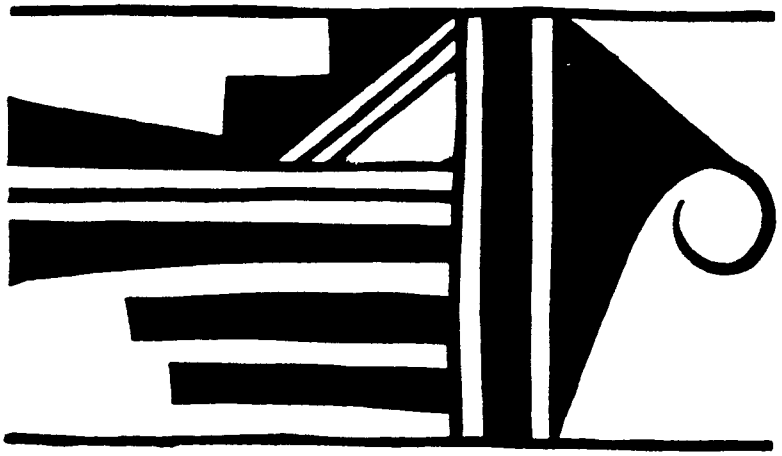
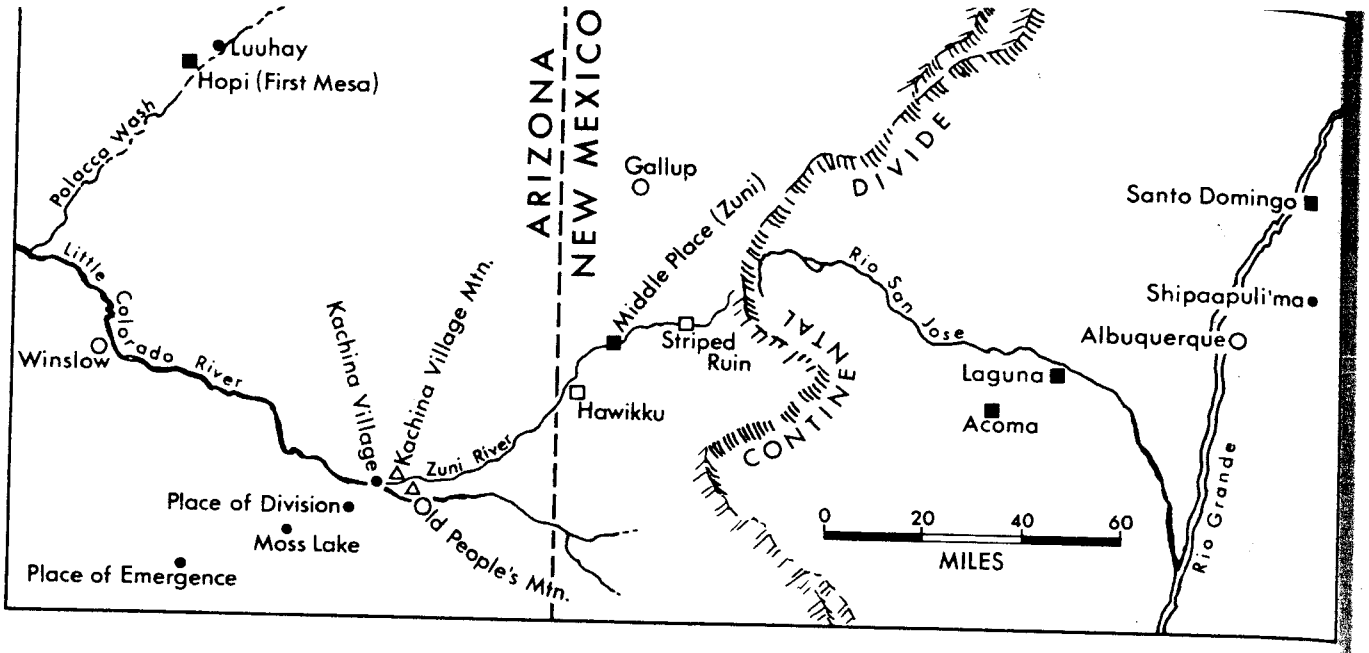
FINDING THE CENTER



Narrative Poetry of the Zuni Indians

Translated by
DENNIS TEDLOCK



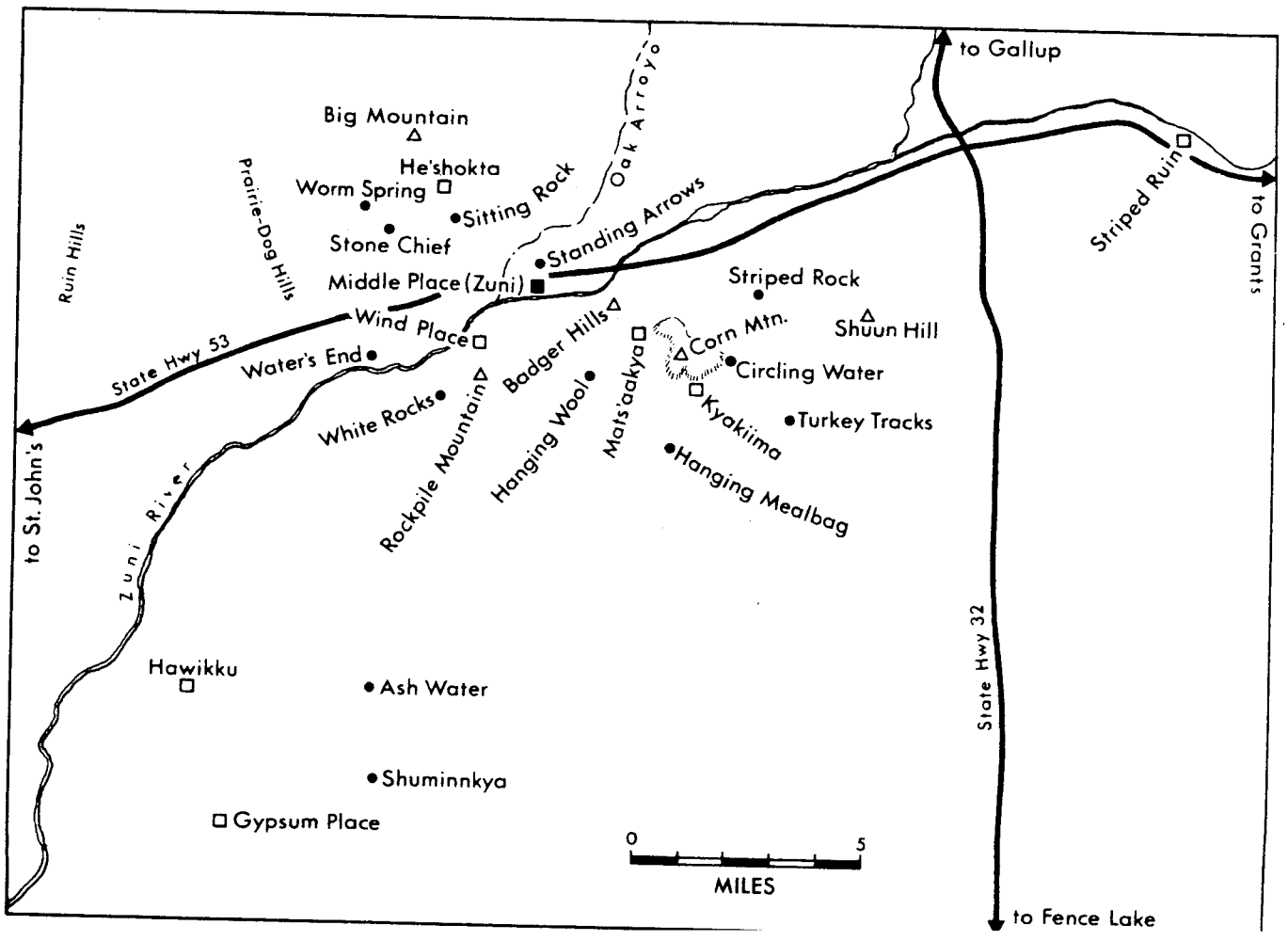
MAPS OF THE ZUNI REGION

Showing Places Mentioned in the Narratives

KEY (both maps)

- ■ Present-day Pueblo Indian village
- □ Ruin of Pueblo Indian village
- ○ Non-Indian town
- △ Hill or Mountain
- • other location

NOTE: Many locations are only approximate



Preface to the Bison Book Edition

This is still the only book devoted to detailed scores for oral narrative performances, complete with the original pauses, shouts, whispers, chants, and changing tones of voice. The present narratives are translated from the Zuni language of New Mexico, but the same mode of presentation could be a vehicle for any other spoken tradition.[1] I see the book in part as a contribution to the ongoing reopening of the ear and voice that Charles Olson called for all the way back in 1950, when he said that poetry must "catch up and put into itself certain laws and possibilities of the breath."[2] The reopening of the possibilities in our own language goes hand in hand, or voice in voice, with a new openness to the spoken words of other traditions, especially those that spring from the same continent where we are now learning, however slowly, how to become natives.

I hope that at least some of the readers of this book will be people who do not ordinarily find themselves in the midst of a book of poetry. The poets presented here respect the mysterious qualities of what they have to tell, but they do not set obscurity as a goal. And poetry, in the sense I understand the word here, is not the silent lyrics to imaginary songs: it is just people talking, making speeches and telling stories.[3] That is what the word meant in Chaucer's time, before Wordsworth confused it with verse, and that is what it may come to mean again.

By this time I have heard how various people fared when they tried reading these stories aloud. When Andrew Peynetsa's eldest son Dennis first received a copy of the book, he spent the evening reading "The Beginning" to his family, only he did it *in the Zuni*

language; he found the translation to be reversible, line by line, except for my reference to "ozone." For the non-Zuni who wishes to try his or her own hand at the Zuni language, the translation of "Coyote and Junco" is accompanied by a facing-page Zuni text; instructions for pronunciation are included below in the "Guide to Reading Aloud." The only advice I have with regard to the English translations, in addition to what is given in the "Guide," is this: try to sound like someone telling a story, not like someone reciting an elocution lesson, and keep your pace slow and deliberate enough for your listener and for your own sense of the story.

I have been asked why I didn't publish a tape or disc, rather than a book. But I like telling these stories over and over, not once and for all "for the record"; they never come out the same way twice. And I like the picture of readers using their own voices rather than sitting passively before a machine. Anyone who wishes to hear the original performances in the Zuni language will find the tapes on deposit in the library of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, and there is an issue of *Alcheringa* with an insert disc recording of a new story by Andrew Peynetsa, accompanied by an English libretto.[4] Meanwhile, try your voice, even if your purpose is to "study" the stories. That is what "studying" a text originally meant in English: to read it aloud.

The formal opening and closing lines of the telapnaawe or "tales" in this book (the first seven narratives) were left untranslated, but I now have some idea as to what these lines may have meant before long use transformed them into their present forms, rounded and diminished like river pebbles. The first part of the opening, Son'ahchi or So'nahchi, may once have been something like, S ho'na ahhachi, "Now we are taking it up," with the -ch- indicating a repetitive action. It is as if the story had been left lying somewhere and were being picked up again, piece by piece. In the second part of the opening, Sonti inoote, only the first word is a mystery, the second one meaning "long ago"; the full line may once have been something like, S onati inoote, "Now it

begins to be made long ago." What we are about to hear, then, is a re-enactment of how the story came into being, how it came to be lying where it lies. In fact, the very next lines will give us the names of the places where the events took place. The closing line, Lee semkonikya, may have been shortened from, Lessi semme konikya, "Enough, the word was short," in which se- is an archaic stem appearing in modern Zuni only in the term selhasshi, "old word," which refers to talk that has been handed down, including all of the ten narratives presented here.

When Barbara Tedlock and I were on one of our periodic return visits to Zuni in 1972, just before this book appeared, Andrew Peynetsa was seized by the idea of creating a new tale out of some surprising recent events that had taken place in his own family.[5] Tales are supposed to take place long ago, but now it was as if Andrew were taking literally the present tense of the formal opening, "Now it begins to be made." When he had finished telling the events that made his new tale, he went on, without breaking the narrative stream, to tell how the participants in those events had sat around in the evening and decided to make up a tale about them, which of course is what had been happening as we all sat there. Toward the close, where he would ordinarily have told us that the tale was the origin of some present-day custom, he said instead, "*A story was made!*" The moment he finished, his grandsons wanted to show us the evidence of the thirteen-point buck that figured in the story, but when they went outside to get the antlers they discovered a brilliant display of northern lights, almost unheard of as far south as Zuni. We all went outside to look. The cosmos itself had moved in synchrony with Andrew's act of creation.

Andrew Peynetsa and Walter Sanchez both estimated their year of birth as 1904; Walter died in 1972. When we saw Andrew in the winter of 1976, on our way to a year with the Quiché Maya of Guatemala, he was in a quiet, reflective mood, and each morning by the stove he gave us serious talks on the subject of medicine. On the last morning he taught us how to cure a bad fright we had just received out on the highway. We first learned

of his death from a Quiché diviner, who gave us the meaning of the disturbing dreams we had both had on the same night. Andrew was my greatest teacher of the powers of the spoken word. As Charles Olson once said, "He who can tell the story right has actually not only given you something, but has moved you on your own narrative."

NOTES

1 For an application to Yucatec Maya narratives, see Allan F. Burns's work in *Alcheringa*, o.s. 4 (1972), 97–103; o.s. 5 (1973), 101–5; n.s. 1, no. 1 (1975), 99–107; n.s. 3, no. 1 (1977), 134–36.

2 "Projective Verse," in *Charles Olson: Human Universe and Other Essays*, ed. Donald Allen (New York: Grove, 1967), 51.

3 For some of my own writings and talks on this and related issues, see "Pueblo Literature: Style and Verisimilitude," in *New Perspectives on the Pueblos*, ed. Alfonso Ortiz (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1972), 219–42; "Learning to Listen: Oral History as Poetry," *Boundary 2*, 3 (1975), 707–26; "Toward a Restoration of the Word in the Modern World," *Alcheringa*, n.s. 2, no. 2 (1976), 120–32; "From Prayer to Reprimand," in *Language in Religious Practice*, ed. William J. Samarin (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1976), 72–83; and "Toward an Oral Poetics," *New Literary History*, 8 (1977), 507–19.

4 "The Story of How a Story Was Made," *Alcheringa*, o.s. 5 (1973), 120–25. Other narratives which do not appear in the present book are Andrew Peynetsa's "When the Old Timers Went Deer Hunting," *Alcheringa*, o.s. 3 (1971), 76–81, and Walter Sanchez's "The Girl and the Protector," *Alcheringa* n.s. 1, no. 1 (1975), 110–50.

5 See the first item in note 4.

Introduction

The Aashiwi, as they call themselves, or the Zuni Indians,[1] live in western New Mexico. They are one of twenty separate groups of Pueblo (village) Indians stretching from Taos in northern New Mexico to Hopi in northeastern Arizona. Their language is unrelated to those spoken by the other Pueblos, and in fact has no clear relationship with any other American Indian language.

The land of the Zunis is a high, rugged plateau, broken by red and yellow sandstone mesas; most of it is covered by low brush or open woods of juniper and piñon (nut pine), but there are ponderosa pine forests in the higher elevations and small irrigated farms in the valleys. When the Spanish arrived in 1539, the Zunis made their living by growing corn, squash, and beans, by gathering more than a hundred species of wild plants, and by hunting deer and smaller game. After the coming of the Spanish they added wheat, chili, and peaches to their crops and began raising stock, primarily sheep. Today their income derives largely from wage work, handicrafts (especially silversmithing), and livestock. They are now more numerous than at any time in their recorded history, with a population of over 6,000.

During the sixteenth century the Zunis lived in six different villages, which the Spanish called "The Seven Cities of Cibola"; by 1630 they had come together in the single village where most of them live today, Shiwina, or "Zuni," also called Halonaawa, "Red Ant Place," or Itiwana, "The Middle Place." Their social structure is exceedingly complex, involving twelve matrilineal

clans, thirteen medicine societies (organizations with secret curing powers), a masked dance society into which all males are initiated, a series of hereditary rain-bringing priesthoods whose highest-ranking members form the religious government of the village, a secular government of elected officials, four mission churches, three public schools, a crafts cooperative, and a small factory.[2]

I first went to Zuni in December of 1958 to attend the famous Sha'lako ceremony.[3] I returned to do anthropological field work in November of 1964 and continued until January of 1966; this work was done with the permission of two successive heads of the Zuni civil government, Fred Bowannie and Robert Lewis. My principal interest was in oral narratives and their social and psychological contexts, an interest which had been encouraged by John L. Fischer and Munro S. Edmonson of Tulane University.

Formal Zuni narratives are performed largely by men, and almost any man over fifty knows at least a few of them. They are told in the home, where television is now supplanting them, and in medicine society meetings. They fall into two main categories: telapnaawe, or "tales," which are regarded as fiction; and stories of the chimiky'ana'kowa, or "The Beginning," which are regarded as historical truth. There are other, less formal narratives (not represented here) which fall outside these two categories, including accounts of historical events which are more recent than "The Beginning."

Telapnaawe, including the first seven narratives in this book, may be told only from October to March, lest the narrator be bitten by a snake, and only at night, lest the sun set early. Anyone who falls asleep during a telapnanne or who fails to stand up and stretch at the end of such a story may become a hunchback. Telapnaawe are "fictional" in the same limited sense that our own fiction is, which is to say that they may contain many realistic

details and may even be based on "true" stories. Among the stories in the present collection, this ambiguity is strongest in "The Sun Priest and the Witch-Woman," which is regarded as "true" in almost every detail and yet is given the opening and closing formulas and other stylistic features of a telapnanne.

Stories of "The Beginning," represented here by the last two narratives in the book, may be told at any season of the year and at any time of day. When told in a ritual context they are chanted; the present examples, told as they were in a hearthside context, contain only a few chanted lines and make less use of esoteric language than ritual versions. The remaining story in this book, "The Shumeekuli," would fit neatly into the early portion of Part II of "The Beginning," but its narrator chose to present it as a separate story, though he himself regards it as part of "The Beginning."

Andrew Peynetsa and Walter Sanchez, the two narrators represented here, were both in their early sixties when their stories were recorded. Related by clan, they are among the few Zunis who still devote a good deal of time to farming. Andrew speaks English but Walter does not. Joseph Peynetsa, who helped in the making of the Zuni transcriptions and English translations of the stories, is Andrew's brother's son. At present he works in the offices of the Zuni government.

I collected nearly a hundred narratives from Andrew and Walter, half of them telapnaawe and the rest having to do with "The Beginning" (only a few of these) or with more recent history. In all instances I used a tape-recorder and had at least one Zuni present other than the narrator himself. The recorder caused no apparent "stage fright"; after all, narrators are "on stage" anyway, with or without a recorder. Andrew and Walter decided for themselves which stories to tell, and in what sequence. The story titles were provided by Andrew, at my request.

Once a story was recorded, Joseph Peynetsa and I faced the

massive task of getting it off the tape and onto paper. Joseph would listen to each Zuni clause or sentence two or three times and then repeat it to me until I was satisfied that my phonetic transcription was accurate; he would then offer a translation which we often discussed or modified before I entered it between the lines of the transcription. As time went on and I acquired more knowledge of the Zuni language, I played an increasingly active role in this process. Our results were good enough as these things go, but linguistic training, with its excessive emphasis on the precise notation of phonemes, had made me deaf to the subtler qualities of the speaking voice, and the tediousness of our work (ten to twenty hours for each hour of tape) made Joseph and myself care less about the precision of the translations than we should have.

When I left the field in 1966 it was already my intention to put together a book of Zuni narratives. At first I saw this task as largely a matter of polishing the rough translations done in the field, but I was unhappy with the flat prose format which had always been used in presenting such narratives. Thinking of Melville Jacobs' suggestion that oral narratives might be better understood as a kind of theater than as an oral equivalent of our own written fiction,[4] and noting that Zuni stories contain many quotations, I considered using a play format, with each quotation labeled according to its speaker and the remaining passages labeled "narrator." But I eventually decided that such a presentation would add nothing, since, in Zuni narratives at least, it is usually perfectly clear which character is responsible for a quotation anyway. Moreover, a play format would divert one's attention from the unitary nature of the storytelling experience: the narrator performs *all* of the roles, not just one of a number of fragmented possibilities, and in a sense he must "identify" with all of them.[5]

I was first led to consider the possibility that Zuni narratives might be poetry by Edmonson's discovery that the *Popol Vuh,*

which had always been treated as prose by translators, was composed entirely of couplets.[6] But my search for a similar structure in Zuni stories did not uncover anything which would justify a coupleted format. It was not until late in 1968, after listening to many oral performances of modern poetry, that I returned to my Zuni tapes and began to work out the details of the mode of presentation used here, which combines poetic and dramatic features. The intensive listening involved in such a broad-spectrum translation greatly improved my knowledge of the Zuni language over what it had been in the field, so that I was also able to revise and refine the wording of the original rough translations.

The results of this effort have convinced me that prose has no real existence outside the written page. Narratives of the kind presented here have been labeled and presented as "oral prose" for no better reason than that they are not sung or (in most passages) chanted. Earlier field workers, including my predecessors at Zuni,[7] were hampered in their recognition of the poetic qualities of spoken narratives by the fact that handwritten dictation was their only means of collection. This is a tedious method which involves constant interruptions of the flow of speech and deprives the performer of an attentive native audience. But now that the tape-recorder has become practical and accurate as a field instrument, it is possible to capture true performances and to listen closely, as many times as may be necessary, to all their sounds and silences.

What makes written prose most unfit for representing spoken narrative is that it rolls on for whole paragraphs at a time without taking a breath: there is no silence in it. To solve this problem I have broken Zuni narratives into lines: the shorter pauses, which average three-fourths second and almost never drop below one-half second, are represented here by simple changes of line; the longer pauses, which run from two to three seconds, are represented by strophe breaks. Among the present narratives only two

pauses (both about six seconds long) fall outside these two groups; they are represented by spaces markedly larger than the regular strophe breaks.

As a casual inspection of the narratives will show, the punctuation marks and paragraphs of a prose presentation would not be much of a guide to Zuni pauses. Some of the pauses fall between clauses and sentences, but many do not, and some of the clause and sentence boundaries are not accompanied by silence. Even the longer pauses sometimes occur in the midst of a sentence; such pauses help to build the tension in a narrative.

Zuni lines vary constantly in length, ranging from one syllable to more than seventy. In passing from Zuni to English it is possible to at least approximate the original contrasts in line length, as can be seen by comparing the text and translation of "Coyote and Junco."[8] There is no point in preserving exact syllable counts in translation, but radical changes would distort the pace of the narrative. Line length—or, to put it the other way around, the frequency of pauses—is the major cause of variations in the apparent rate at which human speech is delivered: passages with short lines (many pauses) seem slow, while those with long lines (few pauses) seem fast. The rate of syllable articulation, by contrast, plays little role in the speed variations of Zuni or any other language,[9] but there are two occasions in "Pelt Kid and his Grandmother" when the narrator, by deliberate effort, greatly slows his articulation in order to make his words absolutely clear; I have marked these lines *slowly* at the left-hand margin.

Occasionally Zuni word order makes the transposition of lines desirable: in "The Boy and the Deer," for example, a strictly literal treatment would produce some lines like, "Her clothes / she bundled," or "His kinswoman / he beat." It might be argued that the hearer ought to be kept in suspense for a half second as to what the woman is going to do with her clothes or what the

man is going to do to his kinswoman, but my sense of the matter is that since "Her clothes / she bundled" sounds like ordinary Zuni, it ought to be transformed into "She bundled / her clothes," which sounds like ordinary English.

The loudness of Zuni narration ranges from just short of a shout to just short of a whisper. Representing this on the page is something of a problem, since most of the devices offered by our writing tradition are ambiguous: an exclamation point, for example, most often indicates something loud, but it is also appropriate after a whispered interjection. My present solution to the problem is to use small type for soft passages or words, larger type for middle-level passages, and capitals for loud passages.

Sometimes middle-level passages are delivered with a heavy stress on the last syllable of each line, as in this example from Part I of "The Beginning":

Kwa' kwa'holh uhsona ho' yu'hetamME.
Ma'homkwat liwan ho'na suWE
Alahho ShiwaNI:
homkwat lukhon ayyu'yaanaky'anNA.

If the meanings of the stressed elements were used as a guide to English translation, the passage would come out something like this:

But I do NOT know about this.
Perhaps our younger broTHER there
the Coral PRIEST:
perhaps he WOULD know.

But the purpose of the stresses in the original passage is not to single out particular *meanings* but to mark off lines. In the words of Joseph Peynetsa, the speaker is "saying it in a way that is not ordinary. He is trying to stress, to bring out an important idea.

It shows authority, and to have a complete thought at the same time, not just trailing off." The following rendition, which emphasizes the line structure, is more appropriate than the one offered above:

But I do not know about THIS.
Perhaps our younger brother THERE
the Coral PRIEST:
perhaps he would KNOW.

The effect of this version does not correspond precisely to anything in English poetry, but it does suggest the stress which is often given to line-ending rhymes.

The important lines in Zuni narrative are sometimes chanted rather than given final stress. As in the following example, most chanted lines are limited to two pitches with an interval of roughly three half-tones, and most of them are loud:

TON AA WAANA TON HE SHOTAWASHNA

The higher pitches in these two-pitch lines tend to fall on the most important words, so that in this case, unlike that of line-final stress, meaning is an appropriate guide to the arrangement of the translation:

WHEN YOU HAVE GONE THERE YOU WILL BUILD
HOU SES

Occasionally a chanted line breaks into three pitches, as in this case:

NALHAKNAAWE
nalhaknaawe
nalhaknaawe

Here the interval between the top and bottom pitches runs to about four tones, with the middle pitch closer to the top than to the bottom. The translation is simple:

KILLED THE DEER
killed the deer
killed the deer

It should be noted that the pitches in chanted lines, while far more controlled than those in a normal speaking voice, are not as controlled as in singing.

A long time or distance in Zuni narrative may be indicated by drawing out a vowel sound for two or three seconds while keeping a steady pitch. Thus "akya," "he went," may become "akya———," which seems best in English as "he went o——n." This feature might be represented by repeated vowels rather than by long dashes, but the vagaries of English orthography often preclude that: "oooooooon" would appear to have the same vowel sound as "soon." Lengthened consonants, on the other hand, turn out well as repeated letters: thus Zuni "KY'ALHHHHHH" becomes English "KERSPLASHHHHHH."

Sometimes the lengthening of the Zuni vowel "a" is combined with the control of loudness to produce a crescendo, as in this line:

aaaaaaAAAAAA LHITON IKYA

In this case the repeated vowels have a stronger graphic effect than a long dash, which might work out this way: "a————A." I have kept the "a" in the English versions of such crescendos, but have added an "h" to remind the reader that this is like the vowel in "ah" and not like the one in "bat":

aaaaaaAAAAAAH THE RAIN CAME

Vowel lengthening may also be combined with change of pitch, which produces a glissando:

$$ta^{l}{}_{a}{}_{a}{}_{a}{}_{a}$$

This is the sound of a person descending a ladder at great speed; I have retained it unchanged in translation.

The special manipulations of voice quality (or tone of voice) in Zuni narrative can be transferred directly into English with no real confusion about the meanings of the affected lines; as in the script for a play, such lines can be introduced with parenthetical, italicized instructions. Sometimes these special voice qualities involve imitations of the voices of the story characters; a boy may be given a *high* voice or, as in the case of the adolescent younger brother Ahayuuta in "The Sun Priest and the Witch-Woman," a *high and hoarse* voice; a woman may be given a *tight* (tense) or a *high and tight* voice; a mountain lion may be given a *low and gravelly* voice. In other cases voice qualities depend on situations rather than on particular characters: the words "he pulled" may be rendered *with strain*, as if the narrator were trying to hold his breath during great exertion; a character who is starving may speak *weakly;* a sleepy owl may sound as if he were *almost yawning;* a man planning to witch someone may speak with a *rasping* voice.

Italicized notations are also useful when events other than speaking itself play a part in a narrative, as when the performer clears his throat, sighs, breaks into laughter, turns his head to make an aside, or gestures. The two narrators represented here make relatively little use of gestures, mostly limiting themselves to indications (with extended arm and hand) of the position of the sun or the direction in which a story character is traveling. I never worked out an efficient system for correlating these gestures with the narrative texts while in the field (my tape-recorder did not

have a counter), so most of them have been lost; the few which remain are indicated by parenthetical notes. In any case, a Zuni gesture is almost never essential to the understanding of the accompanying line, the only real exception in the present collection being this passage from "Coyote and Junco": "Coyote has no teeth here (*points to molars*)."

A Zuni audience usually responds to a narrative with affirmations: in the case of telapnaawe the listeners say "eeso," and in the case of "The Beginning" they say "hacchi" or "eleete," which are more serious and formal than "eeso." Such responses come at the rate of once a minute or more and are usually inserted during a pause; they are most likely to occur after an explanatory sentence, especially if such a sentence is delivered as an aside or is followed by a deliberate pause. Unfortunately it is almost impossible to get a Zuni audience to respond fully in the presence of a tape-recorder. The responses noted in "The Boy and the Deer" have been reconstructed: those which follow the two introductory formulas are standard for all audiences, and the others are based on the restrained "mm" which Walter Sanchez uttered three times while he listened to this story. The "eeso" in "The Girl Who Took Care of the Turkeys" and the audience comment in Part II of "The Beginning" are given exactly as they occured. Audience laughter is frequent on the tape of "Pelt Kid and his Grandmother," but since written notations of this would create the feeling of "canned" laughter I have indicated only the narrator's own laughter.

A narrator's uncontrolled moments, of which the laughter just mentioned is one example, are usually eliminated in written presentations. But they are a natural part of performance, and keeping them in translation helps preserve the "live" quality or unexpectedness of the original story. A narrator may get ahead of himself, for example, and then back up to fill in a missing detail, as Walter Sanchez does in "Pelt Kid and his Grandmother." If I

were to eliminate this error in translation I would be doing something an oral performer cannot do, which is to erase something he has already said. Moreover, I would be distorting Walter's personal style, for this "error" is one aspect of his general tendency to great haste and excitement. Other aspects, which I have also preserved, include an occasional stutter, a proclivity for ending lines with connective words, and the production of lines of extreme length (ranging up to twice as long as Andrew Peynetsa's longest). Andrew, by contrast, "tries to bring out his stories not fast, but precisely," as Joseph Peynetsa put it. But even Andrew gets carried away sometimes, as in this passage from "The Boy and the Deer":

> Your belly grew large
> you
> you were to deliver, you had pains in your belly,
> you were about to give birth to me, you had pains in your belly
> you gathered your clothes
> and you went down to the bank to wash.

The "you" in the second line and the repetition of "you had pains in your belly" might be considered errors, but Andrew is quoting an agitated person at this point: his slips actually enhance the story by making the quotation more realistic.

Even when repeated lines are not accidental they are usually removed from written presentations. But repetition is a common feature of oral discourse, whether formal or informal, in any language, and its elimination in writing is self-conscious and artificial. Moreover, such repetition frequently serves obvious poetic ends. The following passage might seem awkward in a prose format, but with pauses and softnesses restored, the repetitions give it greater force:

At that moment his mother
embraced him
    embraced him.

His uncle got angry
    his uncle got angry.

He beat
his kinswoman
he beat his kinswoman.

Most of the remaining problems encountered in translating Zuni narratives are of a more conventional nature than the ones discussed so far. There are, for example, grammatical problems, as when an incomplete past action is given the present tense in Zuni instead of the past; such use of the present would sound awkward in English narrative, so I have chosen to use the imperfect instead (see "Coyote and Junco" for examples: each English imperfect there corresponds to a Zuni present). One other specifically grammatical problem worth mentioning involves the occasional shifting of the subject of a Zuni verb from its normal position before the verb to a sentence-final position: instead of the normal "Le'holh Nepayatamu ikwekkya," or "That's what Nepayatamu said," the narrator may say, "Le'holh ikwekkya, Nepayatamu." "Le'holh ikwekkya" alone would have meant, "That's what he said," but the narrator, as an afterthought, has gone on to specify the subject of the verb. Arranging the English translation in a parallel manner preserves this afterthought quality: "That's what he said, Nepayatamu."

Zuni narratives contain many words, usages, and phrases which would be absent in completely neutral everyday speech, including the formulaic frames which enclose telapnaawe, esoteric terms borrowed from ritual language, highly formal greeting exchanges, and archaic interjections. "Son'ahchi," which opens all telapnaawe, and "Lee——— semkonikya," which closes

them, are declared by the Zunis to be untranslatable, so I have left them as they are. In a sense they are not really "words," just as the frame around a landscape painting is not a part of the enclosed scenery. "Son'ahchi" might be rendered as "Once upon a time," but even aside from the unfortunate fairytale connotations of this English formula, it is not as "abstract" as the Zuni one, in that it does have a decipherable meaning. The Zuni formula which sometimes follows "Son'ahchi," on the other hand, does lend itself to a partial translation: the first word in "Sonti inoo——te" is purely abstract, but the second word means "long ago," a split which is appropriate to the fact that this formula is halfway between the "frame" and the "picture." I have preserved this split by using "Sonti lo——ng ago" in the translations.

The esoteric terms used in Zuni narratives usually refer to matters which might also be referred to (by different terms) in everyday life, rather than to matters which are unique to a ritual context. The ordinary term for a coyote, for example, is "suski," but there is an esoteric substitute, "sani," which I have translated into the less common of the two English terms for this animal, "prairie wolf." The ordinary term for "southward" is "ma'ky'a-yakwin," but a narrator may use "alahho'annankwin," or "toward the coral," instead. Some other esoteric terms are metaphorical: "onanne," for example, which ordinarily means "road," may be used to mean "life," and "shipololo," which ordinarily means "mist," may be used to mean "smoke"; I have retained these metaphors in English rather than translating them into "life" and "smoke."

The greeting exchanges in Zuni narratives are more elaborate than those of everyday life. Ordinarily a person might say "Kesshé," which has the effect of "Hi," and be answered with the same or "Tosh iya," "So you've come." But in a story he may say, on entering a house other than his own, "Hom aatacchu, hom chawe, ko'na'to tewanan aateyaye?" and be answered with, "K'et-

tsanisshe, ho'naawan cha'le, tosh iya, s'iimu." A straightforward translation of this exchange preserves its highly formal character: "My fathers, my children, how have you been passing the days?" "Happily, our child, so you've come, sit down." When the characters who exchange greetings are of great importance they may go to even greater lengths, as they do in "The Sun Priest and the Witch-Woman" and "The Beginning."

The archaic interjections used in Zuni stories, most notably "Tísshomahhá" and "Hanáhha," are difficult to translate: they have no meanings other than the emotions they are supposed to express, whereas all strong English interjections have reference to sex, bodily functions, or religion. Some English interjections are only covert in such reference or lack it altogether, "My goodness!" or "Wow!" for example, but these lack seriousness, and interjections which are archaic in addition sound even worse, "Gadzooks!" or "Zounds!" for example. In the hope that the contexts of the strong Zuni interjections will make their meanings clear, I have chosen to leave them untranslated. But where archaisms of no great weight are placed in the mouths of ridiculous characters, as in "Pelt Kid and his Grandmother," I have given them English translations which sound old-fashioned: thus Pelt Kid's "A'ana ha'la" becomes "Oh, drat!" and his grandmother's "Atíikya" becomes "Dear me!"

Zuni narratives contain no slang (penaky'amme, literally "non-speech"), but at least one slightly substandard term is used: "okyattsik'i," which Zunis translate as "old lady." In "Coyote and Junco," for example, the Oregon junco, or "silo" (a bird), is referred to as "sil'okyattsik'i"; translating this simply as "Old Lady Junco" preserves the original effect quite well.

The Zuni language offers narrators a rich fund of onomatopoeic words; English is also rich in such words, so there is no great translation problem. Even so I have left some of the original Zuni words as they are, especially where they seem more

vivid than their English equivalents; in these cases the context usually makes the meaning clear, as in this line from "The Women and the Man": "Tenén! his body fell dead."

Some Zuni proper names are untranslatable, "Payatamu" (a character) and "He'shokta" (a place) for example, but wherever names are at all translatable I have put them into English, as in the case of "Kempewi Ts'ana," or "Pelt Kid," and "Towayalanne," "Corn Mountain." In order to cut down on the number of difficult Zuni words remaining in the English versions of the stories, I have sometimes translated a name even when its meaning is uncertain; this is the case with "Shoplhuwayal'a," for example, which I have rendered as "Standing Arrows" on the basis of a Zuni folk etymology.

The songs which accompany three of the stories have been left untranslated. In the case of "The Hopis and the Famine," the song is in the Hopi language; since it is unintelligible to the Zuni audience, it seems appropriate that it remain unintelligible to the English-speaking one; moreover, the general meaning of the song is explained by the narrator after he sings it, so that a translation would be redundant. In the case of "Coyote and Junco," the song is composed of vocables which have no meaning; they are not difficult for an English-speaker, so I have left them as they are. The song in "The Girl Who Took Care of the Turkeys" is also composed of nonsense vocables, except that "TOK TOK" is the Zuni rendition of the sound made by a turkey; I have left this song as it is because I prefer "TOK TOK" to "gobble gobble." As for the melodic lines of the three songs, I have treated them in a manner analogous to my handling of the chanted lines rather than using conventional musical notation, in order to emphasize that speaking and singing are on a continuum, with chanting in between.

Beyond interjections, proper names, songs, and the like,

there is something else in Zuni narratives which cannot be "translated" in the ordinary sense, and that is the kind of thing which is not *said* but which takes place in the minds of the narrator and his listeners. This is what Joseph Peynetsa had in mind when he suddenly asked, in the middle of our work on a story, "Do you picture it, or do you just write it down?" Of course part of what the Zunis picture depends on their specific cultural background, and although I have provided some notes to help readers fill in that picture, nothing I could do would make them experience these stories precisely as a Zuni does. But there is no single, "correct" picture of a given story even from one Zuni to another. What makes a narrative work for anyone other than the narrator himself is this very openness, and I think that some of the present narratives are open enough to permit the reader to do some picturing of his own. As Joseph says, "If someone tells a story, you can just imagine it."

NOTES

1 In using "Zuni," rather than the Spanish "Zuñi," I follow the practice, in both spelling and pronunciation, of the English-speaking residents of the Zuni region, including bilingual Zunis; this is the spelling used by the Zuni tribal government. "Zuñi" is a Spanish corruption of the Keresan (a Pueblo Indian language) corruption of the Zuni "Shiwi"; if anything, "Zuñi" resembles the original Zuni word even less than "Zuni" does.

2 For detailed descriptions of Zuni, see especially Matilda Coxe Stevenson, "The Zuni Indians," *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, 23 (1904); Ruth L. Bunzel, "Introduction to Zuni Ceremonialism," *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, 47 (1932), 467–544; and Dorothea C. Leighton and John Adair, *People of the Middle Place* (New Haven: HRAF Press, 1966).

3 For the best description of this ceremony, see Edmund Wilson, *Red, Black, Blond, and Olive* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 3–42.

4 *The Content and Style of an Oral Literature*, Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology, 26 (1959), 7.

5 It is worth noting in this connection that the Zunis have great difficulty in answering when they are asked which character they "identified" with in a given story, even when they have a reasonable understanding of what identification means.

6 Munro S. Edmonson, trans., *The Book of Counsel: The Popol Vuh of the Quiche Maya of Guatemala*, Publications of the Middle American Research Institute of Tulane University, 35 (1971). Dell Hymes has also used semantic structure to break text into lines, as in "Some North Pacific Coast Poems: A Problem in Anthropological Philology," *American Anthropologist*, 67 (1965), 316–341.

7 The principal earlier collections of Zuni narratives, all of them in a prose format, are Frank Hamilton Cushing, *Zuni Folk Tales* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1931); Ruth L. Bunzel, *Zuni Texts*, Publications of the American Ethnological Society, 15 (1933); and Ruth Benedict, *Zuni Mythology*, Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology, 21 (1935). For an extended discussion of the history of the collection and translation of American Indian narratives, see Dennis Tedlock, "On the Translation of Style in Oral Narrative," *Journal of American Folklore*, 84 (1971), 114–133.

8 It is the vagaries of English orthography that make the lines of the Zuni text seem shorter than those of the English translation; the respective syllable counts are reasonably close.

9 Frieda Goldman-Eisler, "Discussion and Further Comments," in *New Directions in the Study of Language*, ed. Eric H. Lenneberg (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1964), 120.

Guide to Reading Aloud

She went out and
went down to Water's End.

•

On she went until
she came to the bank
and washed her clothes.

Pause at least half a second each time a new line begins at the left-hand margin, and at least two seconds for each dot separating lines. Do not pause within lines (even at the end of a sentence) or for indented lines.

Up on the hills
HE SAW A HERD OF DEER.

Use a soft voice for words in small type and a loud one for words in capitals.

The girl would sit wor king.

Chant split lines, with an interval of about three half-tones between levels.

O————n he went.

Hold vowels followed by dashes for about two seconds.

KERSPLASHHHHHH

Hold repeated consonants for about two seconds.

aaaaaaAAAAAAH	Produce a crescendo when a repeated vowel changes from lower case to capitals.
ta$^{l}{}_{a}{}_{a}{}_{a}{}_{a}$	Produce a glissando for ascending or descending vowels.
(gently) Now come with me.	Tones of voice, audience responses, gestures, etc., are indicated by italics.

PRONOUNCING ZUNI WORDS

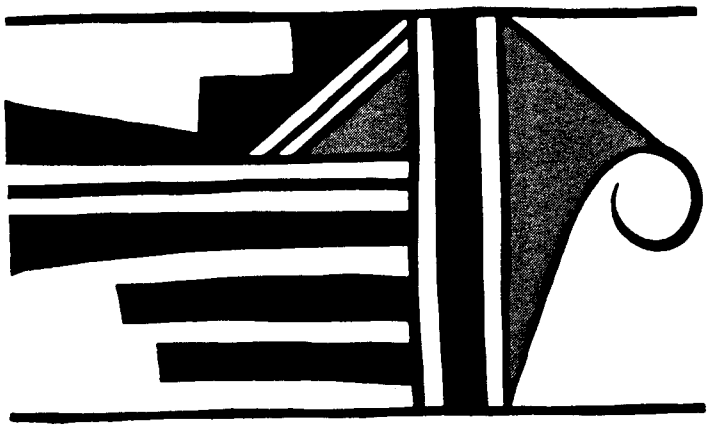
a, e, i, o, u	Vowels should be given their Continental values.
aa, ee, ii, oo, uu	Double vowels should be held a bit longer than single ones, like the long vowels in Greek.
ch, h, k, l, m, n, p, s, sh, t, w, y	These consonants should be pronounced as in English, except that p and t are unaspirated.
lh	This sounds like English h and l pronounced simultaneously; something like the Ll in Welsh "Lloyd."
'	The glottal stop is like the tt in the Scottish pronunciation of "bottle." When it follows other consonants

	it is pronounced simultaneously with them.
cch, hh, kk, ll, llh, mm, nn, pp, ss, ssh, tt, ww, yy, ’’	Double consonants are held a bit longer than single ones, like the double consonants in Italian.
	Stress is always on the first syllable except in words marked with accents.

Note: In the songs, the pauses, loudness, lengthened sounds, glissandi, and the pronunciation of Zuni words are as indicated above. The beat follows the stresses and pauses in the words. The contour of the melody is indicated by the ups and downs of each song line; the reader may determine the exact pitches according to his own ear.

Further Note: The reader should not attempt mechanical accuracy to the point where it interferes with the flow of performance.

COYOTE AND JUNCO



SUSKI TAAP SILO

SON'AHCHI.

SONTI I$^{NOO—}$TE.

•

SHOPLHUWAYAL'AN
SIL'OKYATTSIK KY'AKWAPPA
taachi SUSKI
suski lak a'l iimulhan holh cha'lliye.
Cha'llappa
taachi sil'okyattsik holhi
kyawashey'a.
Teshuk'o
taap k'ushuts'i, holh kyawashey'a.
Il'anna wolunholh lesna
kyawashnan allachelhky'akkya.
Allachelhky'ap
taachi suski
suski' s
lhat allu'ya, yam chal'aawan lhat allu'ya laks

silo kyawashennankwin tecchikya.

SON'AHCHI.

SONTI LO———NG A GO

•

AT STANDING ARROWS
OLD LADY JUNCO HAD HER HOME
and COYOTE
Coyote was there at Sitting Rock with his children.
He was with his children
and Old Lady Junco
was winnowing.
Pigweed
and tumbleweed, she was winnowing these.
With her basket
she winnowed these by tossing them in the air.
She was tossing them in the air
while Coyote
Coyote
was going around hunting, going around hunting for his
children there
when he came to where Junco was winnowing.

"Kop to LEYE'A?" le'anikwap. "Ma' ho kyawashey'a," le'.

"Kwap to kyawashey'a?" le'. "Ma'

•

teshuk'o taap k'ushuts'i"

le'holh anikwap.

"Hayi.

Kop to' ikwe'a?" "Ma' hom luk kyawashnakkya tenanne," le'.

"AMA HOM'AAN TENA'U
akky ho' yam
chawotenna," le'.
Sil'okyattsik s yam
suski an tenakkya:

YUUWA^{HINA} YUUWA^{HINA}
YUUWA^{HINA} YUUWA^{HINA}
YU^{HINA} YU^{HINA}
PHHH PHHH
YU^{HINA} YU^{HINA}
PHHH PHHH

Le'holh i'.
"EE, HO' SO'AKKYA
ma'so anne, yam ho' cha'aawan tena'unna."
Suski aakya lak wiimayaawan, holh lottikyap
NIISHAPAK'O AALA'HIPPA
taa yam tenan okky'akkya.

"What are you DOING?" that's what he asked her. "Well,
I'm winnowing," she said.
"What are you winnowing?" he said. "Well

•

pigweed and tumbleweed"
that's what she told him.
"Indeed.
What's that you're saying?" "Well, this is
my winnowing song," she said.
"NOW SING IT FOR ME
so that I
may sing it for my children," he said.
Old Lady Junco
sang for Coyote:

YUUWA^{HINA} YUUWA^{HINA}
YUUWA^{HINA} YUUWA^{HINA}
YU^{HINA} YU^{HINA}
(blowing) PFFF PFFF
YU^{HINA} YU^{HINA}
(blowing) PFFF PFFF

That's what she said.
"YES, NOW I
can go, I'll sing it to my children."
Coyote went on to Oak Arroyo, and when he got there
MOURNING DOVES FLEW UP
and he lost his song.

Ikya ina:
"Hanatte! tom'an tena'u, niishapak hom

tenan okky'anapkya," le'.
Taas an tenne.
Tenan yaanikwatinan taas aakya.
Lak teshoktaawan holhi
taas iskon yeyye an'a kwachukya.
Taas yam tenan okky'akkya.
Taas ha''iky'annan inan
itekkunakkya.
Taas an tenne.
Ha''iky'annana s'anne, taas wiimaya holh tecchippa

K'ECCHO AALA'HIP taas yam tenan okky'akkya.
Aawitenaky'annan iyappa
sil'okyattsik leskwikkya, "Aa lak to' iyappa
kwa'so tenaashukwa," le'kwanas.
A'ky'amon teshuna.
A'ky'amon awana, yam
sil'ucchun ullunan, an sil a'unan kyala''u.

"Shemak yamante ko'le'ona."
Silo yam ky'akwen kwatokya.
Suskis aawitenaky'annan iya.
Inan:
"Hanatte! tom'aan tena'u, taas an tenan okky'anakkya, iya,"
le'anikwappa.
Kwa' silo peyena'ma.

He went back:
(muttering) "Quick! sing for me, some mourning doves made
me
lose my song," he said.
Again she sang for him.
He learned the song and went on.
He went through a field there
and broke through a gopher hole.
Again he lost his song.
Again, he came for the third time
to ask for it.
Again she sang for him.
He went on for the third time, and when he came to Oak
Arroyo
BLACKBIRDS FLEW UP and again he lost his song.
He was coming for the fourth time
when Old Lady Junco said to herself, *(tight)* "Oh here you come
but I won't sing," that's what she said.
She looked for a round rock.
When she found a round rock, she
dressed it with her Junco shirt, she put her basket of seeds
with the Junco rock.
(tight) "As for you, go right ahead and ask."
Junco went inside her house.
Coyote was coming for the fourth time.
When he came:
"Quick! sing it for me, I lost the song again, come on,"
that's what he told her.
Junco said nothing.

"Hanatte!" le'anikwap, kwa' penamkya.
"TOOPA," le'.
"Aawitenaky'annan ho'
penap, kwa'hom'an to' tena'ma, tom ho' uttenna,"
le'anikwappa.

•

"Kwiliky'annan, KWIILI," le'.
"Hanat tom'aan tena'u," le'.
Kwa' tena'ma. "HAA"I. ALHNAT ho' penuwa," le'.

•

Suskis, "HANAT TENA'U," le'anikwappa.
Kwa' tena'ma.
Sil'ucchun suski a"u.
Sil uttep, KWAAM, a'ky'amon s'olh uttekya.
Liilhno luky'anna ko' yo'nashky'an, akkyaluk
yo'na yalhakwin.
"Luhappa tenhish tom ho' leyan." "AY! AY!" le'kwana.

SANI YAM CHA'LIKWIN TECCHIP, kyaakyamash ko'an
chawe yashekkya tekkwin tecchikya.
Le'n inoote teyatikko'akkya, kwa' suski liilhno
aawo'nawamme. LEE————SEMKONIKYA.

"Quick!" that's what he told her, but she didn't speak.
"ONE," he said.
"The fourth time I
speak, if you haven't sung, I'll bite you," that's what
he told her.

•

"Second time, TWO," he said.
"Quick sing for me," he said.
She didn't sing. "THREE. I'll count ONCE MORE," he said.

•

Coyote said, "QUICK SING," that's what he told her.
She didn't sing.
Junco had left her shirt for Coyote.
He bit the Junco, CRUNCH, he bit the round rock.
Right here *(points to molars)* he knocked out the teeth, the
rows of teeth in back.
(tight) "So now I've really done it to you." "AY! AY!"
that's what he said.
THE PRAIRIE WOLF WENT BACK TO HIS CHILDREN,
and by the time he got back there his children were dead.
Because this was lived long ago, Coyote has no teeth here
(points to molars). LEE————SEMKONIKYA. *(laughs)*

NOTES

Narrated by Andrew Peynetsa, immediately after Walter Sanchez did "The Girl Who Took Care of the Turkeys." The performance took four minutes; Andrew learned this story from a man who had a reputation for telling only very short stories.

Coyote: Joseph Peynetsa commented, "These Coyote stories make it sound like he's an outcast and nobody thinks too much of him. So he's the eater of any kind of food, like bugs, roots, berries."

Blackbirds: these are Brewer's blackbirds.

Junco shirt: Old Lady Junco is an Oregon junco, and her "shirt" is the hood-like area of dark gray or black that covers the head, neck, and part of the breast of this species.

Prairie wolf: at this point Andrew uses "sani," an esoteric term for coyote, rather than "suski," the ordinary term; therefore I have used the less common of the two English terms for this animal.

The ending: asked whether this story teaches a lesson, Joseph said, "It just teaches how the coyote is being very foolish. It doesn't teach anything like a human being might do."