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MAASAW: PROFILE OF A HOPI GOD

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TEXT 41

As a symbolic token of the land covenant between Maasaw and the Hopi, the god had Spider Woman fashion two *owatutuveni*, literally "stones with multiple markings." The tablets are said to indicate, among other things, the dimensions of the land allocated to the Hopi.

TEXT 42

Paasat pu' yaw pumuy oovi nankwusaniqw paasat pu' yaw pay i' piw yep kiy'taqa, maasaw, put kookyangwso'wuutit paas piw pan put owatutuvenit pepeq maskyatoyna. Noq pu' yaw oovi i' kookyangwso'wuuti put sukw kwusuuqe pu' pam yaw hiita ang penta. Pu' pam yukuuqe pu' pam piw sukwat anga'. Yantit pu' yaw pam put pumuy mömuy amutpipo hoyokna. Paasat pu' yaw puma maasawuy amum aw hikwsuqw pu' yaw pam ang paki. Pay pi hiita pi ang peena. Niikyangw pam hapi yaw yep it tuuwaqatsit pas soosok tungwaniy'ta.
Hiisaq i' yep tuuwaqatsi payutumpoq qalawtaqat put yaw pam tu'awiy'ta.

As the people were about to start forth on their migration, Maasaw entrusted Old Spider Woman with two stone tablets. Old Spider Woman took the first and drew something on it. With the second she did the same thing. Then she nudged the two tablets in front of her grand-children, who together with Maasaw breathed upon them. As a result, her inscriptions were etched into the stone. What exactly was drawn on the stones is not known. But their markings are said to describe the land in its entirety. They delineate the dimensions all the way to the edge of the sea.

The number of tablets reportedly given to the Hopi by Maasaw varies from one informant to another. Waters speaks of four tablets, of which one was given to the Kookop clan and three to the Bear clan. One of the Bear clan tablets is adorned along its edge with two snakes reputed to symbolize "the two rivers that would mark the boundaries of the

people's land"[2] (1963:32). Text 43 once more confirms the significance of the tablets which are held extremely sacred.

TEXT 43

Noq pu' yaw antsa itam pep put owatutuvenit makiwyaqw pu' yaw pam put aw lavayti, "Ta'ay, yep hapi nu' umuy it tuuwaqatsit maqa. Haqami qalawtaqat nu' put umuy maqa. Put hapi nu' yep umuy mavoktoyna. Aqwhaqami ima yep uutim kurukmaqw pumuy hapi um yep timuy'kyangw paas aqwhaqami tsaamiy'mani. Lolmat ang um tsaamiy'mani. Antsa yokvaqw himu aniwtiqw put uma noonoptiwiskyaakyangw aqwhaqami wuyomiq umuutimuy amumum umuuqatsiy ö'qalyani. Sinom wuutaqtokvantiwni, so'wuutiharkutokvantiwni."

Yan yaw pam put hopit öqalaqw pu' yaw pam put owatutuvenit mavokoy'taqa maasawuy aw pangqawu, "Kur antsa'ay. Is kwakwhay. Niikyangw yaapiy hapi itam ung nay'kyaakyangw antsa panhaqam yesni."

Having relinquished possession of the stone tablet to the Hopi, Maasaw said to its keeper, "All right, I've granted you ownership of this earth. It's yours as far as it extends. That's what I've placed in your arms by giving you this tablet.[3] Once your children have multiplied throughout this land lead them with care. Guide them in goodness. When it rains and crops grow, strive in life for old age as you sustain yourselves with food. People are to die in their sleep as old men and as old women."

Thus Maasaw encouraged and reassured the Hopi, whereupon the keeper of the tablet replied, "Thank you very much, indeed. From this time on we'll think of you as our father as we live."

[2]For pictorial representations of both sides of these four tablets see Waters (1963: 32-33). The two snakes supposedly signify the Colorado and Rio Grande Rivers (Waters 1963: 32). In the *Hopi Hearings* only one snake is mentioned and said to symbolize "the guarding of this land and life. As long as we remain fast and adhere to the teachings of the tablet the Snake will hold back the punishment" (1955: 55).

[3]An early land reference in conjunction with the tablet is found in Wallis: "Maasaw gave this story inscribed on a stone, to the Hopi. He said: 'The whole earth is mine. As long as you keep this, it all belongs to you' " (1936: 16).

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Prior to the Hopi embarking on their migrations Maasaw, in a farewell speech, emphasized that the land belongs to all people, not just to the Hopi. Furthermore, they were told never to part with it.

TEXT 44

Pu' yaw pam maasaw imuy hopiituy mongwiyamuy aw pangqawu, "Ta'ay," yaw aw kita, "yuk hapi uma pu' itutskway aw nöngakqe yep hapi uma oovi yaapiy yesni. Noq uma pew it itutskway aw yayvaniqat nu' nakwhay. Pu' i' hapi yep soosokmuy sinmuy himu'amu. Qa hopitsa i' tutskwa'ata. Uma hapi qa naanap hinkyaakyangw aqwhaqami umuuhopiqatsiy ang hintsakwise' putakw uma nayesniy'yungwniy. Nen uma wuuyavo yesni," yaw pam maasaw put aw kita. Pu' yaw pam piw pangqawu, "Niikyangw uma hapi it tutskwat qa hisat yep yuuyuynani. Uma hapi yep it umuututskway pas qa hakiy aw no'ayaniy. Uma pas qa hakiy maqayani. Qa hakiy uma aw huyayani. Uma hapi it angqw nitkyalalwani. Put uma yuy'kyaakyangw yesni. Kur uma hisat hakiy it aw huyayanik pay uma paasat kur hiita ang natwanlalwani. Naat hapi umumi naanangk ökiwkyaakyangw son naat umumi qa unaheptotani." Paas yaw it yantaqat pam maasaw put aw piw enang tutaptat pu' yaw pumuy maatavi.

With that Maasaw turned to the leader of the Hopi. "Well then," he said, "now that you've emerged into my world, you'll live here from now on. I gave you permission to come up to my land. But this land belongs to all people. It's not the sole possession of the Hopi. For the time to come make sure you lead a constructive life. Practice the gentle ways of your culture. By these means you will thrive and enjoy a long future. And," added Maasaw, "never ever disturb this land. Do not cede your land to anyone; don't ever give it away. Above all, don't sell it to anybody. After all, it is to provide your nourishment. Hold this land dear like a mother as long as you live. If you sell it you will no longer reap crops. Be prepared: one after another people will approach you and put you to the test in this matter."[4] After these detailed instructions to the leader, Maasaw removed himself from the Hopi.

[4]As intimated in the *Hopi Hearings,* Maasaw especially warned the Hopi against the land-hungry White man. "The Hopi people were further warned that the white man, as he would come moving in this direction, he would claim every piece of land over which he went including the trees, rocks and everything under it. We were to watch. We were not to become confused. He also said they will come and ask for land and if you give them a small piece of land and it is given to them they will ask for more, for this particular people is a very clever and scheming people. Do not become bewildered or confused. Hold on to your land holdings which have been given to you. They have been given to you and therefore are yours. Don't give up the land. Above all, hold on to your tradition which is grounded in this land. If once you give your land, your tradition will begin to dry up and lose its value" (1955: 87).

Following their migratory treks across the continent, the various Hopi clans slowly but surely convened on Maasaw's land as commanded by the god. Once again the Hopi met Maasaw face to face. The encounter with the god varied considerably, depending on clan tradition. Invariably, however, he gave the Hopi permission to settle on his land.

The First Mesa Snake clan, in an etiological legend explaining how it obtained this permission, tells of the god appearing "in a horrible shape" with "blood all over his body" to test their courage. "When he got close they were scared to death and fell on the ground. But the leader did not fall, because he had looked at this thing before and he was the only one who didn't get scared and didn't fall. So, after this happened he went over to where this leader was sitting, and in order to scare him he went to the leader and put his arms around him, and in order to really scare him he has his way of making a sound, but the leader did not get scared, so this thing that approached him felt of his pulse from the back and the front. When people are scared, the heart beats faster, but this man was calm and this thing looked him in the eye. He saw that there was a black mark away from both of his eyes. He said, 'No wonder. You are a snake. That is why you didn't get scared.' By that remark he meant that he had a strong heart. 'Because you didn't get scared, you have got the best of me. I will have to forfeit the land that I call my own" (*Hopi Hearings* 1955:340-41).[5]

The legendary encounter between Maasaw and the Hopi at Orayvi lacked all the dramatic aspects of the one that occurred at Walpi. Again, there are conflicting traditions as to how the meeting came about. One rendition of the story focuses on Matsito, the Bear clan leader from

[5]Compare also Stephen (1939: 204), where the same episode is narrated. "You and your people are strong of heart. Look in the valleys, the rocks, and the woods, and you will find my footsteps there. All this is mine, but by your courage you have won it. All this I give you, all this is yours forever, because you met me and were not afraid."

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