SCRIPTA INSTITUTI DONNERIANI ABOENSIS

I

# STUDIES IN SHAMANISM

*Based on Papers read at the Symposium on Shamanism held at Åbo on the 6th–8th of September, 1962*

Edited by

CARL-MARTIN EDSMAN

ALMQVIST & WIKSELL

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# Preface

On the initiative of Dr. K. Rob. V. Wikman, Professor Emeritus at the Finland-Swedish University of Åbo, (Åbo Akademi), the Donner Institute for Research in Religious and Cultural History organized in Åbo from the 6th to the 8th of September, 1962, a symposium on shamanism. The Institute is described below in an introductory article by its former head, Dr. H. Ringgren, now Professor in Old Testament Exegetics at the University of Uppsala. Some forty specially invited scholars and students from the four Nordic countries as well as Dr. H. Diószegi took part in the symposium. The local arrangements were cared for by Dr. H. Tegengren, Professor of Nordic Culture History and Folklore Research in Åbo. The present writer, who acted as a chairman for the symposium, had the task of editing the lectures for the press. The majority of them are collected in this volume, some in their original form, others in a rewritten and extended form.

Unfortunately some of the contributions to the symposium are missing. That of Dr. H. S. Nyberg would have been of great interest. This well-known orientalist has stimulated much international discussion by interpreting in his work *Die Religionen des alten Iran* (Leipzig 1938) Zarathustra in the light of north-eurasian shamanism. Some years earlier Dr. D. Strömbäck, later Professor of Nordic and Comparative Folk Life Research in Uppsala, demonstrated in his doctorate thesis *Sejd* (Uppsala 1935), available unfortunately only in Swedish, the striking similarities between the ancient Nordic *sejd* and Lappish shamanism. From this point of view it would have been valuable if the contribution by Fil. Lic. L. Ejerfeldt on "Sejd and Transformation Cult" could have been included in this volume. Likewise the study by Fil. Lic. H. Mebius on "A Shamanistic Term in G. Tuderus' Description of the Kemi-Lapps' Sacrificial Rites" would have occupied an important place in it. The same is true also of the contribution made by Dr. L. Honko, now Professor of Folklore and Comparative Religion at the Finnish University of Åbo (Turun Yliopisto), based on material written in

Finnish and dealing with "Preparatory Rites in Shamanism". This omission is somewhat made up by this scholar's "Varhaiskantaiset taudinselitykset ja parantamisnäytelmä" (Ancient Explanations of Illness and Healing Action) in *Tietolipas* 17, 1961. The fieldresearch of Finnish scholars among north-eurasian tribes as well as the theory on *Kalevala* as shaman-poetry, put forward by Comparetti, K. Meuli and M. Haavio, would have resulted in a contribution from the hostcountry that would have been both natural and desired. The omission of Dr. Diószegi's lecture on "Features of Samoyedic Culture in the Shaman Belief of the East Sayanic Peoples" is almost compensated for by the fact that this paper is published in German (in *Acta Ethnographica Acad. Scient. Hung.* 12, 1963). This scholar is the author of several other publications which deal with different aspects of shamanism in both Finno-Ugric and Siberian forms. It is sufficient here to refer to *Glaubenswelt und Folklore der sibirischen Völker* edited by V. Diószegi (Budapest 1963). The same field is also covered by *Studies in Siberian Shamanism*, ed. by H. N. Michael (Toronto 1963), where as in the foregoing work modern Russian field researchers are the contributors. An English translation of Dr. Diószegi's work on Hungarian Shamanism from 1958, hitherto only accessible in Hungarian, is just now in preparation.

If therefore this volume has certain gaps when compared both to the symposium and the subject itself, it has been possible nevertheless to make certain additions to it that go some way to filling these gaps. Among them are the contribution on the Eskimoes by the Professor in Eskimo Language and Culture in Copenhagen, Dr. E. Holtved, and the paper on Hungarian Shamanism by the Hungarian linguist now active in Uppsala, Dr. J. Fazekas.

Among other participants who read papers dealing with their various specialist fields at the symposium, now printed in this volume, is Dr. G. Ränk who has contributed a survey of research. Formerly Professor in Folklore at the Estonian University at Dorpat (Tartu), he is now working in Stockholm. Dr. Hultkrantz, who as an eye-witness has described a shamanistic seance among North American Indians, is Professor of History of Religions at the University of Stockholm. Dr. H. Siiger represents the same subject at the University of Aarhus, Denmark; he uses material obtained during a Danish expedition to the Black Kafirs on the north-west border of India, now Pakistan. Dr. Toni Schmid, formerly of Austria, author among

other works of *The Cotton-Clad Mila: The Tibetan Poet-Saint's Life in Pictures* (Stockholm 1952), has also contributed The Sherpas of Northern Nepal, based on personal experiences. Dr. A. Kapelrud, Professor in Old Testament Studies at the University of Oslo, finds traces of Ancient Near Eastern shamanism also in the Old Testament. His compatriot, Dr. O. Nordland, who applies the McGill experiments on "sensory deprivation" to the psychology of the shamans and quotes some Rorschach interpretations of shamanism, is primarily a folklorist and teaches Old Nordic Culture at the University of Oslo. The Editor, who comments on an eighteenth century female folk-healer from historical, folkloristic and psychological points of view, holds the Chair of History of Religions at the University of Uppsala, (Faculty of the Humanities).

At the symposium the religious-psychological aspect of the subject was also attended to by Dr. Hultkrantz who cited extracts from the great posthumous work of his teacher, E. Arbman, *Ecstasy or Religious Trance*. The first volume of this work has since been published with the subtitle "Vision and Ecstasy" (Uppsala 1963). The Nordic scholar, Dr. J. B. Björkhem, who perhaps better than anyone else could have treated shamanism as a psychological phenomenon, was unfortunately unable to be present and died prematurely in the Spring of 1963.

It is not my intention to discuss here the varying definitions of shamanism that the reader will come across in the following papers. Since the concept is used partly in a sense that has a terminological and a geographical limitation, and partly as a synonym for ecstatic religion in general, the subject is inexhaustible. Here it is only necessary to recall that classical scholars have used the term shamanism for varieties of pre-Hellenic, Hellenic and Etruscan religion. (K. Meuli in *Hermes* 70, 1935, E. R. Dodds in *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1951, W. Burkert in *Rheinisches Museum* 105, 1962, E. A. S. Butterworth, *Some Traces of the Pre-Olympian World in Greek Literature and Myth*, Berlin 1966, pp. 135 ff., and W. Muster in *Frühgeschichte und Sprachwissenschaft*, edited by W. Brandenstein, Vienna 1948). The same is true of the ancient cultures and religions of the Far East, which is why A. Waley has given his work *The Nine Songs* (2nd ed. London 1956) the subtitle "A Study of Shamanism in Ancient China" (cf. also *Festgabe* E. Vögelin, München 1962, pp. 581 ff.).

In current Japanese research the indigenous and aboriginal folk religion is characterized in the same manner (see W. P. Fairchild, "Shamanism in Japan" in *Folklore Studies* 21, 1962). During his stay in Hong Kong in 1958 the Editor was able to attend in person a spiritmedium séance that had been arranged for healing purposes (see A. J. A. Elliott, *Chinese Spirit-Medium Cults in Singapore* (London School of Economics), London 1955, and R. W. Lieban, "Shamanism and Social Control in a Philippine City", in the *Journal of the Folklore Institute* II: 1, 1965). The aboriginal tribes of South and South-East Asia are also investigated from a shamanistic point of view (see two unpublished doctoral dissertations from the Institute for Ethnology at the University of Vienna: J. B. Balys, *Der Shamanismus in Malakka und Indonesien*, 1933, and R. Rahmann, *Gottheiten und Shamanismus bei den Mundavölkern und ihren dravidischen Nachbarn*, 1935; cf. idem in *Anthropos* 54, 1959, and G. D. Berreman, "Brahmins and Shamans", in E. B. Harper, *Religion in South Asia*, Seattle, 1964). Even in descriptions of magical healing among Central and South American Indians the term in question is used (cf. L. Sebag, "Le Chamanisme ayoréo" in *L'Homme* 5, 1965).[1]

The authors are themselves responsible for their articles. The Editor has only revised Dr. Fazekas' contribution, added the pronunciation of a number of Tibetan words in Dr. Toni Schmid's article, inserted subtitles in Dr. Nordland's article, and attempted to make the foot-notes and bibliographical details as uniform and logical as possible. For the customary time-lag and for any lack of formal consistency in the volume I make the time-honoured apologies. Finally I would like to extend my warm thanks to my collaborators and to Mr. M. Srigley, University Lecturer in English at the University of Uppsala, who has translated the contributions of Dr. Ränk, Dr. Toni Schmid, Dr. Fazekas and the Editor. Last but not least I should like to express my gratitude to Dr. H. W. Donner, President of the Donner Institute and Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Uppsala for his invaluable help and constant encouregement.

[1] When writing this preface I did not have access to the English edition of M. Eliade, *Shamanism* (New York 1964), where a complete and up-to-date bibliography will be found.

July, 1966

The Editor.

# The Donner Institute for Research in Religious and Cultural History

by HELMER RINGGREN

The Donner Institute is an institution for the study of the history of religion and culture at the university of Åbo Akademi (Åbo, Finland). It was founded in 1957 following a stipulation in the last will of Mr. and Mrs. Uno Donner of Helsingfors, who died in 1958 and 1956 respectively.

Uno Donner was an engineer who had studied in Finland, England and Germany, and was a prominent industrial leader in Finland. He was also a painter whose works were well above the amateur level. His wife Olly, née Sinebrychoff, was of an originally Russian family, also prominent in Finnish industry. She was a prolific writer, who published a great number of novels, plays, and short stories in Swedish and French without, however, receiving much attention from the critics. Her interests included such authors as Hölderlin, Nietzsche, William Blake, and Rilke.

Uno Donner had shown an early interest in philosophical questions. During a visit to Egypt at the beginning of this century both he and his wife were impressed by ancient Egyptian culture and certain mysterious aspects of religion. They both seem to have had a firm conviction that intuition is an important way to true knowledge. When, in 1913, an artist friend of theirs, Henry Collison, introduced them to the thinking of Dr. Rudolf Steiner, their interest was easily kindled, and they became eager students af anthroposophy. They visited Dornach near Basel, the center of the anthroposophic movement, several times and made the personal acquaintance of Dr. Steiner. When an Anthroposophic Society was established in Finland in 1922, Uno Donner became its president.

Convinced as he was of the existence of a supersensory world, Uno Donner was unwilling to accept any doctrines about it on the mere authority

of established religion or philosophical speculation. No doctrine could be considered final or be said to contain the whole truth. He was anxious that religious and philosophical ideas should be subjected to earnest research for verification or disproof. On the other hand, he was convinced that philosophical intuition and religious experience had played an extremely important part in the cultural evolution of humanity.

It is against this background that we have to consider his decision to give his property to a foundation for the study of religion. The will provides for the establishment of an institute "to promote the strictly scientific study of the history of religion and culture with special regard to the influence of mystery religions and occultism on the origin and development of various religions and cultures". It was also recommended to include the study of "modern phenomena in religion, philosophy, science, art, and literature, in which mysticism and occultism have asserted themselves". Accordingly, the statutes of the Donner Institute defines the scope of the foundation as "the promotion of the scientific investigation of the mystic experience and its significance for the origin and development of the various forms of religion and culture".

The above wording placed the executors of the will before a puzzling task. In general usage, "mysticism" and "mystery religions" have nothing but their Greek etymology in common. The statutes with their reference to the mystic experience represent a kind of compromise, but even so the aim of the foundation remains somewhat obscure.

However, the suspicion was near at hand that the clue to Mr. Donner's combination of the words "mystery" and "mysticism" is to be found in anthroposophic usage. This suspicion turned out to be true. According to the anthroposophic view of history, there have been in the various epochs of the earth's evolution "mystery places", where the truths of the supersensory world were cultivated and taught, and the Hellenistic mystery religions are late and imperfect representatives of the wisdom taught at those mystery places. "Mysticism" and "mystic", on the other hand, refer, according to some statements in the introduction to Dr. Steiner's *Das Christentum als mystische Tatsache*, to any experience that derives from the supersensory and brings man into touch with the realities of the supersensory world. True occultism, according to the same source, is more or less identical with

this mysterious wisdom and is by no means incompatible with true mysticism.

But what has this to do with the history of religion and culture? Again, anthroposophy provides us with a clue. According to Dr. Steiner, the actual religions of the world are poor remains or survivals of the knowledge that mankind has once possessed about the supersensory world. True art, in all its manifestations, is equally an effluence of man's experience of the supersensory. Consequently, religion and culture are results of the mystic experience, understood as the experience of the supersensory.

True to these intentions, the Donner Institute has set up as its goal to promote all kinds of study within the realm in which the mystic experience manifests itself in various ways, in mysticism, in all kinds of religious practice, in art, literature, and other cultural activities. The only limitation set up is that in some way or other an experience that is understood as supersensory should be present.

In accordance with the expressed wish of the donor, special attention is given to the study of the ideas of Rudolf Steiner. The library of the institute possesses an almost complete collection of Dr. Steiner's works and all available works of various anthroposophic authors. The fascinating study of Dr. Steiner's ideas in the areas of philosophy, religion, history, medicine, education, biology, politics, etc., has only begun, but anyone who is willing to engage himself in such study will here find rich opportunities of broadening his perspectives.

The Donner Institute tries to realize its task in various ways. First and foremost, according to the wish of the donors, comes the library, called The Steiner Memorial Library. Started in 1957, it has grown in a most satisfactory way and contains today approximately 13,000 volumes. Covered are all branches of the history of religions, including the psychology, phenomenology and sociology of religion, occultism, superstition, folklore, history of medicine, etc. Recently the possibilities of study and research have been greatly enriched through moving into new and more spacious localities, enabling students to work in the library itself with access to all its treasures.

Secondly, scholarships are distributed every year to people who carry out research in any of the fields that are within the Institute's sphere of interest. In the last five years the annual amount of scholarships has been 20,000 FMk,

in addition to which special grants have been given to the Scandinavian Nubia expedition, for the printing of a collection of Pythagoraean texts, and for the promotion of folkloristic studies at the Åbo Akademi.

Thirdly, a chair of comparative religion has been established at the Åbo Akademi. As the first professor was appointed, in 1962, Dr. Helmer Ringgren, who earlier taught comparative religion at the University of Uppsala and Old Testament Interpretation at Garrett Theological Seminary, Evanston, Ill., U.S.A. This was the first time comparative religion was taught as a regular subject at a university in Finland, and considering the relatively small number of students studying at the Åbo Akademi, the interest taken in this new branch of study has been most encouraging. As Prof. Ringgren moved to Sweden in 1965, he was succeeded by Dr. Sven S. Hartman.

A fourth branch of activity is the organization of symposia. The aim of these symposia is to bring together specialists from different fields of study to discuss problems of religion, each elucidating them from his particular point of view. In this age of specialization this combination of approaches seems to be a very valuable method of studying a phenomenon of such a complex nature as religion. To this date two symposia have been held, one in 1962 on shamanism and the other in 1964 on ideas of destiny. The proceedings of the symposia will be printed as volumes in a series of publications, published by the Donner Institute under the title *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis.*

# Shamanism as a Research Subject

## SOME METHODOLOGICAL VIEWPOINTS

by GUSTAV RÄNK

There is hardly any other ethnological or historico-religious subject that has had such a great power of attraction on scholars or on other more or less popular writers as shamanism, particularly in its North-Eurasian version, the one dealt with in this essay. To be convinced of this one need only look at the bibliographical works on the subject. The bibliography on the Russian literature dealing with this subject, published by the Russian scholar A. Popov in 1932, on its own includes more than 650 articles and long essays.[1] Thirty years have passed since then, and interest in shamanism has far from died out among Russian scholars. In addition there are essays on the subject written in other languages.

Included in this enormous quantity of literature—which a scholar could scarcely go through in one lifetime—there are of course both short notices and more thoroughgoing theses, either of a general or a specific character, but an overwhelming proportion of the literature concerned consists of descriptive and phenomenological surveys, with greater or lesser theoretical features. In this literature and in unpublished sources, especially those in different Russian archives, there is a vast amount of material on North-Eurasian shamanism, which provides a solid foundation for comparative research. Attempts at comparative research are by no means lacking. There have been prominent scholars both in Russia and in the West who have endeavoured to go into the whole question of shamanism on the basis of their own field-research, and the results provided by others.[2] But surely

[1] A. Popov, *Materialy dlja bibliografi russkoj literatury po izučeniju šamanstva*, Leningrad 1932.

[2] See e.g. V. Bogoras, "K psichologii šamanstva u narodov severovostočnoj Azii", *Etnogr. Obozrenie* 1910, Nr. 1/2.; D Zelenin, *Kult ongonov v Sibirii*, Moskva–Lenin-

there is no scholar who would dare to maintain that this has always been done in a satisfactory way. A great number of Russian scholars who have devoted themselves to North-Eurasian shamanism have been orientated along evolutionist lines, and were therefore inclined to draw broad general conclusions from phenomena limited to different localities. This tendency appears even among such reliable fieldworkers as, for example, Bogoras, Jochelson or Sternberg. North-Eurasian shamanism, as is known, does not comprise a completely unified phenomenon, but exists in different gradated forms that not seldom take on a strong local colouring. Not only does the personality make-up of the shamans vary, but so do their authority, their pattern of behaviour, and professional equipment, and all this provides a fertile soil for different theoretical reconstructions and generalizations. For every theory advanced there are ample opportunities to find proof for a contrary theory. Research so far is rich in such contradictions which not seldom concern matters of principle.

A striking example of this is provided by the discussion on the shaman himself, more exactly on his psycho-physical personality. Is the shaman a normal human being, or is he afflicted with certain illnesses which create the natural qualifications for his profession? The question is of major importance, for when the latter theory is accepted, an unhistoric dimension is without doubt introduced into research; certain questions are simplified; and the problem is brought onto the plane of natural history. There are scholars, as, for example, Bogoras, Jochelson, Zelenin, Ohlmarks and others, who start with the assumption that the shaman is a psychopathic type, while other scholars such as Eliade, Findeisen, to some extent even Uno Harva and several others, on equally good grounds dare to maintain the opposite, or at least think that illnesses have not played any decisive part in shamanism.

Certain evolutionist scholars have been inclined to bring out isolated, more or less rare phenomena and present them as survivals of earlier stages of development. On the basis of this they have drawn extensive historico-cultural or geographical conclusions. A large number of Russian scholars

grad 1936, pp. 352 ff.; Idem, "Die animistische Philosophie des sibirischen Schamanismus", *Ethnos* 1 (1936); D. Schröder, "Zur Struktur des Schamanismus", *Anthropos* 50 (1955); M. Eliade, *Schamanismus und archaische Ekstasetechnik*, Zürich–Stuttgart 1957; H. Findeisen, *Schamanentum*, Stuttgart 1957.

build their theory about female shamans and their priority in time to male shamans on such supposed survivals. The theoretical background to this assumption is made up of the evolutionist conception of history according to which the whole of mankind has gone through a matriarchal phase in which the woman was not only the head of the family but also a seer and priest. As further proof of this hypothesis they simply refer to isolated cases of female shamans who now and then occur among different ethnic units, especially among the so-called paleo-Asiatics. As another example of this I would mention the magic drum which is considered by some scholars to be a successor to the bow.[1]

Differences of opinion do not only arise on questions of detail, but even on the basic principles themselves. Such is the case for example with the very concepts shaman and shamanism. What is a shaman? What distinguishes him from the ordinary witch-doctor or nature healer? On what ideological grounds does shamanism rest? Even in these questions a dividing-line can be traced between, on the one hand, eastern-European marxist scholars, and, on the other, scholars of the West, but this is not to say that opinion on all these questions dealing with this basic problem is unanimous in the West.

According to the opinion accepted among western scholars it is the ecstasy which characterizes the shaman and differentiates him from ordinary fortune-tellers and quack-doctors. The well-known historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, calls shamanism simply a technique of ecstasy (Technik der Extase). The ecstasy seems to be the prerequisite condition for enabling the shaman to handle different types of demons, which according to prevalent opinion can do both good and evil, though mostly evil. Both these elements, ecstasy and spirits, appear of course in the conception of shamanism advanced by Russian scholars, but not as any final criteria.

The Russian scholars are of the opinion that shamanism has a long prehistory in which neither ecstasy nor spirits could have played any role worth mentioning. Both the ecstasy and the spirits belong to a later stage, or are the product of a long development of all that we usually characterize as shamanism. According to this conception which has been worked out on a

[1] Zelenin, *Kult ongonov*, p. 375; in greater detail E. Emsheimer, "Zur Ideologie der lappischen Zaubertrommel", *Ethnos* 9 (1944).

theoretical level by the well-known Russian ethnologist and philologist, Dmitri Zelenin, it is necessary to distinguish two main phases in shamanism which have developed along with certain changes in society. In the first phase which coincides with primitive communism the shaman was only a nature healer who by means of certain manipulations, mainly sucking, attempted to remove the cause of the illness from the patient's body. Such illnesses were believed to be caused by a live creature, as for example a worm, or illness demons which entered the body and there tried to annihilate the life-force. The second phase, which on a social plane coincides with the beginning of feudalism, introduces both the idea of spirits which seize the human soul, and the idea of the shaman who could oppose these malignant powers through certain transcendental actions and through his helping spirits. It is in this connection that ecstasy first begins to play a meaningfull role, for it was only in a trance that the shaman could maintain control over the transcendental powers which were conciliated or combated by him.

As far as the ecstasy itself is concerned, Zelenin sees it as a state of illness which is congenital and therefore to be regarded rather as a natural gift than as a cultural product. Moreover, he does not lay so much stress on the ecstasy itself as on the idea that ill people, especially the mentally ill, could allow themselves to be possessed by dangerous illness demons without any risk and later transfer them to certain animals. Therefore mentally ill people are often regarded as holy in primitive societies.

After considering the matter Zelenin came to the conclusion that the shaman was originally no less than a kind of totem, more exactly the successor of the totem-animal, which according to his opinion likewise controlled illness demons. The difference between the totem-animal and the shaman, according to him, consists in the fact that the totem-animal was intended for zoomorphic demons, the shaman primarily for anthropomorphic spirits.[1]

It was not until the later stages of shamanism that the pure trance began to play a larger role. Here Zelenin along with a number of other scholars makes a certain distinction between the black (inferior) and the white (superior) shamans. The black shamans comprise the great mass of witch-doctors who deal with hostile illness demons believed to dwell beneath the

[1] Zelenin, *Kult ongonov*, pp. 358, 361 f.

earth. On the other hand, the white shamans deal with friendly spirits that live in the upper regions in which the world is believed to be divided, and with whose help the shaman is also able to combat hostile demons. Moreover Zelenin takes the view that only the kind of morbid possession to be found among the black shamans is original and pure, while all other shamans, above all the white, are only imitators. So much for Zelenin's point of view.

As far as western research is concerned, I have already intimated in the introduction that it is usual to make a logical link between shamanism and ecstasy, and exclude the purely medical functions of the shaman provided that they are not carried out during the trance with the help of the special spirits that the witch-doctor has at his disposal. To this extent there is agreement about the concept of shamanism. But as soon as the question of the form of ecstasy and the original meaning of shamanism is raised in discussion, the views of different scholars diverge widely.

A large number of scholars, as for example Åke Ohlmarks,[1] Father W. Schmidt and others, are of the opinion that originally shamanism is an arctic phenomenon which is nowadays preserved by the so-called black shamans, who perform their manipulations in a deep trance characterized by unconsciousness and convulsions. This opinion is shared especially by those scholars who link the shamanistic ecstasy with possession and illness. This theory has been advanced with particular emphasis by Father Schmidt who considers that the so-called white shamans to be found among certain Turkish and Mongolian groups such as the Jakuts, Burjats, and Altaians, never fall into a complete trance during their performances, but only simulate unconsciousness. He therefore has reason for saying: "dass der weisse Schamanismus sich herausstellt nicht als ein natürliches, primäres Element der Hirtenkultur, sondern nur als ein spätes, sekundäres Element, das sein Entstehen der Reaktion der Hirtenkultur auf das Eindringen der Fremdelemente des eigentlichen, schwarzen Schamanismus verdankt". He can also say that "Der sog. weisse Schamane ist gar kein Schamane und der schwarze Schamane ist der eigentliche und einzige Schamane." The so-called white shaman in his view is rather a sort of "Himmelsdiener" who maintains contact with the world's higher regions.[2]

[1] Å. Ohlmarks, *Studien zum Problem des Schamanismus*, Lund 1939.

[2] P. W. Schmidt, *Ursprung der Gottesidee*, vol. XII, Münster 1955, pp. 633 f.

Of quite another opinion in this matter is one of the best-known modern historians of religion, Mircea Eliade, who has subjected shamanism to an exhaustive investigation. According to him the type of shamanism to be found among the nomads of southern Siberia and Central Asia and which is bound up with the idea of the shaman's journeys through a multi-layered world, is not pseudo-shamanism as Father Schmidt presumes but rather the classical form of shamanism. Eliade says expressly that the shamanistic ecstasy is nothing else than a technique for passing unhindered through different layers of the world, and maintaining contact with different sorts of spirits, originally with the heavenly powers. Whereas for Schmidt it is the white shamans who are no true shamans, for Eliade it is the black shamans. This is evident from the following statement in which Eliade sums up the results of his investigations: "Einkörperung von Geistern und Besessenheit durch Geister sind allgemein verbreitete Phänomene, doch sie gehören nicht notwendig zum Schamanismus im strengen Sinn."[1] Here one scholar excludes the part of shamanism that another considers to be the most essential.

I have purposely chosen and presented the opinions of three different writers on shamanism to show how diversely it can be defined and interpreted, when the subject is approached from quite different and prejudged positions. In this matter one not only takes up a position with regard to the subject's meaning, but also demarcates at the same time its distribution over the world. Zelenin who links shamanism with primitive etiology and the art of healing on an animistic and animatistic basis, sees in it a transitory stage of development which from time to time has been known all over the world. Schmidt limits shamanism to the Arctic, whence it has spread to the Subarctic, and there been corrupted. In his turn Eliade builds his theory on pure ecstasy, and finds reason to extend the potential occurrence of shamanism almost to the whole of mankind, although with this reservation that shamanism in the northern hemisphere has its own individual character and history. In the presence of such controversies among leading scholars, one does not feel any better placed than the Swedish pioneer in the subject, J. Stadling, when exactly fifty years ago he wrote the following lines: "A systematic study of Siberian shamanism in its various stages of development

[1] Eliade, op. cit., pp. 248, 261 f.

and many-sided forms—in this field an important amount of research has already been carried out—requires nevertheless a somewhat wide-ranging investigation in considerable detail into such an immense and heterogeneous field of research, involving so many difficult problems, the solution of which demands lengthy studies by dedicated and trained specialists, that there will not perhaps be time to resolve every point before it is too late."[1]

I do not regard myself as a true specialist in shamanism, but still take the liberty of pointing out some of the deficiencies in the research that has been carried out so far, and of trying to remedy them. Nothing can be objected against descriptive and phenomenological surveys, nor against attempts to establish the theoretical lines which future research will follow. The mistake with existent major comparative research consists mainly in the attempt of scholars to seek a short cut straight to the meaning and origin of shamanism. By concentrating on the origin they have, so to speak, lost their way in it, and wish at any price to achieve a solution. But the results attained so far in that direction cannot lay claim to any objectivity. If similar mistakes are to be avoided in the future, it is necessary to undertake a large number of detailed historico-cultural investigations, which cover both terminology, the shaman's equipment, different sides of the shaman's activity and related religious ideas. Modern investigations on these lines are not lacking, but they are few in number. By way of example, I refer to Shirokogoroff's investigations on shamanism among the Tungus.

But ethnology and the study of religion are not only a sort of historical account, in which the primary objective is the question of origin and development. Equally important in research is the functionalistic view-point which when we investigate details helps us not to lose sight of the structural unity. All our efforts would be in vain if we were not able to place shamanism in a functional relationship with human existence in its widest sense, that is, with its social-economic system and religious ideas. Without such a holoistic view of the matter, the question of origin and development is left floating in a theoretical vacuum, lacking any contact with reality.

The two above-mentioned aspects of research do not necessarily exclude each other as a number of scholars believe. *If historical research is to be suc-*

[1] J. Stadling, *Shamanismen i norra Asien*, Stockholm 1912.

*cessful, it must not lose sight of the overall unity of human existence including shamanism and its various functional aspects,—and on the other hand, functionalistic scholars should bear in mind that even the functional and structural relationship has a history behind it.* It is very desirable that one or several scholars should submit the social functions of shamanism and the shaman to such combined research. That such a form of research can be fruitful is shown by Shirokogoroff's brilliant investigations among the Tungus.[1]

[1] See for example the relevant chapters in his large work on the Tungus: *Social Organization of the Northern Tungus*, Shanghai 1929, and *Psychomental Complex of the Tungus*, London 1935.

# Eskimo Shamanism

by ERIK HOLTVED

Shamans and shamanistic performances have been described from almost all parts of the Eskimo world, from the Pacific Ocean and Bering Strait to East Greenland, and to judge from the records it seems that the position and traditional functions of the shaman in general have had a rather uniform stamp all over this vast area. Apparently shamanism has been narrowly connected with Eskimo culture far back in time. Nevertheless certain characteristic differences found in the shamans' ways of exercising their practise indicate that the development has not proceeded along the same line in all cases. In this connection, however, it is necessary to take into consideration that the descriptions are not all of equal detail and value, and partly date from a period where shamanism was in decay. In a large number of cases, however, our knowledge is founded on eyewitness accounts, and among Canadian Eskimos in particular shamanism has been found living uninfluenced by the white man's civilization until only a few decades ago.

Generally speaking the task of the Eskimo shaman is to take charge of the relations to the supernatural powers that are supposed to interfere with human life. Thus it includes: first and foremost to procure game animals in times of failing luck in hunting, also to drive away wicked spirits, procure good weather, explore the future, and to cure sick people. In addition people might apply to the shamans in order to get strong amulets, songs or charms.

If hunger was impending because the game animals had disappeared the shaman could visit the deities who controlled the animals, the Moon-Man or the Sea-Woman (Sedna), and it would then appear that they had become angry and had withheld the animals because people had broken the prescribed rules. Having returned, the shaman would then try to find out the offender and have him or her confess. If he succeeded, and a penance had been im-

posed on the offender—mostly prohibitions of eating certain parts of animals, or the like, the deity in question was supposed to have become satisfied.

In Greenland and Labrador the idea is met with that the offences became materialized as dirt (*agdlerutit*, or *pitseete*) in the hair of the Sea-Woman. The shaman had to struggle with her in order to be allowed to cleanse and comb her hair, and having succeeded, the Sea-Woman would promise to set the animals free that they might be hunted again.

On such occasions where the shaman acted on the behalf of the whole society he was not paid for his efforts. In all other cases, when his assistance was asked for, it would depend on a payment which according to circumstances might be rather great. This in particular applies to cases of sickness where the cause was supposed to be wicked magic, stealing of the soul, or some other supernatural reason including punishment for transgression of taboo rules. The patient could be cured by blowing, sucking, or extraction of some "object". In Greenland the shamans also had the more special task to destroy tupilaks, artificial monsters, that were sent out to pursue and kill a person.

It naturally follows that the shamans also played a prominent rôle at cultic ceremonies in places where such were held, as they more than others were familiar with the traditions, and experienced in dealing with the spirit world. Thus in Canada and Greenland, where the Sea-Woman cult was dominating it was totally in the hands of the shamans. In Alaska and with the Sibirian Eskimos, however, this was not necessarily the case. Often the ceremonies were here conducted by experienced old men; it might be the head of a family or a prominent hunter (*umialik*). If a shaman assisted, his position was rather that of an expert helper who also in such cases was paid for his services.

Thus Eskimo shamanism apparently had assumed a strongly professional stamp. But even if the shaman on some occasions can be said to have performed a kind of priestly function, yet he did not hold any in a proper sense official position within the society. Anyone, man or woman, who felt a vocation for it and possessed the necessary capability could appear before the public and act as a shaman, and obtain recognition as such. It was thus a purely personal matter. Only in relatively few instances we are told that a person could be predestined for the shaman's task. On Nunivak, according

to Lantis, occasionally a son would become a shaman like his father,[1] and from the Chugach Eskimos Birket-Smith reports that the dignity might sometimes go to a sister's son.[2] Finally, a child might from birth be supposed to possess a particular power to withstand wicked supernatural forces, for instance if its parents had managed to keep it alive after having lost all their preceding children.

It can hardly be doubted that people in general had confidence in the shaman. He was felt to be a safeguard against hidden dangers. But exactly on account of his magic faculties and alliance with the spirit world he was also feared as a person with whom it might be risky to be on bad terms. On the other hand, also the shaman himself might run a risk, if he came to be suspected for abusing his power for bad purposes, which in some cases has resulted in his being killed. In the Alaska area in particular a suspicious attitude towards the shamans seems not to have been uncommon.

Furthermore, one might suppose that people's confidence could also be shaken by the disclosure of the shaman's often naive and badly disguised tricks and ventriloquism, but this seems not to have been the case. No doubt they were differently perceived when the nerves were strained under the impression produced by the séance, its darkness and mystery. In a corresponding way some songs attained their real power only when they were used on particular cultic occasions.

It is above all during the séance that the shaman displays his professional skill, but it is exactly in this connection that certain characteristic differences in technique are in evidence, indicating that historical influences may have been at work in the past in different ways. The researches of Thalbitzer have made it probable that a strong shamanistic wave reached America from Asia at a certain period.[3] This seems to be confirmed by the archaeological finds made by Larsen and Rainey at Ipiutak (Pt. Hope). These include curiously carved swivels of walrus ivory which seem to be imitations of Asiatic shamans' equipment.[4] It is true that corresponding elaborate objects have not been found outside Alaska, but on the other hand there is considerable

[1] Lantis 1946, p. 200.
[2] Birket-Smith 1953, p. 126.
[3] Thalbitzer 1928, p. 419.
[4] Larsen & Rainey 1948, pp. 131 f.

evidence that a more active form of shamanism has found its way to the Eskimos and has spread along the Arctic coast to Greenland, probably in connection with the neoeskimo Thule culture.

It is a characteristic feature of this form of shamanizing that the shaman makes extensive use of the drum when he works himself up into ecstasy and invokes his helping spirits. Here apparently also belongs the shaman's "spirit flight" (*ilímarneq*) with his arms and legs laced tightly to the body, besides a strongly dramatic appearance in general.

As distinct from this some Central Eskimo use a more passive and contemplative way of shamanizing, more suggestive of North American Indian shamanism. The shaman gets his visions sitting or lying in deep concentration at the back of the sleeping platform, behind a curtain, or covered with a skin. The drum is not used in this connection.

This less dramatic form was also known in Greenland but was said to have been used there only by shamans of inferior degree. It was called *kilungmôrssorneq*, "to go to the back of the platform", and the shaman himself was called *nerfalassoq*, "one who lies on his back". In Greenland no doubt it represents an older tradition that has been superseded by the more active form.

Besides these two characteristic forms which make special demands on the shaman's personality and training, a still more popular and simple method of invoking spirits exists, namely the so-called *qilaneq* or "head-lifting". It is known from all parts of the Eskimo world, where it is also sometimes practised by the professional shamans. The method is performed by alternately lifting and sinking a heavy object by help of a leatherstrap the other end of which is sometimes tied to a *qila*-stick. At the same time questions are put to a *qila*-spirit which is supposed to enter the object, or stay in the earth immediately below. In most cases the question is whether a sick person will recover, or the like. If the lifted object feels heavy it is mostly taken as affirmative, and negative if light. The lifted object is usually the patient's head or foot. Thus it can also be practised with oneself insofar as the foot is used. In some places, however, a rolled up coat is used, as in the particular instance of the Caribou Eskimos where the shaman uses his own coat, and lifts it by help of his shaman's belt and and the qilastick.

No doubt the Eskimo *qilaneq* dates back to a time prior to the more profes-

sional shamanism. The circumpolar distribution of the method alone indicates a very great age. However, more conclusive seems to be that the word-stem *qila* is also found in the name for the shaman's drum, *qilaut*, literally "a *qilaneq*-instrument". Thus shamanizing with the drum seems to have been regarded as a new way of performing *qilaneq*.

Just as the general functions of the shaman are the same almost everywhere, his introduction into the profession and training also show great uniformity. Often it seems to have been a dream or some extraordinary experience of nature that has made a person think that he was called to become a shaman. He may try to resist, but in spite of a strong mental pressure he will perhaps in most cases yield to what he feels as destiny.

The next step usually will be that he approaches an older shaman, who may then take care of his further education. Sometimes there could be two teachers, sometimes more. In East Greenland for instance it was customary for the novice to consult several "specialists".

Before tuition could begin, it was always necessary to give a present to the teacher. The Iglulik shamans explained it as a gift to the future helping spirits even if, of course, in practice the teacher himself had the benefit of it.[1] The instruction proper might last from a few days to several years. The latter was often the case in East Greenland. To some extent, however, it would depend on the novice himself.

It is a general feature that the novice should spend long periods in solitude, in desolate places where he expected to meet the beings who should afterwards serve as his helping spirits. Often he had to undergo the most severe sufferings from cold and hunger. In fact, in order to become an able shaman it was necessary to experience the mystery of life and death. This could be done in different ways. From the Caribou Eskimos for instance hanging, drowning, and shooting are mentioned.[2]

The most detailed descriptions of the shaman's "death-test" come from Greenland where the novice, hypnotized by constantly rubbing a stone in circles, was eaten by the mighty spirit who suddenly appeared as a bear from a lake and attacked him. He would fall into a faint and afterwards find

[1] Knud Rasmussen 1929, p. 111.
[2] Knud Rasmussen 1930, pp. 57 f.

himself naked on the shore, but on his way home his clothing would come flying after him through the air.

A similar tradition is known from Labrador,[1] and, on the whole, it seems that experiences of this kind have been known by most Eskimo groups. Thus, according to Knud Rasmussen, an Iglulik shaman must be able "to see himself as a skeleton" and name all the parts of his body, every single bone by name in the sacred shaman's language.[2] This greatly recalls the "dismembering" of Sibirian shamans.

Also a kind of "worm test", reminiscent of American Indians' "ant test", has apparently been known by the Eskimos. By letting worms eat the meat from the body the shaman became "light and shining", as Knud Rasmussen was told in North Alaska.[3] That the shaman is shining, or filled with an inner light, is a widely spread idea. In this way he was thought to be observed by his helping spirits. A "worm test" is also mentioned from the Aivilik Eskimos,[4] and from West Greenland.[5]

A special interest attaches to the bear-figure Tôrnârssuk. By the early Greenland missionaries he was described as "the master of the helping spirits". This conception has been opposed by Thalbitzer, who, however, seems to some extent to have based his view on the particular conditions in East Greenland where in fact Tôrnârtik was only the most prominent helping spirit, and was clearly not identified with the bear-monster that eats the shaman to be.[6] Thus it might seem as if a splitting up had taken place in East Greenland, the name of Tôrnârssuk (Tôrnârtik) having become transferred to the helping spirit, whereas his original nature of a supreme being still manifests itself in the mystic bear.

In West Greenland, however, it seems beyond doubt that Tôrnârssuk was really regarded as "the master of the helping spirits". It was he who gave the shamans "power" and provided them with helping spirits. The West Greenland Tôrnârssuk thus corresponds in all essentials to the mighty spirit who in North Labrador was imagined to live in an inaccessible moun-

[1] Hawkes 1916, p. 129.
[2] Knud Rasmussen 1929, p. 114.
[3] Knud Rasmussen (ed. Ostermann) 1952, p. 130.
[4] Boas 1901, p. 154.
[5] Rink 1868, p. 236.
[6] Thalbitzer 1928, p. 381.

tain, and who controlled the game animals, allowing them to be hunted only on condition that the hunters treated them with respect and observed the prescribed rules.[1] Similar ideas are found among hunting people in both North and South America, and seem to be characteristic of a very old stage of primitive hunters' culture.

Also with the Central Eskimos and in Alaska the Tôrnârssuk conception can be vaguely traced, and almost everywhere the bear is still regarded as a particularly strong helping spirit, even if as a real deity he has become relegated to the background by other powers. It may in this connection be significant that the shamans apparently nowhere get their "power" or "light" from the Sea-Woman. Caribou Eskimo Shamans get it from Hila or Pinga who controls the souls of the caribou. With the Iglulik Eskimos it is above all the Moon-Man, but also the Mother-of-the-Caribou, bears in human form, and deceased persons that are mentioned as sources of power.[2]

A helping spirit is generally called a *tôrnaq*, and the shaman himself *angakkoq*. Locally, however, also other names are found, e.g. *apersaq*, "one who is questioned", or *nakorut*, "something that gives strength". In Alaska the common name is *tuneraq*, and the shaman is correspondingly called *tunralik*, "one who has a *tuneraq*".

The helping spirits form a very mixed assembly. Here free reins seem to have been given to the imagination. Nevertheless certain more constant types are met with, thus in East Greenland where each shaman must try to get a *tôrnârtik*, an *aperqit* (asking spirit), an *eqingaleq*, a falcon, certain frightening spirits, etc., each of which could be charged with special tasks. During the séance the shaman would summon one or more of his helping spirits and speak with them in the special shaman's or spirit language, or he could let them enter his body while his own soul made flights far away.

Masks seem generally not to have been used at the séances proper. At cultic festivals in Alaska, however, it was not unusual that a shaman wore a mask representing a helping spirit, but also laymen could wear masks on such occasions.

Also dolls are mentioned. The Chugach Eskimo shamans are said to have owned special dolls in which they could let a helping spirit take up its

[1] Hawkes 1916, p. 129; Turner 1894, p. 195.

[2] Knud Rasmussen 1929, p. 113.

residence before being sent out to perform some task or other.[1] Similar dolls are known from the Copper Eskimos. They were made of bark and correspondingly called "*kaisalluk*" (cf. WGrl. *qasaloq*, "bark of a tree").[2]

On the whole the professional equipment of the Eskimo shaman seems to have been sparse. Presumably each shaman had his own drum, and in some places a *qila*-stick. In East Greenland the shaman used besides the drum a *makkortaq*, i.e. a small rattling skin which he held on the palm of his hand and rapped with a stick. The Caribou and Iglulik Eskimo shaman wore a belt with attached amulets, or gifts that had assumed the character of amulets. Otherwise no special shaman's costume is known. It is, however, interesting to note that an Alaska shaman on certain occasions wore a gutskin coat, and the same is known from Eastern Central Eskimos.[3] This custom apparently goes back to Asia, where Keretkun of the Chuckchee, the same as Kacak of the Eskimos, was imagined to wear such a coat which similarly was worn by all people when they participated in ceremonies performed in his honour.

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[1] Birket-Smith 1953, p. 127.

[2] Jenness 1922, p. 197.

[3] Nelson 1899, p. 432; Lantis 1946, p. 203; Hawkes 1916, p. 137.

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# Spirit Lodge, a North American Shamanistic Séance

by ÅKE HULTKRANTZ

## 1. *General Remarks on North American Shamanism*

In its more limited sense shamanism is a phenomenon characteristic of the North Eurasian peoples. We may then define it as a religious and magic complex centered on the ecstatic magician, the shaman.[1] In a more general sense, however, shamanism is supposed to include all activities peculiar to the medicine-man. Anglo-Saxon and French scholars in particular interpret shamanism in this broader aspect. The result is that all manifestations of the American medicine-men may be called shamanism, and shamanistic.[2]

If the word shamanism seems ambiguous, the word shaman is less so. Most scholars agree that the activities of the shaman presuppose some form of ecstasy. Eliade, for instance, finds that the shaman is distinguished from the medicine-man, the magician and the sorcerer "by a magico-religious technique which is in a way exclusive to him and which may be called: the ecstatic trip to Heaven, to the Lower World, or to the depths of the ocean".[3] It seems to me, however, that this definition is too limited; it is at least as characteristic for the shaman to operate without any extra-corporeal journey to the other world, provided he is in an ecstatic state. A shaman is, according to this definition, a practitioner who, with the help of spirits, cures the sick

[1] Some scholars consider shamanism to be a religion; Findeisen, for instance, thinks that it is a "spiritualistic religion", see H. Findeisen, "Das Schamanentum als spiritistische Religion" (*Ethnos* 1960: 3–4), pp. 192 ff. As pointed out by Stiglmayr this interpretation is incorrect, see E. Stiglmayr, "Schamanismus, eine spiritistische Religion?" (*Ethnos* 1962), pp. 47 f.

[2] Cf. Å. Hultkrantz, *Les Religions des Indiens primitifs de l'Amérique, essai d'une synthèse typologique et historique* (Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm Studies in Comparative Religion, vol. 4, 1963), pp. 84 ff.

[3] M. Eliade, "Shamanism" (*Forgotten Religions*, ed. V. Ferm, New York 1950), p. 299.

or reveals hidden things etc. while being in an ecstasy. During the trance he may leave his own body, or he may simply summon the spirits to him and ask them to help him.[1] This extension of the meaning of the term "shaman" is important, for it allows of the inclusion of the "Spirit Lodge" to be described in the following among the true shamanistic rites.

There are many references to shamans or "jugglers" in the early sources on North American religion, for instance in the Jesuit relations, and the material on shamanism has accumulated in the course of the centuries. Nevertheless, research on shamanism has scarcely more than begun, and we still lack a general treatise on the North American medicine-man and shaman which absorbs the whole complex of shamanism in its manifold morphology. A good start was made shortly after the turn of the century when Roland Dixon wrote his famous article on the American "shaman" (by which term he understood the medicine-man in general). Dixon has here outlined the North American shamanistic complex and mentions, among other things, the Spirit Lodge phenomenon.[2] He also makes the important statement that "the spiritual flight of the shaman himself, in search of information, so characteristic of the shamans in northeastern Siberia, seems on the whole rare".[3] Here lies indeed the greatest difference between North American and Siberian shamanism, the latter term used in its more restricted sense.

Dixon's good initiative had unfortunately no immediate following. Instead, attention was concentrated on the characteristically North American vision quest, particularly after Benedict had published her famous work on the guardian spirit.[4] This vision-seeking was named "democratized shamanism"

[1] Cf. J. Haekel, "Religion" (*Lehrbuch der Völkerkunde*, ed. by L. Adam and H. Trimborn, Stuttgart 1958), pp. 62 f.

[2] R. B. Dixon, "Some Aspects of the American Shaman" (*Journ. of Amer. Folk-Lore*, vol. 21, 1908), p. 9.

[3] Dixon, loc. cit.

[4] R. F. Benedict, *The Concept of the Guardian Spirit in North America* (Amer. Anthrop. Ass., Mem., vol. 29, 1923); idem, "The Vision in Plains Culture" (*Amer. Anthrop.*, vol. 24: 1, 1922), pp. 1 ff.; J. Blumensohn, "The Fast among North American Indians" (*Amer. Anthrop.*, vol. 35: 4, 1933), pp. 451 ff.; J. Haekel, "Zum Problem des Individualtotemismus in Nordamerika" (*Intern. Arch. für Ethnogr.*, vol. 35, 1938), pp. 35 ff. Cf. also the survey in Hultkrantz, op. cit., pp. 71 ff. It should be observed that Benedict presents a subchapter on shamanism in which she discusses the position of the medicine-man and shaman in relation to the common visionary (Benedict, op. cit., pp. 67 ff.).

by Lowie, and undoubtedly represents a heritage from an older shamanistic practice.[1] Shamanistic studies were, however, resumed in the late twenties and early thirties with extensive monographs on North American Indian shamanism by Leh and Corlett.[2] These are not, however, exhaustive, nor do they treat the really essential features of the shaman and his art. Later works by Ohlmarks, Bouteiller and Eliade stress the parallels between North American shamanism and shamanism in the Old World from psychological, phenomenological and "religiously interpretative" points of view.[3] Finally, a German doctoral dissertation, unpublished and inaccessible to the present writer, discusses the sub-Arctic forms of North American shamanism.[4]

Besides these general works on North American shamanism there are numerous others dealing with selected aspects of shamanism, as Stewart's investigations of possession,[5] or with shamanism in particular tribes, as Park's treatises of Paviotso shamanism.[6] There are also many studies of the integration of shamanism in modern American Indian cults, such as shakerism.[7] Strangely enough, the shamanistic background of the Ghost-dance

[1] Cf. R. Lowie, *An Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (New York 1940), p. 312; Hultkrantz, op. cit., pp. 74 ff., 77. A contrary opinion will be found in M. Schuster, "Die Schamanen und ihr Ritual" (*Völkerkunde*, ed. by B. Freudenfeld, München 1960), pp. 36 ff.

[2] L. L. Leh, *The Shaman in Aboriginal American Society* (Univ. of Colorado Studies, vol. 20, 1934), pp. 199 ff.; W. T. Corlett, *The Medicine-Man of the American Indian* (Springfield 1935). See also A. C. Parker, "Indian Medicine and Medicine Men" (*Ann. Archaeol. Rep.*, Toronto 1928), pp. 9 ff.

[3] Å. Ohlmarks, *Studien zum Problem des Schamanismus* (Lund 1939); M. Bouteiller, *Chamanisme et guérison magique* (Paris 1950); M. Eliade, *Le Chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase* (Paris 1951), particularly pp. 261 ff.

[4] S. Bechmann, *Der Schamanismus bei den Indianern des subarktischen Amerika* (Wien 1958).

[5] K. M. Stewart, "Spirit Possession in Native America" (*Southw. Journ. of Anthrop.*, vol. 2: 3, 1946), pp. 323 ff.; idem, "Spirit Possession" (*Tomorrow*, vol. 4: 3, 1956), pp. 41 ff.

[6] W. Z. Park, *Shamanism in Western North America* (Chicago 1938); idem, "Paviotso Shamanism" (*Amer. Anthrop.*, vol. 36: 1, 1934), pp. 98 ff.

[7] T. T. Waterman, "The Shake Religion of Puget Sound" (*Ann. Rep.*, Smithsonian Inst., 1922, Washington 1924), pp. 499 ff.; E. Gunther, The Shaker Religion of the Northwest (*Columbia Univ. Contrib. to Anthrop.*, vol. 36, New York 1949), pp. 37 ff.; J. M. Collins, "The Indian Shaker Church" (*Southw. Journ. of Anthrop.*, vol. 6: 4, 1950), pp. 399 ff.; M. W. Smith, "Shamanism in the Shaker Religion of Northwest America" (*Man*, vol. 54, 1954), pp. 119 ff.; H. G. Barnett, *Indian Shakers* (Carbondale 1957).

movement has not as yet received an adequate and thorough investigation.[1]

It is well known even among scholars who are not Americanists that shamanism in North America sometimes appears in very specific forms, particularly where shamanistic societies have developed; it is sufficient to remind the reader of the medicine-lodge society among the Central Algonkian tribes and the cannibal society among the Kwakiutl.[2] In the present article, however, interest is concentrated on the more original, individualistic forms of shamanism, and whenever shamanism is mentioned it is the activities of the lone practitioners which are referred to. It is less well known but nevertheless a fact that also this individualistic shamanism appeared and continues to appear in several different forms.

The regional typology of North American shamanism is rather complicated and still needs a thorough analysis, although the authors mentioned above have made some progress in trying to reveal the pattern. If, however, we apply broad historical-phenomenological perspectives, we may observe a major difference between two main forms: first, a type of shamanism which is very common also in other parts of the world, and is characterized by considerable variation but (usually) low intensity in its forms of expression; and, secondly, a more limited shamanism which is characterized by its uniformity and intensity. In this paper, I shall call the former type "general shamanism", the second, "Arctic shamanism", since it dominates the Arctic areas (the Eskimo) and parts of the Northwest Coast area and most probably has direct connections with similar shamanistic manifestations in the Arctic areas west of Bering Strait. There is no doubt that Arctic shamanism has developed on the foundations of general shamanism. It may be defined as an ecologically conditioned special form of the latter. This does not exclude, however, that also a common Circumpolar historical tradition has contributed to its growth.[3]

[1] Cf., however, Å. Hultkrantz, *The North American Indian Orpheus Tradition* (Statens Etnogr. Mus., Monogr. Ser., vol. 2, Stockholm 1957), pp. 306 f., 311 f.

[2] Survey and short bibliography in Hultkrantz, *Les Religions des Indiens* etc., pp. 114 ff.

[3] Å. Hultkrantz, "Type of Religion in the Arctic Hunting Cultures: A Religio-Ecological Approach" (*Hunting and Fishing*, Nordic symposium on life in a Traditional Hunting and Fishing milieu in Prehistoric Times and up to the Present Day, Luleå 1965), pp. 265 ff.

In general shamanism, ecstasy does not function as a constantly prevailing factor. The medicine-man has, perhaps, attained his profession through an ecstatic experience in which the guardian spirits have appeared and delegated their power to him; in his shamanistic activity, however, he can operate without falling into a trance—in some cases he is even unable to enter into ecstasy. Since his activities are mostly directed to the curing of diseases (every shaman and medicine-man is first and foremost a healer), he has recourse to healing methods which do not demand a higher degree of meditation: extraction and sucking of disease spirits and objects from the inflicted person's body are primarily resorted to, less often extraphysical journeys to catch a strayed or stolen soul. If the diagnosis of soul loss is inescapable—which it usually is when the consciousness of the sick person is darkened—the medicine-man has several ways of retrieving the lost soul. He can, for instance, show in a pantomime how he seeks it in the environment or how he catches it in the realm of the dead. There are also occasions, at least in some places, when, during an ecstasy, he dispatches his own free-soul to overtake the forlorn soul of his patient. In most cases, however, the shaman's trance is reserved for the summoning of his assistant spirits. These are called on for consultation or active intervention, be it the curing of the sick, the finding of lost articles or the discovery of secrets and of future events.

In Arctic shamanism the trance is an integral part of the shamanistic procedure. The shaman resorts to ecstasy, either to recall the sick person's soul, to remove a disease-object from the patient's body, or to gather information concerning human beings and fateful events. During the ecstasy he usually sends out his free-soul, or his guardian spirits—the boundary-line between these spiritual agents often tends to be effaced, the shaman being able to journey in the figure of his guardian spirit. When the shaman cures a patient whose disease is caused by the intrusion of an inanimate object or a spirit (a diagnosis which somehow is forced aside in Arctic shamanism), he usually lives in a kind of half trance and is assisted by his helping spirits. The notion exists sometimes that the latter, and not the shaman, remove the disease agent.

This summarily sketched outline of the two most prominent forms of shamanism in North America will serve as a background and help us to put in its right place the shamanistic performance which will be described

in what follows. In the bordering area between general and Arctic shamanism we find a ritually elaborated shamanistic séance characterized by the summoning of spirits for information (divination, etc.) and, in some cases, healing. It is held in a dark place, and the medicine-man is not infrequently practising in a cylindrical tent erected for the purpose. This may be placed outdoors or in a largish lodge or house. Sudden confusion of spirit voices, shaking of the tent and the medicine-man's mysterious disentangling of ropes and thongs are some of the most conspicuous features of the performance. It is known under the denominations "Shaking Tent" and "Spirit Lodge", or is simply described as "Conjuring Ceremony" or "Jugglery". Since the feature of the shaking tent is not present everywhere in this ceremony, particularly not in the Arapaho séance to be described here, the term "Spirit Lodge" is preferred in this article. The ceremony has been dealt with from different points of view by authors like Cooper, Hallowell, Lambert and Ray.[1] Its religio-historical position has, however, never been made the object of a closer investigation.

## 2. *A Spirit Lodge Ceremony among the Arapaho Indians*

In August 1955, the present author attended a medicine ceremony among the Arapaho Indians on the Wind River Reservation, Wyoming. The Arapaho constitute a branch of the great Algonkian linguistic stock; their nearest kinsmen are the Atsina or Gros Ventre (of the Plains) who broke away from them several hundred years ago. They were, until the end of last century, typical Plains Indians equipped with horses and tipis (i.e., conical tents of buffalo-hides), living on buffaloes, organized with military societies, and having the famous Sun Dance as their foremost religious expression. With their well-known neighbours and linguistic kin, the Cheyenne, and the likewise well-known northern Sioux (Dakota) Indians, they were until late times among the most warlike tribes on the Northern Plains. It was a close

[1] J. M. Cooper, "The Shaking Tent Rite among Plains and Forest Algonquians" (*Prim. Man*, vol. 17: 3–4, 1944), pp. 60 ff.; A. I. Hallowell, *The Role of Conjuring in Saulteaux Society* (Publ. of the Philadelphia Anthrop. Soc., vol. 2, Philadelphia 1942); R. S. Lambert, "The Shaking Tent" (*Tomorrow*, vol. 4: 3, 1956), pp. 113 ff.; V. F. Ray, "Historic Backgrounds of the Conjuring Complex in the Plateau and the Plains" (*Language, Culture, and Personality: Essays in Memory of Edward Sapir*, ed. L. Spier et alii, Menasha, Wis., 1941), pp. 204 ff.

common interest, viz. the opposition to the white invaders, which brought them and the Sioux together; and the bands between the two tribes are still rather strong, as will appear from the following account. It is also important to note that the Arapaho have always been known as devotedly religious; their inclination to religious mysticism distinguished them from most other Plains tribes. In 1878 they were removed by force from their old hunting grounds in eastern Wyoming and western Colorado to their present home in western Wyoming.[1]

Anyone who knows the Arapaho's strong dedication to religion would expect the medicine ceremony to be performed by some of their old medicine-men. This strangely enough was not the case. The acting medicine-man was an Oglala Sioux from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota by the name of Mark Big Road. Although a very silent and reticent man—he did not like to discuss the ceremony with me—he nevertheless disclosed certain particulars about himself and his calling. Mark Big Road, a tall and strongly built man in his forties, told me that he practised the same type of séance as his father and grandfather had done before him. They were medicine-men like him, and Mark had inherited their guardian spirits. In spite of this, however, he had not acquired them automatically but had like other medicine-men to go through an ordeal of fasting and waking, whereupon the spirits had appeared in visions. His foremost helping spirit was Skadi, the ghost of a white man who had become so "indianized" that he now spoke the Sioux language. Mark had met Skadi in his first vision, and then after Skadi's instructions he had received many other guardian spirits, he did not say how many. An Arapaho woman who considered herself initiated told me they were 427 all in all, other participants in the ceremony thought they were

[1] Cf. J. Mooney, "The Ghost-Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890" (*Bur. of Amer. Ethnol.*, Ann. Rep. 14: 2, Washington 1896), pp. 953 ff.; idem, "Arapaho" (*Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, ed. F. W. Hodge, Bur. of Amer. Ethnol., Bull. 30: 1, Washington 1907), pp. 72 f.; A. L. Kroeber, "The Arapaho" (*Amer. Mus. of Nat. Hist.*, Bull. XVIII: 1, New York 1902), pp. 1 ff.; W. P. Clark, *The Indian Sign Language* (Philadelphia 1885), pp. 38 ff.; Sister M. I. Hilger, "Arapaho Child Life and Its Cultural Background" (*Bur. of Amer. Ethnol.*, Bull. 148, Washington 1952), pp. 1 ff.; H. Elkin, "The Northern Arapaho of Wyoming" (*Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes*, ed. R. Linton, New York 1940), pp. 207 ff.; M. H. Wright, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of Oklahoma* (Norman 1951), pp. 42 ff.

many but would not say how many. One spirit is supposed to be 7000 years old. Mark counts among his guardian spirits also the mighty spirit of the Thunder (Wakinyan).

Mark Big Road had been called to Wind River by Arapaho Indians who had witnessed his magical performances on the Sioux reservation and among white men in Rapid City. Older Arapaho remembered that similar remarkable feats had been achieved amongst them fifty years earlier, or around that time. However, no present-day medicine-man among them mastered the art any longer. Therefore, Mark was called upon to reintroduce the medicine ceremony during a series of performances. Admittedly, this meant that the Oglala version of the ritual had to be accepted, but the difference between this and the earlier indigenous ceremony was apparently very slight. Anyway, this reintroduction of an old shamanistic rite must be considered to be a remarkable event, particularly if we keep in mind that seventy-five years earlier the Indian agent at Fort Washakie (Wind River Reservation) thought he could report that the Arapaho medicine-men had finally ceased with their jugglery.[1] In other words, the revitalized medicine ceremony among the Arapaho in the 1950's ought to be conceived as a "nativistic" rite, according to Linton's definition of the concept.[2] It thus represents a new trend in the tribal life, a renaissance and renewal of the best values in the old religion. In this connection it is important to note the role and functions of the medicine ceremony. It does not only help human beings to have their health restored, or their lost and hidden things regained. It also creates for them the contact with the reassuring world of spirits which is the heritage of the Indian religions since time immemorial.

The medicine ceremony on the eve of August 23, 1955, was arranged by one of the most active promoters of a religious renewal among the Arapaho, Buster Crispin, and was given for the benefit of his kinsman Steve Duran, who for many years had felt pains each time he had a meal. The ceremony was held in a primitive log-cabin close to the Little Wind River, ordinarily occupied by a middle-aged Arapaho Indian. In the course of the evening many Arapaho arrived at the house, until finally its large room was filled

[1] *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs*, 1881 (Washington 1881), p. 242 (Shoshone and Bannack Agency, Wyoming).

[2] R. Linton, "Nativistic Movements" (*Amer. Anthrop.*, vol. 45: 2, 1943), p. 230.

up by some sixty persons, mostly women and children. They sat down on blankets spread out on the floor along the walls, the men being seated in the western and the women in the eastern parts of the room. Four drummers placed themselves on two mattresses in front of the men's row. Mark, appearing in the usual modern Indian apparel of "cowboy fashion", took his seat at a place where the men's and the women's sides joined each other. The windows were covered by sackcloth. It was now ten o'clock. The séance could begin.

The hostess, Helen Crispin, hands over in a dignified way a big ceremonial pipe to the medicine-man, asking him at the same time, with tears glittering in her eyes, to cure her sick relative.[1] Mark accepts the pipe, lights it and starts smoking. This is a sure sign that he has decided to accede to Helen's wishes. Helen's husband now rises from his seat and admonishes those present to try to believe, not to doubt, not to wonder; they must pray incessantly to the ninety-six spirits who will be present during the performance.[2] "And", he surprisingly finishes his speech, "I ask for the blessings of God and the Holy Ghost". Hot stones are now carried in a tub to the middle of the room, water is poured over them, and the room is filled with steam and strong heat. Men and women rise and, passing slowly the heated place, they fan the steam up towards face and breast. This being done everybody receives small seeds of sweetsage which they rub into their heads and arms. This rubbing procedure as well as the steam bath are preparatory cleaning rites.[3]

The medicine-man now takes his seat in the centre of the room on a carpet which is covered by long straws of sagebrush. Around him are placed small flags and a rectangular enclosure, consisting of a string which is bound

[1] All conversation during the performance was held in English, since Mark, being a Sioux, does not understand the Arapaho language.

[2] Already before the ceremony began Buster Crispin tried to dissuade me and the white lady I brought along from attending it. He pointed out to us that curiosity in this connection was no good, and that the spirits would not appear if the whole audience did not join in prayers to them. Cf. also W. R. Hurt, "A Yuwipi Ceremony at Pine Ridge" (*Plains Anthrop.*, vol. 5: 10, 1960), p. 52.

[3] It is interesting to observe that the sweat-bath rite which was formerly performed in a separate hut outside the spirit lodge has now been incorporated in the main ceremonies. Concerning the sweetsage, this was probably *Artemisia ludoviciana*, a herb that often serves as incense among northern Plains Indians.

to a series of jars standing on a line. The string is stretched between them some few inches above the ground and carries 147 small red bags filled with tobacco. Beside his blanket, but inside the enclosure, the medicine-man arranges a little altar, provided with, inter alia, feathers, sacred pipes, tobacco and gourds. He thereafter sets a piece of sagebrush on fire and makes the incense pass over the sacred objects of the altar, at the same time as the thundering sounds of the drum fill the room and the harsh voices of the drummers reach the ceiling. Mark fetches his two ceremonial pipes and points first one, then the other in the direction of the four cardinal points and over the heads of the assembly, making blessing hand movements.

After these preliminary rites there takes place a sacrificial ceremony of a type which occurred in the Sun Dance in the old days. A young daughter of Buster and Helen Crispin, Helena, steps forward, withdraws her moccasins and places her feet on the blanket, at the same time looking towards the west. The medicine-man comes closer, strokes her left arm with sagebrush, raises his hand and prays over her. Thereafter he brings out a razor, and under the deafening roar of the drums he cuts thin slices of skin and flesh from the girl's upper arm. She makes faces, but apparently does not utter a sound; her blood pours out of the wounds, while the assembled, still seated, pray with lowered heads. After a while Mark nods as a sign that her torture is over. She returns to her seat, and is relieved by Mark's wife who now steps forward to suffer the same painful procedure. The sacrificial flesh of the two women is then collected and placed in a little gourd that has its place on the altar. The spirits have received their tribute.

It is now time for the main performance, the shamanizing. The medicine-man who is stripped to the waist stands up on his carpet, whereupon two men approach him and wrap him up very tightly in a blanket. Then they bind him with ropes all over the body, and his hands are tied together behind his back so tightly that they become red. At the same time Mark starts calling on his guardian spirits in a tense, strained voice. Now and then he disrupts his singing with the voice of the owl: "hu, hu". The assistants cover up his face, but his singing continues, although with a partly stifled voice. Finally, the medicine-man is placed on the floor, lying on his face. And then the light in the ceiling is extinguished.

There follow four steady beats on the drums, then the tempo becomes

faster and faster working up to a frenzy, and the room resounds with the intense singing of those present. After a few minutes have elapsed in the dark something seems to happen,[1] and suddenly one can hear a rattle jingle in the midst of the turmoil. It seems to move around the room at the level of a man's height. The drums and the singing cease, and the only thing that may be perceived by the ear is the quiet moaning of the medicine-man, still, as far as I can judge, emanating from the level of the floor. The spirits have arrived.

Helen Crispin's voice breaks the weird silence. "Oh, Skadi and you other spirits, please, pity us. We are here to ask you to take care of and to cure Steve, my brother-in-law, who is very ill. Help him to get well. We believe in you, Skadi. Please cure him, allow him to be with us, let him take care of his family. Skadi and you other spirits, we ask you from all our heart to make him well". One can hear agreeing mutterings from the assembled, even an "amen" here and there. Helen prays again: "Skadi, take away the evil from Steve, place it somewhere out in space where there are no people and where nobody may be hurt by this evil. And think, Skadi, of my niece who is sick and weak, and cure her". Other persons also send up similar prayers, asking for the cure of their sick kinsmen. They ask Skadi if he will make them well, and beseech him to give counsel whether or not they should send their sick youths to school.

Suddenly, Mark says something under his blanket. Those seated very close to him apprehend that the Thunder spirit has arrived, not, on the other hand, the longed-for Skadi. The latter is expected from Rapid City in the Black Hills, and because of his distant abode it takes time for him to arrive. Some minutes are spent in eager expectation. Then Mark starts singing, the drums are sounded again, but more violently than before, and men and women sing with all their voices—indeed, the noise is deafening. Now the cry of an owl breaks through the turmoil. It is Skadi who has arrived; being a ghost he chooses the apparition of the owl. Heavy steps resound from the boards of the floor. Sighs are perceived from the centre of

[1] According to what Crispin and others said one can see blue and green sparks when the spirits enter. (Cf. Hurt, op. cit., p. 51). My own experiences—however they may be explained—were restricted to feeling a strange draught along the wall and shivers running up and down my spine.

the room where the medicine-man is supposed to be lying. All the rest is now silence.

At the request of Buster Crispin the assembled move away some inches from the walls in order to make it possible for the spirits to pass freely in and out. Mark's voice is again heard all over the room. He announces what he has been told (not audible to the rest of us) by Skadi. The girl N.N. will have a baby. "Ugh", the listening crowd comments. Skadi promises to see to the patients who have been prayed for, but he will first treat Steve. The latter is ordered by Crispin to rise to his full length against the wall. Again there is singing and drumming, until Mark announces that Steve has been cured and that Skadi has left to visit the sick ones at the hospitals. The sound of an airplane can be vaguely perceived by all present. Mark bursts into laughter: "Skadi regrets that he can't take the airplane, he missed it". There is mirth everywhere, a sort of release from all the preceding tensions.[1] Mark adds that the séance may be adjourned for some minutes, since Skadi is not present any longer and will be away for a while.

When the light is turned on Mark is found seated on his carpet which he has rolled up. Drops of perspiration fall from his naked back. The rope that had fettered him is lying neatly coiled at his feet, the blanket is away, it had been thrown out in the dark and had landed among the audience.[2] Crispin is satisfied: this is how it should be done, he says, this is how the old-timers did it. "The Whites don't catch anything when they take photographs, and therefore it is meaningless to photograph".[3]

It is now past mid-night. Soon, the light is put out again. There is, once more, singing and drumming, thereafter the rattle is sounded again. Skadi announces through Mark that he has helped the sick and cured them. Steve will get well, but in future he must think of Skadi and take care of himself. This information from the spirit is followed by happy cries of delight from

[1] The occasional outbursts of laughter during the conjuring ceremony have also been observed by other authors, cf. for instance Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 44 f.

[2] The blanket, in fact, hit the white lady whom the author had in his company. It is known from other similar ceremonies that it sometimes falls down on somebody who is unbelieving; see W. R. Hurt and J. H. Howard, "A Dakota Conjuring Ceremony" (*Southw. Journ. of Anthrop.*, vol. 8: 3, 1952), pp. 292 f.

[3] He is referring to photographic experiments during spiritualistic séances in Rapid City.

those present, and above all the humming sounds Helen's quiet voice: "Thank you, thank you, Skadi".

Mark announces that Skadi is now leaving us. After some minutes the light is turned on again. The séance is at an end. What remains pertains to the common Indian feast traditions: the feathered ceremonial pipes pass around among the assembled, and a feast is served by Crispin's daughters. It was 2.45 o'clock in the morning when the meeting was dissolved.

As far as I know, Steve Duran kept fairly well henceforth; at least he did not get worse. The believers said, of course, that he had become better, and it is certainly not impossible that this was so.[1] Throughout the autumn and winter Mark remained among the Arapaho, and he was very popular since he never charged his clients for the services he rendered them, thereby differing from other medicine-men among the Dakota Sioux.[2] I was informed that the spirits had imposed many taboos on him, amongst other things, the prohibition to make money in his work as *wapiye*, medicine-man.

During the years which have since elapsed the type of medicine ceremony here described has gained a secure position among the Arapaho, and according to the latest information at my disposal it is now performed by a young Arapaho Indian whose reputed capacity to work miracles has induced Indians from many tribes to visit the Wind River Reservation.[3]

## 3. *Old and New Forms of the Spirit Lodge Ceremony*

The ceremony described above is a variant of the great ceremonial complex Spirit Lodge. This variant is called *yuwipi* in the Dakota language, a word which denotes the binding and wrapping up of the medicine-man, and it is

[1] On the other hand, Buster Crispin, the host of the ceremony, passed away during the Sun Dance the following year.

[2] In most conjuring séances of this type it is a common thing that the medicine-man abstains from fees.

[3] See also concerning this V. Dusenberry, *The Montana Cree: A study in religious persistence* (Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm Studies in Comparative Religion, vol. 3, 1962), p. 172. The reader is reminded of what was said above concerning this medicine rite as a nativistic ceremony. According to Dusenberry, the interest in the Spirit Lodge is growing among all the northwestern Plains tribes. The Cree in Montana who gave up the ceremony in 1904 or perhaps a little later, reintroduced it in 1945 (op. cit., pp. 167 f.). Cf. below concerning the spread of the rite in its modern Dakota form.

performed among the Dakota Sioux, in particular the Oglala branch.[1] What differentiates the *yuwipi* from other Spirit Lodge performances is, above all, the intricate ritualism with much ceremonial paraphernalia and—in modern times—the location of the ceremony in the quadrangular room of a cottage. To these elements may also be added the blood sacrifices.

The exhibition of ritual objects within a square, mentioned above, seems to be an item of the common ritualistic pattern in the Northern Plains. It is possibly related to the Sun Dance altar and other similar ceremonial structures among the Plains Indians[2] and may, as in the Cheyenne Sun Dance, represent the earth or the universe.[3] From the formal point of view the *yuwipi* altar reminds one of the sacred shrines of the Pueblo Indians and may, indeed, be related to these.[4] A different opinion has been developed by the anthropologist S. E. Feraca who thinks that the earthen altars are variations of the fireplaces among the Indians of the Southeast.[5]

The blood sacrifice was formerly common in the Plains Sun Dance and in the vision quests in this area.[6] It is of great interest to note that the sacrifice made in the Arapaho-Dakota rite which has been described in this paper corresponds completely with the famous Sioux (Hunkpapa) Chief Sitting Bull's self-sacrifice in the Sun Dance of 1876: also in this case, slices of flesh and skin were cut out of the arms.[7]

[1] Hurt & Howard, op. cit., pp. 286 ff.; Hurt, op. cit., pp. 48 ff.; W. R. Hurt, "Correction on Yuwipi Color Symbolism" (*Plains Anthrop.*, vol. 6:11, 1961), p. 43; S. E. Feraca, "The Yuwipi Cult of the Oglala and Sicangu Teton Sioux" (*Plains Anthrop.*, vol. 6: 13, 1961), pp. 155 ff.; idem, *Wakinyan: Contemporary Teton Dakota Religion* (Browning, Montana, 1963), pp. 26 ff.

[2] Cf. R. H. Lowie, *Indians of the Plains* (New York 1954), p. 170; C. Wissler, *North American Indians of the Plains* (New York 1941), pp. 129 f.; L. Spier, "The Sun Dance of the Plains Indians: Its Development and Diffusion" (*Anthrop. Papers of the Amer. Mus. of Nat. Hist.*, vol. XVI: 7, New York 1921), pp. 471 ff. See also the illustration in G. A. Dorsey, *The Arapaho Sun Dance* (Field Columb. Mus., Anthrop. Ser., vol. IV, Chicago 1903), pl. LXI, p. 118.

[3] G. A. Dorsey, *The Cheyenne, II: The Sun Dance* (Field Columb. Mus., Anthrop. Ser., vol. IX: 2, Chicago 1905), p. 146.

[4] Cf. E. C. Parsons, *Pueblo Indian Religion* (Chicago 1939), vol. I, pp. 353 ff., II, pp. 956 f.

[5] Feraca, "The Yuwipi Cult" etc., p. 155.

[6] Spier, op. cit., pp. 492 f. Cf. W. C. MacLeod, "Self-Sacrifice in Mortuary and Non-Mortuary Ritual in North America" (*Anthropos*, vol. 33, 1938), pp. 349 ff.

[7] S. Vestal, *Sitting Bull, Champion of the Sioux* (2nd ed., Norman 1957), pp. 149 f.

The present habit of arranging the rite in the room of a wooden building, the most common dwelling among the Arapaho of today, is of rather recent origin. In the old days the performance took place in a lodge (tipi), and it could frequently happen that the tent shook in a mysterious way when the spirits entered and departed, or even during the whole ceremony.[1] These agitations were formerly common in most places where the ceremony occurred. They motivate its most popular name, the "Shaking Tent".

The Arapaho, too, have once known the rite in this form. Bruce Grosbeak, an elderly Arapaho, who died in 1956 and who had a good knowledge of the old traditions of his tribe, told me that before the turn of the century the Spirit Lodge ceremony was arranged in a tent. The medicine-man was tightly tied to the base of a lodge pole, and the spirits entered through the smoke hole; the audience could hear their voices from the top of the tent.

Such séances were reported already in the beginning of the seventeenth century by Samuel de Champlain and Father Le Jeune who had found them in the territories of the Algonkian Indians.[2] They still occurred in this area until very recent times, and most probably exist there even today. The Shaking Tent was, as we shall see, also common in the northern Plains and Plateau areas farther west. In most cases the ceremony was held in a tent which had been raised for the purpose, and not infrequently we are informed that the medicine-man performed his magic tricks in a small, closed tent which was put up inside a large lodge. Sometimes the medicine-man was not tied up. Otherwise, the similarities between the oldest known Spirit Lodge performances and the *yuwipi* rite which has just been described were so great that it must be taken for granted that both of them belong to a very

[1] See G. Pond, "Dakota Superstitions" (*Minnesota Hist. Collections*, vol. 2, 1889), pp. 249 f.

[2] H. P. Biggar (ed.), *The Works of Samuel de Champlain* (Publ. of the Champlain Soc., vol. II, Toronto 1925), pp. 86 ff. (the same text also to be found in vol. IV, Toronto 1932, pp. 85 ff.); R. G. Thwaites (ed.), *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, vol. 6 (Cleveland 1897), pp. 163 ff., vol. 12 (Cleveland 1898), pp. 17 ff. (Le Jeune). Champlain's experience is from 1609, Le Jeune's from 1634. The first picture of a Spirit Lodge rite appears in H. R. Schoolcraft, *Historical and Statistical Information Respecting the History, Condition and Prospects of the Indian Tribes of the United States*, vol. V (Philadelphia 1860), Pl. 32; it shows a cylindrical medicine-lodge in which the spirits are conjured up and probably refers to the Ojibway; cf. the text, pp. 421 ff.

old, fixed shamanistic tradition. It is possible to say that the *yuwipi* today supplies the form in which this tradition can survive; it has, so to speak, transferred shamanism from the tent milieu of the nomad to the modern, urbanized milieu.[1] The *yuwipi* rite has recently expanded, and not only among the Arapaho. At present it is on its way to penetrate Sioux reservations where the secret of the Shaking Tent was forgotten many years ago.[2] It seems that nowadays the *yuwipi* performance is the most vital element of the old pagan religion among the Dakota.[3]

In this connection we must abolish the suspicion that this medicine ceremony, in any case in its *yuwipi* form, has received a decisive influence from modern spiritualistic séances. There are, certainly, reasons for assuming such influence, as when, for example, the medium in both ceremonies keeps in contact with a spirit control who is the ghost of a deceased person—in the Arapaho ceremony even the ghost of a White person.[4] On the other hand, the presumed connection is impossible in view of the fact that right since the beginning of the 17th century the Spirit Lodge ceremony has preserved its tight moulding and has been diffused over a considerable area, as we shall soon see. It is more likely that modern occidental spiritualism has been influenced by American shamanism as this appears in the Spirit Lodge.[5] This is also the opinion of Richard Lambert who points out that both the trick of escaping when being bound up and the custom of giving the controls Indian names have been passed over from American Indian shamanism to modern spiritualism.[6] It is appropriate to mention in this connection that the

[1] Cf. Hurt & Howard, op. cit., p. 294: the architectural structure motivates the absence of the shaking trait in the modern *yuwipi*.

[2] Feraca, op. cit., p. 162; Hurt & Howard, op. cit., p. 288 n. 11.

[3] G. Macgregor, *Warriors without Weapons* (Chicago 1946), pp. 98 f.; cf. Feraca, op. cit., p. 162.

[4] Several parallels between the Spirit Lodge and the spiritualistic séances were already pointed out by J. G. Kohl who studied the Ojibway ceremony in the 1850's (cf. below).

[5] Cf. in this connection the comparisons between modern spiritualism and Siberian shamanism in Findeisen, op. cit., and Stiglmayr, op. cit.

[6] Lambert, op. cit., p. 128. Another writer goes even further when he claims that the séance-cabinet of modern spiritualism is directly derived from the North American Indian conjuring lodge (D. H. Rawcliffe, *Illusions and Delusions of the Supernatural and the Occult*, New York 1959, p. 302). The impact of the Spirit Lodge on spiritualistic literature has been discussed by Hallowell (op. cit., p. 2).

well-known Swedish author and spiritualist Jan Fridegård claims that he has an Indian guardian spirit, the ghost of a medicine-man.[1]

## 4. *The Diffusion of the Spirit Lodge Complex*

From the phenomenological point of view the religious beliefs and rites making up the Spirit Lodge constitute a unitary, complex whole. The different elements pertaining to it occur to a surprising extent in a fixed order and clearly delimited from other shamanistic performances. The area of diffusion is, moreover, restricted, or mainly so, to a continuous east-western belt in Canada and the United States. It is thus evident that the Spirit-Lodge ceremonies have a common historical origin.[2] The efforts made by American anthropologists to establish the roads of diffusion must, however, be considered only partly successful. Not only does every new discovery of the conjuring practice change the earlier historical reconstruction, but also the information available from times past is too scattered to support more than a tentative analysis of this kind.

This does not rule out the possibility that a study of the distribution of the Spirit Lodge may reveal to us where this ceremony had its centre of gravity and, in all probability, its centre of diffusion. Its main area takes in three important cultural regions, the Northeastern Woodland, the Plains and —less intensely, it is true—the Plateau. A separate but major field of distribution is the Eskimo area. Within the main area the ceremonial complex seems to be concentrated to ethnic groups of Algonkian affiliation. It is preferably these tribes who have used the particular, shaking conjuring tent.[3] The rectangular enclosure of strings and flags in the Arapaho ceremony and in the conjuring performances of other Plains tribes is to all appearances a

[1] J. Fridegård, *Den gåtfulla vägen* (Göteborg 1963), p. 87. Fridegård does not know the name of this spirit. He mentions, however, the names of some other spirits of American Indian origin appearing in the séances he partakes in: Chief Black Eagle, who is a control, and "Kockum", a trickster playing practical jokes during the séance (op. cit., pp. 40, 87).

[2] Ray, op. cit., p. 204; D. Collier, "Conjuring among the Kiowa" (*Prim. Man*, vol. 17: 3–4, 1944), p. 45.

[3] Hallowell, op. cit., p. 14; R. Flannery, "The Shaking-Tent Rite among the Montagnais of James Bay" (*Prim. Man*, vol. 12: 1, 1939), p. 14 ("an exclusively Woodland Algonquian usage").

substitute for the shaman's tent among the Algonkian tribes. These and other facts seem to point to the main role played by Algonkian Indians in the dissemination of the complex phenomenon.

In the Northeastern Woodland the Spirit Lodge ceremony is known from a series of Algonkian tribes and ethnic groups: the Cree, Mistassini, Naskapi-Montagnais, Ojibway.[1] From the 17th century onwards the evidence is rich from these groups, so rich that it is possible to consider the Northern Algonkian Spirit Lodge as the high mark of the ceremonial complex. In later times it appears that almost every small band had the séance.[2] In the periphery of the area the ceremony, strange to say, is missing among the Coast Algonkian Indians,[3] whereas we find it among the Menomini (Central Algonkian).[4] It is not improbable that it has reached the latter from the Northern Algonkian tribes. The existence of a shaking-tent rite to the south of this area, among the Creek, seems rather enigmatic.[5] One could possibly expect that the Southern Algonkian tribes, in particular the Shawnee, should have brought the ceremony to some southern peoples. But this is not the case, for the Shawnee and their neighbours do not know it. We shall return to this problem later on.

It is quite probable that the Spirit Lodge was spread over the Plains by

[1] Source material for the Cree, Naskapi-Montagnais and Ojibway will be found communicated in Cooper, op. cit., pp. 78 ff., Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 14 ff., 35 ff., and Ray, op. cit., pp. 205 f., 208 n. 11. Additional information on the Ojibway may be found in M. I. Hilger, "Chippewa Child Life and Its Cultural Background" (*Bur. of Amer. Ethnol.*, Bull. 146, Washington 1951), pp. 75 ff. Concerning the Mistassini, see M. & J. Rousseau, "La Cérémonie de la tente agitée chez les Mistassini" (*Actes du XXVIII^e Congrès Intern. des Américanistes*, 1948), pp. 307 ff.; J. Rousseau, "Rites païens de la forêt québécoise: la tente tremblante et la suerie" (*Cahiers des Dix*, 18–19, Montréal 1955), pp. 129 ff.; J. A. Burgesse, "The Spirit Wigwam as Described by Tommie Moar, Pointe Bleue" (*Prim. Man*, vol. 17: 3–4, 1944), pp. 50 ff.

[2] Cooper, op. cit., p. 79.

[3] Hallowell, op. cit., p. 14 n. 21; Cooper, op. cit., p. 82; R. Flannery, "The Culture of the Northeastern Indian Hunters: A Descriptive Survey" (*Man in Northeastern America*, ed. F. Johnson, Andover 1946), pp. 264 f.

[4] W. J. Hoffman, "The Menomini Indians" (*Bur. of Amer. Ethnol.*, 14th Ann. Rep., Pt. 1, Washington 1896), pp. 142 ff. The forms taken by Huron and Iroquois shamanism resemble certain aspects of Algonkian shamanism, but lack the Spirit Lodge features; see G. P. Kurath, "Effects of Environment on Cherokee-Iroquois Ceremonialism, Music, and Dance" (*Bur. of Amer. Ethnol.*, Bull. 180, No. 18, Washington 1961), p. 183.

[5] Cooper, op. cit., p. 83.

stimulus from the Algonkian tribes in this area, the Plains Cree, the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Gros Ventre and Blackfoot.[1] It gained a firm footing among the northern Sioux Indians, that is, several Dakota groups—the Wahpeton, Sisseton, Mdewakanton, Yankton, Yanktonai, Teton (to whom the Oglala belong)—and the Assiniboin, Mandan and Crow.[2] Finally, the ceremony reached the Arikara at the Upper Missouri and the Kiowa on the southern Plains.[3] The latter, isolated case may seem surprising. It should however be observed that the Kiowa some centuries ago probably maintained their existence in the northern Plains.[4] Lowie has noted down some few cultural elements joining the Kiowa with the Crow.[5] It is now possible to add to them the Spirit Lodge.

Some Plains tribes, perhaps the Blackfoot in the first instance, were probably responsible for the diffusion of the conjuring lodge to two eastern Plateau tribes, the Kutenai in British Columbia and the Salish-speaking

[1] Besides the source material quoted in Collier, op. cit., pp. 47 f., and Ray, op. cit., consult the following works: on the Plains Cree, Dusenberry, op. cit., pp. 166 ff.; on the Gros Ventre, Cooper, op. cit., pp. 60 ff., and R. Flannery, "The Gros Ventre Shaking Tent" (*Prim. Man*, vol. 17: 3–4, 1944), pp. 54 ff., cf. also A. L. Kroeber, "Ethnology of the Gros Ventre" (*Anthrop. Papers of the Amer. Mus. of Nat. Hist.*, vol. 1: 4, New York 1908), p. 276; on the Blackfoot, Cooper, op. cit., pp. 77 f., and Chief Buffalo Child Long Lance, *Long Lance* (New York 1928), pp. 51 ff. There is no earlier information on Arapaho jugglery in the ethnographic literature.

[2] Source material for most of the Dakota groups may be found listed in Hurt & Howard, op. cit., p. 287. Concerning the Wahpeton, see also W. D. Wallis, "The Canadian Dakota" (*Anthrop. Papers of the Amer. Mus. of Nat. Hist.*, vol. 41: 1, New York 1947), pp. 102 f. As to the Assiniboin ceremony, see the sources noted down in Collier, op. cit., p. 47 n. 5; see also Cooper, op. cit., p. 78, and J. L. Long, *The Assiniboines* (ed. M. S. Kennedy, Norman 1961), pp. 162 ff. The Mandan ceremony is described in A. W. Bowers, *Mandan Social and Ceremonial Organization* (Chicago 1950), pp. 179 f., the Crow ceremony in R. H. Lowie, "The Religion of the Crow Indians" (*Anthrop. Papers of the Amer. Mus. of Nat. Hist.*, vol. 25: 2, New York 1922), pp. 380 f., and idem, *The Crow Indians* (New York 1935), pp. 70 f.

[3] For the Arikara, see H. M. Chittenden & A. T. Richardson (ed.), *Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet* (New York 1905), vol. I, pp. 250 f.; for the Kiowa, see Collier, op. cit.

[4] W. R. Wedel, "An Introduction to Kansas Archeology" (*Bur. of Amer. Ethnol.*, Bull. 174, Washington 1959), pp. 78 f.; G. E. Hyde, *Indians of the High Plains* (Norman 1959), pp. 137 ff.

[5] R. H. Lowie, "Alleged Kiowa-Crow Affinities" (*Southw. Journ. of Anthrop.*, vol. 9: 4, 1953), pp. 357 ff.; idem, "The Relations between the Kiowa and the Crow Indians" (*Société suisse des américanistes*, Bull. no. 7, Genève 1953), pp. 1 ff.

Colville in Washington.[1] There are no traces of the ceremony farther west, unless we include the shaking post in the Cannibal dancing rites of the central and northern Kwakiutl (Wikeno, Bella Bella and Haisla). It was common usage here to tie the future shaman to the loosely set pole during the initiation rite.[2] The parallel with the Spirit Lodge is, however, very far-fetched and certainly does not prove any immediate connections.

Against the distributional background as drawn up above it may seem surprising to instance the occurrence of a Spirit Lodge ceremony among the Eskimo, particularly the Central Eskimo.[3] It is, however, possible to find evidence for a direct communication between the Eskimo and the conjuring tribes to the south. Theoretically, there may have existed two channels of diffusion, via the Naskapi or via the Cree. As concerns the Naskapi, they are in touch with the Eskimo on their northern boundary.[4] Cree shamans have performed Spirit Lodge séances as far north as the White Sands at the Mackenzie River, Lake Athabaska and the Athabaska River.[5] It is doubtful, however, whether they have come in closer contact with the Eskimo, from whom they were separated by the Athapascan tribes to the north and east. The evidence is contradictory where the dedication of the latter to the Spirit Lodge practice is concerned. Cooper assures us that the Chipewyan lacked the ceremony, even where they bordered on the Cree.[6] Regina Flannery

[1] Cf. Ray, op. cit., passim, and see the following sources: A. F. Chamberlain, "Kootenay 'Medicine-Men'" (*Journ. of Amer. Folklore*, vol. 14, 1901), pp. 95 ff.; H. H. Turney-High, "Ethnography of the Kutenai" (*Amer. Anthrop. Ass.*, Memoirs, vol. 56, 1941), pp. 174 ff.; W. Cline et alii, *The Sinkaietk or Southern Okanagon of Washington* (General Series in Anthrop., vol. 6, Menasha 1938), pp. 152 f.

[2] Ph. Drucker, "Kwakiutl Dancing Societies" (*Anthrop. Rec.*, vol. 2: 6, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1940), pp. 204, 208 f., 216.

[3] See e.g. F. Boas, "The Central Eskimo" (*Bur. of Amer. Ethnol.*, 6th Ann. Rep., Washington 1888), pp. 593 f.; K. Rasmussen, "Intellectual Culture of the Iglulik Eskimos" (*Rep. of the Fifth Thule Exp.*, vol. VII: 1, Copenhagen 1929), pp. 123 ff.; G. Holm, "Ethnological Sketch of the Angmagssalik Eskimo" (*Meddelelser fra Grønland*, vol. 39: 1, København 1914), pp. 90 ff. Cf. also Å. Hultkrantz, "Die Religion der amerikanischen Arktis" (*Die Religionen der Menschheit*, vol. 3: Die Religionen Nordeurasiens und der amerikanischen Arktis, Stuttgart 1962), p. 405.

[4] L. M. Turner, "Ethnology of the Ungava District, Hudson Bay Territory" (*Bur. of Amer. Ethnol.*, 11th Ann. Rep., Washington 1894), p. 184.

[5] Cooper, op. cit., pp. 79, 82; A. K. Black, "Shaking the Wigwam" (*The Beaver*, Dec. 1934).

[6] Cooper, op. cit., pp. 82 f. Cf., however, a similar shamanistic rite in K. Birket-

also denies its existence among the Chipewyan and adds that, although it does occur among the Beaver, it has only been observed among those Beaver Indians who have been strongly influenced by the Cree.[1] On the other hand, a traveller in the Great Bear Lake area in the middle of last century, W. H. Hooper, saw there a conjuring lodge, probably belonging to the Satudene.[2] Furthermore, the medicine-men among the Hare and Loucheux (Kutchin, or rather a band of mingled Hare and Kutchin) are reported to have been suspended in the air to promote their communion with the spirits—something which could be interpreted as a Spirit Lodge seance.[3] It is, of course, possible that they as well as the Satudene had been influenced by their close neighbours, the Mackenzie Eskimo. In this connection it should also be pointed out that the "rope-trick", i.e. the shaman's mysterious release from the mat and the ropes in which he is entangled, was once known to the Tlingit of Sitka.[4]

Although the link through the Athapascan tribes cannot be proved, it seems probable that the Eskimo and Algonkian-Plains-Plateau conjuring practices once belonged together; they may be considered branches of the same fundamental conjuring complex. From all the evidence the Algonkian groups and the Eskimo must be the originators of the complex in North America. Since it shows a remarkable uniformity over a vast area, despite important variations in certain details, the hypothesis of a rapid dissemination and a single origin is justified. There is, however, no clue to its age which may be quite considerable. The theory has been developed that the Spirit Lodge was created by the Central Algonkian tribes together with their well-known medicine society and the vision quests of children.[5] This is not con-

Smith, "Contributions to Chipewyan Ethnology" (*Rep. of the Fifth Thule Exp.*, vol. VI: 3, Copenhagen 1930), p. 82.

[1] R. Flannery, "The Shaking-Tent Rite among the Montagnais" etc., p. 14.

[2] C. B. Osgood, "The Ethnography of the Great Bear Lake Indians" (*Nat. Mus. of Canada*, Ann. Rep. for 1931, Ottawa 1932), p. 48.

[3] D. Jenness, *The Indians of Canada* (Nat. Mus. of Canada, Bull. 65, Ottawa 1934), p. 395; cf. also C. Wissler, *The American Indian* (3rd ed., New York 1950), p. 203.

[4] A. Krause, *Die Tlinkit-Indianer* (Jena 1885), pp. 286 f. (English transl. *The Tlingit Indians*, Seattle 1956, p. 196).

[5] W. Müller, *Die Religionen der Waldlandindianer Nordamerikas* (Berlin 1956), pp. 206 f.

vincing, partly because it does not account for the Eskimo cases and partly because the Spirit Lodge is intrinsically a ritually fixed form of a more general conjuring practice.

It is possible that both the Creek and the Kwakiutl performances mentioned in the foregoing represent this more general form. Further examples of the latter may be found in the Southwest and in South America. Clairvoyant medicine-men among the Maricopa and other Yuman tribes in the Southwest (Yavapai, Walapai and Mohave) went into a trance in a special hut, among the Maricopa built inside the meeting house, and were possessed by spirits who prophesied the future or revealed some sickness.[1] Among the Cuna, Isthmus of Panama, the medicine-man was formerly seated behind a partition when he had his nightly séances with the spirits, and similar performances occurred also among the Cágaba in northern Colombia and the Caribs in the northern parts of South America.[2] The Manasí in Bolivia arrange divining ceremonies in the chief's large assembly hall. A ceremonial leader, *mapono*, takes his seat behind a curtain, calls on the gods and consults them concerning rain, harvest, hunting luck etc. His questions and the answers of the supernatural beings form a quick dialogue completely audible to the audience on the other side of the curtain. The big building is shaking both at the arrival and the departure of the spirits.[3] There are other South American instances of the same general type.[4]

We also find similar examples outside of the American continent. Hallowell mentions a conjuring performance among the Semang of the Malay Peninsula, quoting Schebesta and Evans.[5] The construction of the conjuring hut, the turmoil of the spirits and the curative and clairvoyant functions of the

[1] See especially L. Spier, *Yuman Tribes of the Gila River* (Chicago 1933), pp. 292 f., and A. L. Kroeber, "Ethnographic Interpretations" (*Univ. of Calif. Publ. in Amer. Archaeol. and Ethnol.*, vol. 47: 2, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1957), pp. 226 ff.

[2] S. H. Wassén, "Cunaindianernas medicinmän och deras värld" (*Nytt och nyttigt*, no. 3, 1961, Göteborg 1961), p. 19.

[3] A. Métraux, "The Social Organization and Religion of the Mojo and Manasi" (*Prim. Man*, vol. 16: 1–2, 1943), pp. 22 f.

[4] Cf. J. H. Steward, *Handbook of South American Indians* (Bur. of Amer. Ethnol., Bull. 143, Washington), vol. II (1946) pp. 302 ff.: "Inca"; vol. V (1949) p. 594: "Tupinambá".

[5] P. Schebesta, *Bei den Urwaldzwergen von Malaya* (Leipzig 1927); I. H. N. Evans, *The Negritos of Malaya* (Cambridge 1937).

medicine-man in action remind him of the Saulteaux Spirit Lodge. He continues, however, "I am not citing these analogies in order to raise the question of any possible historical connection, but they do seem interesting because, so far as I know, similar parallels *do not* occur in the Boreal regions of Asia. If they did, it would be difficult to dismiss the possibility of historical connections with North America".[1] But indeed, North Asiatic parallels do exist! A very interesting conjuring performance from the Yakut was described at the turn of the century by Sieroszewski. It is true that both the conjuring booth and the shaking are missing, but we find the binding of the shaman ("pour le retenir dans les cas où les esprits tenteraient de l'enlever"), the dramatic entrance of the spirits with much noise, curing and prophesying, etc.[2] Moreover, the leading guardian spirit is here as in many cases in the American conjuring lodge a deceased person, usually a shaman.[3] A ghost is also the chief spirit in a Chukchee séance that shows many features of the Spirit Lodge: the sudden sounds of the voices of the spirits all over the dark room, the shaking of the lodge, throwing of articles, etc.[4] It is important to note that Lowie presumed ancient historical connections between northern Asia and North America, inter alia by uniting the Chukchee performance with the Spirit Lodge performance.[5] The Eskimo jugglery should, then, be considered the connecting link.

This reconstruction seems most probable. We can go even further. The North American séances should in my opinion be judged as ritually patterned specific forms of a jugglering complex spread not only in the northern parts of Asia and America, but also in South America and Southeast Asia. The reiteration of certain conspicuous elements, for instance the violent entrance

[1] Hallowell, op. cit., p. 14 n. 20. Cf. also T. M. Fraser, "Spiritualistic Ritual in Thailand" (*Intern. Journ. of Parapsychology*, vol. 5: 4, 1963), pp. 400 ff.

[2] W. Sieroszewski, "Du Chamanisme d'après les croyances des Yakoutes" (*Revue de l'hist. des rel.*, t. 46, Paris 1902), pp. 325 ff. Cf. also A. F. Anisimov, "The Shaman's Tent of the Evenks and the Origin of the Shamanistic Rite" (*Studies in Siberian Shamanism*, ed. H. N. Michael, Toronto 1963), pp. 100 ff. (description of a Tungus shamanistic performance).

[3] Sieroszewski, op. cit., pp. 312, 314.

[4] W. Bogoras, "The Chukchee" (*Amer. Mus. of Nat. Hist.*, Memoirs, vol. 11: "The Jesup North Pacific Exp.", vol. 7, New York 1907), pp. 434 ff.

[5] R. H. Lowie, "Religious Ideas and Practices of the Eurasiatic and North American Areas" (*Essays Presented to C. G. Seligman*, London 1934), p. 188.

of a crowd of spirits, the shaking of the tent and the binding of the medicine-man, make a common origin probable. It is of course useless to speculate about the place of this origin. In view of the data collected here one could think of a Circumpacific rite complex, but the question cannot be settled until further research work on its distribution in the Old World has been done.

It is as difficult to decide the age of this wide complex. Discussing the Chukchee ceremony Eliade asserts that it has no original touch. "On a l'impression", he says, "que la technique extatique est en décadence, les séances chamaniques se réduisant la plupart du temps à l'évocation des esprits et à des prouesses fakiriques".[1] This would mean that the conjuring ceremony should be judged as a later development of the great ecstatic séance with imaginary extra-corporeal soul-journeys. Eliade is here of course proceeding from his general theory concerning the character of the original, genuine shamanistic trance. He is quite right in his opinion as far as the great shamanistic ecstasy is concerned, for, as Miss Czaplicka testifies, "The modern shamans actually 'sink' very seldom, but they know that it was done in the old days".[2] It is, however, important to note that the Spirit Lodge ceremony is an altogether different complex, a particular form of shamanism where (usually) the intense ecstasy has no necessary function. Therefore, a comparison between the two forms of shamanistic expression cannot give us any clue as to the age of one or the other.

## 5. *The Position of the Spirit Lodge in American Shamanism*

In order to establish the place of the Spirit Lodge within the North American shamanism it is necessary to discuss some of the more diagnostic traits of the former. This can only be done very summarily since space prohibits a more comprehensive analysis; I hope however to be able to revert to the subject more closely in a future treatise.

The following points seem to be of particular interest in the present connection: the ecstasy; the shaking of the tent and other shamanistic tricks;

[1] Eliade, *Le Chamanisme* etc., p. 231; cf. pp. 232 f.
[2] M. A. Czaplicka, *Aboriginal Siberia* (Oxford 1914), p. 232.

the nature of the spirits; the suspension of the medicine-man; the occurrence of soul-flight; and the way of curing.

(1) The ecstasy. Opinion is divided whether the conjuring medicine-man[1] is in a state of ecstasy or not. Quoting Shirikogoroff's pronouncement that the Tungus shaman falls into ecstasy Hallowell says, "So far as I know, nothing of this sort is believed to happen to Saulteaux conjurers, nor do I think that trance actually takes place".[2] It is more than probable that Hallowell has been influenced in his judgement by the rather frank statement of an occasional conjurer (he had tried only once) that he himself had made the lodge shake and the voices sound.[3] This statement is, however, definitely an exception; most conjurers believe that the spirits act without their interference.[4] Hallowell also refers to the normal mental make-up of the conjurers, as also other investigators do, apparently in the belief that ecstatic shamanism is combined with an abnormal, pathogenic personality structure.[5] The absence of the trance is also taken for granted by other researchers, e.g. Cooper for the Algonkian tribes and Hurt and Howard for the Dakota.[6]

Other observers testify, however, that ecstasy has been part of the ritual. Champlain noted how the conjurer works himself up into a frenzy, then "se leve sur les pieds, en parlant & se tourmentant d'une telle façon, qu'il est tout en eau, bien qu'il soit nud".[7] Le Jeune tells us how the medicine-man became more and more animated and "fell into so violent an ecstasy that I thought he would break everything to pieces".[8] Speaking about the Mistassini ceremony during the 1930's, Burgesse says that "the chant begins slowly and softly, increasing in tempo and pitch to reach a climax when Mictabio

[1] It is as a rule a medicine-man who performs the jugglery. Among the Kutenai, however, anyone possessing a guardian spirit could be a conjurer, and among the Cheyenne the latter had to be a layman (Ray, op. cit., pp. 207, 209). It must be recalled, however, that the boundary line between a medicine-man and other visionaries is very slight and sometimes completely disappears, particularly on the Plains.

[2] Hallowell, op. cit., p. 13.

[3] Op. cit., pp. 76 ff.

[4] Op. cit., pp. 73 ff.

[5] Hallowell, op. cit., p. 13; Cooper, op. cit., p. 81; Hurt and Howard, op. cit., p. 295.

[6] Cooper, ibid.; Hurt and Howard, ibid.

[7] Biggar, op. cit.

[8] Thwaites, op. cit.

[=the control] manifests himself and the shaman is entranced".[1] The descriptions of the Eskimo performance leave no doubt concerning its ecstatic nature. Ohlmarks, referring to the Menomini rite as described by Hoffman, talks about a modified ecstasy. "Von einer wirklich grossen Schamanenextase ist ja hier nicht die Rede", he says, "wohl aber von einer gewissen Ekstase und Erregtheit, wo die Geister den 'Juggler' inspirieren und ihm die Zukunft entschleiern".[2] Lambert, on the other hand, is less inhibited in his general assessment of the Spirit Lodge phenomena. He states that the medicine-man employs a rattle and drum as he chants and howls "in preparation for going into a trance".[3]

It depends of course on our definition of ecstasy whether we can characterize the Spirit Lodge shamanism as ecstatic. Ernst Arbman, our foremost authority on the subject, describes ecstasy as a "total suggestive absorption in the object of belief", an absorption which reveals itself in "a peculiar, strictly organized and intensively clear, conscious and realistic visionary state of dream".[4] The visions have in certain cases an "almost dazzling inner clairvoyance or illumination", with "actual perceptions of light of a purely hallucinatory or physically sensuous nature".[5] It is of interest to note that Arbman shows after lengthy investigations that religious ecstasy, although anormal, can in no way be said to presuppose a pathological state of mind or a psychically disintegrated personality system.[6] This conclusion eliminates the apprehensions of certain anthropologists, referred to above, against associating the conjuring with states of trance.

In view of these definitions it seems justified to consider the Spirit Lodge shamanism an ecstatic performance.[7] We know for sure that the conjurer, who is certainly no fraud, believes that the mysterious things that happen are the result of the spirits' own activity; it should be impossible for him to

[1] Burgesse, op. cit., p. 51.
[2] Ohlmarks, op. cit., p. 98.
[3] Lambert, op. cit., p. 126.
[4] E. Arbman, *Ecstasy or Religious Trance*, vol. I: "Vision and Ecstasy" (Uppsala 1963), p. XV. Cf. my own definitions in *The North American Indian Orpheus Tradition* (Statens Etnogr. Mus., Monogr. Ser., vol. 2, Stockholm 1957), pp. 236 f.
[5] Arbman, op. cit., p. 297.
[6] Arbman, op. cit., pp. 215 ff.
[7] Cf. also Hultkrantz, *Les Religions* etc., pp. 90, 98 f.

maintain this if he is not himself entranced, i.e. absorbed in this belief. Drumming, shaking of rattles, singing and other suggestive acts produce the preparation for ecstasy. Obvious proofs of the presence of ecstasy are the light visions, the automatic speech, and, where they have possibly occurred, the states of possession.

The light visions are, as mentioned above, a typically ecstatic symptom. They are mentioned in several sources as belonging to the experiences of both the conjurer and his audience—for instance, already in Champlain's description, and as late as in the notes on the Arapaho rite in the present article. It is probable that the audience's visions reflect the suggestive influence of the conjurer who sees the light within the frame of his ecstatic state.[1] An excellent case of the conjurer's light perceptions is found in Kohl's description of an Ojibway séance (the disadvantage however being that the author received his information second-hand). The medicine-man told Kohl's informant that the top of the lodge in which he made his performance was filled with the voices of the spirits and lit up by a shining light, and the whole universe, heaven and earth, lay open before his eyes.[2] Arbman, who quotes this passage,[3] states that what is here described is "the very ordinary hallucinated light that must be supposed to be present in every really ecstatic vision or inner visionary scenery in the same way as in the natural dream", although the rapid transition from inner darkness to vision makes the light perception more intense in the ecstatic vision than in the natural dream.[4]

The automatic speech functions sometimes in the messages which the spirits give to the public through the medicine-man. It is true that these messages can be delivered in a quiet, natural way and with a voice that sounds normal and talks the same language as the audience.[5] But in other cases the language of the spirits is unintelligible and has to be translated by

[1] Even Le Jeune saw fiery sparks emerging from the top of the lodge, cf. Thwaites, *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. 6, p. 173. A recent observer, Hurt, noted the same thing; see Hurt, op. cit., p. 51.

[2] J. G. Kohl, *Kitschi-Gami oder Erzählungen vom Obern See* (Bremen 1859), vol. II, p. 78.

[3] Arbman, op. cit., pp. 303 f.

[4] Arbman, op. cit., pp. 332 f.

[5] Cf. the Gros Ventre (Cooper, op. cit., p. 67) and the Saulteaux (Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 44 ff.).

the control or the medicine-man.[1] It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that we have here to do with verbal automatisms on the part of the medicine-man, and such phenomena belong of course to ecstasy.

Neither the light vision nor the automatic speech do as such necessarily presuppose a deeper trance.[2] It is different when the ecstasy also includes a soul journey or a possessional state. North Asiatic and Eskimo conjuring séances contain in any case the former of these traits (see below, section 5), perhaps also the latter although this is difficult to decide. Possession is an ambiguous concept in most ethnographic texts, sometimes referring to the intrusion of a spirit in the body, at other times referring to the domination of the personality by a foreign spirit which has usurped the place of the ego. From the psychological point of view only the latter definition is important, and it will therefore be used here.

States of possession are, as we know, rather rare in North American shamanism.[3] The cases which could be adduced in connection with the conjuring ceremony are not very convincing. In the Kutenai and Colville rites, the medicine-man is supposed to be carried away by the spirits and replaced by them; it is doubtful whether this means a case of possession, since the conjurer's body and not only his soul are said to disappear. In a Montagnais séance described by Burgesse the medicine-man was lying unconscious, or seemingly so, while the spirits answered the questions put by the audience. "Replies to the hunters' questions are always given in the voice of the shaman but Moar [=the informant who had witnessed the séance] explained that it is really Mictabio [=the control] who speaks".[4] We are after all not told that the medium had been possessed by the spirit, although the situation may be interpreted that way. Le Jeune and several observers after him have noted that the medicine-man, when personifying the spirits,

[1] See, for instance, R. Flannery, "The Cultural Position of the Spanish River Indians" (*Prim. Man*, vol. 13: 1, 1940), p. 16. These Indians are Ojibway (or Ojibway-Algonkin).

[2] Eliade's pronouncement that the shaman's trance always has the same intensity (*Shamanism*, p. 302) is scarcely correct. See Å. Hultkrantz, *Conceptions of the Soul among North American Indians* (Statens Etnogr. Mus., Monogr. Ser. vol. 1, Stockholm 1953), pp. 277 ff. Cf. also Findeisen, op. cit., p. 202.

[3] See Hultkrantz, *Les Religions* etc., pp. 96 ff.

[4] Burgesse, op. cit., p. 52.

talks in a harsh or nasal voice which is otherwise foreign to him. It is obvious that in many cases the medicine-man practises ventriloquism. Kohl, Black, Hallowell and others reveal that there is a dialogue going on, the medicine-man speaking from the ground, the spirits, with the medicine-man's twisted voice, speaking from the top of the lodge.[1] Possession is here no necessary inference, but it cannot be entirely ruled out that it has occurred in some cases.[2]

Possession or no possession, we are satisfied to know that the conjurer is entranced. The trance is produced by different means. Besides drum and rattle, already mentioned, some shamans have resorted to drugs, as for example the old conjurer referred to by Kohl.

(2) The shaking of the tent and other shamanistic tricks. The shaking feature seems to be fundamental in most rites in the Woodland and Plains areas, and it also occurs among the Arctic groups (Eskimo, Chukchee) and in South American conjuring.[3] Its absence in the modern *yuwipi* form has here been explained with reference to the construction of the conjuring building; the same explanation applies to its absence among the Mandan and Colville.[4] From a superficial point of view the shaking is the most impressive feature in the Spirit Lodge; from a functionalistic point of view it is only one of the signs that spirits are present.

Other phenomena testifying to the presence of the spirits are the light visions, the confusion of voices, sounds of tapping and steps on the ground, the throwing around of articles, the liberation of the medicine-man from his bonds and the magical removal of the medicine-man. In this connection only the rope-binding trick will be discussed.

It is usually called the "Houdini trick". It is not always present in the Woodland (Algonkian) performances—indeed, Cooper considers its absence characteristic of the Montagnais and Eastern Cree.[5] Otherwise, there is in-

[1] See, e.g., Kohl, op. cit., p. 77.

[2] Possession has been emphatically denied by some observers: see Rousseau, op. cit., p. 136; Cooper, op. cit., p. 81. The Arapaho rite described in this article was not associated with the medicine-man's being possessed. As we have seen, possession occurred in the more general conjuring form represented by the Maricopa.

[3] Cf. Cooper, op. cit., p. 81; Collier, op. cit., p. 49.

[4] Ray, op. cit., pp. 208 f.; Hurt and Howard, op. cit., p. 294.

[5] Cooper, op. cit., p. 81.

formation about its occurrence among all the Algonkian groups having the Spirit Lodge, the Eskimo, and the Plains and Plateau tribes. Some sources underline that the Houdini trick is a secondary feature, and unnecessary.[1] Cooper suggests that it "had the purpose, overt or covert, of creating or confirming faith in the authenticity of the ghostly visitation".[2] As we remember, the binding of the shaman also occurs among the Yakut in Siberia. Its motivation was there that the spirits might carry off the shaman if he were not bound. The same explanation is given by the Central Eskimo; their shaman is bound so that only his soul can move away from the place. This motivation is, however, not sufficient to account for all the American cases in which the medicine-man is untied by the spirits. Although no explicit explanation can be laid forward here it seems fairly certain that the Houdini trick, besides showing the cleverness of the medicine-man and thus strengthening the belief in him and in the rite, demonstrates the presence and interference of the spirits.

The interpretation of the reality behind these shamanistic acts cannot concern us here. The judgements of the observers and writers are very contradictory. Paul Kane, the artist, who witnessed a conjuring ceremony among the Saulteaux in 1848, was amazed to find that the enclosed shaman could feel the presence of a white man in the dark, and he assures us that the detailed and clear prophecies the medicine-man had told him all came true.[3] Similar statements have been given by, i.a., Densmore, Hallowell and Dusenberry.[4] Eliade considers that the confusion of voices and the liberation of the medicine-man from his bonds are enigmatic phenomena which should if possible be revealed by psychical research.[5] On the other hand, the most spectacular feature of the conjuring act, the shaking of the lodge, can, according to several observers, be explained with reference to the construction

[1] Hurt and Howard, op. cit., p. 292 (Dakota); Dusenberry, op. cit., p. 170 (Plains Cree); Cooper, op. cit., p. 66 (Gros Ventre).

[2] Cooper, op. cit., p. 66.

[3] P. Kane, *Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America* (Toronto 1925), pp. 311 f.

[4] F. Densmore, "An Explanation of a Trick Performed by Indian Jugglers" (*Amer. Anthrop.*, vol. 34: 3, 1932), p. 311; Hallowell, op. cit., p. 16 n. 27; Dusenberry, op. cit., p. 168.

[5] Eliade, *Le Chamanisme*, pp. 231 n. 1, 265 n. 1.

of the lodge.[1] These authors do not agree, however, on how the mechanism functioned, and one modern observer can find no clue in the construction of the lodge.[2] The medicine-men themselves, and even the conjurer mentioned by Kohl who made his statement after he had been converted to the Christian faith, assert that they do not move the top of the lodge.[3] The value of such pronouncements can of course be contested. As Andrae says, spontaneous experience and simulation go together in religious practitioners with a hysterical—or rather, hysteroform—nature.[4] At the same time they identify themselves with a role set by their society.[5]

(3) The nature of the spirits. The spirits appearing in the conjuring lodge are of very varying types, but two kinds stand out as being the most common: the spirits of Nature, prevailingly called upon in the eastern part of the conjuring area in North America, and the ghosts, common on the Plains.[6] In the East, i.e. among the Forest Algonkian groups, Thunder, Turtle and a crowd of animal spirits dominate the scene. Most of the latter belong to the category of "owners" or "masters", each group of animals having a chief.[7] This is a very general idea among North American Indians, but it has particularly developed among the Algonkian tribes. The Saulteaux, for instance, apply the concept of "owners" first and foremost to the natural phenomena, the animal and plant species, but they also extend it at the same time to the spirits of the dead.[8] Thus, in their Spirit Lodge both the masters of the ani-

[1] Densmore, op. cit., pp. 313 f.; Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 73 ff.; Rousseau, op. cit., p. 145.

[2] Black, op. cit.; cf. also Le Jeune's observations on the solidity of the tent in Thwaites, op. cit., vol. 12, pp. 17 ff. See further the criticism of Densmore's hypothesis in Flannery, "The Shaking-Tent Rite", pp. 15 f., and Hallowell, op. cit., p. 83 n. 129. See also Lambert, op. cit., pp. 127 f.

[3] Kohl, op. cit., p. 78. See also Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 74 f., and the quotation from Schoolcraft in M. Mead and R. L. Bunzel (eds.), *The Golden Age of American Anthropology* (New York 1960), p. 166.

[4] T. Andrae, *Mystikens psykologi* (Uppsala 1926), pp. 139, 171. An example of a conscious manipulation on the part of the medicine-man may be found in Feraca, "The Yuwipi Cult" etc., p. 161.

[5] Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 75 f.

[6] Cooper, op. cit., p. 81.

[7] Cf. Å. Hultkrantz, "The Owner of the Animals in the Religion of the North American Indians" (*The Supernatural Owners of Nature*, ed. Å. Hultkrantz, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis, Stockholm Studies in Comparative Religion, vol. 1, 1961), pp. 53 ff.

[8] Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 6 f., 10; A. I. Hallowell, "The Spirits of the Dead in

mals and the master of the dead are invoked. Hallowell gives an interesting sketch of a conjuring performance in which the spirits of deceased relatives were present, their "boss" acting as the control.[1]

Séances where the dead appear are, however, more characteristic of the performances on the Plains. The crowd of spirits consists of both spirits of Nature, more or less unidentified, and spirits of the dead, often close relatives recently deceased. The control spirit is always, or nearly always, a ghost helper; the Algonkian Cheyenne have, however, the Badger in this role.[2] Cooper stresses emphatically that no one lacking a ghost helper could conduct the shaking tent rite among the Gros Ventre, no matter how much power he had received by fasting and crying. Most people have guardian spirits representing the realm of Nature, fewer individuals have ghost helpers; and only the latter spirits enter into the Gros Ventre rite.[3] All over the Plains it seems that the Owl could act as a substitute for the ghost helper.[4] Actually, here as everywhere in North America—and, for that matter, all over the world—the owl is the form of manifestation of a dead person.

This association between ghosts and shamans is particularly interesting since, as pointed out by Benedict, "in North America the idea that one may seek tutelaries among the dead is very nearly absent".[5] There is undeniably a certain difference in the functions of the ghost helper and those of the other guardian spirits: the former gives "knowledge about past, present, future, or distant happenings, and counsel and direction in illness or danger". In short, he imparts information, but does not as such grant power.[6] The idea of the ghost helper recurs in the Yakut and Chukchee ceremonies, mentioned above. It is tempting to see here an original trait in the conjuring complex, overshadowed by the common guardian spirit idea among the otherwise so conservative Algonkian groups in the East.

Saulteaux Life and Thought" (*Journ. of the Roy. Anthrop. Inst.*, vol. 70: 1, 1940), p. 39.

[1] Hallowell, ibid., pp. 42 ff.

[2] G. B. Grinnell, *The Cheyenne Indians* (New Haven 1923), vol. II, pp. 114 f.

[3] Cooper, op. cit., pp. 61 ff.; cf. Flannery, "The Gros Ventre Shaking Tent", pp. 54, 58.

[4] Cf. Collier, op. cit., pp. 48, 49. Note that in the Arapaho rite as described in this article the medicine-man hooted like an owl.

[5] Benedict, *The Concept of the Guardian Spirit* etc., p. 47.

[6] Cooper, op. cit., p. 64 (referring to the Gros Ventre).

(4) The suspension of the medicine-man. In some instances we are told that the medicine-man when freed from his bonds is found suspended at the top of the conjuring hut. According to a Blackfoot statement the onlookers can see the shaman "hanging precariously by one foot at the top of the Lodge, stripped as naked as the day he was born".[1] A similar occurrence is reported from the Teton Dakota.[2] As far as I know there are no examples from the Woodland distribution area. It is true that the Indians told Le Jeune that the medicine-man's soul left the body and mounted upwards, but this information is probably only a reference to the shaman's amazing ability to throw his voice.[3] We are, for instance, reminded here of the way in which Kohl's Ojibway conjuror could make a conversation between himself, lying on the ground, and the spirits entering on top of the tent;[4] or of the Ojibway performance described by Jenness in which Thunder "is at the top, covering it like a lid".[5]

The Kwakiutl custom of tethering the shaman-to-be to the pillar of the world has been mentioned earlier. It belongs most probably to a larger cultural connection obtaining in North and South America and in Siberia and characterized by the belief that the centre post of the world as pictured in the cult may serve as a vehicle for the communication between the medicine-man and the spirits in the world above. The spirits may come to the post, or the medicine-man may climb the pole to reach them.[6] As we have seen, both acts occur, or are supposed to occur, in the conjuring lodge. The spirits enter on top of it, and—on the Plains—the medicine-man climbs up there. There is evidently a liaison here between the climbing-shaman complex and the Spirit Lodge. The Dakota and Blackfoot climbing acts in the Spirit

[1] Chief Buffalo Child, op. cit., p. 57.

[2] F. Densmore, "Teton Sioux Music" (*Bur. of Amer. Ethnol.*, Bull. 61, Washington 1918), p. 346. Cf. also Chamberlain, op. cit. (the Kutenai).

[3] "Some of these Barbarians imagined that this juggler was not inside, that he had been carried away, without knowing where or how. Others said that his body was lying on the ground, and that his soul was up above the tent, where it spoke at first, calling these Genii, and throwing from time to time sparks of fire" (Thwaites, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 167).

[4] Kohl, op. cit., p. 77.

[5] D. Jenness, *The Ojibwa Indians of Parry Island, Their Social and Religious Life* (National Mus. of Canada, Bull. no. 78, Ottawa 1935), p. 66.

[6] J. Haekel, "Zur Problematik des heiligen Pfahles bei den Indianern Brasiliens" (*Acts of the 31st Intern. Congr. of Americanists*, São Paulo 1955), pp. 229 ff.

Lodge have their close counterparts in the medicine-man's climbing of the centre pole in the Crow and Kutenai Sun Dances. It would be most convenient to see the climbing feature in the Spirit Lodge as a local adaptation on the Plains to the shamanistic climbing complex. Of course, the possibility that the Spirit Lodge as such has its roots in ceremonies connected with this complex cannot be ruled out.[1]

(5) The occurrence of soul-flight. The two Plateau instances of the conjuring complex, Kutenai and Colville, contain a phase in which the medicine-man is said to be carried away to a distant place by the spirits.[2] It is indeed difficult to form an opinion about the beliefs involved, but from all appearances it was the medicine-man in body, and not his soul, who departed. The difference is, however, not very substantial in this connection, since the free-soul from a psychological point of view is identical with the image of the person.[3] (It is of course quite another matter what really happened to the medicine-man.)

As just mentioned, above, the conjuror observed by Le Jeune was supposed to have dispatched his soul to the top of the lodge.[4] This was at least the interpretation of Le Jeune's Indian companion, Manitou-Chat-Ché. It is, however, difficult to speak of a real soul-journey in this connection. Furthermore, as emerges from Le Jeune's description of the séance the medicine-man was singing his chants from his place in the lodge until the spirits arrived, whereupon he consulted them. The situation thus did not seem to conform to the idea of a soul-journey.

The Central Eskimo performance gives us more conclusive evidence of soul-flight. Here the shaman's soul flies away to some cosmic region while his body which is securely bound with cords lies inanimate on the ground. After having woken up from his deep trance the shaman tells the audience

[1] The climbing of the shaman seems often to be a part of the annual tribal ceremony, cf. Hultkrantz, *Les Religions* etc., pp. 107 f. The Colville conjuring seance was apparently held in connection with the Winter Dance which is an annual ceremony related to the Plains Indian Sun Dance.

[2] Ray, op. cit., p. 208.

[3] Cf. Hultkrantz, *Conceptions of the Soul* etc., pp. 242 ff.; The Kutenai soul beliefs are discussed on pp. 72 f.

[4] Cf. above, p. 64, note 3, and the words directed to the sceptical Le Jeune by his host: "Enter thou thyself into the tent, and thou wilt see that thy body will remain below, and thy soul will mount on high" (Thwaites, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 169).

of his journey in the other world.[1] His Yakut colleague makes a similar journey to the supernatural world during the conjuring séance.

Although the data are difficult to interpret it would seem that the idea of the soul-journey does not primarily belong to the Shaking Lodge complex, except in its Arctic extension. The common routine is that the spirits called up by the conjuror depart to gain the information which has been demanded. Sometimes they do this on their own initiative, as we have seen in the Arapaho séance, sometimes they are sent away by a commanding spirit, the control, as among the Montagnais.[2]

(6) The curing. Shamans are primarily healers, supernaturally endowed. The juggler in the conjuring ceremony, however, is not necessarily a healer, not, for instance, among the Ojibway where medicine-men are divided into three different categories, healers, conjurers and seers; the members of the Medicine Lodge then are not included here.[3] If curing occurs in the Spirit Lodge, it is usually of subordinate importance, the greatest weight being laid on the searching for information, for instance, information about the causes and remedy of a certain illness which afflicts somebody in the audience. In the Plains Cree performance the spirits determine the location of a person's illness by hitting his body with a rattle. "Once the exact spot of the sickness has been found, the spirit pounds that particular area quite hard".[4]

There are, to my knowledge, only few cases of actual curing in combination with the conjuring act described in our sources. One of them has been demonstrated in the foregoing account of the Arapaho rite; on the whole we receive the impression that the *yuwipi* performance has inherited the curing activities associated with the shamanism of former days.[5] Another case emanates from the Ojibway. Jenness tells us that sometimes "the helping spirits cured sickness by exchanging the soul of the patient with that of a man in perfect health; the latter merely felt indisposed for a short time until his new soul regained strength".[6] The Saulteaux jugglers were formerly

[1] Boas, "The Central Eskimo", p. 594.
[2] Burgesse, "The Spirit Wigwam" etc., p. 52.
[3] Jenness, *The Ojibwa Indians* etc., pp. 60 ff.
[4] Dusenberry, *The Montana Cree*, p. 171.
[5] Cf. also Feraca, "The Yuwipi Cult" etc., p. 162, and Hurt and Howard, op. cit., p. 287. See also R. H. Ruby, *The Oglala Sioux* (New York 1955), pp. 44 ff., 62 ff.
[6] Jenness, op. cit., p. 67.

capable of restoring the soul to the body of a recently deceased person. In other words, they could cure cases of disease through soul loss by dispatching their supernatural helpers to fetch the patient's soul in the land of the dead.[1] (As mentioned above there is otherwise outside the Eskimo area no information of the American conjurer's soul going to the realm of the spirits.) In some places diseases due to witchcraft or the transgression of a taboo can be cured in the Spirit Lodge. If a man has cast a spell over another man the spirits abduct his soul to the conjuring lodge and force him to confess there, whereupon the sick man is said to recover.[2]

It is, however, important to note that information of curing in the conjuring ceremony as such is rare and that the task of the jugglers is primarily to elucidate the nature and treatment of the disease, but not to treat it. The conjurer is a diviner, whether he traces lost objects, discloses past incidents, reveals future events or discovers the cause of diseases.

This summing up of some essential features of the Spirit Lodge complex may now help us to establish its position and relation to shamanism as such, and particularly shamanism in America. The Spirit Lodge is evidently a variety of shamanism characterized by its divining functions. Herein lie its limitations: the shamanistic trance is there, and so are the helping spirits, but the curing activity so typical of shamanism is absent, or principally absent. The act of divining shows a certain affinity with the shamanistic pole-climbing performances and may originally have been related to these. The shaman does not himself make soul journeys to distant regions during the conjuring performance, except among the Arctic peoples where such journeys belong to the regular shamanistic pattern; instead, spirits are summoned and asked to make the necessary expeditions. These spirits represent different categories, but their leader, the control, is a ghost in several quarters. Specific features express the presence of the spirits: the shaking tent, the Houdini trick, the confusion of voices, etc. The spirits visit the shaman whilst the latter is in a trance; where soul journeys and, possibly, possession occur the ecstasy may be very deep, but this is not typical.

[1] Hallowell, *The Role of Conjuring* etc., p. 64.
[2] Jenness, op. cit., pp. 66 f.; cf. Hallowell, op. cit., pp. 60 ff.

It seems realistic to claim that the Spirit Lodge is a particular form of a divinatory practice which has developed within general shamanism, the latter concept used in the sense in which it was defined at the beginning of this article. In the North, its basic structure has been overlayed by Arctic shamanism (cf. the soul journeys and the secondary motivation of the Houdini trick), whereas in the South, that is among Woodland Algonkian groups and Plains-Plateau tribes, it has retained its original character which has become fixed into a rigid ritual pattern. In this way it has become the most spectacular and interesting manifestation of shamanism in North America south of the Arctic zone.

# Shamanistic Ecstasy and Supernatural Beings

## A STUDY BASED ON FIELD-WORK AMONG THE KALASH KAFIRS OF CHITRAL

FROM THE THIRD DANISH EXPEDITION TO CENTRAL ASIA 1947–54

by HALFDAN SIIGER

For more than a century and a half the Kafirs of Afghanistan have been known to European students, but it was not until Sir George Scott Robertson in 1896 published his famous book *The Káfirs of the Hindu-Kush* that they attracted universal attention. From a scholarly point of view that was none too soon, for about that time, the Kafirs, living west of the frontier between Afghanistan and British India were converted to Islam, and their country, formerly called Kafiristan, became Nuristan, the Country of Light. Giving up their ancient religion, these Nuristanis now entered the great Islamic sphere of culture, and what today is left of their original spiritual life is only the last remnant of a once powerful religion.

However, a minor Kafir group, called the Kalash or Black Kafirs, living on the Indian, now Pakistan, side of the border, did not embrace Islam. The majority of the Kalash Kafirs live in their own cultural and religious environment, worshipping their own gods and drawing on a rich inheritance of myths and legends. But due to growing contacts with the outside world their three tiny valleys Rumbur, Bumboret and Birir, are under constant influence from the Moslems surrounding them, and therefore the three thousand or so Kalash Kafirs who are left will probably soon lose their cultural and religious characteristics.

Before I proceed to give an account of my own experiences among them, I shall briefly mention some of the important relevant publications. There is, to my knowledge, no author who has specially investigated Kafir shamanism, and one has therefore to collect what material one can from scattered

chapters and paragraphs in the publications of various British officers, Government officials, travellers, and investigators. Among these should specially be mentioned Mountstuart Elphinstone, *The Kingdom of Caubul and Its Dependencies in Persia, Tartary and India*, 1815, and Alexander Burnes, "On the Siah-Posh Kafirs", published in the *Proceedings of the Bombay Geographical Society*, 1838. H. G. Raverty has several interesting articles on Kafir culture as e.g. "Kafiristan and Kafiri Tribes", *The Calcutta Review*, vol. 103, pp. 65 ff., Calcutta 1896. In the same year Sir George Scott Robertson published his big and invaluable book *The Káfirs of the Hindu-Kush*, which immediately called forth great and well-merited admiration. He had really travelled and lived among the Kafirs and gave excellent descriptions of almost all sides of their life, culture, and religion. His book has become the classic on this area, indispensable to anybody who wants to study those complex questions.

In order to understand the further background of the Kafir religion it is frequently necessary to resort to investigations of neighbouring cultures, as e.g. G. W. Leitner, *Result of a Tour in Dardistan, Kashmir, Little Tibet, Ladakh, Zanskar*, etc., Lahore 1873, and Ghulam Muhammed, *Festivals and Folklore of Gilgit* (Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, vol. 1, No. 7, 1905), and O. Olufsen, *Through the Unknown Pamirs*, London 1904.

By the turn of the century so much knowledge had been gained that the encyclopedias were able to publish articles on these areas, see e.g. the article "Dards" by George W. Grierson in the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings, vol. IV, 1911, pp. 399–402, and the article "Kafiristan" by George Scott Robertson in the same encyclopedia, vol. VII, 1914, pp. 634–636.

Since the appearance of Robertson's book the Kafir problem has been the subject of many discussions, largely due to the ancient tradition that the Kafirs are the descendants of Alexander the Great's soldiers. But the first World War put a temporary end to all field work. Meanwhile the religious problems were discussed, as e.g. in "The Mythology of the Kafirs" in J. Hackin, *Asiatic Mythology*, London 1932, pp. 57–60, cf. also D. L. R. Lorimer, "The Supernatural in the Popular Belief of the Gilgit Region" (*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Part III, July 1929).

In the middle of the 1930's a German expedition travelled in many Kafir

areas (see *Deutsche in Hindukusch*, Berlin 1939), and about the same time the British colonel R. C. F. Schomberg visited the Kafirs of Chitral and published his valuable results in *Kafirs and Glaciers*, London 1938. This is, to my knowledge, the first book that deals in detail with the localities of the country of the Kalash Kafirs and describes a great number of their sacred places and religious customs. In *The Red Kafirs* from 1946 M. A. Shakur treats the culture of this Kafir community. The Norwegian scholar, Professor Georg Morgenstierne, who has devoted his life to the study of the Indo-Iranian frontier languages, and who has made several expeditions to the peoples of these areas, has also given a very informative account of "The Spring Festival of the Kalash Kafirs" published in *India Antiqua*, A Volume of Oriental Studies Presented to J. P. Vogel, etc., Leiden 1947, pp. 240–248.

The German Hindukush Expedition of 1955/56 brought back important results, and so did the Austrian Karakorum Expedition of 1958. In this connection should be specially mentioned Karl Jettmar's excellent study of the intricate Dard problem in "Ethnological Research in Dardistan 1958", Preliminary Report (*Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 105, No. 1, February 1961, pp. 79–97) and Peter Snoy's valuable study *Die Kafiren, Formen der Wirtschaft und geistigen Kultur*, Stuttgart 1962. Snoy has also some very informative notes to the film "Darden–Nordwestpakistan (Gilgitbezirk), Schmanistischer Tanz" (*Encyclopaedia Cinematographica*, Institut für den wissenschaftlichen Film, pp. 3–8, Göttingen 1960). In his article "The Cultural History of Northwest Pakistan" (*Year Book of the American Philosophical Society*, 1960, pp. 492–499) Karl Jettmar gives interesting sidelights on the Kafir problem in general. Interesting observations and excellent photographs will be found in the book *Where Four Worlds Meet*, Hindu Kush 1959 (on the Kalash Kafirs, see pp. 242–271) by Fosco Maraini, English Translation, London 1964. One team of the Third Danish Expedition to Central Asia 1947/54 visited Nuristan, and one of the members of this expedition, Lennart Edelberg, who also later visited Nuristan, has published many articles on the Nuristan Kafirs. Perhaps the most important of these is his study made in collaboration with A. Schafer and W. Lentz "Imra, The Creator God of the Kafirs and His Main Temple in the Parun Valley" (Nuristan, Southern Hindu-Kush), *Akten des vierundzwanzigsten internationalen Orientalisten-Kongresses Mün-*

*chen 1957*, Wiesbaden 1959. The present author has dealt with the Kalash Kafirs in his *Ethnological Field-Research in Chitral, Sikkim, and Assam*, Preliminary Report, København 1956, pp. 12–34 (Historisk-Filologiske Meddelelser udgivet af Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Bind 36, No. 2), and in: "Shamanism among the Kalash Kafirs of Chitral" (FOLK, vol. 5, København 1963, pp. 295–303).

In most of the above-mentioned publications will be found a great many valuable bibliographical references. As for general bibliographies I may draw attention to R. Fazy: *L'exploration du Kafiristan par les Europeens* (Asiatische Studien, 1–2, pp. 1–25, Bern 1953), and to a very comprehensive and excellent *Annotated Bibliography of Nuristan (Kafiristan) and the Kalash Kafirs of Chitral* I (Historisk-Filosofiske Meddelelser udgivet af Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Bind 41, No. 3), København 1966, by Schuyler Jones.

A general survey shows that shamans exist, or existed until quite recently, within the whole area in question. Moreover, these shamans had so many peculiarities in common that we may assume that the shamanism of the Hindukush/Western Himalayan area represents a particular branch of the well-known greater Asiatic shamanism. But there are, of course, also certain differences within this branch of shamanism, as e.g. in the official names of the shamans.

In the ancient Kafiristan the shamans were called *pshur*, and Robertson has given interesting descriptions of their customs and performances (cf. Robertson 1896, pp. 214 f., 245 f., 334 f., 402 f., 416 f., 425, 430 f., 465, 619, 627, passim). Snoy writes that the Prasun Kafirs, according to Buddruss, used the word *paschki*, i.e. seer for their shamans (cf. Snoy 1960, p. 209).

Schomberg states that the Kalash Kafirs of Chitral call their shamans *pshé* (cf. Schomberg, pp. 171, 174 f., 184 f., 201 ff., passim), whereas the Kati or the Red Kafirs call them *dehar* (cf. Schomberg, pp. 174 and 201). The present author was told that the name *dehar* was used by the Kalash Kafirs, whereas the Chitralis used the name *betan* of a person with shamanistic abilities.

The Aryan Dards of Dardistan have their own name for their shamans, which used to be given in the form of *dainyal* (cf. Grierson in Hasting's

*Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. IV, 1911, p. 401), while Jettmar gives the form *daiyal* (cf. Jettmar 1961, pp. 87 and 93) and Snoy uses *dayal* (cf. Snoy 1960, pp. 3–8).

For reasons of space the present paper does not attempt to provide a general and comparative survey of the shamanism of the area under consideration; and the reader is referred to the above-mentioned book by Peter Snoy from 1962. I shall confine myself to my own experiences during my field work among the Kalash Kafirs of Chitral, and the problem of the relationship of the supernatural beings and the shaman will be specially dealt with. I prefer to use the neutral term "supernatural beings" because I want to use a term which will include not only gods, but also other supernatural beings as e.g. fairies.

It is generally agreed that ecstatic behaviour is the outstanding shamanistic characteristic; but the author has been present at ceremonies where some laymen fell into a kind of ecstasy too. I shall begin with this ordinary or minor type of ecstasy.

During the spring of 1948 I attended the great spring festival, called *Joshi* (cf. my Report 1956, p. 24 ff.). On the third day of this festival a great number of ceremonial dances takes place. During one of these dances, which was performed for the fairies of the mountains, I noticed that some of the men now and then behaved in a manner which showed that they were undergoing some violent experience. Their steps became very rapid, the movements of their arms and heads seemed to be uncontrollable, and they delighted in loud shouting. In a few cases some of them even fainted. The other dancers immediately drew away from such men, left them to dance alone, and observed them with an obvious eagerness bordering on a state of awe. These dances may be called ecstatic dances, and they were certainly considered to be so, as the people said that these dancers were under temporary influence of the fairies, or rather, were possessed by the fairies. But these dancers were not shamans, on the contrary, they were to all appearance quite ordinary Kalash men, and they were in no way considered to be pure or holy. They were ordinary men whom the fairies had suddenly selected for the occasion and favoured with their supernatural influence.

While these performances carried the stamp of the sudden, unexpected, and unformalised materialisation of the influence of the supernatural beings,

the following example shows a supernatural influence whose manifestation proceeds according to a definite pattern. This pattern is very important because it testifies to the fact that we here meet with a constitutionalized performance of ancient origin. This performance is confined to a special type of person, the *dehar*, or shaman, who by virtue of his supernatural vocation and by the strict observance of the rules attaching to a state of purity and holiness, is the only one who is qualified for receiving such supernatural favours.

The ordinary *dehar* performance is associated with a sanguinary sacrifice of a goat or a bull and may take place during one of the greater festivals or on some minor private occasion. The initial part of the performance consists of such ceremonial elements as the invocation of the supernatural being or beings, the killing of the animal, the cultic cry, the prayer uttered by the *dehar*, the sprinkling of the animal's blood on the altar and onto the fire, etc. And then the attention of the men assembled becomes concentrated on the *dehar*.

Facing the altar he stands immovable with his arms hanging slackly down along the sides of his body. Although he seems to be waiting for something in a relaxed posture, his entire attitude is that of tense expectation. His gaze is riveted on the altar, and the rigid expression in his eyes reveals that an intense watchfulness has laid hold of his soul to the exclusion of everything else. It is also obvious from the attitude of the men gathered that everyone expects something special to happen. Whereas a few moments earlier they were eagerly looking at the sacrifice, they have now forgotten this, and their attention is turned on the *dehar*, whom they watch anxiously. There can be no doubt that these few minutes are very decisive and that a favourable result of the entire performance depends on these auspicious moments. They wait for the first slight symptom indicating that the supernatural beings have accepted the sacrifice and the invocation, which they will do by taking possession of the *dehar*.

The first symptom of the supernatural influence is almost imperceptible and may easily be overlooked. The relaxed posture of the *dehar* is by and by replaced by a slow stiffening of the whole of his body, a stiffening which seems to come from his internal organs, and to penetrate outwards into the smallest muscles. His spine becomes stiff, the muscles of his neck, arms and

legs become rigid, while his feet seem to lose their easy and natural grip on the ground.

To this new state is soon added another symptom which is easier to notice. That is a slight shivering or, perhaps better, vibratory movements noticeable in some of the smaller muscles. Up till now the *dehar*'s eyes have been wide open and firmly fixed on the altar, but now the eyelids begin to flutter slightly, and so do some of the facial muscles and his fingers. This fluttering is accompanied by the appearance of beads of perspiration on his forehead. There is no doubt that he is beginning to lose control of himself, a circumstance which to the attendant men is a sure sign that the supernatural beings are taking possession of him.

By and by this shivering grows stronger until it is a real trembling that takes hold of the whole of his body. This trembling runs through his limbs and makes them shake violently in short, rapid movements as if in a series of shocks. Meanwhile his facial expression changes considerably, he gets a wild look in his eyes, the muscles of his jaw jerk suddenly, often violently, and he begins to foam at the mouth. At this stage he may utter some indistinct words or short sentences in reply to questions which are either put to him then or which he has been asked previous to the performance.

It is immediately obvious that this physical state constitutes a very heavy strain on his nerves, and that it cannot last long. After a few minutes his body begins to sway, first slightly, but soon the swaying movements become more frequent while the shaking slowly disappears, till finally he sways like a person who has lost consciousness, control of his body, and his sense of balance.

In the meantime some of the men have gathered immediately behind him. In a few moments his swaying movements become still more unconscious, his body sways almost now with a circular motion, while his arms hang down, flaccid and dangling. The fixed look in his eyes has disappeared and has been replaced by a vacant stare indicating that his mind has lost all power of thought and concentration.

The attitude of the men show also that they are expecting a crisis, they are standing in a semi-circle behind him and watching him anxiously the whole time, ready to catch him the minute he falls. And then the last will power seems to leave him quite suddenly, his spine, legs, and muscles lose

all strength, and he faints into the arms of the men. They catch him, support him, and lay him on the ground so that he can rest stretched out and unhurt.

As he lies on the ground he looks like a person completely exhausted and powerless. His face is pallid, his eyes are closed, his respiration is almost imperceptible, and if one did not know better one might take him for dead.

From the behaviour of the men it is clear that the performance is over. Their reverent conduct has given place to ordinary behaviour, they walk about, some squat, and some talk in a low voice. They let the resting *dehar* alone, but their frequent and scrutinising glances at him show that they have not forgotten him, and that he is under constant observation.

By and by small symptoms indicate that he is slowly recovering. The ordinary colour returns to his face, he moves his fingers and his limbs a little, his eyelids open now and then, and his respiration becomes more perceptible. At last he moves, stretches his legs in an attempt to rise, and a couple of the men assist him to get to his feet. He staggers, sways a little, but soon he gains control of his body and walks some steps like a person who has just awakened from a deep sleep. This state is soon over, and accompanied by the men he leaves the precincts of the shrine.

The performance at a funeral ceremony is of another kind, it is more sudden, more wild, and of an immediate importance to the people, who may benefit from the influence of the supernatural beings present. I shall here only quote what I have written in another publication of 1963 (p. 299 f.) about such a performance which I once witnessed. "The corpse of an old man was lying in state in the middle of the meeting place, and mourning relatives and friends had assembled around it. The funeral ceremonies were protracted and went on for hours on end with dances, dirges and eulogies succeeding one another. Suddenly a tall man appeared on the scene, and breathless silence descended on the mourners, while they watched his every movement with intense expectation. The tall man was Rota, a famous *dehar*. Turning his face towards the nearby *Mahandeo* and raising his arms ceremonially above his head, he murmured a long prayer. Then his body began to tremble. It was fantastic to observe how the ecstasy gradually took hold of the whole of his body, until he finally in ecstatic rage leapt in among the people. He rushed to the right and to the left, his long arms raining heavy blows on men as well as on women whenever anyone came too close to him. Some men

withdrew beyond his reach, some women ran screaming away, but some courageous people, both men and women, approached him cautiously from behind, trying to touch his back. It was difficult because he sometimes turned round with whirlwind speed, and distributed punches and blows to those who did not make good their escape in time. However, some were lucky and succeeded in touching his back with their hands. No sooner had they done so, than they quickly turned round and ran away with a happy look on their faces. It was obvious that they were envied by the others, because by touching him they had come to share some of the supernatural power which manifested its presence in his body through the ecstasy. I was standing with my camera on the edge of the meeting place, but I soon had to retreat hastily because he came dangerously close to me. After about a quarter of an hour the ecstasy was over, he collapsed and lay gasping on the ground until some men carried him away."

This ecstatic performance, probably intended to drive away evil spirits, was obviously peculiar to Rota, for the mourners seemed to await something extraordinary as soon as he appeared. But it was not usual *dehar* behaviour, and another *dehar* said that he himself never became subject to ecstasies when attending funeral ceremonies.

These performances give rise to the problem of the relationship between the supernatural beings and the *dehar*. The *dehar* is a person who is singled out from other people by his special vocation, the prohibitions resting on him, and the particular faculties with which the supernatural beings have endowed him. But it seems, on the other hand, that his special status does not confer upon him permanent contact with the supernatural beings. The relationship may perhaps best be expressed by saying that he must always take care to live in a state which enables him to receive communications from the supernatural beings whenever they choose to communicate. If he does not possess the will to comply with the commands of the supernatural beings he cannot be a *dehar*. He must be their servant, always ready to receive and obey their messages.

But how do the supernatural beings convey their messages to him? There may be several ways, but we know only of a few: ecstatic experiences, dreams, and visual and auditory manifestations. We shall concentrate first on the ecstatic experience.

A *dehar* performance may be divided into three phases: the first phase during which the supernatural beings are approached, the second phase during which the supernatural beings take more and more command of the *dehar* until he is fully under their sway, and the third phase when they have left him, and the *dehar* is slowly returning to his normal state of mind.

It will be seen that the phase during which the supernatural beings act in the *dehar* is marked by his initial shivering and his final fainting. The visible symptoms of this phase are the strange and uncontrollable movements of his body, his exclamations, etc. It may also be explained in this way that what takes place belongs to a sphere quite different from the daily and ordinary sphere of human beings. During this short period the *dehar* is the meeting-place of supernatural beings and human beings. Therefore nobody dares to interfere with him as long as he is in this state because the supernatural beings are really working in him, using him as a means by which they communicate with and show favour to human beings. We might call it a superhuman state characterised by a complete voidance of personal mind and will, which are replaced by an infusion of the mind and will of the supernatural beings. This state is so heavy a drain on the mind and body of the *dehar* that it can last only for a short time, and leaves him completely exhausted.

The *dehar* dream is another example of how the supernatural beings may communicate with the dehar. Ordinary people may sometimes have significant dreams, but the *dehar* dream is particularly powerful. A completely pure state is a prerequisite, and therefore the *dehar* cannot be in his home where his wife is nearby. His goathouse up in the mountains is a good place for dreams. The goathouse is a pure place, only visited by men, and the goats are ceremonially pure animals. There the supernatural beings may appear to him in a dream and for instance warn him that the people will be attacked by an epidemic. The next day the *dehar* will issue warnings to the people concerned, so that they may take their precautions. There is in one respect a similarity between the sacrificial situation and the dream situation. During the sleep in which the supernatural beings convey their message to the *dehar*, he is not possessed of his waking consciousness, just as he is unconscious when the supernatural beings act in him during the ecstatic performance. Common to both situations is the fact that the supernatural beings take possession of his mind and will.

This communication of the supernatural beings seems always to have an immediate purpose. It conveys information of something that will happen, what the people ought to do in order to escape something, etc., but it does not seem to convey any information concerning the other world.

The above examples show that the supernatural beings on certain occasions respond to ceremonial requests and establish an extraordinary contact with human beings, a contact which may even develop into important communications.

The first sign of such contacts is the unusual state and behaviour on the part of certain people, especially of the *dehar*. This unusual behaviour is in its first stage characterised by his uncontrollable shivering, trembling and shaking. These symptoms are signs indicating that the supernatural beings have accepted the sacrifice and now manifest their appearance in the *dehar* through his unusual behaviour.

This way of communicating with human beings, i.e. by means of unusual movements beyond human control is, however, not confined to the *dehar* alone. When the people are going to kill an animal at a sacrificial performance, they first sprinkle water on the animal, sometimes into its ears, and await eagerly for the moment when a shivering will run through the animal's body. This shivering is a sure indication that the supernatural beings have accepted the animal as a sacrificial animal. In case the animal, in spite of several attempts, will not become subject to a shivering, the people will reject it, let it go, and choose another animal. In case there is e.g. incessant rains, upsetting the routine of daily life, the people think that some supernatural being has been offended. In order to find out to which of the supernatural beings they have to give a sacrifice for obtaining atonement, they ask the supernatural world by means of a kind of divinatory bow. Some specially gifted person holds the bow in his hand, asking the names of the supernatural beings, one by one. When the bow begins to tremble it is taken for a sure sign that the supernatural being whose name was mentioned at that moment, is the one who has been offended.

These cases indicate a peculiar similarity in the manifestation of the response by the supernatural beings: the shivering, trembling, and shaking of the *dehar*; the shivering running through the body of the sacrificial animal; the shivering of the divinatory bow. In all cases we find that these involun-

tary movements, not under human control, are considered to be conducted by the supernatural beings.

As for the *dehar* in ecstasy, the movements beyond human control are only the initial stage. The real climax is first reached when he becomes unconscious, and the supernatural beings speak through his mouth in reply to question put to the *dehar*. This state of unconsciousness may be compared to the state of sleep during which the *dehar*, being unconscious of the normal daily life, may receive dream revelations from the supernatural beings. These dreams may reveal future events, dangerous to the people.

Summing up we may conclude:

When approached in the proper way, the supernatural beings may intervene in favour of the people. This intervention becomes manifest through symptoms beyond human control, i.e. through ceremonial shivering, etc. The supernatural beings may also give their help in a higher degree through replies to questions, and through dreams to the *dehar* when he is in an unconscious state. These interventions may take two forms: either the solving of an immediate problem which the people cannot solve for themselves, or warnings concerning future dangerous events.

This gives us some indication of the supernatural beings vis-à-vis the course of events. We may perhaps even go so far as to say that we here catch a glimpse of the people's particular conception of causal relation. It seems as if daily and ordinary events do not interest the supernatural beings, but that only exceptional events, which may endanger the life of the people, are their special concern.

It is not quite clear, how one should understand the relationship between the supernatural beings and the course of events. Do the supernatural beings govern or influence the course of events, or do they only possess knowledge of what will happen? It is not possible to answer this question at the present moment. But there is no doubt that the supernatural beings possess knowledge of future events, and that they are inclined to warn the people through the *dehar*. They may then convey information about the right measures for the avoidance of the danger. In other words, they do not themselves change the course of events, but they tell the people through the *dehar* how to avoid the consequences of an untoward event. That is to say, the events seem to follow a certain course of development which cannot be altered, but may be

halted or the consequences of the events in question can be avoided, or, at least, reduced. The messages from the supernatural beings to the *dehar* are therefore information concerning proper counter-measures. The ability to receive such information gives the *dehar* his very special position within the society. He is an intermediary between the supernatural beings and the human beings, and he has been selected by the supernatural beings for the sole purpose of communicating their advice, assistance, warnings etc. to his countrymen. But he has been selected according to a supernatural vocation, and therefore his functions as a *dehar* are really outside the sphere of human beings. Hence the reverence, often awe, with which he is treated.

In daily life the *dehar* is nothing in particular. He has no special social or economic position, but the many rules he must observe place him somewhat outside the ordinary life of the people. His marital relations are also more restricted than that of other men. These conditions often rest as a heavy burden on him, and therefore one understands very well that many young men prefer not to receive a *dehar* vocation. Here as elsewhere it may make heavy demands on a man to be favoured by supernatural beings.

# Shamanistic Practice in Northern Nepal

by TONI SCHMID

My experience of shamanistic practice was gained primarily during a stay of several months among the Sherpas of Northern Nepal. The region concerned is now called "Helembo" or "Helambo", and is identical with the "Yol-mo" named in the "Hundred Thousand Songs" of the Tibetan poet Milaraspa (pronounced Milaräba).

The Sherpas—in Tibetan *śar-pa* or "men of the east"—live mainly in Northern Nepal, in the Darjeeling district, in India and Northern Sikkim, in the regions bordering on Tibet, and on the southern slopes of the Himalayas. As a rule they dwell as high as possible in the mountains where the means of livelihood are negligible, apart from tamang and limbu. In Helembo some of them lead a partly nomadic life, such as, mutatis mutandis, was still being led a few decades ago in parts of Härjedalen. They follow their cattle to the pastures, and at certain periods visit other areas affording means of subsistence, where for example they can collect *śug-pa*.

The Sherpas are of Tibetan stock. Among the Tibetan racial groups two religions can be broadly distinguished. One is a form of *Buddhism*, usually called *Lamaism*. The other religion is called in the Lhasa pronunciation *Bön*. Among the Sherpas both the religion and its priests are called "bombo", spelt: *bon-po*.

Lamaism has a variety of sects or orders, as they may be called, some older, others more recent, ranging from "The Old Sect", believed to have been founded in the 8th Century by King Khri-sroṅ-lde'u-bcan's (pronounced Ti-song-de-tsän) contemporary Padmasambhava, to the "Yellow Hats" (žva-ser) or "Virtuous Order" (dge-lugs-pa) instituted by the reformer bCoṅ-kha-pa about 1400. In the land of the Sherpas there also exist some Karma-pas, but above all "The Old Sect"—Tib. *rñiṅ-ma* (pronounced njing-ma) order. Their High Lama receives *a tribute* dating from the time

of the first and true ancestor "Chinalama" (pronounced Tjinyalama), whose title he still bears. Padmasambhava occupies a prominent position in the temple, and is usually flanked by two wives. Usual also are the dark-red Buddha Amitābha (Tib. 'Od-dpag-med, pronounced ö-pā-me), the white Avalokiteśvara (Tib. sPyan-ras-gzigs, pronounced Tjän-rä-si) with four arms, and the dark-blue Vajrapāṇi (Tib. Phyag-na-rdo-rǰe, pronounced Tjā-na-do(r)-je).

The inhabitants also embrace *bön*. This does not lead to any division in their society. On the contrary, the same people attend both the Buddhist temple and the bön ceremonies. Even the lamas and the bön priests are in no way hostile towards each other. I have seen bön priests and their families taking part in the *che-riṅ* festival in the Buddhist temple, and I have seen the lama's household—though not the lamas themselves—attending ceremonies conducted by a bön priest. On certain occasions a bön priest officiated in a lama's home, and before his relatives. On the other hand, the lama carried out the ritual of the dead at a cremation (compulsory in Nepal) for all and sundry, even for bön priests. The only ones not to be cremated were small children. According to report their corpses were pushed under a rock.

*Bombo* is the name for the belief and the priest, and *Bombo-SE*, Tib. bon-po gsos (Bön is life), is the chorus to the best-known bön hymn, sung even by the lama's children. However it is debatable whether this has any connection with bön-belief or bön-cult.

Along with Professor Matthias Hermanns who spent many years among the Tibetans in Amdo, several scholars have distinguished not two but three religions among the peoples of Tibetan stock. They distinguish between Lamaism, bön and primitive shamanism. In *Kumbum Dschamba Ling* (17) Wilhelm Filchner compares bön in Tibet with shamanism in Mongolia. René Wojkowitz-Nebesky, who died some years ago, considered that the so-called bön among the Sherpas was not bön but rather a pure form of primitive shamanism. I shall try to describe the little I have seen of it.

None of the bön priests that I have met have been so to speak 'full-time' priests. They were married, had a house, arable land and domestic animals; some also had children. To all appearances they were highly esteemed, and not poor. They all seemed to be noticeably above average in intelligence, but

could neither read nor write. They had no books. In this respect they differ from even the poorest village lamas in the region and from the bön priests who live in monasteries and possess literary collections. They also differ, for example, from the shamans described by Professor Rintchen in his latest book, in which he maintains that the shamans use books.

In their daily lives and customary dress they are like the rest of the inhabitants, and like many of the lamas. They wear 'jodhpurs' and the Nepal jacket, and when needed a *boko*, an almost water-proof coat made generally of white hand-woven woollen cloth, often with decorative stitching. They wear the same jewelry as the peasants, mostly necklaces of coral and turquoise, very large smooth stones, also amber, and the highly-prized two-coloured onyx in oblong pieces. Unlike the lamas they were unshaven, and in their waist-belts they carried *khukhri*, the curved knife now the most common throughout Nepal. They resemble almost all the inhabitants in being bilingual, speaking Nepalese as well as the Sherpa dialect.

The ceremonial dress is unlike that of the lamas, the Newar priests or the Hindu ascetics who are to be seen making their way to "The Holy Water" (Gosainkunda). I brought back with me a complete outfit of a bön priest's clothes, which is now in the State Ethnographical Museum in Stockholm. It is comparatively simple. It consists of a wide gown made of strong white cotton, with long wide sleeves, and reaching to the ground. It is fastened at the middle with a belt. The head-dress is also of cotton, a kind of turban wound in three colours: white, red and blue. No shoes are worn; the bombo walks and dances bare-foot. Around the neck he wears one or more rosaries of large pointed beads, similar to those used by the Hindus, and which can be bought in Kathmandu, Benares and other Indian towns. Belonging to his equipment are a drum, a necklace of bells and an antelope horn.

The drum is larger than the lamas' hand-drums used during their services. It keeps its natural colour, and is not green like those of the rÑiṅma-lamas. It has a handle and is played with the fingers. It has skin at both ends like the great lamaical temple-drums, but no grip as on the Tuva-drums recently described by Diószegi Vilmos (in *Acta Ethnographica*, tom. xi, fasc. 1–2, 143 ff.) The necklet of bells is rather large. It hangs round the neck and is set in motion by the shaking of the body during ecstasy. The horn is fastened to the back. These antelope-horns are said to be imported from Tibet.

Occasionally it is possible to hear lamas—especially the High Lama at Melamchi (rmi-lam-bčas)—complain that the 'bombo' was always the first to be summoned in the event of illness, child-birth or other emergencies. When the Lama's principal wife lay ill with gall-stone, every effort was made to cure her. A pious and literate Buddhist who acted as a sort of church-warden at the Gomba (the usual word among Sherpas for a temple, not, as generally, for a monastery, Tib. dgon-pa) read the scriptures by the light of a butterlamp. A European doctor, who was present with me at this place, tended her. A masseur was then summoned—the Sherpas are expert in various sorts of massage—and there arrived a bombo. This bombo lived nearby in a summer-*goré*, and was a friend of the family. The wife concerned was born in the area, and was particularly esteemed there.

In this region the bombo has no temple, nor does he have an equivalent to the mobile religious tent described by Marion H. Duncan (*The Yangtze and the Yak*, 1952, 82). They perform their ceremonies out in the open, or in caves, or in the homes to which they are called.

On the above-mentioned occasion the bombo was in full dress. He sat by himself in a corner of the big room on the first floor, that served also as living-room, reception-room, and bed-room for the lama and his household. The butter-lamp was lit, and incense made from *śug-pa* that grows high up in the mountains was burnt. The bombo recited in a sing-song voice long texts that seemed to be almost entirely litanies and mantras. It was not a repetition of the self-same text, but different texts. We learnt from the lamas that they 'are made up and arranged according to the occasion', in contrast with the holy books of the lamas. But certain texts were said to be transmitted from teacher to novice. 'The profession of bombo' is not inherited, although a son may succeed his father if he possesses the suitable qualifications. Memory-training evidently forms part of the instruction. I received a clear notion of how far such instruction could go even today in Gangtok, in December, 1961. A group of young lama candidates—the youngest only sixteen years old—were made to demonstrate among other things that they had learnt to recite a whole book by heart. The demonstration was carefully supervised by several lamas. None of the candidates faltered once.

The bombo invokes a variety of divinities and spirits. Among the most important are the 'masters of the ground' (Tib. gži-bdag). They seem to be

related to the '*vittra*' of the Lapps, described among others by Björn Collinder, and to the '*rå*'. The Śibdag who preside over the place where the ceremony is held are called *dam-čan-ǰo-bo-phya-ti*, and are said to be for the most part dangerous. The local gods do not like noise or disturbance; they prefer peace and quiet. Another of the divinities invoked by the bombo was spelt out by a lama as: *čhos-kyoṅ-dpos-kar-rgyal-bu* (tjö-kyong-pö-kar-djal-bu). The Sherpas often spell according to the pronunciation. It is recognized that King (Tib. rgyal-po) Pekar is spelt in different ways. In Tibet he is renowned as an oracular god, and is incarnated in the monastery *gnas-čhuṅ*, in the vicinity of Lhasa. Also among those invoked was the "Mountain Queen", spelt by one of the lamas as ǰo-mo-yaṅ-ri-rgyal-mu. The bombo in addition invokes his father's and his grandfather's spirits.

The recitation proceeded at a quickening tempo. To begin with it was accompanied by a gentle rhythmic movement of the upper part of the body. The man sat cross-legged. Now he began to twitch and shake. As he shook the bells around his neck started to sound. This lasted rather a long time. After that the ceremony was concluded somewhat abruptly. The man appeared to be exhausted, and soon left the farmstead. This bombo's name was gyu-rgyal or turquoise king.

The curing of illness was one of his and his colleagues' principal concerns. They are said to have a good knowledge of medicinal herbs; one of them was taken by people ill with fever.

The bombo's big day came with the full moon; during my visit it fell on the 3rd of August in the middle of the monsoon-season. There are two types of bombo, those "who cut", that is, kill animals, and those "who do not cut". He belonged to the first type, and on the previous evening had offered up a bowl of "gtor-ma" and hen's blood, and in a state of possession had thrown it over the steep cliff. On the day of the full moon even he was not allowed to slaughter. With his following of young men and women he occupied the 'Wash-house', that formed an extension to the lama's farm-building, where on other occasions different sorts of čhaṅ were prepared. Now some images of the gods, or rather symbols, were propped against the wall. Drumming went on without cease.

No lamas take part, but the local inhabitants participate and the bombo's closest assistants are the same as normally assist at the Buddhist temple.

Two bombos, a girl with a red and white cloth on her breast, and two boys dressed as girls are the foremost participants. An egg was balanced on the drum for as long as possible. Led by the bombos they all danced in a long procession up to a gži-bdag cave which was difficult of access and overlooked a steep drop down to the stream. Short verses were sung, mostly to the same melody with the chorus already mentioned: "Bombo Se". Written out in the Sherpas' own spelling, one of the verses runs thus:

kar po la chog kar chog na mi pu la rgya či
bab son la sas 'o las bom bo sos //

and another:

'od sken phrom mad če sa med sken ñams sa
kyoṅ sa la sos
'o las bom bo sos //

Nothing of the full moon was seen. For the fourth day running it had rained. In the dark cave there were some stone sculptures, and also some ochre which people rubbed on their faces.

On one occasion the impression given was that a bombo served almost as a chaplain to the High Lama. Immediately before embarking on a journey down to the Kathmandu district he sacrificed a small black hen to ensure that the journey went well. The sacrifice was performed out of doors, on a flat stone, behind which a raised stone was placed. Strips of cloth were hung on a bush. The bird was killed with a swift stroke of the *khukhri*.

Bombos are recognized as 'spiritual leaders', recognized even by lamas. This can have economic consequences. When a bombo lost a valuable animal during an epidemic among his cattle, neither the meat, skin or horn was allowed to be saved, but the whole corpse had to be buried. A collection started on his behalf was widely supported. The religious tolerance of these people is demonstrated by the diversity of cultic objects that appear together on an altar. An extremely dangerous Śibdag had its abode close to a Milaraspa cave. The particularly good relations between the lamas and the bombo undoubtedly depended to a large extent on the fact that the great majority of the lamas belonged to the Old Sect. One met nothing like the same tolerance and good-will in Darjeeling and the Kalimpong district. But the Old Sect and the bombos have many points in common and similar practices.

The lamas had a ritual for bringing on rain, and one to make the rain stop. They had spells and amulets against ailments. They also performed the full moon celebrations, and during these I received the following commentary on the ceremony:

"When Padmasambhava killed the devils he sacrificed his *(g)tor-ma* (cones of either dough or rice) along with their blood to Buddha. In memory of this, sacrifices are now made on Padmasambhava's command." On the sacrificial dish were red-coloured *cam-pa gtor-ma* together with roasted beans, maize and 'Nepal apples', also dried meat and earth-nuts. The red colour, 'the blood' was made from a plant called *(s)ko-ma* in the Sherpa dialect and *Smug-rci* in Tibetan.

In addition, the lamas attempted to exorcise *bhut*, ghosts or hostile spirits, which also belong to the bombo's field of activity. When a person after a long period of illness had partially regained his strength, an image of dough was made. It was painted, dressed up, and many gifts were bestowed on it. Afterwards it was carried out of doors, and thrown over a steep cliff towards the stream. It was said that the 'pointless chatter' that went on during the period of the illness disappeared with the image of dough. Such images—this was not the only one I had occasion to admire and whose manufacture I had investigated—bore witness like so much else to the artistic talent of the Sherpas. By simple means they arrived at a tolerable likeness. Both the lamas and the bombos were without exception clever with their hands. They could sing, carve in wood, make drums and attractive clothes. Their *gtor-ma* of dough and their sculptures in butter set on wooden bases were particularly well-done and tastefully coloured. To see a bombo and his followers dancing on an early morning in a sloping meadow was a beautiful experience.

The most obvious testimony to the good relations between the ancient native religions—by these I mean Lamaism's different branches and bombo-shamanism as well as Hinduism, but not Christianity (which so far has been only a foreign phenomenon in Nepal), nor Modern Buddhism (whose followers have established a school at Svayambhunath and missionaries in other areas)—is to be found at *Bauddha* the great stupa about three miles from Kathmandu.

Bauddha is an ancient Buddhist sanctuary, a celebrated pilgrimage-centre for Tibetans, and different legends exist concerning its founding. It is

believed to contain among other things the relics of the immediate forerunner there of Gautama Buddha, Kasyapa Buddha. Over a long period while living in a building close to Bauddha, I was able to follow all the religious services at the small chapel of the protective divinity at the entrance, and also in the temple opposite, as well as the ritual circumambulation around the stupa performed by pilgrims and local people, during which the large prayer-wheels placed in the wall were set in motion. One morning about four o'clock there appeared a bombo among the other devotees. He was in full dress, with the horn on his back and drum in hand. He circled the stupa in Buddhist fashion with his right side turned towards the holy objects. Consequently he did not walk in the true *bon-po* fashion with his left side turned towards the objects. Strictly speaking he did not walk, he danced. He danced two or three steps, twirled about, and proceeded in this manner to make several turns around the stupa.

To close I should like to say that with respect to shamanism an investigation into the ancient district of *Yol-mo* would be well worthwhile. Primarily such an investigation should concern itself with the so-called *bombos*, but even so the *rñiṅ-ma-* lamas there with their numerous shamanistic features might also be included. If anyone should organize an investigation such as this, it had better be soon, before the changes that are increasing on all sides obliterate the ancient belief and the traditional practices.

# Shamanistic Features in the Old Testament

by ARVID S. KAPELRUD

The question whether there are shamanistic features in the O.T. will receive different answers according to the definitions of the term shamanism. I prefer here to adhere to the definition given by H. S. Nyberg in his book *Irans forntida religioner*[1] (The ancient religions of Iran), which in its turn is based on the works of Stadling, Nioradze and E. Reuterskiöld.[2]

"The shaman is a person", says Nyberg, "who is able, with the help of psychical disposition and methodical training, to put himself into a trance.— Before the beginning of the trance he sets himself into ecstasy, through different means: music on the magic drum, combined with song, dance and sometimes certain narcotics. The shaman sits most often on a seat designed for him and has often a staff of helpers, who assist him in the performance".[3]

According to Nioradze the goal of shamanizing is to get a direct communication with the spirits in order to 1. make the shaman able to answer certain questions which are of interest to him and those present, 2. have the shaman ask the help of the spirits or the fulfilment of promises, 3. have him make the spirits obey by force.[4]

H. S. Nyberg is of the opinion that shamanistic features are present in the Iranian *magi* and in Sufian dervishes within Islam, the latter probably directly influenced by Mongolian shamanism.

The question to be asked, then, is whether it is possible to find sha-

[1] *Irans forntida religioner*, Stockholm 1937, pp. 186 ff. (German translation 1938).

[2] J. Stadling, *Shamanismen i Norra Asien* (Populära etnologiska skrifter, no. 7), Stockholm 1912.

G. Nioradze, *Der Schamanismus bei den sibirischen Völkern*, Stuttgart 1925.

E. Reuterskiöld, *De nordiska lapparnas religion* (Populära etnologiska skrifter, no. 8), Stockholm 1912.

[3] Op. cit., p. 187.

[4] Nioradze, p. 90.

manistic features in the West Semitic world where the O.T. took shape. The first phenomenon arousing one's interest are the *nabi*-guilds, which the Israelites took over from the Canaanites, and which are so clearly depicted in the Books of Samuel. Samuel himself was called a *rō'æh*, a seer (I Sam. IX: 9). Also, a seer could show shamanistic features, as demonstrated by the seer (*ḥōzæh*) Bileam, who was "falling down, but having his eyes uncovered", probably in trance, Num XXIV: 4 & 16.

More characteristic were, however, the *nabis*, who were active at Canaanite cult places, where they used to gather in flocks. They used different means to bring themselves into ecstasy: harp, tambourine, flute and lyre are mentioned in I Sam. X: 5. When the spirit came upon them, they prophesied and it is even so expressed that they were "turned into another man" (I Sam. X: 6).

When the *nabis* were in this condition, "turned into another man" and filled with God's spirit, they spoke the oracles which the spirit gave them. When the king needed divine assistance to start a new task, e.g. a war, he used to call his *nabis*, as it is told in the O.T. about King Ahab in the 9th century B.C., I Kings XXII. The *nabis* were ordered to get in contact with the divine world, and in addition a definite answer was expected from them, namely a "yes" to the plans of the king. King Ahab liked to have his band of *nabis* in this way, but he also wanted to hear the opinion of Micaiah, the son of Imlah, in spite of the fact that this prophet used to predict evil for the king, I Kings XXII. One may easily get the impression that the king (and the narrator) considered the *nabis* as men who were themselves masters of their oracles and who could accordingly turn them in the direction which was wanted. If that was so, the purpose of the work of the *nabis* was identical with that mentioned above, in connection with the definition of shamanism.

In the narrative about the prophet Elijah's struggle with the Baal prophets on Mount Carmel it is told that these *nabis* used to limp around the altar in a characteristic dance. "They cried aloud, and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them", as the narrator tells, I Kings XVIII: 26–29. They here obviously used means that were intended to cause ecstasy. The purpose of the ecstasy was to get into contact with the divine world.

The *nabis* often wore a special garment which indicated their profession.

Elijah used to wear a garment of haircloth, with a girdle of leather about his loins, II Kings I: 8, cf. Zech. XIII: 4. Also in this way they marked themselves out as a special guild, which was called upon on certain occasions and asked to get in contact with the divine world. They managed to do so through their ecstasy. The purpose was also to influence the events of the future. The assumption of the persons commissioning them, was that the oracles should be in favour of them, predicting a happy future. This happy future could be created by the *nabis*, through their oracles which were supposed to be actively powerful.

The *nabi* phenomenon in Israel was of Canaanite origin. It was never fully accepted by the most severe Yahweh-adherents. More characteristic of this latter group were the so-called "prophets of doom", like Amos, Hoseah, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah and Zephaniah. They certainly had some outer features common with the *nabis*, but their preaching, which will not be discussed here, was different.

The *nabis* occurred at a time in the history of Israel when Canaanite influence, cultural and religious, was dominating, at the end of the period of the so called Judges, in the 11th Century B.C. In spite of resistance the *nabis* were able to keep their position until the end of the Kingdom of Judah in 587 B.C. (Cf. the Book of Jeremiah, chap. 28–29.) There can be little doubt that their role was greater than it is depicted in the narratives which were controlled by the official Yahweh circles in the Books of Samuel and Kings.

With the definition of shamanism by Nyberg, cited above, one may be allowed to say that the difference between a shaman and a *nabi* was small. Difficulties arise, however, because the *nabis* were only described by opponents and there are many details in their work which we do not know for certain.

This holds true also of two groups of persons mentioned in the O.T., mediums and wizards (according to the Revised Standard Version), I Sam. XXVIII: 3 & 9, Hebrew: *ha-'ōbōt wĕha-yiddĕ'ōnī*. They are mentioned in the narrative of King Saul's visit to the medium woman at En-dor. It is expressly stated that King Saul had driven the mediums and the wizards out of the country, I Sam. XXVIII: 3. When Saul considered it necessary to take this step, it may indicate that these persons played a role in his time, that they were so many and so much used that Yahweh-adherents reacted against them.

*'ōb* was used as a designation for the spirits of the dead, who could be conjured and brought into open day by the medium. In a law paragraph in Lev. XX: 27 the text actually says: "A man or a woman in whom there are *'ōb* or *yiddĕ'ōnī* shall be put to death". As can be seen in the text of I Sam. XXVIII: 3 & 9 the word *'ōb*, plural *'ōbōt*, may be used about the medium, which may in its turn be a consequence of the point of view in Lev. XX: 27.

The problem is simpler with the word *yiddĕ'ōnī*, where the connection with the root *yada'* is obvious. This verb means to know, to have insight, and the word *yiddĕ'ōnī* thus means one who has insight, one who knows what is going to happen, a soothsayer. The word has a close parallel in Akkadian *mudu*, derived also from the root "to know". It was used in Akkadian as characteristic of the "soothsayer spirit" (KAT 590 f.).

Let us now have a look at the narrative about King Saul and the woman medium, as it is told in I Sam. XXVIII. The narrative is part of ancient strata. The king had forbidden the mediums to call forth the spirits of the dead. In his last desperate period, when everything went wrong and the enemies were victorious, he tried in vain to get divine guidance. It was completely useless, through dreams, through the oracles *urim* and *tummim* and through prophets. He therefore asked his servants to seek out for him a woman who was a medium, "one who reigned over spirits", as the Hebrew designation says: *'ešæt ba'ălat-'ōb* (I Sam. XXVIII: 7). The designation is sufficiently clear, but it has also been used as a foundation for further reflections, worth mentioning, e.g. by Sigmund Mowinckel. He is of the opinion that because the calling forth of spirits was forbidden, it was not exercised by men in Israel, as was usual in other countries in the Middle East. It had sunk down to female necromancy.[1] Mowinckel also points to another meaning of the nomen *'ōb*, which in the Book of Job, XXXII: 19, is used in the meaning bag of goatskin, used for storing of wine. This identity of words may be accidental, but Mowinckel, like Nöldeke, Zimmern and Gesenius-Buhl, is of the opinion that here is no accidence. As the word is used in I Sam. XXVIII: 8 Mowinckel finds it probable that *'ōb* means the tool with which the spirits were called forth (cf. Deut. XVII: 11). As *'ōb* may mean

[1] *Det Gamle Testamente*, oversatt av Michelet, Mowinckel (etc.), vol. II, Oslo 1935, p. 225.

bag of goatskin, Mowinckel proposes to translate "sorcery bag" (Norwegian: "gand-sekk"). In verse 7, mentioned above, he prefers the translation: "a woman who masters the ghosts".

The prohibition which King Saul tried to enforce upon his subjects is in line with that which was later underlined in Deuteronomy (XVIII: 9 ff.). It is there forbidden to burn one's son, to practise divination, to be a soothsayer, an augur, a sorcerer, a charmer, a medium, a wizard, or a necromancer. The narrative in I Sam XXVIII indicates that such prohibitions were rigorously enforced in the reign of King Saul, but the king's own action shows how deeply rooted they were and how hard it was to have them abolished.

Accompanied by two men the king arrived disguised by night at En-dor. He addressed the woman rather brusquely and ordered her to bring up for him whomever he might name to her. He used a verb, *qasam*, which in his mouth may have had a contemptuous tinge. It means to "practise divination", especially by mechanical means (Ezekiel XXI: 26). The word is used in the O.T., about the work of foreign, "false" prophets, Is. III: 2, XLIV: 25, Jer. XXVII: 9, XXIX: 8.

The means for this divination were also indicated by the king, it was to be practised *bā'ōb*, "by a spirit", and his intention was to get in contact with the man he wanted. The man whose advice he wanted, was the seer Samuel, the man who had once anointed him as king. This revealed to the woman that her visitor was the king himself, but he had already sworn to her that no punishment would be inflicted upon her. The narrative does not indicate what means the woman used to bring up the spirit of Samuel. She may, however, have been in a trance, or smoke or incense may have played a role. King Saul had to ask her: "What do you see?" This gives the impression that she alone saw the spirit of Samuel. She answered: "I see an *ăĕlōhīm* coming up out of the earth". The word *ăĕlōhīm* does not here mean a god (as it is usually translated), but a being which was not of a human character, but rather what we should prefer to call a spirit, a ghost. This spirit of Samuel answered the questions which King Saul in his distress put to him.

In his conversation with the woman King Saul uses the word *'ōb*, which Mowinckel in this case translates as "means of divination" (Norwegian: "gjenferdsmaneren"). He suggests that the word here (in verse 8) indicates the tool which the woman used in order to get into contact with the spirit of

the dead man. Mowinckel points to the fact mentioned above that *'ōb* may mean a bag of goatskin. The word may then also indicate a being or an object which gives a muffled whining or growling sound (cfr. Is. VIII: 19, XXIX: 4) Usually, Mowinckel says, the word is understood as meaning the spirits of the dead, ghosts, but some scholars have thought of a tool through which it was thought possible to bring up spirits from the earth. It may have been something like the "bullroarer" (Norwegian: svirretre or brummetre) in primitive peoples. It was a piece of wood which gave a strong whining or growling sound when it was swung on a string. It was used at cultic festivals and supposed to bring the diviners and sorcerers in contact with the spirits.[1]

We shall not here discuss the question of the original meaning of the substantive *'ōb* further. Usually the word is used in the O.T. with the meaning "spirit", indicating the pale withering dead ones in the realm of shadows, Sheol. The one obvious exception in the O.T. is Job XXXII: 19, where the word means bag of goatskin.

Compressed as is the narrative of the woman medium in En-dor, we are not told all the details we should have liked to know, e.g. what were the special qualifications of this woman and which were the tools and means she used. The narrator is silent about the question whether she was in trance or not. She was able to describe the appearance of the ghost to Saul: that it was an old man, dressed in a robe, she alone saw the dead one. This may be an indication that she was really in a trance.

The dramatic narrative in I Sam. XXVIII gives an indication of what happened when the spirits of the dead were conjured up in ancient Israel. We cannot come much closer, and that is not astonishing when we consider that the O.T. texts were handed down in circles which were hostile to the practice of diviners and sorcerers. The narrative discussed above indicates that such a practice existed and that it was not so easily abolished through official decrees.

There is no reason to doubt that shamanistic practice was found in Canaan in the time of King Saul. This practice went far back in time and was found in Canaan before the invasion of the Israelites. The cult of the dead, which the archaeological diggings in Ras Shamra in Syria have revealed, existed

[1] Op. cit., vol. I, Oslo 1929, p. 384.

also in Canaan. It was accepted by the Israelites, a fact which is underlined by the way in which the prohibition against all kinds of sorcery and soothsaying is repeated in the O.T., Lev. XIX: 31, XX: 6, 27, Deut. XVIII: 11, I Sam. XXVIII: 3, Is. VIII: 19.

Interesting are some words found in Is. VIII: 19. They may have been spoken by the prophet himself, in the latter half of the 8th Century B.C. The prophet spoke ironically about the people who consulted *'ōbōt* and *yiddĕ'ōnīm*, mediums and wizards, the two categories discussed above. It is mentioned here that it was characteristic of them to "chirp and mutter". The sharp words of the prophet and his indication that the attitude of the people towards the sorcerers was typical, reveals the strong grasp that the shamanistic rites still had, in spite of prohibitions and encroachments by kings and other authorities. It could last only so long as the traditions were handed down to coming generations. The sorcerers must have a chance to teach young men and women their methods. This was probably possible until the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. After that time the characteristic shamanistic features seem to have receded completely into the background. Instead new religious and magic features were coming in.

# Hungarian Shamanism

## MATERIAL AND HISTORY OF RESEARCH

by JENŐ FAZEKAS

### 1. *Introduction*

The material relating to Hungarian shamanism derives from a living folk-tradition and from folk customs.[1] In addition occasional information is found in printed and unprinted sources of historical,[2] literary, ecclesiastical[3] and

[1] The material and early literature of folklore-research: Folktale-motifs: Honti 1928; Berze–Nagy 1935, 1958. Dramatic folk traditions: Viski 1935. Folk customs: Szendrey–Szendrey 1937; MNT 3a (1955), 3b (1956), 4 (1959). Child's songs, games: MNT 1 (1951). Proverbs: Tolnai. Festival-days: Szendrey 1937; MNT 2 (1955). Ideas of the soul: Szendrey 1946. Burial customs: Munkácsi 1900; Szendrey 1928; Viski 1934b; Szendrey–Szendrey 1937; Szűcs 1948. Lamentations at death: Kodály 1937, 1956, 1960. Magical practices: Komáromy 1910; Viski 1934 a–b. Superstitions: Solymossy 1937a. Folk healing: Magyary–Kossa 1929–1931. Phraseology: Berze–Nagy 1929; Kertész 1922; Csefkó 1930; Tolnai 1935. Linguistic material: NySz; OklSz.-Recorded material and detailed research exists, in addition to the cited literature, in Ethn, NÉ, AE, NyK, etc.

[2] Contemporary historical sources on the ancient Hungarians can be divided into: (1) Byzantine sources (Leo VI the Philosopher, Constantine VII Porfyrogennetos, various chronicles) on which: Marczali–Vári 1900; Macartney 1930; Gyóni 1943. (2) Eastern sources (Ibn Rosteh, Gurdêzi, El-Bekrî, Ibn Fadhlân, Istakhrî, Ibn Haukal, Masʿûdi) on which: Kuun 1900; Macartney 1930; Czeglédy 1943. (3) Western sources (Annales Sithiensis Bertiniani, Conversio Bagvariorum et Carantanorum, Description of Europe by King Alfred the Great, Annales Fuldenses, Reginonis Abbatis Prumiensis Chronicon, Theotmar ad Papam Johannes IX, Rhabani Virtunensem ad Episcopum, Versus Waldramni ad Dadonem episcopum a Salomone episcopo missi, Ekkehardi casus Sancti Galli) on which: Marczali 1900; Macartney 1930; Deér 1943. (4) Slavic sources (Relationes Legendarum Constantini S. Cyrilli et Methodii de Hungaris, Narratiuncula e bello Ungaro–Bulgarico, Chronica Nestoris de Hungaris) on which: Jagić–Thallóczy–Hodinka 1900; Macartney 1930. (5) Hungarian sources (Frater Julianus 1236: De facto Ungarie Magne a fratre Ricardo invento tempore Domini Gregorii Pape noni, on which: Fejérpataky–Marczali 1900; Macartney 1930. Chronicles: Anonymus, circa 1200; Kézai, circa 1284; Chronicon Vindobonense, circa 1358; Chronicon Budense, 1473; and other publications issued together in SRH 1–2. A. Bonfini, Rerum hungaricarum decades, Basiliae (1543) 1568. On the authenticity of the chronicles: Hóman 1925; Györffy 1948.

[3] Pintér 1921, 1; 2, pp. 413–458.

judicial types dating from the Middle Ages up to the 18th century, both in Latin and in Hungarian. Material folk culture[1] and archaeology[2] have also had something to provide. Aided by these sources scholars have attempted to recreate what in folkloristic literature is called the shamanistic element in Hungarian folk tradition.

This work of research has now been in progress for some 150 years. Since the turn of the century it has been intensified, and from the 1920's onwards has been devoted to the assembling and collating of folklore material. It is claimed that it is possible to recover an important segment of the religion of pre-Christian Hungary and its intellectual culture by attempting to isolate the shamanistic survival in Hungarian folk tradition. According to certain scholars this shamanistic element came from the East some thousand years ago to the region now dominated by Hungarian folk tradition along with the migrant Hungarians.[3] It should consequently be compared foremost with shamanism in the Eastern lands where the Hungarians originated and where shamanistic beliefs and practices were living until quite recently, principally Siberia. At the same time, however, one must also take into account the contact between the invaders and other tribes in Central-Asia and South-East Europe. Furthermore, the Hungarians encountered and underwent the influence of beliefs that already existed in the land of their adoption before their arrival. Finally, all these traditions were again modified and overlaid by Christian ideas and customs.

Nevertheless we find in the Hungarian material the same motifs as in North-Eurasia. It concerns the ideas of the personality of the shaman and the shaman-candidate, battles between shamans hidden in clouds or disguised as animals, shamanistic ecstasy and the equipment of the shaman. Shamanistic practices are described mainly in folklore, less frequently in the form of real cultic or magic ceremonies. Traces of coherent cultic practices are also found in the dramatic folk tradition, in the descriptions from historical sources of sacrificial rites and animals sacrificed, and in the magic practices described in witch-trial records and which were prohibited by royal

[1] Ornaments, ethnographical objects: Solymossy 1937 a; Viski 1934a, 1934b.

[2] Archaeological finds, horse-burials: Munkácsi 1896 b; Hampel 1900; László 1944, 1946.

[3] According to Marczali 1895, p. 59, about half a million people.

edict. The magicians of folklore, the seers, quack-doctors, faith-healers, witches, village wisemen, shepherds, wandering beggars and finally children with special birthmarks, the so-called stigmata, or other external characteristics, were regarded by the Hungarian scholars as shaman-figures with roots in the distant pagan past.

The material is grouped around these distinct individuals as central-figures. We therefore have different objects of research characterised by varying shamanistic features. The most important figures are:

1) *táltos* (cf. Finnish *taitaa*, 'to know'; Orsz. "shaman, medicine-man, priest-magician, sorcerer, wizard").

2) *tudós* (from Hung. *tud-*, 'know', 'can'; has a somewhat wider meaning than *táltos*; Orsz (lit.): "scientist, scholar, scientific man"; MTsz: "fortune-teller, quack-doctor"; NySz: "scitus, doctus, peritus, eruditus, kundig").

3) *garabonc(i)ás* (probably from Ital. *gramanza*, 'magi', Greek *nekromanteia;* Orsz: "wizard, disguised as travelling student able to raise storm in popular superstition", NySz: "necromanticus, magus, praestigiator").[1]

4) Shamans who appear in other less characteristic forms than the three mentioned above, i.e. magicians, wizards and seers.

5) Different types of witches, in the witch-trials of the 16th to 18th century usually called *boszorkány* (from Turk. *basyr*, 'press', *basyrqan*, 'evil spirit', 'suppressio nocturna', used in the sense of 'witch', 'sorcerer', 'sorceress'; NySz: "lemur, strix, incubus, lamia, venefica, trivenefica; Hexe, Nachtgespenst").

6) *regös* (Orsz: "minstrel, gleeman, bard"; Kel: "(mittelalt.) Spielmann; (volksbr.) Weihnachtssänger," in evidence from the 13th century; MTsz: "a group of boys who on Boxing-Day call on houses performing their *regös*-song.[2]

The Hungarians were converted to Christianity during the reign of the first Hungarian king, István the Holy (997–1038). But beneath the new official Church piety, the old belief lived on as a substratum. In contemporary historical and literary sources even as late as the 18th century there

[1] For this figure see: Szendrey 1914; Solymossy 1937b; Diószegi 1958.

[2] For the terminology see: Viski 1932, p. 15; MÉSz 5, 1961, p. 960; otherwise: Sebestyén 1902b; Róheim 1925; Berze–Nagy 1935; Solymossy 1937a, 1937b; László 1944; Szendrey 1914, 1938, 1940; Diószegi 1954, 1958; Balázs 1954.

are allusions to this. A chronicle from the 14th century in which a pagan rebellion of the 11th century is described, contains, for example, information on pre-Christian cult practice.[1]

Both in Catholic and Protestant Church literature mention is made of the "pagan" or "devilish" belief. In the records of the witch-trials also this belief recurs as folk tradition; cult practices are there dubbed "magic".[2]

## 2. *The Religion of Ancient Hungary: Different Theories*

A more systematic study of the pagan belief and rites of the Hungarians began with Otrokocsi Fóris in 1693 and Cornides in 1791.[3] The first flowering period of Hungarian religious studies occurred during the 19th century, when under the influence of the romantic school of history an attempt was made to reconstruct an ancient Hungarian mythology of which traces were to be found in historical sources. This line of research is known among Hungarian folklorists as the Romantic school of Mythology.[4] In the work of several scholars this school was predominant throughout the 19th century.[5] The most important of these was Ipolyi. Influenced by Catholicism, he accepted the theory of an original monotheism, and interpreted mythology

[1] "Prepositi vero miserunt ad regem et ad proceros nuncios dicentes: 'Concede nobis ritum patrum nostrorum, more paganismo vivere, episcopos lapidare, presbiteros exentherare, clericos strangulare, decimatores suspendere, ecclesias destruere, campanas confrangere' ... Interim vero prepositi plebis in eminenti suggestu residentes predicabant nephanda carmina contra fidem. Plebs autem tota congratulanter affirmabat: 'Fiat, fiat'" (SRH 1, pp. 359 f., 337 f.). On horse-sacrifices: "Omnes populi libaverunt demonibus et ceperunt comedere equinas pulpas et omnino pessimas facere culpas" (ibid., p. 338). Among royal prohibitions are István the Holy's (997–1038) decree against witches and magic, László the Holy's (1077–1095) decree against witches and prohibition against sacrificial rites at wells, holy trees, springs, holy stones, King Kálmán the Wise's (1095–1116) decree against magic. The use among peasants of *áldomás*, 'mercipotus', still survives from old times (NySz: "sacrificium, oblatio, polluctum, epulae sacrificiales; collatio, epulae; benedictio; mercipotus"). As a pagan sacrificial rite *aldamas* is mentioned by the chronicle-author Anonymus: "more paganismo occiso equo pinguissimo magnum aldamas fecerunt" (SRH 1, pp. 56, 64).

[2] During the years 1565–1756 554 witch-trials were instituted in Hungary. At these 169 death-sentences were passed involving burning at the stake (Komáromy 1910, pp I–XXIII, 1–783).

[3] Katona 1897, pp. 61–68.

[4] Katona 1897; Domanovszky 1903, pp. 234 f.; Solymossy 1937b, pp. 402 f.

[5] Horváth 1817; Ipolyi 1854; Kállay 1862; Kandra 1897.

in the manner of Jakob Grimm. As early as 1854 Ipolyi was criticised by Csengery for his dependence on these two assumptions. A more basic criticism of the mythological viewpoint was put forward by Katona in 1897, who instead argued an ethnological and religio-historical approach.

In addition to the "ur"-monotheistic theory, another hypothesis played a big role in 19th century Hungarian religious studies, that is to say, the dependence of Hungarian pre-Christian religion on Iranian Zoroastrianism. This theory, championed mainly by Horváth, claimed to discover in the religion of Ancient Hungary a dualistic world-concept closely related to that of Ancient Iran. An important support for the theory of Iranian influence was found in the derivation (since proved erroneous) of the Hungarian adj. *ármányos* from the Iranian Evil Spirit, Angra Mainyu/Ahriman.[1]

Ipolyi was the first to use authentic folklore material, an example that was followed by other scholars. The *táltos*-figure was dealt with in various works, and as early as the 1840's was interpreted by one scholar as an ancient Hungarian shaman-type. Apart from Ipolyi, this identification is found among other 19th century scholars, such as Kállay, Csengery, and Kandra. A thorough and up-to-date description of the contribution made by the mythological school as seen from the religio-historical viewpoint, is still lacking. There exists only the outline made by de Ferdinandy in 1963 (pp. 255 ff.). It is his opinion that the scholars of this school, despite their historical fallacy, came close to the truth when they maintained that the religion of Ancient Hungary was of a dualistic nature.

In spite of all the criticism that has been made and continues to be made of the mythological school, one must still point out its positive sides. Its adherents have assembled evidence from historical and folkloristic sources, and several of the most important subjects now being treated in the most recent research had already been handled by Cornides and above all by Ipolyi, as for example, sacrificial rites and places, idols, pagan cultic practices in connection with wells, sacred trees and stones, swearing by blood, wolf or dog. With Horváth the *táltos*-motif and a number of other animistic conceptions, sacrificial customs and burial traditions were for the first time compared with Finno-Ugric material. Horváth was inspired to take up this

[1] de Ferdinandy 1963, p. 253.

comparative method by Engel's investigations in 1791, and through Engel by the Finno-Ugric studies of the 19th century. As a result a new line of research in the religion of ancient Hungary was opened up, the so-called comparative Finno-Ugric Mythology which was further developed by Csengery in the middle of the 19th century by giving it an Ural-Altaic perspective. Horváth compared the Hungarian shamanistic material with Finno-Ugric and Samoyedic elements, while Csengery and Kállay compared it with Turco-Mongolian elements.

But at the turn of the century this comparative method was exposed to the criticisms of Katona. He established as the primary goal the need to define the meaning of the religion of Ancient Hungary and describe the aims and principles of Hungarian ethnological research. He dealt also with the problem of monotheism, the relationship between religion and mythology, and the various ideas on these matters from those of the apologists of the Early Church and the Church-historian, Eusebius, through de Brosse, down to Tylor and Mannhardt.[1]

The pure ethnological approach is met with more regularly at the turn of the century in Hungarian religious studies. It came into favour partly as a result of the recording of folk-belief in which various shamanistic elements were discovered, partly as a result of an intensified study of the *regös*-material. One collection of material made by Sebestyén with the help of the Kisfaludy Society revealed contemporary evidence of the shaman-drum, and established the *regös*-figure at the centre of their studies.

In 1900 Jankó dealt with the *regös*-, *garabonciás*-, *lidérc*-, *boszorkány*-, and *táltos*-motifs, and expressed the hope that it would be possible to reconstruct the religion of Ancient Hungary against the background of Ural-Altaic shamanism. In the historical and historico-cultural work of this period shamanism was put forward as the most important ingredient in the religion of Ancient Hungary with *regös*, *táltos* or the sacred tribal chief as the principal figure.[2]

[1] Katona 1896a, 1896b, 1897.

[2] Cf. Marczali 1895, pp. 59–63 (*táltos*); Sebestyén 1902a, 1902b, 1906a, 1906b (*regös*); Bán 1908 (*regös*); Vikár 1907 (*regös*); Pintér 1921, I, pp. 19 f.; Róheim 1925 (*táltos*); Hóman 1928, pp. 111–117 (sacred chief); 1940, pp. 77–82 (various priest-figures along with the sacred chief); Solymossy 1932, 1937a (*táltos*).

A new approach was made by Solymossy (1932, 1937b), with a stricter formulation of aims in the ethnological investigation of the religion of Ancient Hungary. He argued that it developed out of shamanism and animism of the same primitive type as is found among other Finno-Ugric tribes. This religion was influenced and modified through the contact of the Hungarians with Turkish and Bulgarian tribes. In his opinion the principal figure in the religion of Ancient Hungary was *táltos*.

Hóman uses both folkloristic and historical material. The picture that he gave of the religion of Ancient Hungary in 1928 and 1940 presents it as more strongly differentiated than the usual tribal shamanism found among Northern and Central-Asiatic nomadic tribes. The Hungarians are said to have had a religion of the same type as other contemporary warrior and steppe peoples (Huns, Persians, Avars, Chazars, Turks, and Scythians). Animistic concepts from primitive epochs survived among the ancient Hungarians, but out of a cult of mythic ancestors there developed a tribal chieftainship of charismatic character, an early form of sacral kingship. According to Hóman there were priests for public ceremonies as well as magicians for everyday matters. These different officials performed the same functions as the Central-Asiatic shamans. They were subordinate to the different sacral chiefs or to the high-chief common to all the tribes. The religion was polytheistic with a supreme deity as the creator of heaven and earth, and a series of special gods for woods, mountains, water, etc. Such a sky-god with sons as this is found in Vogulic folk tradition in the person of Numi Tarem, creator of the world and its guardian. According to Hóman and Hungarian historians, however, the Hungarians came into contact with pure monotheism as early as the 7th century through the influence of Byzantine Christian, Jewish and Islamic missionaries.[1]

The same historical approach was made by László in 1944 and 1946. In his treatment of ancient Hungarian intellectual culture he used a wide range of historical and archaeological material, supplemented by folkloristic evidence. The archaeological discoveries, especially the burial of stuffed horse-skins, indicates a religious system well-known from the *Völkerwanderung* Period. Hóman as well as László assume a totemistic ancestor-cult in the religion of

[1] MHK 1900; Zichy 1923, 1939; Hóman 1928, pp. 113 ff., 1940, pp. 79 ff.; MÖ 1943.

Ancient Hungary. This important element they found behind certain motifs preserved in chronicles.

In 1951 and 1954 Róheim used in a more systematic fashion than his predecessors Vogulic and Ostyakian parallels. He deals also with the question of the supreme deity of Ancient Hungary, totemism, shamanism and the sacral kingship. He argues somewhat daringly that Ugric mythology has features in common with the myths of the North-American Indians. Róheim frequently uses concepts and views deriving from psychoanalytical speculations, but he has a firm grip on the material he quotes.

## 3. *Ancient Hungarian Shamanism in General and Different Shaman-Types*

The question of the origin and signification of shamanism was dealt with as early as the period of Ipolyi, Kállay, Csengery and Kandra in connection with the discussion on the *táltos*-figure. Sebestyén provided in 1902 (b) a broad historical and ethnological background to another key-figure, *regös*, using quotations from Central-European kolinda material and certain ancient Roman cultic customs. The contributions made by Katona in 1896 and Jankó in 1900 were linked with the animistic theories of the 19th century and descriptions of Siberian shamanism in Western and Russian sources.

In 1908 Bán filled in a richly-detailed picture of shamanism itself and of the investigations into it, relying mainly on the theories of Lubbock, Tylor and Wundt. Following Lehmann, Bán assumes the following stages of development: primitive magic (pre-animism)—primitive animism—higher animism. Shamanism is regarded by Bán as the higher animistic stage. In contrast to the wizard (magus) the shaman has virtually a priestly function. The wizard has, certainly, a knowledge of magic powers, but unlike the shaman is not in their service. Bán also pays attention to the shaman's social role and his different duties: fortune-telling, healing and exorcism. These were eventually taken over by three separate practitioners, the seer, the healer and the exorcist. Even in today's research the problem of the splitting-up of the shaman's functions, his social downgrading or replacement by new officials as social changes occur still remains to be solved. According to Bán shamanism is only an aspect of animism, not a religious system in itself. It is

made up of certain religious elements which can appear in certain combinations, but without any stronger ethnic characteristic or relation.[1] In the matter of the ethnic differentiation, which, following Lubbock, Bán takes up, there is a complex of problems which also interest scholars dealing with legends and fairy tales: motif-diffusion, motif-contamination, ethnic homogeneity, regional characteristics, and isolated motif-variations.[2]

In 1910 Munkácsi gave a thorough description of Vogulic shamanism based on comprehensive folkloristic material. Among these people the shaman's main role is to establish contact with the gods in order to further the people's interests. But among the Voguls there are also black shamans who use their gifts to injure others.

Even in 1937 Solymossy based his interpretation of the nature of shamanism on Tylor's dream-theory and other doctrines dating from the 19th century and the turn of the century. This is also partly the case with Diószegi who in 1954 aligned himself with the sociological and evolutionist interpretations put forward by the Russian scholar, Tokarjev.[3] Diószegi, in contrast to Zichy for example, in his works from 1923 and 1939 and to the traditional Finno-Ugric culture anthropologists, argues for the postulate that a general 'primitive communism' existed among the Finno-Ugric tribes as late as 500 A.D. This Marxistic theory of society and its application in shamanistic research derives from its use in the 19th century by Changalov in 1883.[4]

Research into the term *táltos* (*tátos*) was begun by Horváth in 1817, and this figure has also been dealt with, as is described above, more or less thoroughly by other adherents of the mythological school. On the basis of these early investigations, the conclusion was tentatively reached in 1874 that the *táltos* was an ancient Hungarian priest-figure.[5] A more comprehensive collection of folklore material was published between 1910 and 1920 in the journal *Ethnographia*. The fight-motif was discussed by Kálmány in 1917 and by Kodolányi in 1945. In 1925 and 1927 Róheim made a thorough ethnological analysis of the figure in question. Solymossy placed him in the

[1] Cf. on these matters: Findeisen 1957, pp. 200 f.
[2] Honti 1935, 1940.
[3] Bolš. Sovj. Enc. 61, 1934, pp. 802 f.; 47, 1957, pp. 505 f.
[4] UG 10, 1952, p. 146.
[5] CzF 6, 1874, coll. 145 ff.

centre of the Ancient Hungarian shamanistic religion. Hóman on the other hand gave him a more subordinate place along with *bölcs* ('wise man'), *bűbájos* ('magus'), and *orvos* ('medicine man') and with the sacral tribal chief. Diószegi argued that *tudós* had been at least as important as *táltos*. According to Solymossy (1937b, p. 443) "*táltos* is always well-disposed and wishes to help people. In different places he enters a dwelling as a stranger, asks for milk and eggs to eat, but does not care for bread. He is reticent and quiet by nature, but if he is denied food or turned away with harsh words, he takes revenge by bringing on sudden bad weather and hail." These characteristics are strikingly similar to those possessed by the *garabonciás*. The conclusion is that some of the features associated with this medieval magician originally belonged to *táltos*. It is indisputable that here is a case of motif-blending, in addition it is clear that certain characteristics of witches have become attached to the *táltos*-figure.[1] Further attempts to trace the features of this figure have been made by Szendrey (1914), Gunda (1963, p. 23) and de Ferdinandy (1963, pp. 248 ff.).[2]

Subsequent to the Second World War, some 120 folklorists have compiled a comprehensive collection of material which so far has been used primarily by Diószegi (1958). There still remains a considerable amount of unpublished material in archives.

The shamanistic features in the Hungarian material have a strongly heterogeneous character. Some of them strikingly recall central-asiatic phenomena,[3] others have more in common with north-eurasian elements.

[1] Cf. Komáromy 1910, p. 778. Klein 1934 stressed this feature in *táltos*, while Róheim 1926 a, p. 35, and Gunda 1963, p. 45, claim that it is insignificant.

[2] Evidence from the 13th century exists in historical sources, Pais 1958, pp. 273–276; NySz, OklSz: "magus, Zauberer"; adj. "magicus, Hexen". Current interpretations according to MÉSz 6, 1962, p. 462: "magical horse, wise-horse that can talk and swallow fire; the shaman among the ancient Hungarians; a man with miraculous powers who was born with teeth and six fingers; horse; child with extraordinary talents". Related terms are: *táltos ló*; *táltos paripa*, 'magic steed'; *táltosbika*, 'magic bull'; *táltosgyerek*, 'magic child', 'shamancandidate'; *táltosság*, *tátosság*, NySz: "ars magica, Zauberkunst"; (christ.) "priestly occupation". The etymology is uncertain, cf. Finn. *taitaa*, 'know'; mong. *dalda*, *daldu*, "secret, mystérieux; le secret, le mystère" (CzF); Turk. *taltyš*, from the stem *tal-*, *talt-*, "schwach werden, ohnmächtig werden; ermüden, matt machen; schlagen bis zur Ohnmacht" (Pais 1958); "Schläger, Prügler; einer, der bis zum Taumel, bis zur Besinnungslosigkeit schlägt, prügelt" (Gunda 1963).

[3] Cf. UG 12, 1955; Eliade 1957; Findeisen 1957.

This mixture of shamanistic elements from different geographical regions has been pointed out by Solymossy (1932, 1937b). He explains it by saying that during their migrations the Hungarians came into contact with Bulgarian and Turkish peoples. This cultural contact is generally accepted by scholars in Ancient Hungarian studies.[1]

The shamanistic material divides into two motif-groups, of which one concerns the shaman-candidate, the other the shaman. For the shaman-candidate the following stages are laid down: the call, the sign of election, (shaman-tooth, -finger, "superfluous bones") and initiation as a shaman ("the dismemberment", shaman-trees or heavenly trees). For the shaman's part his equipment has been described (drum or sieve, *táltos*-horse, headdress in the form of feathers or horns, heavenly ladder) as well as his ecstasy, battles of shamans disguised as animals (horse or bull) or hidden in clouds, or between a white and black shaman, shaman-songs and cultic practices.

The richest material concerns the shaman-candidate, the shaman's equipment (except for the drum), his battles in cloud- or animal-shape. The material on the shaman's ecstasy is based on a word-group (*rejtez*, "hides"; *révül*, "falls into ecstasy") which has shamanistic significance and ethnological associations in Vogulic and Ostyakian. This word-group has occupied the attention of Hungarian linguists for over a hundred years, and their research on it has been recorded by Balázs in 1954 and 1963. Concerning cultic practices the material is less abundant. Research so far has mainly relied on certain exclamations and interjections that have parallels in Vogulic and Ostyakian folklore. Moreover there exist descriptions of ecstasy from the 17th century relating to the Moldau-Hungarians, a group outside the compact area settled by the Hungarians. Traces of cultic practices are found also in records of the witch-trials and in statements on "devilish" songs and rites.[2] In folk tradition there are formulas for oath-making which are overlaid with Christian concepts.[3] There is much room for research here. Battles in animal-shape as well as magical animals have been linked up with totemic ideas.[4]

[1] Hóman 1928, 1940; Németh 1930; de Ferdinandy 1963, pp. 211 f., 217.

[2] Komáromy 1910, passim, and p. 219.

[3] Solymossy 1937a, pp. 381–386.

[4] Solymossy 1937b; Diószegi 1953, 1954, 1958; Balázs 1963; Gunda 1963; de Ferdinandy 1963, pp. 248–250.

What is generally called in Hungarian folk tradition half-*táltos*, such as are born or brought up as half-shamans (Komáromy 1910, pp. 420, 475), have not so far received any thorough treatment. Interesting folklore material on such figures has been set out by Szendrey in 1914 and 1938, and three of these figures (as has been shown above) have been placed on an equal footing with *táltos* by Hóman.

It remains to investigate what these seers, fortune-tellers, incantators, healers, quack-doctors, wise-men and -women, witches, and sorcerers[1] were originally, what social role they played, and in what historical relationship they stood with the ordinary shaman. It could be a question of performers of lesser cultic ceremonies and magic rites, or of shaman-figures that as a result of conquest and consequent social changes lost their former standing and sunk to the rank of black shamans or magicians. A richly diversified collec-

[1] In Hungarian folklore there are several other terms for a seer or magician: 1) *látó*, 'seer', 'clairvoyant(e)'; NySz (16th C.): "propheta, Seher"; *álom-látó*, "interpres somniorum, Traumdeuter"; *isten-látó*, "exorcista, Beschwörer"; Szendrey 1914 (Hung. *lát*, 'see'). 2) *mondó*, 'oracle', 'soothsayer'; NySz: *jövendő-mondó* (16th C.), "propheta, vates, mantis, auspex, haruspex, hariolus, sibylla" (Hung. *mond*, 'say'). 3) *felelő*, 'responder'; Diószegi 1958 (Hung. *felel*, 'respond'). 4) *idéző*, 'conjurer' (of spirits); Diószegi 1958 (Hung. *idéz*, 'conjure up'). 5) *néző* (15th C.), NySz: "pytho, pythonissa; Wahrsager"; *oltáron-néző*, "Opferschauer"; *nézés*, "augurium"; *madár-nézés*, "auspicium; Vogelschau"; *barombélnézés*, "haruspicium" (Hung. *néz*, 'look'), 6) *igéző* (18th C.), NySz: "Zauberer, Hexenmeister" (Hung. *igéz*, 'zaubern'). 7) *kuruzsló*, 'quack(-doctor)' (Hung. *kuruzsol*, NySz (18th C.): "incanto, fascino, ope magiae medeor"). 8) *varázsló*, NySz *varásló* (16th C.): "genethliacus, praestigiator, incantator; Zauberer" (Hung. *varázsol*, *varásol*, NySz: "incanto, divino, vaticinor"). 9) *bölcs*, 'wise man'; NySz: "doctus, eruditus, considiosus, literatus, sophus, sapiens, philosophus" (Turk. 'magus'); *varázsló bölcs*, "magus, Zauberer". 10) *bűvös* (15th C.), NySz: "incantator; Zauberer" (Hung. *bű*, NySz: "magia, incantamentum, veneficium"). 11) *bűvölő*, NySz: "incantator; Zauberer" (Hung. *bűvöl*, NySz: "incanto"). 12) *bájoló*, NySz: "magus, incantator; Zauberer" (Hung. *bájol*, NySz: "incanto, incantatione utor; zaubern"; *báj*, NySz: "magia, incantatio, veneficium, superstitio; Zauberei, Hexerei"). 13) *bűbájos*, NySz: "magus, incantator; Zauberer" (Hung. *bűbáj*, NySz: "cantamen, magia, incantatio, veneficium; Zauberei, Hexerei"). 14) *boboló*, Szendrey 1938: "saga, midwife" (Hung. *bobol*, "scrying with the aid of beans, maize and sieve" (Hung. *bab*, 'bean'). 15) *jós*, (16th C.), NySz: "magus, saga incantator, incantatrix, pytho, divinus vates; Zauberer, Wahrsager", *javas* (16th C.), the same; *javas asszony*, *javas ember*, "respectively female and male quack-doctor; saga, magus". 16) *orvos* (13th C.), NySz: "medicus; Arzt" (earlier: "magus, wizard"); more detailed material in Pais 1958. 17) *hejgető*, Wichmann 1907: "Weihnachtssänger, Weihnachts-zauberer", corresponding to *regös* among the Moldau–Hungarians. 18) Different types of "wise-men and -women", Szendrey 1938. 19) *sirató*, Orsz: "mourner, weeper."

tion of comparative material also exists in Vogulic, Ostyakian and Samoyedic folklore.[1]

In a large group with as many as ten witch-figures[2] the *luca* and the implement associated with this witch, from a shamanistic point of view, is of a particular interest. The *luca-széke* is a "magic seat, witch-stool, made of different types of wood, nine or thirteen different types." Its occupant can 'foresee', if he succeeds in smuggling it in to Christmas-Day mass, make a magic circle, and sit on the stool within this circle. After this pagan rite the stool should be burnt up. It figures in the witch-trials of the 18th century as a banned and criminal witch-implement.[3] The *luca*-stool and other characteristics of the *luca* have together with their European parallels been dealt with thoroughly by Róheim in 1915 and 1916. Sebestyén (1906, pp. 149–168) edited a collection from Dunántúl in western Hungary, where

[1] Munkácsi 1910; Karjalainen 1900, 1921–27; Pápay 1905 a; Lehtisalo 1924; Hajdú 1963; also in other works (UG 12, 1955; Park 1938).

[2] Except 1) *boszorkány* also: 2) *bába* (12th C.), NySz: "anus, vetula, obstetrix, maga, venefica; Hexe". Motif-blending with *boszorkány* can be shown. In fairy tales appears *Vasorrú bába* (Orsz: "old witch in folktales"), who recalls the primitive, animistic god-images among, for example, the Voguls and the Ostyaks and a widely known goddess from the north-eurasian area (VNGy 1, pp. LX f.). Such god-images are mentioned frequently in travel-books, as in Strahlenberg, Möller, Gondatti, Pallas, and others. The evidence of *bábabukra*, 'regnbåge', points also to a divine figure (Solymossy 1927). 3) *babona* (16th C.), NySz: "fascinum, superstitio"; *babonás*: "superstitiosus, magicus; abergläubisch, zauberisch." 4) *banya*, NySz "anus, vetula; Hexe". 5) *lidérc* (15th C.), 'nightmare'; NySz: "ephialtes [nightmare in Greek mythology] incubus, cacodaemon, lamia; böser Geist, Feuermännchen". 6) *sárkány*, 'dragon'; MTsz: "dark cloud of rain, typhoon" (Turk.). This figure is of Ural-Altaic origin, derives from the ancient Hungarian religion and is met with in folk tales partly as a fabulous creature and partly as an underworld demon in the shape of a human being (Berze–Nagy 1935, 1958, Solymossy 1937b, pp. 439 f.). 7) *tündér* (16th C.), 'elf, fay'; NySz: "magus, praestigiator, qui se in varias species pro libitu transformat, empusa; Zauberer". 8) *szép-asszony*, MTsz: "elf, fay, witch, evil spirit (fem.)"; *szép-asszonyok szele* or *szép-asszonyok tánca*, 'typhoon'; *Szép Miklós*, a fairy-tale hero' (Berze–Nagy 1935). 9) *tót-asszony* 'witch'; Szendrey 1937 a: "on *Luca*-Eve the *tót*-women (*tót*-witches) go round to frighten the children." This figure might be related to *tátos*. 10) *luca*; *Luca-asszony*, 'female witch'; Szendrey 1937 a: "the demons' chief"; *lucázás*, 'Luca-procession', "band of boys that goes round before Christmas and performs a certain magic rite to bring good luck to animals, etc." Latin texts before the 16th C. speak of witches as *strix* or *striga*, but we do not know which Hungarian figures they are that lie behind these names. (Komáromy 1910, Szendrey 1914; Berze–Nagy 1935; Solymossy 1937a, 1937b).

[3] Viski 1934 b; Szendrey 1937 b.

the stool is replaced by a tree-stump, a log, a beam or a sheaf of straw, which were probably the objects originally used. The *luca*-stool or the *luca*-stump are probably the same magic requisites as the *sejdhjäll* (the *sejd*-stool) in Nordic regions or the sibyl's tripod among the Greeks. The tree-stump, has, then, developed via the magic seat into the 'official chair', and then 'throne', the chief's sacral seat.[1]

Finally, as concerns the *regös*,[2] the recording of *regös*-songs[3] began as early as the 1830's, but as late as the 1890's only eight variants were known. Since the turn of the century the collecting and publishing of material has been thoroughly carried out.[4]

The so-called *regös*-song is a composite "chain"-song of the kolinda-type consisting of different small verses of varying content: introduction, greeting,

[1] On ecstasy in Indo-European, Hellenic and Germanic regions, see Eliade 1957, pp. 358–375.

[2] Concerning the translation "combibator" for *regus* in OklSz Szabó explained in 1881, p. 558, that this word was not found in Ducange. It must consequently be a medieval ad hoc word-coinage from *bibo*. Szabó claims that *combibator* in the document in question has the same meaning as *joculator*. Hungarian scholars have accepted this explanation and so render *combibator* with "cantor, Sänger, Spielmann". In classical latin, however, there is found *combibo, -ere*; *combibo, -nis, combibiones* (Georges), in medieval latin *combibiosus* (Ducange). Of these words, the medieval Hungarian form, *combibator*, could easily have been constructed out of an earlier *convivator*, "Ausrichter des Gastmahles" (Georges), cf. *convivium*, "Gastmahl, Schmaus, Opferschmaus" (Georges, Menge–Güthling) and *convive*. *Regus* or "convivator" could thus have been master of ceremonies at the royal court or among the nobility, where he also performed religious rites, functioned as a story-teller, and later became a minstrel- or jester-figure. This medieval minstrel-type might thus have descended from an earlier, more religiously engaged, royal or general functionary, i.e. a cultic and shamanistic figure. Such an explanation of the evidence *combibator-regus* would be more logical than Szabó's and Sebestyén's 'drinking companions', 'fiddler'.

[3] The song that is sung is called *regös ének* (Kel: "Weihnachts-, Zauberlied") and the custom itself *regölés* (Orsz: "minstrelsy, recital of ancient popular lays," (Hung. *regöl*, Kel: "Weihnachtszauberlied singen"). Belonging to the same stem are also: *reg-* in *Regtelek*, '*reg*-field'; *Regvölgy*, '*reg*-valley' (14th C.); *regus* (i.e. *reges, regös*), OklSz: "cantor, Sänger" (13th C.); "possessionis combibatorum Regalium condicionariorum vulgariter *regus* dictorum" (14th C.), Szabó 1881; OklSz; Sebestyén 1902b; *regelő hét* (16th C.), '*regelő*-week', Sebestyén 1902b, pp. 85–88; *regelő hétfő*, '*regelő*-monday', Sebestyén 1902b, p. 89; Dömötör 1959; *regös nagy út* (16th C.), '*regös*-long way (to heaven)', Vikár 1907.

[4] Sebestyén 1902: 52 songs with commentaries and 28 musical supplements. MNT 2, 1955, pp. 807–987: in addition 101 songs with notes (nr. 776–876). See also Kodály 1956, 1960.

wedding-song, ox-rhymes, deer-songs, allusions to gifts, altar-motifs, among others. They are linked by the refrain: "haj, regi (regö) rejtem!"[1] According to Sebestyén (1902b) the Ancient Hungarian elements have been mixed with motifs and customs which are spread over the greater part of Europe.[2] The custom of going round from farm to farm and from village to village is known from north-eurasian shamanism.[3] In this connection religious rites have been carried out in the different families and a collection made for the shaman's upkeep. Presumably the Ancient Nordic 'sejd' was connected with similar practices.[4] Such practices presumably lie as a substratum under the Hungarian 'star-boy' procession, the English carols and the Swedish 'Staffansvisorna' (songs of St Stephen), which were subsequently overlaid by ecclestiastical elements.

According to Sebestyén the word *regös* is of Ugric origin. The meaning 'singer' is supposed to have developed secondarily from the older 'magician', 'shaman', which in their turn go back to the *regi*, *regö* in the refrain in the sense of 'song', 'charm'. According to Sebestyén this *regös* was the shaman in Ancient Hungarian religion. The significance of the refrain should therefore be: "Ho! Charm, I (the shaman) produce it (now) by magic!" Vikár (1907, p. 34) takes as a basis a longer refrain made up of certain variants: "Rejtekem régi törvény / haj regül rejtem!" which is, according to Viski's interpretation (1932, p. 20): "Berg' mich recht nach alten Regeln / Hei, ich sage es in Gesang!" that is to say, "mein Zauber ist das alte Gesetz / Hej, ich zaubere es in Gesang!" The obscure refrain has subsequently been interpreted in different ways, depending on the way in which the word *regi* / *regö* ('song', 'ecstasy') is understood. Thus, Róheim on one occasion explains it (1925, p. 235) as follows: "Ho! I am now in ecstasy!", on another (1926b, p. 364): "Ho, song, I sing!" Pais interpreted the refrain in 1949: "Ho! I now produce magic by ecstasy!" Diószegi (1958, p. 146) takes another reconstructed form as his basis: "révüléssel révülök", which he translates as: "Ho! By ecstatic rapture I lapse into ecstatic rapture!" According to this more

[1] A few variants exist in translation in Róheim 1926b; Viski 1932, pp. 15–27; de Ferdinandy 1963, pp. 241 f.

[2] Cf. Jahn 1884; Sartori 1910–1914; Usener 1911; Nilsson 1916–19; Caraman 1933; Schneeweis 1935, 1953.

[3] Munkácsi 1910; Karjalainen 1927; Nioradze 1925.

[4] Strömbäck 1935, pp. 142–150.

recent interpretation of *regi, regö* as 'ecstasy', *regös* is then an ecstatic and the refrain originally an incantation which the shaman used to call down supernatural powers.[1] Whether the refrain really has this meaning is extremely disputable.[2]

In connection with the treatment of the *regös*-problem there has been produced a rich literature on the musico-historical standing of *regös*-songs. The basic musical form is of the kolomejka-type, with four beats in 2/4 with an ascending final fifth.[3]

The investigation into Hungarian shamanism has therefore resulted in the differentiation of four main figures (*táltos*, *tudós*, *garabonciás*, and *regös*) and a series of so-called half-shamans. These are often reduced to one single Ancient Hungarian shaman figure. This idea of one single shaman in ancient times goes back to the 19th century when the main interest was in clan-shamanism. The religion of both the nomadic horsemen and the hunters, however, gives in general a more highly differentiated picture of society with place for various shaman roles. Agreeing with Hóman one can therefore presume the existence of several shaman types among the Hungarians. Traces of these are extant in the related Vogulic, Ostyakian and Samoyedic material, which therefore strengthens such a thesis.

[1] Diószegi 1953, p. 432.

[2] Corresponding conjurations of gods and spirits, songs, prayers and sacrificial rites of Vogul, Ostyakian, Samoyedic and other tribes show another character (VNGy 2: 1, pp. 311–431; Pápay 1905b, pp. 268–282; Karjalainen 1927, pp. 69–331; Lehtisalo 1947, pp. 469–550). It is true that there is the cry to heaven (Pápay 1905b; Munkácsi 1910, p. 102) in the form of *kaj, kaja-juj*, and others which are comparable with the Hungarian *haj* in the *regös*-refrain, but without any mention of ecstasy. The word *kaj* occurs also in the Vogul *kaj-saw*, 'hymn', 'prayer'; *käjji*, 'sing', i.e. 'loud words', 'cry', the meanings of which, however, point to cultic connections.

[3] On this, see Bartók 1925 (Hungarian ceremonial music of a special character); Kodály 1935, pp. 39 ff., 1952, p. 56, 1956, pp. 75–81, 1960, pp. 34 ff. (a type of hexachoral melody both primitive and European, which displays a similarity to nursery rhymes as well as gregorian music; some of the hexachord motifs derive from the pentatonic scale, and the refrain points to western european models); Kerenyi 1953 (the melody derives from Hungarian nursery rhymes; the refrain and even the whole song-type can be of Western origin, possibly from the Middle Ages); Vargyas 1957 (ancient ritual music of hitherto unknown derivation, that displays Mediterranean features, not however, Finno-Ugrian melody-style). On the *regös*-problem, see in addition Sebestyén 1902a, 1902b; Vikár 1907; Viski 1932, 1937; Pais 1949; Balázs 1954, 1963; Dioszegi 1958; de Ferdinandy 1963, p. 242; Szomjas-Schiffert 1963.

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# A Swedish Female Folk Healer

## FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 18th CENTURY

by CARL-MARTIN EDSMAN

### 1. *The Historical Material*[1]

Catharina Fagerberg was a tailor's daughter from Marbäck in Småland, South-Sweden, where she was born in 1700.[2] As a young girl she had worked in the household of a judge in Jönköping[3] and in the same town later learnt linen weaving, continuing to practise this craft at Norrköping until this town was burnt down by the Russians in 1719. Here a leather-worker unsuccessfully proposed marriage to Catharina. Subsequently she earned her living as a linen weaver in the household of Baron (E. J.) Creutz (1675–1742)[4] who was appointed Governor of Östergötland in 1721. For a period of seven years she was afflicted with severe vexations of spirit, and was visited by blasphemous and murderous thoughts. In January, 1727, physical weakness set in; she had a stitch in her side and other troubles that kept her sleepless for eleven weeks. For a while they stopped, but on Easter Monday while in church Catharina experienced great difficulty in breathing and mental

[1] Published in extenso by the present author with the title "Die weise Jungfer, Texte zur Geschichte schwedischer Volksfrömmigkeit und Heilkunde aus dem 18. Jahrhundert" (*Horae Soederblomianae* VI, Uppsala 1964, pp. 82–104). What follows is a short abstract of the sources which for a considerable part exist in German.

[2] Father was the tailor Peter Persson Fagerberg, possibly related to the Småland clan Fagerberg from the neighbour parish Barkeryd, cf. *Svenska Släktkalendern* 1930, utg. av G. Elgenstierna, 10 årg., Stockholm 1929, p. 245, also 1936, 11 årg., p. 286.

[3] Erland Broman, cf. *Jönköpings historia* III, Jönköping 1919, p. 171, son of the Superintendent of Karlstad, "assessor" in the Göta court of appeal in 1703, "lagman" in the province of Kalmar in 1717, in the province of Jönköping in 1718 and in the provinces of Kalmar and Öland in 1719 (†1744), see *Den introducerade svenska adelns ättartavlor*, utg. av G. Elgenstierna, I, Stockholm 1925, p. 621.

[4] *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* IX, Stockholm 1931, pp. 127 ff.

agony which lasted for nineteen weeks. Despite blood-letting and taking medicines, she grew worse, had to forego all medicine (food?), and on the 14th of June was paralysed in the left hand. During the last nine weeks of this difficult period Catharina was deep in ceaseless prayer. She stated that for three hours an hour-glass had been visible on the right side of her chest, a phenomenon which she interpreted as a sign of death.

On the 5th of August, 1727, as Catharina was sitting at her loom she had an attack of yawning and convulsions (*Strecken*), felt in an unusual state, and then was addressed by a 'good spirit', but from inside her and without her perceiving any voice: "You are puzzled by this yawning. I want now to tell you what is the matter with you, namely, that several unclean spirits dwell in your body and cause your illness and your pains."

On the 12th of the same month at 6 o'clock in the morning Catharina set off on horseback to get advice and help from a woman called Greta at Gullringsstugan, who had lived in a doctor's house, and taught herself a variety of things. When she came to a bridge in the parish of Råby in Södermanland, she was unable to make the horse cross it. At the same time a swarm of insects of all colours except white, with four wings and snake-like tails, were seen flying in the air. When she prayed ardently, the spirit mentioned before again spoke inside her: "Get down from your horse, for otherwise you will not be able to cross this bridge, as these devils flying in the air intend to drown you in the water." On being asked why, the spirit answered that it was because Catharina had been delivered up to them. She examined her conscience but could not remember any great intentional sins, only sins of weakness. When she asked if God had delivered her up to the devils, the answer was no. It was her earlier suitor, Lander, who had done it using a black magician called Måns Jonsson, and whom she had herself once questioned without result about a stolen linen cloth. Catharina descended from her horse, and led it across the bridge and rode on through the wood but was followed all the way to and from the house by the winged insects which also pestered the animal.

Now followed seven additional weeks of sleeplessness, disturbance and steady prayer. Catharina was tormented by noises, dreams and visions in which she could see small boxes and a black book. The good spirit interpreted this as meaning that the evil spirits she had seen were offering their

services to her either through *spiritus familiares* or black magic. She was also acquainted with the reputed advantages of the one or the other, and faced with a choice between them.

Catharina, however, rejected both, and declared that she was going to stand by her baptismal covenant. The spirit then wished her God's blessing in her resolve, and advised her to stand by it. Catharina then asked how in fact she should regard the spirit. It replied that it was from God. When asked why in that case it had appeared as an interpreter for the Evil One, it answered that it did not itself have the power of speaking. At Catherina's renewed accusations the spirit protested that it was good, again asked Catharina to refuse the services of the Evil One and instead trust in God. With its comrades it would then serve her. And after Catharina had rejected black magic, God would reveal a great deal to her which He had concealed from others.

In spite of this decision Catharina's pains lasted for some further time, although she devoted herself to steady prayer and Bible-reading. Her petitions were slow in being answered, because she prayed unconditionally. But finally she altered this, and then the good spirit assured her that just as the evil spirits had for long tormented her, so from now on and in her turn she would have God's permission to pain them and drive them from herself and from her suffering fellow-creatures. Catharina believed herself to be participating in this favour, as it is described in Mark xvi, 17 and other places in the Bible which she pointed out.

Catharina had her own opinion of the spirits. Inside a human being there were several such spirits of various kinds and numbers. The number of 'vital spirits' (*Lebensgeister*, *livsandar*) increased with age. Furthermore there were good and bad, and spirits in-between, which were not damned but hoped for salvation. Thus these last were more good than evil, and were created at the same time as the angels. In another place in the documents Catharina takes account of certain earth-spirits that dwell in the earth. She claimed to be able by divine authority to call forth whatever 'vital spirits' she wished, that is, not only evil ones but of other people present, but also to be able to send one of her own 'vital spirits' to absent people in order to bring another person's 'vital spirit' to herself. This spirit in the presence of several people was thought to be able to answer her clearly out of her own mouth, but without

moving her tongue or lips, when she asked about a person's condition or illness.

Then follows an enumeration of the cures and achievements effected by Catharina in the vicinity of Nyköping, after she had finished working for Baron Creutz on the ground that her capacity for work was diminished by her melancholy and her tribulations. Approximately the same pattern is observed in her dealings with Johan de Boo, the master furnaceman at Näverkvarn foundry, as in all such cures.

When Catharina was summoned to him, she answered that it was neither in her power or in any other human being's, but only in God's to cure illness. But the vicar could be told, and if he approved of it, she would then come. Thus it happened, that a fortnight later Catharina was fetched and on her arrival she found the master furnaceman in great tribulation and despair. She did not want, however, to have anything to do with him except in the presence of the vicar. After conducting the sunday-service, he also appeared along with the foundry owner and the bailiff.

Catharina then sat down by the sick man's bed, put her hand on his chest, and exhorted him to consider the origin of his illness, as it could hardly be regarded as physical. He ought to ask God's forgiveness for his sins. At the same time she also called on God to show mercy and help him, having ardently prayed herself for the past fortnight ever since she had got to know of his illness. Gradually the patient became calm, and on the following morning felt so well that he was able to accompany her at her departure and thank her for his recovery. This she would take no credit for, and told him to thank God only.

Intercession, the laying on of hands and trust alone in God Almighty recur in the healing of a man who had lost the power of speech, and a little girl who had lost her sight. A man suffering from rheumatic joints was also soaked in a steaming 'ant-bath', and advised to rub himself with distilled spirits and camphor, a method which Catharina is said to have successfully used on herself. But it did not seem to help, and half a year later the man was so desperate and despondent that he wanted to kill both himself and others. Catharina told him to fear God and to avoid such madness. But in the middle of the night the man ran into the woods, and only after a long search was he found with two large knives in his hand. On returning

to his house five evil spirits are supposed to have left him and instead harassed and shook Catharina, who became unconscious, but retained her senses and power of speech, so that she was able to continue praying. In court she related that she had not seen the spirits, but that they had spoken out of her mouth, telling how many they were and for how long they had tormented the patient. The sick man's son testified that he heard a voice coming from Catharina's mouth saying: "You who will not let me alone are damned." When Catharina left the following day the man was well.

In the following case, concerning a girl from the parish of Tuna Bergslag, it was again a matter of evil spirits. But in addition, these spirits according to Catharina were sent out by a witch called Karin in Kolmåssen, in order to torment the girl. Catharina demanded that enquiries and an investigation should be instituted against the person causing the evil, and so set in motion the machinery of the law. In the presence of the rector and the curate Catharina drove out 5 (6) evil spirits which, according to her own statement in one version of the event, entered her. When the clergymen appeared suspicious, an answer came out of Catharina's mouth: "Shut up you hypocrite (or fool), you don't know what you're saying!"

The wise maid's reputation had spread widely so that people turned to her from as far as Östergötland, where apparently she had journeyed over the bay Bråviken both in summer and winter. As a result she came into conflict with the ecclestiastical and secular authorities in various dioceses and counties. The matter therefore eventually came up before both the Svea and Göta courts of appeal. Largely as a result of the testimony of the pietistic rector of Skeppsholmen in Stockholm, Eric Tollstadius, and the use of all possible biblical and Christian interpretations of Catharina's doctrines and miracles, the female healer was completely acquitted. The good spirit became an angel for the pious country folk and their fellow-believers in Germany, and the cure of sick people became faith-healing. Now a time other than that of the witch-trials had arrived, so that it was also possible to consider her statement as the manifestations of a sick fantasy. The legal treatment of her case, which in itself is of small interest, can in this context be omitted.

A peasant of Lundby in Östergötland suffering from severe constipation sent his brother-in-law to Catharina to ask for help. She gave herself up to waiting for God's mercy, but asked if the afflicted man had any enemy. She

then learnt that there was discord between him and a neighbour. On another visit made soon after by the brother-in-law, he was told to advise the sick man to reconcile himself with God and his neighbour, abandon all worldly preoccupations, and prepare himself for death. The sick peasant died and the wise maid's power to see into the future evidently caused an understandable sensation. In court she explained this power by saying that one of the spirits assigned to her after intensive prayer goes to God, not leaving Him until its request (for an answer) is fulfilled. This takes up about a day and a half.

On another farm in Östergötland it was a housewife who had suffered from convulsions for the past six years. Her 13-year old sister also had recently been afflicted by the same strange disease. The wise maid blamed this on a boatman who with the aid of a book of black magic he had received 13 years earlier from a German dragoon, was supposed to have bewitched both of the sisters. The accusations were made in the presence of the two clergymen from the parish of Östra Husby and the evil-doer himself, Olof Berggren. Catharina said that the magic shot had been aimed at the father but hit the younger daughter, who had come in its way as she was serving his food. Concerning the origin of this knowledge the wise maid referred even in this case also to the "living, invisible, indwelling spirit" that had been assigned to her after urgent prayer during the eleven years of her affliction when she herself had been bewitched. When at that very moment the elder sister underwent an attack, Catharina said that the arrival of the tormenters had just been announced in the usual way, "through bad and heavy yawning." She had kept them at a distance, however, so that the clergymen might see the dreadful pains. One of them related that everyone had knelt down and during song and prayer had called on the Lord for help against the enemy. At the same time and despite these words he denied a little inconsequently that it was a case of "possession by Satan."

After evening prayers with the farm people that same day, the wise maid said that she had 'received a message' (*fått skickning*) by which it would soon be disclosed whether it was evil or good. The detailed account which now follows is of such great interest that it deserves to be quoted in full: "Thereupon she began to yawn and her chest heaved greatly. At that moment she got up out of her chair, asking: 'Who sent you here?' Out of her throat, with-

out mouth, lips or tongue moving, came the answer: 'Olof Berggren'. 'How many are you in number?' The answer came likewise out of her throat: '53'. 'What do you want to do with me?' Responsio, likewise from the throat: 'To make you furious.' Questio: 'Why so?' Responsio as before: 'You are disclosing us.' Thereupon she answered: 'You know, Satan, that at great cost I have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, mine and the whole world's Saviour, and you that before could not hurt my soul and mind, shall not now injure me in the slightest, so be off!' She then lamented her ignorance of the district, or otherwise she could have kept Satan under arrest: 'Instead I will now direct him back to Berggren who sent him out.' All this was heard by myself, my wife, children, servants, together with the mother and her sick daughters.

They said aloud when this occurred: 'God does not allow himself to be mocked. It is the Maid herself who is talking, and who answers herself.' 'That is true,' she said, 'God does not allow himself to be mocked,' and thereupon began to call on Him in the name of Jesus, praying ardently that a sign be granted her that it had been another that had answered. She then made a long and memorable prayer, praying in the name of Jesus that the truth would be revealed. 'Then it will be clear that Olof Berggren has bewitched these people.' She was prepared to testify to this in the highest court, even if it meant that she would undergo fire and hell."

Two days after this the boatman was reminded at Catharina's request of the temporal and eternal punishment for witchcraft. This was effected by quoting from the Holy Scriptures in the presence of witnesses. Berggren said he was aware of this, and added sarcastically that the maid should be asked to take away the black magic book from him, since she knew that he was the owner of it. Moreover the clergymen exhorted the people to remember the awful sin and gross idolatry of which they made themselves guilty by using unlawful means against their childrens' illness.

The district court of Östkind as well as the Svea court of appeal demanded visual proof of Catharina's alleged ability to consult spirits. Before the first-mentioned court these again talked out of her throat. They were herewith conjured to confirm the truth of her statements with signs on the maid herself or on the boatman. At the same time convulsions were noticed in Catharina. The court, however, regarded these as well as the talking of spirits as

assumed and invented, and in addition the speech of the spirits was quite well imitated, although without the wise maid herself being able to detect any resemblance.

## 2. *Contemporary and Later Supernatural Interpretations of Illness*

It occurs naturally to an historian of religion, an ethnologist or a folklorist to relate Catharina Fagerberg's experiences with the phenomena of shamanism,[1] especially the role of the helping spirits. Similarly one thinks of the Ancient Scandinavian concept of 'sendings' (*sendingar*), which can also be included in shamanism in its widest sense. But before such comparisons can be made, the material must be set in its Swedish and historical context.

It can best be classified among the type of descriptions that in large measure form the basis of B. Gadelius' famous book on belief and superstition in ancient times (*Tro och öfvertro i gångna tider* I–II, Stockholm 1912–13), partly reprinted. Since the critical treatment of sources in this book is secondary to the psychological or rather psychiatric analysis, it is not always clear whether it is based on manuscripts or printed books.

The material he uses can, however, to a great extent be found in the biographical file in the Westin-collection of the University Library of Uppsala, entitled *Berättelser om underliga pigor* etc. (Tales about Strange Maids etc.). Among the ten or so documents to be found there, one may note in particular the detailed account concerning a shoemaker's daughter, Sara Stina Schultz from Fogdö in Södermanland, who in 1782 caused a sensation and who was the object of a series of investigations involving the religious, medical and legal authorities. Clearly not all of them were noticed by Gadelius. The title of one of the printed works from 1818 is characteristic: "A Truthful Story, that the great Dragon, the old Snake, that is the Devil, and Satan have bodily ruled over people, even in our days" (in Swedish). An expert in this field and a collector of broadsheets dealing with remarkable events (which partly resemble the experiences of Catharina Fagerberg), is the deceased lawyer J. Pape. In a posthumous work on a wise girl (*Kloka*

[1] For a similar approach, see M. Bouteiller, *Chamanisme et Guérison Magique*, Paris 1950, containing material from North American Indians who are compared to the French "panseurs de secret" and "jeteurs de sort."

*flickan från Vallåkra*, Lund 1949) he has himself described a case from the 19th century, which offers several analogies with the story of Catharina Fagerberg. His work is, however, incomplete, for when it comes to interpretation it suffers, like that of Gadelius, from the limitations of rationalism or from outmoded judgements confined within psychiatric theories fashionable at that time. As collections of material, however, these monographs are of great value.

It was not only ordinary people or country-people who in the 1720's and 1730's shared Catharina Fagerberg's belief that illness could be caused by witchcraft and evil spirits. As an example of the views held by educated people of that time we shall cite the celebrated rural dean from Hälsingland, O. Broman. In his great work, *Glysisvallur*, that incomparable goldmine of historic-cultural material, he has devoted just over 50 pages to a "Disqvisitio de MORBIS ACCIDENTALIBUS MALIGNIS" concerning illnesses and indispositions that are called 'caught by evil' (*råka i ondt*)[1]. It is partly a learned inquiry, partly a reflexion of the ideas of Broman and his time, which shows that we are at the commencement of the Age of Reason. Accordingly Broman refers a great deal back to natural causes, but at the same time is of the opinion that the activity of evil spirits is a truth to which the Bible testifies. A short account of some points in Broman's work that throw light on Catharina Fagerberg's case will therefore be given.

To 'be caught by evil' means to be attacked by any illness whatever, but especially when it is sudden and is believed to be caused by the devil, evil spirits, trolls, ghosts and the instrument of Beelzebub. This is also called 'to be bewitched' (*at warda fäjad*) (p. 785).

There is a good deal of writing, with varying import, on the created spirits or angels. According to Broman, however, it is sufficient to establish from the clear words of the Bible that the fallen angels or evil spirits really do exist in incalculable numbers (Mark v, Luke viii). They are "strong, agile, subtle, cunning by nature," and, in a word, "masters of thousands of arts." They are forever intent on evil, even if the Evil One can transform himself into an angel of light and the Devil is, according to Luther, aping God. He

[1] O. Broman, *Glysisvallur* I–III, Uppsala 1911–54, I, pp. 785–835.

and his crew, however, cannot without God's consent perform anything extraordinary as, for example, appearing in the shape of a revenant or an animal (pp. 785–89).

In spite of the fact that the Devil is harsh in his treatment of human beings, Broman had himself only seen two or three people possessed by the Devil. Although quite a few imagine themselves, or are imagined by others, to be possessed, the fact of the matter is that they have suffered from severe diseases. Among the ghosts, considered by some to be unclean spirits and whose existence Broman does not completely deny, he includes local spirits, bugbears, changelings, ghosts of the murdered, hill-side spirits, trolls, the green-haired wood-nymphs, lake-sprites, underground spirits, the water-spirit Neck, mermaids, and others (p. 791).

The vassals of the Evil One include sorcerers, sorceresses, witches of different kinds 'dragon-flies', rune-sayers, sibyls, sooth-sayers, wise folk, wise Finns, Lapp fortune-tellers, and others. These have existed in great numbers throughout the world, especially among the heathens, and therefore formerly also in Scandinavia where they still exist in secret. Some people know that the Evil One is acting through them, others do not understand this but believe that they practise a lawful and beneficent function especially as they use the prayer Our Father and the name of Jesus in their charms. Broman has a collection of such recitations, not, of course, for use but "for ridicule's sake". The question as to whether magicians should be consulted in cases of illness is answered with a curt No, by referring to God's word and to teachers of Christianity. The punishment that ought to be imposed on those using spells (*gan* or *galdur*) or witchcraft is set down in the royal edicts against such devilry (pp. 792–99).

In general it is held that one is afflicted with evil at certain times and on certain days, and at special places. Examples of this are given, and Ps. xci, 5 cited. The old Swedish Bible translation speaks here of "the evil of the night and the shots that fly by day." Such things usually happen when one is alone, but several people at a time have been known to see the same "ghostly disturbances" (p. 800).

The examples of magic shots and related phenomena which Broman describes recall sometimes almost word for word corresponding phenomena and episodes in the life of Catharina Fagerberg. Thus the rural dean from

Hälsingland tells us about a maid from Österbotten that she "came here to me in the year 1726 to be cured of bad eyesight, saying that it was caused by 'Finnish darts' (*finntyre*) or Finnish shot which another maid had threatened her with because they both loved the same young man. The shot came in this manner: just as she was going through the door a crack was heard, and at that moment a thick fog came before her eyes so that she could hardly see with both eyes" ... (p. 808).

Broman describes also how such a magic shot is made: "For it is a small ring made of an entwined soft twig taken from a certain kind of tree. This ring is placed on a stone which is stuck in the ground, and inside this ring one spits three times. Then a glowing coal is placed on it, and some charms are recited. Then another stone or axehead is taken, and with one powerful blow the ring is smashed asunder, and a crack is heard. This shot can be aimed at both man and beast, and often hits its mark. *But others can also be caught by the same shot, even although the employed marksman was not aiming at them*" (the italics are ours).

Broman adds "that in summer Lapps and Finns collect flies of the largest sort, bluish in colour, blowflies here mentioned ... These flies are kept in a box, and taken out one by one with special charms when the shot is going to take place, and sent out when a strong wind is blowing in the direction of the place where the harm is to be effected; far or near, the person or beast must then be mentioned to whom the shot or fly is going to be sent."

Instead of flies a small hollow ball made of reindeer lichen can be used (cf. p. 774). The person who sees such a shot come flying through the air and can move out of its way can consider himself fortunate. It is also possible to find the shot after it has completed its journey in the shape of a spent musket- or rifle-bullet, and so direct it back to the person who sent it. That person is then injured. What it is like to be the target of a Finnish shot is described by Broman out of his own experience.

In the year, 1704, he accompanied the district judge, Gyllenschöld, and his father, who was a Crown public prosecutor, on a visit to inspect a Finnish cottage in the parish of Hassela. Because the boundary was not marked as the owner wished, he said at their departure: "Ha! ha! We'll now see how your journey goes!" They laughed at him. But when in the calm of the evening they were sitting in a small boat, the flies came as thick as midges,

the water began to rise and the waves enter the boat, so that the travellers thought they were going to sink. They had a narrow escape from drowning, arriving at the shore before the boat had time to sink (pp. 814 ff., 819).

We shall now take two cases from the same year in which Catharina Fagerberg was tried in court, that is, in 1732. It is true that psychologically they are of another type, since in one case the afflicted person was surrounded by the spirits and they did not dwell inside him, while in the other case it is rather a question of a person's experiences at the hands of supposedly evil-minded enemies. These documents, nevertheless, provide a vivid insight into the beliefs concerning the Devil's pact and into witchcraft, beliefs that also occurred in Catharina's case. But it will be evident from the much-abridged stories related below that these beliefs were found not only among country women, but even among highly educated people in the capital, irrespective of whether in our opinion they should be regarded as mentally ill or not. Thus, the pietistic major, Count Nils Gyllenstierna, (b. 1710) tells about the scourges he underwent which might well also throw light on the agonies suffered by Catharina, as well as reveal a world of spirits equally as rich.

Despite a consuming hunger for God, Gyllenstierna was unable to find Him, discovering inside him only the darkness and wickedness of hell. In his own words, his experience was as follows: "One day I felt a strong magical power attracting me, like a mighty tempestuous thunderclap, which in a second rapt me into an ecstasy, and hurled me into a dark eternity. This ecstasy which was a terrible vision completely opened my spiritual eyes and mind ... Before my deliverance was granted, I spent more than one and a half years in that state."

On occasions the sorely tried man saw the evil spirits, usually invisible, that aroused sinful thoughts in the human heart. He "felt with horror their magic arrows in him." Now and then he glimpsed the spirits of the departed in the shape of black and dejected human beings. They sighed so piteously that even Gyllenstierna's host and hostess heard them. He also saw another variety, especially at night. They were bodiless, and had only a winged human head.

In addition Gyllenstierna beheld a kind of whitish-grey spirits, five

quarters long, resembling small naked children. These spirits were as quick as lightning, wicked, and came in heaps floating over the floor of the room, striking the poor man's legs, and setting up a high-pitched thin cry. "If I had wished to practise black magic, these spirits would have given me enough service, for although they did not speak ... they had, as it were, written on their foreheads all that happened in other places."

Gyllenstierna also saw others who were haunted by the same evil creatures, as, for example, "a woman who just got an epileptic fit ... At that very moment ten or twelve of those whitish-grey spirits came and caused the woman grievous pain." He is aware that this explanation of the illness cannot be accepted just as it stands: "I leave it to the respected doctors whether such convulsive paroxysms were caused by a mere deficiency of the physical organism."

One day the Tempter came in the horrible shape of one of the fallen angels or devils. He spoke a magical roaring language which the afflicted man understood in his soul: "You know", he said, "that you have sought God with all your heart. But now you see that he is not a person you can trust, for he has surrendered you into our power, and is not able to recover you from our realm. Therefore, now give him up completely!"

Gyllenstierna refused to surrender himself to the devil, and did not hesitate to use natural means to aid him. He opened a vein in his arm and found that the blood was thick and black. At the same time he derived consolation from a remarkable vision in which he was lifted high above the earth. With spiritual eyes he saw the great red dragon described in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse. There it is told that with its tail the dragon pulls down a third of all the stars in heaven, and casts them down to earth. But in Gyllenstierna's vision (which, if one disregards the Christian background could belong to a description of a shaman's call; cf. also the mythical explanation of the eclipse of the sun in Hinduism), this part has undergone a strange reshaping. The dragon swallows a multitude of stars to satisfy his hunger, but he is unable to hold them, and they emerge from his tail in heaps. "Yes, he swallowed me too, several times, but I escaped him likewise. In this great anxiety when the dragon was pursuing me in the strangest fashion I cried out in a loud voice: Michael, Michael, come and help me!" At last and to the delight of the visionary there came a beautiful angel.

Gyllenstierna was not able to resist investigating the state of spirits after death, and this made his illness worse. But he obtained some refreshment from a light shower of rain which reminded him of Is. xxvi, 19. A few days later he had another marvellous vision in which he was lifted up to the heights of heaven so that he was able to see clearly the earth's globe and the seas. Amidst great thunder beheld from heaven and earth, he saw a white cloud in which the throne of the almighty judge was hidden.

His hardships, however, were not yet finished, and completely unable to sleep, he grew physically weaker. "The first death-dealing wounds of the Enemy's glowing shot could not be healed. A disturbed conscience and fresh arrows shot by sneering spirits, horrible thoughts, the sighing of the dead, the lowering of my strength and my anguish had all for one whole month so grieved my heart that I believed death to be at hand".[1]

Gadelius characterizes Gyllenstierna as "a visionary hysteric of the type in folk psychology so common in the history of religion." He also stresses the psycho-biological significance of the hallucinations to be found at a lower cultural level, such as those of the Siberian shamans and Indian medicine men. Similarly Gadelius notes the existence of clairvoyants in connection with visionary ecstasy and possession.

A case of a completely different nature is as follows. A judge-advocate, J. Bjugg, in a writ sent to Stockholm's city-court on 12 June, 1732, accused his landlord and many other people living in the house of having bewitched him with devilish arts and caused him all sorts of suffering. They are said to have conspired together to accuse him of a variety of treasonable crimes, and at the same time by means of black magic—having introduced magic powder into drinks—they had learnt at a distance of all that Bjugg said or thought. They also constantly disturbed him at his prayers and devotions, blasphemed against God, mocked the Sacrament, denied Christ's divine nature, and repeated Bjugg's hymns and prayers backwards. They also pretended to be His Royal Majesty and other dignitaries, and read out false judgements.

[1] Gadelius, op. cit. I, pp. 85–92 (after a manuscript in the possession of Miss Sigrid Gyllenstierna, Elfdalen). See also *Anteckningar af Nils Axelsson Gyllenstierna*, utg. af M. Weibull ( = *Skånska Samlingar* 1891, I: 2), pp. 6 f., 76 f., and *Förr och Nu* 5, 1890, pp. 38, 78 f., 110 f., 119 ff. (with some variants but without indication of source).

Bjugg, too, had the Rev. E. Tollstadius as his spiritual adviser, and before him declared his innocence. But he was obliged to undergo an official mental examination. Apparently no judgement was ever given in this case, and the unfortunate man ended his days at the Danviken asylum.

B. Gadelius, who brought these documents to light,[1] points to the difference between the enlightened spirit with which this case was treated and the superstitions existing fifty years earlier at the time of the witch-trials. The trial-account of Bjugg adduced by Gadelius is also one of our oldest psychiatric-medical documents. In addition the case is of clinical interest; "It is no longer a state of hysteria induced by the spirit of the times with demoniacal ideas and symptoms of possession of the kind we constantly meet with in the previous centuries. It is a case of *paranoia* with certain catatonic features ... In its entirety the picture recalls nothing so much as alcoholic delirium." Gadelius finally emphasizes the importance of differentiating between hysteria and catatonia, which superficially are so similar. The modern forms of possession belong to the latter group, caused by a process of organic degeneration and which might not be within the power of a faith-healer to cure.

Similar in many respects to Catharina's case are the experiences of 'Wise Anna' of Vallåkra, just over one hundred years later. These include, among other things, what is called "hysterical stigmata", the apparition of an angel, and after the recovery from illness the healing of other ill people. Pape summarizes the story of 'Wise Anna' as follows:

"Ever since the upsetting experience during the rye-harvest in the month of August, Anna had felt sickly and uncomfortable, and at Michaelmas, at the end of September or beginning of October, she was afflicted with headaches and sickness, and from then on stayed in bed.

At about seven o'clock on the same evening that she had gone to bed, she fell into a doze which lasted for about an hour. When she woke up, she saw a 'glorified being', or a 'heavenly angel', standing by her bed for a short while, who during that time merely asked her to reveal what she had seen.

The second vision.

[1] "Psykiatriska sjukdomsformer i historisk belysning (jämte en sjukhistoria från år 1732)" (*Hygiea* 70, 1908: 1, pp. 97–118), pp. 108 ff.

Later in the night she fell into an 'unconscious state or doze', which probably lasted about two hours. Her breathing and blood-circulation had stopped, and her body became completely cold, but the red of her cheeks remained. She was believed to have died.

On awakening she suddenly sat up in bed and in a loud voice, running with perspiration, she read out some verses of a 'pious nature'. She repeated the reading over and over again.

Subsequently she told relatives and other people present who had been called in that during her 'death-sleep' she had been in heaven, hell and the 'world of the spirits'. — In the 'gloriously illumined heaven' she had caught sight of God and his attendants, among whom she recognized the angel she had seen before with 'natural eyes'. This angel (or Christ) had taught her the verses she had read out, and Christ had given her Communion. In the 'world of spirits' she had seen and talked to spirits of dead persons, who, according to a dead tailor's wife she had recognized, were condemned to hover between heaven and earth for a while as a punishment for sins committed during their life on earth. In hell she had seen both the devil and his evil angels. The devil appeared in the shape of a human being and was bound.

Even after waking up she saw the same angel by her bed, and continuously till five in the morning she was able to witness 'the heavenly glory' she had described to the people standing round her.

The third vision.

Immediately after waking she felt completely well, but thereafter she 'fell ill', having headaches and feebleness. For nine days and nights she stayed in bed but after that was able to resume her duties.

One night shortly before Christmas—in the middle of December—after having gone to bed, she fell once more into a 'death-sleep', which on this occasion lasted only a quarter of an hour. Anna's sister, who was lying in the same bed, heard her talking to someone that Anna later maintained was the angel. This angel had announced to Anna that she had been selected to heal ill people. Apart from her sister, no one else knew of this episode.

This last vision made Anna worried and anxious, and caused 'loss of appetite'. Three weeks later—at the beginning of January, 1838—she revealed the angel's message to her parents, and thereupon began healing

the sick. It was not until then that her health returned, and with it her characteristic good humour."[1]

As in the apocalypses of the Early Church and in medieval literature on visions, we find here visions of hell and heaven, as well as communication with spirits and angels. But the point of contact between popular Christian visionaries and their counterparts among the non-Christian shamans is that the gift of faith healing comes after a victorious struggle with both physical and psychological tribulations.

## 3. *The Biblical and Christian Background*

It is not difficult to find historical or phenomonological analogies to the experiences of the wise maid. But what are the facts about the direct origin of Catharina's own, far from simple spirit doctrine, which has been described above from the German manuscript? If a comparison is made between the account there given and corresponding parts in other documents, certain variations are to be found. Since the German Summary refers to different documents, its own description also varies. On the one hand the clairvoyance of the wise maid is explained by saying that she compels one of the evil (or good) 'vital spirits' dwelling in someone present, to speak out of her own throat. On the other hand she can despatch one of her own 'vital spirits' in order to bring her someone else's 'vital spirit'.

But before the district court of Östkind Catharina stated that one of the spirits which had been given to her departed to God when she earnestly prayed for it. Arrived there it persists until it has had its request granted, which takes about one and a half days. This variant is more consonant with the concept of the 'vital spirits' as guardian angels. With his positive approach, the pietistic clergyman, Tollstadius, is unable to reject Catharina's spirit-belief when presented in this shape. He says, however, that he cannot understand how she is able to summon other spirits and obtain an answer from them through her own throat, even although much that is incomprehensible to us is possible to the Almighty God. Even before the district court of Östkind, Catharina had given evidence of her abilities, but had apparently

[1] Pape, op. cit., pp. 66 f.

refused to repeat this before the Svea Court of Appeal because she had promised the clergymen never to do it again. According to the same source, Tessin, Catharina sends "her 'vital spirit' to experience what happens in other places." If the wording of this is not to be regarded as a shortened account of one of the above-mentioned methods, he thinks that the wise maid obtained the information herself without using the roundabout way of using other spirits or the Throne of God.

One asks oneself where a simple country girl could have obtained her spirit-beliefs. It is true that it was the century of Swedenborg, but Catharina has chronological priority. It is possible that she came under the influence of radical pietism, mediated through the upper-class families with whom she was in service. But in these circles, as far as I have been able to discover, no corresponding spirit doctrine is to be found, even if different kinds of apparitions of spiritual beings are common. We could also follow Tollstadius' line of thought and ask: what were the demonology and the belief in angels of contemporary Protestantism, and what possibilities were there of their becoming linked with a pre-Christian folk belief?

The preceding patristic and even the medieval tradition are indeed not without significance since even Lutheran theologians of the 17th century were well-versed in it. Their learned works did not, of course, have any direct influence on the people, but the knowledge contained in them reached the general public through catechisms, homilies and sermons. The Fathers of the Old Church have in their turn handed down much from late classical non-Christian philosophy, even if this was done by way of polemics. Thus, for example, Augustine in his *De Civitate Dei* (X: 9) describes in detail the spirit belief of the neo-Platonist Porphyrios, in which the Church Father himself interprets the pagan angels as demons.

According to Porphyrios the spiritual as opposed to the intellectual part of the soul obtains the ability to entertain spirits and angels and see gods by means of consecrations. Both late-Jewish rabbinical and patristic teaching, already put forward in the Old Testament Apocrypha (Tob. xii, 12 ff.), said that it was the angels who brought the people's prayers before God. According to the men of the Early Church both angels and human souls are entities created by God, and are therefore related to each other. Origen even states that angels can also be called souls. Further, angels are considered to be

able to bring about thoughts and visions in the human soul, as well as foretell coming events and reveal secret things.[1]

Luther in fact opposed both saint- and angel-worship. The Schmalkaldic articles of 1537 bear traces of this polemic (II: 2 § 26). But the Reformer did not therefore deny the existence of angels; on the contrary, in a series of sermons delivered in connection with St Michael's Day[2] he strongly stressed their many-sided tasks, necessary for human beings, which had been set them by their Creator. It is, however, characteristic that their activity is constantly contrasted with that of the devil and demonic spirits. For these also are angels, created by God, who have, however, fallen away and entered the service of the Evil One. A limit is set to their power, and the good angels as spirit guardians are both greater in number and stronger.

This Lutheran angel-belief, which throughout is biblically sanctioned, underwent further development during the 17th century. Such an influential churchman as Johann Gerhard wrote a whole monograph with the title *Angelologia sacra* (Jena 1637). A work of his youth, influenced by J. Arnd, *Meditationes Sacrae* (1606) was, however, of greater significance as to the people's piety. A Swedish translation was produced with the subtitle "*LI* Gudelige Helige Betrachtelser fordom på Latin skrefne" ("51 Godly Holy Meditations, formerly written in Latin"; 2 uppl. Stockholm 1696). The 26th meditation deals with the protection of the holy angels: "... They do not spare themselves in serving a human being, as they shall become brothers to him in eternal bliss. When Jacob was returning to his homeland, he saw on the way a great flock of angels ... Be certain that these watchmen are at hand and with you everywhere, because they are subtle and penetrating Spirits, that neither wood, iron or walls could shut out or resist ... that these heavenly spirits know and see your straits and perils, for they always see our heavenly Father's face ... We should regard the angels as if they were God's holy hands." "The evil spirit, the Devil" is contrasted with "the heavenly, pure and powerful Spirit."[3]

[1] See the article "Engel" in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* V, 1960/62, cols. 59, 72, 88, 163, 150.

[2] WA 32 (1906), pp. 111 f., 552 ff., 34/II (1908), pp. 222 ff.; 49 (1913), pp. 570 ff.

[3] Gustav II Adolf brought with him this tract during his campaigns together with J. Arnd, *Wahres Christentum*. In the Swedish newprints of 1858 and 1896, in spite of the preface of Thomander, the wording is considerably enfeebled.

A few samples from original Swedish catechisms will show that for Paulinus Gothus (1648) the angels play a less important part. In Swebilius' catechism they are mentioned in the explanation of the Second Main Section under the First Article of Faith no 21 ff. There the angels are said to be spirits, both good and evil (1714 edition).[1] The subject is explored more thoroughly in German sources, as for example in D. Martin Luther's *Kleiner Catechismus* of 1737 (Stockholm 1737). J. Swedberg's personal familiarity with the world of angels is well-known and much discussed. It is reflected both in his hymns, and in a several other works by him.[2] Belonging here is the *Catechismi Gudliga Öfning* (Skara 1709). Under the First Article of Faith, no 19, in connection with Psalm xxxiv, 8, Swedberg, the father of Swedenborg, talks of the angelic guard (*vagnborg* = chariot wall) that God uses to protect the faithful even in the thick of battle.

The world of demons also appears frequently in the hymns, and in the devotional manuals issued during Sweden's Era of Power; the piety of the people is completely interpenetrated by the belief in the activity of the evil powers. This activity is particularly marked at night-time, but even during the hours of daytime and during all the vicissitudes of life thousands of evil dangers crowd ready to spring upon the Christian. According to one of the most wide-spread prayer books, the evil spirits wish to cause damage by means of "magic, shots and other evil actions." At the same time warning is given elsewhere against blaming "the hour of birth, the stars, the Devil, people or some ill-fortune" for sickness or mishaps. Help should not be sought from magicians or devilish practicioners.[3] Here the insidious artifices of Satan are accepted as a firm reality. Swebelius also stresses this in his commentary to Luther's Small Catechism: "What is it to practise witchcraft? It is not only to hurt your brother with the aid of the Devil, but to

[1] For the different editions, see E. Lilja, *Den svenska katekestraditionen mellan Svebilius och Lindblom. En bibliografisk och kyrkohistorisk studie* (= *Samlingar och studier till Svenska Kyrkans historia* 16), Diss. Lund, Stockholm 1947.

[2] See B. Wahlström, *Änglar och andar*, Stockholm 1957, pp. 30 ff. (popular); idem., "Swedberg och änglarna" (*Psalm och sång*. Studier tillägnade Emil Liedgren, Lund 1959, pp. 104–116; idem, "Karl XII:s änglar" (*Karolinska förbundets årsbok*, 1960, pp. 105–118).

[3] D. Lindquist, *Studier i den svenska andaktslitteraturen under stormaktstidevarvet med särskild hänsyn till bön-, tröste- och nattvardsböcker*, Diss. Lund, Uppsala 1939, pp. 361 ff.

misuse through superstition God's word and name in order to drive away sickness, from people and cattle, to make oneself invulnerable, to fathom secret things, and such-like."[1]

In Avianus' *Samvetsplåster* ("Plaster for a bad Conscience"), translated into Swedish in 1638 there occurs among other things the following sentence: "Does it seem to you that you see perpetual devils when you see butterflies, or that the Devil has taken possession of you when you step over a hole in the ground, do you then cross yourself and meditate on what is said in Is. xliii, 1." It is to be borne in mind, however, that the Devil is above all portrayed as the enemy of the soul, casting seeds of doubt concerning salvation.[2]

In a book of consolation dating from 1623, also a translation, there appears another frequently occurring "consolation for those that are temporarily possessed by the Devil." That is to say, the Evil One has with God's consent "the power to enter a person, to possess him, torment and afflict him." There is then described "the appalling spectacle of the Devil jerking a poor person hither and thither, making his face awful, treating his limbs terribly, lifting him up in the air and throwing him down again, tearing the clothes off his body" ... This God can allow partly in order to prove that the stories in the Bible about the evil spirits are no fables. In Avianus' *Samvetsplåster* there is a quotation out of Luther's Table Talks to the effect that the Devil and witches receive power over people either to punish the ungodly or test the pious.[3]

This latter explanation agrees with the current theology of the 17th century. C. E. Brochmand, professor of theology at Copenhagen, thus expresses it in his *Religionis Christianae Articulus qui est de Angelis bonis et malis, de Spectris, de Obsessis*, of 1629: *Diabolum ob peccata admissa aliquando ingredi in homines.*[4] ... *Pios nonnunquam a Diabolo vexari et obsideri* ...

[1] In the explanation of the First Main Section, no. 24.

[2] Lindquist, op. cit., pp. 364 ff.

[3] Ibid., pp. 368 ff.

[4] Cf. W. von Siebenthal, *Krankheit als Folge der Sünde. Eine medizinhistorische Untersuchung* (=Heilkunde und Geisteswelt 2), Hannover 1950, pp. 48 ff. For the Christian demonology applied to cases which are similar to that of Catharina Fagerberg, and where she, too, is mentioned, see the contemporary E. D. Hauber *Bibliotheca, acta et scripta magica: Gründliche Nachrichten und Urtheide von solchen Büchern und Handlungen, welche die Macht des Teufels in leiblichen Dingen betreffen* I–III, Hafniae 1738–1745 (I, pp. 443 ff.), and H. C. Lea, *Materials Toward a History*

(Quaestio 22). The signs of bodily possession are, according to the same author, the ability to reveal things of a kind that are not accessible to natural knowledge (*occultorum revelatio*), further an insight into languages which the person in question has never been taught, and finally a cry, completely unprecedented and worse than an animal cry, an awful and wild look, tormented limbs, and astonishing, supernatural bodily power (Quaestio 21). These signs of possession accord quite well with the criteria given in the *Rituale Romanum* (see below!).

From this short survey it is evident that the main features of Catharina Fagerberg's supernatural conception of reality can be traced in current Evangelical Lutheran beliefs about angels and demons. But there is also a contribution from old Nordic folk beliefs, which seem to be pre-Christian.

## 4. *Magic Shots, Spiritus and Yawning*

In the evil dreams which harassed Catharina there were also included visions of some small boxes and a black book. The interpreting spirit construed this to mean that the maid had received an offer from the evil spirits or the Evil One to enter her service, and to leave her a free choice. However, she rejected this temptation to abandon her baptismal covenant, and instead by divine grace received power to fight the evil spirits. The yawning which is mentioned in several places is a sign that these spirits are present or are approaching. The vexation from evil spirits, that Catharina and her patients suffer, are ascribed to the black magic of wicked persons. In one passage, however, there is a statement that the 'shot' was meant for the father, but had hit his daughter, who accidently stepped in its way (cf. above with *Glysisvallur!*). At first sight this method of bewitching people, well-known in folklore, may seem to contradict the idea that a disease was caused by evil spirits. An examination of the material shows, however, that this is not so.

The terms for this kind of bewitchment,[1] of which there are many parallels

*of Witchcraft* I–III, published posthumously at the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1939 (reprint 1957), p. 1285. Hauber's great collection of literature on magic matters is registered in the catalogue of his rich library, printed in Copenhagen in 1766–1767 (II, pp. 179–199).

[1] See N. Lid, *Trolldom*, Oslo 1950, pp. 1 ff.; L. Honko, *Krankheitsprojektile. Untersuchung iiber eine urtiimliche Krankheitserklärung* (=*Folklore Fellows Communications* 178), Helsingfors 1959, pp. 41 ff., 65 ff., 97 ff.

to be found among primitive peoples, are, for example, 'magic shot', 'Lapp shot', 'weather shot',[1] and 'elf-shot'. Sympathetic magic consisting in bewitchment through an image is often an integral part of the method. The visible shapes in which the magic shots appear are, for example, magic flies and birds (*gandfluga* and *gandfugl*, to use Norwegian terminology also).[2] In Österbotten, Finland, the Lapp-shot is an insect that flies through the air, such as a wasp, a bee or a butterfly. In New Icelandic tradition there is mention of *galdrafluga*. This is probably connected with the Icelandic spirit belief and ideas on 'sendings' (*sendingar*) and 'awakenings' (*uppvakningar*), ghosts, that wizards were said to be able to call up out of the grave and send out to kill. These 'sendings' have also travelled in the shape of flies. In Norwegian or Swedish regions, the Lapp-, Finn-, or magic shot has also been called 'sending', like all evil things coming from the north.[3]

Parallel with this, there is now the idea that the Devil and the evil spirits appear in the shape of a bird or fly, or that the magician himself travels in these shapes. In the conjurations the shot is conceived of as a person, an evil spirit, that can be spoken to.[4] The Norwegian scholar who has investigated the Scandinavian material, Lid, would have been able to link this series of conceptions together, if he had borne in mind that the master of the evil spirits, Beelzebul (Mark iii, 22), resp. Beelzebub (cf. II Kings i, 2) had been conceived as a fly-god. This was a flourishing idea during the 18th century, as is clear from the case of Hyphauff (see below).

It has been a general folk belief right up to our own century that prosperity, happiness, power and wisdom can be gained through a spirit which is in the service of the Devil. After death the employer of the spirit then belongs to the Devil. It is possible, however, to sell the spirit, which lives in a bottle or box, and in this way escape this fate. The name given it is *spiritus familiaris*

[1] Cf. the Swedish saying "to be out in bad (*ogjort*) weather", which has been completely misunderstood in current dictionaries. It does not mean that one has failed to insure one's journey by not arranging convenient weather by magic, but that someone is out in evil-intended (*ill-gjort*) weather, i.e. on evil business.

[2] Lid, op. cit., p. 38: Germanic **ganda-*, Greek κοντός ('pole', 'stake'), κεντέω ('stick'), hence the word *gand* means 'stick', 'twig', e.g. the arrow in the magic shot; cf. a series of Scandinavian dialect words.

[3] Ibid., p. 12.

[4] Ibid., p. 13.

(popularly, imp or familiar), the designation which is used also in the account of Catharina Fagerberg's temptation.

Samuel Columbus (1642–79) relates that the belief held in Livonia was that Stiernhielm (1598–1672) owned a *spiritus familiaris*, because he had such great knowledge. Professor Virginius could not rest until he had seen this *spiritus*. Stiernhielm therefore showed him a louse under a magnifying-glass! In 1695 a Småland farmer wished to buy himself a *spiritus* at a fair at Eksjö. In 1706 at Karlshamn two soldiers were gaoled for 8 days because, at the instigation of Satan, they had tried to obtain a *spiritus* for the purpose of getting themselves money. There was a similar case in Karlskrona in 1708. The belief in the *spiritus* was still alive a hundred years ago. At a fair at Hånga Hed in Västergötland about 1850 a bottle with a *spiritus* inside was on view. The man who broke the bottle was whipped. Eva Wigström tells about a farmer in Göinge who also wished to buy a *spiritus*, and was given a spider in a casket. He was very pleased with his purchase because his *spiritus* brought him 75 crowns every night.

The owner of a *spiritus* can talk to it, and receive answers from it. It can perform practically anything, and for this reason sorcerers are almost always provided with a *spiritus*. Other draught creatures with different names and functions also belong here (cf. *bara*, *bära*). Apart from Sweden the name is found only in Siebenbürgen. But it probably has a literary origin, as can be seen from the *Höllen-Zwänge* which are connected with the name of Faust.[1] *Spiritus*, was, according to Norlind, originally an ancestral soul in the form of a snake which was first a guardian spirit, then a servant spirit, and finally got demonized. This short survey of the belief in the *spiritus*[2] shows abundantly that Catharina Fagerberg also shared to the full contemporary ideas concerning such a belief.

Regarding Catharina's yawning when evil is being performed, it is possible to point to Ancient Nordic descriptions of related phenomena. Thus the

[1] Cf. E. Delcambre, *Le concept de la sorcellerie dans le duché de Lorraine au XVI^e et au XVII^e siècle* I–III, Nancy 1948–1951, III, pp. 193 ff.

[2] I have here followed T. Norlind, "Spiritusglaube" (in *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Volkskunde* 25, 1915). Much has since then been published on this and related subjects, and abundant unpublished material exists in the Folk life archives and private collections, e.g. K. G. Gilstring after Rikard Ekström, Klofsten, Vikingstad s:n, uppt. 1962 06 26.

*sejðr* had a peculiar psychic influence on the person at whom it was aimed.[1] In the *Laxdöla saga* it makes all those present sleepy and finally sends them to sleep. In the *Ynglinga saga*, Vanlandi who is far away from the malevolent Huld, 'sejding' in Uppsala, wishes first to set out and afterwards becomes sleepy. This corresponds with the New Islandic *aðsokn*, 'attack', 'nightmare', "vexation of a stranger's 'soul'" (*hugr* or *fylgja*, also *vǫrðr*). In *Njála* Suanr suddenly grows sleepy and yawns, when his enemies are advancing on his farm.[2] The same happens to Gunnar in Lidarände, who falls asleep and sees in a dream the *fylgjur* of the attackers as wolves that fall on him. In the *Sturlunga* cycle it is told how *Hallr Hallsson* became strangely sleepy before being attacked by Kolbein's men, so sleepy that he fell out of his seat. The mother-in-law also suffered from the enemies' *fylgjur*. Strömbäck gives further examples of this sleepiness in connection with *úfriðar fylgjur*. According to one saga both opposing sides go to sleep and are harassed or bewitched by the *hugr* or the *fylgja* of their opponents.

Harald Hårfagre's fosterer (*fostra*), skilled in magic, received a foretoken about the coming of men on a visit to her. That is to say, she sat before the fire and yawned heavily (*geispaðe miog*).

In New Icelandic folk belief these conceptions are still alive. They are linked there with the already mentioned belief in *sendingar*, in the shape of a dead man, a man's bone, or an animal's head, which is regarded as causing sudden weakness or tiredness. The evil injury which it is intended to inflict, need not depend on the agency of such material objects, but can be inflicted directly by means of the 'mind' or the 'follower'. An example of this is the story of the eighteen magicians on the Västmanna islands, which is referred to in Strömbäck's dissertation.

In current Swedish folk belief survivals of such Ancient Nordic concepts are to be found,[3] though they have often got a secondary reinterpretations.

[1] See D. Strömbäck, *Sejd* (=*Nordiska texter och undersökningar* 5), Diss. Uppsala 1935, pp. 152 ff.

[2] Cf. also K. Schmëing, *Zur Geschichte des Zweiten Gesichts* (=*Veröffentl. des Provinzial-Instituts für Landesplanung und niedersächs. Landes- und Volksforschung Hannover–Göttingen* A II: 13), Oldenburg I. O. 1943, p. 68.

[3] The Uppsala Dialect Archiv (ULMA), box 93 (everyday foretokens, signs of arrival). For both Ancient Nordic and contemporary Norwegian material, see also I. Reichborn-Kjennerud, *Vår gamle trolldomsmedisin* V (=*Skrifter utg. av Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi i Oslo*, II. Hist.-filos. Kl. 1947: 1), pp. 37 ff., and Lily Weiser-

The person who owns a powerful *hug* (*håg*, 'mind') influences other people either at a distance or in their presence. The influence manifests itself on the victim as sleepiness. This in its turn is taken either as a foretoken[1] that someone is approaching,[2] or as a sign meaning that the stranger, whether already present[3] or on his way, is going to be rich,[4] i.e. the person who is strong in spirit will have good luck, commonly regarded as the same thing as being rich! On the other hand, the saying goes, that the person who is sensitive to such influence, himself possesses a strong *hug*.[5]

Question-list no 168 of ULMA (answers not yet put on cards) is concerned with folk beliefs on the *vård* (=Isl. *vǫrðr*), and also contains appositely the following question: "Could a person's *vård* make itself known to another person so that the latter felt sleepy (and yawned), felt itchy on a particular part of the body, and so on?"

In earlier folk literature on female faith-healers, possessed people and those skilled in magic, this phenomenon is also well-known. This is clear from the following passage out of Gadelius' collection of examples: "the boy Nils began to yawn and said: 'Right now the sorceress is coming'".[6]

## 5. *Possession in Evangelical-Lutheran and Roman Theological Theory and Usage*

During the first two decades of the 18th century, the daughter of a Skåne clergyman, Söster Hyphauff from Bara, caused a stir as a result of her afflictions and the resultant expulsion of the demons from her. Her father has described in detail these afflictions, and her brother, also a clergyman, has described the expulsion of the demons, in which he took part as the

Aall, "En studie om vardøger" (*Norveg* 12, 1965, pp. 73–112; with a summary in German), pp. 74, 77 f., 92 ff., 97, where the identification with the guardian angel is noted.

[1] ULMA 93: 17 (Smål. Hossmo), p. 740.

[2] ULMA 5622 (Dal. Sollerön), p. 41.

[3] ULMA 192 (Vstml. Ramsberg), p. 57.

[4] ULMA 5672 (Upl. Bälinge), p. 6; 1527: 3 (Ång. Arnäs), p. 28; 2376: 1 (Smål. Jät), p. 4; 6573 (Smål. Höreda), p. 12; 22: 25 (Smål. Hossmo), p. 18; 438: 2 (Vml. Grythyttan), p. 57; 25: 51 (Vgl.), p. 27; 197: 52 (Gotl.), p. 90; etc.

[5] ULMA 1173 (Jtl. Frostviken), p. 105.

[6] Gadelius, op. cit. II, p. 205; reprint Stockholm 1963, p. 102.

exorcist. For a whole year the Tempter often harassed her so violently, that it took four or five people to hold her down. He made her blind, deaf and dumb, twisted her mouth, and audibly snapped one of her ribs, laming and crippling her in such a terrible manner that she could neither walk nor stand but had to be carried to and from bed. Despite hunger, she had to abstain from all food and drink for whole days and weeks; on one occasion it was for as long as 18 days.

Alternating with this unspeakable torture, the sorely tried girl was seized with ecstasy and fainting fits several times a day. On waking up she was able to tell of wonderful heavenly visions, in which God's angels had strengthened her and told her patiently to bear her cross. Being in her senses she was able to describe what was happening in other places, and every now and then she proved right. On these occasions she said that her angels had revealed it to her.

Lars Terleander, curate, later perpetual curate, in Lund, was able during visits to Bara to release the girl from the Evil One without exorcism, but simply by the laying on of hands. Among other things the Evil One had ordered her not to address him familiarly with 'thou', so that she frequently called the Enemy "Monsieur Devil". A barber-surgeon, from the Admiralty in Karlskrona, who was son-in-law to the rector in Bara, was also able to have a good influence on the girl by using both spiritual and natural means.

Söster Hyphauff could also predict when her pains would stop or return. Once, for example, she asked if she could go up to the room of her brother, the curate. On entering, she said to him: "Dear brother, in half-an-hour Monsieur Devil will go away, and then I shall read and sing." But as soon as she had finished the last hymn, she said to those present: "Now I must go in, for right now he is coming back."

Among various peculiarities that marked the girl, one was that during her afflictions she spoke a distorted language so that, for example, she said *snalla* instead of *tala* (speak).

Since the pains would not stop it was concluded that the poor girl was an *obsessa*, that is to say, possessed by the Devil himself. He showed himself tangibly in the shape of a fly, as is clear from several passages in the girl's own account. During a sermon in church, a fly came and sat on her left shoulder; at the same time the Enemy struck her with a blast of wind that

knocked her against her sister so that she had to be carried unconscious out of the church. On another occasion, when she was asked to read out of a hymn-book, she cried out that "a fly came and whispered in her ear that she should not read."

Her brother, the curate, then took up the fight with the Devil both at home and, at his sister's request, also in the church in the presence of the congregation. This is described with a gruesome clearness. It begins with a dialogue between the Evil One and the exorcist. "She, or rather the Enemy through her, started to imitate all sorts of creature, roared like a lion, barked like a dog, crowed like a cock, miaued like a cat," etc. And when Hyphauff the Younger talked to her, a coarse voice answered through her mouth. At the question: "Who are you?", the answer was returned: "Monsieur Devil." "Is it you, wicked Satan?" Answer: "You should call me Monsieur Devil." "But I," writes Hyphauff, "spat at him saying," You damned, proud Spirit, you will never receive that honour from me, but you are the big Dragon, the old Snake, who is called the Devil and Satanas."

While the congregation sang Luther hymn "Our God is a mighty castle to us", read and prayed, "the tyrant was terribly furious, and tortured her poor limbs insufferably." After undergoing a paroxysm, the girl could talk for part of the time with her natural voice, although using her distorted words. The Tempter resisted the exorcist violently, and ridiculed him when he said: "You must depart out of here." When between the paroxysms the priest asked the patient whereabouts in her body the pain was, he was answered at intervals that the pain travelled from her thigh to her stomach, and from there up into her chest. This could also be detected from the movements of the girl's body. "This gave me good reason to hope that in this way the Enemy was approaching the mouth and outlet," commented Hyphauff. When in the name of the Trinity the Devil was ordered to depart, he spat, blasphemed and said: "God I do not respect very much." In his eagerness the clergyman put his foot on her mouth, and in that position recited a passage from the Book of Psalms: "Over lions and adders you will walk, you will trample on and smash young lions and dragons" (Ps. xci, 13). Hyphauff also reminded his opponent that he and his crew once had to obey Our Lord and enter the herd of pigs (Mark v, 1 ff). The priest also resorted to manual force, and prised open her mouth: "I spat as powerfully as I could

several times into her throat, so that the Tempter became exceedingly angry, fought and roared mightily."

The exorcism was now approaching its completion, for shortly afterwards a fly was seen to sit in the corner of the patient's mouth. "From there it flew and came to rest on her nose, which was immediately taken *ad notam*, since it was remembered that the Evil One had twice visited her in the shape of a fly." Hyphauff also refers to the Scriptures where Satan is called "Beelzebub, King of the Flies." When the fly flew away, his sister had no more afflictions, her looks improved and later she burst into tears of joy.[1]

In a letter to the Collegium Medicum, Hans Roslin, medical officer to a county council in Skåne, claimed that according to the definitions of Paracelsus, it was a case of *morbus magicus*, although natural causes were also involved. He hesitated about calling the illness possession, though the patient had been cured in church by God's Word alone, since *naturalis medica* had also helped. In addition, Roslin points out the remarkable fact that "the spirit that spoke on request in a deep voice through the maiden Söster Hyphauff, admitted that this was not intended for her but for the old man her father, Gottfried Hyphauff."[2]

Behind this formulation we glimpse the same concept of a misdirected magic shot that we met earlier in Catharina Fagerberg's diagnosis of illness in Östergötland (above, p. 125), and in the chapter on illnesses by the rural dean, Broman (above, p. 130). Even the Collegium Medicum speaks of a "magic illness" in the Hyphauff case. For Gadelius it is the hysteria of an unmarried daughter of a clergyman caused by sexual repression.

As late as the end of the 18th century, Sara Stina Schultze, a shoemaker's daughter, was the object of ecclesiastical exorcism in Sweden. In the year 1900, A. S. Poulson, the dean as he was then at Roskilde, wrote in the first published volume of the *Kirkeleksikon for Norden*, that in our day real possession can be neither denied nor affirmed. It is true that in each individual case it is extremely difficult to arrive at a conclusion, because the symptoms are to such a high degree similar to those of natural illnesses. Even Christian doctors take up differing standpoints in this matter, Poulson concludes.[3]

[1] Gadelius, op. cit. I, pp. 173–190.
[2] Gadelius, op. cit., pp. 194 f.
[3] The article "Besatte", p. 278.

This view can probably be characterized as rather conservative. With the breakthrough of liberal theology the possibility of possession is denied in Evangelical-Lutheran quarters, when the question is not being wholly avoided. In free-Church circles where faith-healing is a reality, so too is the belief in demons. The reaction against liberal theology and its profane way of thinking has, however, brought about a certain change in the judgements made about the phenomena of possession. The discussion of this matter both among Protestants and Catholics is often associated with the pietistically inspired clergyman, J. Chr. Blumhardt (1805–1880) and his healing of the possessed maid Gottliebin Dittus in 1843, which Poulson also mentions.[1]

There is in Scandinavia a widespread opinion that the Roman Church still remains at a more primitive stage of development, so that it includes a supernatural conception abandoned in more enlightened circles, comprising naturally a crass belief in devils and wonders. Therefore it will probably be appropriate to mention something about Catholic opinion on possession. Especially so as such an account will bring out new and important facts that have a bearing on the case of Catharina Fagerberg.

The big advance made by the natural sciences as well as medical science has been, according to A. Rodewyk, who on several occasion has returned to this question of possession in Roman, theological publications,[2] to bring about a change of view on this phenomenon. Through the investigation of nervous and psychic diseases it has been possible to prove that epilepsy is not dependent on a demonic influence. Other cases of devilish vexation have been found to be mental obsessions with, for example, schizophrenia as a

[1] For bibliography up to 1950, see the article "Blumhardt, J. Chr." in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3. Aufl. I, Tübingen 1957. Further: Johanna Catharina Schreuder, *De overwinningsgedachte bij Johann Christoph Blumhardt*, Diss. Vrije Univ. te Amsterdam, N. V. Kampen [1957]; W. A. Schulze, "Eschenmayer und Blumhardt" (*Theol. Zeitschrift* 14, 1958, pp. 261–281); E. Michaelis, "Der Heilungs- und Dämonenkampf J. Chr. Blumhardts" (*Magie und Wunder in der Heilkunde. Ein Tagungsbericht* hrsg. von Dr. med. Dr. phil. W. Bitter, Stuttgart 1959, pp. 51–67); J. Roessle, *Von Bengel bis Blumhardt. Gestalten und Bilder aus der Geschichte des schwäbischen Pietismus*, Metzingen 1959, pp. 394 ff.; A. Rodewyk, *Die dämonische Besessenheit in der Sicht des Rituale Romanum*, Aschaffenburg 1963, pp. 64 f.

[2] A. Rodewyk, "Die Beurteilung der Besessenheit. Ein geschichtlicher Überblick" (*Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 72, 1950, pp. 460–480), p. 478 ff. See also below.

constitutional background. In this connection it has become evident that much that was before regarded as demonic possession was in fact pseudo-possession.

One psychic abnormality in especial has had externally much in common with possession, that is, hysteria. Doctors towards the end of the 19th century identified these phenomena with each other. At the psychiatric clinic of Saltpêtrière at Paris, Prof. Charcot and Richer compared old drawings and paintings of possessed persons with the hysterics they were treating. It is understandable that the rich variety of external signs of both possession and hysteria should have favoured such an identification of the two. Subsequently when modern medicine became more careful in its use of the term hysteria the psychological attitude towards the question of possession again came to the fore.

It was in this climate of opinion that T. K. Oesterreich (see below) made a comprehensive collection of comparative material from the whole world, and drew the distinction between somnambulistic and lucid possession. Under the first type hypnotism comes into the discussion. In addition, parapsychology made it clear that the greatest achievements of the mediums were effected by hypnosis. According to the *Rituale Romanum* (Titulus X, cap. I) it is just such a type of supernatural ability that is one of the main signs of possession: *vires supra ætatis seu conditionis naturam ostendere* (n. 3).[1] To the question of the relationship between hysteria and possession has thus been added in recent times the problem of how hypnosis and possession are related to each other. And finally one asks if a rational explanation is sufficient.

Modern psychiatrists also pose this question. A neurologist in Stuttgart, Dr Alfred Lechler, says on this matter: "I have myself no doubt of the occurrence of possession in our times, even if it is rare. During my years of practice I have personally witnessed some cases that neither from a psychological nor psychiatric standpoint can be satisfactorily explained. I had for a long time postponed accepting possession as an explanation of these cases,

[1] See now for a more detailed analysis A. Rodewyk, *Die dämonische Besessenheit*, Aschaffenburg 1963, pp. 93 ff., written after the revision of the *Rituale Romanum* in 1952, when Titulus X was changed into XII.

and during that time had tried to find if another was possible. Such an explanation could not, however, be found."

A French Roman Catholic neurologist, J. Lhermitte, is of the same opinion: "Le médecin qui veut rester un homme complet ne peut donc exclure, *a priori*, la possibilité d'une étiologie transcendante dans la production de certaines psychonévroses dont la source naturelle ne se découvre pas au savant."[1]

An apparently Evangelical-Lutheran psychiatrist, Dr Walter Schulte, reaches a similar conclusion in connection with a study of Paster Blumhardt's well-known exorcism of demons during the 1840's: "Much remains an incomprehensible secret, even if we take advantage of the discoveries made in depth-psychology. What we are able to understand pathologically is in the main a part of hysteria. But the whole matter goes much further than this, and cannot be grouped under the same heading as an individual sickness. Here we reach the limits of medical interpretation, and we dare not give a course of events a complete explanation by means of experiences that are linked with mass-suggestion, self-deception, swindle and trickery, words that leave a bitter taste in the mouth. What purpose is served if as a result of exceeding our limitations we reduce what is happening to such an extent that only a ghost of weak character and self-deception remains, and all that is worthy of awe is brought into disrepute?"[2] There still remains an inexplicable element, since all immanent explanations have been exhausted, and medicine therefore needs to be complemented by philosophy and theology. So Rodewyk concludes his historic account.

The viewpoints put forward by Rodewyk can be regarded primarily as representative of the Roman Church's attitude towards possession in our time. As another Catholic authority in this field, Prof. J. Lenz, emphasises, Rome has not officially laid down any doctrine concerning the influence of evil spirits on human beings.[3] The accounts of the Gospels are therefore basic to the opinion that possession is both possible and actual.

[1] *Vrais et faux possédés*, Paris 1956, p. 31. Cf. idem, *Mystiques et faux mystiques*, Paris 1952.

[2] *Evangelische Theologie* 9 (1949/50), pp. 151–169. Cf., for the same point of view, the Protestant theologian and clergyman K. Koch, *Seelsorge und Okkultismus*, 5. Aufl. Tübingen 1953.

[3] J. Lenz, "Die Kennzeichen der dämonischen Besessenheit und das Rituale Romanum" (*Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift* 62, 1953, pp. 129–143).

When it comes to establishing a case as one of possession, Catholic churchmen are just as careful and moderate as with miracles and apparitions of various kinds. Both recent cases and classical examples out of the Church's history are rigorously sifted. Father J. de Tonquedec thus stresses that in our times belief in the activity of evil spirits has returned. They are few in number who are actually possessed, although many unhappy people come to those who discharge the office of exorcism and ascribe illnesses and ailments of various kinds to evil spirits.[1] The oft-mentioned Father Surin († 1665) is regarded as having been a victim of the contagious epidemic of possession prevalent in Loudun, thus a case of pseudo-possession.[2]

Lenz distinguishes between *circumsessio*, in which the devil afflicts the unfortunate person from outside, and *obsessio* or *possessio* in which the evil spirit affects the victim's body and soul from within. So long as the possessed person himself is conscious of this, and regards the demonic spirit as an alien personality, obsessio in a narrower sense or lucid possession exists. If, conversely, the possessed person's own personality is completely obliterated so that the devil alone has domination over body and soul, one then speaks of somnabulistic possession. These states can alternate, and a state of complete calm can occur. Thus Lenz links up with Oesterreich's terminology, and opposes Rodewyk who regards these different forms of possession as in fact different stages within the development of any case of possession, from calm to 'affection' and crisis.[3]

On the question of the criteria by which true possession is decided, the Roman Catholics hold that the precepts and distinguishing characteristics given in the *Rituale Romanum* are wholly valid, if they are interpreted in the correct way. Lenz draws attention to the following pronouncements (up to 1952):

[1] *Etudes Carmélitaines* 27: 2, 1948 ("Satan"), p. 493.

[2] Lenz, op. cit., p. 136; cf. T. Andræ, *Mystikens psykologi*, Stockholm 1926, pp. 106 ff., where the case of Surin is referred to a doubling of the ego or pseudo-possession distinguished from real possession, total or partial. See now Lhermitte, *Vrais et faux possédés*, p. 129 ff. More popular descriptions in J. Michelet, *Satanism and Witchcraft. A Study in Medieval Superstition*, translated by A. R. Allinson, New York (1939) 1963, pp. 189 ff., and A. Huxley, *The Devils of Loudun*, London 1952, pp. 263 ff.

[3] Lenz, op. cit., p. 132. Since the Middle Ages this distinction between three different stages is a commonplace among the demonologistes, see Delcambre, op. cit. II, pp. 91 f. (les simples ensorcelés — les obsédés — les véritables énergumènes).

*In primis, ne facile credat, aliquem a dæmonio obsessum esse, sed nota habeat ea signa, quibus obsessus dignoscitur ab iis, qui vel atra bile, vel morbo aliquo laborant.*

*Signa autem obsidentis dæmonis sunt: ignota lingua loqui pluribus verbis, vel loquentem intelligere; distantia, et occulta patefacere; vires supra ætatis seu conditionis naturam ostendere; et id genus alia, quae cum plurima concurrunt, maiora sunt indicia* (n. 3).

Belonging to the advances made by modern science, however, are:

1. The discovery made by psychopathology of personality-splintering, or occasional, resp. persistant personality-doubling with, above all, hysterical compulsive phenomena and convictions of incarnation and possession. Here it is also a question of subjective pathological possession, of the type that the French doctor, Marescot, as early as 1599, was able to expose with the statement: *Nihil a daemone; multa ficta; a morboso pauca.* To be grouped with pseudo-possession are also certain cases of epileptic and especially hysterical accessory phenomena. Isolation and electric-shock treatment can help here, but exorcism is without effect.

2. The parapsychological study of the achievements of mediums, such as automatic writing and unconscious speech, telepathy or thought-reading, thought-transference, clairvoyance in space and time, prophecy, second sight, revealing secret things (cryptoscopy), moving things at a distance and without contact (telekinesis), floating in the air (levitation), bodily disappearance and reappearance (apports), the radiation of bodily shapes (materialization), sound and light phenomena.[1] Since one is here dealing with alleged spirit manifestations, one speaks of incarnation or possession phenomena. Some of these phenomena are achieved by trickery, while those that are undoubtedly authentic are explained by Catholic scholars as having been caused by the abnormal but natural power of the mediums. Only two occult phenomena, whose authenticity is, however, problematic, can hardly be included in a natural explanation, namely, a ghost phenomenon independent of the medium and the foretelling of coming free actions. For this reason it is necessary to be on the alert for such things in a possessed person.

[1] Cf. the interpretation of shamanism given by H. Findeisen, *Schamenentum*, Stuttgart 1957; idem, "Das Schamanentum als spiritistische Religion" (in *Ethnos* 1960), criticised ibid. 1962, pp. 47 f., by H. Stiglmayr.

3. Depth psychology has taught us that the following phenomena are associated with subconscious states, as are also hypnosis, trance, and the crises of hysterics, epileptics and possessed people: a memory which is out of the ordinary so that what arises suddenly out of the past is easily accepted as spirit revelations; an exceptionally heightened sensibility that overcomes both distance and obstacles that otherwise conceal; an exceptional suggestibility that can lead to unusual organic changes in the body; an increased ability to correlate and divine that reveals unsuspected connections between things. If in addition personality-doubling also occurs, an experience of a spirit dwelling within the person concerned easily comes about so that pseudo-possession results.

All this has to be taken into consideration in order that subjective, pathological and simulated possession can be excluded before a diabolic influence can be determined. Regarding this the pronouncements already quoted out of the *Romanum Rituale* up to 1952 ought, according to Lenz, to be read in the following way:

*Nota habeat ea signa, quibus obsessus distinguitur ab iis, qui morbo aliquo sive organico (epilepsia, hysteria) sive psychico (obsessione pathologica) laborant vel viribus naturalibus anormalibus (parapsychicis) utuntur.*

In order to eliminate unusual feats of memory and telepathy one should further read: *Lingua plane ignota pluribus verbis loqui et talem linguam intelligere.* No medium is in fact in complete command of a language which is quite unknown to him. This is why such a requirement is a sure criterion of something supernatural. In order to exclude clairvoyance and cryptoscopy, one ought to interpret the following words: *Naturaliter homini impervia patefacere, ut sunt valde distantia et plane occulta, præsertim futura libera.* Parapsychology requires also a clarification of the following sentence so that it emerges with this formulation: *Vires transcendentes omnes huius ætatis seu conditionis potentias naturales, etiam anormales seu extraordinarias.* The addition *Et id genus alia* leaves it open to the ingenuity of the theologian to work out criteria other than the main three.[1]

C. M. Staehlin, another Roman theologian and psychologist, also stresses that whatever happens in any of the three divisions of the soul, the sub-

[1] Lenz, op. cit., pp. 135 ff.

conscious, the conscious and the superconscious, finds an echo in the others. The simple person is liable to attribute extraordinary experiences to extra-human influences, either divine or demoniac, when they are in fact natural. Extrapsychic criteria for supernatural phenomena are therefore essential. And so Staehlin is prepared to accept the classical rules of the *Rituale Romanum*.[1]

What happens from a Roman Catholic point of view when, after taking all the necessary precautions, one believes oneself capable of defining true possession, lies outside the scope of this account.[2] The detail given in this chapter has been motivated by the desire to retrieve out of the past the case of Catharina Fagerberg and cases similar to hers, and present them as something more than merely picturesque curiosities.[3] Further, it has been of some importance to show how many psychological interpretive possibilities in fact exist. The opinion of Gadelius which is dated and onesided, has as a result of the new impression of his book become topical once more. Furthermore, presentday psychology of religion has not been the first to try and define accurately the different sorts of possession.

## 6. *The Voices*

Where the speech of the evil spirits in the case of Catharina Fagerberg is concerned, one thinks primarily of the voices which are associated with

[1] C. M. Staehlin, "Mystische Täuschungen. Zur Beurteilung einiger mystischer Phänomene" (*Geist und Leben* 27, 1954, pp. 276–290); see further the detailed bibliography in Rodewyk, *Die dämonische Besessenheit*, and also *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, art. "Démon"; *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 3. Aufl., and *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* 3. Aufl., art. "Besessenheit"; E. Blickenstorfer, "Zur Psychopathologie und Therapie eines Falles von 'Geistesbesessenheit' nicht schizophrener Art" (*Psyche* 5, 1951, pp. 98–108); M. Waldman, "Trancen und Ekstasen in ihrer psychologischen Gegensätzlichkeit" (*Geist und Leben* 25, 1952, pp. 54–66); *Christus, Cahiers spirituels* 4/5 (1954/55): "Le discernement spirituel."

[2] A. Rodewyk "Die Teufelsaustreibung nach dem Rituale Romanum" (*Geist und Leben* 25, 1952, pp. 121–134).

[3] For corresponding contemporary cases on the border between popular magic and Roman Catholic popular piety, see Bouteiller, op. cit., pp. 203 ff.; M. Leproux, *Médecine, Magie et Sorcellerie*, Paris 1954, and idem, *Dévotions et Saints Guérisseurs*, Paris 1957. Also the authorities of 17th century France—and the people—have had difficulties with the distinction between witchcraft and healing, cf. Delcambre, op. cit. III, pp. 9 ff., and R. A. Knox, *Enthusiasm. A Chapter in the History of Religion with Special Reference to the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, New York (1950) 1961.

different states of psychic illness, and which have the character of sense illusions. Among paranoids both illusions and hallucinations are common. The latter are perceived through all the senses.

"Indubitably, hallucination through hearing is the most common. This can either be simple as when the sick person seems to hear indistinct noises, knockings, etc, or more complex as when he hears words, statements, sentences, etc. Most important are hallucinations of the latter type. Very often the patients themselves call these phenomena 'voices', which seems to be the term that best corresponds to the experience, because it exists in all languages ('Stimmen', 'voices', 'voix', 'röster', etc.) ...

Less important though frequently occurring are the hallucinations of sight ...[1]

A variant of hallucination of the touching is when the ill person believes he feels movements in certain parts of his body without them in fact happening. For example, he can believe that his tongue pronounces words and sentences without this actually taking place. ('my mouth is talking on its own'), a phenomenon which in the old days was often interpreted as 'possession', not only by the sick person himself, but also by those in attendance."[2]

The voices of Catharina Fagerberg, however, were not sense illusions, because they were also heard by those around her. On one occasion she was even accused by them of speaking herself when she claimed that it was the evil spirit which spoke. Here we have a phenomenon characterized and exemplified by Andrae in this way:

"The other principal form of true possession is characterized by the fact that the possessed person all along preserves his own personality, in full consciousness, but discovers in himself an alien entity, which has control to a greater or lesser extent of the motor-centres or dwells in a certain part of the body. The possessed person does not regard the demon's thoughts and

[1] Cf., however, Catharina's experience of the flying animals.

[2] V. Wigert, *Psykiska sjukdomstillstånd* I–II, Stockholm 1931–1932, I, pp. 194 ff.; cf. II, pp. 113 f. See also G. Dumas, *Le surnaturel et les dieux d'après les maladies mentales* (*Essai de théogenie pathologique*), Paris 1946, pp. 30 f., 46 f., 55 f., 79 f., 156 f., 210 f., and E. Arbman, *Ecstasy or Religious Trance in the Experience of the Ecstatics and from the Psychological Point of View* I, Stockholm–Uppsala 1963, pp. 151 ff., 161, 173 f., 179 f., 211, with reference to B. Lagache, *Les Hallucinations verbales et la parole*, Paris 1934.

desires as his own. He first hears his words when the Spirit speaks through his own lips, or when he listens to the 'promptings' expressed by the 'voices', which speak through his head, heart, stomach."[1]

The example given by Andrae of this phenomenon and which recalls Catharina Fagerberg and even more so Sister Hyphauff, is taken from the account of the suffering undergone by Madeleine de Mandol, a young nun in the St. Ursula nunnery in Aix. She succumbed to a terrible attack of possession in 1611 at the age of nineteen.

The devils afflicted Madeleine by forcing her to bend forwards and backwards down to the ground, twist her arms and legs and her whole body, so that there was a sound of cracking in her legs and all her entrails were shaken about. Asmodéus, the prince of lewdness, compelled Madeleine to make shameful movements. The doctors and surgeons were not able to restrain her. Beelzebub shrieked, interrupted confession and wanted to hinder the priest when he tried to give absolution. On another occasion as she was about to confess the devils plunged her into a deep sleep and made her as immobile as a copper statue. When Madeleine, humbly and obediently, swept the floor, the devil quarreled and screamed violently.

Andrae, who in this case talks of hysterical convulsions and fits, remarks that the chronicler of the case and also apparently the patient herself, could clearly distinguish between her own and the demoniac personality. He compares the states of hysterical fits to the abstruse imaginings of possession of the insane and distinguishes the former from the latter. A patient of Huet's who is possessed by a 'voice' relates: "It is as if I myself was talking. I feel a movement of my lips similar to that of a chewing rabbit, and I feel my tongue moving completely on its own" [reference missing]. With schizophrenes the idea of possession seems rather to be a systematization of sense illusions, which here seem to be primary. On the other hand, in the hysterical form of possession the idea of possession is rather the primary formative psychic attitude, which creates 'splintering of the personality', as well as eventual sense illusions. Therefore spontaneous hysterical possession has disappeared also with the dying out of the belief in the devil, while the mentally ill still interpret their experiences secondarily as possession. In this connection

[1] Andræ, op. cit., pp. 100 ff.

Griesinger tells the story of one of his patients who did not wish to believe that an alien entity, a demon, had entered her body. But when she "hears it talking inside her", and notices that this voice is completely unlike her own, she is compelled to admit the true existence of the possessing "spirit".

The epidemics of possession among French nuns during the 17th century have now been thoroughly investigated by specialists in different fields of research.[1] First attacked by this spiritual epidemic were the Ursulines in Aix where it all began in 1609. Four years later it was the turn of the Birgitines in Lille, the Ursulines in Loudun in 1631, the Franciscans in Louviers in 1634, and the Ursulines in Auxonne in 1658.

In this spiritual milieu, with which we are now dealing, belongs Elizabeth de Ranfaing. She was called "The Possessed (l'énergumène) from Nancy" (1592–1649), but ended her days as the founder and head of a religious order. Her parents had given her away in marriage when she was fifteen years old in order to dampen her religious zeal. Her husband was a fifty-year-old professional soldier. In the course of her unhappy marriage Elizabeth gave birth to six children. In 1616 she became a widow. She then took a vow of chastity, but because of bad health was unable to enter a nunnery. During a pilgrimage in 1618 when she was accompanied by her doctor, Poirot, Elizabeth was suddenly seized by an irresistible passion for him. She blamed this on a love-potion which Poirot was said to have mixed in her food. Elizabeth's psychic and physical agonies increased, and she soon came to regard herself as possessed by evil spirits which the doctor was said to have set on her. From 1619 to 1625 the poor woman was submitted to frequent exorcisms. Then the Devil speaking through her mouth accused several named people of witchcraft. Among them was Poirot who was condemned to be burnt at the stake, and was executed in 1622.

The documents dealing with this case have been collected and critically edited by a French archivist, while a psychiatrist, professor of medicine, with a strong interest in the phenomena of possession has given a psycho-

[1] See above, and F. Bavoux, *Hantises et Diableries dans la terre abbatiale de Luxeuil d'un procès de l'inquisition (1529) à l'épidémie démoniaque de 1628–1630*. Monaco 1956. For contemporary information, see J.-P. Seguin, "L'information en France avant le périodique. 500 canards imprimés entre 1529 et 1631" (suite) (*Art et traditions populaires* 11, 1963, pp. 119–45).

pathological interpretation of Elizabeth's case.[1] An inherited nervous disability, the strict upbringing given her by her parents, her husband's brutality and inclinations unrecognized by the warm-hearted and talented woman herself, caused, according to Lhermitte, her notion of possession and her persecution mania that resulted in accusations of witchcraft and hysterical crisis. The exorcisms served only to reinforce these, and when Poirot died they disappeared.

In the context of this section dealing with "voices", what interests us most is that moment in Elizabeth's possession when the Devil speaks through her mouth and acts as judge and accuser of Poirot. The latter bravely stood up against the evil rumours that were soon circulating, and was himself present at the exorcisms. "He heard the demon through the mouth of the possessed accuse him of magic and loudly declare that it was his evil tricks that had caused this possession" (p. 64). The exorcists tried in vain to quieten the demon. Threatening severe punishment they ordered him to retract his accusations. But the demon screamed and clamoured that against his will he accused his fellow-men, forced to do so by the power of the Holy Mother of God. Similar dialogues took place on other occasions, although after the arrest of Poirot, Beelzebub and another evil spirit made their accusations in vaguer terms.

Time, milieu and the course of events otherwise distinguish Elizabeth's story from that of Catharina Fagerberg. In 17th century Catholic France a young widow of the upper classes overcame her afflictions and founded a religious order, where she pursued an active life in the service of humanity. In 18th century Protestant Sweden a young unmarried woman of the people repulsed the attack of the evil spirits and their temptations to practise black magic, and instead became the master of the spirits so that she was able to practise as a faith-healer among ordinary people, while not tolerated by ecclestiastical or secular bodies. But both have in common the final positive phase. Another similarity is that the presence of the evil spirits is blamed on the malevolent tricks of a loved and lovesick man. The unmasking of the evildoer through the spirit speaking in the throat of the possessed woman

[1] E. Delcambre-J. Lhermitte, *Un cas enigmatique de possession diabolique en Lorraine au XVII^e siècle: Elisabeth de Ranfaing, l'Energumène de Nancy, fondatrice de l'Ordre du Refuge*, Nancy 1956.

also happens in the same way. There is, however, a century separating the two cases, since during the 17th century the witch-fires were ablaze in both France and Sweden. During the Age of Reason, it is the accuser and not the accused who is the first to run into difficulties with official bodies. The Swedish peasants had become so critical as not to believe in the genuineness of the evil spirit's speech, but regarded it as the woman's own.

One of the most instructive examples of experiences of "voices" has occured in our own time. The chemistry master at the Lyceum of Freising, near Munich, Ludwig Staudenmaier, has described in his book on magic as an experimental science (Leipzig 1912) a whole series of personally experienced phenomena which a few centuries earlier would most certainly have been regarded as terrible outbreaks of possession.[1] In fact one is here dealing with a person with an extreme disposition to psychic obsessions. Like Surin, Staudenmaier was able all the time to describe his state,[2] though he was not able in the long run to control it. In connection with automatic writing a series of obsessive personalities developed, who gained great autonomy, as well as hallucinations and other psycho-physical manifestations, the nature of which has not yet been clarified, and which have therefore be left out of consideration by Oesterreich.

In the experiment in automatic writing, Staudenmaier, in contrast to others, was wholly or partially aware of the content of what had been written, although the writing was completely passive and independent of his will.[3] Soon acoustic sensations occurred, so that just before writing Staudenmaier heard what he was going to write. This experience gradually came to the fore, so that Staudenmaier stopped writing, content to listen to the inner voices with which he could hold a meaningful conversation.[4] Some of these voices had an evil character. Although Staudenmaier was aware that they were not incarnated spirits, as had earlier been believed, he treated them in the same way as had the possessed in the old days, that is as autonomous

[1] T. K. Oesterreich, *Possession, Demonical and Other, among Primitive Races, in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and Modern Times*, London 1930, p. 15 (German original from 1921).

[2] Ibid., pp. 57 ff.

[3] Cf. Andræ, op. cit., p. 205.

[4] Cf. Andræ, ibid.: impossible to concentrate on two kinds of experience.

beings which, among other things, he subjected to reproaches. This behaviour naturally increased the character of reality of these voices. From Staudenmaier's account of his experiences the following may be quoted: "In the end the inner voice made itself heard too often and without sufficient reason, and also against my will; a number of times it was bad, subtly mocking, vexatious, and irritable. For whole days at a time this insufferable struggle continued entirely against my will."

"Often the statements of these so-called beings proved to be fabrications." When S. accused his "spirits" of giving false information concerning a recently arrived neighbour, they answered: "'It is because we cannot do otherwise, we are obliged to lie, we are evil spirits, you must not take it amiss!' If I then became rude they followed suit. 'Go to blazes, you fool! You are always worrying us! You ought not to have summoned us! Now we are always obliged to stay near you!' When I used stronger language it was exactly as if I had hurled insults at a wall or a forest: the more one utters the more the echo tends back. For a time the slightest unguarded thought that passed through my mind produced an outburst from the inner voices."

Gradually Staudenmaier began to feel the sensations connected with the different voices. Thus, emperors from the past and present appeared, and took control even of his external attitude, interests and way of life. The combination of these personifications finally came under the notion of "My Highness", with a particular pattern of behaviour. Sometimes Staudenmaier defended himself against such personalizing feelings, which he experienced as alien to him, although they in fact belonged to his own ego.

At other times S. allowed himself over a long period to be passively dealt with by one such personification, as in the matter of "the child" in him acting as against its father and holding a conversation with him. In the child's role he then behaved as a child does before a toy-shop window, etc. Above all, however, he became happier and more spontaneous in the manner of a child. In the same way Staudenmaier's artistic personifications influenced his general interest in art, which previously had been minimal. Even his features were affected by these personalizing feelings.

Oesterreich points out the remarkable resemblance with the possessed: "Like Staudenmaier he addresses the demon in his soul, talks to him, petitions him. etc.; in short, treats him as an ordinary living person. And now

comes the most remarkable fact; the 'second' personality behaves as if it really were such a being. It gives replies, makes promises, feels repentance, just like a real person. Things may reach the point of an audible conversation between the possessed and his state of psychic compulsion," a heightened form of the dialogue that takes place between neurotic people of today and their pseudo-hallucinations. For the possessed not only hears in his fantasy another person answering him, but his own organ of speech cooperates automatically or compulsorily. And so there is played out the strange scene of two different people seeming to talk out of the same body. The alien compulsive person acts towards even an outsider as a real person, and talks, for example, with the exorcist, rages, scolds and answers questions. Oesterreich takes an example from 19th century literature in which a demon was subjected to an attempt at conversion both by the possessed woman herself and by the exorcist. A higher angel acts as an adviser.[1] There is, of course, no question in this or similar cases of deceit on the part of the possessed. The alien entity forces itself coercively on the possessed, which is why one cannot here speak of a divided will in the possessed.

In three lectures on Tantra-Yoga H. Zimmer has commented on and described in detail Staudenmaier's case, believing it to be a confirmation of yoga-experiences and of the important role played by the unconscious.[2] It is Staudenmaier's unlived life which takes shape in his experiences (p. 74), so that, for example, the father in him brought out the child in him (p. 75). But hell also together with its heavenly counterpart in the Christian version of the state after death, described in the Tibetan Book of the Dead as *Bardo Thödol*,[3] arises from within him: the devils "Buck foot" and "Horse foot" oppose the reverend old man, God the Father. Staudenmaier experiences the temptations of St. Anthony as well as Faust's lovely Helen, who is found in Lamaism, too, where, however, she has been changed in the cult to "the fairy of all the Buddhas" (pp. 76 ff.). Staudenmaier did not experience what the

[1] Oesterreich, op. cit., pp. 62 f., cf. p. 84.

[2] *Eranosjahrbuch* 1933, pp. 67 ff.

[3] See for that conception *Das Tibetanische Totenbuch oder die Nach-Tod-Erfahrungen auf der Bardo-Stufe*. Nach der englischen Fassung des Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup herausgegeben von W. Y. Evans-Wentz. Übersetzt ... mit ... einem psychologischen Kommentar von C. G. Jung ... 5. Aufl. Zürich 1953; Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Grundlagen tibetischer Mystik*, Zürich 1957, pp. 127 ff., 281 ff.

Hindus call "all the gods at our body", although he was close to it. The chaotic cosmogonical occurrences within him did not become a cosmos, and Staudenmaier died finally in 1933 in a mental home in Rome, where he had been living as a Tibetan yogi (pp. 87 ff.).

Independent of the psychopathological interpretation of Staudenmaier as an example of a schizophrenic person or the use of his experiences by Jungian psychologists, they still remain of the greatest value for the understanding of similar phenomena. In this way they also offer an excellent analogy to some of the main features in Catharina Fagerberg's story.

## 7. *Conclusions*

From a phenomenological and psychological viewpoint the case we have studied offers striking parallels to some constitutive elements of shamanism. Especially is this the case if this phenomenon is defined as broadly as in, for example, a work on Indian Shakers: "In its broadest aspects shamanism is reflected in Shakerism by the fundamental notion that an individual can be imbued with supernatural power as manifested by trembling seizures—and that while in this state he is capable of mythic insight into the causes of disease and distress which the power directing his movements enables him to cure or alleviate."[1] All this applies perfectly to Catharina Fagerberg.

Such a sweeping definition, however, tends to become meaningless. The need to set limits to it has therefore been stressed in both scholarly and practical connections. When the Episcopal Study Commission in present-day America compares the enthusiastic gifts of the Holy Ghost with primitive spirit possession, a critical commentator recalls that even a cultural anthropologist such as Métraux has distinguished between divine and demoniac possession.[2] In distinction from possession the French scholar has further defined shamanism in this way: "Shamanism is, so to speak, the other side of the coin of ecstatic experience in religion; where possession presupposes a 'coming in' of the divine spirit (enthusiasm), shamanism

[1] H. G. Barnett, *Indian Shakers. A Messianic Cult of the Pacific North-West,* Carbondale 1957, p. 309.

[2] A. W. Sadler, "Glossolalia and Possession: An Appeal to the Episcopal Study Commission (*Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 4, 1964, pp. 84–90).

presupposes a 'going out' of the individual soul of the shaman to visit paradise and communicate directly with divine persons. Both phenomena involve entrance into an ecstatic trance state. And in studies of both phenomena the question of the mental health of the practitioner has been raised."[1]

This classification of the concept, however, seems too narrow where it concerns North American shamanism and Catharina Fagerberg. On the one hand Catharina Fagerberg was able to send out her 'life-spirit(s)' to discover what was happening in other places, and yet on the other hand both evil and good spirits were able to speak through her. The difficulty of establishing general definitions that are meaningful is illustrated by a single case studied in detail.

Other conclusions are mostly of the methodological type. Christian folk-religion has often become the plaything of comparative religious studies. Undoubtedly many comparisons are justified both from a psychological[2] and historical point of view.[3] But sometimes they are shallow and unjustifiable, as, for example, the view that Laestadianism in North Scandinavia is a Christian survival of ancient Lappish shamanism. The case of Catharina Fagerberg is principally of importance because it offers an example of how 18 Century people—and not only day present scholars—have been able to interpret the same phenomenon as both Christian and non-Christian (=witchcraft). An anthropological, folkloristic and psychological interpretation must never dispense with historical analysis. A historical investigation also opens one's eyes to common or related traditions which have furthered cultural and religious meetings and an interpretation into new terms of a belief already given, in our case an *interpretatio christiana* (spirits =angels).

[1] A. Métraux, *Voodoo in Haiti*, New York 1959, p. 87. For possession in Voodoo see also: Maya Deren, *Divine Horsemen, the Living Gods of Haiti*, London 1953, pp. 247 ff. There she recounts how as an outsider she was ridden by a *loa*, and describes this experience as the 'white darkness'. See also H. Courtander, *The Drum and the Hoe. Life and Lore of Haitian People*, Berkeley, Los Angeles 1960, pp. 45 ff.

[2] Th. de Félice, *Foules en délire: extases collectives. Essai sur quelques formes inférieures de la mystique*, Paris 1947, pp. 52 ff.

[3] H.-A. Junod, "Deux cas de possession chez les Ba-Ronga" (*Bull. de la Soc. Neuchatel. de Géogr.* 20, 1909/10, pp. 387–402), and A. Allard, "'Possession' in a Revivalistic Negro Church" (*Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 1, 1962, pp. 204–13).

As well as the need to be on guard against historical anachronism, it is necessary also to be cautious as to modish psychological theories. They spring up rapidly enough to make scholars careful. In the end they always lead to scientific questions of a borderline nature. The requirement of religion—and irreligion—that its concept of reality be true can come into conflict with scientific interpretations. This is true whether it concerns the conception of Roman Catholic theology that the whole of reality is the sum of the natural and the supernatural or the liberal Protestant view that the concept of belief and scientific interpretation are different aspects of the same thing or the atheist denial of any spiritual world. The investigator's frame of reference here enters into the picture. This influences the choice of scientific theory either consciously or unconsciously.

These general propositions might appear to be truisms. If, however, the investigation that has now been carried out has made them into meaningful and significant statements, then it has fulfilled a function within the symposium.

# Shamanism as an Experiencing of "the Unreal"

by ODD NORDLAND

## 1. *Introduction*

In the form of religion we call shamanism, the shaman, or "wizard" as we could call him, plays a central role. This form of religion is, first and foremost, indigenous to hunters and fishermen in arctic-circumpolar regions. If, for example, the flock or tribe suffers hardships because of sickness or a poor catch, the shaman takes over: he dances, beats the drum, sings, is filled with ecstasy and falls into a trance. When he awakens he relates that he has been out on a journey, has spoken with the spirits, and now he gives advice which will help the ones who have asked him for it.

Among the Laplanders in earlier times the person who had this central, religious function was called a *noaide*, or an *angakkoq* among the Eskimos of Greenland, but he is also well known among the northern tribes on the American continent and in Siberia. There is a wealth of interesting, religio-historical material and religio-historical literature about shamanism and the shaman.

Despite this fact, all things considered, little has been done to interpret and understand the phenomena with which we are dealing. The most sceptical will perhaps dismiss the entire problem by pointing to the rich oral tradition as an origin of what the individual shaman claims to have experienced. Others will point to the reply made by the ex-angakkoq from Greenland to Knud Rasmussen, when he was asked why he did not continue with his skills: "I wasn't good enough at lying!"—Still others will say that these are experiences of a special kind, *cognitions*, individual knowledge. Thus we have explained the unusual with words which in turn themselves require an explanation.

But if we now proceed in the opposite direction, and accept the fact that the shaman does or can have experiences of the nature he describes, where do we then find, with the knowledge we possess today—something to compare these experiences with?

The psychical result, which the shaman is said to be capable of achieving, a result which also produces a purely physical manifestation, is the trance. If we define the trance as a loss of consciousness, to a greater or lesser degree, we are here dealing with a physical phenomenon in which the cerebrum is disconnected, to a greater or lesser extent.

Now, in itself, such a psychical situation is nothing unusual. It is this situation which each of us experiences blessedly recurring in sleep: we shield ourselves from impressions—light, of course, is the only one of our sensory impressions which we can shut out with any real effect. We close our eyes, we avoid arousing muscular feeling, sensations of pressure and heat by finding positions which we can maintain for longer periods, completely relaxed, agreeably warm. Then we turn to our inner stream of calm, and agreeably soothing pictures, pictures which do not engage us, do not excite us—then we fall asleep.

Now we are suddenly in a world of other dimensions, where we have experiences which we cannot classify as "real". They are "dreams", even though psychoanalysis has indeed revealed to us that "the dream" can be more closely connected with the vital problems of the individual, than much of what he thinks, says or writes in a waking state. The dream can also be both good and highly unpleasant. We may have a desire to return there as soon as we awake, or we may do everything we can to keep from returning to the horror that reigns where the cerebrum has no control.

Sleep and dreams are known to us all, but we can also fall into a trance, lose consciousness through hypnosis. A monotonous influence, for example from a strong and dominating personality, can result in some of us again being able to cross the borderline between conscious and reflective experience, and the region where we journey, speak and act without being masters over what takes place.

Not until more recent years have we had a significantly greater insight into what we call hypnotic experiences. We have received an impression of a remarkable cerebral activity where the combinations rush forth over a

register of stored impressions which we are not generally conscious of, where life is experienced in a flash of seconds, and where we make combinations in a manner that comes close to what we call creativity.—There can be no doubt that our conception of the human brain, as a combining and memorizing apparatus, has been changed to a great extent in the last few years.

Our usual conception of the shaman is, indeed, that he employs monotonous effects to fall into ecstasy and arrive at the state of trance: he sings and dances alone, or along with others. The auditory stimulations and the motoric movements, in increasing intensity, and the emotional induction from the crowd around him result in his falling into a trance in the end, and the disconnecting of higher cerebral centers: his "soul" journeys, released from the body. It is now that he is said to be capable of relating experiences which we cannot judge on the basis of our "knowledge", experiences which he and those present, on their part, accept as knowledge.

The special position of the shaman, and the specific social and cultural situation which is the background for his contribution, make it extremely difficult to approach phenomena like ecstasy and the trance through observation and experiments.

But there are other methods. In our technical and mechanized civilization, monotonous stimulation is steadily increasing, and a considerable number of situations exist which have raised problems for fertile meditation on this subject. For pilots, monotony is perhaps especially to be reckoned with, and its effects can be particularly serious. It is a well known fact that the flashes of sunlight on the blades of the helicopter rotor, with so many flashes per second, make the pilot sleepy, lead to a trance and paralysis of the power to act. For this reason helicopter pilots wear eyeshades which eliminate the effect of the light.

We are familiar with a number of examples of pilots of jet planes, at great heights and considerable speed, having had hallucinations, with loss of the sense of locality, equilibrium, and distortion of vision. Of 137 pilots in the United States who were questioned, 48 had had such unusual experiences.—Psychiatrists, who have worked with aviational medicine, have been concerned with this type of phenomenon.

There is a great deal we do not yet know about this side of our cerebral

functions. Nonetheless, in the past ten years, a number of interesting studies have been made in this field which have changed our conception of cerebral functions, and which can support an explanation of many of the questions which we have before us here.

## 2. *The McGill Experiments with "Sensory Deprivation"*

The experiments and theoretical research which D. O. Hebb has conducted at McGill University, in recent years with assistance from Bexton, Heron and Scott, aim at throwing light upon the effects of monotony on the personality. As far as I have been able to understand, it is from the investigations in this and related areas that we are obtaining results which can help us in a better understanding of what a trance really is, and what the cognitions we are dealing with really are.

The field of research which we can here benefit from is usually known as "sensory deprivation": we could call it experiments with "reduced stimulation of the senses".

The object of these experiments with "sensory deprivation" is to isolate the subject of the experiment, and to bring under control the stimulations to which he is subjected. In various ways he can be prevented from receiving stimulations of light, sound, cutaneous sensations, etc., or he can receive monotonous stimulations of this kind. The question then is the way in which he reacts to this.

It has turned out that here we have promising but difficult experiments, and we have already received invaluable support to the information we have about important areas of the relationship between the individual and "reality". When we realize how fundamental psychophysics has been to the progress of our psychological research, it is remarkable to think that we are here dealing with the results of research undertaken during the past twelve to fourteen years. The best survey of the discoveries and progress which have been made in this area are undoubtedly to be found in the accounts which were presented three years ago at a symposium at the Harvard Medical School. The results of a research project, which had been worked out according to the method of "sensory deprivation", were submitted, and a considerable number of investigators from the United States and Canada were present.

Woodburn Heron explained a series of experiments at McGill. He experimented with male students who received payment for participating. The subject of the experiment was warned that he would be taking part in an experiment which would last for an indefinite period of time. Then he took his place on a comfortable bed, in a small, lighted, sound proofed experimental room. The student put on goggles with translucent glass so that he could see light, but was not able to distinguish contours or colors. His lower arms were placed in padded cardboard coverings which prevented the sensory cells in the lower arms and fingers from receiving changes in stimuli. Nor was the student able to hear very much; his head was resting on a foam-rubber pillow; the room was isolated against sound, and the whirring of the ventilating fans also hindered the interpretation of sound. The experiment was controlled by an electroencephalogram with wires attached to the base of the student's skull, and the curves indicating the cerebral functions were recorded. Between the subject and the conductor of the experiment there was a loudspeaker connection. The subject was not given any information about time, only told to endure as long as he could. Most of the subjects managed for two or three days. If they needed assistance, they could ask for it. Of twenty-nine students, eighteen came through the first series of control-tests.

In this experiment situation a considerable number of changes in cerebral activity were revealed. To begin with, the subject was able to relax and think about his customary work, ponder over personal problems, etc. However, it soon appeared difficult to maintain the power of concentration, and "they just let their thoughts wander". Then there could be periods when they did not think of anything. Some said afterwards that they had difficulty in determining whether they were awake or asleep, and they had changing perceptions.

Three of the subjects had clear hallucinations of happenings which they thought were taking place in the experiment room. One ducked his head to avoid objects which seemed to come towards him. Another thought that images were being projected on the glass of his spectacles. A third thought there was "someone" in the room with him.

Twenty-five of the twenty-nine were able to report hallucinations in one form or another. First they saw brighter light effects in the range of vision,

then followed spots and stripes of light, geometric figures and patterns, then solitary objects on monotonous backgrounds, and finally scenes in full size. If they wanted to study a section of what they saw, they had only to move their eyes and stare, as if at a picture.

They had little control over what they saw. *One* saw nothing but goggles, no matter what he did. The pictures often prevented sleep. Another was so upset by what he saw, and the fact that he could not get rid of it, that he left the room and interrupted the experiment. The hallucinations lasted from twenty to seventy hours.

The hallucinations strongly depended upon stimulation from diffuse light through the translucent glass in the goggles. After several days of isolation, wearing these special goggles, one control group was given other spectacles. With these, however, the hallucinations were no longer the rule, and in darkness they were gone after a few hours.

On the basis of these experiments, Woodburn Heron felt that they had an effect on some of the mechanisms which are responsible for the regulation of the electric functions of the brain. He believes that it is a question of changes in those parts of the brain stem which we know play a role in the regulation of the cerebral functions. It is here a question of parts of the brain which are automatically and functionally connected with the sensory apparatus.

The experiments seem to confirm the fact that if the cerebral functions are to continue their regular activity, they must be stimulated by changes in the sensory influences. The organization which is necessary for continuing the processes of thought and action will thus be kept functioning by the constant variation in thoughts for which the activity of movement is responsible.

Many of the other experiments, conducted with "sensory deprivation" of the sensory apparatus, also clearly brought out the fact that the brain is dependent upon a conscious registration of the surroundings through the senses.

Stanford J. Freedman and his co-workers cite an experiment with fourteen volunteer students chosen at random. Through interviews and tests, people who showed signs of lacking psychical stability were eliminated. Then eight of the students, one after the other, lay down on a bed in a small room. The light by the head was as strong as a 30 watt bulb, the student was given

translucent goggles, and earphones which provided a soft mixture of disorganized noises ("white noise").

Each of the eight students, with spectacles, "white noise" and armcoverings, found it difficult to think coherently and to concentrate. They had difficulties with speech, and were aware of "bodily changes": a smaller body floating in space, etc. Four had hallucinations, heard sounds and voices. Four developed anxiety of a paranoidal nature, three had visual "hallucinations" which had a considerable resemblance to those which have been described during the use of mescalin or in a hypnagogic state: "I saw a hand and a stack of thin magazines, about maybe ten of them, and I, I was only concentrating on the hand and the corners of the magazines, and he picked one up, the hand picked one up, and a voice came and said: 'The article isn't very difficult', and then reverberated saying the same thing over again as though it were in an echo chamber"....

Another related: "The herd of elephants. Oh, that was pretty. That came very spontaneously. It was just a sort of elephants in black, with pink and blue and purple ... They were moving. The elephants themselves weren't moving, the picture was moving as if it were a closeup, sort of a backdrop ... the elephants were gray ... the background was pink ... they weren't real elephants, because they were more like cutouts."

Freedman believes that when the external stimuli become so monotonous as here, the subject of the experiment glides into a kind of dreamlike state between sleep and wakefulness. Auditory and visual "hallucinations", on the other hand, must be interpreted as a result of the fact that the cerebral mechanisms which otherwise take care of the stimuli from the outer sensory apparatus, make one tempted to classify the stimulants which are nonetheless to be found because of the impulse there is to find a meaning in the world around us. The ego "turns inwards" when no meaning can be found in the external sensory stimulations that are received.

When we are awake, we must believe in a central activity in the brain, an activity in the central nervous system, constantly and automatically—like the seekers in the register of an automatic telephone system—working to organize relationships which we perceive in our surroundings. The perception is always selective, and always in the process of trying the codes which are necessary for maintaining the different patterns. Now when the inner

frame of reference is broken down, it becomes difficult and, in the end, impossible to "structurize" the outside world, to place constancy and stability in the reality one perceives. Now various changing, unclear figures appeared, geometrical figures changing contours, altering in size and shape, etc.

Tendencies in this direction will always be found in the functions which are also to be found in a normal cerebral condition, but the secondary mechanism which gives structure to our surroundings, and which gives it stability, keeps these primary functions under control. With "reduced stimulation" they break through and cause the subject of the experiment to have a particular kind of experience.

Experiments which not only reduced the stimulation of light, sound and cutaneous feeling, but also hindered movement resulted in feelings of panic and hallucinations. They were interpreted as being so "real" that one of the participants in the experiment went, afterwards, to a psychiatrist for consultation.

Georg E. Ruff and his co-workers emphasize that the way in which an individual reacts to "sensory deprivation" is connected with his own personality traits: it turns out that those who are clearly aware of their own personality, who have a clear understanding of their *ego*, their "identity"—to employ the conception with which almost every poet in Western Europe has been preoccupied in recent years—those persons are also the ones who, during an experiment, will fluctuate least from normal behavior and experiences. A clear understanding of the ego carries with it a strong feeling of being the same person in every circumstance. The individual who is certain of his identity thus has an inner harmony which, in itself, activates and makes it less dependent upon external sensory influence (D. Rapaport: "The theory of ego autonomy: a generalisation." *Bull. Menninger Clin.* 22, 13, 1958, p. 182.)

These new discoveries, made according to methods of experimentation with sensory deprivation, throw new light upon the pattern of actions and "cognitions" which we usually call "shamanism".

It appears to have been experimentally proven that each one of us is capable of having visual and auditory experiences which we would not count as "real". They can be induced under certain conditions which are not

connected with sleep, hypnosis, hysteria or the effects of intoxicants. These experiences are always equally surprising, frightening and shocking to the one who is not prepared. For lack of another name, we must still call these cognitative experiences "hallucinations". They occur as a result of regulating cerebral functions, when the brain otherwise has a small variety of sensory impressions to react to.

Monotonous stimulation from the sensory apparatus is the prerequisite if these aspects of the cerebral functions are to result in "hallucinations".—We are still barely on the threshold of work in a complicated and interesting field of research into these cerebral functions, and there is a tremendous amount which we do not know, but for which certain basic aspects are clear.

## 3. *Monotony, Destruction of Personal Identity, Isolation and Intuition as Basic Features of Shamanism*

It appears to be clear that monotony is the basis of many forms of shamanism: monotonous song, drumming, music, dance with rhythmic movements. At other times it can be the restriction of movement, staring into the flames, darkness, even masks with special effects of light for the eyes. In the experiments we have described, it is not even necessary to attain the heights of emotion we could call ecstasy in order to bring about the trance and the hallucination.

I will not maintain that we are to go to the bulk of information about shamanism, and make it coincide with these insights into cerebral functions and hallucinations, but I would like to point out that such experiences can be incorporated into shamanism. The method of procedure can also be employed to such ends.

On the other hand, if once a shaman has *had* such experiences, he will for ever be convinced that he has contact with the spirits in the unseen, and he will be convinced of the justification of the religion he believes in, and the legitimacy of the power he has. The effects of this on both himself and on others are still too little known because there is too little knowledge about the relationship between the body and the psyche.

It is here that we again have the feeling of astonishment and—I would even go so far as to call it respect for the total amount of knowledge which

mankind has amassed in its long cohabitation with a harsh or bountiful nature, and with the forces *outside* and *within* man himself. What a wealth of knowledge may be concealed in a system of religious ceremonies and rituals, which we are only slowly beginning to understand the wisdom of.

Did shamanism, as a whole, have an insight into connections hidden behind what we call "identity" and "ego", and did it make use of this insight? I will answer by once again pointing to the hitherto unexplained phenomenon of the shaman himself, in large areas, dressing in woman's clothing if he is a man, of his often being a hermaphrodite in other places, for example, in some Indian cultures in America. In addition the shaman, in language and behavior, often looks for his pattern among members of the opposite sex.

When we know how fundamental the roles of male and female are for the comprehension of identity, of ego in an individual, we understand once more that actions and behavior of this kind were the prerequisites for his being able to give free reign to the primary functions without resistance. *By destroying his own pattern of character, he opens the way for the voices, the visions.*

There is scarcely anything which tells us more decisively how self-destructive it was to be a shaman. One could learn to shut oneself out, or deaden the impressions from normal surroundings. But now and then experience and examples demanded more, one had to sacrifice a part of one's self, one's own personality.

What a strength it must have been for the shaman to have contact with the spirits, and I do not grudge him the communion he thought he had! For there is so much in the shaman's situation that makes him stand out as an individual with special contact difficulties. Not only did the shift in his sexual role, or his unclear sexual status cause him difficulties with the most intimate form of human contact, the sexual, but there are also things which indicate that the reduced sensory stimulation, which the system made use of, created a particularly strong need for contact.

Here too there is much we do not know, both about cerebral functions and about the problem of social contact. But it is clear that "sensory deprivation" fosters a need for contact with people, a need so intense that the sexual element predominates in the consciousness of the one who finds himself

placed in such a situation. In part it is directed towards the opposite sex, in part towards the same sex.

"Sensory deprivation" also implies social isolation. It produces an intense feeling of "being different". It dissolves an ego which already has little resistance. To feelings of this kind, the shaman will necessarily react with an intense need for contact. Out of such a shattering experience of loneliness and social isolation, the *helper* must be created, the person who is a support and a help to the shaman, and with whom he communes socially in his attempts to join the fellowship of the others again.

For the shaman, the return to a social fellowship is through the helper. It is not strange that this helper is thanked, praised and flattered for his art, for his song, for his friendship, or even that the shaman seeks sexual intercourse with the helper and leaves the cold isolation out there where the spirits reign. Or shall we say the cold isolation *within*, where he has lived, withdrawn, like the snail in an inhuman cohabitation with the primary functions in his own central nervous system?

Nonetheless, if we now feel that we understand more of the way in which shamanism relies upon certain cerebral functions, which can be experimentally proven, then a long row of no less important problems appears. First and foremost: is shamanism capable of solving problems by turning to these primary functions? Does the shaman here possess resources which he can employ for the good of the people for whom he feels responsibility? Or is the whole thing merely a flimsy, intense experience, without any connection with outer realities?

If we distinguish between conscious logical thought, and the more unconscious form of problem-solving which we call intuition, then there is a basic distinction between them: the solution of problems on the conscious level makes use of words. In the unconscious activity which is entailed in intuition, we must believe that these combinations we make build upon visual, auditory and other sensory memories. Now when we arrive at a solution on an intuitive basis, abstraction and symbolism, to a lesser degree, are materials for the solution.

It is just such a stream of complex pictures which we can imagine the shaman resorting to, but can his cohabitation with them also provide solutions which have any real value?

In order to reply to this, let us first imagine what kind of forces we may be dealing with here. The person who, in one way or another, has experienced "the unreal", revealing shaman qualities, or has received a shaman election, will, around such an experience, amass stories and legends about *the way* a shaman acts and *what* he experiences.

It is reasonable to believe that such information, in the connections they have with a central, momentous psychical experience, might add to and give content to the shaman's experience on a subsequent occasion, in the manner of a hypnotic command from an overpowering will.

Much of the equipment used by the shaman—the figures on the drum, metal animals on the garments, different kinds of "riding" and "driving animals"—can be employed to retain central conceptions about "journeys" and "ways of journeying", right up to the point when the shaman glides over into his inner experiences. This apparatus may also be suggestive, and can give the experiences of different shamans a certain aspect of uniformity.

When the shaman turns to his inner experiences, his inner flow of pictures, he is, in the trance, freed of much of what, in bodily functions, consciousness or surroundings, might prevent him from concentrating on the problem he has to solve. He is also released from the "tabu-conceptions" with which society and tradition can bind his thoughts. He is deprived of his usual critical powers so that he can have experiences in the area where the problem lies.

We can also imagine that the problem may be of such a nature that it is not easy to think out logically and in full consciousness. Or it may demand abstractions, and make demands upon formulations and logical conclusions which make contemplation difficult.

Let us imagine that the shaman has the task of trying to find out in which direction the wild reindeer have gone, so that the starved and exhausted hunters can find the game they need to save their tribe. A long list of considerations is involved here, and decides where the animals are now staying: first, the snow and the low temperatures in the autumn, the autumn grazing places, the prevailing winds in early winter, flocks of wolves, storms, the amount of snow in the lowlands and up in the mountains, the condition of the ice on lakes and rivers. To this must be added a knowledge about conditions in previous years, reports from hunters and travellers.

Concentrating on all this, we can imagine that the shaman, on his "journey", experiences a long row of pictures and intuitions which, with lightning speed, are set apart and combined, accepted or discarded in their combinations. Out of this rush through various kinds of information, experiences and pictures, the shaman returns with an experience of an intuitive solution to the problem: "I have seen the reindeer by the valleys to the east."

If we think in this manner, it is not impossible that the shaman has a solution here which would have otherwise taken him endless speculations to arrive at. Perhaps it would not have been at all possible for him to arrive at such a solution logically and consciously.—It is not unreasonable, on the contrary, it seems to be probable that the shaman, in his trance, employs mental resources to which a modern person no longer has access, to the same extent. In our part of the world, we have long based our solution of problems, first and foremost, on symbols, and on the language. We have chosen an area in which we are continually building more extensively upon our knowledge of cause and effect, and in this state we leave our knowledge to posterity.

If we here imagine a form of intuitive problem-solving, which does not employ our usual abstractions, we also arrive at a better understanding of the foundation upon which shamanism rests. Shamanism is at home in a culture lacking writing, in a culture without social organization. Shamanism is, first and foremost, characteristic of the fringe-cultures to the north where people subsist by primitive hunting and fishing. It is a question of people who have organized their way of thinking by symbols and social specialization to a lesser degree than in other cultures. It is also a question of people who, more often than others, with life at stake, must mobilize all their resources in order to survive. It is a question of people who, in a monotonous landscape and with few impressions, can come into situations when hunger, exhaustion and isolation can limit stimulation, and turn contemplative life inwards to primary experiences.

But in reality, it is probably easier for us to imagine that at every step in the saga of mankind both methods of problem-solving have been employed, but that we, in our world of symbols and abstraction, are more and more alien to what has been a less precise problem-solving, filled with intense experiences and with strange, penetrating effects upon the relationship between

personality and social milieu.—The primitive, migratory society, with its elementary form of social organization, with incomplete equipment of thought and abstraction, cannot afford to risk life and security on our conscious method of problem-solving as the *only* method of procedure.

Where our society trains the scientist in the specialized use of symbols and language, so the migratory cultures have their specialists who, in a crisis, can also employ the less conscious and less precise forms of problem-solving, on the level where man, in his thinking, parted company with his other fellow-creatures.

## 4. *The Personality Structure of the Shamans as Tested by means of the Rorschach Test*

In recent years psychologists and psychiatrists have occupied themselves extensively with the problems connected with the activity of the shaman and his psyche. The main questions are no longer his obvious ambivalent sexual role or the question of his "normality". The most promising approach seems to be the efforts to determine the dominant characteristics of his personality structure by means of testing, first and foremost by means of the Rorschach tests (Bruno Klopfer & L. Bryce Boyer, "Notes on the Personality Structure of a North American Indian Shaman: Rorschach Interpretation"; and L. Bryce Boyer, Bruno Klopfer, Florence B. Brawer & Hayao Kawai, "Comparisons of the Shamans and Pseudoshamans of the Apaches of the Mescalero Indian Reservation: A Rorschach Study", *Journal of Projective Techniques*, vol. 25, 1961, and vol. 28, 1964).

Boyer describes in his first study the test reactions of a shaman, Black Eye, of the Apache tribe of the Mescalero Indian Reservation. This seems to be the first time a study of this kind has been undertaken with a shaman as the test subject, and the result is of great interest both as regards the shaman within general social anthropology and his place in the study of religion.

The Rorschach test operates with a series of coloured blots which have no assigned meaning but which are open to interpretation according to the personality traits of the person tested. It is at present one of our most important and most widely utilized character tests.

Black Eye tended to interpret the figures of the Rorschach test from a frame

of reference dominated by his role as medicine man and shaman. He had a general tendency to interpret in the direction of "star", "cloud", "lightning", just such phenomena in nature which he regularly used as material for interpretations in his relationship with the "powers". In other words, it seems that one of the most fundamental attitudes of this shaman was his conception of himself as "spoken to" or "rendered messages through" by elements in his surroundings. He is on a more or less constant alert as regards his relations towards the "powers"; he has attained a "symbolic attitude" towards his surroundings.

The "alertness" of this shaman gave the impression of a general background in his personality of "deep anxiety connected with the strong and totally unrefined impulsive sensuous reaction". "He identifies his urges with his magic mandate, but is very careful, at the same time, to avoid any ego responsibility for his actions." This is just the kind of personality one would expect to fulfil the role of "intermediary" in a religious group; in other cultures he would serve as a prophet. His openness to the symbolic value of elements in his surroundings seems to be related to the general attitude of the artist; but in some important respects he is different: in his attitude towards the supernatural powers and in his social function derived from his role as "intermediary" between the "powers" and his culture.

The shaman feels himself dependent on outside powers—"he is used"—whereas the artist, more independently, *uses the outside powers* in his creativeness, in the "world" that he creates, in his art. But even the artist may at times feel himself under the sway of uncontrolled powers. He may talk of "godlike inspiration", or he may, for instance, as a surrealistic painter or writer of symbolic literature, see himself as an agent of his own unconscious creative activities.

The artist who considers himself inspired by God or drawing upon sources of "unconscious creativity" generally deprecates the idea that he is personally responsible for creative utterances in the sense that they might be consciously controlled. Thus even the artist may feel himself to be an "intermediary" much in the same way that the shaman does. The difference lies in the conception of *where* the powers are situated to which one takes this intermediating attitude: either *within* one's own personality or *outside*, thus reducing the degree of personal responsibility. The difference lies also in the kind of

authority attributed to the "powers": powers situated outside the ego will generally be accepted as having greater authority.

The study of the Apache shamans of the Mescalero Reservation divided the shamans into two groups according to the way they were perceived by themselves and/or their society. Boyer, Klopfer, Brawer & Kawai singled out twelve shamans (seven men, five women) and seven pseudoshamans (four men, three women). The shamans were regarded as such both by themselves and their society. The pseudoshamans lacked this double confirmation of their status; they were regarded as shamans either by themselves or by their society, but were not recognised as shamans by both parties.

To compare the results with general traits, a control group was established, thirty men and twenty-four women, all except four over fifty years old in order to ensure that they were all well established within the traditional social pattern and value system of the tribe.

The study of this Indian group comprised both psychoanalytically oriented interviews, frequently in a therapeutic situation, and Rorschach tests. Thus it was possible to draw conclusions from a relatively large number of observations and from very rare material.

The comparison between the two differently defined groups of shamans brought out that the shamans were more like hysterics than the pseudoshamans were. At the same time, the shamans had a greater interest in the theoretical value of objective information and discovered characteristic traits in a given material more quickly than the pseudoshamans. This was concluded from the way they reacted to the Rorschach test.

Commenting on this, Klopfer states: "The more people are egoistically involved and lose practically all characteristics of individual personalities from the Rorschach standpoint, the more likely they are to be found among the pseudoshamans, while the real shaman appears capable of using regression in the service of the ego, in Freudian terms. This accounts for the peculiar mixture between hysterical and real creative characteristics to be found in the Rorschach data derived from the shamans and which is absent in those of the pseudoshamans."

The shaman, according to this study, is not involved in the interpretation of the "messages" on his own behalf, whereas the pseudoshaman is more interested in the use of the message for his own gain. The shaman also has

the possibility of regression for meaningful purposes. He has readier access to all levels of development as an individual and a greater possibility for remembering and re-experiencing earlier events and emotions than the pseudoshaman.

Boyer, Klopfer, *et al.*, also stress the presence of ego-controlled availability of primary processes in the shaman, something which in itself is intimately related to creativity and showmanship. These factors seem to be "as necessary for the successful practice of shamanism as they are for the artist whose products are to prove lasting in acceptance and influence, for the true prophet, and for the convincing functions of the impostor."

The division of the shamans and pseudoshamans into separate groups might be criticized as in some respects insufficient or even misleading. Whether or not the shaman is regarded as a "real" shaman by the group might say something about his general success in his undertakings or his adherence to the traditional pattern. It says nothing about his own attitude towards his social functions or his own capability or his attitude towards the powers in whose sway he feels himself to be. The person who is counted as a pseudoshaman might therefore only differ from the shaman as far as the reactions of the society towards his shamanism or his attitude towards the "powers" has any effect upon the formation of his personality.

But in spite of this reservation, the picture given of the personality of the shaman, supported by interviews, analytic therapy, and tests, is of the utmost importance in understanding the functions of the shaman within society and his place in the history of religion. New and more extensive studies from other parts of the world according to these methods would be highly welcome. They are urgently needed in the Arctic circumpolar regions where the tradition and practice of shamanism is rapidly diminishing owing to acculturation, industrialization, and social pressure.

New psychological studies of the personality of the shaman reveal to us that he regards himself as an observer, and his society sees him as both observer and interpreter. He is more or less constantly on the alert for signs through which the powers, the gods, approach him with messages of importance to him and his group. He does not regard himself as the creator of such messages, the messages *are* there, and he is the one to pass them on to his group so that the appropriate steps might be taken to avert, defend, or act.

Besides this general attitude towards the symbols that surround him, the shaman is apt to translate his surroundings and interpret them according to the language and the symbols of his mythic training. This is nothing more than what should be expected of a person who has been trained within a system of concepts so thoroughly that the system acts as his constant frame of reference.

The shaman reacts like any such person in any culture at any time. A specialist in Ibsen will interpret life in terms of symbols from Ibsen's plays and will constantly impress these symbols on his surroundings: "He is a Peer Gynt-like escapist"; "He comes like an evil omen, like the white Rosmersholm horses". The theologian will refer as often to his Bible, as will the biologist to his Darwin.

The group will classify such persons as "interesting personalities" or "learned men" or "bores", according to the function they fulfil and the power they have of impressing their "message" on their contemporaries.

In an undifferentiated society, where secular and spiritual leadership is vaguely institutionalized, the shaman is looked up to not only for his special powers and religious functions but also as a "knower" or "wise man" in general. He carries in himself, because of his special authority, many of the functions which in more structured societies are covered by the spiritual and worldly decision-makers.

What about the "honesty" of the shaman? Boyer was impertinent enough to raise that question, trying to study the role of "imposture" in shamanism. With psychoanalytically founded methods he wanted to penetrate the behavioral side of shamanism in order to judge the degree of conscious or unconscious pose.

Boyer came to the conclusion that the shamans were, on the whole, typical members of the Mescalero group, showing psychological congruence with it. They differed from the others in two important respects: their possession of greater creative potential, as mentioned, and in their successful use of imposture.

Boyer maintains that imposture seems to be as necessary for the successful practice of shamanism as showmanship is for the artist. But here we meet with the possibility of imposture on many levels, from the basically honest attitude of the artist who at the moment of performance is what he poses as

being to the level at which the *angakkoq* of Knud Rasmussen gave up his shamanistic role, realizing that he "wasn't good enough at lying".

What then about the hysterical traits that also were typical of the shamans among the Mescalero Indians and not so typical of the pseudo-shamans? The capacity of regression in the service of the ego is an important trait of the personality both of the hysteric and, for instance, the artist. Both use their power of a more ready contact with experience at earlier stages in their development and their capacity for re-experiencing, often unconsciously, in furthering their ends. The shaman here may be compared with the artist in his greater ego-controlled ability to call upon the primary processes. The hysteric uses this capacity with little or no consistency to further his aims of the moment.

## 5. *Conclusions*

The ability of primary-process thinking, of making unconventional combinations, like those of the child in his reflections on his surroundings, are important aspects of creativity. It is highly interesting that this ability is the most characteristic personality trait of the shaman.

I have, earlier in this study, pointed to the part that less conscious, less precise, and non-verbal forms of problem-solving might play in shamanism. This implies "regression" and a broad contact with the previous experience of the individual, down to the level at which "thinking" might be regarded as a kind of non-verbal combination of motor reminiscences. In principle, drawing upon these resources by the shaman, implies an even more intimate turning to primary processes in which intimations combine in the shadows and whispers of observations which cannot at present and perhaps never, will be brought forth to manifest consciousness. To activate these primary processes, more utilized in earlier stages in the development of our species, the shaman could use his special technique of regression and unconsciousness.

The shaman must then be regarded as an individual who has unusual capacities for contact with his own stock of experiences, down to the non-verbal level, a power of untraceable combination at such levels, and the ability to accept the resulting combinations as problem-solving solutions.

An individual like the shaman, who is constantly on the alert for "the

powers" and who feels their total impact on the life of himself and his group, would naturally not be a calm and reflecting man. Through his repeated discoveries of "messages", he lives under recurrent emotional shocks. His life is filled with moments in which he is emotionally "raised", and these moments have an influence on his whole organism.

There is still a lot we do not know about our own body and the complex of happenings that we call "memory". Knowledge of body chemistry and its emotional effects seems to be accelerating. Intense emotions are felt to have special effects, such as giving the experience of catharsis to the mind and body. Recurring strong emotions might therefore be one of the prerequisites for easier access to the non-verbal level of motoric reminiscenses. The "message" in itself being both reason for and result of emotional constitution and emotional habits.

The emotions felt by the shaman, and observed by the audience, seem to be one of the reasons for the position he occupies in his society. The shaman acts on behalf of the group. The group is intensely occupied with his actions and emotions, and the emotions are in this situation easily transferable to the group. At the same time the group never understands the reason for his emotions and registers the actions and reactions of the shaman as unusual, perhaps even as supernatural. Efforts on behalf of the group, efforts for the welfare of the group in relation to powers not comprehended, are one of the reasons for the "awe-inspired" attitude felt towards the shaman. In our own society, this awe-inspiring social function of the shaman is replaced, not by the artist, but, perhaps foremost, by the scientist.

## SCRIPTA INSTITUTI DONNERIANI ABOENSIS

1. Studies in Shamanism, edited by Carl-Martin Edsman. 1967.
2. Fatalistic Beliefs in Religion, Folklore, and Literature, edited by Helmer Ringgren. 1967.

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