

Conscience of the Cosmos: Thinking About Mother Earth and Father Sky

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Abstract: Standing alone, eyes outward toward a dark, cloudless, country sky scattered thick with stars, our minds fill with questions. What are we in this immensity? We call ourselves intelligent. Two urgencies tug at our being: the beauty of what we behold overwhelms us; but we feel so tiny within this vastness. What can we do? Do we have responsibility? Can we make a difference in this reality? Yes, we are an example of the universe being able to contemplate itself. What more might be expected of us? A voice seems to echo from those distant walls of space and time as the thought enters upon our minds. “Are you ready? Are you willing to accept the awareness that YOU are the conscience of the cosmos?” The concept of Mother Earth and Father Sky seems to go back as far as we can go in sorting out the origins of human thoughts and beliefs about ourselves, about our planet, and about the inspirational canvas revealed overhead at night. Indeed, it seems likely that the inception of concepts of Earth as mother and Sky as father came from the deepest feelings and knowledge of earliest humans long ago and that this is now moving, back again, into our most advanced and provocative philosophical human understandings. This movement of conceptualization can be illustrated by a selection of three stories of origin that compose this essay. The first two emerge from primitive philosophy and here we select examples from Native America: The Mother Earth example is from the American Southwest (Navajo (Diné)); the Father Sky example comes from the American Plains (Pawnee) The third story, provided by discoveries of contemporary scientific exploration and discovery, ties it all together, testifying that we do, indeed, inherit our existence from Earth and sky, that we truly are children of Mother Earth and Father Sky. This realization leads us to the thought that we should accept the premise that humans can be and should be the conscience of the cosmos.

Keywords: Mother Earth, Father Sky, Cultural Astronomy, Navajo (Diné), Skidi Pawnee, Astronomical Traditions

1. Introduction

Immanuel Kant, the German Enlightenment philosopher wrote, “Two things fill my mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the more often and steadily I reflect upon them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me. I do not seek or conjecture either of them as if they were veiled obscurities or extravagances beyond the horizon of my vision; I see them before me and connect them immediately with the consciousness of my existence.”

It seems likely that the concept of Earth as Mother and Sky as Father must go back to the origins of humanity when people became aware that all living things – animal and plant – depended upon the land for nourishment and the sky for light, warmth, moisture, indeed for knowledge. Eventually

legends of human origin were written and some of them confirm the conviction of terrestrial and celestial parental relationships, indeed to Earth and Sky.

The essence of what we believe about ourselves, about others, about everything is contained in cultural stories that emerge from our deepest thinking about relationships of things. Stories have been passed down from mothers, fathers, grandparents and teachers speculate about who we are, where we have been, how we came to be the ways we are and what we want to become. Although they are stories from the past, they delineate the present and lead us into the future.

We will consider three stories that illustrate the profundity of stories.

2. Story I: “We Emerged from the Womb of Mother Earth”

We could study any of a large number of Native Southwest American Mother Earth stories. We choose the Navajo (Diné) version [20], [18] These people might declare “Everything that would become the world we know began deep down within our Mother Earth.

“The Long-Ago-People taught that we came out of the womb of Mother Earth! “It was dark down there, they say. “Mist People, Holy People and Coyote lived there. The First “Dark World” was small, chaotic, disorganized. Then four cloud columns appeared: in the east was Folding Dawn; the south column was Folding Sky Blue; in the west was Folding Twilight, and the north was Folding Darkness. Because Coyote visited the columns and changed his color to match them, he became known as Child of Dawn, of Sky Blue, of Twilight and of Darkness.

A yellow cloud appeared on the west with a blue cloud to the south, and where they came together First Woman was formed along with a perfect ear of yellow corn, a white shell and turquoise.

On the eastern side First Man stood where he burned a crystal for light and warmth.

First Woman saw the light and burned her turquoise. These two Holy Beings searched for each other three times, and on the fourth they found each other and came together.

Because those existing in the First World disagreed and fought among themselves, they had to leave. They escaped through an opening in the east and migrated upward into the Blue World where they found birds, insects and many other beings already living. Wolves lived in a white house in the east; wildcats lived in a blue house in the south; Kit Foxes lived in a yellow house in the west and Mountain Lions lived in a black house in the north. These beings were at war with each other. Coyote went exploring in each of the directions, finding sorrow and suffering everywhere. With the help of First Man, the beings were able to escape into the Third World through an opening in the south.

Bluebird was first into the third Yellow World, followed by First Man, First Woman, Coyote, the insects and all the others. Six mountains stood in the Third World: Dawn, or White Shell Mountain (Blanca Peak) in the east; Blue Bead, Turquoise Mountain (Mount Taylor) in the South; Abalone Shell Mountain (San Francisco Peak) in the West; Obsidian Mountain (La Plata Mountains) in the north; Soft Goods, or Banded Rock Mountain (Huerfano Mountain) in the Center; and east of the center stood Precious Stones Mountain (Gobernador Knob). A great female river (Los Pinos River) flowed from north to south and a male river (San Juan River) from east to west and these rivers crossed at a certain place (now Navajo Reservoir in northwestern New Mexico).

When Coyote took a white shell to the water’s edge, where there was a whirlpool, he noticed that he could control the level of the water simply by raising and lowering the shell above it. He moved the shell way down and the water fell back, exposing one of the children of Water Monster.

Quickly, Coyote grabbed the child, hid it under his arms and ran away. Almost immediately it began to rain. As the rain increased, causing a great flood, everyone climbed higher up a mountain. First Man planted trees, hoping that they would grow fast enough and high enough to reach the sky, but they did not. Finally he planted a female reed and it grew clear to the top of sky. The people entered into the reed and climbed into the Fourth World with the water still rising behind them. Then it was discovered that Coyote had Water Monster’s baby, realizing what had caused the flood and when Coyote lowered the child back into the water, the flood ended, leaving the people in the Glittering World.

This is not the end of the ever-continuing story; actually it is just the beginning of life within the confines of the four sacred mountains. You must understand that this was before ordinary people existed, even before the seasons as we know them were defined. Yes, the story goes on and on with all sorts of interesting things occurring. Here and now we must include only one more bit before moving on.

Imagine being there in the glittering world, right at the center between the four sacred mountains. You are about to witness some very important events. Holy People are gathered to make the Glittering World more complete, and to know how to properly live. You are watching First Man and First Woman sitting beside large buckskin upon which there is a large perfect turquoise and an equally large white shell. Numerous large, small and tiny crystals cover the buckskin. First Man is working on the turquoise while First Woman carves the shell.

Having carved the turquoise into a disk, giving it facial features, attaching feathers for flight and crystals for light, a carrier is selected to transport it into and across the sky. First Man addresses his turquoise creation, “You, Father Sun, will provide light and warmth for all those abiding below.”

When First Woman completes the white shell disk adding feathers and crystals, another carrier takes it up to follow Sun. First Woman instructs, “Mother Moon, Provide light when needed during darkness.”

Continuing to watch, now you see a dark figure dancing into the creation circle. It is Black God, creator of everything containing fire. A tiny set of lights sparkle on His ankle, but when He stomps his foot upon the ground the gleaming lights all together jump up to his knee. He stomps again and they fly onto his thigh. With a third stomp they land on his shoulder and when his foot lands the fourth time they fly onto his head where they remain in the pattern that portrays the Fire God as he dances over to join the others. Now the buckskin contains only fragments of leftover crystal.

Looking down on the canvas First Man declares, “We should do something with this,” “Perhaps we can use it to help the people know how to properly live.”

“Yes,” First Woman agrees. “Lets make brilliant patterns defining laws to live by.” We could put them out there upon the sand where they will sparkle so that the people can see them.” “No,” she adds, “That will never do. Wind Boy will move them around and cover them up. “OK, then,” she mutters, “Lets put them out on the waters where they can be

seen from afar. No, that will not work either. They will sink out of sight.”

The Holy People sit, thinking. Finally, looking up, they speak in unison, “If we put them way up there nothing can disturb them and everyone can see them. Then they will know how to live. That is what we must do.” And that is what they do during the dark hours.

They put a bunch of crystals into the pattern displayed on the head of Black God, tossing them onto the sky.

Pointing out across the land into the distance, First Man calls out.

“Look out there, Can you see him? That is Coyote, wandering around, as he likes to do. See Him looking up. He must have seen the sparkling cluster zoom into heaven.”

Do you see him out there dancing around? At first Coyote is curious, then he is furious. He is jumping around and shouting! “What is that? They are doing it again. They always leave me out of the best things.”

“Look! He is running.”

Up goes another pattern of crystals. “We will call these First Slim One (Orion). Along with Black God’s stars (Dilyéhé, Pleiades), they will tell the people when to plant crops and when to do ceremonies.”

Coyote stops; jumping up and down he curses, then runs in another direction.

The Holy People toss up a single crystal, “That one marks the Central Fire of Heaven.” Then a set of seven pops into view on one side, “That is the Turning Man.” When a group of five is put on the other side of the Fire; “Those show the Revolving Woman. All of them, the Fire (Polaris), the Woman (Cassiopeia) and the Man (Dipper in Ursa Major) will teach people how to behave as families in their own hogans, enjoying each other as they learn together, at home, around their fires.”

Now Coyote is not far away, coming toward us. Two more groups go up into the sky. “That one is Man With Legs Ajar. (Corvus) He looks like a very old man watching everything that goes on down here. Those others are Rabbit Tracks, the Hunter’s Guide (tail of Scorpius). They will let people know the proper time to hunt.”

Here comes Coyote, shouting. “What are you doing? Why have you left me out of this important work? Give me one of those, it is my turn now.”

The Holy People are perplexed with the arrival of the one who always messes things up, but knowing that Coyote is one of their own, one of the Holy People, they hand a crystal to him. What a strange thing he does with it. Lazy as he is, he puts it way down low in the south where it will barely rise up and quickly set again (probably Canopus).

Coyote sits; “Isn’t it beautiful. Isn’t it wonderful! That is Coyote Star.”

Tired, the others also sit to rest, thinking about how to complete their work. Only a few larger crystals and lots of tiny ones remain on the buckskin.

Coyote is thinking also. “This is not so difficult. I wonder why it is taking so long.”

Oh no! He is standing up. He is sneaking over there,

looking down at the buckskin. He is stooping and grabbing the corners of the skin. Oh no! With one great swish he flings the crystals into space, scattering a river of light across heaven.

Coyote’s shout arouses the Holy People. “There it is. It is finished. My way was so much quicker and better than yours. Isn’t it marvelous? Isn’t it beautiful?”

The others don’t look happy. Indeed, they look sad. But Coyote is correct. It is finished. In time everyone realizes that Coyote has succeeded in placing one of the most important laws for good living in the sky. His motion spread most of the crystalline stars in a dusty trail (Milky Way), representing the principle that people should go out early each morning, running off toward the east where things rise into view, scattering prayer meal across in front of them, contemplating who they are and what they should do each day.

Yes, that was an important time when the most fundamental things were being sorted out. We cannot tell the whole story right now for it is long and full of detail, and still it goes on, but here we are. We are the children of our Mother Earth.

Readers who want to know more about those early times in the Glittering World we live in, how the gleaming stars came to decorate the night, and many other things related to stars in Navajo traditions can go to some of the references at the end of this essay [2-4, 8, 10, 11, 6, 7, 9, 16, 17]. The single most important source of information on Navajo astronomy is Griffin-Pierce’s book [16] resulting from her University of Arizona PhD research having the title *Earth is My Mother, Sky is my Father: Space, Time and Astronomy in Navajo Sandpainting*.

That first story carries us directly into the second one.

3. Story II: “We Came Down from Father Sky”

Now, turning eyes upward, we consider an especially rich tradition that comes from people of the Great American Plains. It is the legend of cosmic origins of the first humans that comes to us from the Skidi Band of the Pawnee Nation [14, 13, 18, 19, 1, 12]. These people of the American Plains might say, “Oh yes, we came down here from out there. We are children of the sky. Here, briefly, is our story.”

Longer ago than anyone can possibly remember, there was only Teeduhwaahut, all-powerful, standing at the very top of heaven! We never see Him, but we know He is there, always watching over us.

Teeduhwaahut gathered the star gods together giving each a place in the heavens and powers to create people.

Pointing to Suhkooloo (Sun), He directed, “You shall live in the east. Give light and warmth to all the beings that shall come to earth.”

Turning to Pah (Moon), “You shall live in the west and give light when darkness comes.

“Chooipihdit-tahkah, Bright Star (Venus,) you also will live in the west. You shall be known as Mother of all things, for

through you all life shall be created."

"Oopihdee-koochoo, Great Star (Mars), your home is in the east. You shall be a warrior. Each time you drive the sky people towards the west, see that none lag behind."

"Karaiwarh (Polaris), your place is in the north. You shall not move, for you are chief of all the gods that sparkle in the heavens. Watch over them. When human beings are created and placed upon earth, they will appoint a chief among themselves. He is to resemble you, Star-That-Does-Not-Move, presiding over his people. You, chief of the stars, communicate with the human chiefs and keep them watchful of their people."

Pointing to another star, He said, "You, Spirit Star, stand low down in the south where you will be hard to see. Receive the spirits of the dead at the end of their journeys on the Ghost Trail."

Teeduhwaahut pointed to four stars, each in turn. "Black Star, your lodge is in the northeast near Suhkooloo's summer home. Yellow Star, you live in the northwest, toward the place where Suhkooloo will leave the sky in the warm season, painting things yellow." To another star, a white one, He said, "Your lodge is the pillar holding the sky to the southwest," and to a red one, "You are the pillar of the southeast where the red dawn of winter will come." To all four He declared, "You four shall be known as the ones who shall hold up the heavens, standing as long as the heavens last. You shall touch the heavens with your hands and your feet shall rest upon earth."

To all the star gods, He commanded, "I give you the power to create people, and you shall give them sacred bundles and ceremonies to order their lives and remind them of us."

"In the east, creation will be planned; in the west, it will be fulfilled; for east is Man and west is Woman."

"Warrior in the east, Oopihdee-koochoo, you shall take a journey to the west to find Choopihdit-tahkah. Stay with Her. I promise you a girl. The gods of the west shall place her upon earth."

Turning to Suhkooloo, Teeduhwaahut said, "When you have taken your place in the heavens, I give you permission to lie with Pah. When you are together, She shall disappear. A boy shall be born to the two of you, and you shall call upon the gods of the west to place the child upon Earth. The two of you will help the people regulate their lives by the passage of times and seasons."

Teeduhwaahut sent Choopihdit-tahkah to the west and gave Her a garden where things would forever be alive. He sent Her Clouds, Winds, Lightnings, and Thunders. "Receive these gods, place them between you and the Garden. These four gods shall be the ones who will create things. With their songs rumbling across the land, Mother Earth will live!"

The Great Red Star (Mars), Oopihdee-koochoo, went forth from the east toward the west so that creation might continue. Choopihdit-tahkah of the west moved to draw Him toward Her, yet, as He came, She placed barriers in His path. Many of the other male stars had attempted to mate with beautiful Choopihdit-tahkah, but She denied them all.

Now, the Great Warrior of the east was approaching.

As He came closer toward the radiant White Star of the west (Venus) the guards stood no longer in His way. He stood facing the beautiful female Star, yet She would not yield until He brought the cradleboard for their child that would be born. From the cottonwood, He made the board; the covering was made of the skin of the spotted cat, emblem of the starry heavens. Above the board, over the place where the head of the child would lay, was a hoop from the willow tree to represent the rainstorm and the Arch-Above-the-Earth, the rainbow. He placed His own red image upon the top of the board to show that He, Himself, would watch over the child.

Cradle in hand, He came again to the Woman of Heaven. "You must bring a mat for the child to lie upon." From a heavenly buffalo He provided the softest part of the hide.

Again, She reproached him. "I must have water to bathe the child in." He brought sweet water from Choopihdit-tahkah's own garden, fragrant from the grasses, herbs, fruits and flowers growing there.

Now, She yielded to Him. Each gave unto the other their power to be transferred to the people who would appear upon earth. The power of the Great Red Star is in the bed of flint on which He stands, the same power by which Suhkooloo shines. Choopihdit-tahkah gave Her powers of the west, the Storms to drive across the land. Into the Clouds Oopihdee-koochoo placed His flints to strike as Lightning from the rainstorms. The power of flint would also give fire, knives, axes, and weapons to the People of earth. All the Powers of east and west mingled and merged.

In the wintertime, Choopihdit-tahkah gave birth to a daughter. The maiden dropped like rain, giving rise to the Skidi name for maiden, Tcuraki, "Standing Rain." There she stood. Alone.

While all this happened, Suhkooloo and Pah had come together. Lying together, they shared their powers. In summertime, a boy was born to them. Teeduhwaahut commanded Choopihdit-tahkah to cause the four gods to sing again. The Winds blew and the Lightnings and Thunders entered Clouds that rose up to Pah. The child was placed upon the Clouds that were sung downward to touch the ground. A boy wandered over the land.

When the boy and girl found each other, they lay together, and after many months a baby was born to them. The new family built a grass lodge to live in.

The People increased. They learned to make sturdy and warm lodges to live in, given the pattern by the star gods: round like the world; four posts in the northeast, southeast, southwest and northwest to represent the world quarter stars, those animals, trees and other things; floor to represent the earth; ceiling for the sky; entrance opening to the east, symbolic of Great Red Warrior Star and the planning of creation; altar at the west side, the sacred place of Bright White Star and Her garden, the direction where creation was accomplished and from which life was renewed each spring; fireplace containing the spark from the flint of Oopihdee-koochoo and the fire of Suhkooloo; and smoke-hole over the fire, round like the "Council of Chiefs," stars that passed directly overhead and tell us how we should make important

decisions when our leaders sit in council. On spring and autumn mornings, the first rays of sunlight come through the entryway, cross the fireplace so that it can burn, to fall upon Choopihdit-tahkah's altar, nourishing life that is renewed each year by the storms that move in from the west.

The people treasured this knowledge and sang over the sacred bundles. The stars had informed the priests about how they could watch through the entryway, through the smoke-hole, and out in the open to know when to do ceremonies, when to plant seeds, when to hunt and how to live upon the land. They knew well the luminaries of the sky that breathed life into everything that moved.

As the first people moved about, they encountered others, and found that they could understand each other. They talked and learned that each had been created by different stars, and that each possessed sacred knowledge and artifacts that should be used for the benefit of all. In council, each group shared what they knew. The gods in the heavens continued to govern the patterns of their lives.

Every year, when the snow begins to melt, the Swimming Ducks fly upward from the southeast dawn. Then, we listen for the sound of thunder, rolling from the west across the Plains. With these spring storms, Choopihdit-tahkah's bundle is opened and the ceremonies begin. In every generation people grow old and die, but children are born and we teach them the ways of harmony and happiness, the ways that came to us from the stars.

This is OUR story. We came from up there. WE are children of the sky!

Readers who might wish additional details can do so by reading my research [1], also presented in fictional form [12].

So, here is a cultural interpretation of what we observe in the sky. Here we have a people who looked around and lived in harmony with the cosmos.

4. Story III: We Are Children of Mother Earth and Father Sky

There is a yet another story that weaves the deep meaning of these two stories, the stories of our Mother Earth and Father Sky together. This final story, briefly told in mythical mode goes something like this. – “a very long time ago, longer than anyone can remember, there was no Sun, no Earth, there was no Moon, what there was was the nearest thing to nothing that is anything. And then something of truest significance happened. In the briefest of a moment what was to become the entire universe we know burst forth – exploded is the proper word -- into existence. “At first there was just the simplest thing -- mostly what we would call hydrogen and a bit of helium, and energy – lots of energy wound up together. Mostly it was just some hydrogen. This was expanding rapidly, and some of it began to morph into what we now call stars. Gravity ruled and in the center of these primordial stars the temperature went up and up until what we have learned to call thermonuclear fusion began and this initiated the cosmos we know. Inside these first stars, the

chemical elements began to form. To make this story short, this process went on over and over in the early universe. Stars formed and inside some of the largest of these, became unstable as the cores of these giant chemically enriched stars – let us call them element factories – exploded scattering the elements outward into surrounded space where they mixed with the remaining materials which eventually gravitated into other stars. – and so it went generation after generation of stars – over and over again until.

“Finally within the chemically enriched universe there were stars orbited by planets, fleets of planets of various sizes. On one such planet creatures swam in oceans, birds flew in the atmosphere and on the surface standing on two legs an emotionally motivated intelligent creature walked. This creature looked up at stars, looked down at rocks and sand, asked questions, investigating its surrounding over generations of time and began to discover – finding answers to its questions – better and better answers over time.

This third story, when understood in great detail convinces us that we are indeed children of mother Earth and Father Sky. It is truly the continually being unvailed story of scientific inquiry including the story of humanity, and everything else on planet Earth. From exhaustive research over many centuries of the most careful scientific investigation, (physical science, geological science, biological science, astronomical and all the other sciences) using telescopes that scan across the electromagnetic spectrum, telescopes scattered over the Earth and even some orbiting in space, also spacecraft moving out through the system of planets, even maneuvering upon the surfaces of some of the planets – yes in all these ways it has been learned that the universe we are able to discern began at least 13.8 billion (our current estimate) years ago.

And here we are – still asking questions, still finding answers. Still we look up, down, within. Still we are amazed at the beauty of the stellar heavens and still we feel insignificantly tiny in the immensity of it all, still we are wondering, let us say discovering, who we are. Yes, finally we recognize that one of the things we are is the universes way of comprehending itself. And still we ask about who we are.

Now, ever so briefly reviewing our own history, thinking about our own planet – the one we call Earth, we recognize that we are, indeed, children of Mother Earth. We have learned that all around us from Earth life evolved into many forms, crawling, flying, swimming, moving, even walking about, learning, discovering even moving outward through other planets. Yes, Earth is, in reality, our mother. Surely we have evolved from within the fertility of the planet – from our Mother Earth.

And as we have looked out into the cosmos, we have recognized that all around us – out there in space – many generations of stars have formed – time and time again – forming chemical elements within their cores – scattering those elements back into space – over generations of stars until planetary systems exist all over – until intelligence spreads through the cosmos.

Still we ask as we go through all the difficulties of dealing with everything around us – especially of dealing with each other. We are asking about our own survival within the cosmos.

One of the things we should realize from the entire history of humanity is that our greatest dilemma has hovered about our struggles of dealing with each other. So it is time to look again at the words of Immanuel Kant found near the beginning of this essay. When we look into the grandeur of a crisp country sky we are both inspired by beauty amid a bit of discomfort of feeling small, sometimes frightened. Kant alluded to possible struggle between the inspirations of the starry heavens sometimes fighting the moral law within. Perhaps there is message there for each of us.

Looking into the mirror of our own souls we must ask the most searching questions, demanding that we provide appropriate answers. So let us, now, recognize that perhaps humans might be, must be, at least in part, the conscience of the cosmos. Let us, as humbly as possible, declare that we, the human race on planet Earth, born of Earth and Sky, we want to be the best we can be, willingly WE ARE THE CONSCIENCE OF THE COSMOS!

In doing this let us recognize that this has already been articulated in Native America in the following words:

Oh, our Mother the Earth.

Oh, our Father the Sky.

Your children are we.

With tired backs we bring you the gifts that you love.

Then weave for us a garment of brightness.

May the warp be white light of morning.

May the weft be red light of evening.

May the fringes be falling rain.

May the border be the standing rainbow.

Oh, weave for us a garment of brightness.

That we may walk fittingly where grass is green.

That we may walk fittingly where birds sing.

Oh, our Mother Earth.

Oh, our Father Sky!

SURELY, THEN, WE ARE, WE MUST BE AS HUMBLY AND AS INTELLIGENTLY AS WE CAN BE THE CONSCIENCE OF THE COSMOS!

5. Summary and Conclusion

Looking up on a clear country night we find ourselves surrounded by ultimate beauty and questions flood our minds. What is it all about? How did it come about? What does it all mean? Who am I? What am I in all of this?

We ask this question at a critical moment in our history when we know that we are capable of eliminating our own survival. What are the answers?

Where is the answer to be found? Are we capable of accepting the premise that if the universe is ever to have a conscience it might as well be us? Perhaps we are the conscience of the cosmos if it is ever to have one. It seems clear that there needs to be conscience somewhere. If not us, who? If not now, When? Let us, then, realize that it is a role

we MUST accept. We MUST visualize ourselves, at this critical moment in our perceived history, by declaring to ourselves that WE ARE THE CONSCIENCE OF THE COSMOS.

Out on the American Plains, overlooking the Missouri River along interstate 90 between exits 263 and 265 near Chamberlain, South Dakota stands a 50 foot high stainless steel statue by Dale Claude Lamphere titled Dignity of Earth and Sky. May we the children of Mother Earth and Father Sky prove worthy of our inheritance resulting from nearly 14 billion years of cosmic development.



Figure 1. Sculpture by Dale Claude Lamphere located on a bluff overlooking the Missouri River along interstate 90 between exits 263 and 265 near Chamberlain, South Dakota.

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