk lore. Compare Water: Guardians, Frogs.

Terms: *Cakawolo* means 'salamander' (Barrett, Pomo, 120). *Elelespu* means 'salamander' in Tsmuwich (8, has the root *Pu* meaning 'hands').

- The Salamander's hands are remarkably similar to the hands of humans, thus many native peoples refer to the hand when naming this amphibian. This species is often called a water dog by Americans.

SALMON The beginning of the annual salmon runs into the Pacific streams, from the Chumash north to Alaska, symbolized the annual renewal of the Cornucopia outpouring of bounty. See the Karok tale in part 6.

SALIVA See Thirst: No Saliva.

SEAT The water demons featured in this text are unmoving. They 'sit' in a spring, or creek, and thus dam up the fresh waters needed by humanity. See Demon: dam for further discussion.

SEKPEWEYOL, x. A Chumash mythologist whose frog tale is featured in chapter three.

Terms: *Sekpeweyol* is his self-name. He used the colonial name Juan Justo. *Xwan* is the Tsmuwich variant of *Juan*.

SKEWER A long pin, or stick, used to penetrate something at an

angle; often, the purpose of the skewer penetration is to help bind the object together.

- In native American mythology, the skewer can represent the world axis, which does not point overhead to the zenith but is set at a slant, pointing to the North Star. As a symbol of the World axis it 'binds' together the upper, middle, and lower worlds.

Terms: *Skewer* has the connotation of being skewed, slanting or oblique, to be set at a slant (as in *Skew*, meaning 'a slanting movement', and *Eschewed*, 'to be set at an angle'). In the Yakima narrative, the skewer was a camas digging stick. A jabbing cane (Barrett, Pomo, 116; a "Skewer", 124). A deer's rib (*Kalap-ya*, "just like a big dentalia shell"); a dentalia shell was used as a "spear" (Passamoquoddy, Glooskap).

Hypothesis The 'post' of the Chumash solar instrument, used in winter solstice ceremonies, was slanted so as to point symbolically to the north star.

SOUTHWEST In one of the Pomo tales, Coyote went to the southwest (the ritual direction of the setting sun on the winter solstice) in a futile effort to stop the drought.

TOAD The toad is often regarded in folk lore as a loathsome, contemptible, creature in comparison to the Frog (which has a more positive reputation). Compare Frog, Water: Demon.

Terms: *Kopkop* means 'toad' (Samala, 185). *Kopkop* (Tsmuwich, 14).

- A toad has rough warty skin and is often associated with psychotropic toadstools, rotting debris, and death. It lives on moist land rather than in water.

THIRST: NO SALIVA When people become extremely thirsty, their mouths become so dry that they cannot produce saliva for normal digestion.

TORTOISE A member of the turtle family which lives on dry land. See Turtle.

TURTLE Associated, like the Frog, with fresh water in many native American folk traditions.

- The Turtle is especially revered for its long life. Among the Micmac, for example, the Turtle is the "hardest to kill of all the animals" (Leland, Algonquin, 53). See *Enememe's Friends* (Anderson 1976) for a discussion of Turtle symbolism.

- Like the Frog, the Chumash Turtle uses his urine to put out a fire which threatened to kill him.

URINE: COYOTE A ritual name for ponds, springs, and creeks 'spoiled' by chemicals such as sulphur. Unsuitable for daily drinking, many were used for medicinal purposes.

Terms: Coyote Urine is the Chumash name for the sulphur springs in the foothills above Ventura, California. Compare Urine: Frog.

URINE: FROG A ritual name for fresh water found in springs, wetlands, and associated streams.

Terms: *Oxshol* means 'to urinate' (Tsmuwich, 21; '*Ioxsholush* means 'urine' '*Oxsho'li*' means 'urinary bladder'). (Samala, 261; 'to urinate' *Oxsolpi* means 'to urinate on'; *Soxsol* means 'bladder'). *Caksol* (Pinart lists as Limu island dialect, but it may be Tuqan). In all of these terms 'O' is a root term, meaning 'fresh water' (Tsmuwich, 20).

Discussion of terms: Frog urine is a Chumash ritual name for fresh water.

WATER: DEMON See Demon: Water.

WATER: DOG A common American name for the salamander, a slow moving amphibian capable of breathing underwater. See Salamander.

WATER: FRESH See Urine: Frog and Urine: Coyote for discussion.

WATER: GUARDIAN Native Americans, like Europeans, believed in many types of water guardians (or spirits), as in the protectors of springs, lakes, and rivers. Frog Woman was "queen of the waters" in Chumash myths. Compare Demon: Water.

Terms: guardians of springs were called *Anaxixi* in Chumash (meaning 'two old men'; they were depicted as two old men living at the bottom of a well. They were frog-like, "with their knees half-flexed" and they were called "fathers of the water", December, 289).

- The Salamander, called the Water Dog by American ethnographers, is a common water guardian in native myths. Compare snake symbols for rivers.

WATER: THIRST See Thirst: No Saliva.

WEAVING: BASKETS In many of the narratives quoted in the text, weaving plays a key part in the story. The woven object represents a basket, a dam, or a womb. Compare Basket, Dam, and Womb.

Terms: Basket, net, and web terms are often associated with the concept of weaving, as in the Chumash term *Ski'nit* meaning 'a rope' (Tsmuwich, 78). The Pomo term *Yet* means 'a carrying net'. Each of these terms have weaving (twining) as a conceptual base, as opposed for example to the Tsmuwich term *Axtakuy* which means 'a large basket' (52; whose root is *Ax'ukuy* meaning 'to contain', 14).

Yet means 'a carrying net' (Bartlett, Pomo, 547). *Washlayik* means 'a carrying net' in Chumash (Tsmuwich, 27; roots are *Washkay* meaning 'to carry', 55).

WOMB The female organ in mammals, which encloses the embryo with a water sac to protect it from sudden shocks during development. Compare Dam and Basket for related discussion.

Terms: *Sumalku'y* means 'womb' in Samala (321, with the root *-Kuy* meaning 'to hold'). *Saqli'yinis* also means 'womb' (Samala, 336).

Maliwil means 'the afterbirth' (root is *Iwi* meaning 'to accompany').

WORLD AXIS A pivot which stretches down from the North Star, through the center of the earth, and stops at the center of the lower world.

- The unmoving Eagle sits at the top of the World Axis, and the unmoving Frog is probably also associated with this axis.

YAKIMA A Penutian-Sahaptin speaking peoples, from central Washington. See chapter six for a Yakima Frog story.

Other Books by the Author

The Swordfish Race Coyote defeats the rulers of the Sea, eating contests, resurrection, 'drowning' shamanism. 48 pages, 2005.

The Fast Thinker This Kootenai racing tale from the American Northwest is compared to the Chumash race featured in *The Swordfish Race*. 44 pages, 1994.

The Swordfish Race Chumash and Pomo racing tales, rescuing drowned souls from the rulers of the ocean, 48 pages, 2005.

A Circle Within The Abyss Chumash Indian religion, metaphysics. 44 pages, fourth edition 2000.

The Chumash House of Fate The gambling gods of ancient California, gambling, cosmic dualism, the celestial Abyss, ritual directions, the hand game, fate and free will. 44 pages, third edition 2001.

Enememe's Friends Chumash theology. Third edition, 44 pages, 2001.

The Fox Jumps Chumash summer solstice tales from California; compared to Kalispel & Yakima tales from the Northwest. 40 pages, fourth edition 1999.

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