LENAPE WOMEN IN A TRANSITIONAL CULTURE

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PREFACE

The story of the Lenape is one example of adaptation and survival, and Lenape women held a prominent role in the process. Lenape women that retain knowledge of their heritage hold a significant perspective to view the ramifications of their traditional values of their culture from which Lenape women made socioeconomic contributions to a transitional traditional culture. Lenape customs of the Big House, Doll Dance, social dances, stomp dances, drums, Native American Church, funerals, feeds, festivities, etc. imbued the Lenapes with their identity as a community. In turn, the people perpetuated the existence of their customs each time they re-enacted them. While the forums from which the customs were re-enacted may have changed, the basic premises, or Lenape worldview, allowed the people to regenerate the Lenape culture.

Lenape women participate in significant activities that continue and re-instill this worldview and thus Lenape women actively participate in a transitional

culture. As culture is not static, current Lenape culture can not totally be the same as it was in pre-contact or early contact history. Within the domains that they could control, however, family, religion, and culture, Lenape women modified their internal society clinging to as many of the former customs as possible, while creating additional and yet, culturally appropriate mechanisms to adjust to a foreign system of land ownership and Euro-American society in general.

The allotment process altered Lenape customs by overturning Lenape women's socioeconomic status, thus reducing the extent of Lenape women's abilities to subsist and adapt to their new circumstances in Indian Territory, as they had previously been able to do in removing to former areas. The purpose of the Dawes and Severalty Act, 1887, was to break down the communal and tribal patterns of Indian life to impose White standards of social organizational behavior. The act, even more than removals, attacked the fundamental elements of Lenape life. The Delaware Nation retained, redefined, and transformed their tribal culture in spite of the imposition on their lives. Much was retained, but the position of the Lenape women was forever changed. Dependent on the control of tribal land, women's roles in Delaware society had to adjust to the laws of privatization.

Traditionally, through their dreams and metaphysical experiences, Lenapes connected to their ancestors, who in turn, revealed how the Lenape people should live today. The Lenape adapted with each move west as well as accommodated to the allotment and 'civilizing' forces. Their last adaptation will include the transition from a survival and protective mode to a fully functional and flourishing society.

Numerous people have contributed and supported me throughout the research and writing of this study. Foremost, I am most thankful to my ancestors and my grandmothers. I felt their presence leading me through this process. Their sacrifices and struggles enable me to write these words today, perhaps as a small atonement for all the wrongs that were imposed onto them. In memory of their lives, I dedicate this thesis to them.

I also extend my thanks to my parents who encouraged, supported, laughed, cried, and even demanded that I persevere and finish the thesis when, at times, I doubted that I would ever find a satisfying place to complete the research. I am also indebted to the women that I interviewed. Aside from their valuable words and prayers, their openness and heartfelt acceptance of my purpose, and myself, motivated me to complete this thesis. They are, I

believe, the most special and caring people in this world. I continue to learn from them, not just about my Lenape heritage, but also how to survive as a human being, as a Lenape woman, and as a mixed-blood Native American.

Additionally, I offer my most gracious thanks to James Rementer, Kay Wood, the Jackson family (Rosetta Coffey, Elgie Bryan, Gene Kirkendall, Evelyn Thomas, Kay and John Anderson), the Ketchum, Donnell, and Tompkins families, Michael Pace, former Assistant Chief, Curtis Zunigha, former Chief, the Frenchman family, as well as so many other Lenapes who took me in, mentored and encouraged me to take on the overwhelming task of writing this thesis. I especially thank Dee Ketchum, Chief, and Mary Watters, Elder, for introducing me to the Pow Wow dance arena. Lawrence Snake, President of the Western Delawaree Nation, as well as the rest of the Western Delaware Tribal Council, have also supported and encouraged my work. All of these people continue to mentor me through the challenges of moving between personal life, traditional culture, tribal politics, and formal academics. Wanishi.

This thesis offered me a forum to find my place in a world that has sought to destroy elements of my being, my heritage and culture. More, however, through

this formal educational process, I was offered a unique opportunity to announce to the world the depths of strength that Lenape women withhold, as well as Native American women in general. This would not have been possible without the support of my advisors and the Oklahoma State History Department who saw the importance in my work. Foremost, Dr. Paul Bischoff spent countless hours, expending patience and understanding throughout the research and into the writing process. He explained how I could act as a "bridge" between Lenape culture and the academic understanding of Lenape history. Dr. George Moses offered significant insight to understanding and then writing about Native American history. Dr. Mike Logan has taught, supported, and encouraged my academic pursuits through various and challenging phases of my formal education.

I, however, assume complete responsibility for any errors of fact or interpretation in this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1

CULTURAL MARKERS: HISTORY OF THE DELAWARES

Throughout the Delaware Nation's history,[1] Lenape women were able to maintain, modify, adapt, and reapply their culture, traditions and rituals through six removals from the Eastern Woodlands of North America to Indian Territory, currently Oklahoma. That the Delaware, they were able to do so until the Dawes Act, also known as the General Allotment Act of 1887. This act definitively changed Lenape women's roles because, as a matriarchal society, the goal to individualize and break up land held in common by the tribe broke up Lenape women's customary responsibility to maintain the land, as well as the internal structure of the society.

[1]The use of the terms "Lenape" and "Delaware" will be intermixed throughout the thesis. It is unclear when the Lenape formally considered themselves the Delaware Nation. To this day, the terms are frequently intermixed. The use of Lenape tends to be more specific and personal and relates more to cultural subjects. "Delaware" is a more formal term and often used to refer to political meaning.

The allotment process altered Lenape customs by overturning Lenape women's socioeconomic status, thus reducing Lenape women's abilities to subsist and adapt to their new circumstances in Indian Territory, as they had previously been able to do while occupying former areas. Within the domains that they could control, family, religion, and culture, Lenape women modified their internal society clinging to as many of the former customs as possible, while creating additional and yet, culturally appropriate mechanisms to adjust to a foreign system of land ownership and Euro-American society in general.

The story of the Lenape is one example of adaptation and survival, and Lenape women held a prominent role in the process. Despite this centrality, the historiography excludes the subject of Lenape women's roles in the history of the Lenape. Lenape were innovative in altering their society to fit their ever-changing environments, and Lenape women actively participated in their social alterations. In light of how many Lenape people died and how much of the culture was forced into submission or left behind along their trails of removals due to United States' history of genocide and demands to assimilate Native Americans, as well as Lenape intermixing with other Native Americans and non-Indians, how much can actually be retained or

transformed? This is a difficult question, especially considering the fact that there are merely two fluent Lenape speakers remaining today. When fluency in the language passes away with these Elders, the primary layer of the worldview may also pass away. But the Lenape will still identify with their heritage, their contemporary culture, and their history. Why? Because they are Delaware.

There have been no scholarly or academic historians of Delaware descent. There is a definitive association between existence as a Delaware and the ability to accurately record Lenape history; interacting with other Delawares as well as other Native Americans, being involved in Lenape heritage and culture, and taking part in Lenape activities that enables a person or historian to comprehend the Lenape worldview. This is not to say that a non-Indian could not acquire an understanding of the Lenape worldview. For instance, Jim Rementer, a non-Indian, came to Oklahoma to study the Lenape in 1961 and has not left to this date. In fact, the late James H. Thompson, a full blood Lenape, adopted Jim Rementer into the family. Jim Rementer has been instrumental in researching and recording Lenape culture and language ever since his arrival. In so doing, the community accepts him as a member. Instead of targeting non-Indians, as does much of Lenape historiography, Jim

Rementer works diligently to pass on his knowledge to the other Lenapes.

Many historians take a different approach than Rementer and, most often, they target non-Indian audiences. While much can be said for an individual who researches and records factual information about the Lenape, without some definitive cultural translation and open-minded understanding, the altruistic view of the Lenape and especially of Lenape women remains unreported. A historical investigation based on oral history and cultural participation enabled this thesis to uncover unreported issues primarily about Lenape women and secondarily about Lenape society as a whole. In doing so, the investigation revealed an overall awareness about Lenape culture that the current historiography lacks.

Also important is that as a Delaware female historian, the Delaware women invited the author into the Lenape women's world in a way that they would not invite men. Among two of the influential groups in the area, the Bartlesville Indian Women's Club and the Delaware War Mothers Society invited the author to join their groups, giving the author a primary perspective to observe and participate in the values of the organization. This is likely an outcome of the approach the author took to request interviews and information

from the Lenape women, although the author was already involved in some of the organizations before researching for the thesis.

Out of respect, a researcher should request information from Lenape Elders, as well as all Indian people, in a proper manner. Usually, a gift is appropriate or some people offer money. The author chose to give the informants earrings made from porcupine quills and family heirloom beads. If the author approached a male Elder, tobacco would also be appropriate. Culturally, the right action is to at minimal, give the Elder something in appreciation of their knowledge.

At times, Indian people have inadvertently stretched the truth, or even made things up to tell historians and anthropologists. Several anonymous informants spoke about "those academic people" who came to them in earlier years and they would not leave until the informant gave them some sort of insight. There are several reasons that an informant may stretch the truth or make something up to tell a researcher. Foremost, if one approaches an Elder, that Elder will be giving information to the questioner. An informant may make something up if they feel disrespected. Historians and anthropologists, at times, have been very eager to find significance in certain actions or rituals. Sometimes,

to the Indian person, there is little meaning behind the ritual or tradition. The informant would say that this was simply, "how it was done." Or there is meaning that is inappropriate to tell the academic and thus an informant might make something up or stretch the truth just to appease the historian or anthropologist so that the informant would not have to reveal a truer meaning.

Also, Indian humor can play with words, actions and people. For instance, an Indian person may make a comment and another Indian person will add something humorous to the initial comment. The first person may make another comment, adding onto the second comment, and so forth. This likens to improvisation, only native style. One must think quickly to state humorous remarks about ordinary activities and then be able to come back with additional humorous remarks. Among Indian communities, there is also a great deal of "teasing." When Indians tease someone or makes fun of someone's actions, it is a way of including or coping with the recipient. During the initial days of Pow Wows in Oklahoma, for instance, there was a clown. This Pow Wow clown danced in regalia placed on the wrong body parts, danced around the arena all the "wrong" ways, and did everything inappropriate and backwards. This was a way to teach and play with the people. The meaning behind the clown was for people to not take themselves too

seriously which is similar to why Indian people tease each other. When people take themselves too seriously, they lose sight of life. No one is perfect and teasing allows people to cope with these imperfections of life. An academic may miss this rapid play with words and meanings and misconstrue the intended message.

If an anthropologist or historian was pressing for information, an Indian person may use this humor to cope with the questioner, not necessarily lying, but stretching the truth to make fun of or tease the questioner. In many Indian communities, it is inappropriate to ask too many questions or improper questions. Improper questions are questions often related to religion and spirituality. Often when an Elder or "teacher" feels that it is time, they will tell a person about the religion or spirituality. Building a relationship with the informant assists in building trust that is essential to finding the truer meaning in a native culture. This trust takes spending time with that person and among the community, not just asking questions, but shutting up, observing and listening. When trust exists, the informant often reveals those religious and spiritual aspects, as well as information an academic may not have even thought about.

A well-noted Lenape cook invited the author to join her in cooking for events. Culturally, this is a

special invitation that should not be turned down because the hands that prepare the food prepare the sustenance that enables the people to live. A blessing over the food connects food to spirituality and religion. More will be said about this in later chapters. For now, it suffices to say that the author's numerous invitations and other experiences provided only a glimpse of the Lenape philosophy and culture as a whole. Although the philosophy is simple, it is still one that takes a lifetime to learn and experience to gain the full meaning. This is because the identity or essence of a Lenape, or Native American in general, tends to be an existence based upon certain spiritual guidance transcribed into human experience. Although this spiritually defined existence is not restricted to Native Americans, Lenapes, as well as each Native American Nation, interprets that place through their distinct lens and practices.

The native Lenape philosophy is minimal in the secondary sources. Although, some historians may touch upon the philosophy behind Native Americans in their histories, much remains unreported. Policy at the federal levels of society severely impacted the grass roots levels of tribal societies. In the Lenape's case, the historiography hardly begins to explain the roles of Lenape people within their society or how they were

modified through the external policies that removed them from their homes six times and then forced the Lenape to accept foreign concepts of land ownership and America's rugged individualism.

There are three main schools of thinking in the historiography of the Lenape. The first school represents the Lenape in Western or European terms. Either Europeans violently subjected and utterly victimized the Lenape or the Lenape once existed in a pristine but uncivilized state. This family repeatedly references or assumes American Indians in passive concepts such as the noble savage, societal progression to civilization, Indians as a disappearing race, or in Social Darwinian analogies. This first school of historiography, more often than not, portrays the Lenape living in a natural state: primitive, a people ultimately victimized by war, removals, submission, and sadly, eventually acculturated. A "survival of the fittest" mentality justified Caucasian domination and forced policies to transform Native Americans into rugged individuals of the greater American society.

A rudimentary summation of this family of thinking can be likened to the following: Europeans met friendly advances from the Lenape during their first encounters. Europeans, however, were violent and contemptuous. The violence escalated as the two societies battled for

control of the land and natural resources. Immigrant settlers became numerous and foreigners, such as the Dutch, gained political control over some northern Lenape territories through war, violence, trickery, and force. Intertribal warfare erupted as local tribes competed for European favor to increase trade relations. The Lenape paid tribute to the Dutch for this favor, and yet the Dutch accused the Lenape for numerous thefts. What were at first Dutch accusations, escalated to extreme violence as Governor William Kieft, of New Netherlands, ordered his soldiers to kill and torture Raritan Lenapes. Kieft also offered wampum to ransom every Raritan's head brought to him. He then ordered his soldiers to murder more Lenapes on Manhattan Island. Although, the soldiers spared the lives of some Lenape, Kieft shipped the natives to English Bermuda and sold them as slaves.[2]

Combined with other detrimental impacts, three major epidemics of smallpox devastated the Lenape population. European hunters also drove a significant proportion of deer from the woodland areas and dug mollusks to near extinction, depleting Lenape food resources. These forces pushed the Lenape from their coastal homelands.

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[2]Gregory Evans Dowd, The Indians of New Jersey (Trenton, New Jersey: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1992), pp. 33-37.

The preceding scenario was repeated by different groups of European colonizers, and later Americans, until the Lenape reached Indian Territory in 1886-1887. Despite these hardships, numerous authors note that as the Lenape moved to avoid non-Indians, "the stronger was their determination" to live according to their traditions and values.[3]

This first school of thinking is also outdated in that it views Lenape history as a linear progression marked by various steps toward "civilization."[4] This "old school" approach completes a set of western assumptions, which seeks to explain tribal values through an alien lens. For instance, Paul Wallace states:

> The man, because his greater physical strength and his freedom from the burden of child rearing and nursing, attended to the more strenuous and dangerous duties.[5]

The gendered assumptions and impositions are hard to miss. Although crediting that Lenape women were in a "more respected position in the community than her sister in Europe,"[6] Wallace conceives of western classifications of women as the weaker gender hence of

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[3]Ibid., p. 52.
[4]Paul A. Wallace, Indians in Pennsylvania (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1964), p. 6.
[5]Ibid., p. 30.
[6]Ibid., p. 30-31.

lesser societal importance. Not only are women weaker, but they bare this negative "burden" of child rearing and nursing. Such conceptualization is antithetical to native views of family, reproduction and child rearing. To the contrary, Lenapes valued and celebrated reproduction, recognizing women as the life-givers. Lenape society placed women in positions of great esteem simply because of their reproductive abilities.

Another example of how Eurocentric interpretation obscures rather than reveals Lenape history concerns the period in the seventeenth Century when the Lenape resided within the Iroquois Nation, as will be discussed in greater detail in a later chapter. In short, during this time, the Iroquois referred to or deemed all the Lenape people "women."[7] Historians of this first school of thought assumed that Lenape were regarded as "women" because of their "inferior" political status and prohibiting them from participating in war. Consistent with the Western view of women as socially and politically insignificant, historians of the second family of thinking have provided information that casts doubt as to this conclusion. When viewed from a native perspective, particularly in light of the powerful

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[7]C.A. Weslager, The Delaware Indian Westward Migration (Wallingford, Pennsylvania: The Middle Atlantic Press, 1978), p. 16.

political influence of women in Iroquois society, such a conclusion is faulty. Instead, more accurately, the Iroquois called the Delaware "women" as a metaphor to a peacemaker's role.

While there is at least an effort to understand the culture, the second school of historiography contains certain superficial, or shallow, interpretation of Lenape and/or other Native American cultures. Most historiography of the Lenape fits into this second school. The founding of Lenape history is attributed to C.A. Weslager and he exemplifies this second family in several accounts describing the Lenapes western migrations, culture and history. As an example of the Eurocentric error often found in his writings, he states, "Each Delaware community had its own chiefs, great men, and patriarchs, and possibly groups of villages may have constituted a band, with a band chief."[8] He highlights the men's roles, barely touching the evidence that attributes women and matriarchal societies as the primary conduit for Lenape groupings and classifications. Although, Lenapes did choose male leaders, a prerequisite to the leadership position was

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[8]Ibid., p. 5. Further evidence of Euro-centric bias can be found in other texts: "Captain John Smith, whose life was saved by Pocahontas in an incident known to every schoolboy." Weslager, C.A., Magic Medicines of the Indians (Somerset, New Jersey: The Middle Atlantic Press, 1973) p. 17.

descendency through a female or sister's line. Weslager points out the more shallow layers of Lenape leadership while he does little to explain the deeper importance regarding what purposes leadership descended through the female lines.

Another author that almost reaches the third school of thinking but remains superficial in his analysis is Roger James Ferguson. His weak portrayal of the Delaware Nation through his western lens results in his characterization of the Lenape as a people with a "continuum of dispersal, disunity, and cultural and social disintegration."[9] The Delaware Nation, however, even as Ferguson admits, became adept Plains people. If the Lenape were not resilient, did not adapt, and did not unify to bring in their subsistence, they could not have become such a renowned Plains Tribe. His views of disorganization and loss of their original culture, blames the victim and Ferguson bypasses the evidence that contradicts his own thesis. The Delawares resisted White intrusion, an evident agency, which does not suggest cultural and societal breakdown. Instead, the Lenape retained their primary tenet of their religious Big House Ceremony and participated in many other cultural, traditional, religious and social endeavors.

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[9]James Roger Ferguson, "White River Indiana Delawares." (Ph.D. Diss., Ball State University: 1972) p. iii.

The third school of historical thought analyzes the Lenape from the anthropological and ethnographic perspective, specifically for academic sources. This anthropological and ethnographic perspective seeks to interpret Lenape cultural meanings. Yet, the conclusions about the cultural meanings vary from grossly inaccurate to totally accurate. Translating the interpretation to fit into the true context of the Lenape meaning can differ from the academic perspective.

Literature in this school varies from listings of Lenape characteristics with little to no interpretation of cultural meaning to full-scale interpretation about specific cultural traits.[10] Several treatises in this family deconstruct Lenape culture and history to reveal concentrated meanings in Lenape society.[11] Herbert C. Kraft illuminates a cultural modification when the Delaware Nation resettled in Kansas. He states, "the Lenape had become another 'Plains People,'" well adapted and accomplished horsemen, buffalo hunters, and warriors. The Lenape even participated with the Union during the Civil War with their comrades from the

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[10]Michaele Thurgood Haynes, "Alterations in Delaware Personal Appearance as an Indication of Acculturation" (MA thesis University of Texas at San Antonio: May 1995). Flannery, Regina "An Analysis of Coastal Algonquian Culture," Anthropological Series NO. 7. (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University Press, 1939).

[11]Ibid., Robert Grumet, The Lenapes (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989).

state.[12] His studies answer some basic concerns, such as how the Lenape modified their ways, adapting to a changing environments.

Women are more often included in the anthropological historiography of Lenape society. Their roles are more delineated and their definitive characteristics, such as types of clothing, tie them to their identities as Lenape women. Still, the intertwining and complexities of the culture mixed with their westward migration and all that would apply to cultural adaptation for the migrations is slight. Nor does this family address how Lenape women affected and were effected by their environment. Important, but often missing in this school, is a comparison of how Lenape people currently interact and participate in their culture to explain the Lenape history. Instead, this literature works backward, starting from objects and theories rather than from how the Lenape people viewed objects and rituals fit into their lives.

Regula Trenkwalder Schönenberger is an exception to the previous schools of analysis as she translates how the effects of colonization, migration, and resettlement affected Lenape women and how the Lenape women affected

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[12]Herbert C Kraft, The Lenape Archaeology, History, and Ethnography (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1986) p. 65.

their environment. The strength in her argument lies in her analysis of the Lenape language constructs. Her weak research methods, however, merely studied one group of Delawares, who today, live among the Iroquois Nation and are hence more closely associated to the Iroquois culture. Among the Iroquois, the Lenape culture could not be delineated from the Iroquois because the Lenape culture would borrow some Iroquois cultural traits and vice versa. Schönenberger often identified Iroquois cultural characteristics and then explained how the same characteristics applied to the Lenape. There are clear distinctions between the cultures even if the cultures had historic similarities and close association. She reasoned that similarities exist between the Iroquois and the Lenape cultures due to their original close proximity to each other and similar agricultural endeavors. She cites Wallace to support her assumptions as well as visited the Iroquois Nation, observing current-day Lenape people who coexist within the Iroquois Nation. While this may seem a reasonable supposition in that Iroquois women held great political powers in their formalized roles to select Iroquois leaders, Lenape people did not have these methods of leadership as other historians point out.[13] Lenape

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[13]Shönenberger, Regula Trenkwalder Lenape Women, Matriliny, and the Colonial Encounter: Resistance and

women, then, would not hold the same position in their society as Iroquois women. In light of the fact that Lenape people were Algonquian, perhaps a study of other Algonquians might reveal more appropriate suppositions as to the history of the Lenapes.

An account of Lenape history should also study the Oklahoma Delaware to at least provide a comparison for analysis. Schönenberger could also compare and contrast Lenape groups and cultures in other areas to ascertain more accurate information of an altruistic view. Because the main body of the Lenape moved out of the Iroquois' area to retain their culture and preserve their ways away from intruder's influence, one could argue that her scope of information was too narrow. Also culture is not static. Current Lenape culture can not totally be the same as it was in history. A comparison could reveal similarities and differences and hence a more effectual account of Lenape cultures.

Nevertheless, Shönenberger recognized that colonization effected Lenape people in general, but the effects are compounded as colonization is applied to Lenape women. This is due to the paternal, male-centered practices within the cultural norms of western peoples. As these western cultural norms were applied

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Erosion of Power, (New York: European Academic Publishers, 1991), Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 134.

to colonizing the Lenape, a maternalistic, egalitarian society, communication between the two societies became muffled; a result of each group conceiving of the other's messages, actions, and language into its own norms and values.

Shönenberger supported her argument by evaluating: Lenape language and culture; Lenape men's, women's, Elders, and children's roles; economy and agriculture; religion; and Iroquois, missionary, governmental and settler influences. Recognizing that the Lenape language is at the core of the culture and hence expresses the philosophies of the people, Shönenberger illustrates how language determines an individual's relationship to his or her society as well as reflects the society's relationship to nature; plants, animals, earth, minerals, etc.

Emphasizing that "Much of a culture's 'essence' or philosophy gets lost in translation," Shönenberger distinguishes the elemental differences between English and the Lenape language.[14] English categorizes by gender. Lenape, alternately, categorizes through animate and inanimate. Lenape also lacks passive voice while passivity is a primary communication in western texts. Passivity is moreover commonly associated to

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[14]Shönenberger, Lenape Women, p. 4.

women in western cultures. The author faults an "ahistoric perspective" of western reasoning to have "robbed native people of their history and their identity." This is because an ahistoric perspective "can neither account for changes in gender relations and definitions nor for socioeconomic changes in general."[15] Since this is the main approach used to study colonial encounters with American Indians, valuable information is missed. The ahistoric perspective is flawed beyond merely missing information; it imposes a hierarchic trope, as well as patriarchy and class on American Indians.

In the case of the Lenape, the ahistorical approach neglects the egalitarian and matrilineal society which "emphasizes sharing, giving, group continuity, and reciprocity, as well as individual autonomy."[16] The Lenape valued social relationships and the reproduction of these relationships rather than western conceptions of accumulation and individual productivity. Traders, missionaries, government officials, and settlers assumed paternal descent and the ideals of man's natural superiority. Also of note is that during the settler phase violence towards native women, "increased and rape

[15]Ibid., p. 11.
[16]Ibid., p. 15.

became a common theme on the battlefield."[17] Ironically, unreported in the historiography is that rape by Indians, even of captive white women was virtually unknown. As extreme violence intensified Lenape women's control over land, their society, and their bodies decreased. The historiography of the Lenape privileges western elements as the standard due to academically historically acceptable sources. Indian-White relations are therefore, according to Shönenberger, "interpretive, rather than purely factual."[18]

Even so, piecing together the history of the Lenape is difficult. Two primary sources throughout the secondary literature are David Zeisberger', History of North American Indians, 1779-1780, and John Heckwelder's, History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States, 1819.[19] Zeisberger and Heckwelder were two Moravian missionaries who lived among the

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[17]Ibid., p. 127.
[18]Ibid., p. 116.
[19]David Zeisberger History of North American Indians, edited by Butler Hulbert and William Nathaniel Schwarze (Ohio Archeaological and History Society Publications, English translation of German manuscript, 1910). John Heckwelder, An Account of the History, Manners, and Customs of the Indians Who Once Inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States, (1819) Rev. Ed. Edited by William C. Reichel "Memoirs of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania." (Philadelphia, 1876).

Lenape for extended periods of time during the seventeenth century. Reconstructing Lenape culture through non-Indian missionary perceptions and manuscripts is merely the first of an extended maze of interpretations. Other resources are the official state records for Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, and Delaware. Recorded by non-Indian men, these document biased accounts about the Lenape.

The secondary literature relies heavily upon land deeds, treaties, English, Dutch, Swedish, French, colonial, and American records, as well as some Lenape and other tribal oral history. Anthropology relies on ethnographic data, artifacts, museums, private collections, and general archeological theories. Kraft describes how the three clans of the Lenape can be misinterpreted, warning that the wolf, turkey, and turtle, clans as they exist today, are not separate tribes nor are they totemic in origin. The warning results from, according to Kraft, misinterpretation of a "carefully worded German manuscript written by a Moravian missionary David Zeisberger."[20] Schönenberger does this in mistakenly associating Lenape clans to deities. She states that the turtle "symbolized the spirit of goddess of the earth."[21] Associating the clan

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[20]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. xv.
[21]Shönenberger, Lenape Women, p. 186.

symbols with a God or totem, misrepresents the Lenape's interpretation of themselves. A totemic symbol would trace a lineage line to a non-human ancestor, "whereas," Kraft notes, "the ancestors of the Lenape Indian were human beings according to their creation myths."[22]

These "phraety" affiliations, or clans, as well as gender were important for social, cultural and religious activities. For example, in the Big House ceremony, Opossum Dance, and the Doll Dance, clan affiliations designated the obligations that the specific clan member would perform. Shönenberger elaborates that gender also designated certain roles within the cultural and religious activities. The women's dances and stomp dances took place during the spring. Indian football, for example, is a highly competitive game for women versus men; a rugged encounter that neither sex likes to lose. The Bear ritual was primarily men's feast, but six women were responsible for the concluding calls.[23]

Alternatively, Schönenberger's poignantly discussed utilizing the Lenape language to illustrate a more culturally relevant approach to Lenape historiography. Although she utilizes the same primary resources as many of her counterparts, her interpretation reveals a unique contribution that is closely connected to the linguistic

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[22]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. VVI.
[23]Shönenberger, Lenape Women, p. 216.

constructs and hence, is closer to Lenape. In so doing, Schönenberger opens the door to an alternate understanding of native society. This is the challenge of Lenape historiography, because a deeper analysis consists of examining Lenape women, revealing sources from which Lenape society is guarded and maintained.

Shönenberger notes that Lenape women:

> are not fighting to achieve a status which traditionally has been defined as male, but that instead they are fighting to protect and even to enhance the domain that once had assured them their autonomy and economic independence. Thus, not all women do necessarily gain something by complying with the songs of Western feminism.[24]

In other words, western dogma about gender roles formulated the foundation of much popular feminist ideology. American feminism reacts against western discrimination and aspires to bring the status of women to equate with the status of their male counterparts. Although there are many theories about the avenues for women to achieve this status, via Liberal, Marxist, Radical, Psychoanalytic, Socialist, Existentialist, or Postmodern, feminism,[25] they fail to reflect the difference with American Indian thoughts about gender.

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[24]Ibid., p. 43.
[25]Rosemarie Tong, Feminist Thought A Comprehensive Introduction (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989).

The difference between Native American women and western feminist ideologies lies in the conceptualization of women in native societies. Native women traditionally have been valued for their socioeconomic contribution. Lenape women are no exception. Their struggle is to protect their domain that has sustained their connections within their culture and heritage rather than achieve the status of a white male in the American society at large. Their efforts do not oppose the society at large, but more, protect their identity within their own society.

Lenape society was a commingling of various roles based on age, status, and gender rather than the doctrine from western thought that determines women's and men's roles as physically inflexible conflicts. Lenape roles were not solid because individuals were autonomous to decide how he/she would contribute to each other in Lenape culture. Leaders have been followed because of their abilities to lead, not because their followers were coerced or forced as in much of European, specifically, English societies. Lenape people have replicated their social idioms because their norms retain their basic core values. Gender is a facet of the society, but not the directive. Therefore, what affects the society as a whole affects Lenape women.

To look at cultural ideas about gender in the Lenape society, oral histories are invaluable because they reveal the experiences of the individual women and concurrently explain socioeconomic and cultural values. In general, Indian people are noted for their oral abilities and memory recall. When applied to Lenape history, written primary and secondary literature are less accurate then oral traditions. Oral history and interviews convey a more personal interpretation and thus draw the audience closer to the truth. The history is consequently no longer a third person, non-emotional account, but is a connection to the significance of American Indian history, and how it truly effected the lives of native peoples.

At the least, there are many prominent gaps in the secondary literature that oral history can begin to fill. For instance, during the Lenape's stay in Indiana, the secondary literature relays a problematic, alcoholic Lenape society based on non-Indian primary resources. A fuller story, however, is relayed when asking Lenape people about this time. Nora Thompson Dean, Lenape Elder, elaborated that the western migration of Delawares was "our 'Trail of Tears.'" With the incoming stream of violence and settlers the Lenape experienced many hardships and trials. As a result, the people became sick in their hearts. The following

conveys her understanding of the history of her people's time in Indiana:

> One stop was Ohio where Missionaries baptized a lot of my people and they were given Christian names. But General Morris declared law placing a bounty on every Delaware scalp, March 8, 1782. Many innocent Christian Indians were horribly massacred in a place called Gnadenhutten, Ohio...When they moved to the White River in Indiana. Some evil force stepped in. Bad times befell us in what was called a "witch burning."[26]

Tenskawatawa, the Shawnee Prophet and the brother of Tecumseh, influenced many Delawares to accuse the more Christianized factions of the tribe of witchcraft during the Delaware Nation's stay in Indiana. The burning coincided with native revival of the Big House and other religious ceremonies. Nora Thompson Dean relays the severity of the problem when recapitulating that some Lenape mothers were accused of witchcraft because their babies were ill and dying. The revival of native traditions allowed the Lenape to see the wrong in the accusations and killings, rather than condoning the murders. She says:

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[26]Nora Thompson Dean, "Delaware Indian Religion: A Talk By Nora Thompson Dean," edited by James Rementer. Presented as a talk 7 November 1978 at Boston Avenue Methodist Church, Tulsa, OK. p.27.

> The elders got together and had a council. They said, "The Creator is trying to tell us that we're committing sins, we're doing wrong, and we ought to try to rebuild our Big House Church here."[27]

After moving to Missouri, Kansas, and then finally to Indian Territory, the Tribe re-established their Xingwikaon, or Big House Church. Here, the old ones prayed and sang their vision songs, their "sacred songs."

Her elaboration sheds new light on the secondary interpretation of this time period. The secondary literature points to severe alcohol consumption as the significant driving force during the Indiana and Missouri occupations. Nora Thompson Dean's explanation alters that view, illustrating that the Lenape were also activating a resurgence of their native religion to counteract the negative problems. The secondary literature also misses the cultural and religious approach that the Lenape and other Native Americans often take to problem solving. Native people, including the Lenape, traditionally looked for imbalance or some other source as the cause of wrongdoing. The Lenape would find medicinal meanings in dreams, songs, and religion to remove or counteract the bad medicine. Whether consciously or unconsciously able to identify,

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[27] Ibid.

source through as much preventative medicine as possible. To the Lenape this meant that the cause of their wrongs in Indiana was that they were not following their religion their Big House practice.

Taken as a whole, the interviews with Lenape Elders and women emphasize the need for this type of native views, with limitations. They highlight that whenever the Delawares faced adversity, if they turned inward to their culture, heritage and native religion, the Lenape drew strength from their native ways and overpowered what caused distress.

The truth about the roles that Lenape women played throughout history lies beneath the surface. This is because Lenape women are accorded the most superficial treatment in common historical accounts. Even where Lenape women are discussed, they are viewed through a non-Indian prism because non-Lenape men have most often written history with little or no true knowledge of Lenape society. The stereotypes and impositions in the primary sources have since been amplified and embellished by subsequent historians, again generally by non-native male historians. These interpretations are moreover colored and jaded by the cultural prejudices and misconceptions of the writers. All the while, Lenape women become further obscured, subsumed, and lost in non-Indian historical accounts.

Much of the Lenape's cultural strength derives from the women in their society. This is due to the roles and activities that Lenape women have undertaken to ensure the survival of their ways. Older Lenape women and grandmothers are the matriarchs in their families. They guide, cook, sew, teach, contribute, and love their extended family and friends through all kinds activities. During any given occasion, one can look around and observe the various Lenape families that surround a mother or grandmother. Their children and grandchildren are adorned with regalia made by their family matriarch. Other women can be found cooking and preparing meals for the crowds and families during holidays, cultural activities, or feeds. Yet, food and clothing are merely a few of the cultural elements. When prompted, Lenape women will teach those who desire to learn about Lenape heritage. The tribe as a whole, bestows much respect to any of those who retain knowledge about Lenape heritage.

This thesis at most can begin to reveal some actualities about Lenape women and the critical roles they have played in cultural and social preservation. Given the unreliability of the secondary literature, this can only be accomplished through the best possible primary sources, traditional Lenape women in Oklahoma. These women are members, often Elders, of the Delaware

Tribe of Indians in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, the main body of the Lenape. These women represent a vast untapped wealth of knowledge and no one else is better able to reveal the complexities and meanings of Lenape culture or the very special place that women occupy within it.

CHAPTER 2

LENAPE WOMEN BEFORE 1887

Lenape ancestors formerly occupied areas along the eastern seaboard of what are currently New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Delaware. Like other native cultures, their traditions emerged from their view of the surrounding world. This world was rich in spirituality, dreams, visions, ceremonies, art, figures, family, births, deaths, love, war, enemies, food, hunting, gathering, medicine, work, even suicide. Reflected in their values and behavior, their world celebrated and honored their gifts of life. Aspects of those Lenape ancestors on this eastern seaboard, sounds and songs from the water drum, patterns of behavior, and significantly, their reverence towards women, still reverberate today.

Historians and anthropologists identify several early bands of Lenape. Specifically, they have identified the Lenape bands occupying the northern areas of New Jersey and New York: Canarsee, Esopus, Hackensack, Haverstraw, Kichtawank, Manhates,

Matineconck, Massapequa, Navasink, Nachpeem, Raritan, Rechgawawank, Wappinger, Warranawankongs, and Wiechquaeskeck.[1] These bands are distinguished by their particular dialect of the Algonquian linguistic stock, Munsee and Unami. Historians have also divided the Lenape into three divisions based on areas of occupation. The clan divisions result from Lenape concepts of origin rather than the areas that the group occupied as some historians' claim. A totemic classification of the clan symbols, as Kraft discussed, would originate to the particular animal. This is incorrect in the Lenape's case.[2] Lenapes mark their origins to human ancestors and instead, these three designations are just some of the original clan lineage. The Munsee, part of the northern group, was the wolf, Tùkwsit. The Unami, inhabiting the central region, were the tortoise, Pùkuwànku. The Unalachtigo or Wunalachtickos, from the southern portion, was the turkey, Pële. There may have been more clans.

Lenapes believed that they originated from a tree that grew off of a turtle's back. The Creator, Kishelëmukònk, also created the sun, moon, animals and plants, and the four directions that govern the seasons. The North, East, and West are known as Grandfathers,

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[1]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. xiii.
[2]Ibid., p. xv.

while the south, which blew in the warm winds of spring, Sikòn, is known as, "our grandmother, where it is warm."[3] Spring is a time for birth and re-emergence of life. It is a natural association for Lenapes to connect the south and spring with a female. Even more significant is that they associate the incoming southern spring, Sikòn, with the warmth and tenderness of a grandmother. The other three directions are important, but the singular grandmother has been able to give life and nurturing through old age. Lenape people also believed that the changing of seasons results from the grandparent's gambling. Spring came when the South Grandmother defeated the North Grandfather.

Lenape life was a seasonal equilibrium. Women and men would aid each other as needed for many of their chores.[4] During Sikòn, Lenape camped near waterfalls and rapids to trap and net, shad, herring and other migrating fish. Women gathered strawberries, and assisted the men hunting deer and bear.[5] Summer, Nipën, was filled with planting corn, beans, squash, and other edibles, gathering berries and hunting deer, elk, bear, small mammals, turkeys, and waterfowl. Women most often planted but men would assist when necessary. Lenape

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[3]Robert S. Grumet, The Lenapes (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989), p.14.
[4]Schönenberger, Lenape Women, p. 152.
[5]Ibid., p. 17.

also traded during Nipën.[6] Autumn, Tahkokën, was a time when women were consumed with the harvest and drying crops, preparing hominy, and men went on massive hunting expeditions. Winter, Luwàn, was a relaxing time for congregating, storytelling, councils, feasting, singing of visions and exploits, dancing, and importantly, a time for giving thanks.[7]

Northeastern tribes are generally known as "Woodlands" people, geographically ranging from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River. Other Native Americans referred to the Lenape as the "Grandfathers." Culturally, the Lenape held more similarities to the Mahicans than the Iroquois, Susquehannocks or other woodland people. Yet, similar to the Iroquois, matrilineal descendancy designated clan affiliation and certain ceremonial and religious rights such as performing specific dances that assigned Lenape people to ceremonies as well as hosting feasts.[8] Unlike the Iroquois, however, Kraft asserts there is little evidence that Lenape females chose their leaders as the Iroquois women. Instead, leadership seems reserved more to a competent prospect from a leadership lineage, albeit through the female lines.

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[6]Ibid., p. 18.
[7]Grumet, The Lenape, p. 19.
[8]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, 134.

As in other matrilineal, matrilocal, and matriarchal societies, newly married couples would move in with the bride's family and assigned their children to their mother's clan affiliation. These matrilineal societies are distinguished from any of their European counterparts for which patrilineal forms of lineage are the norm. Lenape people tended to marry at young ages and in some cases, a male could marry more than one woman. This was an exception, rather than the rule, as there were usually special circumstances for this type of marriage. For instance, A male could marry two sisters. Divorce was acceptable if the couple could not live together or did not conceive a child. In case of divorce after there were children, the mother always kept custody of the children. New couples moved in with the wife's family, enabling generations of women from the same clan to stay together on the same land. All members of the father's family were in-laws. The matrilineage held all of the control and rights to the clan's lands as well as to the household possessions.[9]

Fundamental tenets of Lenape society were consensus and egalitarianism. Yet, all people were not seen in an equal light. Individuals could attain higher status through leadership, medicinal practice, arts and crafts

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[9]Grumet, The Lenapes, pp.14-15

talents, warriors and other respected abilities. Although these talents placed them in a higher status than many common Lenape, those talented people were expected to utilize their abilities for the good of the people. Generosity was, and remains, a dominating altruism of Lenape society. Those who had more were expected to share and provide for those with less. This created balance in the society.

More settled than commonly known Plains Tribes, Lenape people participated in industrial endeavors unique to Woodlands peoples. Women made clay pottery for cooking, weaved baskets, mats, and other practical furnishings, and sewed skins into clothing. Men fashioned tools and weapons for hunting and fishing as well as other particular needs, did arts and crafts, and engaged in sporting events. Hunting and fishing were unlike today's sports fishing. Their lives depended on bringing in game and men would often have to pack these animals on their backs for many miles. Runners were sent over well-traveled paths from village to village delivering important messages. Women gathered herbs and roots for medicinal as well as practical purposes such as smoking, dying, and flavoring.[10] They consumed

[10]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 115.

chiefly meats and vegetation as well as other specialties.

Some of their principal agriculture consisted of corn, beans, squash, pumpkins, tobacco, and sunflowers for seeds and oil. Their cultivation techniques, however, became more innovative with experience. This resulted in more varieties of vegetation. Farming varieties of corn was an especially noteworthy enterprise. By the seventeenth century, Lenape women grew varieties of white, red, blue, yellow, brown, black, spotted, and flesh-colored, soft and hard corn.[11] With their first harvest of the year, Lenapes engaged in the "Green Corn Ceremony" to give thanks and praise to Kishelëmienkw for their blessings produced in the harvest. Dowd suggests that the Green Corn Ceremony formed the basis for what Lenapes later developed into the "Big House Ceremony."[12] Today, the Green Corn Ceremony of the Eastern Shawnee holds a series of "Woman Dances" amidst the rest of the ceremonial. If today's dance reflects this tradition, the Green Corn Ceremony celebrates women's association with corn and the harvest.

The Lenape closely related religion and medicines. The term Medicine holds more meaning than remedial

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[11]Ibid., p. 138.
[12]Dowd, Indians of New Jersey, p.21.

purposes. Medicine conjures religion, spirituality, well being, and illness. Religion was a primary source of preventative medicine to protect and ward off evil spirits, the source of sickness. Lenape warriors carried a medicine bag, or bundle, to ward off evil and mishap.[13] Tobacco was used to "quiet angry waters; to allay destructive winds; to seek good luck in hunting; to protect a traveler; to return thanks to the Creator; to console the bereaved; and for many other religious purposes."[14] Religion was also called upon during sickness. Plants, herbs, and remedies were utilized and applied to remedy the sickness only in addition to calling upon the spirits.

Much evidence exists to ascertain that Lenapes were especially knowledgeable about the medicinal and/or detrimental aspects of plants and herbs. The May apple, for instance, was a plant in which the fruit was consumed, but the root would induce death to commit suicide.[15] Ginseng was known among the Lenape as a tea and general tonic.[16] The use of sassafras originated among the Lenape. The root and bark were taken to

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[13]Weslager, C.A. Magic Medicines of the Indians (Somerset, New Jersey: The Middle Atlantic Press, 1973), p.7.
[14]Ibid., p. 31.
[15]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 142; Weslager, Magic Medicines, p. 18.
[16]Weslager, Magic Medicines, p. 28.

England and the use of sassafras spread quickly for its benefits to the human system.[17]

Women were highly valued for their social, cultural, religious, and economic interconnections. Lenape girls learned from an early age how to weave and make pottery. According to Kraft, there are no surviving remains of the original weavings.[18] Lenape women gathered the clay from lakebeds and riverbanks. Although all girls and women learned how to make pottery from this clay, some women became especially adept in their art.

Lenapes dwelled in wooden structure called a wik̲ëwam. They constructed ceremonial structures for their community gatherings and religious events. Made from more than two hundred and twenty saplings and bark covering, these intricately designed structures were sturdy and expanded twenty feet. Each end-post reached depths twenty feet into the ground.[19] Inside, artistic mats covered the ground, serving as a nice carpet between their feet and the ground. They slept on bunks covered with a deer and bear skin mattress.

Children and elders were revered. Even before they were born, Lenapes catered to an unborn child. An expectant mother, for instance, was careful not to

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[17]Ibid., p. 27.
[18]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 146.
[19]Ibid., p. 122.

disturb her unborn child in any way. This meant among other things, refraining from eating certain foods, and carefully eating meat with utensils so as not to touch the meat. To refrain from touching meat also applied to a menstruating woman. This practice stems from a religious respect towards the spirits. A pregnant woman acted in ways to take care of her unborn child and protect it from harm. This began with courtesy towards the spirits. An expectant mother was not only taking care of her child; consequences surely resulted from the mother's care. The Lenape believed that an unborn child's spirit affected the father's hunting abilities. This indicates a direct connection between the spirits, the unborn child, the expectant mother, and the father. Spirits connect to complete a circle between the individuals who physically created the life and the spirits who granted life. Even though a mother could act in all the ways according to protocol, the spirits especially favored some people. For instance, twins were exceptionally favored and held within "great spirits." Lenape society acknowledged twin's parents to be very fortunate.[20] Lenape society placed a great deal of emphasis on the responsibility of the mother towards her child. After all, only she could give that life. But actions and courtesy towards these great powers

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[20]Ibid., p. 136.

assured favors only so far. Spirits were the supreme delineators of a human life's path as early as inception.

This connection and responsibility placed women in an esteemed position of Lenape society. As the essence through which life is given, a life-carrier, and a life-protector, women were the source of continued existence for the society. Men and women alike knew that responsibility and acted according to the assurance that would appreciate this great gift. This indicates a perception of creating a balance. Respecting life and the spirits assured survival of their offspring. If this balance was disturbed, for instance, if a Lenape woman were to eat meat with her hands while menstruating or pregnant, terrible consequences resulted. This balance between human life and the spirits created the check for maintaining structure and laws within the Lenape society.

Midwives assisted in giving birth in small huts. After the recovery, the mother carried the newborn in a cradleboard. She utilized dried moss and other soft, absorbent materials for diapers.[21] Children were gently guided rather than use forced or coercive behavior. They learned from stories, example, and experience.

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[21]Grumet, The Lenapes, p. 19.

Aunts and uncles held special roles in teaching youngsters' skills. Passage from childhood to adulthood was recognized through ceremony.[22]

The Lenape believed that each living entity comprises a spirit, or manetuwak. Kishelëmukònk, the Creator, made manetuwak as well as all other beings. People gained power from manetuwak through their dreams, visions, and prayers. Because all things comprise a spirit, the physical presence of an animal could be killed for food while its spirit prevailed. This was the time to appreciate the animal's sacrifice of its physical life to give the people sustenance. Lenape would hunt only what they needed because they would not kill needlessly.[23]

Lenape society took care of elderly members. Those who lived to attain a status of graying hair were thought to be "very wise and prudent to have attained so great an age." They valued their elders to the point that younger people took conscientious care of those elders who could not take care of themselves.[24] In becoming a Lenape Elder, one attained a position of multidimensional leadership. Elders guided the political, economic, spiritual, and social affairs of

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[22]Ibid., pp. 19-20
[23]Ibid., p. 156.
[24]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 138.

the people. They led by example and honed their influential abilities to sway public opinion. Elders guided and taught young men and women who attained special spiritual powers through dreams and visions. These talented young men and women were trained to heal and become meteinuwok, doctors or medicine people. Meteinuwok were responsible for the appropriate prayers, rituals, and ceremonies, and generally provided the spiritual needs of the people. Leaders, or Sakimas, governed by persuasion, avoiding manipulating power. The status of chief was inherited from the mother's clan, but the Lenape followed those leaders who were most capable.

Ceremonies were also integral forms of Lenape society and often were established through metaphysical occurrences, dreams, visions, or prayer. For instance, the Doll Dance, one of few ceremonies that survived through the twentieth century. Nora Thompson Dean explained that this dance derived from Lenape children emulating their parents away at their social and stomp dance. When all the children's parents would get together to go to the social and stomp dance, the children would be left with a guardian in one location. The children made a doll and danced with the doll twelve times just as the adults. Afterward, one of the children got very ill. The parents did not know why.

They called in a medicine person, or doctor, to aid the child. The doctor determined that the parents would need to make a doll and continue the dances.[25] Lucy Parks Blalock relates that this dance emerged when a young girl did not take care of the doll. This girl had a dream that told her all that she and her family needed to do to take care of the doll. Jim Rementer suggested that Lucy Parks Blalock described more of the ending to the emergence of the dance.[26] Converging the two stories could possibly be deciphered to mean that the child was told how to take care of the doll in the dream and subsequently told the doctor about the dream. The doctor in turn, knew what the dream meant and relayed the meaning to the parents. The doll became known as Ohtas, and Lenape families later carved wooden Ohtas. The dance was an annual event held in her honor to bring prosperity and good health to the people.[27]

Their respect for life occurred from inception to old age. This indicates another connecting circle between the young, the middle aged, and the elders. Through the middle-aged members of society, the Lenape

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[25] Nora Thompson Dean, "The Origin of the Doll Dance Ceremony," Recorded by Jim Rementer, 15 Feb. 1979. Touching Leaves: Dewey OK 15.
[26] Jim Rementer, interview by author, 24 Nov. 1998. Delaware Tribal Center, Bartlesville, OK.
[27] Lucy Blalock, interview by Jim Rementer, Janifer Brown, and author, 20 Aug. 1996, Quapaw, OK, tape recording.

provided care for those who could not care for themselves. This acted to control Lenape society. Taking care of each other ensured survival. Disregarding the norms broke the circle, tragedy resulted, and members of the society would perish. Elders withheld valuable and practical knowledge to pass to their predecessors. The young Lenape contributed merely through their existence as the future of the Lenape people.

European contact into the Americas altered Lenape society and impacted Lenape women's abilities to maintain traditional interconnections to their society. European and native values conflicted and this created tension within Lenape society as they assessed and attempted to adapt to the invaders. Because Lenape women controlled the land and the agriculture, Europeans took away control of the land especially from Lenape women. Europeans, moreover, sought out Lenape men as representatives with which to treaty and barter. This diminished Lenape women's controls: first, to land; second, their economic contribution to procure the land; and third to their authority to negotiate.

No matter how accommodating the Lenape were to their invaders, however, Europeans saw the Lenape as a commodity. According to Kraft, the territory the Lenape occupied contained valuable natural resources. He

states "Lenapehoking held great wealth in seemingly inexhaustible stands of timber suitable for ship's masts, hulls, and decks, as well as planks and beams, and clapboards for house construction."[28] Their work and efforts served European interests and after those interests were fulfilled, Lenapes were at best objects of interest, and at worst subhuman and objects to destroy.

Aside from these external economic pressures, European society decreed their hierarchical paternal values on Lenapes. Europeans traders sought certain males to obligate an assigned role of "captain," or "chief."[29] This enactment caused Lenape society to reorder themselves. If outsiders were redesignating their leadership, and the Lenape needed to coexist with Europeans, they opted to pacify their resistance to these ignorant impositions. This could, however, mean that Lenapes internalized some elements of the hierarchical and patriarchal values. Yet, they may have merely acted to accommodate to their situation. Either way, Lenape men and women found themselves in new and to say the least, challenging control factors to accommodate gender roles.

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[28]Kraft, "Bulletin of Archaeological Society," p. 2.
[29]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 200.

To accommodate Europeans, Lenape society shifted from subsistence hunting to trapping animals for furs as a commodity. This created challenging obstacles for the people. Lenape men spent more time hunting and trapping sufficient numbers of small pelts than to hunt down and kill deer, elk, bears, or other large game. Hunters went greater distances away from their villages to trap. These small mammals did not provide much in the way of sustenance and some animals, such as a weasel, were inedible.[30] The quest for small pelts, moreover, increased the workload for women. As they previously tanned and prepared game for consumption, they expanded this role to preparing the pelts of small game trappings.[31] Their focus changed from a sustenance-oriented culture to a commodity producing construction.

Europeans depended on Lenape women for sustenance. European sailors were not sufficiently supplied for their voyages and Lenape women provided their food supplies. Later, with the first generations of colonizers, this dependency ran deeper as Lenape women knew the makeup of the land and thus edible sustenance such as fish, shellfish, deer, elk, turkey, other game, plants and nuts and berries.[32] These colonizers would

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[30]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 200.
[31]Ibid., p. 201.
[32]Dowd, Indians of New Jersey, p. 34, Herbert C. Kraft, "Bulletin of Archaeological Society of New Jersey," (NO

have starved to death if Lenape women had not shared and taught them how to survive. Lenape women's roles became pressurized to meet the demands of their own society as well as to provide for the needs of an external continental invasion. In essence, they had to play both ends against the middle. More often than not, through Lenape women's knowledge, skills, and provisions, they assisted in more peaceful and expedient relations between Lenapes and Europeans.

Lenape people also adapted to some of the European materialistic values. They traded to obtain among, other items, cloth and ribbon. Yet, while the Lenape adapted to the cloth and trade items, Lenapes designed particular styles of clothing unique to their identity. Lenape clothing bequeathed a sense of group belonging, which holds a deeper meaning than the surface adaptation. According to Michaele Thurgood, the clothing, "identified a Delaware Indian not as an aboriginal Indian, but as a member of a group which had strengthened its identity as a people who were not absorbed by the Iroquois or Europeans."[33] Tribes imported beads for clothing, crafts, and artwork. Wampum, a value of exchange, became mass produced. The

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50, 1995 South Orange, NJ: Steton Hall University Museum) p. 2.

[33]Haynes, "Alterations in Delaware Personal Appearance as an Indication of Acculturation," p. 6.

Lenape exchanged land and worked cheaply as farm laborers. They traded wampum and furs for guns, wool blankets, copper, and iron knives and hatchets. These items substituted their former tools and thus ensured Lenapes' ability to feed, cloth, and protect their family, but in no way could these elements replace the views of the society. In other words, these foreign elements, once recognized as having worth in Lenape significance, were integrated into useful forms of the society.

Most important at the time of European invasion, however, was survival. At least fourteen epidemics of small pox, measles, malaria, and other terrifying diseases, as well as alcohol and wars drastically reduced Lenape population. In 1609 the Lenape population numbered possibly as many as 24,000. By 1700, a mere 3,000 Lenape remained, a depopulation of epic proportion.[34] There were many dynamics influencing the Lenape and they assessed their best strategies to survive.

Inevitably, the European drive for commodities depleted the land of natural resources and the Europeans then had little need for the Lenape. Kraft relays:

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[34]Grumet, The Lenapes, p. 34.

> After the supply of furs depleted, European colonists were disinterested in the Indians and Lenape as Printz said in 1644 'Nothing would be better than that a couple of hundred soldiers should be sent here and kept here until we brake [sic] the necks of all of them in the river.'[35]

European livestock and hunters moreover drove the deer from the woods.[36] These ecological changes impeded Lenape means of earning a livelihood. The Lenape were quick to realize the impending dangers from remaining on the coast. The clashes and ensuing battles illustrated their need to relocate or find an alternative to protect themselves. The alternative that non-Indians devised was the reservations. The main body of the Lenapes, to avoid the reservation, relocated to the Iroquois Nation.

There is historical dispute about the relevance of the Lenape occupation with the Iroquois during the seventeenth century. The Lenape did not aspire to become part of the League, nor were they invited. The Lenape merely wanted to reside in an area free from war and harassment from the colonists.

The subject of Lenape as "women," in some cases is derogatory. Anthony Wallace states that the meaning of the term "women" is not "altogether clear." He asserts

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[35]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology., p. 261.
[36]Dowd, Indians of New Jersey, p. 45.

that the Lenape were to play an "effeminate"[37] or the women's role in matters of entertaining officials from the Great Council. They could not speak at the Great Council except from invitation, nor could they join warfare. The Mahicans, the Nanticokes, the Siouan Tuteloes, and the Tuscaroras were also "women." Wallace likens the "women" metaphor to a "non-voting membership in the League."[38] Yet, according to Wallace, Teedyuscung, the main character of his book, took offense to being called a "woman." Non-Indians, especially Quakers, heavily influenced Teedyuscung. Wallace explains that this influence stirred Teedyuscung's defensiveness. Wallace wavered between any truly definitive interpretation of the metaphor, but does give credence to both views that the Delawares as women were both disparaged and esteemed.

Francis Jennings is more emphatic to the Lenape as "women" issue regarding the meaning in Iroquois and native terms. He believed the meaning is clear and that it connotes a peacemaker's role. The term should not be mistaken for contempt. The Iroquois honored the Lenape as "women," in their role of peacemakers.[39] In the same

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[37]Anthony F. C. Wallace, King of the Delawares: Teedyuscung (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), p. 195.
[38]Ibid., p. 198.
[39]Francis Jennings, The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire, The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with

vein, the Iroquois sometimes addressed the Lenape as Grandfathers or nephews. Jennings asserts, "they were simply referring to different sorts of relationships, ceremonial and political."[40] In fact, a Cayuga tradition illuminates that the Lenape role in the Covenant Chain was to mediate between the Five Nations and the Algonquian-speaking people. Jennings concludes that the Cayuga tradition, "dovetails neatly" to Lenape as "women," as well as "grandfathers."[41]

Considering the Native American emphasis that portrays women as peacemakers, the Lenape as women fits more within the Native American context. Jennings asserts that the Iroquois "called the Delawares *women*," as the Iroquois, "had never claimed a conquest" over the Delaware Nation.[42] Jennings cites the oral acclamation of traditionalist Chief Jacob E. Thomas who recalled that the Delaware Nation had been "adopted by the League as peacemakers to cement alliances between the Iroquois and Algonquian nations."[43] Even so, the Lenape eventually removed from the Iroquois Nation into a less controversial location, or so they thought.

English Colonies from its beginnings to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744 (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1984) p. 161.

[40]Ibid., p. 45.

[41]Ibid., p. 161.

[42]Ibid., p. 22.

[43]Ibid., p. 23.

Even after their removal to Ohio, the Lenape were "removed" again to Indiana, to Missouri, and finally to Kansas. These removals were nothing short of devastating. It is unimaginable what the Lenape must have experienced to be forced, sometimes by gunpoint to leave their homes, burial grounds, gardens, and entire means of subsistence for unknown territory. They were like refugees in a war, but they never got to go home because they no longer had a home. Enroute, they left loved ones sick or dead. Desperate acts occurred during these times. For instance, some Lenapes hid a child in hopes of strangers finding and taking care of him or her, demonstrating the severity of the conditions. A child had a better chance of survival with strangers than enduring a forced migration. The United States forced the Lenape to remove not just once, but five times. The exception was their move from Missouri to Kansas. Even so, their time in Missouri was much like a continuation of the removal from Indiana. The Lenape never recovered from the move and continued to experience violence from the squatters who already occupied their new territory.

Upon reaching their destination in Kansas, not only was adaptation necessary, but also mastery of survival or subsistence skills allowed the tribe to distinguish its position in a territory already filled with

aboriginal natives who had for eons acquired these same skills. Later, when the fur-bearing animals and the buffalo were practically gone, the Lenape increased their agriculture. The Lenape people developed a keen sense and awareness about their surroundings, which enabled them to discern necessary skills and techniques for any landscape. All of the Plains Nations suffered from the effects of the buffalo slaughter because not only was their entire subsistence base wiped out, but also their access to clothing, utensils, housing, art, tools, among other things.

Between 1838-1863, the Lenape increased their agricultural endeavors consisting of corn, beans, peas, Irish potatoes, and pumpkins to alleviate their dependence on buffalo. They also acquired minimum levels of agricultural livestock. By 1839, the Lenape even cultivated wheat, which in addition to corn served as the major subsistence base.[44] Missionaries re-established their practices among the Lenape by 1830. Moravians, Mormons, Methodists, and Baptists built schools, churches, wrote textbooks and hymnals in the Delaware language.

The Lenape sided with the Union during the Civil War sending 170 out of 201 able-bodied men to the army.

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[44]Ferguson, "White River Indiana Delaware," p. 162.

This was among the highest proportions of any population in service. While the men were away, any Lenape women residing off the reservation moved onto the reservation as a necessary safety precaution. While on the reservation, many of their off-reservation homes were burned or ransacked. Unfortunately, not all of the men returned to their families. This left many Lenape widows to start over again, building or repairing their homes and providing for children. A case in point is the story of Eliza (Woo-le-noo-xwa) Randall. After returning to her ransacked home, widowed, and a mother of five, she rebuilt and provided for her children. Left without a husband's contribution, she plowed, gardened, sewed, and took care of her five children alone.[45] For an Indian woman alone in a hostile environment to endure such hardship yet successfully provide for her children is a token of the strength this and other Lenape women must have possessed.

To foremost provide for their families, and then to actively maintain Lenape culture, Lenape women have chosen practical elements of their culture to assist in Lenape survival. Migrations forced Lenape women to conform their methodologies to their surroundings. For

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[45]Alta Mae Bowman (Randall) "The Story of Eliza and John Randall and their Descendants," (Unpublished: Vinita, OK 1986) p. 20.

instance, the coastal fishing culture evolved to a hunting and gathering culture supplemented with gardening in Ohio, Indiana and Missouri. The move to Kansas further altered the Lenape society and caused them to adapt to existence as a Plains Nation. This meant that in each location, the women learned alternative methods to prepare food, wild game butchering and skinning, as well as gathering techniques. They also learned to identify edible plants and herbs in any given area.

Lenape women were moreover free to modify a specific cultural trait, although it was a selective process. For instance, revelations often came to Lenapes through their dreams. Upon understanding and translating a dream, Lenapes would activate what they interpreted from the dream. Even some modern day activities or phenomenon are explained through feelings and dreams. An anonymous informant relayed how she knew of her niece's death at first from an uneasy feeling. Then, from a dream, she saw the girl in a garden in heaven and knew that she was at peace. Lenape losses due to the European invasion were significant in virtually every respect. They lost entire families, their homes, their lands, the graves of their ancestors, their previous methods of life, as their lives and their descendants' lives were forever altered. All the while, Lenape

people, sometimes under the guise of submission, and other times during open war, maintained their dignity and their spirituality; ever-present as the essence of their identity. Believing in the metaphysical to clarify their world, directly correlates to Lenape women's strength that has enabled these women to endure such tragedy and make something beautiful out of it all.

CHAPTER 3

REMOVAL TO INDIAN TERRITORY

The Lenape people descended from eastern woodlands and coastal traditions and modern day Lenape culture is traced to these origins. Lenape history reflects a deeply driven will to endure, persevere, and sustain their traditional ways of life. Lenape people have endured hardships that annihilated the majority of Lenape people even before the eighteenth century. They persevered through European, colonial, and American invasions, forced acculturation, as well as dangerous threats to their culture, traditions and families. The Lenapes' relentless insistence upon their society's autonomy and distinct culture has prevented their disintegration in the face of tremendous pressure.

Through their history of removals, unfulfilled promises of a Native American State with the Delaware Nation as the head, and broken treaties guaranteeing their unabridged occupation, Lenape people not only survived, but also unknowingly forged the path to western "frontiers." The Lenape signed the first treaty

with the newly formed Continental Congress[1] and assisted in many wars beside U.S. citizens. The Lenape fought other tribes along their trail westward to blaze a trail for non-Indian settlers to follow. The Lenape also fought for the Union side during the Civil War, sending more members per capita than any other population of people within the United States.

Lenape people, and women in particular, suffered tremendous hardships from the removals. Each removal called for completely uprooting the family and moving everything the family owned. The emotional and physical hardships profoundly affected the women. Add to this the loss of husbands, fathers, and brothers to war and the toll was enormous. Remarkably, Lenape women were able to overcome the traumas of removal to provide a home and place for their families and culture.

Lenapes' first contact with Europeans began in 1524 with Giovanni de Verrazano and his expeditionary crew. Sir Samuel Argall, Captain of the "Discovery," in 1610 named the De La Warre Bay in honor of Sir Thomas West De La Warre and Governor of Virginia Colony.[2] These explorers encountered, according to recent studies, from 16,000 to 24,000 Lenape.[3] From this time henceforth,

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[1]"Treaty with the Delawares," 1778, (7 Stat., 13).
[2]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. VVIII.
[3]Grumet, The Lenapes, p. 13.

the English referred to the Lenape as Delaware Indians. After Henry Hudson's voyage, Europeans settled on Lenape territories. Historians concur that at first, Lenapes were friendly toward their visitors, as would be Lenape custom. Lenape referred to Europeans as Shouwunnock, "Salty People." The Lenapes were quick to realize the impending hostilities from these Europeans, as the Hudson crew set the precedence for future dealings with the Lenape. The crew drove the "Salvages [sic] from their Houses, and took spoil of them."[4] Lenapes learned to calculate their actions and establish defensive measures to protect their people.

The coast provided a landing dock for a new European industry. After fishing the ocean waters, the Europeans improved their techniques beginning to "dry catch" before returning to Europe for their profits. Clamshells were used for making wampum, which was a common and valuable means of exchange and gifts. Metal drills introduced by Europeans, allowed an efficient means of mass producing the wampum beads. Lenapes were able to obtain control of this production but European threats of violence, taxation or tribute quickly dispossessed them of it.[5] European exploitation and relentless pursuit of resources depleted nature of one

[4]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology p. 10.
[5]Ibid., p. 195.

commodity only to be replaced by another as trapping furs later supplemented the fishing industry.

European trapping intensified as they became more proficient. Europeans dug mollusks throughout the year unlike the Lenape who dug them seasonally.[6] Beavers were soon extinct in Lenape territory and by 1640, they had to encroach upon other tribal areas for this commodity. Other tribes, however, defended this precious trade commodity for their own.[7] Most startling is that fish and furs were not the only exports; Europeans captured and enslaved the native peoples. This practice began as early as the sixteenth century. Acts of slave raids, kidnappings, and other atrocities occurred all along the seaboard.[8]

The Europeans thus severely impacted Lenape society in several ways. First, the native people learned to distrust the invaders. They did not welcome and aid the new arrivals as they initially had. Second, Lenape people learned to act defensively and then offensively towards the Europeans. They acted defensively to protect their people and offensively, they learned what the Europeans valued, furs. In becoming a hunting and trapping asset to the Europeans, they acted as a worthy

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[6]Gregory Dowd, The Indians of New Jersey (Trenton: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1992), p.43.
[7]Grumet, The Lenapes, p. 35.
[8]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 196.

commodity. They consequently illustrated that they were more essential as assets than as slaves.

Bringing more than simply their desire to exploit North America's resources, Europeans brought disease and war. Incidents of diseases, such as small pox devastated the Lenape populations. Lenape people fell victim to three major epidemics of small pox in the early seventeenth century, 1630s, and 1661-1664.[9] Their numbers also dissipated from violence and war, which coincided with the Lenape loss of their lands.

Although concepts of nature differed, Grumet points out that both the Lenape and the Europeans believed that they were entitled to the land through higher powers. The Lenape held land as "custodians for the spirit beings and Lenape clans held land in trust for Kishelëmukònk" in as much as the Europeans claimed the land for their monarchs by "divine right." Europeans recorded land transactions on deeds, licenses, and other documents. Lenapes utilized oral agreement, wampum belts and pictographs to record transactions.[10] Yet, Francis Jennings elaborates more about the impact of the Lenape encounter with Europeans, pointing out that the, "invasion of America was a series of encounters between governments in the state form and governments in the

[9]Dowd, Indians of New Jersey, p. 43.
[10]Ibid., pp. 44-45.

tribal form."[11] Governments in the tribal form utilized native methodologies, which did not always accomplish adequate defense of their territories. The British "right of conquest," or divine right to land, also believed in divine right to "conquer" the human inhabitants of that land. Methods to accomplish the conquest of the human inhabitants range from straight out war to subliminal strategies. For instance, England solicited other tribes, namely the Iroquois, to divest the Lenapes of their lands and then the British claims of conquest over the Iroquois meant British conquest of any tribe the Iroquois were perceived to have overpowered.[12] In other words, this time period reflects a complicated and unique case history and the Lenape were for better or worse caught in extreme cross torrents of events, dynamics, and cultural conflicts.

Postmarking trade relations, Europeans, namely the Dutch, began to seek northern Lenape lands, while Lenapes continued to think of land deeds as they did during the fur trade. They considered the land transactions more an offering of appreciation albeit a gift of shared territory. In 1614, the Dutch government established the Dutch West India Company in New Netherlands on the northern lands of the Lenape. This

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[11]Jennings, The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire, p. 7.
[12]Ibid., p. 11.

company strategically located trade forts throughout the area. Fort Amsterdam, located at the southern tip of Manhattan Island became New York at the end of the Anglo-Dutch wars in the late 1600s. This was a deep-water fort trans-shipping supplies, trade goods, and news. Fort Orange, later known as Albany, was at the junction of the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers. Fort Orange enabled the Dutch to control the lucrative fur trade in the north.[13]

Between 1630-1767, Lenapes placed their mark on over 800 deeds. These were most often small tracts of land. There were also fraudulent deeds, such as the infamous, "Walking Purchase," that William Penn's son Thomas Penn conducted. The Lenape refused to cede the land that he coveted. Refuting them, Penn produced an old document from his father's lifetime that he claimed the Lenape should honor. Although the document specified an area of land that a person could walk in one day, Penn utilized exceptional runners to chart his claim. The Lenape were swindled out of a significant portion of their land from this so-called purchase.[14]

Even after signing most of their land away, Lenapes still remained under an assumption of trade, recalling the small parcels of land that they offered to the

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[13]Ibid., p. 31.
[14]Ibid., p. 331.

newcomers during their initial encounters. The Lenape, however, did learn to negotiate for the right to hunt and fish on their previous territories.[15] Jennings offers that "under aboriginal custom, the 'sale' of land conveyed only the rights of use for residence and subsistence as long as the parties lived and were satisfied with the terms of compensation. No sales were permanent."[16] Lenapes, under this scenario, ceded land assuming a use as needed basis. This was obviously not the case. As the colonial populations increased and they sought more permanent settlements, they founded townships. This increasingly created pressure on the Lenape to secede from their territory and confront the differences in land conceptualization.

By 1639 the Dutch pressed into the lower Manhattan and into Staten Islands, currently New York. Conflicts resulted from Dutch agricultural practice verses the Lenape systems. For instance, Dutch settlers would fence in their grains but would allow their livestock to roam into and wreak havoc on Lenape cornfields. When Lenapes guarded their fields by killing the animals, the Dutch would accuse them of theft.[17] These disruptions escalated to a full-scale attack on the Lenape. In

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[15]Grumet, The Lenapes, p.46.
[16]Jennings, Covenant Chain, p. 326.
[17]Dowd, Indians of New Jersey, p. 36.

1639, Governor William Kiefts, New Netherland, attempted to force Lenape submission by ordering Cornelis Van Tienhoven to take eighty soldiers to torture and execute four Raritans, including the Peace Chief's brother. The Lenape retaliated by killing four people on a Dutch farm in Staten Island. Kieft upped the antie offering a bounty on any Indian who would bring him a Raritan's head. Surrounding Indians accommodated that offer and the Raritans submitted to not press the matter further. The Governor consequently rescinded the bounty.[18]

More incidents of accusations and violence occurred among the Hackensack village on the Newark Bay in 1643. Livestock killings instigated the Dutch to sell the Lenape "adulterated brandy" as well as engaged in other faulty transactions. The Hackensack grew enraged enough to murder a Netherlander. While the Hackensack offered wampum to the family to compensate for their loss, they met only hostility and demands for no less than a surrender of the murderer. Governor Kieft soon sent in two heavily armed companies of soldiers to attack and massacred eighty Lenape men, women, and children.[19] On Manhattan Island, forty more Lenapes awoke to the same

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[18]Ibid., p.37.
[19]Ibid., p. 38.

tragic death. Survivors were shipped to English Bermuda and sold as slaves.[20]

The Lenapes could not contain their warriors after this attack. They seized New Netherland scattering Dutch settlers from their posts in Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, Staten Island, Newark and parts of Manhattan. Lenapes killed every man but did not harm the women and children.[21] By 1645, Lenapes agreed to cease their hostilities. Although war was avoided, tensions remained. Bouts of violence were frequent and cultural conflicts abounded. In 1671, for instance, a Lenape man's sister was murdered. Her grief stricken brother from the village of Mantes, sought retribution. He drew from his custom for which a woman's death called for the killing of two of the enemy and he killed two Dutch men.[22]

The English finally conquered the Dutch in 1677, which culminated in the Five Nations joining in the Covenant Chain with New York, Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, Maryland, and Virginia. This allowed the Iroquois a more strategic military and political position. From this position, the Iroquois dominated

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[20]Ibid., p. 39.
[21]Ibid.
[22]Ibid., p. 48.

the area and subjecting other tribes to their laws and regulations.

By 1720, the torrents of settlers along the East Coast pushed the Lenape to three regions: the Ohio River Valley, Pennsylvania's Susquehanna and upper Delaware Valley, and southern New Jersey. Their travels and settling into less populated regions evidences their determination to reject European domination. Lenapes moved to insure their survival.

The subject of the Lenape's acceptance or rejection of Christianity is not a cut and dry issue. The inherent eclecticism in Lenape, as well as many other native populations, accepted many forms of separated power. Christianity indeed had power. Lenapes could conceive of particular aspects of Christianity as powerful and yet, not wholly accept it. They therefore could move between their native religions and Christianity; they incorporated aspects of Christianity into their native religions and vice versa. Some historians claim that the non-Christian Lenape believed that the Creator gave the Bible to the younger brother, the White men. The Creator did not give it to Indians and Africans and therefore it was not right for them.[23]

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[23]Ibid., p. 59.

Ultimately, an individual Lenape could choose and there does not seem to be a uniform answer.

During the American Revolution, the Lenape attempted to remain neutral. After obtaining permission from the Miamis to move between the Ohio and White River, the Lenape remained peaceful. They maintained their stance even through the Shawnee war against the Virginia militia during Dunmore's War. During the initial phases of the Revolution, some of the Delaware leaders favored the Americans while other leaders pledged their alliance to the British.

Those who favored the American side were attracted to the promise of obtaining control of a fourteenth State. The Continental Congress pledged that this State would be all Indian and the Delaware Tribe would be at the lead or in their words, "To join the present confederation, and to form a state where the Delaware nation shall be the head, and have a representative in Congress."[24] Torrents of greedy settlers moved into the area however, quickly destroying the promised state. Furthermore, Americans attacked two innocent Moravian Christian missionary villages, Gnadenhutten and Salem. On March 8, 1782, the colonists slaughtered ninety-six men women, and children in cold blood. Certainly

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[24]"Treaty with the Delawares, 1778," (7 Stat. 13).

enraged by this incident, the Lenape turned to the British and resisted the Americans long after the British completely withdrew from the war.

The Lenape continued to defend each of their most recently defined territories. They attacked, raided, and took hostages along the borderlines of frontier settlement of their lands. In 1790 and 1791, the Lenape combined forces with other Ohioan tribes to defeat two American armies and push their lines back. These Ohioan tribes fought against a numerically superior American army under Arthur St. Claire. The American army's casualty statistics showed 640 dead with 400 wounded or captured contrasting with the tribal losses of twenty dead and forty wounded. This stands as the worst defeat ever incurred by the Americans against tribes.[25] The Americans defeated the Lenapes and their allies at the Battle of Fallen Timbers along the Maumee River in 1794 and the Treaty of Greenville, 1795, ended fighting in the upper Ohio River Valley. This treaty signed away their remaining Delaware lands in Ohio to the American government.

After this defeat, the Lenape broke into four main groups. The New Jersey Brotherton Lenapes went to the Stockbridge Indian Reservation in New York, then to the

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[25]Dowd, Indians of New Jersey, p. 61.

Stockbridge Munsee Reservation in Wisconsin. The Munsees, Unamies and others from Gnadenhutten and Salem fled to Michigan and migrated to the Thames River region of Ontario, Canada. Another group migrated to Girardeau region of Missouri and they became known as the Absentee-Delaware, who currently reside in the Western region of Oklahoma. The main body removed to Indiana along the White River, then Missouri, Kansas and then to Indian Territory.

The reservation policy was born out of early land transactions and Christianized Lenapes. The New Jersey Commission set aside 3,044 acres of land in Burlington County for the "Brotherton" and it became the first and only reservation in New Jersey.[26] The reservation was similar to a town with comfortable homes, a log meeting house, a school, trading store, gristmill, and a blacksmith shop. The non-reservation Indians viewed this as a means to confine and trick the Lenapes. They were too easily concentrated in one location to be confined and killed and their fears were readily confirmed.

Reservation life could not provide for all of the Lenapes' necessities and they had to venture outside the boundaries. The land was insufficient to meet the needs

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[26]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 231.

of the Lenapes or the non-Indians and the locals grazed their cattle within reservation boundaries. As resources diminished so too did relations between the two groups. The converted reservation Lenape were pacifists, leaving them vulnerable and the non-Indians and Indian alike abused them for their beliefs.[27] Conditions deteriorated and colonists burned down the Lenape gristmill on the reservation. By 1801, the remaining Lenapes either departed for another mission or moved among the Stockbridge Mahicans.[28]

At the Indiana juncture, the main body of the Lenape followed a powerful, charismatic leader named Tenskawatawa. He was a Shawnee Prophet and the brother of Tecumseh.[29] A broadly condemned time for the Lenape, there were rampant accusations of witchcraft. These accusations stemmed from this new leader's messages condemning Christianity and resisting anything non-native. After Chief Tetepachksit was burned to death by his son for witchcraft, Lenape leaders realized the severity of their actions. The Lenapes reassessed Tenskawata's messages, choosing not to engage in any further American resistance.[30] The eclectic views that

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[27]Jennings, Covenant Chain, p. 350.
[28]Dowd, Indians of New Jersey, p. 59.
[29]Ferguson, "White River Indiana Delawares," p. 75.
[30]Ibid., p. 88.

enabled the Lenape to follow such a powerful leader could also allow the Lenape to relinquish its following.

This relinquishment of Tenskawatawa as their leader consequently released the Lenape from engaging in war against the Americans. During the War of 1812, the United States declared war on Great Britain. To protect peaceful tribes, President Madison ordered the Delawares to move to the Piqua agency. The Delawares maintained their peaceful position although, there were few incidents of unrest. The Delaware Nation assisted the United States as scouts, foragers, spies, and interpreters.[31] The Nation returned to their land along the White River in 1814 and rebuilt their homes.

Ironically, for their peace, the Lenape surrendered their lands to the United States for the Trans-Mississippi River in 1820-21. Previously, in 1803, by the Treaty of Fort Wayne, the Delaware Nation signed over three thousand acres of land.[32] Indiana had become a state and citizens wanted all of the Indian people removed. This removal was very trying for the Lenape. The federal government provided scarce rations and scant provisions during a long wait to cross the Mississippi River. The atrocious conditions made many Lenape ill and many perished. Before proceeding to their final

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[31] Ibid., p. 91.
[32] "Treaty with the Delawares, etc., 1803" (7 Stat. 74).

destination, Chief William Anderson, ill himself, sought refuge along the opposite bank. He reasoned that the refuge would allow his people time to hunt and recover from their dire state. There were even fewer provisions, however, in this temporary refuge. Chief Anderson then set up an emergency encampment along the Current River to salvage the lives of his starving people. He sent hunters to search for game and fish. The Nation also planted corn. Terribly, the crop froze from a heavy frost destroying their food.[33]

Finally, in 1822, the United States government established a more permanent location for the Lenape. They settled along the James Fork of the White River in Missouri. Still, non-Indian squatters already laid claim to these lands, and another tribe occupied this territory. They resented the Lenape resettlement there. While Chief Anderson insisted the land belonged to the Lenape, the resentment grew and the factions retaliated by stealing Lenape horses and livestock. The U.S. government assisted and sided with the Delaware Nation, stifling the resistance to their settlement.

Existing on the land in Missouri was nonetheless, extremely difficult for the Lenape. Heavy rains and flooding demolished their crops. Hunting proved

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[33]Weslager, Delaware Westward Migration, p. 212.

difficult because there was little game on their assigned area and in hunting farther west, they met other Indian Nations who, to say the least, did not appreciate the Lenapes hunting on their grounds.[34] The Osage was among the resistant Nations, stealing Lenape horses and killing Chief Anderson's son. The Lenape retaliated and killed some Osage hunters. This led to further hostilities.[35] The Lenape endured many periods of starvation, hardships, and battles.

These forbidding conditions caused Chief Anderson to negotiate for lands elsewhere. But this time, Chief Anderson had learned to become a harder negotiator and he sought a fair deal. He demanded a well-supplied envoyage, including wagons, horses, and increased annuities. He planned for a reception of farm equipment, tools, and a saw and gristmill for use by the Lenape upon arriving in Kansas. He insisted on an Indian school for the children in Kansas. To ensure a proper location, Chief Anderson sent a unit to inspect the Kansas lands.[36]

In 1829, the Lenape Removed to Kansas. They arrived in several groups after a long trek. Despite Anderson's negotiations, their provisions were minimal and the

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[34]Ibid., p. 213.
[35]Ibid., p. 215.
[36]Ibid., p. 216.

agency only provided rations for women and children. Men hunted to supplement the meager supplies, even though there was little to hunt.[37] The Delaware Nation persisted and again adapted to their situation surrounded by unfamiliar grasslands and rolling plains. According to Kraft, Lenape people became, "accomplished horsemen."[38] They hunted buffalo and protected their independence warring with Plains Nations. They even developed a notable reputation for their acquired abilities as plains hunters and warriors.

By 1854 the United States established a territorial government for Kansas. Along with the government came non-Indian settlers, the railroad, and the civil conflict over admitting Kansas into the Union. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, the Lenape found themselves in the middle of an outside conflict. The Lenape sided with the Union sending 170 out of 201 able-bodied men to the Army. This was among the highest proportions of any population in service.

No less than a year after the end of the Civil War, the United States forced the Lenape to remove to the former confederated Indian Territory. Previous episodes in 1854 revealed the Lenapes eventual displacement. The United States government sought several representatives

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[37]Ferguson, "White River Indiana Delawares," p. 137.
[38]Kraft, Lenape Archaeology, p. 237.

to sign away the Delaware Nation's lands between the Missouri and Kansas Rivers as well as their outlet. The Lenape people were exasperated because those who signed the lands away were not the officially recognized leaders of the Nation. The Council was not involved in the decision and never consented to the treaty. The Council even prepared to send representatives to Washington D.C. to dispute the agreement. This however, never came to fruition. Pressures from the railroad were insurmountable and in 1861, the Delaware Nation ceded another 100,000 acres to the Leavenworth, Pawnee, and Western Railroad Company.[39] As illegal squatters invaded their land, the Delaware Nation suffered from timber depredations and cattle rustling. The United States refused assistance due to the influence of the railroad companies who had plans to build on Delaware lands in Kansas.

In 1866, the Lenape situation dissolved to the point that the Delaware Nation signed the treaty to remove from Kansas and the Delawares bought rights to settle in Indian Territory.[40] 986 Lenapes removed from Kansas to Indian Territory to reside among the Cherokee people in 1867-1868; a mere portion of the original 24,000 that the Europeans first encountered. Once more, the removal

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[39]"Treaty with the Delawares," (12 Stat., 1177).
[40]"Treaty with the Delawares," (14 Stat., 793).

from Kansas to Indian Territory was brutal with little provisions or promised assistance from the United States government. Hardship and weather killed many Lenape along this path. Four groups of the Nation moved to Indian Territory. They traveled by wagon and often covered fifteen to twenty miles a day. They would camp two or three days and travel again. One group went to the area around what is now Ketchum, Oklahoma. Another went to the area around what is now known as Grand Lake.[41] They settled into various areas, sometimes next to Cherokee homes. Their homesteads were usually less than 160 acres[42] versus many non-Indians' who after they were able to settle in Indian Territory, had 400 to 500 acre wheat farms.

The Delaware resettled in Indian Territory re-establishing their society, culture, and religion. No sooner had they stabilized their livelihood, than did the United States Congress pass the Dawes Act in Severalty of 1887. Combined with the United States drive to "civilize" American Indians, Indian Citizenship into the United States and boarding schools the Dawes Act

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[41]Fred Falleaf, interview by J.W. Tyner, 17 Feb. 1969. Transcribed by Flora Quinata, Touching Leaves, Dewey, OK. p. 2.

[42]Terry Prewitt, "Tradition and Culture Change in the Oklahoma Delaware Big House Community: 1867-1924" (University of Tulsa, Program of Anthropology). Report for Contract between the US Army Corps of Engineers and the University of Tulsa DACW56-77-C-0228, p. 40.

disrupted the Lenape society. The Dawes Act divided "many well-developed family farms, and set the first generation of Oklahoma Delaware children in the position of starting fresh, if at all, in building a working arrangement on the land."[43] The act took away the Lenape's social and economic system through their land base, depriving Lenape women of their gardening, gathering, and socioeconomic positions.

[43]Ibid., p. 40.

CHAPTER 4

NATIVE AMERICANS AND THE DAWES ACT IN SEVERALTY, 1887

The purpose of the Dawes and Severalty Act was to break down the communal and tribal patterns of Indian life to impose White standards of social organizational behavior. The act, even more than removals, attacked the fundamental elements of Lenape life. The Delaware Nation retained, redefined, and transformed their tribal culture in spite of the imposition on their lives. Much was retained, but the position of the Lenape women was forever changed. Dependent on the control of tribal land, women's roles in Delaware society had to adjust to the laws of privatization.

John H. Oberly, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1888 reports to the Secretary of the Interior:

> His [American Indian men] squaw was his slave. Without no more affection than a coyote feels for its mate, be brought her to his wigwam that she might gratify the basest of his passions and

> minister his wants. He should not be permitted to live any longer in idleness and debauchery.[1]

Oberly's statement epitomized the biased views from which American Indian policy at the national levels was derived and then applied to Indians at the tribal levels of society. These were precisely the images that gave rise to the demands for the Allotment Act in Severalty as well as the accompanying schemes for 'civilizing' American Indians in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

For Native Americans, these theories were totally incomprehensible. By justifying the allotment policies through mythical images of Indians, reformers like Oberly, were able to impose devastation among Indian Nations equaled only by the removals. During the removals, Native American Nations were able to relocate somewhere else and re-institute their cultures and religions. Under the allotment policy, however, basic elements of Indian life were targeted for destruction. In a sense, men like Oberly recognized the ability of Indian Nations to retain their cultures despite removals.

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[1]John H. Oberly, "Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year 1888," (Washington Government Printing Office), p. XXXVII.

The Lenapes were merely one of all the Native American Nations affected by the Dawes Act in Severalty. U.S. policy at the end of the nineteenth century, dictated that American Indians be assimilated into mainstream America and thus enacted programs to achieve assimilation via boarding schools, United States citizenship, and dividing communal land ownership into individual lots. To humanitarian, but ill-advised reformers, civilizing Native Americans was the desired end. The policies taught American Indians the basic tenets of United State's rugged individualism and property ownership. To the greedy, the policy granted them the means to take control of Native Americans' land and minerals.

American Indians, according to reformers, needed a naturalization process to establish clearer legal standards. The naturalization process to grant United States citizenship coincided with an educational "civilizing" process. United States' education principals for Native Americans aimed to individualize the communal societies. The federal government sent the Dawes Commission to Indian Territory to obtain agreements from the Five Tribes for allotment of their land and relinquishment of their tribal status. After allotment, Indian people could apply for United States citizenship at the Muskogee office by 1890. In 1901,

Congress passed a bill making every Native American in Indian Territory a United States citizens, although the Burke Act postponed citizenship until after a twenty-five year trust period.

The Dawes and Severalty Act was instigated during the period in which assimilation dominated American Indian policy. Although the principles of assimilation were historically derived, implementation became widespread at the close of the nineteenth century at the time that the Dawes Commission went to Indian Territory to implement their plan. Proponents of allotting Indian lands viewed communal land ownership, common among all Oklahoma tribes, with contempt. They believed that the allotment policy provided the surest and quickest means to teach American Indians individual land ownership.

The Dawes Commission, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and agents, as well as the humanitarian reform groups all utilized images of American Indians to justify and promote allotment policies. The policy of allotting land was therefore based on inaccurate assumptions about American Indians. Advocates of this policy hypothesized that allotments would improve American Indian people.[2] Other, less surreptitious

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[2]Prucha, The Great Father V. II (Lincoln: University Nebraska Press, 1984) pp. 659-686. Herman Viola and Robert M. Kvasnicka, The Commissioner of Indian Affairs (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press) p. 226.

groups masqueraded behind the goals of assimilation to seize greater control over Indian lands in Oklahoma territory.[3]

To allotment advocates, private or individual land ownership was at the core of civilization. First Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Egbert Herring in 1832 proclaimed that American Indian communal land ownership caused Indian people to remain in the 'savage' state, exemplifying the misinformed common image of American Indians. The term 'savage' described one of the common Anglo images of American Indians as negative and warlike. The image consistently involved nakedness, lechery, passion, polygamy, sexual promiscuity, warfare and revenge. Indeed, Herring begins his address expressing these very sentiments that American Indians were "prompted by an unchecked spirit of rapine, and a thirst for warlike distinction, and, particularly, when impunity furnishes an additional incentive."[4]

The theme of American Indian communal land is repeatedly deemed the cause of Indian savagism and deficiencies. On November 25, 1835, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, T. Hartley Crawford, exemplified these sentiments about savagism:

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[3]Angie Debo A History of the Indians of the United States (University of Oklahoma Press, 1970) p.300.
[4]Berkhofer, White Man's Indian. pp. 25-27.

> Unless some system is marked out by which there shall be a separate allotment of land to each individual whom the scheme shall entitle to it, you will look in vain for any general casting off of savagism. Common property and civilization cannot co-exist.[5]

In January of 1868, the "Indian Peace Commission" reported that because Indians "have not religion or have what we call superstition," and Indians "associate on terms of equality," they should be converted to Anglo civilization. Reformers insisted that uniformity in language, custom and habits would destroy the Indian cultures. The Indian Peace Commission sought to treat all American Indians the same, no matter that Indian cultures encompassed a plurality of values and religions. In simplifying this plurality they were able to promote their civilizing schemes, inflicting a destructive education system comprised of force and coercion. American Indian boarding school students were subjected to learning the English language, individualization, and Christianity or suffer severe consequences of physical and emotional punishment.

The Commission viewed American Indians in deficient terms; Indians lacked religion according to Anglo-Christian values. Anglo-American reformers insisted on a homogenous society that Indian people should be assimilated into no matter what effort it would take to achieve their convictions.

Indian reform groups that purported to advise Native Americans also influenced the passage of the Dawes and Severalty Act. These groups, often Christian affiliated, met yearly to discuss their perceptions of the 'Indian Problem,' from 1883 to 1916. They, too, viewed Indians in deficient terms and proclaimed that American Indians lacked civilization. To combat their deprivation, reformers at the Lake Mohonk conference often advocated diminishing tribal organization, citizenship, and allotment as means to achieve Indian civilization. They played a large role in persuading Congress to adopt legislation for allotment policies.

Several organizations that purported to have the American Indian's best interest in mind attended the

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[5]"Indian Commissioner Crawford on Indian Policy," Senate Document no. 1, 25th Cong., 3rd sess. serial 1337, pp. 15-17, 20-22, Prucha ed., p. 73.

Lake Mohonk Conference. They were the Friends of the Indian, The Women's National Indian Association, and the Indian Rights Association. They held that the allotment policy was the "grand march toward the position of intelligence, law-shielded, and law-abiding citizenship."[6] Massachusetts's Senator and Chair of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Henrey L. Dawes, attended and participated in advocating allotment policies at the conference and he worked closely with these groups to enact their reform agendas.

Senator Dawes proclaimed "selfishness," was "at the bottom of civilization" and that is how Indians would become civilized.[7] The Lake Mohonk Conference adopted these sentiments that individualization or "selfishness" could be achieved through private property and thus allotting Indian lands.[8]

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[6]"Indian Friends of Philadelphia," April 5, 1904, (Executive Board of Women's National Indian Association).

[7]"Lake Mohonk Conference," Report 1904, pp. 5-6.

[8]"Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners," 1894, 65. Prucha, Francis Paul Indian Policy in the United States., p. 212. There was some opposition to ending communal land ownership at the Board of Indian Commissioners meeting on January 2, 1887. Creek delegate Pleasant Porter spoke in opposition but the

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs repeats Indian images that justified the allotment policy. J.D. Atkins, in his 1887 report, cautioned that even though a reform measure was favorable, "the distance between barbarism and civilization is too long to be passed over speedily." He added "idleness, improvidence, ignorance, and superstition cannot by law be transformed into industry, thrift, intelligence and Christianity."[9] Atkins epitomized the description of the hostile Indian image:

> He [the Indian] was taken a hostile barbarian, his tomahawk red with the blood of the pioneer; he was too wild to know any of the arts of civilization...loath to give up their savage customs, and view with suspicion any innovation upon their nomadic mode of life.[10]

He contradicted his argument by listing the Five Civilized Tribes as the primary opponents. Ironically, the Five Civilized Tribes were often cited for their

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Board discussed his opposition as illegitimate due to his "diluted" Indian blood.

[9]J.D. Atkins, "Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for they Year 1887," (Washington Government Printing Office), p. VI.

[10]Ibid.

adaptation of certain "civilized" elements of Anglo society into their own cultures.

Atkins stated that the main opposition to allotments "comes from or is instigated by squaw men and half-breeds, whose chief interest in the Indian is to drive sharp bargains with him to make money out of his ignorance."[19] His argument is that the civilized elements, hence the 'squaw men,' or Anglos married to Indian women and the 'half-breed,' or Indians with mixed Indian and Anglo parentage, of the tribe were responsible for opposition to allotment. John H. Oberly in his report the following year espoused much of the same sentiments as his counterpart:

> His [the Indian's] environment no longer compels him or affords to him opportunities to display the nobler traits of his character. On the warpath and in the chase he was heroic...a creature of exalted fortitude.[11]

Oberly agreed that the civilization process of allotment and education must be enforced to change these conditions. By imposing the "exalting egoism" of

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[11]John H. Oberly, "Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for the Year 1888," (Washington Government Printing Office), p. XXXVII.

American Civilization on Indian people, assimilation can take place. This process was moreover a "national duty."[12] Oberly also argued that "semi-slavery" existed and was a result of the Indian lands held in common. He claimed that land held in common resulted in "tenantry" and allotment in severalty should be enlisted to combat the conditions. He additionally called into question the treaties with the Cherokees, Choctaws and Chickasaws. Oberly's position was that the treaties with the Five Tribes were inconsistent with an allotment policy.[13]

Tribal leadership, for obvious reasons, completely disagreed with Oberly. According to the treaties that removed the Five Civilized Tribes to Indian Territory, the United States guaranteed exclusive jurisdiction and self-government to them. For instance, The Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek with the Choctaw Nation makes these guarantees:

> The Government and the people of the United States are hereby obliged to secure to the said Choctaw Nation of Red People the jurisdiction and government of all the persons and property that may be within their limits west, so that no Territory or State shall ever have a right to pass laws for the

[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.

> government of the Choctaw Nation of Red People and their descendants; and that no part of the land granted them shall ever be embraced in any Territory or State; but the U.S. shall forever secure said Choctaw Nation from and against, all laws enacted in their own National Councils not inconsistent with the Constitution, Treaties, and Laws of the United States.[14]

The initial phases of the Dawes plan sent the Dawes Commission to Indian Territory. The Dawes Commission consisted of a chair, Henrey L. Dawes, and two members, Merideth L. Kidd and A.S. McKennon. Due to the insurmountable opposition of the Five Tribes, a special commissioner, Tams Bixby, was appointed to the Five Tribes in 1897. Bixby succeeded to Chairman after Dawes' death that same year. His purpose was to negotiate extinction of national or tribal title to their lands. After three years of "involuntary" action, the Dawes commission began to prepare the rolls as a preliminary step to allotment.

Despite tribal opposition, Congress instituted the process by which Indian Territory tribes began to

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[14]"Records of the Dawes Commission to the Five Civilized Tribes, 1897-1913," (microfilm Oklahoma State University), Oct 3, 1898; Mills, Lawrence Lands of the

relinquish their communal lands. The federal government empowered the Dawes Commission to do whatever was necessary to gain agreement of the tribes. The Five Tribes, as a means of maintaining some control over the process signed agreements in 1897. The Choctaw-Chickasaw signed the Atoka Agreement; the Creeks signed the Original Agreement, although the agreement failed ratification by the membership. All but the Cherokee Tribe signed agreements with the United States, surrendering to allotment. The Commission, however, was empowered through the Curtis Act of 1898 of dissolving tribal governments, to override the Cherokee Nation and to initiate the processes of allotting Cherokee lands in 1899.[15]

The Curtis Act of 1889 was the Dawes Commission's final blow. This act abolished tribal governments. Congress claimed that "plenary authority," or the guardianship clause, gave the United States the right to impose the Curtis Act, which was in direct conflict with earlier treaties. The Curtis Act moreover ensured that

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Five Tribes (St. Louis: The F.H. Thomas Law Book Company, 1919), p. 4.

the process of allotment could be instigated without the consent of the tribes.[16]

The imposition of allotments on the Delaware Nation was complicated. In 1867, the Delaware Nation signed an Agreement for which the Delaware Nation bought rights in the Cherokee Nation.[17] In 1866, the Delawares had paid the Cherokee Nation to set aside 160 acres for each Delaware man, woman, and child.[18] The Delaware Tribe, through Cherokee Nation v. Journeycake, 155 U.S. 55 (1894) insisted upon separate treatment during the allotment process due to the Delaware rights to land according to their prior purchase of 1867. The Articles of Agreement, "assured that ownership and occupancy of such lands would not be interfered with." The Delaware Tribe protested that they would receive allotments as Cherokee citizens and requested their 160-acre tracts for each individual, according to the 1867 agreement,

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[15] Angie Debo, A History of the Indians of the United States, p. 308.
[16]"Records of the Dawes Commission." pp. 5-10.
[17]Articles of Agreement between the Cherokee Nation and the Delawares, April 8, 1867, (Washington D.C., Pratt Papers, roll no. 7, fr. 00212, microfilm).
[18]Gina J. Carrigan, and Clayton Chambers, "A Lesson In Administrative Termination: An Analysis of the Legal

versus the eighty-acre allotments as Cherokees according to the Dawes plan.

The Delaware Nation had bought 160-acre "life estates" for 198 living Delawares as well as 200 deceased members who perished on the move from Kansas to Indian Territory. The Delaware Nation claimed 1,100 Delawares should have received life estates and the Delaware Nation took their claim to the Supreme Court.[19] In 1904, the court ruled against the Delaware claims, abrogating the 1867 treaty and "Articles of Agreement," in the ruling Delaware Indians v. the Cherokees, 193 U.S. 127 (1904).[20] The Delaware Nation received 160-acre tracts only for the Delawares who had reached Indian Territory and eighty acre allotments for the 902 other Delawares as Cherokee citizens.

Each head-of-household and each single person over eighteen was assigned a quarter section, while orphan children under eighteen were assigned one-eighth section. If religious or educational groups previously

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Status of the Delaware Tribe of Indians," Second Edition. Bartlesville, OK. p. 26.

[19]Ibid., pp. 26-27.

[20]Ibid.

occupied the reservation, they were also allowed a quarter section. If an eligible Indian failed to select an allotment within four years, the Indian agent, assigned by the United States President made the selection for that Indian person. The allotted lands were to be held in trust for the period of twenty-five years or extended by the President for the "sole benefit of the Indian or his heirs."[21] Non-Indians held the United States Secretary of the Interior responsible for buying any excess or unallotted land from the tribes for their settlement. These lands were interspersed among the Indian allotments in a checkerboard fashion. The moneys from these sales went into the United States Treasury.

> The sole purpose of the tribe or tribes of Indians; to whom such reservation belonged and shall be at times appropriated by Congress for the education and civilization of such tribe or tribes.[22]

The Secretary of the Interior determined the rules and prescribed water usage for irrigation purposes and retained the power to grant railroads, highways, and

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[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.

telegraph lines right-of-way through any assigned lands for just compensation. Those Indians who cooperated and became United States citizens, were often employed in the police or other public services. To receive the allotment, the Indian person must sign up on the official rolls. This was a demanding process. For those Indians who lived out in rural areas and did not know about the process, the Commission had to devise ways to ensure that their names were recorded on the rolls. In one case, several Choctaws did not know that there was even an Indian agency until the Dawes Commission actively sought them out to enroll.[23]

The Commission questioned certain Indian claims. The Commission set hearings to decide claimants legitimate or illegitimate claims of Indian heritage. In the Dawes Commission's determination process, the United States overlooked some people of Indian heritage. For instance, the Commission neglected to consider the issue of a mixed-blood Choctaw and Black person, registering

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[23]"Indian Pioneer Papers," (Oklahoma Historical Society: Oklahoma City, OK) Vols. 12, 354-356; pp. 86, 165.

him on the rolls as a freedman. As a freedman, a person was eligible for only forty acres.[24]

There were, moreover, cultural conflicts for tribes, such as the Delawares, who recognized Indian descendancy through matriarchal lines. Under United States policy, descendants of paternal lines became eligible for the previous maternal heritage. For people from cultures that were "relatively isolated from the broad developments of the nation's expansion,"[25] the allotment process served as an unforgettable trial that alienated Indian people, rather than assimilated them. Although the Dawes and Severalty Act guaranteed United States citizenship to Indian people, it was a mixed blessing. With citizenship and the Curtis Act, came the loss of tribal identity. Non-Indians gained significant portions of land because the United States ignored Indian claims of fraud. When implementing the plan, the Dawes Commission relied on their subjectivity, often dismissing American Indian perspectives.

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[24]"Indian Pioneer Papers," Vol. 14, p. 29.
[25]Prewitt, "Tradition and Culture Change in the Oklahoma Delaware Big House Community," p.14.

Three acts authorized United States citizenship for American Indians. The first act was issued in compliance with the Dawes and Severalty Act in 1887. American Indians, who accepted allotments were, after a certain trust period, eligible for United States citizenship. The second act allowed those Indian people who served in the military during World War I to become United States Citizens. The 1924 Citizenship Act gave blanket citizenship to the rest of the American Indian population. Historians note that Congress issued the 1919 World War One Indian Citizenship Act to prove that Indians could become "civilized" by serving in the war, rather than to acknowledge American Indian contributions to the war efforts. Native American involvement in the war nonetheless encouraged the drive for American Indian citizenship.[26] The Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 finally gave blanket citizenship to American Indians, but did not have the desired result of ending United States guardianship over Indians. Two-thirds of the

[26]Prucha, The Great Father, p. 771.

Native American population, even after United States citizenship, remained under federal control.[27]

American Indian admission to United States citizenship, however, did not equate to enfranchisement. In fact, the author of the blanket citizenship bill, Representative Homer P. Snyder, proclaimed that it was "not the intention of the bill to have any affect upon suffrage qualifications of any states."[28] This enabled a number of western states to prohibit American Indian voting. Even up to 1975, states imposed a number of limitations on Indian people to keep them from voting. Ambiguous national and state constitutions defined American Indian relations. The ambiguity has left a more precise definition up to the courts.

States attempted to impose their definitions by disallowing American Indians from voting, even after the Citizenship Act of 1924, by protesting that Indian people were a federal responsibility, not state residents. The Supreme Court had to intervene three times, in 1927, 1947, and 1962, proclaiming that Indian

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[27]Ibid. p.786.
[28]Prucha, The Great Father, p. 794.

people were legal residents of the areas in which the reservations existed and that they thus have the right to vote on issues even if those issues do not pertain to them as American Indian people.

Another means that states utilized to keep Indian people from voting was to proclaim that the "guardianship" clauses in their state constitutions eliminated American Indians from state enfranchisement. Federal courts disputed the "guardianship" relationship, based on the notorious Cherokee Nation v. Georgia ruling. The courts clarified that the "guardianship" clause was strictly judicial guardianship and therefore not applicable to American Indians.

There were also cultural and racial justifications that restrained American Indian voting. Especially early in the twentieth century, American Indians had to prove that they were "civilized." Attorneys argued that their Indian clients had assimilated and were therefore capable of becoming United States citizens. This was especially effective during the Allotment era. States utilized "gerrymandering," and prior to the 1965 Voting Rights Act, some states issued literacy tests to

maintain Anglo political control in Indian populated areas.

No matter how one looks at the national level of the allotment and citizenship policy, it is at the tribal levels where Native Americans felt the most severe impacts of the acts. The Dawes Act in Severalty and the implications of Indian Citizenship devastated Lenape tribal society. Many Native Americans, including the Delaware Nation, would have welcomed United States citizenship if the acts had not coincided with the culturally destructive pressures of boarding schools and 'civilization.' Native American patriotism directly correlates to their participation in all the United State's wars in addition to the high cost that they paid in lives and land to build the country that sought to destroy their existence. To become citizens would allow Native Americans to participate in the country they helped build and protect.

For the Lenape, the Dawes Act divided "many well-developed family farms, and set the first generation of Oklahoma Delaware children in the position of starting fresh, if at all, in building a working arrangement on

the land."[29] The Lenape were barely settled when the act came into effect. As discussed later, Lenape life in Indian Territory consisted of seasonal cycles similar to their ancestors. Sadly, traditional culture only flourished in Indian Territory for thirty-nine years. The people, they thought, had finally reached a destination where they could live according to their customs and traditions. The act took away the Lenape's cultural, social and economic system through their land base, depriving Lenape women of their farming, gardening, gathering, and other socioeconomic positions.

Indian people experienced severe social dislocation from these policies. Non-Indian standards of land ownership and individuality conflicted with traditional lifestyles. Many non-Indians were settling the area, changing the demographic makeup of the total population. Lenape subsistence methods, agriculture and their capitalization of the oil and minerals in the area altered the economy little. Oil royalties offered only temporary boosts to some of the Indian families. As a

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[29]Prewitt, "Culture and Change," p. 40.

whole, the Allotment process caused major losses in land and tribal sovereignty.

CHAPTER 5

LENAPE WOMEN IN A TRANSITIONAL CULTURE

> To lay stress on the material aspect of life is to take a convenient path to the realities of changes and continuities through manifestations that are easily observed and reported upon. The whole story requires an understanding of feelings and attitudes. And most of all, it would be an error to associate "traditionalism" with static patterns of the material past, for the spirit of identification with Delaware tradition is as strong today in belief and practice...it is proper to seek the patterns of form which characterize the dynamics of recent Delaware history, and to know that the diverse patterns which occur in succession strongly maintain some common fundamentals of belief and lifestyle.[1]

Lenape women that retain knowledge of their heritage hold a significant perspective to view the ramifications of the traditional values in their culture from which Lenape women made socioeconomic contributions to a transitional traditional culture. Lenape customs of the Big House, Doll Dance, social dances, stomp dances, drums, Native American Church, funerals, feeds, festivities, etc. imbued the Lenapes with their identity as a community. In turn, the people perpetuated the existence of the customs each time they re-enacted them.

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[1]Prewitt, "Culture and Change," p. 6.

While the forums from which the customs were re-enacted may have changed, the basic premises, or Lenape worldview, allowed the people to regenerate the Lenape culture. Lenape women participate in significant activities that continue and re-instill this worldview and thus Lenape women are in a transitional culture.

The current Elders are the last generation to have experienced the Big House and the older dances, or speak Lenape as their primary language. In retrospect, this is the last of Lenape knowledge that existed when the Lenape first encountered Europeans. These Elders have additionally experienced a rapid American technological procession from covered wagons to gasoline cars, rockets and space exploration. The ultimate question considers how the Lenape reconcile their past traditions with their current realities and the significance of those ramifications.

These women tell of their childhood days in boarding schools, their retention or denial of access to Lenape language and their culture, their traditions and meanings about those traditions, as well as their joys, sadness, frustrations, innovations, and often, heartbreak and struggle to exist as Lenape women. They revealed some things in confidence to understand the meaning behind their disclosure. They whole-heartedly discussed many subjects with the intention to pass on

their knowledge. Each of their personal stories held common traits and characteristics that clarify Lenape culture. Those commonalties, although unique to each individual, derived from a deep personal meaning, an expression of their identity as Lenape. They are deeply conscious of and driven by their association to Lenape culture. Several women wept during their interviews, attesting to the deep emotions attaching Delaware women to their history, their family, and their Nation. This emotion provides a context through which to secure a greater understanding of Lenape history, tradition, and the enduring bonds of a people. This thesis is intended to provide some insight to the valuable and too frequently overlooked contribution that Lenape women have made to the survival of their people.

To capture Lenape women's stories sheds light on the true history of the people. Mary Watters, Delaware Elder, believes that each Delaware has a certain spirit; a Delaware spirit. She says that you can see it and that is what defines our people today.[2] While Lenape people have had to leave some materialistic, cultural, and spiritual possessions behind, the people have retained their historic agents of Lenape traditions.

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[2]Mary Watters, interview by author, 13 October 1997, Copan, OK, tape recording.

The Lenape have faced tremendous pressures and hardships wrought by history and emerge today as a whole people bound by culture, tradition, kinship, and love for each other. The role of Lenape women in this great transcendence must not be lost or forgotten.

Lenape society was a commingling of various roles based on age, status, and gender rather than the dogma from western thought that determines women's and men's roles as physically inflexible conflicts. Lenape roles were not solid because individuals were autonomous to decide how he/she would participate in Lenape society. Leaders have been followed because of their abilities to lead, not because their followers were coerced or forced. Lenape people have replicated their social idioms because their norms retain their basic core values. Gender is a facet of the society, but not the directive. Therefore, what affects the society as a whole affects Lenape women.

The migrations from the forced removals impacted Lenape society in a multitude of respects. By the time the Lenape reached Indian Territory, each of the dispersed groups of Delawares demographically numbered below threshold to maintain marriages within the society. This meant that the norm for members was to seek marriage partners outside their immediate heritage. Delaware groupings were moreover, merely aspects of the

community as a whole, the larger spectrum of Indian groups and then later Whites.[3] The ramifications for this are that the Lenape underwent a "series of rapid cultural transformations, corresponding more or less to generational turnover in the settlement sequence."[4] "Traditional" then, changes in each succeeding generation, "as old ways are reformulated to accommodate new conditions."[5] The issue of gender also fits into this equation because tradition includes the language, family, society, economy, culture, and division of labor for which women were significant contributors. In each move, the Lenape interacted within a new economic and subsistence setting, which required that they revise their society accordingly.

The Lenape were tried with each movement west, as they ventured into the frontier of the expanding United States. Each move resulted in demographic and cultural changes, in addition to deaths and births, and the practices associated with them.[6] With each move, the Delawares faced trials and tribulations that were evidenced in their changing lifestyles. The amalgamation of all the Delaware adaptations emerged in Oklahoma. Almost at once it seems, the allotment

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[3]Prewitt, "Culture and Change," p. 6.
[4]Ibid., p. 7.
[5]Ibid., p. 23.
[6]Ibid., p. 14.

process destroyed the land base, or the basis for the Lenape economic system and agricultural practices. The aim of breaking down social and communal society by issuing checkerboard sub-divisions of land, was charged to nullify the Delaware Nation. The boarding school system, served to reinforce this trend. The system "undermined the Delaware tradition of sending boys on vision quests, and so also undermined the Big House Religion."[7]

Of those who reached Indian Territory from Kansas, three generations of the Big House culture, along with some Christian influences existed in the northeast, mainly Copan, Oklahoma, in Washington County. Opposition from non-Indians through various forms, such as the boarding schools punishment for practicing their native customs, segregation, and discrimination, were common and even expected by this time. Nonetheless, at first, the removal to Indian Territory altered little of the Lenape culture, traditions and religion. Much of Lenape's lifestyle compared to their eastern ancestors in cooperation with the seasonal requirements and cycles. Each season called for specific tasks and chores. As early as March, women began to gather wild onions and trimmed the orchards. The Lenape kicked off

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[7]Ibid., p. 23.

their official planting season with a game of Indian Football. By May, the Lenape were well into the gathering and planting season. They began harvesting in July as well as attended the Quapaw Dances. September called for canning, and processing corn. Many Delawares attended the Shawnee's Bread Dance in September. Everything ceased for the twelve days of the Big House ceremony in October. In November and December, winter months, Lenapes told stories, played games, and tended to indoor chores. Women sewed, quilted, did ribbon work, and beaded. Men hunted small game such as duck, geese, squirrel, quail, and rabbit. December through February the people cut wood and slaughtered hogs and beef. Lenape women utilized many internal parts of animals to make foods, such as sausage, and other items. Women also made soap from lye during this time.[8]

The Big House ceremony, Xingwikaon, was a powerful ritual that embodied their religion like no other ceremony. This was a twelve-day service held for religious observances, prayer, homage, and giving thanks. The ceremony took place in a long-house structure built with logs and a dirt floor. The support polls were placed in specific areas for observance of the mesingw (spirit of the game animals), and a door was

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[8]Ibid., p. 38.

placed on the east and west sides. There were twelve mësingok, a religious icon of the Lenape placed on the posts with two placed on the center post.[9] The participants specifically chose a certain man to wear the mesingw to ward off danger as well as assist in hunting endeavors. The Lenape did not worship the Mesingw. Although powerful, the mesingw merely represented the spirit. The Lenape prayed to the Creator, Kishelëmukònk.

Twelve was a symbolic number representing the twelve stages to reach heaven. During the Big House ceremony, the Lenape used twelve prayer sticks, matahíkäna. Kishelëmukònk resides in the twelfth stage. Thunderbirds reside in the first layer. These thunderbirds are responsible for the rain. At this date, no one recalls the meanings for the rest of the layers. Twelve emerges in many elements of Lenape culture, and today, the Lenape are quick to point out that the number connects with many cycles, including the twelve months in the year.

The ceremonial processes were detailed and held special meanings during Xingwikaon. Clan members sat in designated areas. There were three clans, Tùkwsit (wolf or "round foot"), Pùkuwànku (turtle or "hole in the

[9]Falleaf, 1969, p. 8.

heal"), and Pële (turkey). If a member sat in the wrong place the Ashkasàk would reseat that person in the proper place. Two ceremonial fires and two drummers sat on the south side. There were two sets of drumsticks. A plain set of drum sticks was used until the tenth night at which time the sticks were changed to notched tipped sticks, each with miniature mesingw on them. Consistent with the life forces, one stick was a male and the other a female. The mesingw is a carved wooden face. The right side of the face was red and the other half was black. Metaphysically, two alternate views exist as to the significance or meanings of the colors. In the first view, red represents female and the black represents male. The other view suggests that the red represents life, while the black represents death.[10] Because women are life-givers, the connection with life could be consistent with either meaning. Males utilizing the mesingw to hunt could also coincide with the black side and the death during a hunt. For twelve nights the services proceeded.

On the last night, women visionaries sang their vision songs. They made a new fire for this service and they carried the ashes out the west door. Everyone was smoked with cedar, or smudged. There were approximately

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[10]Prewitt, "Culture and Change," p. 48.

seven women visionaries. Lucy Willits, Rosie Frenchman, Eliza Falleaf, Sarah Thompson, and Pauline Blackwing were the only ones that Nora Thompson Dean recalled.[11] Although women did not purposefully seek a vision in a quest, the Creator blessed some women with a vision, which granted them a special status. They sang about their experiences during the ceremony.[12] Lenape women tended to receive visions during times of duress. Nora Thompson Dean's mother, Sarah Thompson, received her vision during a "frightening experience." Dean's mother, who was young at the time, was riding a horse with her mother, when something, possibly a heart attack, caused her mother, to pass out on the horse. The two fell to the ground and Nora Thompson Dean's mother was frightened. Nora Thompson Dean relays how some of the trees turned to people and the people told Dean's mother not to be afraid and that they would help her. They even sang a song to her. This is the song that she sang in the Big House. The old ones always cautioned not to use these songs carelessly.[13]

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[11]Nora Thompson Dean, interview by Katherine Red Corn, 1 April 1968. Transcribed by Nona Kerr, Touching Leaves, Dewey OK, pp. 2-3.
[12]Dean, "Delaware Indian Religion" 1978. Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey, NO 50, and 1995 p. 27.
[13]Dean, 1968, p. 6.

Men more commonly had visions that resulted from the practices of sending boys out for a vision quest. At a certain age, parents would send a boy into the forest without food and water. Visions were very important as they connected a Lenape to the spirit world and only with a vision would they be able sing vision songs in the Big House church. The seeker "hoped that some animal, bird, or tree would take pity on them and give them a vision, because it is believed that almost everything has a spirit - a soul."[14] Upon returning, if the boy did not have a vision, parents often sent him out again. On the thirteenth morning of Xingwikaon, the participants faced east on their knees with raised hands, and gave twelve prayer calls to Kishelëmienkw. This ended the service.

By 1924, there were not enough Lenape versed in this tradition to carry it on. The Lenape put the ceremony to rest as their Visionaries were passing on and the practice of sending boys on vision quests had diminished. The deer that they hunted to feed everyone were almost extinct by then, and the Lenape resorted to buying meat for the service. Several Lenapes explain that there was a deep division between those practicing the Big House, Xingwikaon, and the Christianized Lenape.

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[14] Ibid.

Traditional Lenapes viewed their practices as the means to assure the well being of all people.[15] If they did not practice the Big House and their other dances or observances, negative results would surely result. For the Christianized Lenapes to condemn their peers was a difficult pressure for the traditional Lenapes to endure. This was tantamount to a family member denouncing another family member for disloyalty it and held much sorrow, anger, and resentment. The traditional Lenapes clung vehemently to the Big House, Xingwikaon, and the other practices for as long as they possibly could and the Christians worked just as hard to 'save' them. This rift in the Nation is still remembered and even today some Lenape hold significant resentment about this subject. In time, some of the traditional people came to accept Christianity albeit by their own terms. Indian Christianity can differ from non-Indian Christianity, although the concepts are consistent with non-Indians. For instance, the Choctaws are a specific branch of the Presbyterian Church. Many Choctaws in Southeastern Oklahoma are Cumberland Presbyterian. Only in the last generation have they worshipped in English. They previously worshipped in their own language. Robert David Noah, for instance, was a Choctaw, who preached in his native language at

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[15]Ibid., p. 7.

Coal Creek Church, near Atoka Oklahoma. The congregation sang and some still sing old gospel hymns in the Choctaw language. At the Creek Southern Baptist Church, located in Okmulgee, Oklahoma, they also sing Creek hymns. Essentially, Native Americans altered Christianity to fit the view of the particular people. In this case, each native culture modified Christianity to their ideology. Delawares are consistent with this overall pattern of American Indian Christianity.

Many Delaware people belong to the New Hope Indian Methodist Church or the Rose Hill Baptist Church. Some of these people's Grandparents or parents participated in the Big House Ceremony, Xingwikaon. Out of this church, some Elders have formed a gospel singing group. The women at the New Hope Indian Church annually prepare traditional foods for the Harvest Dinner and the Wild Onion Dinner. The events are well attended, contributing to the social dynamics and perpetuating the overall Lenape culture.

The Otter Hide Dance was another religious ceremony that included visionary rights. Little is known about this ceremony because it only occurred a few times in Oklahoma as those who knew the Otter Hide songs passed away early. Visionaries sang their songs and gave prayers using otter hides outside in the open air. The

last Otter song was held in the late 1800s near Dewey, Oklahoma.[16]

The Doll Dance was a ritual of special significance performed annually to insure health and prosperity to the Lenape. A "prayer dance" and "very ceremonial," there were only a few select families with a doll. The Doll was usually female and passed down in families. Some families had two dolls, a female and male. The Doll was re-dressed annually in new traditional Delaware clothing for the dance. If the owners neglected to hold the dance, something evil would happen to the family. There were twelve songs for each doll. Whoever led the dance would carry the doll, or it was fastened to a stick. After each song finished, the person carrying the doll would hand it to the person behind them. The women carried the doll first and when the last woman finished, she took it to the men for them to dance. Every person who danced carried the doll. Following the dance, the owner placed the doll on a stick in front of their tent. Then the Chief would pray to end the religious aspect of the dance activities. The Lenape held social and stomp dances the rest of the night until morning. After another prayer, a special bread that the women made on the Kohòkàn, mortar, was tossed out to a

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[16]Dean, "Delaware Indian Religion" 1978, p. 28.

leafy carpet. The women wrapped one long piece of bread with wampum beads about a yard long. They called this bread the bear, Maxkwe. People vied and scrambled to get the Maxkwe when they tossed the bread. The last Doll Dance was held about 1930, northwest of Copan. Again the Lenape who knew the songs had passed away and the family that had the doll finally resorted to a little commemorative feast. But even that gave way because it was not, according to Anna Anderson Davis, "the real doll dances."[17]

These Dolls were and still are sacred to the Lenape as a result of this practice. The Doll Dance ceremony exemplifies Native American views of balance and health. Many tribes had something of this nature--which if the people failed to practice or did not perform, disaster would befall on the people. The Doll Dance, for the Lenape, assured health and vitality to the people, much as the Jingle Dress dance of the northern tribes is a healing dance, and hence sacred. Ceremonies often resulted from a person's metaphysical and/or religious state that clarified the procedures for the practice, as explained in the first chapter.

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[17]Ibid., p. 29. Anna Anderson Davis, Interview by Katherine Red Corn, 5 Aug. 1968. Transcribed by Cathy Griffin, Touching Leaves, Dewey, p. 7.

A protocol existed for Lenape marriage. Parents often chose the partners for their children and they exchanged gifts for them. The prospective groom's parents would present gifts, often of deer meat, bear meat, wampum beads, or other material goods, to the prospective bride's parents. If they accepted the gifts, then the woman was willing to marry the man. During the ceremony, the Chief placed a string of white wampum over the couple's shoulder encircling the bride and groom. They then prayed and declared the couple husband and wife.[18]

The Lenape also interacted with the other Indian Nations in the area. Although, not always positive, these interactions turned into traditional activities. Smokes between the Osages and the Delawares resulted from negotiations after the murder of a young Delaware boy. This boy was merely out looking for his mother's horses in the Osage Hills. Because the body had two arrows on top, the Delawares identified the sources as Osage. But the Delawares and Osage Elders desired peace, and after initiating the first meeting to smoke the peace pipe and exchange gifts, they met annually, alternating between Delaware country and Osage country.

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[18]Dean 1968, p. 3.

The Lenape utilized cedar for virtually all ceremonies because smoke from burning cedar boughs moves upward carrying the prayers through the twelve layers to the Creator, Kishelëmukònk. Nora Thompson Dean relays that cedar is a cleansing tree and was utilized for funerals, sickness, and other cleansing associations.[19] After someone passed away, the Lenape would burn cedar to smoke the inside and outside of the home and the clothing. Four workers were called upon to take care of the details to wash, dress, and prepare the body for burial. These workers would cook, prepare and serve the food during their stay with the deceased. On the last day, they took the deceased to the place of burial. An Elder male was appointed to speak to the deceased one. He would relay that the deceased should 'no longer think of this place, and go on to the other world in his/her way.' The Lenape would place some of the deceased clothing in the coffin. After they buried the deceased, the widow or widower led mourners around the grave counter clock-wise toward the east. After twelve days, the family would have a feast at the home of the deceased. The family would then give away gifts. The family distributed clothing to the descendants and workers of the funeral. For up to a year, someone should remain in the house at all times. This was also

[19]Ibid., p. 3.

a time that the family refrained from social dances and activities.[20]

Puberty, an integral part of the cycle of life, called for some alterations in a young woman's life. When a female reached puberty, her family placed her in isolation and brought her food and washing bins. Often, she occupied her time with sewing or crafts. After her time was through, she was cleansed with cedar and given a new outfit. She put away her childhood toys and she was to act as an adult. In former times, a female Elder would accompany the young woman during her isolation to speak and teach her about the changes taking place in her life.[21]

Socioeconomically, women were responsible for farming and gardening. They grew and gathered Lenape foods and medicines. Their diets consisted of: onions, both water lilly and pod nuts, Indian potatoes, common lamb quarters, dandelions and milkweed, pawpaw fruit, black haw nuts, pecans, persimmons, black walnuts, wild strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, dewberries, wild grapes. Garden crops consisted of corn, beans, and pumpkins and many new vegetables introduced by the Whites. Corn, kahesena or xàskwim, was the most important food. Literally, kahesena means, "our

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[20]Ibid., p. 8.
[21]Ibid., p. 4.

mother." There were several varieties of corn, puhwem (white flour corn), sehsapsin (blue corn), pisim (sweet corn), and sawanahxkwim ("white man corn"). Women prepared seteo (hominy) by boiling the shelled kernels in clean ashes. Women stirred the kernels until they turned orange and they were removed into a basket. A woman would shake the basket until the kernels were white. The kernels were then placed in cotton bags to dry. When dried, the women would pound the kernels with a wooden mortar called a kahokan. The fine matter produced from the friction was utilized to make lenahpon, bread and the coarse matter was cooked with meat in sapan.[22]

Throughout their history, Delaware women continued to express their socioeconomic value, religion and culture through ceremonial and daily attire. For instance, older Lenape women who first removed to Oklahoma wore traditional dress similar to the preceding century. Although contemporary common dress is non-Indian or street clothing, traditional Lenape clothing was and continues to be worn for ceremonial purposes. This clothing is a means to communicate a Lenape woman's connection to her culture because the clothing is unique and must be worn in a respectful manner. A woman

[22]Prewitt, "Culture and Change," p. 35.

wearing Lenape clothing should always conduct herself with the utmost care and proper representation out of respect to her ancestors and Keshelëmukònk. Ceremonial clothing included a tàkwèmbës, a blouse with a shoulder yoke, tëpèthun, and a wrap-around skirt made from broadcloth, or woolen type material with rainbow border. The bottom of the skirt was beaded or ribbon worked with woodland tribal motifs of flowers or leaves. Before women used beads and cloth, they quill worked, that is used porcupine quills, their outfits and some still do. They also wore kakuna (leggings), lënhàksëne (moccasins), sèkhasu (it is ribbon worked), xingwi anixkàman (brooch), and decorations of anixkàmana (small brooches), masapia (beads) and a ahkontpi (neckerchief), chixamokàn (hair comb), and ansipëlaon (hairbow) with ribbon worked trailer. Lenape women in the old days wore much jewelry and trade silver. The more jewelry a woman wore, the better attired she was perceived to be. They transferred their traditions from their eastern and plains heritage to their new home and re-established their societal norms and values. From these patterns of life, dress, culture, norms and values, one can conclude that the Lenape transferred their earlier culture to their residence in eastern Oklahoma.

But women were more than reactivating their culture, they also invented new forums to express their cultural

values. There are several Indian women's clubs or organizations that exemplify the formation of a cohesive forum from which Indian women could culturally and socioeconomically contribute to their Indian people. An important aspect of Lenape women's roles in cultural preservation was the formation of Indian women's clubs. Anna Anderson Davis relayed that the first Indian Women's Demonstration Club was formed prior to the 1930s Depression. The women disbanded the club, but they reformed and began the Indian Women's Club. Anna Anderson Davis belonged to this organization twenty years or more.[23] The formation of these Indian women's organizations corresponds to the allotment time period and the demise of the Big House and Doll Dance. The Bartlesville Indian Women's Club holds fundraisers to provide scholarships, community services, and other donations. Their major fundraiser is an annual fashion show that displays the various native clothing and regalia of Indian Nations in the area. This not only educates the public but also provides an opportunity to congregate in a meaningful event that celebrates native women's clothing and heritage. The Delaware War Mothers commemorates and honors veterans. Lenape women who have a relative who has served in the military are eligible for membership. As participation in war or battle has

[23]Davis, 1968, p. 3.

historically been honored in many Indian cultures, Lenape women formed the organization to express tribal, as well as non-Indian, men's valuable contribution to the United States. They hold an annual dance to honor specific veterans. Ultimately, these women took care of the boys who grew into those men who served their nation. An extension of this purpose is that while Lenape men were away at war or in battle, the women took care of the home. These clubs epitomize how Lenape women, even within the confines of society's limiting impositions, re-established their roles to contribute to their society.

Other aspects of culture, however, have been modified or revived. Lucy Parks Blalock states, "Only a Visionary should give a name to someone because something awful will happen if the Name-Giver has not had a vision."[24] Lucy Parks Blalock, as of 1998, is one of two fluent Lenape speakers. Lucy Parks Blalock is not a Visionary because she did not have a vision in her life and she therefore believes that she is not entitled to give a name. She is among the last generation to grow up participating in the Lenape Big House Ceremony and the Doll Dance. Lucy Parks Blalock currently

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[24]Lucy Parks Blalock, interview by Jim Rementer, Janifer Brown, and author, 8 June, 1996. Quapaw, OK, tape recording.

resides in a Quapaw Nursing Home and she is no longer able to teach Lenape. She worked diligently to pass on the language to interested younger generations of Delawares before moving to the nursing home. Teaching classes and recording the language for over five years, Lucy Parks Blalock related memories from her child hood and adult life. When prompted about why she retained the Lenape language while many other Delawares did not, she responded that when the teachers used to punish little Native American children in the Boarding Schools for speaking their native language, she and her sister would hide out and speak the Lenape language to each other. Lucy Parks Blalock was not afraid of the teachers and she would not let them take her language away from her.[25]

The other Delaware who speaks fluent Lenape, is ninety-three year old, Edward Leonard Thompson. He is the one Visionary left and he is often requested to perform namings for Delawares or other events requiring a Lenape prayer. In case he does not know the person requesting a Lenape name, Leonard Thompson obtains a picture and asks other people about the recipient to acquire knowledge from which to provide the name.

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[25]Lucy Parks Blalock, interview by Jim Rementer, Janifer Brown, and author, 9 July 1996, Quapaw, OK, tape recording.

Leonard Thompson reveals the name in a Name Giving ceremony and says a prayer for the Delaware. Traditionally, a Visionary was not to tell anyone the name because Kishelëmienkònk must be the first to hear. A name bestowed upon a Lenape enables that person's ancestors to recognize him/her and welcome them in heaven.[26] The author's Lenape name, however, was given in a slightly different manner. Another well noted Delaware Elder, Nora Thompson Dean, Leonard's sister, was a Visionary. She had many names come to her during her lifetime. She gave some of these names to individuals, but kept others for future use. There were still some names she had not given by the time of her passing in 1984. When the author requested a name, Dean's nephew and student, Jim Rementer, thought to give one of the remaining names to the author and it was a great honor to receive it. Leonard Thompson revealed that name in May 1997.

The truth of the Lenape ceremonies, including the Name Giving Ceremony, is a constant investigation of many different opinions and experiences. There is actually no one truth. For instance, an informant relayed her daughter's naming as she was told was the old Delaware way. A Delaware family held a dinner for

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[26]Joanna Nichol, interview by author, 11 Oct. 1997. Copan, OK, tape recording.

the naming of a newborn baby girl. The older ladies circled around the drum and passed the baby around taking turns holding her. When the drum stopped, the woman holding the baby was to giver her the name. When asked if the namer had to be a Visionary, the informant replied that she had known many Delawares to receive names through their grandparents who were not Visionaries.[27] Some Delawares have indeed acquired names through their grandparents. Grandparents have observed special characteristics in their grandchildren and based upon those characteristics named their grandchildren. One informant, a grandmother, explained how she named her grandson from a special occurrence. She was sleeping and all of a sudden she heard distant drum beats. She investigated the source, as hearing drums is a "good sign."[28] Not long afterwards, she received a call and she rushed to the hospital to see her newborn grandson. She named him from that occurrence of hearing the drum beat. This type of naming is not because these Lenape parents and grandparents do not believe in the ways that Lucy Parks Blalock grew up with. Despite not knowing the Lenape language, the Lenape need to retain this meaningful

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[27]Evelyn Kay Anderson, interview by author, 15 Sept. 1998, Bartlesville, OK.
[28]Elgie Bryan, interview by author. 11 June 1998, Bartlesville, OK.

tradition. Some Elders say that when a Lenape receives his/her name, the old ones will recognize that person when as they pass into heaven.[29] The incident of the Grandmother hearing the drum, as well as other incidents, reveals a tendency for the Lenape to retain a degree of transcendentalism and spiritualism that are akin to, but not altogether a Vision. This Grandmother's experience attests to the connection that some Lenapes feel toward their traditional spirituality, beliefs, and meanings.

When faced with a dilemma, the Lenape acquiesced and produced alternative resources to meet the dilemma. This does not mean the Lenape did not lose elements of their heritage; more that they adapted appropriate methodologies to meet the demands of their native worldview. This is at the core of the Lenape worldview. Simply put, the shift in the ways that the names are given is not a conscious decision. The shift has resulted more from a transitional and adaptive culture. Although, there is some sorrow about the superficial and material loss in their traditions, the core worldview of the Lenape remains. The people are innovative and adapt to the situation and they hence devise alternative methods to carry on their heritage. The resurgence of

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[29]Nichol, 1997.

the water drum and social dances, while minimally continued at times, exemplify how Lenapes carry on their traditions currently. Today, through the leadership to learn the songs, Doug Donnell, in addition to other members of his family and associates, have instigated much revival of the water drum and the accompanying social dances. Elders encouraged these Lenapes to retain the songs with the understanding of the song's proper use. Rosetta Coffey, member of the Jackson family, revealed that she encouraged Doug Donnell to learn the songs, and yet she warned, "do not add anything onto them." The songs should be sung as they are supposed to be sung.[30] Lucy Parks Blalock also noted how encouraging and appreciative she was to Doug Donnell for his efforts to retain these aspects of Lenape culture.

There are limitations to re-establishing aspects of Lenape culture, however, as some issues have been laid to rest. During the early 1990s, there was some stirring among certain individuals to revive the Big House ceremony. Because this was such a religious event and specific actions were required, each of the women interviewed responded that the ceremony should not be attempted because there is nobody left who knows exactly

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[30]Rosetta Coffey, interview by author, 17 Sept. 1998, Bartlesville, OK, tape recording, p.1.

how to perform the necessary requirements. In native views, to revive the Big House would be detrimental, because to do something without knowing exactly what to do and why would result in negative occurrences. Elgie Bryan commented:

> I could tell you when that first burned down. That meant no more. Forget having it. It is just like the temple with the prophets. When it burned down they didn't build it back up. It is the same with the Big House. See, they have wanted to build another one. I said don't. It is bad luck. Things will happen to our people. It is just so strong...You go walk on it, you feel this feeling. Makes you want to get away. If ever people walk on it, trample on it, they don't have any feelings. You can just as well say they are not Indians.[31]

Her statement reveals several issues at once. If an element of culture altogether dissipates, many Indian people in general believe that it should be left to rest. To attempt to revive that aspect is to disrespect one's heritage and ancestors. Going one step further, to say that one is "not Indian," is tantamount to not having an identity. Disrespecting one's ancestors and not having feelings conveys the association between the way an Indian person conducts him/herself and their connection with their heritage and ancestors. To disagree with reviving the Big House indicates the

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[31]Elgie Bryan, interviewed by author, 11 Sept 1997, Bartlesville, OK, p. 9.

women's adherence to native values. Even though the Big House has dissolved, the understanding from which created this tradition is the same understanding that dissolved it and insists that it remain dissolved. In essence, they are exercising their native conceptual framework that clarifies what and why certain elements of tradition should remain.

The Lenapes persisted and re-enacted their traditions as well as formulated and acted within new traditions in Indian Territory. John Wilson, a Lenape, also Caddo, brought and preached the Native American Church to the Lenape.[32] Noted for this endemic religion, Native American Church mixed elements of native religions and integrated some Christian influences. Anna Anderson Davis remarked that she was raised with the Native American church influence because her Grandparents were both very favorable towards the religion.[33] Her family, however, never insisted she "embrace" the religion because her father told her to "do as you think, and do what ever is right for you. If you want to do it, well all right, if you don't, all right. But always do what you think is right." Anna Anderson Davis relayed that because the tribe could not always have their Big House, the Peyote meetings were

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[32]Dean 1968, p. 2.
[33]Davis, 1968, p. B-1-2.

"the next thing to a religious ceremony." Her experiences relay the open-mindedness that the Lenape had for choice, even for a child. They saw the importance of allowing their children to choose to attend ceremonies and functions. The Lenape were open to a form of religion they could carry over to participate in since the Big House was disbanded. One day, Anna Davis relayed, she was listening to a radio program that had ridiculed the Native American Church. Anna Anderson Davis said that her Grandmother would respond that when people "made fun of it, or light of it, something disastrous would happen."[34] This was her way of explaining the consequences for others who ridiculed native philosophies. In doing so, she was explaining to her daughter to learn about something before making a judgment.

The Native American religion provided a peaceful alternative involvement as the influx of settlers into Indian Territory resented and discriminated against Indian people. Men were skilled farmers, ranch hands, and cowboys. Combined with their successful farms and agricultural skills, women became adept dressmakers, house servants and nursemaids. The settlers saw this as competition and combined with prejudices, provided the

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[34]Ibid., p B-2.

impetus to ban Indian people from stores and any other places, functions, or activities. Lenapes turned to a religion that offered sanctuary in their native values rather than violently rebel against insurmountable odds.

The American federal government, to provide more land to the influx of settlers, directed their efforts to acculturate and to detribalize Indian people. As a result, the federal government instituted the Dawes, or Allotment act of 1887. The federal government allotted Delawares lands in 1906 and the allotment effort aimed to individualize the American Indian. The process was supplemented by the boarding schools, which intended to re-educate Indians into American individuals.[35]

Delawares were no exception and the federal government shipped off the young Lenapes to boarding school. These Indian students were isolated from their families and punished for speaking their language. The policy was to force-feed them a Christian education. Teachers taught the students lessons in reading, writing, and math, but most of their education was aimed at vocational endeavors. Students spent most of their time in maintenance, farming, and cooking to keep the school running. These students were moreover, subject to physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. They were

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[35]Berkhofer, White Man's Indian, pp.166 and 172.

taught to be ashamed of being Indian. Some even believed in the rhetoric of the schools and became devout Christians, renouncing their Indian heritage. Lucy Parks Blalock elaborated on this point in explaining that while other Indians felt ashamed to speak Delaware, she was an exception to maintain her fluency. Fred Falleaf relays a similar story while concurrently revealing the intentions of the boarding school programs:

> Well, they claim they made a white man out of me when they shipped me to school. But I did save my language. I managed to hang onto it. I lost a lot of it though... I just don't get around enough people that talk it.

These two examples of defiance seem to be the exception rather than the rule. Interestingly, in 1969, when this interview took place, Falleaf confessed that more women than men could speak Lenape.[36]

Anna Anderson Davis said she lost her language in boarding school and would write home feigning sickness to get her grandparents to pick her up. Her grandfather would take the train, or travel by horse and buggy to go get her. She was sent to Chillocco when she was six

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[36]Falleaf, 1969, p.17.

years old and when she returned home, she could not speak. She subsequently relearned to speak Lenape.[37] She relayed that, just as Falleaf, it was difficult to retain the language since there were so few who spoke Lenape.

Most Lenape, curiously did not wholly pass on their language to their own family members and in general, each succeeding generation passed on only little bits of the language. Mary Watters relayed that Lenape is a "Happy Language," and she used to receive enjoyment from listening to her Mother, Lizzie Longbone and Lucy Parks Blalock speak Lenape. Mary Watters described how they would speak and then they would laugh.[38] Because Lucy Parks Blalock did not start teaching the language until she was in her late nineties, attests to the severe limitations that white society imposed on the Lenape people.

Many Indian groups throughout Oklahoma, such as Choctaws, refused to teach their children their native language to improve their children's chances of succeeding in school and then the society at large. All the impetus Lucy Parks Blalock needed to teach and pass on Lenape, however, was to be asked by the Delaware Nation. Of course, by this time, being Indian had

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[37]Davis, 1968, p. 1.
[38]Watters, 1997, p.1.

become much more accepted among the larger American public. After the Nation approached Lucy Parks Blalock, she worked diligently to preserve the Lenape Language through recordings and teaching the class.

The discouragement and even shame that these boarding school generations experienced about their culture and heritage carried over into the next several generations of Delawares. The parents saw the alienation that being Indian brought to their children and refused to teach their children and grandchildren Lenape. Even so, much of the worldview of tribal society cannot be filtered out. Instead, the culture may submerge beneath layers of meaning. For instance, Dorothy Snake, Cherokee, relayed how even though her husband Lawrence Snake, President of Western Delaware Tribe, did not speak fluent Lenape, he drew from a Lenape context. For instance, on one occasion, she asked him to go retrieve a quilt. In Lenape, there is a generic term for cover, which would apply to any cover, whether it is a lid for a food container or a bed cover. When her husband brought her a regular blanket, she said she had to describe exactly what she meant by "quilt." Later, she realized why he brought her the blanket

instead of the quilt, as he thought in terms of a 'cover.'[39]

Generational change combined with outside forces contributed to the demise of the Lenape language, as well as the modifications in parts of Lenape culture. A cultural study of the Copan area illustrates a credible exterior analysis that integrates interior issues to explain the dissolution of the Big House. The Lenape women's experiences relay the inside cultural perspective, while the study of the Copan area attributes the "change in tradition" to the "generational changes in the settlement era and period of early statehood."[40] The first generations of Lenapes in Oklahoma were settlers eking out their existence in an emerging state. Their methods of subsistence and agriculture differed from non-Indians which influenced Lenape people's acceptance, or more, non-acceptance in the surrounding non-Indian community.

Relationships with surrounding Indian communities was a different story. Other tribes influenced the Lenape traditions and practices. Although relating to the Osages was tenuous, the Delaware and Osage Nations were able to establish a series of meetings for peaceful

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[39]Dorothy Snake, interview by author, 3 Oct. 1998, Oklahoma City, OK, tape recording, p. 3.
[40]Prewitt, "Culture and Change," p. 8.

communion. Both of these Nations were involved in the establishment of the Native American Church, which provided another forum to interact. The Shawnees, another Algonquian language family, shared much with the Delawares. In fact, these two Nations interrelated and intermarried to a great extent.[41] Delawares attended many Shawnee dances such as the Bread Dance, Green Corn Dance, Buffalo Dance, and other activities. Some of these dances were indigenous to the Delawares as well, such as the Bread dance and many Shawnees attended the Big House ceremony. These cross-cultural ties expanded the context of Lenape experience and cultural elements. From these ties, the Lenape and other tribes borrowed, shared, and integrated elements of each other's cultures. The Lenape's place and identity then, was also in the context of the larger Indian community unique to their locality.

Several Lenape women elaborated on this intertribal connection. Elgie Bryan, member of the Jackson family, talked about how she learned to make fry bread, "I made up my mind I was going to learn how to do it. So I went to another kind of Indian, a Sac and Fox woman, and she showed me."[42] Pat Donnell, member of the Ketchum and Curleyhead families, learned to do ribbon work from an

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[41]Falleaf 1968, p. 7.
[42]Bryan, 1997, p. 3.

Osage woman, "That is when I met Georgeanne Robinson and she was one of my big inspirations to do ribbon work. She taught me how to do ribbon work."[43] Some accounts claim that the original Ribbon Work patterns in the local area reflects back to the Delawares. Jim Rementer, for instance notes that the Delaware gave those patterns to the Osage and they in turn also kept the tradition alive.[44]

An important element of contemporary Lenape society is the Pow Wow, which also involves intertribal relations. This is an intertribal activity that forms much of the social and even some economic structure to the culture. The annual Delaware Pow Wow is held during Memorial Day weekend and many people consider this dance the official kick-off for the Pow Wow season. There are many smaller dances and Pow Wows in the area throughout the year. The dances and Pow Wows hold a great deal of significance to Lenape women in a multitude of respects. Families, friends, and associates reunite during Pow Wows. Mothers and grandmothers prepare and sew clothing for dance outfits for their children, themselves, and other relatives enabling them to dance and participate in other activities. These women, who sew, cook, and

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[43]Pat Donnell, interview by Raymond John and author, 20 Sept. 1997, Dewey OK, tape recording, p. 6.
[44]Jim Rementer, interview by author, Delaware Tribe Center, Bartlesville, OK, 23 Nov. 1998.

prepare for the dances, are the "matriarchs" in their family. They are most likely the reason that a family participates because of how much preparation and investment they make to assuring their relatives involvement in the activities. For instance Mary Watters relays:

> It was my Mother that kept our family. She is the reason that we participate in the Delaware Pow Wow. I was a young woman when it started. She would always get us ready. She would make things for her grandchildren and then she always planned the food. It was just like with most families. There is a matriarch. That is typical of the Delaware way...There were times when we didn't really want to dance or participate. And she expected it of us and so we did it for her...She was the strength of the family.[45]

Dances and Pow Wows were also a time for learning and forming or growing relationships. Because relationships grow during these times, Pow Wow's hold a special significance to the participants. Mary Watters expressed how her husband developed a connection with her mother:

> My husband is not Indian but some of his closest times with my Mother were during this time. He would build a fire for her to cook and he would keep it going. He would put up her tent. He helped her. Early morning, she would get up at daybreak, and he would go build a fire and visit. And she told him a

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[45]Watters 1997, p 3.

> lot of things about the Delawares and explained things to him. They just visited. That was their time to spend together because we were all asleep. Some of the people around us had just gone to bed. They had been stomp dancing. When she passed away that was one of the things that hurt him. He lost her because she was a friend and she was a teacher and she taught him. He was always interested to learn more about the Delawares because the people important to him were Delaware, me and our children, and then our grandchildren. They had this heritage. She was the main one.

Lenape women cooked for feasts, holidays, feeds, dances and many other occasions. The family matriarch, either the mother or grandmother, prepared and cooked these meals as well. Mary Watters described how her mother cooked the main courses of each of these meals. When her Mother passed on, Mary Watters, as the oldest child took on that responsibility:

> I thought, I can't do this. But it just came natural. I believe in spirits. That is one of the natural things that I grew up with, spirits. And her spirit has helped me, guided me through many times that I needed help.[46]

Elgie Bryan and Pat Donnell also relayed that relationship to their families. The women take it a step further in cooking for feeds and club activities. Elgie Bryan goes further yet as she is recognized all over the state for her cooking abilities. When asked to cook, a woman should not turn down the invitation

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[46]Ibid., p. 3.

because many tribal people consider it an honor. Because food nourishes and sustains the body, the one who prepares the food is special. Elgie Bryan also teaches students how to make Indian foods at Central State University. Her abilities to prepare and cook massive amounts of Indian foods have enabled her to earn an income as well as to participate in perpetuating her Lenape customs.

For some Lenape, food symbolizes and is associated with something significant in their lives. To commemorate a loved one, a Lenape can prepare an annual memorial dinner or feast. Mary Watters and Elgie Bryan described their feasts. Mary Watters relayed that the family prepared foods that her Mother used to fix for her feast. The family then has someone sit in the deceased's place. That person should at least taste all the foods on the pan. They eat this to "satisfy the spirits of those they are eating for." This is a time that the family can pray, asking for a special blessing. All the while, a Memorial feast is a time for closeness through remembrance. Once a family begins a Memorial dinner they should continue to do so every year afterward.[47]

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[47]Ibid., p. 4.

Elgie Bryan associates food with a significant relationship in her life. She described how she began making fry bread. Her brother was sick in the hospital and he repeatedly asked her to make fry bread. But Elgie Bryan said her fry bread was very bad. Her brother kept asking and Elgie Bryan resorted to calling her niece to make some bread. Her brother passed away before she learned to make fry bread. From that day on, every time Elgie Bryan makes fry bread she thinks about her brother. She will not compete in any fry bread competitions to make money, which would communicate that she makes that best. She comments:

> When an Indian woman has something like this, nobody, I mean nobody, says anything about my bread. They do not say well I have had it this way or you just want to show off. I have nothing to show off. If you only knew why I make it. I do not try to out do anybody.[48]

What becomes evident in examining these women's perspectives is that they conceive a spiritual connection to meals. Meals connect people together and sustain life, thus acting as a time for building relationships to each other and the spirits. In Elgie Bryan's case, food connects her to the spirits in more

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[48]Bryan, 1997, pp. 2-3.

ways than drawing people together for food. She connects her cooking to the spirit of her brother.

In assessing their options, basic self-preservation necessitated that Lenape women ascertain their essential tools. These women did just that. Lenape women have not only persevered, they adamantly believe in and preserve their heritage, in spite of extreme pressures to eradicate their native values. They fully participate in their native heritage as well as the intertribal activities. The women explain how their spirituality and beliefs in their Lenape ways has molded and held their families and culture together. Mary Watters relays that her mother taught her much of what she lives by today. When her family dresses and dances during activities, "it is not so much for me, but for Grandma. They feel like she sees us and they do it for her."[49] Elgie Bryan explains that when she does not know something particular, she "prays real hard for them to come in my dreams."[50] Their transcendental connections allow them to enact the meaning of their current state of being to their ancestors. This is a simple formula. Dreams and metaphysical experiences connect the people to their ancestors, which in turn reveal how the Lenape people should live today.

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[49]Watters, 1997, p. 4.
[50]Bryan, 1997, p. 6.

Lenape women, because of their interconnection to the society, have been integral to the retention of Lenape heritage. Throughout history, their interconnection of family, culture, and spirituality have consistently been within a Lenape woman's domain of control. Pressing outside influences created confusion and turmoil within Lenape society. Lenape women lost much of their pre-contact roles that valued the full extent of their socioeconomic contributions. These roles dissipated from major transitions and forced removals. Lenape women were agriculturists, gatherers, hunters, reproducers, and caretakers. The matrilineal society gave women control of the land, home, family, society, and to an extent, gave women much political influence. Over time, Lenape women lost these controls. Primarily women lost control of the land and agriculture, especially during the allotment period. Their control of the home and society have been impacted, but not wholly lost. Yet much of their political influence seems to have dissipated.

Missionaries, removals, boarding schools and the allotment processes aimed to destroy American Indian cultures and intensified the processes that consequently robbed Lenape women of their traditional value in their native culture. As their families linked women and defined their roles as caretaker, Lenape women clung to

the only sources that valued their humanity and their identity: spirituality, family, and culture. Pat Donnell, expresses this sentiment:

> My Mother went to Chillocco Indian School. My Mother and Father both did. Back in that era, people were so poor. A lot of families sent their children to Chillocco and she was one of those. When she had children of her own, it was so important to her to try to keep the family together, keep them close. There were three of us children and we were very close. And I give her the majority of the credit for that. But that was something she had always wanted and never had. Back then, they tried to take your culture away from you. She really hated that. And so when she had children, they were allowed to learn more about their culture. She tried hard to learn all she could and encouraged us kids to learn about our culture. She was always there. She is just my inspiration to do anything.[51]

These Lenape women strove to adapt and alter their family to cope with the pressures from the society at large. They were successful because Lenape culture augments their family and religion. Women's roles in Lenape society have historically faced inward towards family, culture, and traditions. Their lives complemented the entire society, not only with respect to gender roles but also to Elders and children. To the extent that Lenape men dealt with the outside world, Lenape women directed their attention to the daily maintenance that created their livelihood and structured

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[51]Donnell, 1997, p. 2.

their culture. From this view of an inward direction, Lenape women were able to determine throughout history, elements and practices practical to maintain in their society. As culture is not static, these women had the best view to determine what should be cooked, how it should be cooked; or what utensils and tools to use; or when to teach the children the language and when not to teach the children the language; or whether to go to the Big House ceremony or the local Baptist church service. All these and much more were elements of the Lenape culture subject to changes.

While the history of the Lenape people is the same for both sexes, the effects of history impacted gender roles of males and females differently. Lenape women's roles compliment men's roles, albeit different attention or directional flows. Lenape women determined the practical and impractical methods and tools to survive. As the men hunted, fished, tracked, as well as dealt with the outside world, Lenape women altered their routines and methodology to fit the times and requirements for survival. Not all of these decisions seem appropriate, given much emphasis for ideals of cultural preservation. But Lenape women were empowered to make that decision internally and reasonably. Of course, Lenape women were not the only decision-makers for Lenape culture. But taken the elements of family,

social activities, dances, foods, and language that created the trends that direct the culture, Lenape women play a significant role. This is not to say that women changed the worldview of the Lenape people. Instead they picked and chose elements that benefited their family and society's condition. Many elements of the society remained intact while the Lenape discarded other elements. Taken as a whole, the views of culture and the spirituality remained consistent. This is precisely why the Lenape people were able to survive. They adapted to their situation because they believed that their spirituality gave them that ability. As long as they remained spiritual, the essence of being Lenape remained intact.

The Lenape language and songs reflect, reinforce, and perpetuate this connection to their spirituality. Lenape nouns are categorized through animate and inanimate philosophy, whereas, English, and other western languages, separate through gender - usually, male, female, or neuter. This primary difference explains a fundamental worldview of the Lenape. The Lenape associate objects as live, or animate, and not alive, or inanimate. Some objects lack reference altogether, in English. Apple, for instance, is neither female nor male in English. But in Lenape, apple, apëlìsh, is animate, or alive. As human beings, or

Lenape are animate, Lenape worldview connects an apple and a human being through their status of animate. To the Lenape, everything alive has a spirit. Lenape women are connected to the spirits via their physical makeup and cycles and therefore connected to all life. Their ability to reproduce the society traditionally elevates them to a special status. This status should be respected because women's connection to the spirits connects the society as a whole to the spirits.

Lenape women experienced many pains to maintain their social structures, families, and the tribe. An example of a Lenape woman who chose to stay with her people rather than remain with a non-Indian husband to remain on the land the tribe was forced to leave during a removal, attests to the dedication and close affinity that some Lenape women experienced during these traumatic times. Rather than assimilate and lose her and her children's Lenape identity, she packed up the children and left the father and husband to remain with the tribe.[52] These women constantly struggled with the question of what to take and what to leave behind, both literally and figuratively.

Western practices have emphatically attempted to deny not just Lenape women, but Native Americans as a

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[52]Weslager, Delaware Indian Westward Migration, p.73.

whole, access to their heritage. In attempting to take away their access to their heritage via boarding schools, allotments, forced sterilization, and other assimilative and inhumane tactics, and additionally applying western gender discrimination, Native American women have suffered inaccessibility to basic subsistence levels of resources in the United States. Their social and economic value within the Lenape society was severely limited with the alteration in Lenape subsistence practices, and their value in the larger American society has been non-existent. Lenape women, then, took control of their only remaining domain, family, which in this case is synonymous with culture. From the interviews, family and culture were too inextricably connected to delineate.

These confines of control culminated into the native women groups within the larger society. The Indian women in the area, from a very early stage, cemented an internal support network, as well as offered a forum to increase their control over social dynamics. In essence, the native women's clubs were consistent with and a progression of the confines they could operate. Today, Lenape women are attempting to expand those confines of control through encouraging increased education and hence participation in economic activity within the society at large. Internally, Lenape women

have been a valued and integral part of the overall Lenape culture and heritage. With the onslaught of western assimilative tactics, Lenape women had to act within the confines of forced western gender impositions, as well as strive to protect and maintain their cultural integrity. This resulted in Lenape women's inaccessibility to the society at large and the larger non-Indian community remains fixed in prejudiced views about the Delawares.

The Lenape people, as other tribes, have been faced with this situation since the arrival of the Europeans. To emphasize the significance, however, necessitates examining the overall picture. This is a culture that has experienced six removals westward to a final destination in Indian Territory. Many eastern tribes perished even at the onset of the European arrival. Other tribes perished enroute. Lenape people's ability to adapt enabled them the means to survive, attesting to their strength. Still, as a sub-group of the Delaware tribe, Lenape women do not fully participate in the society at large. The latest poverty rate for Delawares is over seventy percent, according to a 1993 study. Tribal officials estimate that the rate is actually higher and are in the process of determining a more exact rate. Women and children comprise the highest

percentage of those in this rate. They are also the least served and most academically undereducated.

Currently, because this is such a pivotal time in American history to reform welfare and other public programs, American Indian people, especially women have to access other forms of subsistence. While the larger community remains fixed in western notions, the goal to alleviate the poverty and public assistance dependence then, is to reconsider how western practices can reformulate to apply and be accepted among native societies. Losing much of women's traditional socioeconomic status has caused imbalance among the Lenape as a whole. Until society reconciles native women's traditional roles, via inside mechanisms and external incentives, Lenape women will be limited in the total picture of economic contributors. As a result, their families and culture remain in economic poverty. This can be changed through valuing the existing native concepts of gender, expanding the domains of native women's activities, and offering economic incentives to create native concepts of viable alternatives. In other words, when native societies are able to place economic value to their beliefs and practices, within the confines of their values that allow monetary gain, native women, including Lenape women, will regain their place to fully participate in their society as well as

the larger United States and thus fully realize the struggle to maintain their culture. The Lenape adapted with each move west as well as accommodated the allotment and 'civilizing' forces. Their last adaptation will include the transition from a survival and protective mode to a fully functional and flourishing society.

Also important is the non-monetary aspects of the Lenape culture. Much of the cultural resurgence recently has been from the work of a few key leaders. Yet, there remains little to replace the powerful religion and traditions that the Allotment Act and imposed acculturation stole from the Lenape. Perhaps soon, a powerful Lenape will have a dream to tell us explains how the Lenape should proceed into the future.

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