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The reconstitutive power of Wovoka's prophetic discourse: A rhetorical history of the 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet

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THE RECONSTITUTIVE POWER OF WOVOKA'S PROPHETIC DISCOURSE:
A RHETORICAL HISTORY OF THE 1890 GHOST DANCE PROPHET

by

Alexander David May

Bachelor of Science
Southern Utah University
2002

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the

**Master of Arts Degree in Communication Studies
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Greenspun College of Urban Affairs**

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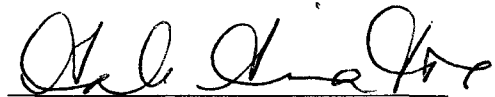
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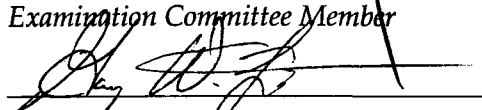
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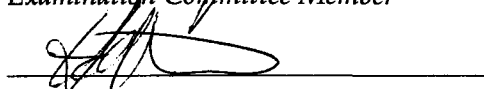
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ABSTRACT

The Reconstitutive Power of Wovoka's Prophetic Discourse: A Rhetorical History of the 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet

by

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The tremendous influence of Wovoka, or Jack Wilson as he was commonly known, was manifested through his message of peace and renewal. The Ghost Dance Prophet of 1890 outlined a new way of life for "his people" which included every native nation, not just the Paiute. Delegations that came to hear Wovoka speak and letters he sent to the faithful spread the tenets of the religion among the indigenous people. Wovoka's rhetorical history illustrates the interplay of first persona, substantive message, and second persona as a means of transforming an audience. In addition, the parallels between the Paiute Prophet's discourse and the prophets that preceded him, both Native American and Christian demonstrate the authoritative power derived from positioning oneself as the mouthpiece of God.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Anthropologist Raymond J. DeMallie wrote that the “uniqueness and the strength of Native American cultures is rooted in their religions” and that it is this deep rooted tradition in religion that has made it possible for Native Americans to sustain themselves against the onslaught of upheaval that has been forced upon them since the arrival of the Europeans on the American continent. DeMallie goes on to say that the list of Native American prophets who have preached to the tribes is long and their teachings have survived the five centuries of white occupation but none of them is “more famous than the most recent of native prophets, the Paiute religious leader Wovoka” (xv).

The tremendous influence of Wovoka, or Jack Wilson as he was commonly known, was manifested through his message of peace and renewal. The Ghost Dance of 1890 outlined a new way of life for “his people” which included every native nation, not just the Paiute. Delegations that came to hear Wovoka speak and letters he sent to the faithful spread the tenets of the religion among the indigenous people. The Paiute Prophet’s discourse is an illustration of the tradition followed by the prophets that preceded him and emulates the apostolic form used by the Apostle Paul. Beyond the hybrid

nature of Wovoka's message lies the most compelling aspect of his rhetoric, which was its ability to transform his audience.

In his book Wovoka and the Ghost Dance, Michael Hittman indicates that "[s]ince he [Wovoka] neither read nor wrote, there are no personal diaries or journals that lie hidden awaiting the research efforts or future scholars" (2). For this reason, this exploration of Wovoka's rhetoric will rely on what has been said about the Paiute Prophet. Bruce E. Gronbeck notes that rhetorical history is "any examination of discourse or rhetors which essentially or primarily is extrinsic" and that the analysis "finds most of its confirming materials outside a rhetorical artifact" (310-311). This approach, according to Gronbeck, can yield a number of conclusions. Among these, he contends that it is possible to reveal the subject's background and its "effects upon a mature career" (131). In addition, Gronbeck indicates that it is also possible to illuminate the situation contexts and "their influences upon message-reception" (131). Gronbeck postulates that the discoveries of such an approach cast conclusions in terms of *rhetorical laws*, which in turn can be blended with those from studies carried forward by other specialized historians, then this analyst [the rhetorical historian] may well be contributing generally to the complete history of human events. Ultimately, such studies will help answer questions concerning the roles of rhetors and of discourse as cause among all other causes precipitating historical effects and processes broadly conceived. (313)

According to Gronbeck, rhetorical histories are conceptually “the study of historical effects of rhetorical discourse” (310). The effects of the rhetorical discourse and their analysis have the ability to “describe, explain, account for, and judge a rhetorical artifact or discourser principally by references to the ‘real’ world outside symbolic manipulations, texts, and subjective feelings about eloquence” (311). Therefore, a construction of Wovoka’s rhetorical history will allow for an analysis of the artifact or text without the interference of symbolic or subjective manipulation of the text on the part of the scholar. While this research does not claim to offer an objective view of Wovoka’s discourse, this approach does allow for the varying views of the Paiute Prophet to come together in a depiction of his rhetorical career.

In his review of Kathleen Turner’s book, Doing Rhetorical History, Thomas Burkholder notes the importance of rhetorical history research contributing to the advancement of the discipline, and our understanding of how human symbol use can “influence belief, attitude, value, and behavior and to illuminate the role of human symbol use in history” (Burkholder 298). Viewing the history of Wovoka, from a rhetorical perspective will indeed contribute to our understanding of communication and the ability of a rhetor to transform an audience.

While the rich historical data pertaining to Wovoka contributes to our understanding of his life and the context from which he emerged, there is yet to be a comprehensive analysis of his rhetoric and its power. The 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet presented a message of hope and renewal, influenced by

Christian faith, in a manner familiar to the Native American. Wovoka presented a dogma using a recognizable story with which his audience wanted to participate. Through a construction of Wovoka's rhetorical career, this research will reveal the transforming capabilities of his discourse and its ability to garner influence among his audience.

Chapter two will offer a treatment of the prophets that preceded Wovoka as well as offer an understanding of his unique upbringing and the historical situation from which he emerged. In doing so, this chapter will provide answers to fundamental questions regarding who he was, what his potential influences were, and an understanding of Wovoka's rhetorical situation. It is important to offer insight into his upbringing and the state of affairs concerning indigenous peoples because it was the deprivation of the Native American culture, resulting from Euro-American expansion that motivated Wovoka to offer his message of hope. An appropriate analysis of a rhetor's words and actions cannot be offered "without understanding the historical context in which they occur" (Campbell and Burkholder 49).

Chapter three formulates the theoretical lens through which to view Wovoka's rhetorical history. The ability of the Paiute Prophet's rhetoric to change his audience finds clarification and understanding in John C. Hammerback and Richard J. Jensen's model for analyzing Frederick J. Antczak's conception of reconstitutive rhetoric. Following a brief discussion of Antczak's work, this chapter will explain Hammerback and Jensen's model, which illustrates how the interplay of *first persona*, *substantive message*, and

second persona has the ability to affect change in an audience. In addition to Wovoka's words and actions is a surviving text originating from the Paiute Prophet himself. Because of its striking parallels to the Pauline Epistle form and its importance to understanding the rhetorical history of Wovoka chapter three will also construct a theoretical perspective based on Malinda Snow's study of Martin Luther King's "Letter From Birmingham Jail." This theoretical base will allow for an understanding of the reconstitutive power of Wovoka's rhetoric as well as demonstrate the potential for influence derived from speaking as the mouthpiece of God.

Chapter four will draw on the historical data available, including historical accounts, interviews, and James Mooney's recreation of Wovoka's letter to tribal delegations. Wovoka's rhetorical career will be the object of analysis for this thesis and will be framed by the theoretical perspective offered in chapter three. Wovoka's aim was to bring about fundamental change in his audience and he set out to do this through the presentation of the message of peace he received from God. Through his heritage, reputation, and appearance Wovoka obtained a position of influence among his audience from which he could present his Ghost Dance. The Paiute prophet personified the message, which he presented in a manner that his audience could relate and identify with. The second persona constructed by Wovoka's message was strengthened through his identification with his message and audience and outlined the characteristics the audience should adopt in order to act out the tenets of the Paiute Prophet's religion. In addition to the transforming qualities

of Wovoka's discourse, he was able to position himself as a leader and garner authority among his people by securing the role of religious prophet and messenger of God.

CHAPTER 2

NATIVE AMERICAN RESPONSE TO EURO-AMERICAN EXPANSION

The rhetorical history of Wovoka began in Northern Nevada in the late 1800's. Just as every other Indian Nation in North America, the Paiute faced the turmoil brought about by Euro-American expansion. Wovoka's message, given to him by God, offered him and his people a better life in exchange for adherence to outlined precepts. Wovoka, however, was not the first native prophet to offer a message like this and there were clear influences upon Wovoka that are important to understand before an analysis of his rhetorical career can be offered. This chapter will present a treatment of the prophets that preceded Wovoka as well as explain his unique background and the period from which he emerged.

The list of Native American prophets is expansive and it would be difficult to render a complete portrait of each. To create the historical background from which to present this discussion of Wovoka, I will examine the native prophets Neolin, Tenskwatawa, Kenekuk, and Wodziwob. It is important to present these Native American prophets because of the similarities in message and form to Wovoka's Ghost Dance. In addition to the prophets that

came before Wovoka, this chapter will depict the circumstances of the Native American and U.S. Government attitudes towards the native population in the late 1800's. With this done, it is then appropriate to consider the early influences of Wovoka as well as government reaction to the spread of his Ghost Dance among the Lakota and the resulting massacre at Wounded Knee, South Dakota. Without an understanding of the historical context from which Wovoka emerges, it is impossible to render an analysis of his words and actions.

Before the arrival of Wovoka, various Native American prophets offered their own interpretation of the future. With their visions came comfort and a promise of better times ahead. In his investigation of the Ghost Dance of 1890, James Mooney offers an illustration of the pattern manifested by the teachings of many of the earlier prophets. Mooney says,

when the race lies crushed and groaning beneath an alien yoke, how natural is the dream of a redeemer, an Arthur, who shall return from exile or awake from some long sleep to drive out the usurper and win back for his people what they have lost. The hope becomes a faith and the faith becomes the creed of priests and prophets, until the hero is a god and the dream a religion, looking to some great miracle of nature for its culmination and accomplishment. (657)

This is the pattern followed by the religion of Wovoka and the prophets that came before him. Alice C. Fletcher noted in her article, "The Indian Messiah" that the "belief in a deliverer can be traced as far back as we have any records

of the aborigines” (58). What the faiths discussed below also illustrate is the pattern that the Euro-American expansionists became all too familiar with. The native prophets repeatedly called for an abandonment of the “modern” and a return to the “way of their fathers.” Along with a restoration of the “old ways,” there was often collaboration among tribes resorting to militancy in holding their ground against the westward expansion of the white man. In addition to illustrating a pattern among Native religious movements, the Indian prophets discussed below provide a background from which we can explicate the unique experiences of Wovoka and his rhetoric.

The Delaware Prophet and Pontiac

By the end of 1760, the British had gained control of French holdings in North America following the French and Indian War. In his book, Gods of War, Gods of Peace Russell Bourne notes that the retreat of the French and the occupation of the land by the British was viewed by the Native Americans in the area as an abandonment of their “long-established brotherhood” with the French (242). According to Bourne, the Ottawa “were at the point of concluding that the time had come for a last-ditch, all-tribes war for survival” (242). Bourne notes that the individual pushing the Ottawa in the direction of a confederation was a “spiritual genius” known as the Delaware Prophet or Neolin, the enlightened one (242).

Gregory Evans Dowd, author of “Pontiac and Neolin,” points out that although we have a tremendous amount of information regarding the

teachings and prophecies of Neolin, we know little about the man (4). Of the few accounts available to us, there is only one offered by someone who actually met the prophet. Dowd indicates that a Presbyterian missionary, Charles Beatty, described the Ottowan prophet as gentle, attentive, and respected. Dowd goes on to say that Neolin “treated Beatty well, demonstrated great hospitality, listened to sermons, and, when the village council concluded that it didn’t need Presbyterian advice, he politely (no doubt gladly) ushered Beatty from the village” (4). The prophet Neolin obtained his position as spiritual leader of the Ottawa following a vision that revealed to him a call for a union of all the tribes and a return to the old Indian life.

In 1762, after wandering in the wilderness in search of a vision, Neolin arrived at “a dazzlingly bright mountain” and was instructed to “ascend the slippery-as-glass height after stripping himself naked and purifying himself” (Bourne 242). The prophet, Neolin, received the precepts of the religion after climbing the mountain led by a beautiful woman “clad in snow-white garments” (Mooney 664). At the mountain’s summit awaited the Master of Life who gave Neolin a message for his people. The Master of Life insisted that they “cease from drunkenness, wars, polygamy, and the medicine song” (Mooney 665). The prophet was told that because of their evil life, the animals had been removed from the earth and if they became good again they would go without nothing (Mooney 665). These teachings were taken back down from the mountain where the “religious ferment produced by the exhortations of the Delaware prophet spread rapidly from tribe to tribe, until, under the guidance

of the master mind of the celebrated chief, Pontiac, it took shape in a grand confederacy" (Mooney 668).

In 1763, Pontiac used the discourse of Neolin to unite the tribes of Ohio Country and western Pennsylvania against the further progress of the English. Pontiac was recognized as the high priest and keeper of the faith, and used the words of the Delaware prophet to unite the tribes in a grand effort to recover "their ancient territories" and to preserve their "national life" (Mooney 669). Pontiac's carefully orchestrated plan enabled "his warriors to strike simultaneously a crushing blow at every British post scattered throughout the 500 miles of wilderness from Pittsburg to the straits of Mackinaw" (Mooney 669). The British responded with a military invasion of the area, quickly subduing the uprising.

Dowd notes that despite Pontiac's inability to secure permanently any lands for his people, Neolin retained local influence, and "his ideas would be more lasting than Pontiac's" (7). Dowd goes on to say that, because Neolin's ideas of prophetic resistance depended less on military allies, his visions were more suited to the needs of the Indians in later years. The rhetoric of Neolin demonstrates a pattern emulated by many native prophets including Wovoka. The idea of going to the mountain in order to find an answer to the problems of your people is a phenomenon that occurs repeatedly among religious leaders. The other side to this pattern, which colonizers became familiar with, was the acquisition of a prophet's vision for the purposes of procuring support for militant action.

However, it is often the visionary's message that lasts beyond any attempts at thwarting Euro-American expansion. Dowd says, "it is no accident that fifty years after the end of the war we now call 'Pontiac's War,' a Shawnee man would collapse in a Lenape village and experience visions" (7). He goes on to say that, these visions would lead him on a crusade among his people against alcoholism and the loss of Indian land. The Shawnee prophet Dowd was talking about was Tenskwatawa.

Tenskwatawa and Tecumtha

Timid and a seemingly unlikely candidate for leadership or spiritual advisor is the description Bourne gives of Laulewasikaw, the destined prophet of the Shawnee (324). Bourne goes on to describe the Shawnee prophet as an "unattractive individual" with a "twisted body being made uglier by an eye blanked out in a hunting accident" (324). In his book, Life of Tecumseh, Benjamin Drake notes that the young Laulewasikaw had the disposition to boast, "not only of his own standing importance, but also of the rank and respectability of the family to which he belonged" (63). Regardless of the conflicting depictions of the prophet's character, his influence on the Shawnee and the surrounding tribes is apparent.

In November of 1805, Laulewasikaw announced that he had received a revelation from the Master of Life (Mooney 672; Drake 87). He gathered his tribesmen and their allies to their capital city located within present-day Ohio. He told his listeners that he had been lifted up into the spirit world where he

was permitted to see “the happiness that awaited those who followed the precepts of the Indian god” (Mooney 672). He told his listeners of the tormented life that waited for them after death if they continued to drink the white man’s firewater. Drake describes this fate saying, “all who had died drunkards were there, [dwelling with the Devil] with flames issuing out of their mouths” (87).

Laulewasikaw told them that the Master of Life wanted the young to cherish and respect the old, that all property must be held in common, and that Indian women should cease to intermarry with white men (Mooney 672; Drake 87). He admonished those gathered to abandon their medicine bags, the clothes and tools of the white man and “return to the methods which the Master of Life had taught them” (Mooney 672). The prophet concluded by telling them that if they did all this they would “again be taken into the divine favor, and find the happiness which their fathers knew before the coming of the whites” (Mooney 672).

As his fame spread, the prophet changed his name to Tenskwatawa, which means “The Open Door” (Mooney 674; Drake 86). Drake notes that the name change corresponded with his new undertaking of pointing out “the new modes of life which they should pursue” (86). Apostles began to carry his message to the remote tribes, which Mooney believes ultimately reshaped the doctrine of the original message. Mooney indicates that although the idea of united hostility against the whites seems to have not been part of the doctrine, the rhetoric of Tenskwatawa’s revelations was used to bring together tribes

under the common goal of halting the Euro-American expansion (676). In its inception, the movement was “purely religious and peaceable; but the military spirit of Tecumtha afterward gave it a warlike and even aggressive character” (Mooney 683).

Tecumtha, the brother of Tenskwatawa, used the religious doctrine to unite local tribes against the U.S. Government prior to and during the War of 1812. Tecumtha created a confederacy of tribes whose intent was stopping the westward expansion of whites at the Ohio River. While Tecumtha was absent in the south, assembling more tribes to the confederation, his efforts would reach their culmination without him in the battle of Tippecanoe. On November 7, 1811, between 800 and 1,000 Indians led by Tenskwatawa, representing all the principal tribes in the region, clashed with an army of 900 led by William Harrison, governor of the Indiana Territory. The battle ended with the defeat of Tecumtha’s confederation and the survivors scattering to their various homelands. Tecumtha continued his attempts at building a confederation and fought the United States as an ally of the British Government in the War of 1812. He died in the battle of Thames.

After the battle of Tippecanoe, Tenskwatawa slipped quietly into obscurity. Drake describes the effect of the confederations defeat on the prophet’s position saying “[a] battle was fought – the Indians were defeated – and the gory form of many a gallant, but credulous ‘brave,’ attested that the renowned Prophet had lost, amid the carnage of that nocturnal conflict, his office and his power” (221). Ultimately, Drake describes the intentions of Tenskwatawa

saying, “he was really desirous of doing good to his race” (221). The message of the Shawnee prophet was purely peaceable and without malice; however, Tecumtha used the rhetoric of a unified people to create a confederacy, bent on cauterizing Euro-American expansion.

It is important to understand how religious movements, like Neolin’s and Tenskwatawa’s sometimes led to outbreaks of violence against white colonists. While the original messages of both these native prophets were peaceable and intended for the improvement of their people, militant leaders appropriated the message and used it as justification for violence against the continued encroachment of colonists. This demonstrates why the U.S. Government would view Wovoka’s Ghost Dance and its spread among the native population with suspicion. While native uprisings were sometimes the culmination of a native religious movement, not every prophet’s call for change led to violence.

Kenekuk

The Kickapoo prophet first garnered attention, according to Joseph B. Herring, during the religious revival of the 1820’s and 1830’s. Herring notes that white visitors “observed that the prophet’s fiery sermons often aroused his listeners to a fever pitch” (2). Herring goes on to cite an instance when speaking before a crowd Kenekuk said, “that every human heart was ‘the fountain from which good or evil thoughts flow’” (2). The prophet’s interest in the wellbeing of his people went well beyond, “saving souls,” as Herring

indicates, “for he was also an effective leader who understood the ways both of whites and of his own people” (2).

From 1815 to 1816, the federal government was hoping to put their plans of removing all Indians in the east and pushing them west of the Mississippi River into motion. However, the problem for them in Indiana and Illinois was that the native population still maintained dominance compared to the sparsely inhabited white settlements. Herring says that when they recognized that the use of force was not an option, the Indian agents “tried to strike the best bargains possible by relying on friendly persuasion and deception” (16). One of the earlier treaties signed with the Kickapoo promised overdue annuities and an agreement of no further land cessions (Herring 16). Kenekuk was one of the signers of the treaty, and an observer of the celebration that followed. The festivities after the signing included dancing and the distribution of whiskey. According to Herring, a “frenzy of intoxication” ensued prompting Kenekuk to realize that whites saw this as typical behavior of his people and that “Indians must change their ways if they are to survive peacefully among the whites” (17).

Following the initial negotiations of 1816, a series of treaties over the next twenty years, signed by chiefs that did not represent every native inhabitant, forced the removal of almost every tribe beyond the Mississippi (Mooney 692). Despite the government’s earlier promise of no further land cessions, one of the tribes designated for removal by the U.S. Government was the Kickapoo tribe. The treaty called for the Kickapoo’s expulsion from their land, which

comprised half of the state of Illinois, in exchange for a much smaller portion of land in Missouri and \$3,000 in goods (Mooney 692). The tribe was not eager to move because “their hereditary enemies, the Osage, who outnumbered the Kickapoo three to one”, already occupied the land granted to them (Mooney 692). They were also encouraged to hold their ground against increased efforts to remove them from their lands by the increasingly passionate discourse of Kenekuk.

As religious and secular leader of approximately 400 Kickapoo Indians, Kenekuk effectively stemmed the tide of both federal and local efforts to remove his people from the area. Herring praises Kenekuk for his ability to tell the white settlers “what they wanted to hear” (37). The Kickapoo prophet would tell them that he was their brother and that his tribe had no claim to the land. He would tell them that he and his people were preparing to move beyond the Mississippi river, but he would always find an excuse for not submitting to government wishes, allowing the Kickapoo to maintain delicate hold of their lands (Herring 37).

In addition to his dealings with local officials, Kenekuk made several trips to St. Louis to see the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, William Clark. On one trip in particular, Kenekuk asked the government to let his people stay where they were and shared with Clark the vision given to him by the Great Spirit. Kenekuk told Clark that the Great Spirit commanded his people to throw away their medicine bags, not to steal, tell lies, murder or to quarrel (Mooney 694). What Kenekuk told his people was that if they did not follow these tenets, the

Great Spirit would destroy everything, but if they did good, they would be given a country where there was nothing but prairie (Mooney 695). Kenekuk would return to the Indian Agency in St. Louis on a number of occasions to speak on behalf of his people and plead for their continued stay in Illinois.

Kenekuk was able to establish a relationship with the surrounding white settlements that was mutually beneficial in trade and assistance. However, none of this was able to quiet the fears of white settlers when they heard of Indian uprisings in surrounding areas. As a result, the federal government forced Kenekuk and his band of Kickapoo into selling their land and accepting their offer of territory beyond the Mississippi. In the fall of 1832, Kenekuk and his followers set out for their new home, in present-day Kansas. In spite of his tribe's eventual removal and his violation of the Great Spirit's command not to sell the land where his ancestors were buried, Kenekuk's prophecies never evolved into militancy as some of its predecessors did.

Regardless of Kenekuk's peaceable approach in his dealings with white settlers, he and his people were still removed from their lands. The prophet's visits to St. Louis to talk to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs were ignored and demonstrate what Native Americans were up against in their dealings with the U.S. Government. It did not matter whether the tribe was peaceful or organized resistance, they were in the way of U.S expansion and were to be removed beyond the Mississippi.

Ultimately, Euro-American expansion was not confined to lands east of the Mississippi. As explorers discovered precious minerals out west, mining

towns were established and one of the native tribes effected by this movement west were the Northern Paiutes. About the time Wovoka was twelve years of age, there emerged a prophet in a neighboring area who responded to the hard times of his people with a vision that promised better days ahead.

Wodziwob's 1870 Ghost Dance

The white settlements springing up around the Paiute reservation at Walker Lake, a little over a hundred miles southwest of Carson City, Nevada, had a devastating effect upon the native culture. According to Michael Hittman, miners in and around Virginia City “decimated groves of pinon trees in pursuit of lumber for mining shafts, and thereby deprived the Paiute of pine nuts, their single most reliable food resource” (“1870 Ghost Dance” 252). Hittman also points to ranchers grazing herds of cattle upon wild grass and farmers poisoning gophers and rabbits as additional factors leading to the depletion of Paiute food resources (“1870 Ghost Dance” 252).

In addition to vanishing resources, the government estimated between 75 to 100 Paiutes died because of ague, bilious, and typhoid fever (Hittman “1870 Ghost Dance” 255). The U.S. Government also established the Walker River Reservation in 1860 and in that same year stationed a cavalry troop at Fort Churchill in order to protect the Pony Express (Hittman “1870 Ghost Dance” 252). The combination of diminishing sustenance, unparalleled drought, and the overwhelming white presence in the area contributed to a native population longing for the life they enjoyed before the arrival of the white man.

Optimism for the Paiute Indians presented itself in a religious movement led by the visions of Wodziwob.

In his discussion of the 1890 Ghost Dance, Mooney postulated that Numu-tibo'o was the prophet of the first Ghost Dance and the father of Wovoka (701). However, later research by Cora Du Bois and Hittman reveals that the similarity in the English translation of the names of both Wovoka's father and the prophet of the 1870 Ghost Dance resulted in some confusion. Du Bois and Hittman conclude that Numu-tibo'o is indeed the father of Wovoka, but the originator of the movement was Wodziwob (Du Bois 4; Hittman "1870 Ghost Dance" 240).

The 1870 Ghost Dance originated among the Northern Paiute of western Nevada and eventually influenced California and Oregon tribes (Du Bois v; Hittman "1870 Ghost Dance" 149-150). Wodziwob's response to the debilitating epidemics and starvation brought about by Euro-American expansion in the late 1860's was a religious movement that Hittman says involved the resurrection of the dead and control of the weather ("1870 Ghost Dance" 248).

In 1869, Wodziwob proclaimed before participants of a Paiute festival that he had gone to the mountain and received a vision in which he saw a train coming from the east, carrying the dead (Du Bois 5). He told his listeners to paint their faces before performing the festival's "Round Dance" and that they should bath after dancing (Du Bois 4). One of Du Bois' sources told her that Wodziwob addressed the people saying, "[o]ur fathers are coming, our

mothers are coming, they are coming pretty soon. You had better dance. Never stop for a long time” (4). According to one of Du Bois’ sources, Wodziwob foretold of the dead returning to the earth within three to four years from 1869 (3).

Before speaking to Paiutes at the festival, Wodziwob experienced visions in which he visited the spirit world. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Frank Campbell told Mooney that he visited Wodziwob’s camp while the prophet was in a trance and remained there until he awakened. After his return from the spirit world, Wodziwob said he had spoken with the “Supreme Ruler, who was then on the way with all the spirits of the departed dead to again reside upon this earth and change it into a paradise. Life was to be eternal, and no distinction was to exist between races” (Mooney 703).

Wodziwob spoke at traditional Paiute gatherings known as Round Dances. According to Willard Park, the Paiute Indians performed the Round Dance on a cleared flat space, two to three hundred yards in diameter. Red and white paint in the form of dots and bars would adorn the exposed skin of men and women as they danced around a pole placed in the center of the circle. Used as a point of reference, the pole placed in the center of the area allowed dancers to form a circle as they joined hands and danced in a counter clockwise motion. Park continues his description of the ceremony indicating that the dancers circled a singer and that a dance leader who prayed for rain, food, and good health conducted the ceremony from outside the circle. Held for five consecutive days, the ceremonies lasted all night long (Park 183-184).

Hittman indicates that Wodziwob's use of the Round Dance ceremony enabled him to graft "the religious movement he founded upon Paiute culture" ("1870 Ghost Dance" 264).

Both Du Bois and Hittman suggest a number of reasons for the eventual demise of the 1870 Ghost Dance. Du Bois notes Paiute skepticism as one of the reasons for the decline (6). Hittman interprets the skepticism noted by Du Bois as Wodziwob's failure to resurrect the dead as he had promised ("1870 Ghost Dance" 267). Du Bois also points to Wodziwob's exposed use of Legerdemain or "sleight of hand." One of Du Bois' informants told of how the 1870 Ghost Dance prophet used explosions of dynamite masked as communication from the dead (5). The informant also said Wodziwob used Paiute women painted white pretending to be the dead returning from the spirit world (5). Hittman says that not only did the prophecies fail, but reported starvation among the Paiute in early 1872 led to further disillusionment ("1870 Ghost Dance" 268). Because of Paiute skepticism, the 1870 Ghost Dance soon disappeared and the short-lived movement never resulted in any militant activity on the part of the Native Americans who practiced the religion.

The prophecies of Neolin, Tenskwatawa, Kenekuk, and Wodziwob illustrate a model also present in Wovoka's Ghost Dance. This model is exemplified by prophets looking to God for an answer to hard times, a message that calls for a change in behavior in exchange for an improvement of life. The broad strokes used to paint the background from which Wovoka emerged will help us not only to understand Wovoka's rhetoric but also help us

appreciate the government's tragic misunderstanding of the original intentions of the 1890 Ghost Dance. The use of Neolin and Tenskwatawa's discourse for militant purposes by Pontiac and Tecumtha contributed to the government's suspicion of any effort made by Native Americans to revert to the "ways of their fathers." As the prophets before him, Wovoka admonished his followers to abandon their "evil ways" which were the cause of their unhappiness. However, what this meant for adherents to Wovoka's teachings was a forsaking of the ways of their white occupiers and a return to the old. This was in direct conflict with the U.S. Government's attempts at the time to assimilate the native population into the white culture, or to "civilize the savage."

Assimilation or Extermination

In her book A Century of Dishonor, Helen Hunt Jackson says, "[i]t makes little difference, however, where one opens the record of the history of the Indians; every page and every year has its dark stain. The story of one tribe is the story of all, varied only by differences of time and place; but neither time nor place makes any difference in the main facts" (337). Jackson is referring to the fact that the treatment of Native Americans has been the same regardless of the tribe. The policy of westward expansion by the U.S. Government was contemptuous toward the native inhabitants of this continent. The story of one tribe, to some extent, can stand as a testament to what every tribe encountered in its dealings with whites. This time period must be

explained in order to understand better the government's policy concerning native tribes.

It is difficult to formulate a complete account of relations between white immigrants and the natives of the North American continent during the time of the 1890 Ghost Dance. Much happened during the late 1800's between white settlers and the Native American tribes they encountered in the movement west. Wovoka's Ghost Dance had an effect on a number of tribes across the country and if this analysis were to account for the history regarding every tribe it would never arrive at a conclusion. What I will do instead, is offer a general historical contextualization of the time period, in order to present an understanding suitable for the purposes of this research.

During the late 1800's reformers, known as "Friends of the Indian" hoped to "civilize" the Native American tribes of the United States by breaking up the reservations and enrolling young American Indians in boarding schools. They felt that it was possible for the "savage" to progress into a civilized people. In 1879, Captain Richard H. Pratt initiated what soon became a model for Native American boarding schools across the nation. According to Duane Champagne's compiled history of the Native North American, the purpose of Pratt's Carlisle Indian School was to "take the Indian to civilization" (224). As the boarding schools spread, Indian reformers would remove native children from their homes and communities with the belief that it was in the interest of the children to "destroy their Native culture" (224). The assault on American Indian custom continued with Chester Arthur's presidency authorizing the

Secretary of the Interior to initiate rules forbidding the practice of dancing, religious rites, and traditional rituals on the reservation (Champagne 228).

In addition to the concerns surrounding the Native American, the United States was grappling with a number of other problems including increased immigration from other countries and a newly free African American population estimated in 1880 to be more than 6.5 million (Elliott 204). The resulting problem as Michael A. Elliott puts it was “increasing numbers of ‘hyphenated Americans’ unable to assimilate into ‘true Americanism’” (204).

Elliott notes that Native American reformers repeatedly pointed out the relatively small number of “reservation Indians” in order to suggest that the “Indian Question” ought to be an easier one to solve than either the “Negro Problem” or the “Immigrant Question” (204). When the reformers referred to the “Indian Question”, they were in essence asking the policy makers in Washington to formulate a plan that would distribute reservation lands to its inhabitants in an effort to civilize them and sell the rest of their land to investors and railroads. Reformers felt that a distribution of the land would lead to what Elliott called an “Americanization” of native tribes and provide land for a rising tide of immigration from Europe. According to Elliott, for many Americans, the “huge tracts of reservation land that tribes west of the Mississippi occupied--was the only reason to be interested in Indians at all” (205).

As the westward expansion of the early white settlers encroached upon the lands previously occupied by Native Americans, the uprooted tribes found

themselves confined to smaller parcels of land. The difficulty many of the tribes faced was that they could not simply move further west as they were being displaced from their lands in hopes of distancing themselves from the early pioneers. Settlers were occupying any land that was of use and the regions that lay beyond one tribe were generally occupied by another tribe for whom deeply rooted animosity existed. A long series of broken treaties and agreements, cessions of land and privileges kept Native Americans in a constant state of flux. Increasingly, Native tribes were confined to the reservations provided for them by the government, which were often areas of land that offered little by way of natural resources.

It is important to note the initial intentions of anthropological research during the late 1800's as an indicator of government attitudes at the time. Under the leadership of John Wesley Powell, the Bureau of American Ethnology set out to describe in detail, the life of Native Americans (Elliot 202). Anthropological work by people like James Mooney was an attempt at compiling a record of the native inhabitants of the continent in the event of their extinction. Interest in the fate of Native Americans was widespread at this time because according to Elliott, it was unclear as to whether they were going to be assimilated or exterminated (202).

By 1880, the Congress of the United States had reported that the buffalo had become nearly extinct and the economic base of the native tribes inhabiting the plains had been altered past the point of any recovery. The way of life for the Plains Indian was gone and the food they hunted to sustain life

vanished with it. In the place of hunting were inadequate government rations. As pressures mounted, Garold Braney notes that Native Americans were driven to look to “religious leaders for solutions to the problems of survival in a seemingly hostile and indifferent world” (66). Wovoka followed in the tradition of the prophets who preceded him by offering solutions to the despair of his people. With the construction of the era from which Wovoka emerged serving as a backdrop, it is now possible to place the Ghost Dance Prophet in the foreground and bring his unique rhetorical situation into focus.

The Early Life of Wovoka

Research puts the birth of Wovoka in Mason Valley (located in present day Lyon County, Nevada) between 1856 and 1863 (James Mooney 764; Michael Hittman Wovoka 27). Wovoka’s father, Numu-tibo’o was a Paiute medicine man and was a participant in the Ghost Dance of 1870 (Grace Dangberg “Wovoka” 26; Hittman Wovoka 33). In response to early Euro-American expansion, Hittman (Wovoka 33) believes, Numu-tibo’o joined efforts to curtail the usurpation of land by whites and allegedly fought in early skirmishes with settlers in eastern California, southern Idaho, and western Nevada (Clemmer and Stewart 536-537; Steward and Wheeler-Voegelin 273-279). Hittman’s interview with Wovoka’s nephew, Corbett Mack, indicates that Numu-tibo’o was captured or driven out during one of the battles. This suggests that Wovoka’s father would have been absent during a portion of his son’s early life (Hittman Corbett Mack 108).

Wovoka was placed under the care of a rancher named David Wilson. Grace Dangberg's report in The Nevada Historical Society Quarterly compiles many of the stories told by those who knew the 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet. In her report, initial accounts of the young Wovoka place him on the Wilson ranch as early as age eight, playing with the rancher's two sons and later working for the family ("Wovoka" 26). In David Wilson's household, Wovoka was given the name Jack Wilson and exposed to Christian concepts that would later manifest themselves in his teachings. In his book The Last Days of the Sioux Nation, Robert Utley notes the influence of Christianity in Wovoka's life saying the "Wilson's read aloud the family Bible, and Wovoka learned about the white man's God and about his son, Jesus" (64). Utley notes that the future prophet learned about that Jesus healed the sick and had control over the elements.

In 1874, Wovoka married a woman named Mary with whom he had several children. All of the couple's boys died in infancy or childhood and one daughter survived to adulthood (Dangberg "Wovoka" 27). A few years prior to his marriage, Wovoka began to have minor visions and in 1879, was reported to have fallen into a coma or "trance" (Mooney 771; Dangberg "Wovoka" 27). Around this time, Wovoka was also credited with being able to prophesy with accuracy storms and the appearances of sundogs (Dangberg "Wovoka" 27).

Wovoka announced his revelation to Walker River Reservation Paiutes in December of 1888 and according to newspaper accounts found by Hittman, there is record of the first Ghost Dance ceremony held on December 22, 1888

(Hittman Wovoka 65). Wovoka presented them “his dance” and at first, the religion was not widely accepted. However, in January of 1889, Wovoka had his Great Revelation in which God gave him power over the weather. Just as he had predicted, Wovoka was able to use his power to bring the severe drought in the area to an end (Dangberg “Wovoka” 27). Shortly after the drought, reports of Ghost Dance ceremonies taking place begin to surface in local newspapers (Hittman Wovoka 66). Dangberg notes there was a period of five years, from 1886 to 1890, when Wovoka “never missed a prophecy concerning weather” (“Wovoka” 27).

Just as the prophets who preceded him, Wovoka went to the mountain to find answers to the problems plaguing Native Americans. His teachings called for fundamental changes in behavior and as Wovoka’s influence among the Paiute began to grow, word of the prophet’s miracles and control over the weather began to spread to other tribes. While Wovoka presented a peaceful message, just like Neolin and Tenskwatawa before him, as his teachings disseminated, they evolved into something completely different among other tribes. This distortion of the original 1890 Ghost Dance message ultimately led to the shedding of innocent blood and had a dramatic impact on the rhetorical career of Wovoka.

Wounded Knee

By the end of 1890, Wovoka’s Ghost Dance had spread to over two-thirds of Native American tribes in the United States territory and had become for the

government in Washington D.C. a movement of “suspicion” (Mooney 805). In the summer of 1890, Wovoka was visited by Kicking Bear and Short Bull of the Lakota reservation at Pine Ridge, South Dakota (Mooney 819). They took the Ghost Dance back to their people, but in a completely different form.

Wovoka’s religion was based on peace with the whites but Kicking Bear and Short Bull’s interpretation took on a militaristic form. This prompted government attention and military movement to the Pine Ridge reservation.

The Ghost Dance had caused a great deal of tension between the Native Americans and the U.S. government on the Pine Ridge reservation because of the government’s attempts to stop the dance. The government’s oppression of the religion, combined with a number of other extenuating circumstances led to the massacre of men, women and children at Wounded Knee.

On December 15, 1890, Native American police killed Sitting Bull (the Lakota medicine man) in an attempt to arrest him. The death of Sitting Bull, combined with the presence of U.S. troops on the reservation, created a sense of uneasiness and worry among members of the tribe. A number of Native Americans took refuge at Wounded Knee and surrendered to troops in an effort to stop the bloodshed. On the morning of December 29, 1890, they were ordered by the military to disarm. Reluctant to relinquish their weapons, members of the camp presented troops with two guns. Dissatisfied with the results, a detachment of troops was sent into the camp in order to recover any remaining weapons before the refugees were to be transported to the agency. In the process a fight ensued, leading to what could be called nothing less

than a massacre. Mooney recounts the events of that morning saying that “the guns trained on the camp opened fire and sent a storm of shells and bullets among the women and children, who had gathered in front of the tipis to watch the unusual spectacle [...] mowing down everything alive” (869). Approximately three hundred men, women, and children were massacred on that cold December morning. According to DeMallie, those “needless deaths symbolize the failure of whites to understand the Ghost Dance as a religious movement” (xvi). Regardless of the events of December 29, 1890, the Ghost Dance continued to flourish, despite government attempts to stop it.

When Wovoka received word of the massacre at Wounded Knee, he was afraid that blame would fall on him and quickly went into semi-seclusion. L. G. Moses reports that as tribes would send their delegations to him following the massacre, Wovoka would council them to “return to their respective tribes and stop the dances” (343). Hittman postulates that the Ghost Dance lasted in its homeland from December of 1888 to 1892 saying “the religion he [Wovoka] founded ended when he wearied of rumors and falsehoods attributed to him” (102-103).

Regardless of his reticence, the 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet continued to maintain contact with other tribes and held a predominant position in his community as Shaman. Wovoka’s prophecies continued long after 1892 and through the rich historical data that is available, it is possible to construct a history of his words and actions. To understand the rhetorical impact of Wovoka is to have an understanding of his rhetorical history.

The hardships and usurpation of land endured by the native inhabitants of this continent have produced fascinating historical figures who have offered their followers a means of overcoming adversity in exchange for an abandonment of their “evil ways.” These instances found in our country’s history present the rhetorical scholar an opportunity to understand human symbol use among the native population. The historical contextualization offered by the backdrop of prophets who preceded Wovoka, combined with a treatment of his upbringing and the time period from which he emerged provide a starting point from which to begin this analysis of his rhetorical career.

CHAPTER 3

THE IDENTIFYING POWER OF RECONSTITUTIVE RHETORIC AND THE PAULINE EPISTLE

One of the more intriguing aspects of Wovoka's Ghost Dance was its ability to change the audience's way of thinking. Wovoka's rhetoric took a departure from basic Paiute beliefs, as illustrated by the Ghost Dance Prophet's promised return of those who had gone to the "spirit world" and Northern Paiute "avoidance of the dead." For the Paiute, the dead were buried immediately, their personal belongings destroyed, the campsite was relocated, they could not speak the name of the deceased, and they would plead with the soul of the dead not to return and bother the living (Hittman "1870 Ghost Dance" 265).

While the belief in a spiritual existence after death was common among the Paiute, Wovoka's depiction of the departed was portrayed as "benevolent and happy and coming back to live on this earth" (Dangberg "Wovoka" 10). The doctrine presented by Wovoka told them that they would soon be reunited with the dead and that the destruction of property was no longer necessary (Du Bois 3). Wovoka's teachings were in direct conflict with what many Native

Americans believed for centuries yet the tenets of the Ghost Dance influenced native tribes across the country.

Wovoka presented his teachings of change through the telling of the vision he obtained on the mountain. Wovoka believed that his message was not just for the Paiute but all Native Americans. As word of his prophecies and miracles spread, tribal delegations came to Wovoka and took his teachings back to their people in letters dictated to them by the prophet. Wovoka spent his rhetorical career calling for change among his people and he maintained his role as prophet by corresponding with tribes outside his own region, just as the apostle Paul did in the early Christian Church.

This chapter formulates a theoretical foundation for understanding the power of Wovoka's message to change his audience. This will be done with the help of John Hammerback and Richard Jensen's model for analyzing reconstitutive rhetoric, which is based on the work of Frederick J. Antczak. After a brief treatment of Antczak's work, this chapter will proceed with a discussion of *first persona*, *substantive message*, and *second persona*, which are the three elements that comprise Hammerback and Jensen's model. In addition to Wovoka's words and actions, the "Messiah Letter" is a surviving illustration of correspondence sent to neighboring tribes and is an important text that contributes to our understanding of the Paiute prophet's rhetorical career. This chapter will also construct a theoretical perspective through which to view the similarities to the epistle form found in Wovoka's letter.

Reconstitutive Rhetoric

Hammerback and Jensen point out that the direct end of reconstitutive rhetoric is to change the character of the audience and it “differs significantly from that of most persuasion.” The difference lies in the rhetorical qualities and unique processes that are “indispensable for the task of changing character” (45). To understand the rhetorical means used in such a discourse, Hammerback and Jensen construct a model to analyze reconstitutive rhetoric.

In his book, Thought and Character: The Rhetoric of Democratic Education, Antczak sees identification rather than persuasion as rhetoric’s chief function and bases his approach to rhetoric on the work of Plato, Kenneth Burke, and Wayne Booth. Antczak follows Plato’s idea that it is far better to change an audience morally and intellectually than just to tell them what they want to hear (Thought and Character 8). Antczak notes that Plato saw rhetoric as successful when it “personally engages both the speaker and audience in the search for intellectual and moral reconstitution” (Thought and Character 8). Burke provided for Antczak the concept of identification and consubstantiality, which highlights the commonalities shared by the rhetor and audience. Antczak indicates that for Burke, “what rhetoric fundamentally does and what rhetorical studies fundamentally explore is identification” (Thought and Character 11). In Antczak’s approach, Booth contributes the idea that “the primary mental act of man is to assent to truth rather than to detect error, ‘to take in’ and even ‘to be taken in,’” and this is accomplished through rhetorical exchange (Booth xvi). Booth designates the implied author as

central in literature, saying that the “important effect is to involve us [...]” in what is being said (Rhetoric of Fiction 214). Antczak brings Burke and Booth together saying that for the two of them, “intellectual reconstitution inextricably involves human character” (Thought and Character 11). Burke’s contributions play a significant role in the development of this theoretical foundation and are explained later as this chapter develops the three elements of Hammerback and Jensen’s model.

Using Plato, Burke, and Booth, Antczak constructed an approach that explains how a speaker is able to change an audience by identifying with them. He says that the “reconstitutive power of this rhetoric lay in the identification of thought and character” (Thought and Character 201). Antczak then applied his critical approach to the discourse of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Mark Twain, and Henry Adams. The result was an understanding of how the three orators could deliver, as Hammerback and Jensen put it, “extraordinarily well-received speeches despite committing a long list of oratorical offenses [...]” (47). An understanding of reconstitutive rhetoric and its ability to influence an audience will lend itself to an appreciation for the power of Wovoka’s rhetoric, despite its divergence from contemporary ideals of style and delivery.

Wovoka’s message of renewal was given to him in a vision and its promises were obtainable through an adherence to prescribed changes in character and action. As evidenced by the work of Hammerback and Jensen, this method of analyzing reconstitutive rhetoric has the potential for lending

significant understanding to the transforming influence of Wovoka's rhetoric. Their model differs from Antczak's approach in that it features three parts through which a consideration of the rhetor's thought and character can be made. Hammerback and Jensen's approach to the analysis of reconstitutive rhetoric is based on an understanding of the interplay of personal persona, substantive message, and second persona, and the theoretical foundations from which they emerged.

The First Persona

For the purposes of this theoretical framework, I will adopt Hammerback and Jensen's definition of first persona, which is "the audience's view of the rhetor's personal qualities as communicated to and perceived by the audience" (51). This expands Booth's notion that the rhetor's personal persona comes entirely from within the text (Booth 169-209). As a result, Hammerback and Jensen's definition is conducive to the depiction of Wovoka's rhetorical career because it allows for the first persona of the rhetor to come from non-textual sources. Due to the lack of surviving texts produced by Wovoka, the construction of his rhetorical history depends on what other people have said about his words and actions. Hammerback and Jensen note that the sources from which the critic illuminates the first persona "may or may not be controllable by the rhetor – the rhetor's own life history, for example, or the rhetor's family heritage" (51). Hammerback and Jensen go on to say that non-textual sources have the ability to "powerfully shape the rhetor's first

persona for a particular audience and thus can partly account for the resulting rhetorical effects on the audience's character and actions" (51).

When Hammerback and Jensen look to a speaker's heritage, life, and appearance as a means of persuading an audience, what they are doing is expanding on an Aristotelian concept of personal character. One of the available means of persuasion, as outlined by Aristotle in the Rhetoric, is ethos, or "the personal character of the speaker" (1356^a3). Of the three modes of persuasion, (ethos, pathos, and logos) Aristotle believes that the speaker's "character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he [sic] possesses" (1356^a13-14). Aristotle says that "we believe good men [sic] more fully and readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible [...]" (1356^a6-9). He provides three ways of inspiring confidence in the orator's character saying this is done through "good sense, good moral character, and good will" (1378^a9). Chapter four will demonstrate that not only was Wovoka able to establish a strong moral character among his own people, but he also had a reputation among whites in the area as a good worker and created a sense of good will as he admonished his people to work for and get along with their Euro-American neighbors.

Hammerback and Jensen introduce Burke's concept of identification in conjunction with Aristotle's ethos to further the development of first persona. According to Burke, identification sprouts from our divisions and it is compensatory or making amends for our divisions. In his book A Rhetoric of

Motives Burke indicates that “if men [sic] were not apart from one another, there would be no need for the rhetorician to proclaim their unity” (22). We constantly try to find these areas of overlap with other individuals or groups and try to achieve some position within the group in an attempt to relieve the guilt caused by separation. In order to compensate for our division and our guilt, we try to find areas in which our values, beliefs, experiences, and perceptions are common or overlap with others. These areas of shared values or experiences make us “consubstantial” with others.

Burke says, “we might well keep in mind that a speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his [or her] act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests [...]” (Rhetoric 46). He notes that the need to identify comes from our need to be included or to identify with others. Burke points out that we are aware of a biological separation from the moment of our birth and as we develop, we come to understand other forms of separation based on social class or position. While we are aware of this separation, Burke believes that we not only feel guilty about the separation but also about our insistence on maintaining the order to that hierarchy of separation. It would be difficult to find an instance where separation was more pronounced and where people were making as concerted an effort in finding a common ground than in the relationship between Euro-Americans and the native inhabitants of this continent in the late 1800's.

For Burke, the human want is to identify with others and this provides an avenue for those interested in persuasion. The presence of guilt for our separation combined with the desire to find identification with others provides a forum for those who would be interested in persuading for the purposes of good or evil. Burke mentions that we use language to build a connection with others. Burke does this in an attempt to explain how we use and abuse language to manipulate our perceptions of why we are different or the same. Burke indicates that it is this manipulation of perceived similarities or differences that are often used for justifying war and conflict just as it may be used to unite various individuals. In this way, Burke demonstrates the use of identification in everyday activities as well as its potential to operate on a much grander scale.

According to Burke, "we know that many purely formal patterns can awaken an attitude of collaborative expectancy in us" (Rhetoric 58). Once we understand the form, it invites participation in the discussion. Burke indicates that this is the case with forms such as tropes and figures, as well as stories and myth. This is to say that when we encounter a story we are familiar with, we have a tendency to participate in the discourse. We become interested in the story that is being told because we have become accustomed to hearing it and we enjoy the telling of the narrative. While we may not recognize the main story, we are familiar with the characters and the outcome and can often fill in the blanks of the story when the rhetor leaves them out. Involvement in the story and filling in the missing pieces constitutes participation and in the

words of Hammerback and Jensen, “could secure an auditor’s unconscious identification with the rhetor” (51).

While Wovoka’s message contained clear evidence of a Christian influence, the foundation of his prophecies and vision were something with which the native population was very familiar. The previous chapter demonstrated a pattern and theme in the messages of prophets that preceded Wovoka. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter, Wovoka presented the same pattern and theme in the telling of his own vision, which made it a story that invited the participation of his audience.

More powerful than telling a story that is familiar to the audience is talking to them in their own language. Burke notes that you “persuade a man [or woman] only insofar as you can talk his [sic] language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his [sic]” (Rhetoric 55). Burke provides an example of this when he talks about the politician’s attempt to identify with a crowd of farmers saying, “I was a farm boy myself.” In our desire to identify with others and overcome the guilt from an adherence to the natural hierarchy of order, we find a common ground with others in their use of language, gesture, and ideas. In this attempt at finding a common ground, there is a certain amount of persuasive ability in the message. There had never been a white Christian effort that accomplished what Wovoka was able to do in the span of three years. The following chapter will demonstrate that while his message was a call for his people to return to the ways of their fathers, Wovoka couched his message in Christianity.

However, because the prophecies presented to his audience were in their own language, Wovoka spread a Christian message beyond the hopes of any proselytizing missionary.

The power of appealing to an audience's sense of beliefs and values finds explanation and clarity in the work of Burke's Language as Symbolic Action. Burke indicates that humans are a "symbol-using animal" and that our sense of reality is based for the most part, on what people tell us (Language 5). According to Burke, there is only a "tiny sliver of reality each of us has experienced firsthand" (Language 5). He says that not only is it human nature to use symbols or language to define reality but to abuse language as well (Language 5). The reality constructed for Wovoka's audience was that he was a prophet with a message from the mountaintop. Much of what was known about the Paiute Prophet was told to his audience through the telling of his many miracles and control of the weather. There were firsthand accounts of his powers over the elements and as these stories were relayed and retold to others, those narratives helped define the audience's perception of Wovoka's personal persona.

The linking of Aristotle and Burke helps us to understand the importance of the rhetor's first persona as well as the human need to find commonalities with those around us. The auditor's view of the speaker's personal qualities is fundamental in a successful message. Aristotle stressed the importance of character in instances when exact certainty is impossible, and just like the prophets that preceded him, Wovoka was dealing with the uncertain future of

his people. Burke demonstrated the human need to identify with others and its use in persuasion. Not only is a rhetor able to connect with his audience by speaking their language, but the audience is able to identify and participate in a message when they hear a story with which they are familiar. Moreover, as will be demonstrated through the development of this chapter, when the elements of the speaker's personal persona begin to intertwine with the substantive message and the second persona, there is a potential for a reconstitution of the audience as they seek to embody the elements of the rhetor's message.

The Substantive Message

As described by Hammerback and Jensen, "[t]he themes, arguments, explanations, and evidence that comprise the substantive message in the texts of reconstitutive discourse often allow rhetors to embody – and thereby in some cases to become indistinguishable from – their ideas, ideology, or movement" (52). Hammerback and Jensen go on to say that both unspoken and obvious means can be used by the rhetor to embody their message. Attempts at connecting the rhetor with their message, if done explicitly, would involve claims of having lived the philosophy they are advocating. Implicit means of connecting the rhetor with the message occur "when rhetors use such means as language, delivery, appearance, or organization to prove their enactment of their arguments, appeals and agendas" (Hammerback and Jensen 52).

What is important to consider in the rhetor's embodiment of the message links back to the identification established in the first persona. Hammerback and Jensen note that as a "general rule, when a rhetor identifies with a message, auditors who identify with that rhetor will be inclined to identify with the message too" (51). They go on to point out that identification then has the ability to be transferred from the rhetor to the message and as a result, the persuasiveness of a message does not lie in facts and arguments alone but is "fueled by identification" (52). "The rhetorical potency of identification," according to Hammerback and Jensen, "is therefore magnified, with both the rhetor and message connecting closely and personally with the audience" (52). Chapter four will reveal that Wovoka's connection with his message was demonstrated by his willingness to adhere to the precepts of the vision he obtained on the mountaintop and the explicit connection made by God giving him that message; this inextricably connected the Paiute Prophet with his message. Combine Wovoka's connection to the substantive message he presented and the identifying power he and his message had with his audience and a potentially persuasive rhetorical career begins to emerge.

To exhibit the influence a merger between the rhetor's self-portrait and a substantive message can have on an audience, Hammerback and Jensen draw upon Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson's analysis of Barbra Jordan's Keynote Address at the 1976 Democratic convention, and John F. Kennedy's speech, "Ich bin ein Berliner" (52).

Campbell and Jamieson's critique of Jordan's keynote address revealed that the rhetor's embodiment of the message made her "the proof of the argument she was making" (408). When Jordan became the proof of her own argument, it tied her to the discourse and according to Campbell and Jamieson, made for a potentially persuasive message (408). Despite the noted limitations in Jordan's keynote address, Campbell and Jamieson still find the rhetor's ability to embody their message a powerful means of persuasion.

Campbell and Jamieson offer insight into a number of successful strategies used by Kennedy. They note the compelling comparison made between the "free" and "communist" worlds found within Berlin when Kennedy gave his famous speech calling upon everyone to become symbolic citizens of the city. In giving his speech in Berlin, Kennedy's speech offered a "dramatic enactment which says, in effect, 'do as I did – come to Berlin'" (Campbell and Jamieson 416). These studies by Campbell and Jamieson "have found that a rhetor's communicated self-portrait can merge with a substantive message to exert considerable influence on audiences" (Hammerback and Jensen 53).

Hammerback and Jensen also note the contribution of Martha Solomon to our understanding of the influence of the rhetor's embodiment of a message as an influential persuasive tool. In her study of Emma Goldman's anarchist discourse, Solomon illustrated the connection between "specific ideologies and their inherent rhetoric" (184). While Goldman's anarchist ideologies were not effective for an American audience, Solomon argued that embodiment was

an effective rhetorical tool because it “bridges ethos and logical argument” and because the speaker “enacts the principle or argument s/he is discussing” (190). Solomon continues by pointing out that “this strategy is particularly useful to leaders of social movements who can embody the principles they advocate” (190).

Through a construction of Wovoka’s rhetorical history, the analysis of his substantive message is possible. As mentioned earlier, what remains of texts originating from the Paiute Prophet is limited and in order to understand Wovoka’s rhetorical career and the influence he had on the native population it is essential that we look at what other people have said about his words and actions. Hammerback and Jensen’s model for analyzing the substantive message of reconstitutive rhetoric makes that possible. With an understanding of how a rhetor is able to identify with both their audience and message it is now possible to move on to the third element of the model that helps to explain how the rhetor formulates the characteristics they want their audience to embody.

The Second Persona

According to Hammerback and Jensen, the “ability to redefine audiences and to induce them to take on and act out aspects of a new way of life requires effective use of the second persona” (53). As noted earlier, reconstitutive rhetoric borrows Booth’s notion of the “implied author” and its ability to involve the auditor in the discourse. In his essay, “The Second Persona,” Edwin Black notes Booth’s contributions saying that the “implied author of a discourse is a

persona that figures importantly in rhetorical transactions" (111). Black develops this saying that "what equally solicits our attention is that there is a second persona also implied by a discourse, and that persona is its implied auditor" (111). Black says that the rhetor uses ideology in order to provide for the audience a place from which to view and make sense of everything (111). Black indicates that these ideologies or verbal cues can then be used by the critic to analyze the text. He says that what "the critic can find projected by the discourse is the image of a man [sic], and though that man [or woman] may never find actual embodiment, it is still a man [sic] that the image is of" (113). This depicted image constitutes the qualities the rhetor believes the audience possesses or should possess.

What Black was most concerned with was a second persona that sprung from or was evident within a text. In their model for analyzing reconstitutive rhetoric, Hammerback and Jensen expand Black's definition by "viewing the second persona as being explicitly as well as implicitly communicated by the rhetor" (53). This is to say that at times a rhetor will tell the audience exactly the qualities they possess or should possess. What is more likely is that the qualities of the second persona are implied "as when a rhetor calls for actions that require particular personal abilities to be enacted, or addresses an audience in a way that implies their level of understanding, intelligence, sensitivity, or other qualities" (Hammerback and Jensen 53-54).

Hammerback and Jensen indicate that the "second persona adds reconstitutive force when a rhetor projects a first persona and articulates a

message that calls for auditors who possess the characteristics that comprise the second persona” (54). The potentially persuasive message is made even more so when the audience identifies with the rhetor and the discourse. When this is achieved, the audience can be “adjusted to a second persona that tells them who to be and how to act” (Hammerback and Jensen 54). According to Hammerback and Jensen, the abstract qualities embodied by the rhetor and those contained in the message are then treated as concrete characteristics that make up the portrait of the audience (54). This concrete portrait describes for the audience who they are or should be and as a result makes it easier to “bring to the surface their own qualities necessary to accept, adopt, and act out the rhetor’s substantive ideas, personal qualities, and agenda for action” (54).

As mentioned earlier, Hammerback and Jensen’s model differs from Antczak’s approach in that it contains three elements through which to analyze the rhetor. By administering equal treatment to the rhetor’s personal persona, substantive message, and the second persona, a better understanding of Wovoka’s thought and character is possible. The interplay of the three elements of the model allows it to work differently from Maurice Charland’s examination of constitutive rhetoric. In his analysis of Québécois discourse, Charland argued that constitutive discourse preceded the existence of the audience and in order to create audiences, the discourse must rely heavily on the second persona (134, 137). While I acknowledge Charland’s contributions, and the differences between constitutive and reconstitutive

rhetoric, a full treatment of his work is not vital to the development of this theoretical foundation.

Hammerback and Jensen based their model on Antczak's conception of reconstitutive rhetoric but there are fundamental differences between their model and the theoretical underpinnings of reconstitutive discourse that are important to draw from this discussion. In their model, Hammerback and Jensen have replaced the term "character," as it relates to first persona, with "personal qualities." This makes it possible to broaden the scope of this analysis to include sources outside of any text originating from Wovoka. Hammerback and Jensen are also careful to point out that ideas of second persona offered by Black, Booth and Antczak are expanded within their model to include the explicit as well as the implicit constructions of the audience (55-56).

The equal scrutinizing of first persona, substantive message, and second persona allows for an understanding of how a rhetor's discourse can redefine an audience's view of itself and inspire action. The overwhelming influence of identification on a speaker's ability to connect with an audience depicts a potential avenue for those interested in persuasion. The personal persona of a rhetor and how they are able to relate to their substantive message lends insight into the transforming influence of reconstitutive rhetoric. With the application of this model to the rhetorical career of Wovoka, it will be possible to provide further understanding of how this type of rhetoric functions and from where it obtains its persuasive abilities. Now that a theoretical foundation has

been laid through which to view the rhetorical career of Wovoka, it is important to consider one of the few remaining texts originating from the Paiute Prophet and its ability in illuminating his rhetorical history and its role in the transforming power of his rhetoric.

The Epistle as Rhetorical Form

The Messiah Letter is a rendering of one of the letters given to a delegation that came to visit the Paiute Prophet. James Mooney recreated the letter in his treatment of the 1890 Ghost Dance, and called it “the genuine official statement of the Ghost-dance doctrine as given by the messiah himself to his disciples” (780). Wovoka’s letter provides considerable insight into the religion and its tenets. While Wovoka neither read nor wrote (Hittman Wovoka 2), he was able to maintain correspondence with other tribes with the help of translators and friends who wrote the letters as they were dictated to them by the Paiute Prophet. As an exemplar of the prophet’s correspondence, The Messiah Letter lends insight into the basic precepts of Wovoka’s religion.

In her analysis of Martin Luther King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Snow offers a helpful way of viewing Wovoka’s rhetoric. Snow postulates that King assumed both the Pauline role and the Pauline literary form in his letter (318). Snow’s analysis of the letter then goes on to show how the assumed role was “only the most prominent of many scriptural allusions” and that just as Paul did before him, King used the letter as a sermon (319). Much of Snow’s analysis of King’s letter looks at the similarity in writing style King shared with the

apostle Paul. Snow never talks about arrangement of the epistolary form because as she says, the epistles themselves have a “complex and allusive structure” (322). Gordon P. Wiles’ investigation into the significance of Paul’s letters corroborate Snow’s statement saying “[t]he more we study it, the more elusive it seems to become” (6).

It is clear that Wovoka was exposed to the Bible as it was read aloud every day in the Wilson home (Utley 67; Dangberg 26-27); however, he was not the biblical scholar that King was. Nonetheless, the insight offered by Snow into the function of the epistle is important to this discussion.

The Pauline model is the form taken by the letters of St. Paul, or the epistles, from the Bible. The epistles were letters that Paul sent to new churches in remote areas that had questions regarding the doctrine of the church. These letters were written responses to inquiries for advice or concern, and often provided comfort to these newly formed branches of the church. According to Bo Reicke, the literal translation “into current English of the Greek word *epistolé* would of course be ‘letter’” (xxxix). Reicke goes on to point out that while the epistles are similar to the documents we now refer to as letters, they are different in that “they more frequently have a public character and are never private communications” (xxxix). Because of its public nature, Reicke says “epistle” is used for its more “formal connotations” (xxxix).

Snow addresses the public nature of the epistle, indicating that it was not a private letter but intended for public readings, allowing the message to

saturate the widest audience. She notes that Paul's letters were "essentially public documents, composed and delivered orally" (327). This is confirmed in the work of Reicke who says that the epistles were "ways of speaking publicly to congregations that would not be addressed in person" (xxxi). As noted above, the letters dictated by Wovoka were taken by the delegations to their respective tribes so that Native Americans living outside the Paiute Prophet's region had access to his teachings and prophecies.

In addition to the epistles being public letters, Snow notes that the "Pauline epistles themselves are sermons" (327). John W. Shepard echoes this sentiment in his book, The Life and Letters of St. Paul. He says that the Pauline epistles "were written for the instruction and guidance of the early Christian communities" (18). Reicke illustrates this function saying that if a church authority "could not visit believers he wanted to address, he preached to them in writing" (xxxi). Reicke goes on to say that someone would read the epistle "aloud to the congregation and the people were able to listen to the words of the writer" as though the writer of the letter were speaking to them personally (xxxi).

Snow indicates that a crucial part to the epistle form is understanding the word *apostle* (320). She points out that Paul began many of his letters like the example she gives from Romans, which reads, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God" (Romans 1:1). Snow notes the importance of the word "apostle" and defines it as "the one who is sent," and says that this "becomes a rhetorical device through

which Paul asserted that he belonged, that he had authority and was not an outsider” (320).

In asserting that he was a messenger from God, Paul established not only his credibility but also that he had a connection with his audience. This identified him with those to whom he was speaking, which was proven earlier in this chapter’s discussion of Burke to be a highly effective persuasive tool. Burke also lends insight into the importance of using appropriate terms in a discourse like the epistle. As an example, he notes the weight of invoking God in any religious dialogue. Burke says that “[i]f you want to operate, like a theologian, with a terminology that includes ‘God’ as its key term, the only sure way to do so is to put in the term, and that’s that” (Language 46). Although Wovoka never called himself an apostle, he established himself as a messenger of God and by talking in his behalf, introduced terms Burke sees as essential to a religious discussion and positioned the Paiute Prophet as “the one who was sent.”

Although Snow only alludes to the various elements of structure contained in the epistle, she does note the importance of the greeting. In addition to this element, scholars of the epistle identify four others. The first is Paul’s wish to be with those to whom he is addressing that as we will discover latter becomes a means of projecting authority. Second is the actual body of the speech, which according to Reicke can be divided into two independent parts. The last two elements of structure are the opening and closing of the epistle.

The important thing to remember for this discussion is that because of the “elusive nature” of the epistle form, the elements of structure do not have a specific order. Roetzel alludes to this fact when he says that the letters of Paul’s time conformed to certain conventions, but for Paul “his use of these conventions was hardly mechanical” (17). While Roetzel does attempt to identify a linear structure in Paul’s Epistles, he does concede a number of exceptions to his formula. Outside of the opening and closing, the structure of the epistle is fluid in nature and does not have a concrete order of delivery. The elements that scholars of the epistle have identified are commonly contained within the epistle, but do not follow a ridged organization.

The single structural element specifically mentioned by Snow was the greeting. It is important to recognize that, according to Terence Y. Mullins, “the greeting did not always appear at the beginning of the letter and is not to be confused with the opening” (418). The greeting, Mullins maintains, “was a distinct literary form which was intended to establish a bond of friendship. It was essentially one of those gestures which has emotional expression as its main purpose” (418). The greeting, as Mullins indicates, could then emerge anywhere within the text for the purposes of establishing goodwill with the audience. This would suggest that the greeting would be directed at the listener and as Snow points out, throughout the course of his letters “Paul often addressed his audience directly” (323).

The next component often contained in Paul’s letters was a wish for one day seeing the people to whom he was writing. Snow says that Paul’s letters

were “written substitutes for a face-to-face meeting” (331). She offers an example from Romans in which Paul prayed, “making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you” (1:10). Amos Wilder noted in his book, Early Christian Rhetoric, that “Paul writes always as one thwarted by absence and eagerly anticipating meeting or reunion” (14). Robert W. Funk suggests that these elements found in the epistle form be called *parousia*. This is the Greek term for “presence” and he says that the “underlying theme is therefore the apostolic parousia – the presence of apostolic authority and power” (249). This element, as it is found in Paul’s epistles, is a substitute for a personal meeting and a hope for a reunion while at the same time projecting presence and declaring authoritative power as an apostle.

Another element common of the epistle form is its use as a tool for direction and not conversion. Snow says that the composition of an epistle as a sermon “defines one’s audience as people who are to be advised, guided, and convinced, but who, more significantly, are to be persuaded of certain conclusions not merely because they are logical or appealing but because they are in accord with the audience’s own beliefs” (330). Reicke explains how this is accomplished in his discussion of the epistle’s body. He indicates that the “heart of the epistles is generally a doctrinal section followed by a series of admonitions” (xxxi). The two sections of the body as they appear in the epistle form would then be used, as Snow indicates “to strengthen the

belief of the converted, to show them how to conduct themselves in light of their belief, and to teach them the importance of their belief" (331).

Finally, there is the opening and closing of the epistle. Roetzel's discussion of the opening or salutation describes it as being "the most stable elements in the ancient letter" (19). Shepherd notes that Paul's greeting would often contain "thanks to God" and a prayer that would allow Christians to "understand their blessings" (530). Roetzel indicates that the conclusion of Paul's letters would contain a "peace wish, greetings, and a benediction" (25). Roetzel goes on to say that there is an occasional "apostolic pronouncement" and a "battery of last-minute instructions" (25). Together, the opening and closing of Paul's letters function as stable structural elements acting as bookends to a form that has no rigid formula.

Snow begins her article by noting a number of similarities between Paul and King. She says that they both were separated from those they would have spoken and they both used the prison cell as an ironic pulpit and the letter as a means of reaching their audience. Snow goes on to describe Paul and King's commonality saying the letter was not only meant "for those named in the salutation but also for a larger, more general group" (319). She concludes her comparison saying "like Paul, King declared his own apostleship so that he might present himself as one possessed of religious truth and able to define moral action in light of that truth" (319). In addition to finding parallels to the epistle form in Wovoka's Messiah Letter, the following chapter will reveal the same similarities between Paul and Wovoka that Snow

saw between Paul and King. While the Paiute Prophet never spent any time in prison, it could be argued that Euro-American colonization made the Native American prisoners in their own land.

In presenting the similarities between Paul and King, Snow has offered insight into how those who speak on behalf of God obtain their power. Paul derived his power from God by acting as his apostle. Through the writing of his epistles, Paul projected his power as the mouthpiece of God, the apostle, “the one who is sent.” As demonstrated by Snow, King was able to derive his power from God by emulating or personifying Paul. The above discussion of reconstitutive rhetoric illustrated the importance played by the rhetor’s personal persona in influencing an audience. Just like King, Wovoka emulated the Pauline persona. By assuming the role played by Paul, Wovoka’s personal persona obtained for him power and authority from God, and garnered considerable influence among his auditors.

In summary, this chapter has established a coherent and consistent theoretical foundation that will help to illuminate the rhetorical history of Wovoka. The Paiute Prophet’s desire was to change his audience in order to hasten the return of a happier life for Native Americans. He saw fundamental changes in his people as essential to a renewal of the land and sustenance affected by the drought plaguing the indigenous population. Acting as God’s messenger, Wovoka admonished his audience to not lie, steal, or to make war. He encouraged his people to take a more peaceful approach in their dealings with the whites and even encouraged them to work for their Euro-

American neighbors. The message he presented his people was from God and he demonstrated his position as God's mouthpiece by filling the role of prophet.

The building of this critical approach has lent clarification to the identifying power of both reconstitutive rhetoric and the Epistle form. Burke's explanation of the human need to connect and to find those areas of overlap in shared beliefs and ideas helps to illuminate the ability of Wovoka's hybrid rhetorical message to command overwhelming acceptance. John Hammerback and Richard Jensen's model for analyzing reconstitutive rhetoric and the theoretical foundations from which they emerged, along with Malinda Snow's analysis of the Epistle form will lend insight into Wovoka's transforming rhetorical career. The following chapter will proceed with an application of this theoretical approach to the rhetorical history of Wovoka to demonstrate these concepts.

CHAPTER 4

WOVOKA'S RHETORICAL HISTORY

In an article printed January 22, 1890, the *Walker Lake Bulletin* presented one of the first newspaper accounts of the 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet saying;

Some months ago, fearing another dry season, the Indians had a rain or wet talk. At that meeting one Jakey [sic] Wilson, the modern Moses of the Piutes, [sic] was deputized to go up in the mountains and "see Jesus," and ask for moisture. He went. The Indians all solemnly aver that Jakey [sic] saw Jesus, who promised that water should fall. The most skeptical cannot deny that the water fell. ("Too Much of a Good Thing" N. pag.)

The article not only illuminates Wovoka's reputation among his own people as a prophet capable of bringing an end to drought, but the interest of Euro-American neighbors in his activities among the Paiute and its commonalities with their own Christian theology. The article depicts the myth embodied by Wovoka, which is the same story told of the prophets that preceded him. The writer attaches the name "Moses," linking Wovoka to the familiar story found in Judeo-Christian faith. Control of the weather was only one of the miracles

worked by the Paiute Prophet in a rhetorical career that began circa 1887 (Chapman 234), and continued until his death in 1932.

The focus of this chapter is the rhetorical influence Wovoka had upon his audience. The interplay of personal persona, substantive message, and second persona within reconstitutive rhetoric allowed for a transformation of the Paiute Prophet's audience. In addition, the identifying power of the Epistle form contained in the Messiah Letter positioned Wovoka as the mouthpiece of God. This chapter applies the theoretical approach established in chapter three to illuminate the power of Wovoka's rhetoric to reconstitute his audience. This chapter will begin with a discussion of Wovoka's first persona, followed by an analysis of his substantive message, with an investigation into the formulated second persona. This chapter will then conclude with an evaluation of Wovoka's Messiah Letter, a surviving remnant of text originating from the Paiute Prophet and an important element in understanding the substantive message of this transforming rhetoric. The analysis of the Messiah Letter will illustrate its similarities to the Pauline Epistle, which the development of this chapter will demonstrate, was only one of the commonalities shared by the Paiute Prophet and the Apostle Paul.

First Persona

In order to achieve his goal of transfiguring his people to hasten the return of a better life, Wovoka needed to not only persuade his audience, but also change their perceptions of their own identity. Among the tools Wovoka had

available to him in gaining influence with his audience was his heritage, upbringing, and appearance. Long before the Paiute Prophet experienced his visions outlining the tenets of his religion, Wovoka's upbringing shaped who he was going to become and garnered influence upon people's perceptions of the prophet in later years. As evidenced by chapter two, the early life of Wovoka placed him under the guidance and sway of both his Paiute parents and white protestant foster family. The audience's conception of Wovoka's personal qualities, as communicated to them by what others said and wrote about him, began with an awareness of his upbringing and his ancestry. It is the heritage of Wovoka that not only shaped the Prophet's message but also helped establish the Paiute leader's personal persona among his people and Euro-American neighbors.

Michael Hittman and Grace Dangberg offer a composite rendering of Wovoka's parents drawing from a number of historical texts and personal interviews. Hittman indicates that Wovoka's father was a "chief" and "medicine man" who possessed "power" (Wovoka 33). According to Dangberg, Numu-tibo'o was an "assistant or follower of Wodziwob" as well as "a petty chief, a dreamer" and was described as someone "who was invulnerable" ("Wovoka" 5). The father of Wovoka was depicted by whites in the area as unprincipled, untrustworthy, surly, and treacherous (Dangberg "Wovoka" 25; Hittman Wovoka 33). At the other end of the spectrum, Wovoka's son-in-law, Andy Vidovich, remembered Numu-tibo'o as a wonderful man who "'stopped his people from killing the settlers'" (Hittman Wovoka 33).

Hittman postulates that Numu-tibo'o's initial reaction to white encroachment in the area could account for his reputation as wild and quarrelsome (Wovoka 33). If indeed he spent time in prison, as suggested by Corbett Mack (Hittman Corbett Mack 180) because of his participation in local uprisings, there might be an explanation for Numu-tibo'o's subdued nature in later years.

Ultimately, Hittman notes that "there is no evidence that the father of the 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet bore even the smidgen of either his wife's or his son's reputation as a hard working field and ranch hand" (Wovoka 34). Little is known about the Paiute Prophet's mother, Tiya, other than that she was a "typical squaw. Very intelligent" as Hittman discovered in the field notes of Grace Dangberg (Wovoka 34). In contrast to her husband, Hittman discovered that Tiya was trustworthy and that David Wilson said that Wovoka was like his mother and not "wild like his father" (Wovoka 35). Hittman postulates that Tiya's "Protestant-type work ethic" may have "bore acculturative fruit in the ideology of the 1890 Ghost Dance" (Wovoka 35).

The influence of his parents left a lasting impression on Wovoka and his ideology. Wovoka carried with him the reputation of a strong work ethic instilled in him by his mother. The young Paiute also stood as heir apparent to his father's role as a spiritual leader among his people, yet according to Wovoka's friend Ed Dyer, the future prophet was interested in more than being just a medicine man, aspiring "to make himself a personage [...] something more than just another Indian" (3).

As illustrated by the preceding chapter, the importance of ethos or the personal qualities of a rhetor possess considerable influential powers upon an audience. The conception held by Wovoka's auditors of his heritage was formed by what was communicated by others about the Paiute Prophet's family and lineage. The personal persona fashioned for the Paiute Prophet by the reputation and standing of his parents in the community was influential among the Paiute and Euro-American neighbors. In addition to the significant legacy of his parents, the communicated persona of Wovoka as a leader among his people identified the Paiute Prophet with his audience. Wovoka's identification with his auditors presented considerable impact on the audience's acceptance of his message. It is the heritage of his parents that provided for Wovoka a platform from which he could reach for something more, as well as obtain credibility among his audience through the power of identification.

In addition to the influence of his parents, Wovoka's upbringing in the Wilson household significantly influenced the development of the future prophet. After receiving an honorable discharge from the Union Army in 1863, David Wilson moved west with his new bride, Abigail Jane Butler. Along with David's two brothers, the couple settled in Mason Valley, "purchasing 220 acres of scrub land from the Wheeler brothers" (Hittman Wovoka 52). According to Dyer, the Wilson ranch was in the south end of Mason Valley near a canyon bearing the family's name (2). Paul Bailey says that it was on the Wilson ranch where Wovoka learned to "ride a horse, rope, brand and nut

a calf, how to pitch hay, how to clean a stable, and how to plow a straight furrow" (11).

In the Wilson home Wovoka was given his "white name," Jack Wilson, inextricably connecting the young Paiute with the family. Dyer says, "some particular effort was made by the lady of the house to read to the boy [Wovoka] some of the better known Bible stories" (2). Hittman indicates that the Wilson family were devout United Presbyterians who often shared their ideas of life after death, God, and Jesus with the future prophet any time Wovoka would ask questions (Wovoka 55-56).

According to Alice Fletcher, the story of the death of Jesus has made a stronger impression on Native Americans than the story of his life. As indicated by Fletcher, the manner of Christ's death is regarded as "additional evidence of the white man's inhumanity, he not having hesitated to attack the Son of God" (59). Robert Utley speculates that the future prophet was also interested in the story of Christ saying that in addition to the many powers and works performed by Jesus, Wovoka took note that "the whites had killed Jesus by nailing him to a cross" (64). Bailey postulates that Wovoka found the stories of Jesus interesting saying that despite his claims of being the son of God, there were "plenty of unbelievers. In spite of the wonders he taught, [and] the magic he did" (12).

Three years after their arrival in Mason Valley, David Wilson's younger brother, William, discovered gold in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and the settlement of Pine Grove, Nevada, appeared overnight (Hittman Wovoka 52).

According to Hittman, the Wilson mine, along with the two other mines in the area were producing revenues in the tens of millions of dollars, and by 1868, mines in the area had exhausted the local supply of pinion pine and had begun to bring wood in from more remote areas (Wovoka 51, 52). As discussed in chapter two, the pinion pine was not only a reliable source of food for the Paiute, but was also held as sacred (Hittman Wovoka 49). One of the jobs performed by Wovoka was cutting and gathering the sacred food source for the Wilson mine.

Compelling insight into the origin of Wovoka's name, as well as potential motivation behind his desire to help his people are found in an understanding of Wovoka's work for the Wilson mine. Hittman says that the translation of Wovoka's name is "The Wood Cutter," connoting his proficiency with the axe and removal of wood. Hittman goes on to postulate that the Paiute Prophet may have "suffered remorse on account of his chosen occupation" and questions whether this may be the "deus ex machina" or God's hand in the making of the Great Revelation (Wovoka 51). In addition, Hittman speculates that such an occupation may have invoked resentment among the Paiute towards those involved in the removal of the sacred groves (Wovoka 51). Burke offers insight into Wovoka's eventual abandonment of his occupation as woodcutter and rise to position as spiritual leader when he says that we seek identification with others as a result of our guilt for separation. Wovoka's occupation separated him from the deeply held beliefs of his people and the recognition of this separation developed a sense of remorse on the part of the

Paiute Prophet. This resulted in a need to find or even return to a life that amended the guilt by procuring a position within the Paiute community.

The impact of the Wilson family upon Wovoka and his personal persona among both the native inhabitants and the white settlers is apparent. The imprint of Christianity upon Wovoka's message found its roots in the study of the Bible in the Wilson home and their answers to questions the Paiute Prophet would ask concerning their theology. The name, Jack Wilson, tied him to the family and their reputation in the area as landowners and successful miners. His work for the Wilson family bolstered his reputation in the area as a hard worker. James Mooney made mention of this and spoke of Wovoka's "reputation among the whites for industry and reliability" (770). Hittman points out that his job as a woodcutter may have made him the subject of resentment among the Paiute and contributed to Wovoka realizing the role he should be filling as spiritual leader of his people.

While Wovoka's upbringing in the Wilson household presented unique influences on the communicated character of the Paiute Prophet and the formulation of his message, his employment and association with white settlers in the area was similar to that of his audience. Paiutes were often hired by white settlers for the removal of wood for the local mines and as laborers on ranches (Dangberg 26; Hittman 49). Wovoka's work for the Wilson family presented comparable experiences for the Paiute Prophet with his audience, presenting an area of consubstantiality with them based on these shared experiences. This presented a rhetorically potent persona based

on Wovoka's commonalities with his audience in lineage and occupation. Hammerback and Jensen postulate that the power of identification arises because we "find other people and their stories irresistible because part of each of us is made from the stories of others" (52). Wovoka's auditors found themselves and their experiences contained in the telling of Wovoka's story, which presented a powerfully influential persona for the Paiute Prophet.

Hammerback and Jensen note the potential influence found in the appearance of the rhetor and the available accounts paint an intriguing portrait of the Paiute Prophet. Mooney described his first encounter saying that as Wovoka approached "I saw that he was a young man, a dark full-blood, compactly built, and taller than the Paiute generally, being nearly 6 feet in height" (768-769). Mooney goes on to say that Wovoka was dressed in "white man's clothes, with the broad-brimmed white felt hat common in the west, secured on his head by means of a beaded ribbon under the chin" (769). In addition to a robe of rabbit skins, Mooney noted that the Paiute Prophet wore "a good pair of work boots" and that "[h]is hair was cut off square on a line below the base of his ears, after the manner of his tribe" (769). Mooney also took note of Wovoka's countenance saying it was "open and expressive of firmness and decision, but with no marked intellectuality" (769).

An important element of Wovoka's appearance was his manner of dress. Hittman notes that in many of the photographs of Wovoka "suit pants and jackets, white shirts, neckerchiefs, gold watches, vests with fobs, long black coats and Stetson hats predominate" (Wovoka 110). He goes on to point out

that in addition to the clothes of Euro-Americans, Wovoka wore a “feather in his hair, beaded gorget around his neck, beaded bandoleer across his chest and wound once around his waist, and beaded moccasins on his feet” (Wovoka 110). This telling description of the Paiute Prophet’s chosen attire offers insight into his position within both the Paiute and Euro-American worlds. Wovoka appropriated the appearance of his white occupier, while continuing to adorn his wardrobe with the accoutrements of the Native American.

Dyer provides a compelling description of Wovoka saying he was
 a tall, well proportioned man with piercing eyes, regular features, a
 deep voice and a calm and dignified mien. He stood straight as a
 ramrod, spoke slowly and by sheer projection of personality
 commanded the attention of any listener. He visibly stood out among
 his fellow Indians like a thoroughbred among a bunch of mustangs. (4)

The insight offered by Dyer’s description of Wovoka’s physical appearance presents an account of the Paiute Prophet’s manners in speech and personality. Wovoka’s appearance and its influence on his audience’s perception of his personal persona is an expansion on Aristotle’s concept of ethos and further identified the Paiute Prophet with his auditors. From this it is difficult to imagine that the Paiute Prophet would have any problems commanding notice from his audience.

Just as important as the appearance of Wovoka is the presentation of self through language. Burke makes clear the importance of speaking the

language of those you are trying to identify with, saying that you “persuade a man [or woman] only insofar as you can talk his [sic] language” (Rhetoric 55). Wovoka could speak English, but *when* the Paiute Prophet chose to use it is important to recognize. Bailey says that the Wilson’s “commanded him [Wovoka] in the white man’s talk, which he quickly learned” (11). The work of researchers like Dangberg and Hittman, along with personal accounts of those who knew the Paiute Prophet, makes it clear that Wovoka was able to speak English. However, it is interesting to note that when Wovoka spoke to his people concerning his revelation and teachings, and when Mooney was sent by the Federal Government to interview him, the Paiute Prophet spoke in his native tongue. Mooney reports using Ed Dyer as a translator in his investigation into the Ghost Dance phenomenon, and indicates that his help was essential in conversing with Wovoka (771). It is clear that Wovoka was knowledgeable in the language of his Euro-American neighbors but in regards to discussions pertaining to the precepts of his religion, he used the language of his father.

In addition to Wovoka’s physical appearance, the use of his native language when talking about the precepts of his religion further solidified his connection to his audience. It also demonstrated his desire to remain indistinguishable from his message and the myth from which it originated, despite the commonalities it shared with Christian faith. The Christian influence upon Wovoka’s message is clear but it was Wovoka’s presentation

of that message in the language and style of his audience that made it something they could identify with.

The personal persona of Wovoka as communicated to his audience by his heritage, upbringing, and appearance provided a powerful portrait of a man with the character required to guide his people through a time of uncertainty. The Paiute Prophet was interested in being more than just a medicine man and was concerned with finding answers to the problems plaguing his people. Wovoka's formative years had prepared him for the task of prescribing changes to his audiences' perception of their own identity. It also provided a formidable background that established his reputation among his auditors. In the development of his rhetorical career, the personal persona of Wovoka proved to be capable of influence and a means of identifying himself with his audience and message.

Substantive Message

In order to bring about a better way of life for his people, Wovoka saw fundamental change in his audience as essential. The presence of Euro-Americans in the area had brought about devastating changes to his peoples' way of life. The continued encroachment of white settlers on Paiute lands and involvement in their daily activities was continuing and there appeared to be no end in sight. The Euro-American presence was unavoidable and Wovoka sought to make this co-existence as peaceful and fruitful as possible. The future prophet had learned firsthand the benefits associated with working and

getting along with the white occupiers, and believed that harmony between the two races was important to the survival of his people and it was a message that Wovoka personified in the enactment of his own doctrine.

During a full eclipse of the sun on New Years Day of 1889, Wovoka experienced a dream he describes by saying, “[w]hen the Sun died, I went up to Heaven and saw God and all the people who had died a long time ago. God told me to come back and tell my people they must be good and love one another, and not fight, or steal or lie. He gave me this dance to give to my people” (Mooney 771). On the day of his vision, Wovoka was chopping wood in the Pine Grove Mountains when he heard a “great noise.” Wovoka then went towards the noise and while walking, the prophet fainted. However long the prophet remained “dead,” his awakening during a solar eclipse led Paiute Indians to believe that he had “saved” the sun and prevented the end of the universe. After he awakened, Wovoka “announced that he had been to Heaven and conversed with ‘God’” (Hittman Wovoka 63).

At this point, Wovoka’s connection to his message begins to emerge. For the Paiute, Wovoka’s “awakening” during the eclipse of the sun positioned him as the one who prevented the destruction of the universe. Preventing annihilation and obtaining the Ghost Dance from God connected Wovoka with his rhetoric. In addition to this explicit connection of Wovoka to his discourse, the implicit connection is his communicated self-portrait. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson’s treatment of Barbara Jordan’s keynote address demonstrated the effectiveness of the rhetor becoming the

“proof of the truth of what is said” (408). Just like Jordan, Wovoka’s life history, to that point, made him the proof of the benefits of working for and getting along with the Euro-American neighbors. Wovoka’s incarnation of his doctrine exerted considerable influence upon his audience.

Wovoka’s Great Revelation of New Years Day was only one of many visions he had had up to that point (Hittman Wovoka 63). However, the precepts contained in his Great Revelation found increased acceptance after he seemed to demonstrate control over the weather, and it was at that point when reports begin to emerge of Ghost Dances taking place in the area.

On April 20, 1889, an article appeared in the *Lyon County Times*, which Brad Logan believes to be “the first mention of what was probably a Ghost Dance” (267). The article says “[t]he Piutes [sic] of Mason Valley had a big rain dance last week. Their big man who formerly brought rain when they desired it, died last summer, and therefore they have taken it upon themselves to pray for rain in their peculiar maner [sic]” (“Rain Dance” N. pag.). Logan postulates that the “reference to a ‘big man’ who died may be a misunderstanding” (268). He says that there was possible confusion in the relating of the story of Wovoka’s revelation in which he “died” and went to heaven to converse with God.

In addition to the article being one of the first newspaper accounts of Wovoka’s activity in the area, it is also a report of the Ghost Dance itself, which became a central part of Wovoka’s doctrine. God told Wovoka that Paiutes and other Native Americans should perform a dance lasting five days

and the ceremonies should be repeated every three months. Unfortunately, little is known about the actual Ghost Dance ceremony. Hittman points out that “Yerington Paiutes can only vaguely recall those ‘dances’ Jack Wilson ‘put up’” (Wovoka 63).

In his discussion of the 1870 Ghost Dance, Hittman indicated that Wodziwob’s use of the Round Dance ceremony within the annual pinion nut festival enabled him to graft “the religious movement he founded upon Paiute culture” (“1870 Ghost Dance” 264). Dancing was an integral part of the Paiute life and Wovoka’s use of the Ghost Dance could have done for him what it did for Wodziwob. Wovoka’s dance further developed the connection between his audience and his message, which he embodied. Wovoka’s use of dance in his ceremonies also presented another means for him to build a connection with his audience. The previous chapter pointed out Burke’s insistence on the ability of “formal patterns” to “waken an attitude of collaborative expectancy” which invites participation in the discussion (Burke Rhetoric 58). The formal patterns presented by Wovoka were not only apparent in the use of dance but in a doctrine that shared commonalities with the Native American prophets that preceded him. Wovoka’s Ghost Dance presented an area of overlap between his audience and the new doctrine. This area of commonality presented a pattern the Paiute recognized and their familiarity with its function within their culture and myth invited their participation in Wovoka’s discourse.

As ceremonies of the Ghost Dance increased, Euro-American interest in the religion developed and then was amplified by the incident at Wounded

Knee. In response to the growing religion, the U.S. Government sent Arthur I. Chapman and Mooney to investigate Wovoka and his Ghost Dance.

Ordered by Brigadier General John Gibbon, commander of the Military Department of the Pacific, the Indian scout, Chapman, went out to find and interview the 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet. Further insight is given into Wovoka's vision by Chapman's interview with Captain Josephus of the Indian police. Josephus said that when Wovoka was taken to heaven "it was the most beautiful country you could imagine; that he saw both Indians and white, who were all young; that God told him that when the people died here on this earth, if they were good, they come to heaven, and he made them young again and they never grew to be old afterwards" (Logan 285). Josephus goes on to say that when Wovoka went home that night, God came to him again and "told him to tell all the people that they must not fight, there must be peace all over the world; that the people must not steal from one another, but be good to each other, for they were all brothers" (Logan 285).

In his interview with Mooney, Wovoka again talked about the tenets of the religion he brought back from the mountain saying that he told his people that "they must be good and love one another, have no quarreling, and live in peace with the whites" (772). Hittman says other instructions "included the injunction of certain Judeo-Christian apodictic laws: no lying, no stealing, no wars. Moreover, he was told that Numus [Northern Paiutes] should learn to get along with each other and with other tribes, and with Tibo'o [whites] as well, for whom they should additionally work" (Wovoka 64). In exchange for

devotion, God promised rejuvenated youth in heaven to those who followed the precepts of the revelation.

The same principles of peace and cooperation were explained to both Chapman and Mooney. The government investigators reported that Wovoka promised rejuvenated youth and a rewarding life after death for adherence to precepts that called for peace with the white man. Wovoka's embodiment of these principles bridged the Paiute Prophet's ethos with the arguments of his message. According to Martha Solomon, that bridge has the potential of presenting a powerful rhetorical tool (190) that Wovoka could use to persuade his audience to enact or even embody the message he personified.

At this point in the discussion certain parallels begin to emerge between the Paiute Prophet and the Apostle Paul. It is important to explicate the similarities in order to establish the potential influence of Wovoka's personification of the apostolic form upon his message and audience.

According to John W. Shepherd, "[i]t was Saul's plan to exterminate Christianity" (61). His attempts at stopping the spread of Christianity took him to Damascus where Saul heard that followers of Christ were teaching his word in the synagogues. With a group of armed temple guards, Saul set out from Jerusalem to Damascus. Shepherd speculates that the group journeyed on foot, which would have taken seven days (62). Shepherd says that on his journey Saul was in a "disturbed state of mind" despite thinking that he was doing the will of God. It was on the road to Damascus where a vision of the resurrected Christ converted Saul to Christianity. Saul later changed his name

to Paul and authored almost half of the 27 books comprising the New Testament.

It was on the outskirts of Damascus where Saul and his group were engulfed by a light described as “above the brightness of the sun” (Acts 22:6). Paul recounts the story of his conversion saying that when the light came about him he fell to the ground and heard a voice say, “Saul, why persecutest thou me?” (Acts 22:6-7). Paul responded asking who it was that spoke to him. The voice responded saying “I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest” (Acts 22:8). When Paul asked what he should do, he was told to go to the town of Damascus where “it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do” (Acts 22:10). Having been blinded by the vision, Paul remained in Damascus for the next three days and neither ate nor drank during that time. Ananias, a disciple of Christ came to him, restored his vision and baptized Paul. He was told to return to Jerusalem and await further instruction. Paul said, “when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance” (Acts 22:17). It was then that the Lord appeared to Paul and advised him to leave the city and spread his teachings. Shepherd says that this “was not a mere subjective phantasm, but an actual vision” (63). Years later Paul would use the vision as a means of asserting authority saying “Am not I an Apostle? Have not I seen Jesus our Lord?” (I Corinthian 9:1).

The personal persona and substantive message constructed by what has been communicated about the Paiute Prophet has illustrated some striking

resemblances to the conversion of Paul. Wovoka's journey through the mountains to remove the sacred pinion pine for the Wilson mine could be likened to the conversion of Paul. Wovoka's active decimation of the sacred groves was his road to Damascus whereupon he died and went to heaven, just as Paul was blinded and given a message. God revealed himself to both prophets and told them to anticipate further instruction. Both prophets were converted and spread the message of their visions through sermon and as we shall see, through letter. Just as Paul did before him, Wovoka used his position as the mouthpiece of God to assert his authority and power. In addition to the commonalities shared with Paul, the communicated story of Wovoka bares striking resemblance to the pattern manifested by many of the earlier Native American prophets. In all of these cases there is an illustration of the prophetic form and the manner in which it can garner influence upon the audience's perception of the rhetor's personal persona and message. The noted parallels between Wovoka and the Apostle Paul do not end here, as this chapter will demonstrate later with the analysis of Wovoka's Messiah Letter.

The Paiute Prophet was not without his skeptics among Native Americans. In an article appearing in *The Journal of American Folklore*, Albert S. Gatschet presented a report of three Cheyenne Indians who went to see Wovoka in the Fall of 1890. One of the men, a Mr. Porcupine, provides an interesting account of Wovoka. Porcupine recounts his visit saying that "[i]n the night, when I first saw him I thought he was an Indian; but the next day, when I could see him better, he looked different; he was not so dark as an Indian, nor so

light as a white man" (Gatschet 110). Porcupine goes on to describe Wovoka saying that "I heard that Christ had been crucified, and I looked to see, and I saw a scar on his wrist and one on his face and he seemed to be the man" (Gatschet 110). Porcupine said that Wovoka claimed to be the son of God and the creator of "everything you see around you" (Gatschet 110). Porcupine then ends by saying, "[p]lease don't follow the ideas of that man. He is not the Christ. No man in the world can see God at any time. Even the angels of God cannot" (Gatschet 111).

Gatschet ends his article by offering his own depiction of Wovoka based on "biographical facts." He indicated that "[t]here is no doubt that his [Wovoka] religious teachings rest on a well-or-dained [sic] religious system, and, in spite of the numerous false reports that are spread about him, he does not claim to be either God or Jesus Christ, the Messiah, or any divine, superhuman being whatever" (111). Gatschet goes on to point out that God admonished Wovoka "to work zealously among his fellow-men in promoting good morals and delegated special powers to him to this effect" (111).

It is interesting to note that this article was written in 1893, and illustrates the Euro-American understanding of Wovoka's message at the time. The author of the article has not only communicated the persona and message of the Paiute Prophet based on biographical facts, but Gatschet refutes the claims of the informant as well. This would seem to indicate that Wovoka's message was not only one that the Native American could identify with, but one with which some Euro-Americans found commonalities. Gatschet noted

the “special powers” given to Wovoka, and as research has discovered, some of these powers were of the political nature.

According to Hittman, God told Wovoka that he would share the American Presidency with Benjamin Harrison (Wovoka 151-152). Harrison would be the president over the East and Wovoka would preside over the lands to the West. Mooney reports that at one point the Ghost Dance Prophet requested that Indian agent James O. Gregory draft a letter and forward it to President Harrison. According to Gregory, Wovoka asked that the letter contain “a statement of his supernatural claims” and in exchange for a monthly stipend, Wovoka would “keep Nevada people informed of all the latest news from heaven and to furnish rain whenever wanted” (Mooney 773). Hittman notes Wovoka remained politically active throughout his life. The 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet predicted the election of Woodrow Wilson, expressed an interest in intervening in a dispute between Utah officials and Ute Indians, and sent a congratulatory radiogram to the newly elected Charles Curtis, Herbert Hoover’s Native American Vice President (Hittman Wovoka 151-157).

Wovoka’s political involvement demonstrated the Paiute Prophet’s interest in finding commonalities with his Euro-American neighbors and illustrates his deeply held belief that a better life for his audience could be found in a peaceful existence with the whites. Wovoka was certain of his position on earth and the role he had as Native American representative to the U.S. Government.

There are a number of instances in which Wovoka was reported to have control over the elements. As mentioned above, the revelation given to Wovoka was slow in gaining followers until the prophet demonstrated his control over the weather. Mooney learned from Wovoka's uncle, Charley Sheep, that God gave Wovoka five songs for making it rain, "the first of which brings on a mist or cloud, the second a snowfall, the third a shower, and the fourth a hard rain or storm, while when he sings the fifth song the weather again becomes clear" (772-773).

Dangberg related another story of Wovoka's control over the weather. She notes that Wovoka worked for a rancher named Dan Simpson, and during the time of the drought, the Ghost Dance Prophet demonstrated his power over the elements. Wovoka promised Simpson rain in exchange for beef.

Dangberg reports that Simpson refused at first "but later, when his cattle began to die, he promised Jack one beef if he would make it rain" (27). After the end of the drought, Dangberg's source says that Mr. Simpson continued to provide Wovoka with beef (27).

Wovoka's apparent control over the weather furthered his connection to his message. Hittman notes, "by accurately prophesying rain, Walker River Reservation Numus [Northern Paiutes] with their crops saved would have been convinced that Wovoka had powers over the natural elements" (Wovoka 67). The Paiute Prophet's communicated self-portrait was that of God's mouthpiece. Wovoka's control over the weather demonstrated his connection

to God and this in turn merged Wovoka with the substantive message he was sharing with his audience.

After retreating into semi-seclusion, Wovoka traveled to “Indian reservations in Wyoming, Montana, and Kansas, as well as to the former Indian Territory of Oklahoma several times” (Hittman Wovoka 127). In addition to his travels, the 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet maintained correspondence with other tribes and developed an income from selling items such as magpie and eagle feathers, as well as red paint used in the Ghost Dance ceremonies.

Much like the apostle Paul, Wovoka received letters from the faithful with questions regarding various aspects of the religion. Dangberg has compiled a collection of 21 letters sent to Wovoka between 1908 and 1911 that yield a rich illustration of the correspondence carried on between Wovoka and the people who followed his teachings. Dangberg says that the letters were written “by men [Wovoka] met on his journeys east, by men who had heard his message from others, and, in some cases, by those who had visited him” (Letters to Jack 285). The letters ranged from requests for sacred paint used in the Ghost Dance ceremonies to tribes asking for rain. As the letters to Wovoka indicate, many of those who called him the messiah would ask for his help in healing their sick (Dangberg Letters to Jack 285).

Sixteen of the 21 letters begin by addressing Wovoka as “Father” (Dangberg Letters to Jack 288-295). Many of the letters ask for sacred items used in the ghost dance. It is clear that many of them send the prophet money

for the items as one writes, “I ask of you to get you soft red paint, & feathers again, hear me father I stand before you to day, I will send you \$2.50 a pices [sic]” (Dangberg Letters to Jack 190). Similar instances of offerings are noted regarding the Apostle Paul. Shepherd observes that the letters sent to Paul would sometimes be accompanied by gifts and money for the prophet (490). Dangberg reports that Wovoka sent his correspondents red paint and several kinds of medicine in exchange for money and goods but as with any other religion, “poor people could ask for the paint and medicine and receive it for nothing” (Letters to Jack 286). While we do not have any of the responses sent out by Wovoka to the letters contained in Dangberg’s collection, the Messiah Letter offers insight into what the prophet’s response to the many letters might have been. This letter from the Paiute Prophet is discussed later in the analysis of its epistle form.

The rhetorical career of the Paiute Prophet presented a message of hope to his people by offering them a reward of a better life and promised rejuvenation in the life to come through adherence to the precepts of his message. Wovoka’s embodiment of his substantive message tied him to his rhetoric and as evidenced by the discussion of his personal persona, the identifying power of the Paiute Prophet’s heritage, upbringing, and appearance provided a means for him to identify with his audience. This identification made the message of Wovoka doubly powerful because of his audience’s willingness to accept the tenets of a rhetor they identified with. Through the presentation of his message of peace and cooperation with the

Euro-Americans, Wovoka sought the reconstitution of his audience's perception of their own identity. The new identity of his audience can be discovered in the "implied auditor" within Wovoka's message.

Second Persona

As explained by Hammerback and Jensen, the qualities of the second persona can be implied, as when a rhetor calls for action that requires a specific type of person, or the rhetor can explicitly describe the second persona by listing the qualities required. While Wovoka was making specific demands of his audience in order to enact change among his people, some of the implied qualities advocated by the Paiute Prophet were discrete in their placement within his message. The implied qualities of Wovoka's message find their roots in the influence of Christian faith.

As discussed above, the Christian influence on Wovoka's teachings begin with the Wilson Household in which Wovoka would have been exposed on a daily basis to Presbyterian teachings. The family read daily from the Bible and stories of Elijah and other Hebrew Prophets may have heavily influenced the young Wovoka (Hittman Wovoka 107-126). Mooney also believes that another influence on the Ghost Dance prophet might have been the Shakers of the Pacific Northwest (746-763). In addition to the Shaker religion, there are a number of researchers who believe that Mormonism contributed to the ideology of the Ghost Dance (Bailey 64-75; Barney; Mooney 777-791).

It is difficult to know what passages from the Bible might have been read at the Wilson ranch or to determine which variation of Christianity presented the most influence; however, it is possible to see similarities between teachings presented in the Christian Bible and the actions of Wovoka during his rhetorical career. Hittman points out a number of intriguing passages from the Bible that bear a striking resemblance to some of the occurrences within the 1890 Ghost Dance. Hittman says that the similarities to the “miracles and prophecies of Wovoka” found in these Bible passages suggest that perhaps he was exposed to “Hebrew Prophets such as Elijah, in addition to the Glad Tidings of Jesus of Nazareth” (Wovoka 61). Passages from the Bible suggested by Hittman can guide discussion of the similar miracles found in both Christianity and Wovoka’s Ghost Dance, and shed some insight into the constructed second persona of Wovoka’s message.

A passage reported by Hittman which points to commonalities says, “Then he stretched out over the child three times, and cried out to the Lord saying, ‘O Lord my God, let this child’s life return to this body!’” (*I Kings* 17:21). As the letters to Wovoka indicate, many of those who called him the messiah would ask for his help in healing their sick. One newspaper account says that at one point Wovoka is believed to have revived a dead child. On November 12, 1890, the *Walker Lake Bulletin* reported a story told among the Paiutes of a family grieving for the loss of their little girl. Wovoka told the family not to be sad anymore because in three days the girl would return to life. The newspaper reported that “according to solemn assurance of several ‘good’

Indians" the prediction "came to pass" ("This so-called Messiah" N. pag.). While the newspaper article does not mention the Paiute Prophet by name both Hittman and Logan attribute the miracle reported in the paper to Wovoka (Hittman 61; Lagan 268-269).

In addition to the similarities pointed out by Hittman, other aspects of the Ghost Dance religion provide a compelling argument for the existence of commonalities between Christianity and Wovoka's substantive message. One of the most sacred aspects of the Christian faith imparted by Jesus to his disciples is the ceremonious practice of the sacrament. The story is told in St Matthew saying, "he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (26:28-29). There are similarities to the Christian sacrament found in what is known as Wovoka's miracle of the block of ice. There were instances when Wovoka would cause a block of ice to fall from the sky or to float down the river in the middle of July. Dangberg retells the story saying that after the ice had fallen, the block would be put in a tub and "as the ice melted the ice water [was] ceremoniously drunk" as if it "might have been sacramental wine judging from the solemnity" ("Wovoka" 14).

The sacred act of sacrament is not the only ceremony where it is possible to see the influence of Christianity on 1890 Ghost Dance. Some aspects of Wovoka's Dance are reminiscent of Baptism in the Christian faith. As part of the Ghost Dance ceremony, participants were asked to bathe after the fifth

day of the dance. Wovoka also asked followers to bathe “in the Walker River after the Miracle of the Block of Ice from Heaven” (Hittman Wovoka 59).

Outside of the Wilson home researches point to two additional religious influences that may have played a role in shaping Wovoka’s doctrine. By 1890 members The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints had begun to colonize in every direction from the Great Salt Lake Valley. Although there is no evidence on either side of the issue, scholars are divided in their conclusions as to whether or not Wovoka ever came into contact with Mormon missionaries. Utley says that Wovoka was “exposed to Mormon teachings but rejected them”. Barney points out that “Wovoka was not a member of the Mormon Church, but that his daughter was” and among others, Mooney writes about the interest members of the Mormon Church took in Wovoka and their belief that Native Americans are direct descendants of the House of Israel (Utley 65; Barney 93; Mooney 792). Combined with a possible Mormon influence, Utley points to the Shaker Religion prominent on Puget Sound, saying that this religion “was a strange combination of Catholic pageantry, Presbyterian austerity, and pagan witchcraft” (65). Utley notes that Wovoka “learned the doctrine, participated in some of its rituals, and observed its regenerating effects upon converts” (65). Despite the divided opinions on the origin of basic principles within the Ghost Dance Movement, the presence of Christian influence is clear.

The apparent influence of the Christian faith in Wovoka’s message creates an interesting second persona for his audience. While his audience may not

have been aware of the similarities shared by Wovoka's message and the teaching of Jesus, it was presented in the telling of a story that they were familiar with and it invited their participation. The implied auditor created by Wovoka's substantive message was a disciple of Christ, and by identifying with native myth that comprised Wovoka's message, the audience was compelled to participate in the Paiute Prophet's call for a reformation of identity.

In addition to implied auditors, Wovoka's message also contained explicit descriptions of qualities that followers of his doctrine should possess. Wovoka admonished his audience to not lie, steal or make war. He told them that in addition to getting along with his Euro-American neighbors, they should work for them as well. Wovoka did not see the Native American as subservient to the white settlers, placing them on equal ground as their brothers. This is the explicit second persona constructed by Wovoka's rhetorical history.

The Messiah Letter

This research has noted a number of striking parallels between Wovoka and the prophets that preceded him. The rhetorical history of the Paiute Prophet also provides an understanding of the major events and basic tenets of the religion and is constructed by what has been communicated about Wovoka and his Ghost Dance. In addition to what has been said about the Paiute Prophet there are surviving texts originating from Wovoka that deserve careful attention. Wovoka's Messiah Letter provides another illustration of the

similarities present in the apostolic form, which allows the rhetor to project their position of power and authority as the mouthpiece of God. To understand Wovoka's substantive message and how his personification of that message persuaded an audience to take on the attributes of the constructed second persona, this analysis now turns to the epistle form found in Wovoka's Messiah Letter.

The message Wovoka offered the Paiute nation would eventually spread like wildfire to a people desperate to find comfort in a world that offered little more than despair. The Ghost Dance soon found its way to other tribes through letters sent by the Paiute Prophet as well as through Native Americans who listened to his message and then shared it with others. As news of the new religion spread, delegations from other tribes traveled to Wovoka in order to receive his teachings. Upon their arrival, the delegations received instruction from Wovoka along with a letter and paint to be used in the ceremony of the Ghost Dance. The letter outlined the basic principles of the religion and the dance itself saying that they should dance "four successive nights, and the last night keep up the dance until the morning of the fifth day" (1)¹.

The letters given by the Paiute Prophet to the Cheyenne and Arapaho delegates in August of 1891, are presented in Mooney's book. The letters were written by one of the Arapaho delegates and were later translated into better English by a daughter of Black Short Nose who was one of the

¹ All parenthetical citations of Wovoka's "Messiah Letter" are paragraph numbers. See Appendix.

Cheyenne delegates present at that meeting. Mooney also offers his own translation of the two letters for “the benefit of those not accustomed to Carlisle English” (780), and it is Mooney’s rendering that will serve as subject for this analysis. Mooney is able to offer a single interpretation as a standing representation of the letters sent to both the Cheyenne and Arapaho because of their similarities. From this we can presume that the letters sent out by the Paiute Prophet would often follow similar patterns and contain common components much like the Apostle Paul’s epistles.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the basic form assumed by Paul’s epistles was that of a public letter sent out to congregations with questions regarding the tenets and practice of the early Christian church. These public letters were intended to act as sermons and as a means for those in authority to communicate with members they could not have face-to-face conversations with. By procuring the position of Apostle or mouthpiece of God, Paul was able to identify with those in the Christian community and demonstrate his position of authority. Outside of the beginning and ending of the epistle, the structural elements of the form do not adhere to a specific ordering but are simply contained in the letter. The greeting can be found anywhere in the letter and establishes goodwill between the sender and the receiver. Paul would also include a wish that he could one day meet or be reunited with those he was speaking. The body of the letter was not interested in converting but simply bolstering the reasons for adherence to the designed precepts of the religion. The body of the letter accomplished this by first offering general

doctrine followed by admonitions. Finally, the epistle is held together by the beginning and ending. The beginning offered thanks or blessing and the ending would contain a wish for peace, benediction and sometimes a last-minute list of instructions. These elements comprise the form found within the epistles of Paul and constitute a means by which he presented his position as the one who was sent to bring the message of God to his people.

The purpose of Wovoka's letter was to encourage the delegates to take the religion, as he outlined it, back to their tribe. As discussed earlier, word of Wovoka's prophecies and miracles spread across the country and those who were interested in hearing his message sent members of their tribe to meet the Paiute Prophet. They would journey to Nevada in hopes of talking to the prophet and observing this phenomenon firsthand. The letters that were dictated and sent back to the various tribes functioned just as the epistles of Paul did. The purpose of Wovoka's letters was to provide instruction for those with whom he could not personally communicate. The letters of Wovoka contained the basic principles of the Ghost Dance and would act as a sermon as it was read to the various tribes after the delegation's return from Nevada.

As the mouthpiece for God, Wovoka has assumed the role of prophet. He was given this role as heir to his father's position as religious leader of the Paiute but he also makes this clear in the letter as he talks about the message coming from God. Regardless of the role he was given by birthright, he makes it clear that he speaks on God's behalf. He does this when he outlines the tenets of the religion. Wovoka does not say that these teachings are his own

but that the “Grandfather says” (4). According to Mooney, this is a “universal title of reverence among Indians and here meaning the messiah” (781). By positioning himself as an apostle of God, Wovoka has not only established his credibility but has created a place for himself within the community by identifying with his audience. By speaking on behalf of “the Grandfather,” (4) and Jesus (5), Wovoka has included the terms that Burke has identified as necessary for a religious dialogue (Language 46).

In addition to positioning himself as the voice of God on earth, Wovoka’s letter offers another element that is common to those written by Paul. Paul would always include a prayer for an anticipated meeting with those to whom he was writing or a hope for a reunion. It is clear that Wovoka is eager to maintain contact with those who have come to him for guidance when he says, “I want you to come again in three months, some from each tribe there” (2). He has not only hoped for a quick reunion but has made a request for a specified time. It is also clear from earlier discussions that Wovoka spent a great deal of time traveling to other areas of the country visiting the tribes that were writing him.

The greeting of Wovoka’s letter is found in the middle of the text where he says “[t]his young man has a good father and mother” (4). As explained by Mullins, the greeting does not always appear in the beginning of the letter and was a way of establishing goodwill with the audience. Mooney indicates that the “young man” Wovoka is referring to is “the young Arapaho who wrote down this message of Wovoka for the delegation” (781). Wovoka’s greeting

not only established a sense of goodwill with the immediate audience but also the eventual audience of the letter. Wovoka further establishes goodwill and a personal connection with the audience expressing genuine interest in his people. He tells his audience that he cares about them saying “[I] love you all, and my hart is full of gladness” (2). Wovoka tells them that he will send them rain and a “good spirit” (2). His intent is to project an image of a loving messenger.

The body of Wovoka’s letter outlines the basic tenets of the religion, telling them they “must not cry” when their friends die (4). He continues by saying that they “must not hurt anybody or do harm to anyone” (4). Wovoka tells them not to fight and to do right because it will satisfy them (4). He goes on to explain the importance of working for the white man and not to cause trouble (6). The body of the Messiah Letter then goes on to describe for the audience the reasons for adhering to the principles of the religion. Wovoka speaks to them about the dead being alive again and that while it is unclear to him when they will return, they will be coming soon (5). Wovoka continues by telling them “there will be no sickness and everyone will be young again” (5). The Paiute Prophet also talks about Jesus being on the earth (5). The body of the letter has two distinct sections. The first offers general doctrine of the Ghost Dance and then it is followed by practical reasons for following that doctrine. It is interesting to note an exception to the structure of the letter’s body. An important part of the religion begins the letter as he tells them the basic

principles of the dance itself. This section seems as though it belongs in the body of Wovoka's text and yet it precedes any formal salutation.

While the letter starts with a description of the dance, it is followed by a salutation and a statement of goodwill. Wovoka says "I, Jack Wilson, love you all, and my hart is full of gladness" (2). The Paiute Prophet thanks them for their gifts, which is reminiscent of the practice of sending Paul gifts. The salutation continues with a promise of rain saying, "[w]hen you get home I shall give you a good cloud which will make you fell good" (2). This would fall in line with the epistle form including a wish for peace as well as the formal salutation. The letter concludes quickly with last-minute instructions concerning the dance (7). Wovoka says, "[t]hat is all. You will receive good word again from me some time" (7). In this ending we see that Wovoka continues to emulate the Pauline epistle as he concludes with a list of further instructions and then a promise of further communication. The last line of the letters says, "[d]o not tell lies" (7). This line seems to be a bit out of place but it does align with Calvin Roetzel's description of a "battery of last-minute instruction" (25).

From Wovoka's letter it is clear that the intended audience is the Native American when he admonishes them to "not tell the white people about this" (5). Mooney points out that the daughter of Black Short Nose, who translated the letter erased this portion before it was given to Mooney but he said, "the lines were still plainly visible" (780). Each letter was given to a specific tribe and given to that particular audience but an analysis of letters going to

Arapaho and Cheyenne show distinct similarities that would indicate that the same basic message was delivered to all audiences. As this message spread to other tribal nations however, each tribe would attach to the new religion their own meaning and symbols based on their individual mythology.

Just as Paul did in the Epistles, Wovoka used the correspondence as a forum for espousing the tenets of the religion for his people. There are some elements of Wovoka's letter that do not fall in line with the structure of the epistle as it has been presented; however, the similarity in form to the epistles written by Paul cannot be ignored and offers compelling insight into how the adoption of an apostolic persona can yield tremendous influential power on the transformation of an audience. While fairly simple, the letter has much to say about Wovoka and his teachings. He extends a hand of goodwill to those who read the letter while presenting himself as the mouthpiece of God. He outlines the Ghost Dance religion, giving instruction as well as promises of hope if the teachings are followed. While Wovoka was not a scholar of the Bible, his letter does contain the elements found within the epistle form. In addition to depicting the Paiute Prophet as a representative of God, the epistle form identifies him with his audience. He admonishes them to live in peace with the whites and predicts the coming of "Armageddon" but tells them not to be afraid because if they are good, they will not be harmed. The religion offers hope for a revitalization of the native culture and teaches peace. The letter is a highly persuasive means by which Wovoka was able to position himself as

the messenger of God, bringing his people happy tidings in exchange for compliance with the tenets of the religion.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Wovoka wanted to accomplish more than his father and rose to a position that was much loftier than medicine man. He had aspirations for greatness among his people and as Ed Dyer pointed out, the Paiute Prophet wanted to be “something more than just another Indian” (3). The tremendous devastation to the Paiute culture and way of life brought about by Euro-American expansion served as a platform from which Wovoka could present his message of change.

In the late 1800’s there was a concentrated effort on the part of the U.S. government to “Americanize” the native population. In addition to breaking up and selling the little land remaining in Native American possession, part of the government’s plans to “civilize the savage” was prohibiting the practice of dancing, religious rites, and traditional rituals. Despite U.S. policy, Wovoka called upon his audience to abandon the modern and return to the ways of their fathers. The rhetorical power of the Paiute Prophet’s message grew from his position as God’s messenger and the relationship between his personal persona, a message his audience identified with, and a second persona that

helped bring to the surface the personal qualities the audience needed to adopt the tenets of the Ghost Dance.

Looking at the history of Wovoka from a rhetorical perspective allows for an understanding of how he fundamentally changed his audience and the means used to achieve that aim. This analysis has explored the native prophets that preceded Wovoka as well as the conditions and concerns facing the Paiute Prophet and his auditors. Through a construction of what other people have said and written about the Paiute Prophet's history and life, this treatment of Wovoka's rhetorical career has also examined his response to the debilitating effects of Euro-American expansion and his efforts to bring his people a message of hope. In order to demonstrate the ability of Wovoka's rhetoric to transform his audience this research applied Hammerback and Jensen's model for analyzing reconstitutive rhetoric and explored our understanding of the Pauline Epistolary form and its parallels to Wovoka's own correspondence. With the theoretical foundation constructed by this study it was possible to reveal how the merger of Wovoka's character and message allowed him to persuade and reformulate his audience.

This extrinsic look at the rhetorical career of Wovoka has illuminated his background and its effects on his message and auditors. The audience's view of Wovoka's personal qualities was an amalgamation of his heritage, upbringing and appearance. Wovoka's personal persona was rooted in the heritage of a medicine man, Numu-tibo'o, who stood against white usurpation of Paiute land in western Nevada. The work ethic of the Paiute Prophet's

mother found eventual fruition in the tenets of the religion, which Wovoka personified as evidenced by his reputation among whites and Paiutes as an excellent worker. It was in the Wilson home where the Paiute Prophet listened to readings of the bible and learned of the miracles of Jesus. Giving Wovoka his white name connected him with the Wilson reputation and associated him with a family whose legacy in the area was as big as the canyon named after them.

It is apparent that the 1890 Ghost Dance Prophet stood out among other Paiutes in the area and that his manner of speech was one that garnered attention. His position, depicted by Ed Dyer as a thoroughbred among mustangs, was combined with an appearance that straddled two worlds. His wearing of both white man's clothing and native trappings demonstrated his insistence that the survival of his audience depended on both cooperation with their Euro-American neighbors and an adherence to the ways of their native ancestors.

The personal persona of Wovoka not only gained him a position of prominence among his people but also made him one with whom his audience could relate. Wovoka shared with his auditors a desire for survival in both sustenance and culture. Just as many of the Paiutes in the area, Wovoka worked for the white man in order to endure but he saw a need for fundamental change if the ways of his people were to carry on as well. The identifying power of Wovoka's personal persona with his audience bore considerable influence as he presented his message of fundamental change

given to him by God. The persuasive power of identification and its links to the speaker's ethos further our understanding of the human need to connect with those around us.

Wovoka's Ghost Dance was not just for the Paiute but all Native Americans and if he was able to share his arguments, enlightenment, and miracles with all who would listen, he believed they would be transformed and would obtain a better life. The substantive message of the Paiute Prophet presented his audience with the promise of rejuvenated youth in heaven for adherence to the religion's precepts. Wovoka's personification of this message was both unspoken and obvious and through these means of connecting himself with his discourse the Paiute Prophet was able to offer himself as proof of the benefits of transformation.

The Paiute Prophet offered his ideas for fundamental change in a manner that emulated the prophets that preceded him, allowing him to present the message in a way his audience recognized and that invited their participation. Wovoka's use of his native language in teaching the religion's tenets bridged his ethos with the discourse, which further solidified the persuasiveness of his message. In addition to the familiar myth present in his story and speaking the language of his audience, Wovoka's appearance itself was an implicit connection between the Paiute Prophet and his exhortations to live in peace with white settlers while holding to the ways of their fathers.

Acting as the mouthpiece of God and offering his audience the vision that was shared with him on the mountaintop connected him with that message.

Through his supposed control over the weather and his ability to recover the sun from eclipse and ward off the end of the universe, the Paiute Prophet further demonstrated the powers he held as a result of his position. These demonstrations effectively confirmed for his audience the divine position he held and the legitimacy of his teachings. Both the implicit and explicit ties between Wovoka and his rhetoric enabled the identification he shared with his auditors to be transferred to the substantive message of the Paiute Prophet's rhetoric. As a result, the persuasiveness of his message did not rest in facts and arguments alone but was fueled by identification as well.

The prophets Neolin, Tenskwatawa, Kenekuk, and Wodziwob, also offered hope to a people who were "crushed and groaning beneath an alien yoke." However, Wovoka's message took a clear departure from the earlier prophets as evidenced by the constructed second persona. The personal character of Wovoka and his embodiment of his substantive message proved to be an influential force among his audience and a deciding factor in their adoption of the constructed second persona.

Couched in Christian faith, Wovoka's message was presented to his audience in a way that invited their participation and outlined for them the values and behaviors needed to adopt the precepts of the Ghost Dance. Here again Wovoka further extends the need for his audience to find a position between the practices of their Euro-American neighbors and the customs of their ancestors. The qualities and characteristics called for by the constructed second persona of Wovoka's rhetoric were rooted in both Christian faith and

Native myth. Wovoka explicitly called for his audience to return to the ways of their fathers, not to lie, steal or to fight. He was intent on creating mutually beneficial cooperation between his people and the white settlers based on peace and hard work. Through Wovoka's emulation of sacred Christian practices and by employing Jesus in his teachings the implicit portrait of the Paiute Prophet's auditors suggested that they take on the characteristics of a disciple of Christ. The implicit and explicit calls for change in character provided for Wovoka's audience a position from which to view his rhetoric and recognize the required reformation of identity as well as the need to bring to the surface their own qualities needed to act out the tenets of the religion. The duality of the constructed second persona was exemplified further by the commonalities shared by Wovoka and the Apostle Paul.

In addition to the power garnered by the Paiute Prophet's reconstitutive rhetoric, the Pauline role and Pauline literary form, as emulated by Wovoka, has demonstrated another means of persuasion. Just as Paul was able to establish for himself a position of authority and identify himself with his audience, so did Wovoka. These methods not only manifested themselves in Wovoka's "conversion" but in his Messiah Letter as well.

The guilt resulting from his chosen occupation as a woodcutter motivated Wovoka to reevaluate his participation in the decimation of the sacred pinon pine. The effects of Wovoka's occupation on his native culture and his realization of the way in which it alienated himself from his people were his "road to Damascus." Wovoka's recognition of his own need to change

culminated in his great revelation. It was during this vision in which he obtained the precepts of the religion and received his charge from the Great Spirit to take this message to his people. With his message in hand, Wovoka set out to amend his past and reformulate his position among his own people. Like Paul before him, Wovoka was intent on sharing the benefits promised by his vision with all who would listen. One of the means of communication used by the Paiute Prophet was through letter, which held the same elements of the letters written by Paul.

The analysis of Wovoka's Messiah Letter furthers our understanding of the Pauline literary form. This consideration illustrates how the elements contained in the letter give the author authority and sway among their auditors. In greeting his audience and talking to them specifically, Wovoka was able to establish a bond of friendship and goodwill with the reader. The public nature of Wovoka's letter enabled it to function as a sermon, which was intended to outline the precepts of the religion and act as a tool for direction and not conversion. The letter also established for Wovoka his position as the one who was sent as the messenger of God. This not only conveyed the Paiute Prophet's credibility but also connected him with his audience. Wovoka's professed hope of one day seeing those he was writing was a rhetorical tool that allowed the Paiute Prophet to project presence and authoritative power.

The rhetorical devices contained in Wovoka's letter were also present in Paul's epistles. Just as they proved to be an effective means of establishing authority and persuading the audiences of Paul, the rhetorical form also

proved successful for the Paiute Prophet. The commonalities shared by the Messiah Letter and the Pauline Epistolary form not only presents evidence of parallels between the two prophets, it also demonstrates rhetorical elements that can be used to persuade and establish authority with an audience. In addition to the persuasive power of the epistle form, the analysis offered of Wovoka's letter extends our understanding of the transforming power of his rhetoric and the role played by the letter in reformulating Wovoka's audience.

Without personal diaries or journals written by the Paiute Prophet, it is difficult to know with certainty the motivations behind Wovoka's prophetic career. However, the historical texts depicting his prophecies and teachings, coupled with personal accounts of his words and actions from people who knew Wovoka and had contact with him has presented a compelling portrait of the Paiute Prophet. The influence of Wovoka on his auditors is apparent and to have an understanding of his rhetorical career is to understand the ability of prophetic discourse to transform an audience.

This analysis of Wovoka's rhetorical history lends insight into our understanding of the persuasive capabilities of an effective interplay between a rhetor's perceived character and heritage, their message, and the constructed second persona in human communication. The findings of this analysis help to explain and develop Hammerback and Jensen's method for elucidating discourse that redefines its audience. In addition to the transforming power of the Paiute Prophet's reconstitutive discourse is a new understanding offered by this analysis of the parallels between Wovoka and

Paul in both epistolary form and conversion. The analysis of these similarities has demonstrated how Wovoka derived authority based on his position as God's mouthpiece and its contributions to the furthering of the Paiute Prophet's reconstitutive rhetoric.

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APPENDIX

THE MESSIAH LETTER ⁱ

1. When you get home you must make a dance to continue five days. Dance four successive nights, and the last night keep up the dance until the morning of the fifth day, when all must bathe in the river and then disperse to their homes. You must all do in the same way.
2. I, Jack Wilson, love you all, and my heart is full of gladness for the gifts you have brought me. When you get home I shall give you a good cloud which will make you feel good. I give you a good spirit and give you all good paint. I want you to come again in three months, some from each tribe there.
3. There will be a good deal of snow this year and some rain. In the fall there will be such a rain as I have never given you before.
4. Grandfather says, when your friends die you must not cry. You must not hurt anybody or do harm to anyone. You must not fight. Do right always. It will give you satisfaction in life. This young man has a good father and mother.
5. Do not tell the white people about this. Jesus is now upon the earth. He appears like a cloud. The dead are all alive again. I do not know when they will be here; maybe this fall or in the spring. When the time comes there will be no more sickness and everyone will be young again.
6. Do not refuse to work for the whites and do not make any trouble with them until you leave them. When the earth shakes do not be afraid. It will not hurt you.
7. I want you to dance every six weeks. Make a feast at the dance and have food that everybody may eat. Then bathe in the water. That is all. You will receive good words again from me some time. Do not tell lies. (781)

¹ Wovoka, "The Messiah Letter (free Rendering)." In James Mooney's The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1991. 781.

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