Navajo Culture & Its

Relation to Alcoholism

by

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I. INTRODUCTION.

The Navajo represent one of the relatively few cultures which has failed to develop a native alcoholic beverage. At present, however, excessive drinking is a major social problem (Navajo Yearbook 1961:276). A number of writers who have studied the Navajo have mentioned factors they believe to contribute to alcoholism within the tribe, but there are apparently no studies specifically related to this problem from a theoretical point of view. It was approached in a conference called in 1960 by the Navajo Tribal Committee on Alcoholism, which explored the subject from the points of view of the sociologist, the law enforcement officer, the medical worker, the religious worker, and others; but their only contribution was the encouragement of a rehabilitation program (Navajo Yearbook (1961x277). Horton (1943x4, 1, 199-320) extracted a number of variables that he found correlated with drinking in primitive societies, but in a review of the literature there was found no detailed analysis of alcoholism in a particular society. Not only were no studies of this kind found to guide in the present research, but the material that exists of this type in relation to the Navajo culture is incidental and inadequate. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to present, from the literature, theoretical approaches to the etiology of alcoholism with special reference to cultural determinants and to examine the Navajo society for possible specific contributing factors which would lead to hypotheses to be tested in field research.

II. THEORETICAL DETERMINANTS OF ALCOHOLISM.

A. Cultural Variables.

Alcoholism has been approached from many different ways by different theorists. Some have emphasized the physiological, others the socio-cultural or psychological variables within these disciplines devious paths have been taken. The results of physiological studies will not be considered here, not because they are unimportant but because they are inappropriate to the cultural orientation of this paper. The word cultural will be used to include both socio-cultural variables and psychological variables which are more or less common to the society. Lemert(1956:L17, 306-317) has presented the case for socio-cultural etiology by pointing to the fact that the rate of alcoholism is different for men and women, for urban and rural areas, for detached people and married, and for different American ethnic groups.

Horton (1943:4, 1, 199-320) indicated that anxiety is significantly correlated with alcoholism. His study consisted of the analysis of several societies in terms of the factors that were common in those which showed a high instance of alcoholism. He attributed this anxiety to basic insecurities of primitive life, such as drought, insect plagues, floods, crop failures, or any threat to the food supply. In societies with subsistence insecurity, disregarding those in which acculturation was a factor, the degree of insecurity was related to amount of insobriety, the probability being between .01 and .02. When the acculturated
cases were added, the significance rose to .01. Thus, not only subsistence anxiety, but cultural anxieties were related to insobriety (Horton 1943:268-269). A similar relationship was inferred by Honigmann and Honigmann (1945:5, 575-619) by observation among Athapaskan Indians in Canada. Horton concluded: "...that in many societies subsistence insecurity could be attributed to conditions created or intensified by the process of acculturation—settlers encroaching on the land, driving away game, or forcing the natives to less fertile soil, displacing whole populations to reservations, destroying native industries, and the like..."

Acculturation was also found to be an important factor in Horton's analysis of primitive societies. When acculturated societies were compared with non-acculturated ones, there was a higher incidence of insobriety in the former, while there was about an even split between strong insobriety and moderate-or-slight insobriety in the latter (1943:269). Washburne (1961) in his investigation of primitive drinking gave a rather complete description of the cultures which he discussed. Of the six cultures of which it was said that drinking was heavy or drunkenness was deep, acculturation was present in the cultures of five, was mentioned as related to drunkenness in three of these, and was mentioned as a problem in another. Caution needs to be exercised in assuming that the term 'acculturation' refers to equivalent circumstances in these two studies. However, Horton and Washburne are in agreement that acculturation can play a significant role in alcoholism in primitive societies.

Horton used belief in sorcery to indicate repressed aggressive anxiety (1943:286). He interpreted the association of insobriety and drunken aggression with belief in sorcery as evidence of the contribution of repressed aggression anxiety to excessive drinking (1943:292). Shalleo (1941:2, 464-478) cited Bunsel's study of Guatemalan and Chamulan drinking in relationship to repressed aggression. In Guatemala excessive use of alcohol did not bring out aggressive violence. In Chamula no one was safe when alcohol was used. There existed a strong belief in sorcery and sorcerers were considered arch enemies who were killed with public approval.

B. Personality, Variables.

A great deal of research has been done on the psychological dynamics of the alcoholic, and it is not difficult to find theoretical explanations for the etiology of addiction in terms of personality variables. Before discussing the personality traits found by some researchers, it should be emphasized that a number of investigators are not convinced that the alcoholic is distinguishable from other clinical types. A number of personality structures have been found among outpatients (Schaefer 1954:317). Button (1956:17, 35-52), Rosen 1960:21, 253-266), Manson (1949:5, 77-83) and Schaefer (1954:15, 304-319) deny that there is a unique and clinically accepted personality that can be identified with alcoholism. Schaefer emphasizes the disagreement among theorists that was found in research for this paper. One difficulty with studies concerned with personality variables in the etiology of alcoholism is that in most cases the subjects had been drinking excessively for a long period of time. No distinction can be made in these investigations between traits existing before onset and those which came after and perhaps resulted from drinking.
Schaefer (1954:317) has used factor analysis to determine five personality types. The first is the schizoid type. The second, the normal personality, is found in the person who drinks as a reaction to fear, anxiety, and stress of non-neurotic character. The third, uncontrolled type, shows inability to exercise restraint, accept responsibility, or follow conventions, and resembles the psychopath. The emotionally unstable are over-emotional, moody, and unrestrained. The psychoneurotic exhibits pronounced sexual conflict and feelings of inadequacy.

Manson (1949:5, 77-83) developed a questionnaire which in one study identified alcoholics from non-alcoholics with an accuracy of eighty per cent. Using this test and the Cornell Selectee Index, he found alcoholics significantly higher in neurotic scores than non-alcoholics.

One clinical type with which alcoholism has been associated is the obsessive compulsive. Podolsky (1960:237) says that this type resorts to alcohol to moderate tensions, anxiety, and guilt feelings, and to moderate the pressures of ritualistic behavior and obsessive thoughts. Paster (1948:58) links alcoholism with the psychopathic personality and sees it as a phase in the total seeking of pleasure. Like the psychopath, the alcoholic usually begins to develop his symptoms in adolescence in reaction to the strains of that period and falters under the strain of beginning family and career responsibilities. He demands pleasure continuously, has little sense of reality, and accomplishes nothing worthwhile. He yields to wishful thinking and thus finds perseverance difficult (Buhler and Lefever 1947:259, 197).

Although agreement on personality variables is not a reality, there are a few traits that seem common to alcoholics; at least the frequency with which they appear is impressive. It is the layman's belief that drunkenness is a means of escape, and a number of studies show a trend of this sort in the alcoholic. One of these (Halpern 1946:6, 468-479) indicates that the alcoholic is not able to admit personality inadequacies and must find a passive way of dealing with difficulties by putting the problem outside himself where it can make no demands on him. Schilder (1941:2, 277-292) says that the chronic alcoholic has lived in a state of insecurity from earliest childhood. Intoxication gives him temporary "social security" by making him feel loved and appreciated because of his capacities, attractiveness, and sexual qualities, and makes him willing to give appreciation as well; in other words, he has a sense of normal social capability. Podolsky (1960121, 292-297) says that alcohol smooths over conflict material, guilt, shame, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy, as well as giving an excuse for a social behavior or, on the other hand, permitting outgoing social behavior. To Paster (1948:58) the alcoholic uses drink to lessen sensitivity to pain and induce pleasurable feelings, to avoid frustration and hardship. Bird (1949: 9,532-543) emphasizes that the reality that is feared is not primarily that of the outer world, but the real dangers within the person himself. The anxiety that leads to this desire for escape may well arise from a lack of confidence in one's ability to deal with the world, whether internal or external. Hampton (1953167-83), in developing a questionnaire for drinkers, found that alcoholics rate lower on self-confidence than non-alcoholics, even though the alcoholic subjects in his study had 76.90 per cent of their group in executive, managerial, business, minor supervisory, or skilled manual occupations to the non-alcoholics' 52.41 per cent, and earned $2,000 per year more than their, control group.
Alcoholics show significantly high anxiety and apprehension coupled with low tension tolerance according to a Rorschach study of chronic cases (Buhler 1947:1258). Psychoneurotics were differentiated by their high tension tolerance with anxiety and psychopaths by low tension tolerance with little anxiety. The alcoholic's anxiety seems to result from the loss of control in acute tension situations.

According to Strecker (1941:2, 12-17), drinking has the purpose of regression to a state of lessened responsibility. There seems to be a vital conflict between the needs for passivity and activity, for dependence and independence. Lsansky (1960:21, 314-343 believes that an imbalance of frustration and satisfaction in childhood predisposes the individual to strong dependency needs and weak, inadequate defense mechanisms against these needs, resulting in a dependence independence conflict. Hampton (1951:34, 211-222) found simultaneous feelings of superiority and inferiority and a striving for perfection. Halpern (1946:478-479) saw the alcoholic as unable to admit his inadequacies, interpreting disturbing situations as challenges and driving to prove himself, while all the time desiring a passive role. Kaldegg (1956:17, 608-627), however, found the alcoholic to be passive but lacking in drive and incapacitated in the face of personal difficulties. The passivity is reflected in the alcoholics' leisure time activities (Hampton 1953:76). They show less interest in active sports than non-alcoholics, and prefer reading and playing cards. They rate higher in enjoyment of entertainment, but they are low in a more active social activity, dancing.

The family background, according to Knight (1937:86, 538-548) consists of an over-solicitous mother, opposed by a stern, cold, harsh father. There appears a great inconsistency in discipline and training, which results in the child becoming too dependent upon his mother and afraid of his father. Hampton (1952:26) shows that this family constellation causes the alcoholic to project his hostility upon the world and, in turn, he believes that the world is hostile toward him. The world is identified with the father. Alcohol provides him an opportunity to escape from this hostile world (father) and return to the infant stage of mother dependence, where harm is warded off by a solicitous mother and gratifications are easy, simple, and oral. Other psychoanalytic writers disagree with the above interpretation of the relationship of the family. Simmel (1948:20) wrote that the mother for whom the alcoholic longs really never provided him with any security whatever. "They are mothers who indulged themselves without consideration for the child's needs. Such mothers may overindulge the child during the process of nursing and become tyrannically strict about toilet training and cleanliness... All my alcoholic patients had deeply seated hatred for their mothers... This deep hatred of the alcoholic for his mother is deeply repressed as an impulse to incorporate, to destroy b devouring the mother (Simmel 1948:20)." Bergler (1946:7, 356-359 believes that the alcoholic drinks to show the depriving mother he can get all the non-milk liquid he wants. He drinks also because of the injurious effects on himself, identifying with the mother and filling her with poison. Thus the alcoholic, by his drinking, is able to torture those who care for him, tending to destroy them, and with them, to destroy himself. His addiction, according to Simmel (1948:19), is chronic murder and chronic suicide. This murder and suicide is the alcoholic's wish to return to the womb. To the unconscious, it is a return to Nirvana, pre-existence in the mother's womb, complete oneness with her, where love and hate do not exist.
Alcoholism has been linked by some researchers to homosexuality. White (1956:408) shows that in cases of long standing homosexuality there exist a "...strong connection of some kind between heterosexual interest and anxiety." This might come from the ambivalent attitude toward the mother. Another aspect should be shown also. The homosexual has had difficulty in establishing the father as an ego ideal with which to identify. Mowrer and Mowrer (1945:6, 36-44) discuss how the alcoholic dislikes his father and his brother, who seems to be favored by the father. This family constellation leaves only the mother (and sisters) with whom to identify. Male ego identification becomes very difficult. Tabori, Juliusburger, and Read believe this aspect to be the most important etiological feature of the alcoholic. Read (Hampton 1952:26) says that alcohol is a necessary part of modern civilization. Alcohol intoxication provides a man the opportunity to develop the abnormal homosexual friendships and contacts which he so much desires. Alcohol removes inhibitions and increases sexuality, and every drinking episode is a homosexual experience. Higgins (1953:49, 713-726), citing one case history, gave the family constellation as consisting of a mother regarded as powerful and potentially destructive of man's strength and a father seen as a weakened mace whose main expression of "masculinity" and hostility toward women is defiant drinking. Hewitt (1943:4, 368-386) administered the MMPI to alcoholics and found low scores on the Masculine Feminine scale. His study tends to contradict the above evidence. Yet the greater amount of studies, including Machover, Soloman, Puzzo (1959:20, 505-542), and Schaefer (1954:15, 304-319) indicates a definite correlation between alcoholism and homosexuality, or at least covert homosexuality.

The question arises as to why the alcoholic chooses drinking instead of other flights from reality, i.e. neurotic defenses, drugs, etc, Kohler (1945:25, 565-574) believed that the most important part of the etiology of alcoholism is the suggestive power of drinking fashions promoted by the alcohol industry. Buhler and Lefever (1947:8, 197-260) suggest, "The one quality common to all types of chronic excessive drinkers is their desire for the special kind of release given by alcohol. More definitely then other neurotic or emotional releases, alcohol tends to remove rationality and reality. It seems logical that alcohol should be used mainly by individuals no matter what their predicament who want to get away from a too well functioning rationality." This sense of reality combines with the alcoholic's lack of inner defectiveness to make him feel his goals are not worthwhile, and strong sensitivity enhances his self disapproval, Though we have generally disregarded the physiological aspect of alcoholism it is well to mention here Williams' study (1947:7, 557-587) in regard to the escape mechanism of alcohol. He said that no psychological stress can make an individual an alcoholic unless he had inherited a metabolic pattern which renders him susceptible that it is heredity which explains the differences in craving for certain foods and drugs, and the differences in alcoholism among individuals and races.
III. NAVAJO HISTORY.

It is impossible to trace the Navajo to any point in time earlier than 1541, the date given to a hogan found in Northwest New Mexico (Underhill 1953:95). It is known that they were originally a tribe no larger than any other of the Apache bands. Nor they number more than all the others put together. Underhill (1953:37-38) attributes this growth to the Navajo ability to learn. She says that this flexibility has been the keynote of Navajo life. The People, as they are called, were so adept at taking any opportunity to appropriate a useful part of another culture that they can be called the greatest learners among the American Indians.

In fact, by looking at different parts of the Navajo culture, we can see that it was built to a great extent by assimilation and learning. The People adopted the clothing, probably, of the Paiute and Pueblo Indians on their migration from the North to the Southwest, where skins were scarce. Neither pottery making nor basket weaving was original with the tribe, but was learned from others. The stone house was a product of the association with the Pueblos, as were three vital parts of the Navajo economy, farming, weaving, and sheep raising. The importance of the horse cannot be overestimated, and it came from the Spanish. Though the Navajo had worn silver since the time of the Spanish, it was primarily from the encouragement of traders that the People learned silver smithing as a trade. The existence of various clans of non-Navajo origin among the larger Navajo group attests to the habit of assimilating other people into the tribe. This incorporation doubtless led to many cultural changes (Underhill 1953). It should be noted that it was primarily the material culture that was influenced by other groups. Even after modern contact with the whites, the Navajo retained characteristic ways of dressing and decorating to a large extent. Their morals and religion remained unchanged by cultural contacts and the efforts of the missionaries. Their ceremonial life and social structure, including family organization, remained the same (Kuehnsted 1941:101-105).

With the advent of the horse, the Navajo became a successful raider. Raiding parties were got up by young men who wanted sheep, slaves, and horses, which were needed for acquiring brides. They raided just as a young man today starts a business. Slave raids were also frequently made among the Navajo by the Utes, Apaches, Comanches, and Mexicans (Underhill 1953:115-116, 125). When the United States acquired the area inhabited by the Navajo as a result of the war with Mexico, Kit Carson was assigned the task of subduing the tribe in 1863 (Pollock 1942:67). The once proud people were forced onto a reservation at Fort Summer where, after two hundred years of wild freedom, they were reduced to semi servitude. Without their sheep for food and for weaving yarn, they were forced back into dependence on agriculture. Cold, hunger, and repeated crop failures, along with low morale, were their lot until the conquerors set aside a new reservation in their old country. There their economy became a combination of agriculture and sheep herding (Pollock 1942:15).

With the rapid increase of the sheep stock, the people became comparatively wealthy. At the turn of the century it was apparent to a few Indian agents that over-grazing was becoming a problem, but no action was taken by the government (Pollock 1942). In 1933 there were almost one and a half million sheep, besides horses and goats, on a reservation capable of handling only a half million (Pollock 1942). This situation arose in part due to the encouragement given by
most white traders, missionaries, and government workers during the years from 1870-1928. In 1933 there came a complete reversal in a forced stock reduction, which was carried out without understanding of the psychological or cultural background of the Navajo. Many promises were made by the government to offset the reduction, but the promises were not fulfilled (Pollock 1942). The reduction was inequitable, in that small owners were hurt much more than the wealthy sheep raisers. A second reduction took away the goats, which were shot and left to rot, and thus deprived the Navajo of his source of milk and skins. Later the horse stock was drastically cut, hurting the Indians more in prestige than in any other way, though the three horses left each family were not adequate for some. What had been anxiety, -------fear and bewilderment became hate and a sense of utter defeat (Pollock 1942:141). The Indian Service’s policy was to develop a conservation program for saving the land as a means of saving the people, but the Navajo see only inconsistency in the program since, to them, it stressed the saving of the land regardless of the economic and social cost to the people (Pollock 1942:15).

Poverty has been a general characteristic of the Navajo that remains today. Except for a few brief periods of prosperity in the 1880’s the tribe has been faced with the necessity to make a living from inadequate resources. The land they returned to from Fort Sumner was inferior to the land that was traditionally theirs in the San Juan River area of Northwestern New Mexico. Their former land was taken over by settlers and the Navajo, as a defense, poached on the land and often killed the settler's cattle (Bureau of Indian Affairs;4-5). Increasing population resulted in overgrazing, which caused erosion of the already poor land. Of the fifteen million acres, one million are barren, seven hundred thousand are inaccessible. The climate is described as arid or semiarid, and many portions of the land have little usable vegetation (You Asked About the Navajo: 17) With the loss of sheep, wage work became very important. World War II brought a great many jobs and ameliorated the situation somewhat. Many of the youth enlisted in the armed services, increasing the amount of money available to the people. Another crisis resulted with the end of the war, since the return of Navajo veterans made more jobs necessary just as many wartime jobs were being terminated (You asked About the Navajo). Due to stock reduction in the thirties and the increase of jobs for the Navajos during the war, the social and economic structure of Navajo society underwent many important changes. One of the most important of these was the change from an economy based on agriculture to one based on wage work. Wage work became the backbone of the economy for most of the people, while agriculture became only a supplementary income (Navajo Yearbook 1961:156). Before 1933 fifteen per cent of the Navajo families were large sheepherders deriving nearly all their living from their flocks. Today less than one half of one per cent of the Reservation families own 300 or more sheep; whereas twenty to twenty-two per cent of the Navajo families living on the reservation earn a regular annual income ranging from $1,600 to $15,000 per year, the median being perhaps $4,000. This income is derived from wages received from employment with the Tribe, government, public schools, and private industry, such as uranium mills, pipelines, and gas companies (Navajo Yearbook 1961: 218). All this means a much greater amount of income among the Navajo today; however, this money is widely distributed. "In fact, the sharing of resources with less fortunate kinsmen exerts something of a leveling influence on the family income level of the more affluent segments of the population (Navajo Year Book 1961:220)."

Another important source of income for the handicapped, needy children, and old people is the welfare programs of the individual states. New Mexico's welfare expenditures have risen from $839.50 in 1951 to $68,784 in 1960 (Navajo Yearbook 1961:301). In the experience of one of the authors who worked closely
with the Navajo for a period of four years, this has been a very important source
for many Navajos who have been unable to care for themselves. This assistance not
only takes care of the one it is intended for, but also others in the family.

One more aspect in the changing Navajo economy needs to be mentioned. The Navajo lands were found to be rich in many minerals and petroleum. From 1935-1960 about $115,000,000 were received from this source. In 1957 alone a total of $35,500,000 was received (Navajo Yearbook 1961:268-269). The royalties do not go to the individual Navajos, except in cases of private land ownership, but are maintained and administered by the Tribal Council, giving increased importance to the Council and greater unity to the Tribe. This money is being used for the general betterment of the Tribe, with special emphasis on economic development (Navajo Yearbook 1961:182).

IV. NAVAJO CULTURE AND PROBLEMS.

A. Alcoholism.

The alcohol problem among the Navajo is longstanding. Navajo Agent Bennet complained in 1880 that several traders at nearby trading posts were selling whiskey "of the vilest description" and giving it to the Navajo in open violation of the law (Navajo yearbook 1961:275). In 1802 the United States Government gave the president of the United States the power to ban all liquor traffic to Indians. In 1832 a law was passed that made the sale of liquor to all Indians a crime. In 1953 this law was repealed. New Mexico and Arizona soon followed suit. In the repealing of these laws the option was still left to each Indian tribe to keep liquor off its respective reservation. Those white people interested in the repeal of the liquor law felt that with time and experience, excessive use of alcohol would abate and be no more of a problem than is found outside the Indian country (Navajo Yearbook 1961: 276). It was also argued that one could not prevent alcohol from being sold surreptitiously to the Navajo anyway. After seeing the results of the open liquor law one trader, who had voted for the repeal, told one of the authors that he was appalled at the havoc that it has made among the Navajo. The records of the Navajo police and Navajo courts show that the amount of crime due to drinking has increased considerably. In 1941 about fifty per cent of the crimes that came to the attention of the courts on the Reservation had to do with alcohol. In comparison, 79.5 per cent of all cases that were tried in the Tribal Courts in 1958 were due to the alcohol problem. These cases increased to 85.9 per cent in 1959 and 84.3 per cent in 1960 (Navajo Yearbook 1961:278-279). It should be noted that this increase is partly due to the improved effectiveness of the Navajo police.- Nevertheless, this problem is a costly one to the national population and to the Navajo people (Navajo Yearbook 1961:279). Almost all crimes of violence on the Navajo Reservation are committed under the influence of alcohol (Navajo Yearbook 1961:277), and in the absence of alcohol they are unusual (Navajo Yearbook 1961:273).

Neither society nor the individual is able to control the problem. If, according to Bales (1946:482), the society had been different and there had not been such severe needs for adjustment, or if there had been something other than alcohol offered as a means of satisfying needs, the problem may not have arisen. The Navajo culture can now be examined for ways in which it brings about these needs for adjustment and makes other means of satisfaction ineffective.
B. Subsistence anxiety.

It has been shown previously in this paper that Horton found subsistence anxiety a common problem in the cultures in which drinking was characteristically excessive. The brief history showed that for the most of the past century the Navajo have lived in poverty. As late as 1940 mere subsistence was a pressing problem, and the people were less nearly self-supporting than formerly (Hulsizer 1940). As was also indicated in the history, the situation has greatly improved, especially during the last ten years, due to wage work and increasing concern of government and charitable agencies and the Indians themselves, through their Tribal Council. At this time it cannot be said that the People suffer realistically from subsistence anxiety, but poverty has been dominant in their history and has touched the early lives of those who are now young adults. One of the authors has observed that they are even now generally anxious about their economic wellbeing.

Economic anxiety is exacerbated by contact with white culture. The traditional Navajo, though enjoined to work hard in order to accumulate property, was expected not to get too rich, but to share with his relatives (Hobson 1954:17). Those who feel the effects of acculturation are now becoming interested in washing machines, radios, sewing machines, enameled stoves, and the white man's style of house (Shukry 1954:155). Though the acquisition of these luxuries is becoming more nearly possible through wage work, the men often handle money poorly and cause family hardship. The women are eager for the men to do wage work, but the men now hold the purse strings, and the women sometimes have to ask permission before buying even personal belongings such as clothing. When working elsewhere, the men sometimes do not send money home for months, and the women have to depend on loans from the traders or help from others. There is a good deal of alarm about the man's habits, and old men, women, traders, government officials, and the wage earners themselves deplore the situation (Shukry 1954:160-164). Cars and liquor figure high in reports of consumption habits of Navajo men. Besides the cost of liquor, the men have the expense of fines (Shukry 1954:166-169). Apparently the men have not accustomed themselves to a monetary economy or responsibility to wife and children, which under the matriarchal system belonged to the maternal brother. It is significant that Kluckhohn and Leighton (1947:164) found Navajo children around 1947 were preoccupied with gain and loss of property, even more than children in all other tribes tested and even more than the middle-western white children.

C. Acculturation.

Most of the disruption seen among the Navajo can be attributed to a cultural stress placed upon them by their contact with the white man over a period of the last one hundred years. Throughout their history, the People have been, as mentioned, adept at incorporating material aspects of the cultures with which they came in contact. However, they were always able to keep their value System and social organization intact, indicating the strength of their cultural system. They have not fared so well with the white man. Unlike the previous cultures, his material culture cannot be copied or learned. To have what the white man has, the Indian must imitate the white man himself and become a part of his system. To exist at all, the Navajo must adapt himself considerably to both material and nonmaterial aspects of this larger culture, for his own has now been strangled by
a growing population, restriction to a small land area, the inadequacy of his old economy, and resulting dependency on the white man's economy. Manuelito, the great Navajo war chief who came nearer than any other to unifying his people, recognized as early as the latter part of the nineteenth century the inevitability of change and the means of achieving it:

"My Grandchild, the whites have many things which we Navahos need. But use cannot get them. It is as though the whites were in a grassy canyon and there they have wagons, plows, and plenty of food. We Navahos are upon the dry mesa. We can hear them talking but we cannot get to them. My grandchild, education is the ladder. Tell our people to take it (Underhill 1953:4)

Too much emphasis cannot be given to the importance of this change from one cultural system to another. Kluckhohn and Leighton (1951:112) summarize the problem bests:

"Most of the People today who have not left the Navajo country permanently live in a world which is neither white nor Navajo in the traditional sense, a world where values are shifting and where rules of conduct are in a state of flux. Most of the heavy stresses and pressures for readjustment to white ways have come to the bilingual generation of Navajos, particularly the school children; yet even those who speak no English cannot escape all the frustration and conflict introduced by the impact with white society. At the very least, they are disturbed to see their children adopting non-Navajo ways, and indeed they see their whole world dissolving around them."

They go on to explain that the Navajos are so confused by the conflict between the values of their elders and their white models that they tend to reject the problem of morality, in the widest sense, as insoluble or meaningless. The result is only the principle of expediency to guide conduct, and without generally accepted standards of behavior to give dependability in personal relations, social disorganization is inevitable (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951:217). Though the Navajos realize that education is the only means of escape from a dying culture into the stronger one on which they now must depend, not only for a livelihood but for social structure, schooling alarmingly speeds up the breakdown, even separating children from parents. On their return from school, children are dissatisfied with the food, living conditions, and traditional behavior, and may threaten to renounce the Navajo way (Shukry 1954:201-202); the college graduate has broken the most intimate ties with his own people (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951:91). The Navajos are accepting the inevitable and are sending their children to school, as well as giving financial aid to college and graduate students through tribal funds (Navajo Yearbook 1958 s 163-164).

It is obvious that acculturation is necessary, and parents encourage their children to embrace the white ways, though they are hurt by the children's rejection of the old ways (Shukry 1954: 203-204. The young person finds himself pressured to retain his family and tribal identity and at the same time to become a white man (Navajo Yearbook 1961:535).

The Navajo has a compulsive desire to restore lost harmony by a new approach to changed conditions of life. The solution is to harmonize the two cultures by holding on to the old while making the transition to the new (Condie 1958:47, 62). But more contact with the white ways leads to greater dissatisfaction with tradition, and some Protestant schools; in particular, have followed a policy of exterminating the native culture (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951: 82). If a Navajo
succumbs to the lure of the conveniences and advantages he has taken for granted while in school and tries to move into the white domain, he finds criticism from either side (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951:113). Navajo veterans found themselves attracted to white values and patterns, but rejected as social inferiors (Vogt 1951:102). The educated adults find themselves punished for exhibiting skills which place them in competition with whites, and for which they were rewarded as school children. They are rejected from the society for which they have sacrificed their culture to enter and often react with an attempted retreat, abandonment of moral codes, or a working but flat and empty adjustment (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951:114). Navajos who accept the white way are often characterized by few effective ties with other people. Most of those who retain Navajo values tend to have close and satisfying relationships with other Navajos (Vogt 1951:106). "...The result is that Navajos are subjected to pressures for acculturation, on the one hand, and then not permitted to participate fully in the societies to whose patterns they have become acculturated (Vogt 1951:27)."

To fully appreciate the significance for the individual of the disorganization caused by acculturation, it would be well to consider particular values of the Navajo and the corresponding white values which he must accept if he is to make the transition. Something has already been said about the Navajo loss of standards. The white teachers tell the Indian school child what he does is all right if his conscience is clear. The Navajo concept of conscience does not involve standards built up within the person, but considerations of what follows certain actions; stealing is emphasized less than getting caught (Leighton and Kluckhohn 1947: 42), and an action condemned as wrong in our society may be judged solely on the merits of its effect (Condie 1958:65-66). Since the Navajo is too old to develop a conscience when in school, he is left without much restraint except the desire to please his teachers. If interest is lost in them, the restraint is likewise lost (Leighton and Kluckhohn 1947:171).

White emphasis on individualism has had an undesirable effect on traditional Navajo cooperativeness. The custom has been that they depend upon each other for help, advice and sharing of good and bad fortune (Leighton and Kluckhohn 1947:6). The non-Indian is generally oblivious to this important difference the high degree to which the traditional Navajo is controlled by his society (Condie 1958:90). Personal excellence as opposed to personal success is emphasized in competition (Vogt 1951:38). The adoption of individualism leads to the failure of collective and cooperative action, since there is not the simultaneous development of personal responsibility (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951:236).

The Navajo attitude toward work comes into conflict with that of white society. The white man values work. The Navajo does not value industry in itself but only for what it produces, and works only as much as is necessary (Vogt 1951:36). A Navajo woman married to a Pueblo said, "Pueblos always have to work hard on their farms. If I had a Navajo husband, it would be different; he would go picking pinyons with us. The Navajos they just take it easy (Vogt 1951120)."

D. Repressed Hostility.

Earlier in the discussion it was mentioned that Horton found aggression anxiety related to heavy drinking. There is evidence that there is a large amount of repressed hostility among the Navajos. One important source of this hostility is the family. The traditional Navajos have the necessity of sharing each other's good and bad fortune. The close cooperation and interdependence make it necessary
to conceal any antagonisms that develop, and they are rarely expressed (Leighton and Kluckhohn 1947:6). Hostile feelings may not even become conscious, but they may result in chronic anxieties. The largely suppressed and repressed tensions between brother and sister are indicated in the many tales and myths in which the pursuer of a were animal finds that it is really his own brother or sister (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951:136, 169-170). Not only can the Navajo not show any hostility he might feel toward other members of the family, but he has also learned through unpleasant experiences that it is fruitless to behave aggressively toward whites (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951:169-170). Drinking does afford some release through its function as a super-ego solvent, allowing the direct expression of aggression without strong condemnation (Kluckhohn 1944:52-54).

"An uneasy folk is an aggressive folk (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951:169)." Navajos live lives fraught with anxiety due to an unstable economy, the threat of ill health, and encroachment by the white man with resulting competition, and with competition and conflict between two societies. Navajos experience feelings of personal insecurity, resulting in the manifestation of hostilities toward others. But there are few socially legitimate hostilities in the culture. The witch is not only an appropriate object for the displacement of hostility, but is considered by the society to be the proper object. Witchcraft accusations have increased in troubled times, as just after the subjugation of the Navajos, amid land problems, and during disputes with the Navajo Service. There is good, but not conclusive, evidence that the same is related to white pressure, though crowding may be a factor in such cases. Further evidence of the function of belief in witchcraft as a release to aggression is found in the fact that the victim of the initiation of a witch in Navajo tales is a sibling; and Navajo child-rearing engenders sibling rivalry (Kluckhohn 1944:50-60). During the 1940's, the peyote and other religious cults flourished with anti-white associations in the Shiprock area.

Witchcraft talk was common and there was marked uneasiness, probably the result of the kind of cultural change being experienced, which found emotional outlets in religious cults, oppositions to the government, and in the expression of aggression through witchcraft and numerous quarrels (Leighton and Kluckhohn 1947:125). The belief in witchcraft, ghosts, and witches will be among the last values to leave the acculturated Navajo, because of its relation to psychological tensions (Vogt 1951: 114).

E. General Anxiety.

The presence of extreme anxiety in the Navajo culture is now obvious, and the individual's responses and defenses can be discussed. Vogt (1951:106-107) enumerates four typical responses to acculturation anxiety: an attempt to be as much like whites as possible; psychological escape through alcohol; withdrawal into a personal "shell of defense"; an intensified return to Navajo values. Kluckhohn and Leighton (1951:113-114) list the following reactions: focusing energies on becoming as like whites as possible; becoming followers of vocal leaders; dissipating hostility in factional quarrels or family fights, in indirect hostilities toward whites, through internalization and depression, and in aggression toward witches; flight, either physically, or through alcohol, narcotics, and sex; intensified participation in the native religion or new cults. The reason a person selects a particular reaction depends, according to Vogt (1951:107-108), on his stage of transition between the two cultures. The
person who is not closely integrated in one of the cultures but hovers in the "no man's land" between, lout is closer to the white value side, tends to select psychological escape the one who has retained many of the Navajo values will more likely find refuge in those values in times of stress. The native culture itself emphasizes that the universe is full of dangers, and there is strong preoccupation with threats to security. "One of the most frequent types of responses to threatening situations, especially in those involving whites, is cane of 'passivity' (Vogt 1951:115)." Dittman (1957:642-649) found the Navajos he studied reacting to social and economic stresses by exploring a wide range of adaptive devices, including the use of alcohol, becoming acculturated, heavy indulgence in sex activities, and intensification of traditional religious activities. Shukry (1954:249) reported that women reacted to the problems of acculturation boredom, restlessness, and economic insecurity by escape through sex and alcohol. There seems to be a general trend among both young and old to forsake ambition and inner directiveness on the premise that their efforts will no longer be rewarded (Pollock 1942:139, 167).

F.  Family Dynamics.

Much has been said in theoretical treatments of alcoholism about the importance of the family. A close look at the Navajo family, both traditional and acculturated, is revealing. The mother in the traditional family has certain advantages that add up to a degree of domination. The mother owns the family property, and lineage and residence are matrilocal. The women have an independent and ready income through weaving and sheepherding. The woman's importance in the society is reflected in the emphasis on her supremacy in the Blessing Way Ceremony and in the naming of the directions after mythological goddesses. The woman has more contact with the children than the man, since he is rather mobile and is away from home much of the time. He is more an instructor and affectionate companion than a disciplinarian for his sons, while the mother and her brothers are responsible for the discipline of the children (Kluckhohn and Leighton 1951:56) (Shukry 1954:39 -128). Though they lack an identity figure in the father, and the mother is dominant in family affairs, the children have a male identity figure in the maternal uncle. The scene is changing now as acculturation increases and the biological family is becoming more important than the extended family. This has deprived the children of the paternal influence of the uncle, and yet the father has not taken over the disciplinary function (Shukry 1954:128, 199).

Despite the importance of the woman, it seems that the masculine attitude toward her is ambiguous. In the myths, women are characterized as either completely good or completely bad. The women in society are considered the basis of stability, and a man does not make disparaging remarks about female relatives. But dreams, the remarks of a drunk man, or the aggression shown by a man toward his wife or sister when a quarrel does occur make it clear that the evil women of myths represent suppressed attitudes toward women. It is suggested that the negative attitudes arise from the mother's early indulgence of the infant and later abrupt weaning (Shukry 1954:137-138). Although psychoanalytic standards would lead to the prediction that the indulged Navajo child would become a secure and confident adult, the adult is actually moody and worrying, poorly integrated, lacking in personal autonomy, and dominated by public opinion. This unexpected development is explained in part by the difficult weaning or the arrival of a new baby, at which time the child is expected to do simple chores, control elimination, and
settle for the more restricting care of an older sister or grandmother (Leighton and Kluckhohn 1947:34-37, 111).

Family disorganization is frequently a problem among the Navajo. In a study carried out in the 1940's in the Ramah region, it was found that only four out of ten children lived from birth to marriage with their own parents. Both parents were often lost due to high mortality. If a man loses his wife and remarries, he surrenders the children to the maternal family (at least in the traditional system), who will give them for adoption if support is impossible (Leighton and Kluckhohn 1947:46). Though the health situation is improving, it does not follow that the problem is near solution.

Acculturated women tend to become dissatisfied with home life in the hogan according to Shukry (1954:140-147, 212-214, 245). The women at Fruitland were idle, restless, and bored; they disliked their household work and wanted modern appliances. The children were regarded as a burden and usurpers of the mother's freedom. Some of the women desired to have no more children and preferred wage employment to household duties. Disorganization was increased by the pattern of separate recreation for the man and his wife, due to the care of the children, disposition of the husband, and differing levels of acculturation. The most frequent cause of tension between spouses was drunkenness, especially in the husband.

In the same study, the school had assumed primary responsibility for training the children. On their return home, the children were often dissatisfied with the food, living conditions, and behavior, and sometimes threatened to renounce the Navajo way. Navajo young people are becoming more rebellious toward the families. The young people are tending to marry by choice, and the parents have no control, financially or legally, of the choice (Shukry 1954: 201-219).

If sibling position is important in any society, it should certainly be so among the Navajo, due to the rejection and increased demands the child experiences at the birth of a new baby. Children who are actually or psychologically last-born "tend to be more stable, more secure, less suspicious, generally 'happier' (Leighton and Kluckhohn 1947:37)." The younger tend to be less educated and less acculturated, since they have to take charge of sheepherding when their older siblings enter school. If a child comes from a large extended family, he is likely to be less influenced by acculturation, since this type of family tends to perpetuate the traditional patterns through a more thorough orientation of the individual (Vogt 1951:91).

V. CONCLUSION AND HYPOTHESES.

Students of the Navajo are in agreement that acculturation and concern with subsistence, two closely related aspects of the tribal culture, produce a high level of anxiety within the Tribe. As shown earlier in the paper, both theorists on cultural drinking and writers on the Navajo have pointed out the relationship between these two types of anxiety and excessive drinking in a society. It should be cautioned that cultural variables are not considered to function independently of the individual; on the contrary, they have no effect separate from their manifestation in individuals. It is primarily personality variables that are
culturally induced, or at least more or less widespread in the culture, with which this paper is concerned. It should also be made clear that the authors do not consider the variables outlined here to be the only variables, nor the only types of variables operating in alcoholism.

Among the personality variables which theory would suggest is repressed hostility. It has not been difficult to find evidence of repressed hostility in the form of belief in witchcraft, as well as in the means of expression and conditions under which hostility is expressed behaviorally. Considerable emphasis has been given to widespread stress among the Navajo which logically would contribute to high anxiety in the individual. This, if coupled with the low tension tolerance one would expect from frequent frustration, would lead to escapism and strengthen the already existing tendency toward passivity. As the Navajo loses his ability to find coherence and harmony in his environment through traditional belief patterns, and if he possesses the high degree of realism and sensitivity and the lack of inner directiveness found in alcoholics, he would conceivably suffer from an extreme lack of confidence in his ability to deal with the environment and a concomitant need for escape. As the Navajo society has ceased to offer psychological satisfactions, many members have turned to a social behavior, and theorists often agree that alcohol serves to permit this type of release. Finally, though no specific evidence was found for a general dependence independence conflict, it would be predicted from the information presented on Navajo child-rearing practices.

The information gathered during the research for this paper suggests certain hypotheses which could be tested in the field by comparing a group of alcoholic Navajos with a group of non-alcoholic Navajos, matched for location, thus controlling to some extent the availability of alcohol. In a comparison of these two groups, it is predicted that in the alcoholic group there will be found:

I. A higher level of acculturation anxiety, associated with:

A. A higher degree of ambivalence toward the whites, involving suspicion and covert or overt hostility, along with the desire to integrate with white society.

B. Ambivalence toward the old culture.

C. An intermediate level of education, between the more closely Navajo-oriented non-alcoholics and the more closely white-oriented non-alcoholics.

D. Less effective identity with one or the other of the cultures, with, among other characteristics, less understanding of the Navajo culture than the Navajo oriented non-alcoholic’s and less understanding of the white culture than the white oriented non-alcoholics.

E. An intermediate level of occupation and income, between the Navajo oriented non-alcoholics and the white oriented non-alcoholics.
II. More intense subsistence or economic anxiety, shown in:

A. More concern with subsistence.
B. A higher concern with obtaining luxuries and conveniences.

III. More anxiety, in general, manifest in:

A. A higher level of general undirected anxiety.
B. Higher anxiety about the supernatural, conceivably among Christian converts and peyote cultists as well as among believers in the traditional religion and witchcraft.
C. A higher incidence of passive reaction to stressful situations.

IV. Certain family related variables, including

A. Fewer individuals who are actually or psychologically last-born.
B. A greater incidence or degree of dependence independence conflict.
C. More repressed hostility involving family members.
D. A higher incidence or degree of husband orientation in the family organization.
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