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**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
THE TREE-DWELLER DREAMERS AND THE LITTLE PEOPLE:
SHAMANS, POWER AND SPIRIT HELPERS
IN THE CANADIAN DAKOTA RELIGIOUS TRADITION**

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by

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Dedicated to the memory of my Dad

Frank Joseph Ruml (1927-1974)

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I have many people to thank and acknowledge who have helped me through this long, stress filled process--especially my family. Without my Mom (Joyce Denoon), my sister Bev, my brother Vern, and my nephews Dustin and Mitch, I would not be where I am today. They have been there since the beginning. Their constant love and support has helped me through some pretty rough financial and personal times. I could not have accomplished what I have without them. My Nana and Papa (Vern and Irene Denoon) have also always been there for me, helping me to become who I am as a person today, I love and admire them deeply.

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India and I from Manitoba, strangers in a strange town. We became like brothers and have seen each other through both good and bad times. Gwendolyn and I were together for six of my seven years in Ottawa until destiny dictated that our paths would lead in different directions. Much of this dissertation reflects an encounter with Gwen's editorial skills; both directly and indirectly through skills formed by our encounter (of course any errors in this dissertation are mine). Gwen and the Guth family (Francis, Evelyn, David and Jenny) will always have a special place in my memories of the Ottawa era.

The final stage of this journey found me back at Brandon in a two year position as sessional lecturer at Brandon University and White Bear, Saskatchewan, followed by an eight month term appointment at the University of Winnipeg (four months have gone by). It was at Brandon that I met Karen Myran. Her love and support has given me the strength to finish this last leg of studies. Karen, her children Gordie, Dana and Jordan and the Myran family welcomed me with their kindness, love and good humour and have helped to make this journey more enjoyable. Kitchi Megwetch.

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In the context of this dissertation, it would be a sin if I failed to acknowledge my own "spirit helpers." I was raised to believe that everyone is given a guardian angel to watch over them...mine must be tired...I think we'll go fishing.

PREFACE

In nineteen seventy-nine at the age of seventeen, I had a transformative experience that changed my life. Coming from a Catholic background, I interpreted this experience as a calling to the priesthood and subsequently left Winnipeg to enroll in Religious Studies at Brandon University. At the time, I thought Religious Studies was what one should take to become a priest (the first question people in Religious Studies are often asked is, "Are you going to be a priest/nun", the second is invariably, "How are you going to make money!"). As fate would have it, Religious Studies is not about studying for the priesthood (or making money!), it is about learning and attempting to understand the religious history of humankind in all its wonderful diversity and variegated manifestations.

As time went on I was met with the decision to continue on to graduate studies. At first I thought of focussing on the Hindu religious tradition, but then, in the fourth year of my B.A. program I took a course from Arthur Amiotte titled "Traditional Native Religions of the Northern Plains." Professor Amiotte's intimate knowledge of his own Lakota tradition and his masterful communication of its beauty and profundity spoke to me on a deeply personal (one might say spiritual) level and instilled in me the desire to know more. The following summer I inadvertently landed a job as youth group worker at the Brandon Indian and Metis Friendship Centre, which led to my experiencing a spirituality originally introduced to me in an academic setting; during that summer I attended my first sweatlodge ceremony, pipe ceremony, Midewiwin ceremonies and other religious and cultural gatherings. Over the years, the Dakota, Cree and Anishnabe traditions have become part of my personal faith, as friends from these traditions have invited me to pray, celebrate and mourn together with them. I respect these people and these traditions and greatly admire the wisdom and spiritual insights of the Elders and Spiritual leaders.

The pages that follow reflect my understanding based largely upon the written literature and should be seen as a work in progress, not the final word. It is a particular understanding, filtered through the mind and soul of an individual who brings to his understanding all of the baggage unique to him. Hopefully this baggage has equipped me with the necessary tools to allow for an accurate and insightful understanding of a particular tradition--the Dakota religious tradition.

ABSTRACT

One of the most profound expressions of Dakota religiousness is contained in the affirmation/prayer "*Mitakuye Oyasin*" ("All my relatives", "I am related to all"), a heart-felt, mystical awareness of the interrelatedness of all living things and a fundamental religious orientation. The significance of this and other expressions of relationship is indicated throughout the written literature. In fact, an examination of the dynamic of relationship is the best way to understand Dakota religiousness. The following dissertation will substantiate this perspective by examining the dynamic of relationship in the Canadian Dakota religious tradition.

Although the relational orientation itself is hidden, its expression is observable. The following document is an exploration of how "correct relationship," as a religious orientation or way of being truly and fully human, is expressed in the Dakota religious tradition, in daily interactions with other people, with *Wakan Tanka* and the *Wakan* beings, with the animals and with the cosmos. The expression of relationship in myths, rituals, and other religio-cultural manifestations will be investigated. In particular, those expressions related to a discussion of the shamans and their spirit helpers will be focused on. As an exemplary model, the relationship between the tree dweller dreamers (a type of shaman) and the little people (a type of spirit helper) will be examined.

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RELIGIOUS TRADITION**

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INTRODUCTION

The ultimate purpose of this dissertation is to put forward a particular understanding of what it means to be religious for the the Canadian Dakota. It must be stressed at the outset that this understanding is based almost entirely upon written sources; the pages that follow will be a sojourn through these sources. The conclusion that will be substantiated is that to be religious means to live in correct relationship--with the spirit world, the natural world, the human world, the cosmos--and that religious activity involves relationship establishing and relationship maintaining. Furthermore, correct relationship is established and maintained on the principles of respect and reciprocity. In order to reach the concluding chapter a number of elements must first be outlined and discussed.

An examination of the written literature reveals inconsistencies and confusion in the terminology used to refer to the Dakota/Nakoda/Lakota Nation and its political, geographic, and linguistic divisions. The first chapter of this dissertation, therefore, will answer the question "Who are the Dakota?" Many people today are actually unaware of the diversity between the various Native North American Nations. There has been a tendency in the past to simply refer to all Native North American people as "Indians". Chapter one will avoid the error of overgeneralization and will identify the Dakota Nation in a specific context, identifying: the Siouan linguistic family; the relationship between

the Dakota and Assiniboine; the origin of the name "Sioux"; the political divisions of the Dakota/Nakoda/Lakota Nation; the historical circumstances surrounding the origin of the "Canadian" Dakota; the validity of using Lakota material to supplement an understanding of Dakota religion; the geographic location of the Dakota based upon the archaeological record; and, who the Dakota are according to who they say they are, based upon the mythological record.

At the centre of the Dakota religious teachings and religious activities are the religious teachers themselves--the shamans or spiritual leaders--and their spirit helpers. Just as there is confusion in terminology surrounding the identification of the Dakota Nation, there is difficulty with the usage and understanding of the term "shaman"--scholars differ in their usage of the term, the popular understanding of what a shaman is has an impact on conceptualizations, and the Dakota have specific names in their own language to identify people who have otherwise been called shamans or worse names. In Chapter Two, following a discussion of "classic" or "Eliadian" shamanism, the popular and new age understanding of shamanism and shamanism in general, I will engage in a specific discussion of Dakota shamanism--identifying the Dakota names and descriptions of the various categories of spiritual leaders, all of whom have been legitimately identified as shamans in the literature.

Reference to the shamans and their spirit helpers is essential for a proper understanding of Dakota religiousness. Shamans are

responsible for the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of the people. Often referred to in English as "Medicine Men/Women" they can be thought of, functionally, as the teachers, the intellectuals, the philosophers, the religionists, the counsellors, the psychotherapists, the doctors, the priests, the "keepers of the traditions." Furthermore, shamans are the intermediaries between the human social world and the spirit social world. As intermediaries, they intercede on behalf of the people at religious ceremonies and events. In particular, the shamans officiate at one of the most significant--if not the most significant--religious experiences in a person's life: the *hanblecheyapi* (dream or vision quest); an experience integral to establishing personal relationships with the spirit beings and forming the personal character of the individual. The process of the dream or vision quest enables a person to be in direct contact with the spirits. Dreams or visions can be typified as moments when the person's *nagi* (spirit) enters the *nagi* world. Through prayer, supplication, and making oneself wretched, pitiful and humble, a person seeks a gift from the spirits. The spirits take pity on the human individual and grant a gift, *sicun* (power). It is extremely important to understand the meaning of the word power or *sicun* and Chapter Two will define this concept. An individual quests for a dream or vision in order to obtain power. The power is given by a particular spirit, which then becomes the dreamer's spirit helper. A relationship is established with the spirit helper and as such, the

dreamer and the spirit helper are obligated to fulfil certain duties which are seen as correct behaviour, conduct, or action in any relationship; serving as a model for how to live correctly, the fundamental way of relating with another living being is with respect and reciprocity. Thus, it is clear that there are a number of key themes and expressions which need to be examined in order to understand the dynamic of relationship. It will be necessary to discuss: Dakota dream theory; the concept of 'power' or *sicun* and the understanding of the self, as expressed in the concept of multiple souls; the vision quest; the Dream societies; and the Wakan Wacipi or Medicine Dance Society.

Due to the exemplary role of the shaman and the primacy of the spirit world, I will examine the relationship between a particular type of shaman--the Tree-dweller dreamers--and a particular type of spirit helper--the Little People--as an illustrative representation of relationship. In the case of the Tree Dweller Dreamer, it is with the aid of a specific type of spirit helper--the Little People--that the shaman who has dreamt of them uses their gift of power to perform such duties as curing psycho-spiritual and physical illnesses, seeing into the future, finding lost articles, and achieving success in hunting. These shamans or "Dreamers" had, at one time, formed a member group of the Wakan Wacipi Society (the sacred dance society or medicine dance cult) and contemporary *Yuwipi Wichastas* "call in" their spirit helpers, some of whom are Little People, at the *Yuwipi*, a major contemporary Lakota ritual.

A cursory glance reveals that the written literature on the

Native cultures of the Americas abounds in scattered references to the Little People, who are variously referred to as little tree dwellers, little spirits, fairies, dwarfs, elves, pygmies, etc. Surprisingly, however, not only is a general, cross-cultural synthesis of the material unavailable, but--although the odd paragraph or the occasional introductory article appears--no comprehensive study exists which details belief in the Little People for a specific Native North or South American culture, not even for the Dakota. Despite the contemporary and historical significance of the Little People in the Native religious traditions of the Americas, almost no scholarly attempt has been made to understand the meaning of such traditions. It would seem that the Little People are exhibiting their famed elusiveness even in the written literature; Chapter Three will alleviate this oversight. Chapter Three will provide a synthesis of the written literature which elucidates the presence and role of the Little People in Dakota religious tradition. Such an endeavour will familiarize the reader with the significance of the Little People in Dakota religious history as well as set the stage for further study of the Little People cross-culturally in the Americas. Chapter Three will be used to illustrate the relational perspective and will provide the data from which conclusions will be drawn in the final chapter.

In the concluding chapter the specifics of what is meant by living in correct relationship, of being religious, will be detailed. Following an acknowledgment of the cross-disciplinary and

popular interest in exploring the relational perspective in human existence, Chapter Four will outline the relational perspective in the social and political spheres of Dakota society. Maintaining that the relational perspective is grounded in a fundamental religious orientation, Chapter Four will outline the expression of the relational perspective in other aspects of the cumulative tradition: the use of the pipe and tobacco; feasting; the giveaway; and, dancing and singing.

Chapter I WHO ARE THE DAKOTA?

The General Context

The Dakota, in the written literature and in popular discourse, have been and are generally referred to as the "Sioux" or sometimes "Indians" or even the "Sioux Indians". This chapter is intended to answer the question "Who are the Dakota?". It will explore the different terminology used to refer to the Dakota, their language family, relationship to the Assiniboine, origin of the name "Sioux", and identify the three linguistic and political divisions of the Dakota/Nakoda/Lakota nation. It will also identify who the "Canadian Dakota" are, the band names, the location of the reserves, the circumstances of the Dakota's arrival in Canada in 1862 (British Territory at the time) and the relationship between the Dakota and Lakota. Furthermore, this chapter will take a brief look at the archaeological record to reveal the geographical location of Dakota villages or camps prior to written testimony. Finally, it will answer "Who are the Dakota?" according to the Dakota mythological record; who do the Dakota say they are, where did they come from? The Dakota have their own creation stories which tell of where they come from.

The Dakota in a larger cultural context have been commonly referred to and thought of as "Indians"--a misnomer applied to the indigenous people of the Americas by Christopher Columbus in fourteen ninety-two when he stumbled into the region of the Caribbean islands. Thinking he was in India, he labelled the

inhabitants "Los Indios"--"Indians." The name has stubbornly hung on ever since. The "Indians" have also been called "Natives," "Aborigines," "Aboriginal North Americans," "the Indigenous people of North America," "North American Indians," "Canadian Indians," "American Indians," "Amerindians," and a few other titles and variations of the above-mentioned titles. Of course they have also been referred to pejoratively as "savages," "heathens," "pagans," or "primitives"; clearly, inappropriate terms which should be unhesitatingly dropped from modern use.

The quest for a politically correct term in our contemporary discourse proves difficult. Some people say, "I'm a Native person", others respond, "We're not Native we're aboriginal people", still others say, "I'm an Indian", while there are those people who resent being called Indians. It seems that most Native Americans, when speaking English, tend to identify their people as "Indians." Confusion arises, however, when one considers the Indian community in Canada; that is, the people from India, descendants of the people Columbus thought he met when he first set shore in this region of the world. In the Canadian context the term "First Nations" is popular at the present time. In political or legalist discourse this title is probably the most accurate because it reflects the fact that the peoples of these First Nations belong to several distinct cultural and linguistic groups, each with their own specific laws and traditions.

The Historical Record

Siouan Linguistic Family

One of the most consistent errors, historically, has been the failure to distinguish individual nations from their larger cultural context. This flaw has resulted in the over-generalization of unique cultural traits, preventing a recognition of the diversity between the different nations while perpetuating stereotypical images. Whether it is from laziness, convenience or ignorance, the tendency to speak in generalities is continued by uninformed academics, teachers and the media. The average Canadian is unaware of the fact that there exists a total of eleven different linguistic groups in Canada alone; "with differences between them as great as those between English and Arabic or Japanese."¹ Robert Lowie discusses the systematic classification of peoples according to their linguistic affiliation. His summary is as follows:

Groups whose speech is so similar that they are able to communicate with each other, notwithstanding minor differences, are said to be *dialects* of the same language; if the differences are too great for mutual intelligibility, we speak of distinct *languages*. However, in many instances of the latter kind, the languages show many resemblance that can be explained only on assumption that they have diverged from a common parental tongue...Such ultimately related languages jointly form a *family* (stock). In a large family it may happen that two or more of the languages are closer to each other than to the rest, in which case the family is for convenience divided into *branches*.²

¹Alan D. McMillan, *Native Peoples and Cultures of Canada* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1988), p. 3.

²Robert Lowie, *Indians of the Plains* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), pp. 2-4. Originally published

The Dakota belong to the Siouan linguistic family, an ethnic unit first identified by Gallatin, as W.J. McGee explains:

So long ago as 1836...Gallatin employed the term "Sioux" to designate collectively "the nations which speak the Sioux language," and used an alternative term to designate the subordinate confederacy--i.e., he used the term in a systematic way for the first time to denote an ethnic unit which experience has shown to be well defined.³

The Siouan nations, as outlined by G. Laviolette,⁴ are as follows:

- (a) Dakota-Assiniboine, comprising the confederacy of the Seven-Council-Fires (Oceti-Sakowin), and Assiniboine dissident group (separated from the Dakota in the 17th Century). Both speak the Dakota language.
- (b) Omaha, Ponka, Kwapa, Osage and Kansa, who all speak the Cegiha language.
- (c) Iowa, Oto and Missouri, who speak the Tciwere language.
- (d) Winnebago (or Hotcangara).
- (e) Mandans.
- (f) Hidatsa: comprising the Gros-Ventre (Minitari) and the Crows (Absaroka). These are not to be confused with Algonquian tribes of the same names.
- (g) Biloxi (in Louisiana).
- (h) Six other eastern tribes, now extinct, a few Catawbas excepted.

by the American Museum of Natural History, 1954.

³W.J. McGee, *The Sioux Indians* (New York: Sol Lewis, 1973), p. 6.

⁴Gontran Laviolette, *The Sioux Indians in Canada* (Regina: The Marian Press, 1944), p. 12. With regards to this quote, Laviolette directs the reader to see W.J. McGee's *The Sioux Indians*.

Dakota and Assiniboiné

To refer to the Siouan nation in (a) as the Dakota-Assiniboiné is not entirely accurate; nor is it accurate to conclude that "both speak the Dakota language" (as does Laviolette, following McGee). It would be more accurate to identify the Nation as the Dakota-Nakoda-Lakota Nation and conclude that they are the speakers of the Dakota-Nakoda-Lakota language. The reason for distinguishing the Assiniboiné from the rest of the Dakota nation by means of a hyphen, however, is that the Assiniboiné branched off from the middle division Yanktonais. If I understand Dr. Paul Voorhis correctly, the Assiniboiné are the only group who still speak the "N" dialect. Apparently, the Yankton and Yanktonais now use the Dakota or Lakota dialect (with the exception of certain words which have retained the "N").⁵

Gontran Laviolette identifies the Assiniboiné as a "dissident group" which was separated from the "Oc'et'i Sakowin" in the seventeenth century. Although conflicting legends obscure the reasons why the Assiniboiné were separated from the Oc'et'i Sakowin, it must have been over a very serious matter, since the Dakota/Lakota name for the Assiniboiné is *Hohe*--which means enemy. With regards to the word Assiniboiné, Diamond Jenness gives the

⁵Dr. Paul Voorhies, linguist at Brandon University, Dept. of Native Studies, personal communication. See also: James Howard, *The Canadian Sioux*, Raymond J. DeMallie and Douglas R. Parks (eds.). (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), p. 4.

meaning as "the people that cook with hot stones."⁶ Dr. Voorhis said that the word Assiniboine has been translated to mean "Stoney Sioux." He broke down the word assiniboine into two parts. The first part "Assin' is the Saultaux (Ojibway) word for "stone." The second part "boine" is the French spelling of the word "pon" or "bon"--the Saultaux for person (compare this explanation with the word "Bwan," given by S. Riggs; see footnote 16).

Translating "Assiniboine" to mean "Stoney Sioux" leads to a topic which would be worthy of future investigation; namely, the relationship or distinction between the Assiniboines and Stoneys. Based on the literature, one gets the impression that they are one and the same people. For example, James Howard says:

The Assiniboine and Stoneys, however, who split off from the Yanktonais in the not too distant past, still call themselves Nak'oda when speaking their own language.⁷

However, Dr. Voorhis says that the Stoney and Assiniboine are linguistically different. It would be interesting to pursue this inquiry, however, the present concern is with the relationship between the Assiniboine and the Oc'et'i Sakowin.

If the split between the Assiniboine and the Oc'et'i Sakowin was due to a feud, does there still exist any bitterness, hostility or animosity between the Assiniboine and the rest of the Oc'et'i Sakowin? Howard's conclusion, which was based on his research prior to nineteen seventy-two, is:

⁶Diamond Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, (6th ed.; Ottawa: Queens Printer, 1963), p. 308.

⁷Howard, *Canadian*, p. 4.

The Assiniboine and Sioux share a common origin, but they were nevertheless bitter enemies right up until the reservation period, and there is still bad blood between the two tribes.⁸

It would seem that although there may be traces of unresolved, repressed feelings (bad blood), on the whole the friendship has been renewed. This assumption is not so far-fetched when one realizes that the "refugee"⁹ Dakota were required to live in peace if they were to remain in British territory. As such, they had promptly established a treaty with the Metis, in eighteen sixty-two. It was not until eighteen sixty-seven, after suffering a loss of lives at the hands of their old enemies, that the Canadian Dakota were able to form a treaty with the Plains-Ojibway. The Ojibway apparently were reluctant to share their traditional hunting grounds with the Dakota, whom the Plains-Ojibway viewed as intruders.

Another factor supporting the assumption that the friendship has been renewed between the Assiniboin and the Oc'et'i Sakowin was (is) the presence of a common antagonist who viewed the two nations as a single group--"Indians." The common antagonist of whom I speak is that part of the non-Indian "white" European settler community who oppressed the Native people and who met the Native

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁹In the summer of nineteen eighty-seven, at Dakota Tipi, Manitoba, I heard the eminent Dakota elder and tribal historian Eli Taylor (one of James Howard's informants) express indignation at being referred to as "refugees." He stressed that the Canadian plains and points in Eastern Canada have been part of the Dakota's traditional hunting grounds since time immemorial.

people with racial prejudice. Psychological research has demonstrated that when two groups (a+b) that are hostile towards each other, are confronted with a third group (c) which acts as an antagonist to the first two, then the first two identify with each other against the common antagonist.¹⁰ In fact, this same principle probably contributes to the growing sense of unity amongst Native people today in the late nineteen hundreds. Lame Deer comments on the unity amongst Native people, he says:

It is a good thing for Indians to look upon all Indian religions as a common treasure house, as something that binds us together in our outlook toward nature, toward ourselves, making us one, no longer just Sioux, Cheyennes, Navajos, Pueblos, Iroquois, Haidas--but something much bigger, grander--*Indians*.¹¹

and again:

...that ghost dance has made us into friends and brothers. Now we are just one big tribe--*Indians*.¹²

Still another factor which would lead to renewed friendship between the Dakota and their dissident Assiniboiné cousins is the Dakota cultural axiom ("meta-value") which states that one should "forgive and forget after proper restitution has been made."¹³ This is a

¹⁰See the work of M. Sherif, for example: M. Sherif, *In Common Predicament: Intergroup Conflict and Cooperation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966. "Experience of a common predicament is a tie that binds conflicting groups more firmly than any other commonality. Common opposition is also a unifying force." (viii)

¹¹Lame Deer (John Fire) and Richard Erdoes, *Lame Deer: Seeker of Visions*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 217. Lame Deer is a Lakota Wicasa Wakan (Holy Man, Shaman).

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 228.

¹³Lecture notes from: "Traditional Native Religions", Brandon University, Prof. Arthur Amiotte.

cultural value exemplified in ceremonies, re-iterated in mythologies and practised through life-ways. One such example is the custom of leaving something for the field mouse in return for the certain beans which the mouse collects and which the Dakota/Lakota take in exchange¹⁴, a form of reciprocity, an essential relational action as we shall see.

A final factor which leads to the conclusion that the friendship has, to an extent, been renewed is the inter-marriage between Assiniboiné and Dakota people, and hence the fact that some Assiniboiné live on the same reserves as their fellow Dakota/Lakota and vice versa.

As a result of the fact that the Assiniboiné remain politically and culturally a distinct group, separate from the Oc'et'i Sakowin, they will not be a concern to the rest of this dissertation. Similarly, because the Assiniboiné people are the only group which still use the Nakoda dialect and the majority of the Sioux in Canada are Dakota, I will refer to the people with whom this dissertation is concerned as Dakota.

Origin of the Name Sioux

The Dakota, therefore, are an aboriginal North American nation belonging to the Siouan linguistic family. They have been and are commonly referred to as the Sioux. The word "Sioux" originates from the fact that the literary world first learned about the

¹⁴See Howard *Canadian*, pages 59-60.

Dakota through the explorer and trader Jean Nicolet who received his information from Algonkian speakers at Green Bay, Wisconsin.¹⁵ The Algonkians lived in opposition to or conflict with the Dakota and, hence, referred to the Dakota as "nadowesiu" which means snake-like ones, a metaphor for enemies.¹⁶ As a result, in the first published mention of the Dakota, by Paul le Jeune (who received his information from Nicolet) in the *Jesuit Relations* of 1640, the Dakota are referred to by their Algonkian name, as follows:

...és enuirs de cette nation [Ouinipigou] sont les Naduesiu.¹⁷

Throughout the *Jesuit Relations*, the Dakota are variously referred to as Naduiusiu, Nadouessis, Nadouechiowac, and Nadouesiouek. Eventually, the word was shortened (in French) to "Sioux" from the

¹⁵According to the maps in Tanner's *Atlas*, there were Winnebago, Pottawatomi, Tionantati, and Ojibwa at Green Bay. Helen Hornbeck Tanner, ed. *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), pp. 32-33. See Map 1 on page 38 of this dissertation.

¹⁶On the word *nadowe*, Stephan Riggs says:

The Ojibwas are said to call the Iroquois Indians *Nadowe*, which signifies a large serpent. It is further stated, that the name given by the Ottawas to the Dakotas is *Nadowesé*, which name is also sometimes used by the Ojibwas, though they commonly call them *Bwan*. This latter name appears in *Assinaboine*. It does not appear that either has properly the signification of enemy, except so far as a serpent may be thus regarded.

Stephen R. Riggs, *Tah-Koo Wah-Kan; or The Gospel Among the Dakotas* (New York: Arno Press, 1972) p. 2.

¹⁷Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, vol. XVIII, Part I, Chapter X (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1898), p. 231.

last two syllables of the Algonkian word and to a one syllable pronunciation "Sioux" (in English), and the new name "stuck."¹⁸ Given its historical context, the word "Sioux" should fall into disuse whenever possible, since (as McGee so eloquently writes) "it <is> an alien and opprobrious designation for a people bearing a euphonious appellation of their own."¹⁹ It is interesting to note that Lame Deer says that calling his people Sioux or Dakota is "white man talk." He says:

*Maka tanhan wicasa wan--I am a man of the earth, as we say. Our people don't call themselves Sioux or Dakota. That's white man talk. We call ourselves Ikce wicasa--the natural humans, the free, wild, common people. I am pleased to be called that.*²⁰

Dakota/Nakoda/Lakota

It seems that one reason for continuing to apply the word "Sioux" to the Nation which calls itself *Dakota*, *Nakoda*, or *Lakota*, is convenience. It is a covering term for three divisions (*Eastern*, *Middle* and *Western*) whose members use the three designations, *Dakota*, *Nakoda*, or *Lakota*, to identify both their own

¹⁸A similar situation applies to the *Inuit* (their own name for their Nation) who were "stuck" with the word *Eskimo* ("eaters of raw fish") because the literary world first heard about the *Inuit* from Algonquian speakers (the *Montagnais*??) who referred to the *Inuit* derisively, as "*Eskimo*". I notice that today the *Inuit* have reclaimed their own name and the word *Eskimo* is appropriately falling into disuse.

¹⁹McGee, *Indians*, p. 6.

²⁰Lame Deer, *Lame Deer*, p. 23.

division and the entire nation.²¹ As one might have guessed, the three divisions correspond to the three dialects of the Nation. The distinguishing feature between the three dialects is that where one uses the first letter "D," the other uses the letter "N" and the other, the "L." The "D" is used by the Eastern division, the "N" is used by the Middle division, and the "L" is used by the Western division.

Whether Dakota, Nakoda or Lakota, the word "is said to mean 'allies,'"²² or "friendly," "implying confederated or allied."²³ According to Lavolette, "the word 'Dakota' means 'ally,' (from 'Koda'--friend)."²⁴ *United or allied*, the entire nation at one time (before the coming of the horse, when the divisions lived in closer proximity to each other) called their *alliance or confederacy* the *Oc'et'i Sakowin* which means *Seven Council-Fires* or *Seven Fireplaces*.²⁵ The seven "council fires" to which the name *Oc'et'i Sakowin* refers are the *"Mdewak'ant'unwan, Wahpek'ute, Sisit'unwan, Wahpetu'unwan, Ihankt'unwan, Ihankt'unwanna, and T'it'unwan."*²⁶ As James Howard points out:

²¹McGee, *Indians*, p. 4. Lane Deer's comment causes one to wonder about this statement. Yet, other Dakota and Lakota speakers refer to their own division and the entire tribe as Dakota and Lakota respectively.

²²Howard, *Canadian*, p. 3.

²³McGee, *Indians*, p. 158.

²⁴Lavolette, *Sioux*, p. 14.

²⁵Howard, *Canadian*, p. 3 (the italics are mine).

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 3 (the italics are mine).

The first four of the above-named bands, the Mdewakantons, Wahpekutes, Sissetons, and Wahpetons, came to be known as the Santee or Eastern Division...The fifth and sixth bands, the Yanktons and Yanktonais, came to be known as the Middle Division...(and) the seventh band, the Tetons, became the Western Division.²⁷

James Howard presents an excellent discussion of the meaning of the names given to the traditional bands and sub-bands.²⁸ In doing so, he relies on the account given by Stephan Riggs.²⁹ The names and translations of the various bands and sub-bands, from Howard's outline, are as follows:

Eastern Division - Santee (from Isanyati--"Dwellers at the Knife")

- 1) **Mdewakanton or Bdewakanton** "Spirit Lake Dwellers"
 - a) Kiyuksa "Breakers of Custom or Law"
 - *b) Hemnican "Hill-Water-Wood"
 - c) Kapoja "Light Ones"
 - *d) Magayutesne "They Who Do Not Eat Geese"
 - e) Heyatutunwe "Back Villagers"
 - f) Oyate Sica "Bad People"
 - g) Tintatunwe "Prairie Villagers"
- *The only two remembered by Howard's Canadian informants.
- 2) **Wahpekute** "Leaf Shooters"
- 3) **Sisitunwan (Sisseton)** "Ridges of Fish Offal Dwellers"
 - a) Tizaptanna "Five Lodges"
 - b) Okopeya "In Danger"
 - c) Cansdacikana "Little Place Bare of Wood"

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 3 (the italics are mine).

²⁸The particular stories related to the origin of the band and sub-band names are fascinating and telling testimonies to Dakota history. However, the scope of this dissertation prevents me from going into a discussion of the band name origin stories. For a discussion of the origin stories, I direct the reader to James Howard's *The Canadian Sioux*.

²⁹Stephan Riggs, *Dakota Grammar, Texts, and Ethnography*, James Owen Dorsey, ed. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1893).

- d) Basdecesni "Those Who Do Not Split (the backbone of buffalo)"
 - * e) Amdowapuskiya "Driers On The Shoulder"
 - * f) Kapoja "Light Ones"
 - g) Ohdihe ?
 - * h) Cankute "Shooters At Trees"
- *The only four remembered by Howard's Canadian informants.

- 4) Wahpetunwan (Wahpeton) "Leaf Dwellers"
 - a) Inyanceyaka Atunwan "Village at the Rapids"
 - *b) Tabkapsin Tunwanna "Those Who Dwell at the Shinny Ground"
 - *c) Wiyaka Otina "Dwellers on the Sand"
 - *d) Otehi Atunwan "Village on the Thicket"
 - *e) Wita Otina "Dwellers in the Island"
 - *f) Wakpa Atunwan "Village on the River"
 - *g) Cankaga Otina "Dwellers in Log (huts?)"

*Howard's Canadian informants do not remember the 7 sub-bands.

Howard mentions three more sub-bands which are not listed by Riggs³⁰

- h) Hinta Hankpa "Basswood Legging String"
- i) Ispa Tahinspa "Needle Elbow"
- j) Cusdipa "Dew Lickers"

Middle Division

- 5) Yankton
- 6) Yanktonais "Little Dwellers at the End"

Western Division

- 7) Teton "Dwellers on the Prairie"
 - *a) Brule or Sitcanxu "Burnt Thighs"
 - b) Sans Arcs or Itaziptco "Without Bows"
 - c) Blackfeet or Sihasapa "Black-feet"
 - d) Minneconjou or Minikooju "Plant beside the Stream"
 - e) Two Kettles or Oohenonpa "Two Boilings"
 - f) Ogalala or Oglala "She Poured Out Her Own"
 - including the Wajaja "Fringed" and Wagluxa "In Breeders"
 - g) Hunkpapa "At the Entrance"

* The summary of these sub-bands is from W.J. McGee.

³⁰Howard, *Canadian*, p. 20.

The Canadian Dakota

As Gontran Laviolette points out, ninety-seven percent of the Dakota/Lakota nation in Canada are descendants of the Eastern division Santee Dakota.³¹ James Howard lists the reserves of the Canadian Dakota providing us with a breakdown of the predominant sub-bands on each reserve. From Howard's research, the Canadian Dakota reserves and sub-band affiliation are as follows:

Manitoba reserves

1. Sioux Village = T'ipo Ihanke--"Farthest Camp"
2. Sioux Valley = Wipazuk'a Wakpa--"Juneberry Creek"
3. Birdtail Sioux = C'ankaga Ot'i--"Dwellers in Log Cabins"
4. Oak Lake = C'andupa Wakpa--"Pipe Creek" (also)
=Wic'ap'aha Iyeyapi--"Where They Found the Scalp"

Saskatchewan reserves

5. Standing Buffalo = T'at'anka Najin
6. White Warbonnet = Wap'ahaska
7. Round Plain or Sioux Wahpeton = T'intamibena
8. Forest Mountain (Wood) = C'anowancaya Puha

Sub-band Affiliation

1. Sioux Village = Mostly Wahpetons, some Sissetons and others.
2. Sioux Valley = Mostly Sissetons, several Mdewakantons, a few Wahpekutes and Wahpetons.
3. Birdtail Sioux = Mostly Wahpetons, Mdewakantons, a few Yanktonais.
4. Oak Lake = Mostly Wahpekutes, some Wahpetons, a few Yanktonais.
5. Standing Buffalo = Mostly Sissetons, a few Wahpetons and Wahpekutes.
6. White Warbonnet = Sissetons.
7. Round Plain or Sioux Wahpeton = Mostly Wahpetons, a few of the other Santee bands.
8. Forest Mountain (Wood) = Mostly Hunkpapa Tetons, with a few Santees.

³¹Gontran Laviolette, *The Dakota Sioux in Canada* (Winnipeg: DLM Publishing, 1991), p. ix.

Information at the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIANA) reveals that the reserve which was called *Sioux Village* is now (since 1972) divided into two reserves. The one reserve is called *Dakota Plains* and the other reserve is called *Dakota Tipi*. In addition, the *Birdtail Sioux* band own two reserves. The one reserve is called *Birdtail Creek Reserve* and the other is called *Birdtail Haylands*. In DIANA's publication entitled *The Indian Reserve Community Profiles 1984 Report (Manitoba Region)*, "Dakota Plains" and "Dakota Tipi" are listed separately and different Chiefs and Band administrators are registered as well. However, the same breakdown is not given for the two reserves listed for the Birdtail Sioux Band. This report mentions another "parcel" of land which is called *Fishing Station Indian Reserve*, located "on" Rossman Lake in the southwest corner of Riding Mountain National Park and is held jointly by three Dakota Bands (Birdtail Sioux, Sioux Valley and Oak Lake). DIANA does not list population figures for this reserve so it is doubtful that anyone actually lives on this land; perhaps, as the reserve name suggests, it is reserved for fishing. A final update of the Canadian Dakota scene is the news that the Dakota Tipi Band obtained a fifty year lease from the province of Manitoba for *Parish Lot 24* (sixty acres located directly east of the existing reserve) to accommodate the Band's population growth and future land uses.

The population of the various Dakota Bands, as of December 31, 1985, according to recent statistical information,³² compiled by DIANA, is illustrated in the following chart. This chart includes a breakdown of the male and female population, as well as the land space in hectares, Band Name, and Reserve name (as given by DIANA).

Table I: Canadian Dakota Population Statistics

Band Name	Reserve Name	Hectares	Male	Female	Total
Dakota Plains	Dakota Plains 6A	530.1	88	89	177
Dakota Tipi	Dakota Tipi 1	13.0	103	68	171
Sioux Valley	Sioux Valley 58	4,136.0	629	608	1,237
	Fishing Station 62A 1				
Birdtail Sioux	Birdtail Creek 57	2,735.7	146	150	296
	Birdtail Hay Lands 57A	119.8			
	Fishing Station 62A 1				
Oak Lake	Oak Lake 59	1,023.9	192	198	390
	Oak Lake 59A	64.7			
	Fishing Station 62A 1				
Standing Buffalo	Standing Buffalo 78	2,246.1	335	365	700
Moose Woods	White Cap 94	1,671.4	97	107	204
Wahpeton	Wahpeton 94A	1,462.0	71	80	151
	Wahpeton 94B	64.7			
Wood Mountain	Wood Mountain 160	2,376.2	45	53	78

Total Dakota/Lakota Population					3,994

³²The statistical information which I used was all published under the authority of the Hon. David E. Crombie, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Ottawa. The titles of the publications are as follows: *Indian Reserve Community Profiles 1984 Report (Manitoba Region)*, *Schedule of Indian Bands, Reserves and Settlements Including Membership and Population Location and Acreage In Hectres, June 1, 1985*, and *Indian Register Population by Sex and Residence for registry groups, responsibility centres, regions and Canada December 31, 1985*.

As can be seen from the sub-band affiliation chart (page twenty-one) the only exception to members of the *Eastern Division Isantee Dakota* are the few Yanktonai on the Birdtail and Oak Lake reserves and the Hunkpapa Tetons on the Wood Mountain reserve. The Dakota, Yanktonai and Teton presence in Canada is directly tied to specific historical situations.

The Minnesota Conflict of 1862

The presence of the Isantee and Yanktonais in Canada is directly traceable to the chaotic circumstances which forced the Dakota, in eighteen sixty-two to flee (for their lives) north to British Territory. The initial circumstances surrounding the first flight of members of the Dakota Nation into British territory revolves around a particular historical event which has been dubbed, by non-Native historians, the "*Minnesota Uprising of 1862*" or the "*Sioux Uprising of 1862.*" I have also heard it called the "*Minnesota Conflict*" or the "*Conflict of 1862,*" by the distinguished Dakota Elder and oral historian, Eli Taylor.³³

The accounts of the Minnesota Conflict are quite intriguing. This episode and the events surrounding it warrant an in-depth

³³Mr. Taylor also gave an account of the Dakota peoples' flight from the United States Army in which the United States Army was prevented from pursuing the Dakota as a result of "God's" intervention. He drew a parallel to the Biblical story of Moses and the parting of the Red Sea, in which God intervened in history to allow the Israelites to escape from the pursuit of the Pharaoh's unjust army. (Personal Communication, Dakota Tipi, 1988).

study in themselves and there exists a number of such studies. The Minnesota Conflict is highly significant to Canadian Dakota history because the Dakota's presence in Canada is directly related to the Conflict. In fact, if the conflict had never occurred, one wonders if there would be a group known as the "Canadian Dakota."³⁴

Regrettably, the scope of this dissertation prevents a detailed expansion of the Conflict. I will, however, outline some of the main, relevant events and direct the reader to Kenneth Carley's extensive bibliography on the Conflict which can be found in his book, *The Sioux Uprising of 1862*.³⁵ Although a thoroughly documented composition, Carley's work is still written by a non-Dakota. A more recently published work is *Through Dakota Eyes: Narrative Accounts of the Minnesota Indian War of 1862*.³⁶ Of course, it would be best to have the opportunity to become more familiar with the Dakota perspective by listening to Dakota Elders and tribal historians relate it.

In *The Sioux Uprising of 1862*, Carley begins his discussion by revealing some of the possible causes of the Minnesota Conflict. He recognizes that the answer lies in a complex of reasons, dating from the first contact with the "whites" and culminating in the

³⁴For the location of Dakota villages in Minnesota in 1830, see Map 2 on page 39 of this dissertation.

³⁵Kenneth Carley, *The Sioux Uprising of 1862*, 2d ed. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1976).

³⁶Gary Clayton Anderson and Alan R. Woolworth (eds.), *Through Dakota Eyes: Narrative Accounts of the Minnesota Indian War of 1862* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988).

desperate situation which the Dakota people were forced into, at the time of the Conflict.

Perhaps the most immediate, relevant events leading to the Minnesota Conflict began with the treaties which were signed by the Upper and Lower Council Dakota ³⁷ and the United States in 1851 and 1858. As Carley explains,

On July 23, 1851, the Wahpeton and Sisseton bands of the Upper Sioux ceded to the United States their lands in southern and western Minnesota Territory, as well as some in Iowa and Dakota. The price for this magnificent empire was \$1,665,000 in cash and annuities. On August 5 at Mendota the Mdewakanton and Wahpekute bands of Lower Sioux signed away their lands, which embraced most of the area in the southwest quarter of present-day Minnesota. In all, the Sioux ceded almost 24,000,000 acres of rich agricultural land.³⁸

Carley explains how the Upper Council considered the lands assigned to them acceptable as a reservation and how the Lower Council voiced their dissatisfaction with their new domain, the Dakota realized that they had been tricked, at Traverse des Sioux, into signing a "traders paper" which had never been explained to them and which amounted to what was considered to be an outrageous overpayment of the Dakota's financial debt to the traders. On top of all this, the U.S. government were not living up to their end of the agreement; the Dakota were not getting their cash and

³⁷The titles "Upper Council" and "Lower Council," represent the Santee Dakota Bands who live on the reservation above the Yellow Medicine River and the Bands that live below the Yellow Medicine, respectively. The "Upper Council" are the Sissetons and Wahpetons, while the "Lower Council" are the Mdewakantons and Wahpekutes. The U.S. government agencies which were located on the two reserves for the transaction of business, are the "Yellow Medicine Agency" (Upper Council), and the "Redwood Agency" (Lower Council).

³⁸Carley, *Sioux Uprising*, pp. 11-12.

"rations." The withholding of cash and rations coupled with a winter of near starvation in 1861-1862 (brought on by a crop failure the previous fall), left the Dakota in a starving and desperate condition. How much more abuse could they take? Well, it would appear that only two more incidents would do it. The first was the traders' refusal of credit, but the second, the ultimate "final straw," was to occur at the Redwood Agency, at the beginning of August, 1862. At the Agency, Chief Little Crow, one of the main actors in the Conflict, and some hundred other Lower Council Dakota, had assembled, in vain, to receive their rations. They were about to leave when the storekeeper at the Redwood Agency, Andrew J. Myrick, heartlessly said to them, "so far as I am concerned, if they are hungry, let them eat grass, or their own dung." The interpreter refused to translate it, but when the missionary, Williamson stepped forward and gave the translation, "there was a moment of silence, followed by savage hoots and yells and the Indians disappeared in a body."³⁹ Two weeks later a Dakota hunting party came across some chicken eggs by a farm. One of the men took the eggs, another man said to put them back because they belonged to a whiteman and they would get in trouble. The man with the eggs smashed them and accused the other of being a coward, the other denied he was a coward. Eventually a quarrel ensued with the farmer and the Dakota hunting party killed three men and two women. When they returned to their village an emergency council was

³⁹Laviolette, *Sioux*, p. 36.

called, Chief Little Crow was consulted and it was determined that it was time to go to war. As the story goes, the storekeeper Myrick was one of the first to be shot on the day of the outbreak. The burial party found his body. His mouth was stuffed with grass.

The historical evidence reveals that the Dakota were cheated, lied to, taken advantage of, deceived, exploited and had their patience and trust pushed to the limit. It is an impressive feat of self-restraint that the Dakota people who finally did retaliate against the relational transgressions committed by the whites had the fortitude to hold back from violent action for as long as they did. Their actions most likely prevented them from suffering the same fate as the extinct Beothuk Nation.

It should be made explicit that not all, nor even most, of the Santee Dakota took military action. As a whole, the Upper Council Dakota did not take military action. In fact, "the Sisseton Indians protected the prisoners taken by the Lower Santees against outrages."⁴⁰ Despite this fact, when it came time for the U.S. military to launch a counter attack, no discretion was employed, or at least very little, to determine who to kill and who not to kill. It became quite clear that no Dakota person was sure of his or her safety and if they wanted to live they had to move to a place where they would be safe. This place of safety was north into British Territory; the place that the Dakota called "the land of the

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 43.

Grandmother;" the place which was described by the Lakota Holy Man, Sitting Bull, as "the Medicine House where the truth lives."⁴¹

The Dakota viewed "the land of the Grandmother" as a place of safety due to a friendship with the British which was based upon military alliances with the British in the French and Indian Wars, the American Revolution, and the War of 1812.⁴² Dakota leaders Little Crow, and later Standing Buffalo, Waanatan, Leaf, and Turning Thunder, displayed British medals and flags that they had inherited from their fathers. As James Howard explains,

He [Little Crow] said that the elders of the tribe had been told during the War of 1812 that if they ever got into trouble with the Americans they should appeal to the British, and the "folds of the red flag in the north would wrap them round and preserve them from their enemies."⁴³

When the first group of Dakota came to Rupert's Land (the name of the territory before the Hudson's Bay Company turned over its holdings to Canada) they went to Fort Garry (present day Winnipeg). Other groups that came later continued to make their way to Fort Garry, but eventually they began to congregate at White Horse Plains and Portage La Prairie. Details surrounding the movement of the Dakota people in Canada and the welcome that they received prior to the establishment of the reserves, are outlined by Peter Ellis in *The Dakota of the Canadian Northwest*, therefore, in the

⁴¹Howard, *Canadian*, p. 34.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 26.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 27.

interest of brevity, I will not elaborate on this point here.⁴⁴ Suffice it to say that the first group arrived at Fort Garry on December 28, 1862 and the last group, Sitting Bull and his band of Hunkpapa's, along with other groups of the Western Division Lakota, arrived in May, 1877, shortly after the "Battle of the Little Big Horn" ("Custer's last stand") in 1876. The dates in which the various reserves were established are as follows:⁴⁵

Sioux Valley	1875
Birdtail Sioux	1875
Oak Lake	1877
Turtle Mountain (now extinct)	1883
Standing Buffalo	1880
White Cap	1881
Round Plain-Sioux Wahpeton	1894
Sioux Village	1890's
Wood Mountain	1913

Dakota or Lakota?

Another issue which needs to be addressed in order to answer "who are the Canadian Dakota?" relates to the extent that they are separate from or similar to the American Lakota. Through his research on the Canadian Dakota prior to 1972, James Howard concludes, "politically if not culturally, these Dakota severed their ties with their brethren in the United States and became a

⁴⁴See: Howard, *Canadian*, pages 25-35, for a discussion of the Dakota peoples movements in Canada and the response that they received; and Peter Douglas Elias, *The Dakota of the Canadian Northwest: Lessons For Survival* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988).

⁴⁵See Map 3 on page 40 of this dissertation for the location of the reserves in Canada.

separate entity, the Canadian Dakota."⁴⁶ Geographic location has made the ground fertile for the emergence of unique cultural traits. An historical example of change in cultural traits correlated with change in geographic location was offered by Arthur Amiotte. He suggested that the Lakota be thought of as the "furthest Westward extension" of the Dakota/Lakota nation, which has "got rid of excess cultural baggage" upon their move from the Eastern woodlands fringe to the Prairies. As they moved further west there was a "streamlining;" old mythologies were dropped or changed to adapt to their new residence. Amiotte mentioned the Eastern Santee belief in tree spirits as an example of excess cultural baggage which was shed on the Lakota's move from the Eastern woodlands.⁴⁷ Vine Deloria Jr. confirms that, "as ceremonies have lost their content, with the changing of lifestyles, they have been forgotten or abandoned."⁴⁸ As excess baggage is shed, new baggage is added. Like the Lakota, the Canadian Dakota's cultural repertoire was somewhat altered to adapt to their new residence. As James Howard elaborates:

Retaining much of their common Dakota heritage, they nevertheless acquired from their contacts with French, English, Scottish, Ukrainian, and other Euro-Canadians, as well as native Canadian Indian tribes and Metis, many additional cultural features which have made them what they are today.⁴⁹

⁴⁶Howard, *Canadian*, p. 25.

⁴⁷Personal communication, Arthur Amiotte. Brandon, Manitoba, 1988.

⁴⁸Vine Deloria Jr., "Religion and the Modern American Indian," *Current History*, (December, 1974), p. 250.

⁴⁹Howard, *Canadian*, p. 25.

Nonetheless, despite the uniqueness of the Canadian Dakota and their political and cultural distinctness there exists a continuity between them and their American relatives. The imaginary line drawn between the U.S. and Canada disappears: people travel back and forth visiting their relatives; drum groups and dancers attend and compete at pow-wows on both sides of the border; and, medicine-men and women are sought out by members of the Dakota/Lakota nation--the sacred sun dance ceremony, for example, which was held at Sioux Valley in the spring of nineteen eighty-seven, was led by an Oglala Lakota *itanchan* (headman) who is from the United States. Therefore, while it is valid to speak of the Canadian Dakota, it is also justifiable to refer to texts on Lakota religion to support or supplement the information provided specifically on the Canadian Dakota.

Geographic Location: The Archaeological Record⁵⁰

Significantly, after the famous Teton Lakota wars of independence from the oppression of the emerging American government in the late eighteen-hundreds, the horrible Wounded Knee Massacre and the notoriety of such famous Lakota leaders as Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, and Red Cloud, the image of the feathered, horse mounted "plains indian" was established. This stereotype served to represent, for people the world over, the "typical American Indian." Lakota culture and history became the focus of anthropologists and historians while the Dakota were largely forgotten about. As a result, when the Eastern Division Isantee Dakota are mentioned they are generally thought of as a plains culture.⁵¹ Such a misconception fails to take note of the historical

⁵⁰Bushnell, David I. *Native Cemeteries and Forms of Burial East of the Mississippi*. Washington: Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 71, 1920.

Bushnell, David I. "Villages of the Algonquian, Siouan and Caddoan Tribes." *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin*, No. 78.

Bushnell, David I. "Burials of the Algonquian, Siouan and Caddoan Tribes." *Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin*, No. 83.

Brower, Jacob V. "Mille Lacs," *Memoirs of Explorations in the Basin of the Mississippi River*. Vol. 3, *Minnesota Historical Society*, H.L. Collins Co.

Brower, Jacob V. "Kathio," *Memoirs of Explorations in the Basin of the Mississippi River*. Vol. 4, *Minnesota Historical Society*, H.L. Collins Co.

Lothson, Gordon. "The Distribution of Burial Mounds in Minnesota." *Minnesota Archaeologist*, Vol. 29, pp. 29-47.

⁵¹"In response to increasing evidence of this plurality, the concept of Native American "culture areas" was conceived and developed at the turn of the century by Clark Wissler" (Joseph Epes

reality. The Dakota, historically, more appropriately belong to a discussion of "Woodlands" or "Great Lakes" cultures than Plains (although they should not be excluded from the plains either). The archaeological record attests to the fact that the Dakota and Lakota have lived and moved between the eastern forests and northern plains since time immemorial.⁵² Nevertheless, in textbooks and art shows the Canadian Dakota are invariably categorized as "People of the plains\prairies". This oversight is forgivable given the notoriety of their Western Teton Lakota relatives--who fully belong to a plains\prairies discussion--but, still, such a classification remains inaccurate. Indeed, the archaeological history of "The Seven Council Fires" testifies to the fact that their collective destiny has been lived in an "intermediate

Brown, *The Spiritual Legacy of the American Indian*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1982: p.5). Brown identifies these culture areas as: The Western Arctic, Western Sub-Arctic, Mackenzie Sub-Arctic, Central and Eastern Arctic, Eastern Sub-Arctic, Eastern Woodlands, Southeast, Southwest Great Basin, California, Northwest Coast, Plateau, and Plains/Prairies.

A culture area is:

a geographical area occupied by a number of peoples whose cultures show a significant degree of similarity with each other and at the same time a significant degree of dissimilarity with the cultures of the peoples of other such areas...the areas provide a convenient framework for introducing some degree of order in the plethora of detail available about North American Indians. (H. Driver, *Indians of North America* 2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969, p. 17).

⁵²See William Warren for traditional Ojibway history. Dakota were friends with the Ojibway. Both sides would visit back and forth with peace-parties. Intermarriage took place.

position" between the woodlands and the prairies.⁵³ Gordon Lothson elaborates on the concept of an intermediate position based on archaeological evidence in his 1972 M.A. thesis titled *"Burial Mounds of the Mille Lacs Lake Area:"*

...the Cooper sites were located between two major ecological zones; The Pine-Hardwood Forest Zone and the Tall Grass Prairie Zone; and hence two very different cultural patterns. Artifacts characteristic of the Late Woodland Tradition and the Pine-Hardwood Forest Zone exist side by side with those attributed to the Mississippian influenced cultures (Oneota) and the Tall Grass Prairie Zone. This concept of the "intermediate" position of the Cooper sites between two major biotic provinces exhibiting cultural traits from both regions, "The Best From Two Worlds", is the construct of Professor Elden Johnson of the University of Minnesota (Johnson 1969A).

If the Cooper sites do occupy an "intermediate" or ecotone position between two very different cultural adaptations as Professor Johnson suggests, one would expect to find cultural traits from both regions among the burials excavated from mound number one. A comparison of the artifacts recovered from the mound site with those found associated with Late Woodland cultural complexes: The Sandy lake (Snake River?), Kathio, and Black Duck foci, with those attributed to two Oneota Aspect cultures: The Blue Earth and Orr Foci, strongly supports the intermediate point of view.⁵⁴

Moreover, to view the Dakota as recent arrivals to what is now Canada is to fail to consider the archaeological facts; parts of

⁵³"Although the language, manners, and dress of the different divisions were not precisely alike, they were essentially one people. Nor were these people of Minnesota separate from the rest of the Dakota nation, but were closely connected with those living farther west. They considered themselves as forming part of a great people which owned a vast region of country, extending from the upper Mississippi to the Rocky mountains." Samuel Pond, *The Dakota or Sioux in Minnesota as They Were in 1834* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press) p.4. Originally published in 1908 by The Minnesota Historical Society.

⁵⁴Gordon Lothson, *"Burial Mounds of the Mille Lacs Lake Area"*. M.A. Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1972: p. 182.

what is now Canada was traditional hunting ground of the Dakota. As Peter Elias notes, "the archaeological record supports the conclusion that there were Dakota antecedents in Canada at least eight hundred years ago."⁵⁵ Elias explains that:

In the ideal situation, a witness would have observed a people just before the events of material displacement, when they were still involved with tools and technology that can be traced back in time. Further, this witness should then have left a record of precisely who these people were and exactly where they were. For the Dakota, there is such an ideal.

The witness in this case, as Elias notes, is Father Louis Hennepin who was among the Dakota in 1680, and who identifies: the location of the "Isatee" (at Mille Lac at the mouth of the Rum River) and "the nature of their non-European technology;"⁵⁶ most notably, their pottery. Elias continues:

In 1972, G.A. Lothson, then a graduate student at the University of Minnesota, excavated the Rum River site. The most distinctive feature of the site is its ceramics, which are also mentioned by Hennepin. Lothson concluded that this pottery, named Sandy Lake ware by archaeologists, was a manufacture of the Isantee Dakota and that the area over which the pottery is to be found identifies at least a part of the territory occupied by the Dakota at the time the ware had been made. Subsequent research has identified thirty-four sites containing Sandy Lake ware in Wisconsin, Minnesota, western Ontario and eastern Manitoba. The few dates that have been obtained for these sites span the years from 1150 A.D. until slightly after time of contact with Europeans, when aboriginal technology, notably pottery, was displaced by trade goods. As might be expected, there are archaeological sites that contain both Sandy Lake ware and trade goods of European manufacture.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Elias, *Northwest*, p. xv.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p 5. Quotes Louis Hennepin, *A New Discovery of A Vast Country in America*. Volumes I-II. Reuban Gold Thwaites, ed. (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Co., 1903), p. 241-275. Original English publication of this work was in 1698.

⁵⁷Peter Douglas Elias, "The Dakota: A Nation of International People." Lily Plain, Saskatchewan: February 15, 1979. The works

It would seem, then, that based on archeological evidence, the Dakota have occupied parts of Manitoba and Ontario intermittently since at least 1150 A.D.

cited by Elias in this quote are: George A. Lothson *Burial Mounds of the Mille Lacs Area* masters thesis, University of Minnesota, 1972; E. Johnson "The Arvilla Complex" *Minnesota Prehistoric Archaeology* no 9 (1973); D. Arthurs "Sandy Lake Ware in Northwestern Ontario: A Distributional Study" *Archaeofacts* 5 nos 2-3 (1978); R.S. MacNeish *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Southeastern Manitoba* (Ottawa, 1958); S. Saylor "The 1977 Season at Wanipigow Lake (EGKX-1)" *Archaeofacts* 5 nos 2-3 (1978); M.G.M. Rajnovich and C.S. Reid "Selkirk and Clearwater Lake Ceramics on Lake of the Woods: An Overview" *Archaeofacts* 5 nos. 2-3 (1978).

From: Tanner, *Atlas*, p. 148.

Pembina

Indian Villages c. 1830 Minnesota Region

- ▲ Indian village
- White settlement
- Fort
- Trading post
- ▲ American Fur Company
- ▲ Hudson's Bay Company
- V. A. Present state or provincial name
- Present state or provincial boundary
- Rainy Present drainage name

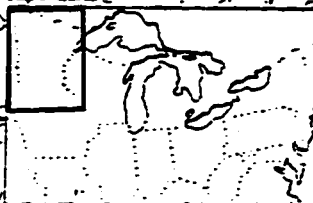
Abbreviation	Tribe
▲ SA	SARQA
▲ SJ	SJIA
▲ SI	SIBIAS

Scale 1:2,500,000

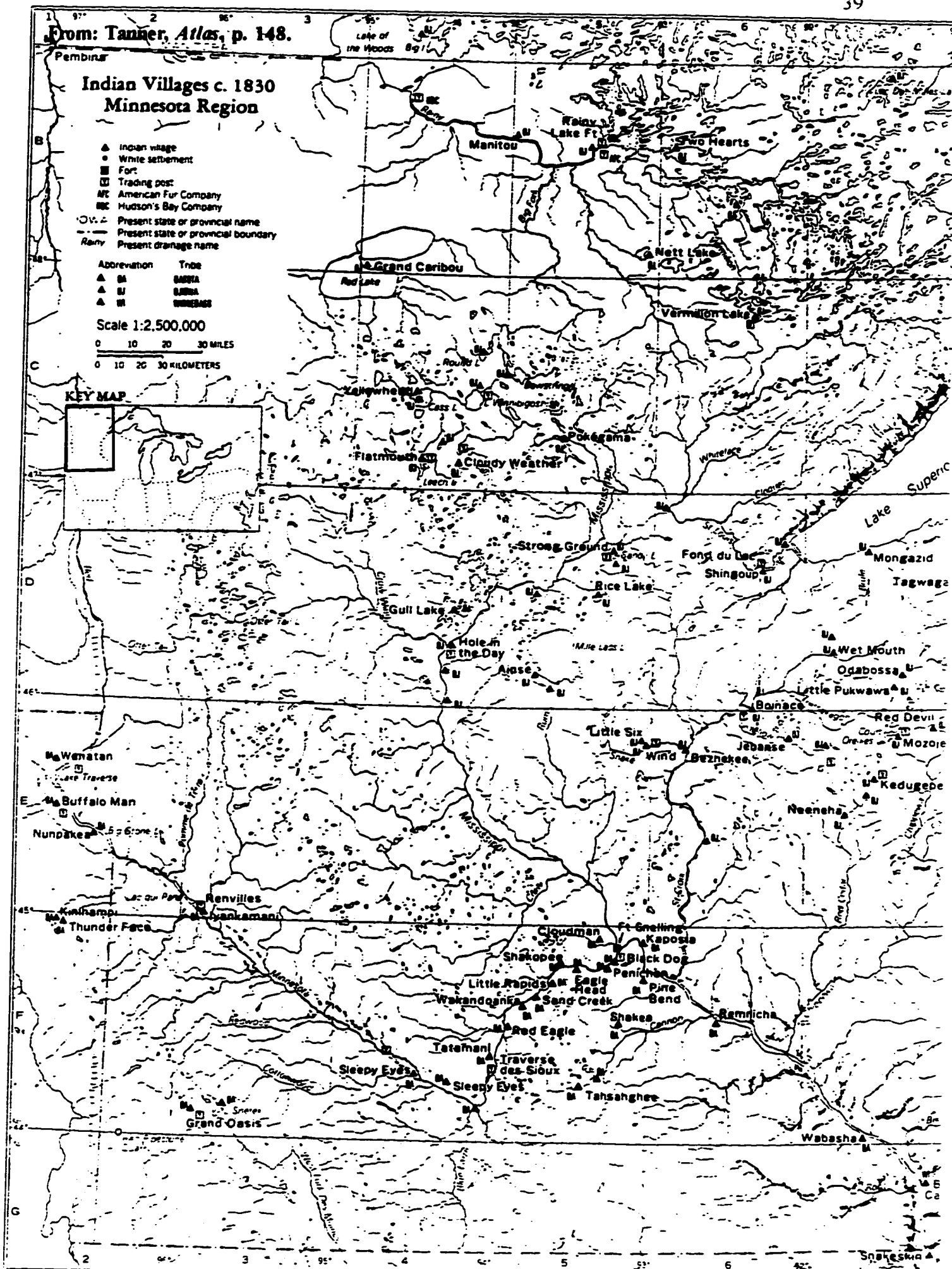
0 10 20 30 MILES

0 10 20 30 KILOMETERS

KEY MAP



MAP
28



Origins: The Mythological Record

"The Lakota Nation began, not with the arrival of Columbus, but with the creation of this universe."

Vivian Arviso One Feather⁵⁸

To really answer the question "Who are the Dakota?" from the perspective of religious studies, one must inquire into the traditional stories told by the old, distinguished oral historians of the Dakota Nation. When looking at the written literature expressing the old stories, one of the most systematic articulation of Lakota cosmology and cosmogony is found in the Walker material. James Walker was sent to Pine Ridge Reservation in 1896, shortly after the Wounded Knee Massacre, to treat small pox, tuberculosis and perform other medical services. The task that he was assigned was too much for one person so he solicited the aid of the traditional healers. After consulting each other, as Elaine Jahner points out, the Oglala leaders stated,

We will do this so you may know how to be the medicine man for the people...We will tell you of the ceremonies as if you were an Oglala who wished to take your part in them. We will not tell you of the parts of them that the shamans do secretly.⁵⁹

Eventually, nine years later, they said that they would teach him the secret knowledge of the shamans.⁶⁰ In the introduction to *Lakota Myth*, Elaine Jahner narrates the circumstances of Walker's association with such creatively brilliant Lakota storytellers as George Sword, Ten Fingers, Left Heron, American Horse, Bad Wound,

⁵⁸From the introduction to: D.M. Dooling (ed.), *The Sons of the Wind: The Sacred Stories of the Lakota* (New York: The Society for the Study of Myth and Tradition, 1984), p. ix.

⁵⁹James R. Walker, *Lakota Myth*. Elaine Jahner (ed.) (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), pp. 1-2.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 2.

Little Wound, No Flesh, and Thomas Tyon. George Sword--Long Knife--stands out as a most impressive creative genius whose "efforts reveal his conscious concern with details of presentation, his fascination with language, and his propensity to speculate about linguistic phenomena."⁶¹ Sword was a major contributor to the Walker collection, providing manuscripts which he had written in Lakota.

Elaine Jahner also discusses the ethnological detective work carried out by Ella Deloria under the direction of Franz Boas to determine how much of the Walker material is Walker's reconstruction and invention and how much is "authentic". Whatever their status before Walker's time, it seems that the stories in the Walker collection are, for contemporary Lakota, authoritative. As D.M. Dooling says of the Walker collection, "for whether or not the myths as recounted by Dr. Walker were in the past a living part of the Lakota oral tradition, they are becoming so now; these are the tales the Lakotas are telling their children."⁶²

The ancestors of the Lakota are the *Pte Oyate*, the Buffalo People, descendants of *Ate* and *Hunku* who were created by the Spirits to serve them. At the first feast, before *Ate* and *Hunku* were created, *Woope*, the daughter of *Skan* (the Spirit of *Wakan Tanka*--the Great Mystery, the totality) did all the work and was exhausted from it. *Ksa* (wisdom) said, "*Woope* has made a feast and served the Spirits until she is tired. The daughter of the Great Spirit should not work so hard at such tasks. It will be well if

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁶²Dooling, *Sons*, p. xiii.

beings were created to serve the Spirits and do their will."⁶³ So Skan took something from the other Spirits to create Ate and Hunku and imparted to each four souls.⁶⁴ Skan then said to them: "Your names shall be Ate, Father, and Hunku, Mother, and you and your children shall be known as the Pte Oyate, the Buffalo People...These were the ancestors of mankind."⁶⁵ The Pte people lived a good life under the earth but eventually some families, under the leadership of Tokahe, were tricked out of their underworld home by Inktomi the trickster. The members of the Pte Oyate who were not tricked by Inktomi remained under the earth under the leadership of Tatanka the Holy Man, who sought a vision from the Sacred Beings to find out about Tokahe and the others:

He saw in his vision that those who went up through the cave would be changed and become a different people, and that they would forget the language of the Spirits and how to serve them. His vision told him that he must follow them, and that he too would be changed and become a shaggy beast and be known as the Buffalo, and he would have in charge the welfare of the people on the world...Those who came up through the cave with Tokahe were the Ikce Oyate, the Real People. They were the first people on the world, and the Lakotas are their descendants.⁶⁶

The Lakota myths in the Walker collection are rich in meaning, expressing in a profound way the complexities of existence. Significant to this dissertation is the central importance of

⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁶⁴See chapter 2 for a discussion of multiple souls.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 122.

relationship expressed in the myths; this theme will be elaborated in the final chapter. The question to be asked at this point is "to what extent are these Lakota myths part of the Canadian Dakota corpus of myths?" To answer this question fully would require extensive fieldwork among the Canadian Dakota. Discussions with Dakota students and friends of mine suggests that these myths from the Walker collection are part of contemporary Dakota mythic history. However, in the absence of personal fieldwork, the written literature must be sought to yield an answer. Moreover, the written literature on the Dakota must be consulted to reveal a picture of the mythological origins of the Dakota, independent of the corpus of myths in the Walker collection.

If we look at the literature on the Eastern Isantee Dakota we find stories not found in the Walker collection. It might be appropriate to begin this inquiry with the work of someone who mastered the various dialects of the Dakota language, was an accomplished scholar, and, most importantly, had an intimate association with the Dakota people as their missionary, priest and friend from 1935 until his death in 1989--Father Gontran Laviolette OMI.⁶⁷ In his posthumously published book, Father Laviolette observes:

The legends of the Dakotas vary to some extent due to cultural changes. The older legends are those of the

⁶⁷I have no idea how hostile or destructive Laviolette was, as a Christian priest, to traditional Dakota religion. Based on what I have read about Laviolette and his work, I get the impression that he was not exclusivistic and genuinely respected the Dakota people and their traditions.

Santee tribes whereas the Tetons have developed a greater number of legendary themes.⁶⁸

He then directs the reader to Charles Eastman's (Ohiye-sa) autobiography *Indian Boyhood* for "the traditional Santee story of the creation of the world."⁶⁹

Charles Eastman (1858-1939) was born to Tawakanhdiota "Many Lightnings" (Jacob Eastman) and Mary Nancy Eastman, Wakantankawin "The Goddess." His maternal grandfather was Capt. Seth Eastman, the well known artist, and his maternal grandmother was Lucy Wakannajinwin "She Stands Sacred." His great-grandfather on his mother's side was the famous Mahpiya Wicasta "Cloud Man" and his great-grandmother Champadutawin "Red Cherry." On his father's side, his grandfather was Makaskaskanmani "He Shakes the Earth When He Walks" and his grandmother, Uncheedah "Grandmother". Charles Eastman was given the name Hakadah "The Pitiful Last" as a baby because his mother died shortly after his birth. He was raised traditionally by his paternal grandmother and it was not until he was a young boy that he was given the name Ohiyesa "The Winner" by a medicine man. He was separated from his father during the Minnesota Conflict of 1862 when he was taken to Canada. He thought that his father died during that turbulent time but his father came looking for him after things had quieted down--Ohiyesa was fifteen years old. His father became a Christian while imprisoned at Davenport and assumed the name Jacob Eastman. Jacob gave his son

⁶⁸Laviolette, *Dakota Sioux*, pp. 25-26.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 26.

the name Charles Eastman when he sought him out and brought him back to his farm in Minnesota. Jacob Eastman sent his son to school and Charles went on to eventually get a degree in medicine from Boston University. Charles was physician to the Lakota at Pine Ridge from 1890-1893; he treated the survivors of the Wounded Knee Massacre. He married Elaine Goodale in 1891. They had two sons and she collaborated with him on a number of publications that Charles had supplied the material for. He was a constant champion for his people and through his writings provided a strong voice for his nation, passing on the knowledge, morals, and values that he had been taught in his formative years--his grandmother deserves credit and respect for the job she did raising Charles and passing on traditional values, he honours her through his writings.

In *Soul of the Indian* Eastman provides an account of the Dakota creation story. This version has the First Born, Ishna-icaga (he grew up alone), appearing mysteriously in an already created world with "the great Mysterious One" remaining "sublimely in the background" and the Sun and the Earth, representing the male and female principles, acting as the main elements in creation.⁷⁰ First Born became lonely and formed a companion from a splinter

⁷⁰Charles Eastman, *Soul of the Indian* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911), p. 122.

from his great toe⁷¹ whom he named "Little Boy Man". First Born then taught Little Boy Man customs and beliefs which have been passed down to the Dakota people; including the use of the sweatlodge. As Eastman explains:

His Elder Brother was his teacher throughout every stage of human progress from infancy to manhood, and it is to the rules which he laid down, and his counsels to the Little Boy Man, that we trace many of our most deep-rooted beliefs and most sacred customs.⁷²

First Born then sent Little Boy Man forth to find a mate. He met, fell in love, and had children with "maidens of the Bird, Beaver and Bear tribes." The children who resembled Little Boy Man became the ancestors of the human race while those who resembled their mother became part of her people.

Eastman also wrote about Little Boy Man in *Wigwam Evenings*. He calls Little Boy Man the Adam of the Sioux. In their introduction Michael Dorris and Louise Erdich write:

Unlike mankind's progenitor from "Genesis," however, this first man turns out to have been far from an intentional creation--instead, he derived from a splinter in the Great Spirit's big toe! And his chief adversary is not some core of internal weakness, some inherent temptation toward disobedience, but rather the very obvious danger of hostile nature and wild animals, who resent his intrusion into *their* Garden.

The Little Boy Man is our precedent-setter, our direct example of both human foible and strength. We identify with his confusions, sympathize with his mistakes, rejoice at his triumphs. He is a clear link

⁷¹Laviolette writes that Little-Boy-Man was created from a splinter from First Born's big bow. This must be a typing error, possibly mis-read by Laviolette's editors, because Laviolette takes his version from Eastman.

⁷²*Ibid.*, p. 124.

between the wholly imaginary and real life, and as such is a stand-in for a child struggling to learn the rules that govern day-to-day existence.⁷³

Dividing the sections into "Evenings" rather than chapters, Eastman begins the first evening by taking the reader on a cold December evening to a Dakota winter camp on a wooded island to meet Smoky Day "the old story-teller, the school-master of the woods." His hypotyposis of the encounter succeeds in invoking ones imaginative understanding of a particular historical moment, an ahistorical moment which has repeated itself immemorially prior to that moment. In the same fashion as Eastman, the storyteller stimulates the readers imagination to enter into "the old stories." On the fourteenth evening, Smokey Day told about "He who was first created" and "Little boy man", which is an elaboration of what Eastman wrote about in *The Soul of the Indian*. In this version, He who was first created tossed the splinter that he drew out of his big toe, through the smoke-hole. He heard it roll and rattle down the birch-bark covering and when it touched the ground it turned into a baby...the father of the human race.⁷⁴

E.D. Neill provided a different narrative of the origin of the Dakota. Neill's version echoes one of the most wide-spread creation stories in the Americas, the classic "Earth Diver" myth.

⁷³Charles A. Eastman and Elaine Goodale Eastman, *Wigwam Evenings: Sioux Folk Tales Retold* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), p. xi. Originally published in 1909 by Little, Brown and Company.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 125-126.

In this instance, the "god of the waters" Unktehi (like the Anishnabe Mishepishu) created the earth by getting the different water animals to dive under the water which covered the world, to retrieve some dirt. Strong swimmers, such as the beaver, tried and failed. As a final resort, the muskrat tried and succeeded in retrieving some dirt from which Unktehi created the earth. After creating the earth, Unktehi created the humans in the following manner:

He took a deity, one of his own offspring, and grinding him to powder, sprinkled it upon the earth, and this produced many worms. The worms were then collected and scattered again. They matured into infants, and these were then collected and scattered and became full grown Dakotas.⁷⁵

Later versions, such as those provided by Wilson Wallis⁷⁶ and James Howard,⁷⁷ have Wakan Tanka as creator. There is not much on the origin of the Dakota in Wallis' account other than that they were made by Wakan Tanka after Wakan Tanka made the earth. The storyteller interviewed by Wallis declared that "the Dakota say that they and the white man must be closely related, since they tell nearly the same story about the creation."⁷⁸ In Wallis' account, the animals are created after the humans. Next in order

⁷⁵E.D. Neill, "Dakota Land and Dakota Life." *Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society*, vol. I (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1902), pp. 205-240, p. 216.

⁷⁶Wilson Wallis, "Beliefs and Tales of the Canadian Dakota." *Journal of American Folk-Lore*. p. 36.

⁷⁷Howard, *Canadian*, p. 100.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p. 37.

of creation after the humans were animals with fur and that swim in the water, followed by land animals. The Wallis reference is the only place that asserts that the animals were created after humans. In all other accounts, written or oral, the animals were created before humans.

An extremely imaginative exposition of Dakota origins is provided by another member of the Mdewakanton Dakota, *Ehanamani* (Walks Among)--also known as Allen (Chuck) Ross--who was "born of Santee, Sicangu, Ponca, Irish and Scottish blood."⁷⁹ In his book *Mitakuye Oyasin: "We are all Related"* Ross, as a Dakota, sets out to "illustrate how we are all related"⁸⁰ by examining theories of the lost continent of Atlantis, the writings of Edgar Cayce and Carl Jung and synchronistic, related ideas or beliefs the world over. Under the title "Origins of the Red Man Part I: Atlantis", Ross states that the orally transmitted mythic origin narratives of the Dakota are four in number: they originated in North America; they emerged from the underground; they came from an island in the east; and, they came from the stars.⁸¹ Given these stories Ross wonders if the best way to make sense of these stories is to consider the literature on the lost continent of Atlantis. When Dakota origin stories are compared with origin stories of other cultures, Ross believes that validity is not only given to the

⁷⁹A.C. Ross, *Mitakuye Oyasin: We Are All Related* (Ft. Yates, N.D.: Bear, 1989), p. 1.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 60.

Dakota origin stories but also to the stories of Atlantis. He refers to John Upton Terrell who, in his book *The Sioux Trail*,

traced the roots of the Siouan linguistic speaking people. In his book, he presented evidence of those peoples originating in North Carolina approximately 15,000 B.C. They slowly migrated northwestward until eventually they reached the Dakotas. Is it really a coincidence that the appearance of the Siouan people in North Carolina is the same date that Cayce said they left Atlantis?⁸²

Ross notes that not only are the origin stories of many of the Siouan Nations similar (they came from the east, from under the water in the east, or from an island in the east), but, non-Siouan Nations also have stories about coming from an island in the east.⁸³

On this point, Ross says:

The Mayans have an origin story that says they came from an island in the east which sank into the ocean. Before it sank, many of the people came to the Americas. Is this sunken island perhaps a reference to the Dakota origin story of coming from under the water in the east?⁸⁴

Furthermore, Ross adds:

Researching Atlantis more fully, I uncovered information about a petroglyph which was thought to be 50,000 years old. It was found in Ica, Peru and displayed a map which identified North America, South America, and a very large island in the Atlantic Ocean. Is this evidence of an island that used to exist in the Atlantic which might have sunk?⁸⁵

⁸²Ibid., p. 73.

⁸³Ibid., p. 61.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 61.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 61-62.

After extensive research on the theories of Atlantis, Ross noted that many writers on Atlantis believe that people of Atlantis migrated east and west from Atlantis to civilize the world, hence the similarities on both sides of the Atlantic.⁸⁶ To support his belief that "we are all related" and in an attempt to provide support for the theories of Atlantis, Ross identifies a number of cross-atlantic similarities.

Regarding the star origin myths, Ross writes:

The story is that we came from seven stars and that we were put in the Black Hills. This origin from the seven stars is why we had only seven tribes in the beginning. It is also the reason why the number seven is sacred in our religion.

...Research identified the seven stars as the Pleiades. In the traditional D/Lakota history, when the Pleiades came up in the east during the fall of the year, that was a signal for the people to return to their sacred sites. Further research on the Pleiades revealed that these stars were originally seven sisters who were the daughters of Atlas and Pleione. Atlas was the oldest twin of Poseidon, the father of Atlantis.⁸⁷

Upon discovering with the help of a zodiac dial that the Pleiades is part of a larger constellation called Taurus the Bull, and that "an ancient European Story says the people believed that Taurus was a sacred white bull"⁸⁸ Ross relates:

I thought of the sacred white buffalo of traditional D/Lakota belief. Then I remembered a study entitled "Lakota Star Knowledge and the Black Hills," done by Sinte Gleska College in Rosebud, South Dakota in which they had identified the Pleiades as the head of a sacred white buffalo located in the stars. Further

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

investigation identified that the stars of this sacred buffalo were related to ceremonial sites located on earth.⁸⁹

After drawing connections with beliefs in a sacred bull among other peoples (Hindu, Mesopotamians, Minoans, Egyptians, Turks, Cro-Magnon) and Plato's writings on Atlantis, Ross informs the reader that he positioned his zodiac dial to the longest day of the year-- June 21, the summer solstice, when the sun dance and other important religious ceremonies are held. Upon doing so, he:

...discovered that two things came up helically on the horizon, the Sun and Taurus the Bull. The sacred white buffalo was on the horizon at the exact time that the traditional Sun Dances were held. The traditional buffalo Sun Dance starts with the appearance of the White Buffalo Calf Woman in the east. Was the timing of the traditional Sun Dance and the rising of Taurus the Bull coincidence?⁹⁰

Ross' internalization of his Dakota "Mitakuye Oyasin" teachings as a fundamental religious orientation has led him to a cross-cultural comparison of ideas and beliefs which he uses as potential support for his own Dakota teachings. Associating Dakota origin myths with theories of Atlantis and the psychic readings of Edgar Cayce certainly adds a different dimension to the answer of the question: "Who are the Dakota?" It also offers an attempt, by a Dakota author, to resolve the conflict between those who postulate that the ancestors of the Native people of North and South America migrated from Asia across the Beringia land bridge and those who maintain, based on their own history, that they were placed here by

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

the Creator. The significance of Ross' account is that it is offered by an individual from the Dakota tradition who is speculating upon or articulating an answer to the question, "Who are the Dakota?". His perspective is unique in that he answers the question by comparing, as a Dakota, traditional Dakota origin stories with other narratives exploring the origins and early history of humankind.

Chapter II SHAMANS-POWER-SPIRIT HELPERS

Having provided an answer to the question "Who are the Dakota?" it is necessary to turn to a discussion of Dakota shamanism; a dissertation on Dakota religion is incomplete without such a discussion because the shamans are at the centre of the religious tradition, they are in constant and immediate relationship with the sacred. To borrow a phrase from Eliade, the shamans are the religious specialists "par excellence", they are models of what it means to be religious.

Before turning to a discussion of Dakota shamanism, however, it is necessary to situate Dakota shamanism in relation to the various levels of discourse on shamanism, in order to be aware of the conceptual contexts in which the shaman and shamanism are understood; this will help facilitate a better understanding of what Dakota shamanism is and is not. These conceptual contexts include the "classical" or "Eliadian" understanding of shamanism, the popular understanding, including the "new-age" or "neo-shamanic" movement, and the general understanding of shamanism. The popular understanding is particularly significant because this understanding has the greatest influence in forming the conceptual spectacles, the preconceived notions, of the population at large. Moreover, the new age or neo-shamanic movement has become particularly notorious as a result of being accused of cultural appropriation. The argument against these movements can be characterized as follows: Native American sacred traditions are being "ripped-off" by enterprising "whites" and shamanism in North

America has become perverted into a multi-million dollar industry. Often the following lament can be heard: "they stole our land and now they want our culture."

Shamanism in the "Strict" or "Eliadian" Sense

The Dakota have no shamans, at least not in the strict sense. "Shamanism in the strict sense is preeminently a religious phenomenon of Siberia and Inner Asia. The word comes to us, through the Russian, from the Tunguz saman."¹ The word "shaman" refers to a specific type of person in a specific cultural context who fulfils a certain function in that culture, and who is identified according to specific character traits. "Shamanism in the strict sense" might also be referred to as "shamanism in the Eliadian sense", following Mircea Eliade's definitive exposition on shamanism in his seminal work *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*.² For Eliade, to be considered a shaman the individual must be able to go into an ecstatic or trance state³ during which his or

¹Mircea Eliade, "Shamanism: An Overview." In: Mircea Eliade (Editor in Chief) *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 13 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), p. 202.

²Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1964).

³Eliade uses trance and ecstasy interchangeably. Hultkrantz also does so, maintaining that trance is medical and ecstasy is theological (see quote below). For an excellent discussion on the need to distinguish the two see: Gilbert Rouget, *Music and Trance: A Theory of the Relations Between Music and Possession*. Translation from the French revised by Brunhilde Biebuyck in

her soul is able to leave his or her body and roam around the earth or travel along the axis mundi to the upper world or lower world. The shaman undertakes these ecstatic journeys (also called magical flights), according to Eliade, for four reasons:

first, to meet the celestial god face to face and bring him an offering from the community; second, to seek the soul of a sick man, which has supposedly wandered away from his body or been carried off by demons; third, to guide the soul of a dead man to its new abode; or fourth, to add to his knowledge by frequenting higher nonhuman beings.⁴

Whatever the reason for entering into an ecstatic or trance state, for Eliade the distinguishing characteristic of a shaman is the fact of entering into such a state. As he maintains "a first definition of the complex phenomenon of shamanism--and perhaps the least hazardous--is that it is a technique of ecstasy."⁵

Shamanism in the Popular Sense

The Dakota also have no shamans in the popular sense. The popular understanding seems to stress the antisocial nature of the

collaboration with the author (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985). Rouget is in favour: "of using 'ecstasy' solely to describe one particular type of state--altered states, let us say, attained in silence, immobility, and solitude--and of restricting 'trance' solely to those that are obtained by means of noise, agitation, and in the presence of others." (p. 7) For the Dakota, however the state is achieved the result is the same--see the section on dreams/vision in this dissertation.

⁴Eliade, "Overview", p. 205.

⁵Eliade, "Overview", p. 202.

shaman. The shaman, in the popular sense, has become imagined as some fantastic, bizarre, "tranced-out", unapproachable being. The rock and roll sub-culture has contributed to the image of the shaman in popular consciousness; especially in the late 1960's through such performers/heroes as Mick Jagger, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, David Bowie, and Jim Morrison. Jim Morrison is particularly noteworthy as an individual who has contributed to planting the idea of the shaman in popular consciousness. Morrison, a struggling poet⁶ turned rock and roll superstar, was very much aware of the shaman, especially in the context of Native American cultures. Commenting on his understanding of and identification with the shaman Morrison says,

The shaman is similar to the scapegoat. I see the role of the artist as shaman and scapegoat. People project their fantasies onto him and their fantasies come alive. People can destroy their fantasies by destroying him. I obey the impulses everyone has but won't admit to. By attacking me, punishing me, they can feel relieved of those impulses.⁷

Identifying the artist as shaman, as Morrison does in the above quote, reflects what Howells writes in *The Heathens*. Howells

⁶For his poetry see: James Douglas Morrison, *The Lords and The New Creatures of the New Church* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971). Originally published in private editions of 100 copies by the author. See also the posthumously edited and published compilations: *Wilderness: The Lost Writings of Jim Morrison, Volume I* (New York: Villard Books, 1988); and, *The American Night: The Writings of Jim Morrison, Volume II* (New York: Villard Books, 1990). For biographical material see: Danny Sugarman, *No One Here Gets Out Alive*.

⁷Danny Sugarman, *The Doors: The Illustrated History*. Benjamin Edmonds (ed.) (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1983), p. 123. Emphasis is mine.

asserts that it is precisely the psychological temperament of the artist that best fits the description of the shamanic personality.⁸

Morrison regarded their concert performances as seances. He maintains that:

The more civilized we get on the surface, the more all the other forces make their plea. We ("The Doors") appeal to the same human needs as classical tragedy and early southern blues. Think of it as a seance in an environment which has become hostile to life; cold, restrictive. People feel they're dying in a bad landscape. People gather together in a seance in order to invoke, palliate and drive away the dead. Through chanting, singing, dancing, and music, they try to cure illness, to bring harmony back into the world.

During his on stage "seances" Morrison would dance and whirl around to the sound of the music until he would finally drop on stage as if dead or in a deep trance; perhaps communing with the spirits who leaped into his soul as a child. In his performance poetry piece *American Prayer* Morrison narrates the following passage:

Me and my--ah--mother and father--and a grandmother and a grandfather--were driving through the desert, at dawn, and a truck load of Indian workers had either hit another car, or just--I don't know what happened--but there were Indians scattered all over the hiway, bleeding to death.

So the car pulls up and stops. That was the first time I tasted fear. I musta' been about four--like a child is like a flower, his head is just floating in the breeze, man.

The reaction I get now, thinking back, looking back--is that the souls of the ghosts of those dead Indians...maybe one or two of 'em...were just running

⁸William Howells, *The Heathens: Primitive Man and His Religions* (New York: The American Museum of Natural History, 1962), p. 136. Originally published by Doubleday and Company, inc., 1948.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 45

around freaking out, and just leaped into my soul. And they're still in there.¹⁰

Movie producer Oliver Stone's interpretation of this enigmatic character in his recent movie, *The Doors*, introduced the "Morrison as shaman" image to a much larger audience than were previously exposed; a whole new generation of devotee's. The aura of mystery surrounding Morrison's unfortunate death (he was only 28) in a bathtub in Paris is similar to another shamanic type superstar--Elvis. The denial of death by the devotee's exemplifies the shamanic death-resurrection motif. As is the case generally with the popular understanding of the shaman, the Morrison myth, like the Elvis myth, has obscured the human person.¹¹

New-age or Neo-shamanic Movements

A much greater influence on the popular understanding of the shaman has been the new age or neo-shamanic movements. Today the new ager is open to a multitude of popular books on shamanism, including "how to be a shaman in three easy lessons" type books.¹²

¹⁰Quoted from: Jim Morrison, "An American Prayer" (Electra Entertainment Group, 1978).

¹¹Since nineteen eighty-two, I have been working on a manuscript which compares the rock and roll superstar to the shaman and examines religious motifs in the rock and roll sub-culture. I hope to have this manuscript published in five years time under the title: "Rock Around the Shaman: Rock and Roll and Religion."

¹²A good example is Michael Harner's *The Way of the Shaman* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1980).

In addition, for the person seeking to be healed from physical or spiritual illnesses they can choose from any number of weekend retreats or workshops with "the shaman of your choice" to go to a sweatlodge, drum, smoke the pipe, or go on a vision quest, all for the incredibly low, low price of a few hundred dollars. Of course, you may need a drum, rattle, pipe or other ritual accouterment; this is when it is time to call one of the many mail order shamanic supply houses.

The new-age, neo-shamanic movement has been severely criticized as being a construction or perpetuation of a colonial mentality and has been condemned as cultural-appropriation. Taken out of their Native American religio-cultural contexts the significance and perhaps the efficacy of the ceremonies is believed to be lost in the name of free enterprise; their usage as a way of making money is condemned as being disrespectful and a misuse of the sacred teachings. In the context of the Dakota religious tradition and other Native American traditions, the teachings that go along with the use of these ceremonies quite clearly denounce the pay as you go plan to attend; as one Elder put it, "the Creator doesn't charge you, you shouldn't charge others."

There is also a concern that taking individuals on a shamanic journey without a community to provide a context and grounding is dangerous and harmful to the patient/initiate. As one Anishnabe "shaman" explained, "these people go that shaman and then come to

us (traditional Medicine-men) and we have to pick up the pieces."¹³

In any event, this dissertation is not intended to encompass a methodical critique of the new age or neo-shamanic movement. I mention these movements in order to situate Dakota shamanism in relation to them.

Shamanism in General

Owing to the popularized and strict sense understanding of shamanism, I have found myself growing more and more averse to using the word shaman to refer to Dakota spiritual leaders. Using such an appellation abstracts from understanding the shaman as a human being and detracts from understanding the place of persons identified as shamans in the Dakota religious tradition. In other words, the difficulty with using the word shaman is the variety of preconceived notions that this word conjures up. Nonetheless, comparisons can be made between Dakota "shamans" and shamans in the strict and popular senses. While not calling them shamans, the comparative study of shamanism validates studying these persons under the rubric of shamanism. As Eliade puts it, similar magico-religious phenomena in North and South America should be studied with Siberian and Inner Asian shamanism due to their shared characteristics.¹⁴ Similarly, John Grim points out:

¹³Medicine Grizzly Bear Lake, *Native Healer: Initiation Into an Ancient Art* (Wheaton, Ill: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1991).

¹⁴Eliade, "Overview", p. 202.

In recent years the term shamanism has been used in such a broad sense that for some critics it has lost its meaning. Yet it is nonetheless appropriate to use it in investigating the personality and the practices of shamans in particular cultural settings. Thus shamanism serves as an explanatory context for investigation rather than as a definitive description of the phenomenon.¹⁵

Ake Hultkrantz also addresses the academic usage of the word shaman. In his book *Shamanic Healing and Ritual Drama* he attempts to hold to a distinction similar to Eliade's, but criticizes Eliade for not including the summoning of spirits as genuinely shamanic. Hultkrantz states the issues and his position regarding the word shaman as follows:

Although in careless linguistic usage any medicine man is called a shaman by some anthropologists, this term should better be limited to persons who manifest such powers and abilities that are typical for Siberian shamans. The shamanic ability *par préférence* is to fall into a deep trance or ecstasy (the two words will be used alternately, for they refer to the same state of mind, although the first one is medical, the other theological). In his trance the shaman may journey in spirit to far-off places or summon the spirits to give him counsel. The former technique has been called soul journeys or soul excursions. It is very typical for true shamanism, but the summoning of spirits is another genuine shamanic experience that must not be overlooked (as Mircea Eliade has done).¹⁶

Why is there such an interest in shamanism, what need does this involvement fulfil? The answer is complex, tied to specific historical circumstances, tied to the sixties and hallucinogenic

¹⁵John Grim, *The Shaman: Patterns of Religious Healing Among the Ojibway Indians* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983), p. 11.

¹⁶Ake Hultkrantz, *Shamanic Healing and Ritual Drama: Health and Medicine in Native North American Religious Traditions* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1992) pp. 18-19.

drug usage, tied to psychoanalysis and the reintroduction to "western" society of the importance of dreams, tied to the inability of the Christian tradition to cultivate mystical experiences, tied to the stifling of the mysterious by science, tied to truth, tied to an openness to non-western traditions, and in the North American context, tied to the influence of Native American ways of seeing or being.

Dakota Shamanism

In the following section my intention is to provide a clearer picture, a better understanding, of the persons in the Dakota religious tradition who have been identified as shamans. As I mentioned before, there can be no discussion of Dakota religion without a discussion of Dakota shamanism. A cursory exploration of the written literature--beginning with Father Louis Hennepin and ending with William Powers--will provide the historical context in which Dakota shamanism has been understood and communicated. Although not a comparative study of shamanism, similarities and differences to persons identified as shamans in other religious traditions will become readily apparent.

The persons in the Dakota religious tradition who have been identified as shamans by some authors have been called other names by other authors. Some of these other names are as follows: priests, magicians, sorcerers, witchs, wizards, witch-doctors, doctors, jugglers, conjurers, medicine-men/women, quacks, mountebanks, charlatans, mystery-men, holy men, spiritual leaders,

supernatural leaders, mystics, prophets, counterfeit physicians, religious specialists, ceremonial practitioners, and, religious practitioners. The preferred name corresponds somewhat to the time period in which the author is writing. "Medicine-man" seems to have been the most popular label over time, only to be usurped in more recent times by the generic appellation "shaman." A number of these names mentioned above were employed in a derogatory or derisive manner calculated to degrade and denounce the shaman and his or her office. This is especially true of the writings of the early Christian missionaries from Hennepin in 1680 to the brothers Pond and others in the mid-1800's.

Father Louis Hennepin was a Recollect missionary who accompanied the exploring expedition under the leadership of René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle in 1679. Although the first recorded meeting between Dakota and European was with Radisson and Groseillier in 1660,¹⁷ Hennepin was the first European to live with

¹⁷It was east of Mille Lac (eastern Minnesota\northern Wisconsin) in the spring of 1660 at an annual feast of the dead that the first recorded meeting between Dakota and European took place. The Dakota were most likely from the Mdewakantonwan band (the principal Dakota group residing at Mille Lac); the Europeans were traders-explorers Pierre Esprit, Sieur Radisson and Medard Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers. The written account of this meeting is preserved in Radisson's journal, first published in 1853 under the title *Voyages of Pierre Esprit Radisson: Being An Account of his Travels and Experience Among the North American Indians, From 1652 to 1684*. Although Radisson is not interested in reporting on Dakota culture, he does offer some information. For example, he provides a description of the calumet ("of a red stone, as big as a fist and as long as a hand"). He also makes casual comments concerning purification techniques, feasts, tobacco offerings, the attitude of respect for the elders and elderly, Dakota hospitality, and other customs, including the ritual use of red paint and bear grease.

the Dakota and the first person to leave a written account of his stay.¹⁸ In February of 1680 Hennepin and two canoe-men (Antoine Augel and Michel Accou) were sent by LaSalle into the Upper Mississippi Valley while LaSalle and the rest of the party proceeded to the Lower Mississippi. On the eleventh or twelfth of April, "near Lake Pepin, about five hundred miles above the mouth of the Illinois",¹⁹ Hennepin and his fellow travellers met an army of Dakota men (30 canoes manned by 120 Indians)²⁰ who were on a revenge military expedition against the Miami. At this point, the Dakota cancelled their plans and escorted (Hennepin would say "kidnapped") the travellers to the Dakota villages in the Mille Lac

See: Pierre Esprit Radisson, *Voyages of Pierre Esprit Radisson: Being an Account of His Travels and Experience Among the North American Indians, From 1652-1684*. 1853. Gideon Scull, ed. (New York: Peter Smith, 1943).

¹⁸An account of Hennepin's adventures was first published in 1683 under the title *Description de la Louisiane*. It was translated into Italian, Dutch and German in 1684 and 1688 and translated into English by John Gilmary Shea in 1880 and by Marion Cross in 1938. Subsequent to *Louisiane*, Hennepin wrote two more books: the first, *Nouvelle Découverte d'un très grand pays, situé dans l'Amérique*, published in 1697 with new editions in 1698, 1704, 1711, 1712, and 1737 (while translations were made into Dutch, Spanish, German and English); and the second, *Nouveau Voyage d'un Pays plus grand que l'Europe*, published in 1698. An English translation of Hennepin's travels was published in 1698 under the title *A New Discovery of a Vast Country in America*. This latter book combined, in two volumes, the *Nouvelle Découverte* and *Nouveau Voyage*, with "added matter introducing Marquette's voyage".

¹⁹Hennepin, *Vast*, p. xxx.

²⁰Father Louis Hennepin, *A Description of Louisiana*. John Gilmary Shea, translator and editor. (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, Inc., 1880), pp. 204-205.

region of northern Minnesota. Apparently, the Dakota divined that providence had provided three replacements for three of the Dakota victims of the Miami raid; Hennepin, Augel and Accou were subsequently adopted by three "captains". I think that Hennepin is quite correct when he says "this help'd me gain credit among these people".²¹ As a relative who travelled, hunted, and lived with the Dakota during the summer of 1680, Hennepin was placed in a perfect position to observe and record (and participate in) Dakota religious life and culture. Nonetheless, for some reason, despite all of Hennepin's credentials and opportunities, he did not provide much information on Dakota religious life and almost no specific reference to the Dakota spiritual leaders. For this reason I agree with Johnathan Carver's statement that Hennepin fell "very short of that knowledge which it was in his power to have attained from his long residence among them."²² Whatever his reasons were for not doing so, Hennepin should have been able to provide much more information on Dakota religious life and spiritual leaders. Perhaps instead of discussing the Dakota spiritual leaders specifically, Hennepin was satisfied with his treatment of Native spiritual leaders in a general discussion. Hennepin first mentions the "charlatans whom they call jugglers" in an appended section of the *Description* which deals with the "Manners of the Indians". In

²¹Hennepin, *Vast*, p. 475.

²²Johnathan Carver, *Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America in the Years 1766, 1767, and 1768*. 3rd edition. (London: Printed for the author, 1781), p. 220.

any event, throughout the English translations of Hennepin's writings, the spiritual leaders are variously referred to as jugglers, mountebanks, counterfeit physicians, charlatans and quacks; all of which carry a pejorative meaning.

In contrast to Hennepin, Johnathan Carver--the first Englishman to leave an account of his adventures among the Dakota--provides a great deal of information about the Dakota spiritual leaders, based on his travels from 1767-1768.²³ Furthermore, Carver's evaluation of the "Indians'" religion and spiritual leaders is much more positive than Hennepin's evaluation or the evaluations of many of the pre-anthropological (1890) authors. Like Hennepin, however, Carver discusses the spiritual leaders (the individuals with the "triple character" of "doctor", "priest", and "magician") of the "Indians" in general, under the subtitle "Of Their Religion."²⁴ Also, like Hennepin, Carver doesn't supply us with the Dakota names for their spiritual leaders and still uses the word juggler. He does, however, use the English word "doctor" which would be a more accurate rendering of the French word *médecin*. It seems that the designation "medicine man" came about from a mistranslation of the French word for doctor--"*médecin*." George Catlin, who was travelling around Dakota/Lakota territory shortly after Carver, provides an explanation for the meaning and usage of the word "medicine".

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 380-389.

Between 1832 and 1839, George Catlin, the travelling artist-historian, set out to capture the pictorial history of the "North American Indians." Supplementing his paintings and etchings with ethnographic notes on the Native Nations that he encountered, he published, in 1841, his notes and pictorial history in the two volume *North American Indians: Being Letters and Notes on Their Manners, Customs, and Conditions*.²⁵ Catlin left St. Louis on March 26, 1832 travelling on the Yellowstone--"the first steamboat to make the long trip to Fort Union at the Mouth of the Yellowstone...in North Dakota."²⁶ When he reached Fort Pierre at the mouth of the Teton River, he met part of the Western Division Teton Lakota. In the spring of 1835 he was at Fort Snelling painting and taking notes on the Eastern Division Santee Dakota; the following year he was rudely trespassing at Pipestone quarry (the first "whiteman" to do so). Catlin informs the reader that the words *medicine*, *medicinebag*, or *medicine-operation* are important words that he plans to use frequently in *Manners and Notes* and which need to be explained. Upon defining the word, Catlin says that the word *medicine*, in its common acceptation here, means mystery, and nothing else...²⁷ He explains further that,

²⁵George Catlin, *North American Indians: Being Letters and Notes on Their Manners, Customs, and Conditions, Written During Eight Years' Travel amongst the Wildest Tribes of Indians in North America, 1832-1839*. 2 vols. 1841. Reprint ed. (Edinburgh: Hohn Grant, 1926).

²⁶*Ibid.*, p. x.

²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 35.

The Fur Traders in this country are nearly all French; and in their language, a doctor or physician is called "Medecin." The Indian country is full of doctors; and as they are all magicians, and skilled, or profess to be skilled, in many mysteries, the word "medecin" has become habitually applied to everything mysterious or unaccountable...(medicine-men) are all supposed to deal more or less in mysteries and charms...Yet it was necessary to give the word or phrase a still more comprehensive meaning--as there were many personages amongst them skilled in the application of drugs and medicines; and they all range now, under the comprehensive and accommodating phrase of "medicine-men"...

The Indians do not use the word medicine, however; but in each tribe they have a word of their own construction, synonymous with mystery or mysteryman.²⁸

This quote by Catlin states the case concerning the word medicine and the usage of the name medicine-man succinctly. The English usage of the appellation medicine-man originates from the French word for doctor. Because the Indian doctors heal with spiritual powers--are skilled in mysteries--the word medicine has come to be used to refer to anything mysterious, spiritually powerful, sacred. Catlin is the first to acknowledge that the "Indians" have a word of their own synonymous with mystery or mysteryman. Even though he acknowledges the fact, he fails to provide us with these words. The first person to record the proper Dakota names was the cartographer Joseph N. Nicollet.

The significance of Nicollet's account is that it was, according to Raymond J. DeMallie, "the first substantial body of data recorded" (1838-1839), however, not published until 1970 and 1976. As a result, this data stands, "as an important independent

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

check on later data."²⁹ In the 1976 publication *Joseph N. Nicollet on the Plains and Prairies*³⁰ translated and edited by Edmund C. and Martha Coleman Bray, Raymond J. DeMallie adds an appendix titled "Nicollet's Notes on the Dakota."³¹ In this section DeMallie reveals that Nicollet recorded a great deal of accurate information concerning the Dakota spiritual leaders. Nicollet's is the first record of the names which the Dakota apply to their spiritual leaders. DeMallie summarizes Nicollet's notes under a sub-heading titled "Medicine Men," as follows:

Wakan-medicine, the Grand Medicine, the ceremonies. Corresponds to Mide of the Chippewa. Wakan watchipi--the Midewin. Wakan watchipi okonda kitchie, he is a member of the medicine dance. Wakan watchipi opa, he belongs to the medicine dance, he is a member. Wakan watchi itantchan (leader of the medicine dance)--the first of the ceremony. Wichashta wakan--man of the medicine society, not a doctor but a diviner, a juggler (or conjurer). Wichashta waka(n) wapiya--the medicine man who is a doctor, practicing medicine in his nation. Wapiya--name of a doctor who treats a sick person, who does ceremonies for him. The word means he mends, he restores, he treats. Pejuta witchashta--man of roots, he is of the medicine, doctor, surgeon (of the whites).³²

²⁹Raymond J. DeMallie, "Comparative Materials for the Study of Sioux Religion." *Lakota Belief and Ritual*. Raymond J. DeMallie and Elaine A. Jahner, eds. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), p. 55.

³⁰Edmund C. Bray and Martha Coleman Bray, trans. and eds., *Joseph N. Nicollet on the Plains and Prairies* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1976).

³¹Raymond J. DeMallie (ed.). "Nicollet's Notes on the Dakota." *Joseph N. Nicollet on the Plains and Prairies*, Edmund C. Bray and Martha Coleman Bray, translators and editors (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1976): pp. 250-281.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 264.

Despite the detailed and accurate notes which Nicollet made concerning the Dakota spiritual leaders, a major flaw is the fact that he failed to identify the female spiritual leaders. Mary Eastman, on the other hand, included a great deal about the "medicine women" in her book.

Although Nicollet may have been the first author to record in detail information about Dakota religions, the honour of having "the earliest published data"³³ goes to Mary Eastman, with her book titled *Dahcotah: or Life and Legends of the Sioux Around Fort Snelling*, published in 1849.³⁴ Eastman weaves her narrative in a romantic literary style, giving it the appearance of a novel. The "medicine-man" is an integral character in Eastman's story--curing here, prophesying there. Upon introducing this character into her narrative, Eastman says, "Their medicine-men, priests, and jugglers are proverbially the greatest scamps of the tribe...they belong to the corps of quacks; for they doubt their own powers, and are constantly imposing on the credulity of others."³⁵ Whereas earlier authors, such as Catlin, Carver, and Hennepin, discussed Native "jugglers" or "medicine-men" in a general presentation, Eastman concentrates strictly on the Dakota; even more specifically, the Dakota who live around Fort Snelling. The reason for such a specialization is that Eastman is familiar with these people as

³³DeMallie, "Comparative Material," p. 55.

³⁴Mary Eastman, *Dahcotah: or Life and Legends of the Sioux Around Fort Snelling* (New York: John Wiley, 1849).

³⁵*Ibid.*, pp. xii-xiii.

friends, neighbours, and associates; hence, she refers to some of the spiritual leaders by name. As a result, Eastman provides a great deal of new, previously unpublished information related to the Dakota spiritual leaders and their organizational structure. Furthermore, while almost all of the authors from Hennepin on indicate that both men and women are "jugglers," "superstitious," etc., Eastman is the first to reveal a personal relationship with a "medicine woman." As such, Eastman's first chapter is titled "Mock-pe-en-dag-a-win: or Checkered Cloud, the Medicine Woman." Eastman makes it quite clear that a medicine woman is a female doctor or juggler. In addition, she adds that no man or woman can assume such an office without previous initiation by authority.³⁶ She also mentions a medicine woman who can foretell future events³⁷ and another medicine woman who related to her the story of Wenona and maiden rock.³⁸

The abundance of information on Dakota religious life provided by Mary Eastman was made possible as a result of her prolonged association with the Dakota people. Earlier authors were basically travellers who were just passing through; hence, they were not able to acquire as much information. In addition to personal contact with Dakota people, Eastman had recourse to other non-Native neighbours as sources of information; neighbours who had close

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 33.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 79.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 166.

personal and professional relationships with Dakota people. In particular, Eastman mentions that she interviewed Thomas S. Williamson and Gideon H. Pond; two missionaries whose business it was to be informed about Dakota religious life (especially since the Dakota spiritual leaders were their rivals). These missionaries, and their contemporaries--Pond's brother Samuel, Stephen R. Riggs, Philander Prescott and James W. Lynd, among others--provided a great deal of information on Eastern Division Santee Dakota religion.

With the Eastern Division Santee Dakota dispersed and "under-control," following the Minnesota Conflict of 1862, attention shifted to the Western Division Teton Lakota and their famous leaders Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, Red Cloud, Spotted Tail, etc. The Teton defended their freedom and rights valiantly in numerous military campaigns against the U.S. army, their greatest victory being in 1876 against Colonel George Armstrong Custer and the 7th Cavalry at the infamous "Battle of Little Bighorn." However, although they "won the battle," as the saying goes, they eventually "lost the war." Following the assassination of the renowned Lakota spiritual leader Tatanka Yotanka (Sitting Bull) in December, 1890, Custer's old regiment the 7th cavalry were to take their revenge on the Lakota at the tragic "Wounded Knee Massacre" on December 29, 1890. An estimated 300 of the 350 unarmed Lakota men, women, and children were indiscriminately and mercilessly murdered. In addition, as William Powers informs us, "the year 1890 signalled another event; the federal government required all Oglalas who were

currently ghost-keeping to release their souls on an appointed day."³⁹ Wounded Knee, as well as the incredible demand made by the government, signified the end of an epoch for the Dakota/Lakota Nation and the beginning of a new age. With this new age came a greater degree of contact between the Dakota/Lakota and the flood of non-Native immigrants. Just as prolonged association between non-Native and Eastern Dakota around Fort Snelling resulted in detailed descriptions of Dakota religio-cultural life, so too extended contact between non-Native and Western Lakota resulted in the publication of a wealth of information on Lakota religio-cultural life. Particularly noteworthy is the information collected by James Walker. Walker provides a great deal of esoteric information owing to his intimate association with Lakota shamans. He was sent to Pine Ridge Reservation in 1896 to administer smallpox vaccinations and medical aid. He quickly realized that such a task was impossible for one man and so he solicited the aid of the Lakota shamans. These shamans took Walker under their wings, so to speak, and taught him some of their esoteric knowledge. In fact, in Walker's manuscript collection some of these shamans--Sword, One-finger, Thomas Tyon--provide their own narratives on various Lakota religious and philosophical concepts.⁴⁰

³⁹ William K. Powers, *Oglala Religion* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1975, 1977), p. 122.

⁴⁰ Recall the end of Chapter One in the section "Origins: The Mythological Record."

The vast amount of material published about Dakota/Lakota religio-cultural life and spiritual leaders in the twentieth century is staggering. It would be impossible in the scope of this dissertation to cover adequately all of this information. In the context of our present concern (detailing the Dakota names of those persons who have been called shamans, medicine men, etc.) it is necessary to mention the work of a contemporary scholar, William Powers.

William Powers is a Professor of Anthropology at Rutgers University. He has spent over thirty years studying Lakota culture, is fluent in the language, and has been adopted into a Lakota family. His intimate relationship with the Lakota people, and what must be a sincere personal desire to learn and communicate to others the rich culture and history of the Lakota people, serves to strengthen his results. As such, the information provided by Powers goes way beyond that provided by earlier authors (especially pre-1900). He is quite precise in detailing the specific Lakota names for the various categories of male and female "ritual specialists."⁴¹

In chapter 7, "Shamans and Priests," of his text *Sacred Language: The Nature of Supernatural Discourse in Lakota*, Powers addresses the present concern of this chapter; the terminology used to refer to, and the identification of, persons in the Lakota

⁴¹"Ritual specialist" is the phrase that Powers prefers to use. See: William K. Powers, *Sacred Language: The Nature of Supernatural Discourse in Lakota* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986), p. 194.

tradition who are commonly referred to as medicine men/women or shamans. Upon examining "the manner in which the Lakota classify their own ritual specialists,"⁴² he employs two tables (Tables 2 and 3 here, page 80) as "a heuristic device which most closely resembles the way the Lakota people understand relationships between sacred persons and sacred rituals."⁴³ He asserts that these sacred persons are classified based upon such factors as gender, ways in which men and women perform their sacred duties, the sources of their power, fields of specialization, public performances, doing harm to others, and cross-dressing. Therefore, he concludes that those persons who are generically called shamans or medicine men/women in English, are generically called *wicasa wakan* (sacred man) or *winyan wakan* (sacred woman) in Lakota. Furthermore, based on the criteria for classification mentioned above, Powers notes that, in the men's case, the *wicasa wakan* are further classified into four subclasses: (1) *wapiyapi* "curers"; (2) *wakan kaga* "performers"; (3) *Wicahmunga* "wizards"; and (4) *winkte* "transvestites."

The *wapiyapi* (from *wapiye* "a person who makes over, renews") are further classified according to their source of power or spirit helper: the *mato wapiye* "bear curer"; the *Yuwipi wicasa* "Yuwipi man"; *hohu iyapa* "to hold a bone in the mouth," "bone

⁴²*Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 195.

sucker"; and *pejuta wicasa* "medicine man, who cures his patients by means of sacred herbs."⁴⁴

The *wakan kaga* were those *wicasa wakan* who performed public demonstrations of their power or public dramatization of their dreams. As Powers explains:

Some of them cured people, some of them changed their own behavior radically after having received visions of the thunder and lightning, others had control over people's behaviors. *Wakan kaga* is a confusing class of *wicasa wakan* because the term refers to both the performer and the performance. Also, somewhat misleading is the fact that members of this class who actually cure are also called *wapiye*. Yet I believe it stands as a class separate from the *wapiye* because many of the *wakan kaga* simply do not cure at all. Rather they simply act out their *wakan* visions in public.⁴⁵

The *wakan kaga* are: the *heyoka kaga* "clown performers"; the *hehaka kaga* "elk performers"; the *mato kaga* "bear performers"; and other performers not indicated on the chart but mentioned by Powers, such as *tatanka kaga* "buffalo performers" and *sungmanitu kaga* "wolf performers."⁴⁶

The third subclass of *wicasa wakan* are the *wicahmunga* or "evil-doers". As Powers explains, not much is known about them but, although not identified, they are blamed for "otherwise inexplicable events such as accidents, murder, the sudden death of

⁴⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 181-182.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 183-187.

children, and catastrophe."⁴⁷ They can also make a person ill or depressed.

The fourth subclass are the *winkte* "would-be-woman" and were men who, as a result of a vision, were compelled to dress like women and assume womens' roles.

For women sacred persons, *winyan wakan*, Powers identifies three subclasses which parallel three of the four subclasses of *wicasa wakan*; these are: *wapiyapi*; *wakan kaga*; and *wihmunga*. Powers does not list a female counterpart to the male *winkte* because he maintains that there is no female counterpart.⁴⁸ In comparison to the types of male ritual specialists, there does not seem to be as much of a variety. In fact, Powers asserts that *wapiye winyan* are rare, but *pejuta winyela* "medicine women" are common. He also notes that *wapiye winyan* are often the wives of *wicasa wakan* and "assist their husbands in various kinds of curing ceremonies such as *Yuwipi*."⁴⁹ I was surprised to see a female counterpart to the male *heyoka kaga*, as I could not recall any reference to women *heyoka* in the literature. However, Powers explains that, "of the *wakan kaga*, women participated only in the *heyoka kaga* but this was in the distant past and no known examples of female *heyoka* exist at Pine Ridge."⁵⁰

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 190.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 192.

Table 2 . Types of Male Ritual Specialists

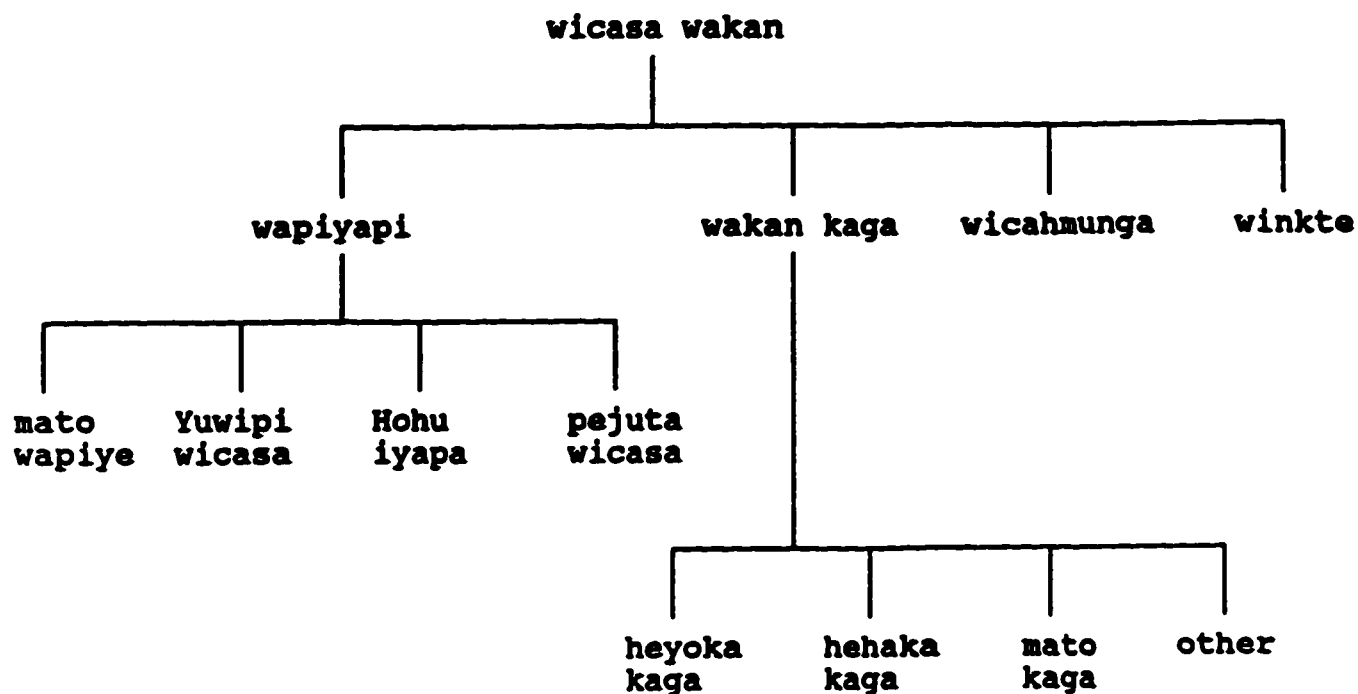
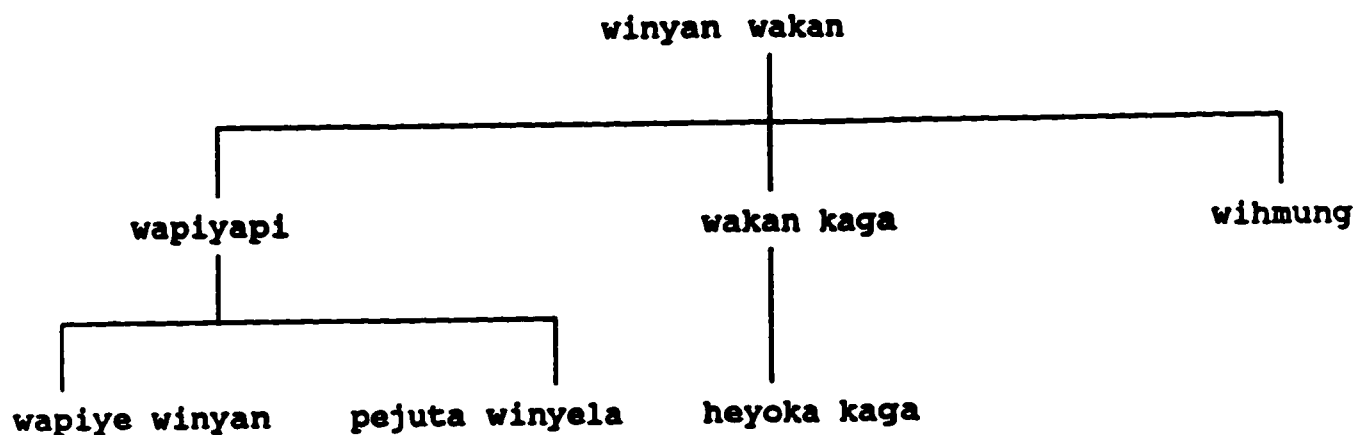


Table 3. Types of Female Ritual Specialists



How reliable is Powers' classification? Well, one must remember that it is his attempt to classify in a way which, as mentioned above, most closely resembles the way in which the Lakota people understand relationships between sacred persons and sacred ritual. It would seem that based on his linguistic fluency, lengthy and intimate association with the Lakota people and in the context of other attempts at classification, Powers is the best that exists, thusfar. The Lakota way of classifying their shamans or medicine men/women suggests that one might expect to find inconsistencies, in the literature, with Powers' classification. This does not necessarily make Powers' classification wrong, it simply attests to the difficulty of trying to systematize something that does not lend itself to such rigid systematization and categorization. He admits that, "some confusion arises in the classification process because the same medicine men and women often are known by more than one name...various terms for ritual or ceremony are coupled with the source of the ritual specialist's power to form descriptive classificatory terms for forms of religious performance."⁵¹ To provide an example of how the nomenclature changes, Powers contrasts three types of *wakan kaga*: the *heyoka kaga* "clown performance," the *mato kaga* "bear performance" and the *hehaka kaga* "elk performance." As can be seen from his Table 2 (Table 4 here), Powers notes that these performances can be classified according to: "(1)source of power,

⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 192.

(2)presence or absence of feast, (3)presence or absence of song as a major medium of communication with the supernatural, (4)the nature of the performance including time and place, and (5)whether curing is associated with the enactment."⁵²

Powers clearly demonstrates that there is a great deal more to classifying the various Dakota/Lakota "sacred men" and "sacred women" than to simply calling them shamans or medicine men/women. No matter which way one classifies these sacred men and women, one thing is certain--of utmost importance is the religious calling to their profession through the dream or vision experience. It is through dreams or visions that the wicasta wakan establishes a relationship with their spirit helpers; a relationship which serves as an exemplary model for all relationships. It is to a discussion of dreams/visions, the concept of the self, the vision quest, and the various "societies of dreamers," that we must now turn to.

Table 4. Sources of Power

Source of Power	Feast	Sing	Performance	Curing
<i>wakinyan</i> <i>ihanblapi</i>	<i>Heyoka</i> <i>wozepi</i>	----	<i>Heyoka</i> <i>kaga</i>	----
<i>Mato</i> <i>ihanblapi</i>	<i>Mato</i> <i>wohanpi</i>	<i>Mato</i> <i>lowanpi</i>	<i>Mato</i> <i>kagapi</i>	<i>Mato</i> <i>wapiye</i>
<i>Hehaka</i> <i>ihanblapi</i>	<i>Hehaka</i> <i>wohanpi</i>	----	<i>Hehaka</i> <i>kaga</i>	<i>Hehaka</i> <i>wapiye, or</i> <i>Hehakela</i>

⁵²*Ibid.*, p. 193.

Dreams/Visions

In the "West", Sigmund Freud is credited with re-introducing the idea that dreaming is a significant human experience;⁵¹ for the Dakota, such a re-introduction has not been necessary. Dreams/visions have been of utmost importance to Dakota epistemology since time immemorial. They have been and are important to the Dakota understanding of human nature and the workings of the human mind. One might be tempted to say that without dreams/visions, there would be no Dakota religion or culture, because dreams/visions are the blueprints for social and individual action and life; they are didactic tools, used to teach an individual about themselves and the world and how to live in the world. The dream/vision in Dakota religious tradition and shamanism is of key importance. It is through the dream/vision that the shaman establishes a relationship with his or her spirit helper and gets the power to be a shaman. As *Lame Deer* informs us:

I am a medicine man because a dream told me to be one, because I am commanded to be one, because the old holy men--Chest, Thunderhawk, Chips, Good Lance--helped me to be one.⁵²

You become a *pejuta Wicasa*, a medicine man and healer, because a dream tells you to do this. No one man dreams of all the medicines. You doctor where you know you have the power. You don't inherit it; you work for it, fast

⁵¹An interesting area of research would be to situate Freud and Jung's dream theories in relation to Dakota dream theory (or theories) and thereby draw comparisons and contrasts.

⁵²*Lame Deer, Lame Deer*, p. 158.

for it, try to dream it up, but it doesn't always come.⁵³

Multiple-souls

Dreams or visions can be typified as moments when the person's nagi (spirit) enters the nagi world. The nagi is one of the four souls possessed by each living thing. In order to understand the role of dreams/visions, it is important to understand the Dakota philosophical conceptualization of the self--the concept of multiple souls. This is an exceedingly difficult and complex religio-philosophical concept which has received very little attention in the written literature. The main source of information on multiple souls for this dissertation comes from lecture notes and class handouts from a course taught by Arthur Amiotte at Brandon University, Manitoba in 1985. Amiotte also outlines the concept in an article on the Lakota dream experience.⁵⁴ Another good source of information can be found in the Walker material.⁵⁵

The first reference to the concept of multiple souls that I was able to detect was by Pierre Charles Le Sueur. Le Sueur wrote, "all the Scioux in general say that they have three souls, and that

⁵³*Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁵⁴Arthur Amiotte, "Our Other Selves: The Lakota Dream Experience." *Parabola*, Vol. VII, No. 2, Spring, 1982: pp. 26-32.

⁵⁵James R. Walker, "The Sun Dance and Other Ceremonies of the Oglala Division of the Teton Dakota." *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*. Vol. XVI, Part II, 1917.

after death, that which has done good goes to the warm countries, that which has done evil to the cold countries, and the other keeps to the body."⁵⁶ In contemporary explications of this concept nothing conforms precisely to what Le Sueur says about the first two souls. Furthermore, according to Amiotte, Sword, and others, Dakota thought conceives that all living things (including rocks and other living beings perceived by Western thought as being inanimate) have at least four souls: the niya; the nagi; the nagila; and sicun. Briefly stated, the niya, according to Amiotte, is conceived of as the life breath; it is linked to the body and inter-dependent with it. One must periodically cleanse oneself through such means as purification in a sweatlodge, thereby cleansing one's body and invisible part. Arthur Amiotte declares that the niya is:

the life breath of the organism-being; the vital linkage of spirit and matter which is a type of energy sustaining and generated by living things and must be sustained by meeting and fostering human basic organic needs while not forgetting to foster 'purity' of spiritual essence of the combination.⁵⁷

The nagi, on the other hand, is more akin to the ghost stereotype. It possesses the individual's personality and memory. As Amiotte explains:

from the Native perspective this may include what Jung calls the personal subconscious to which natives, through tradition are or have been able to master access.

⁵⁶Bernard de la Harpe, "Voyage Up the Mississippi in 1699-1700 by Mr. Le Sueur as given by Bernard de la Harpe, From Le Sueur's Journal." *Early Voyages Up and Down the Mississippi*, edited by John Gilmary Shea (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1861), p. 103.

⁵⁷Handouts for the course "Traditional Native Religion of the Northern Plains" (TNR) given by Professor Arthur Amiotte, at Brandon University, 1985.

Natives have other terms for this; the spirit world; the dream world; the other world; the ghost world; over there. From the native perspective however, this realm is not exclusive to the individual's head--mind--brain--memory. It also exists outside of one's self and can be pierced through the Nagi's ability to move out of the body and into the realm where 'the spirit-like selves' of all things are recognizable and recognize the Nagi. Based on these considerations the Nagi is often referred to as a ghost and in a native language with the proper prefixes specific types of ghosts are referred to ie. wica-nagi=ghost of a man; ti-nagi=ghost of a dwelling; mahto-nagi=ghost of a bear.⁵⁸

The nagila or little soul is that portion of taku skan skan (the origin and source of all movement) that is in every living thing; "there is a portion of taku skan skan in everyone." In a sense the nagila is the universal self and is eternal. Upon death the nagila is re-united with the totality.

The sicun is also possessed by all things. Amiotte outlines it as follows:

The Sicun or Individualized Potency is reflective of the individual's integrated ghosts and resultant potential generated by such integration. The variations of this concept are often thought of in the following terms and qualitative degrees of such: power; shamanic power; sacred power; curing power; holy power; wisdom; intelligence; supranormal powers; talent; skill; charisma; "in control of matters"; the guardian spirit; spirit helper and numerous sources of strength and or knowledge to be able to synthesize, internalize and express the values and life ways of one's culture, sometimes in the face of great odds, conflict and adversity. Sicun can be added to, expanded, transferred, or diminished and negated. It is the prime channel by which good and evil is recognized and controlled; interpreted and disseminated; projected and/or protected. Sicun is both conscious and unconscious yet idealized as a mastering of both and all three of the other ghosts in whatever realm of conscious or unconsciousness they may exist.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

All aspects of the self are important for understanding the dream experience. Of special importance, however, is the *nagi*--which is, in a sense, the dream self--and *sicun* or power, which is what an individual seeks to acquire in the vision quest or is given in a dream/vision outside of the ritual context of the vision quest. Stephen Riggs writes about getting power through fasting and praying and self-inflicted suffering; through the sundance, the death and resurrection of the mystery dance (*Wakan Wacipi*) and through the vision quest.⁶⁰

Vision Quest

A dream/vision might come at anytime. Black Elk narrates his calling by the spirits as happening when he was just a young boy.⁶¹ The formal way to seek a dream/vision, however, is through the *hanblecheyapi*, the vision quest. The *hanblecheyapi* is one of the most if not the most significant religious experience in a person's life; an experience integral to establishing personal relationships with the spirit beings and forming the personal character of the individual. "It is the individual's first step into the spiritual landscape."⁶² Through prayer, fasting, supplication, "making oneself wretched," pitiful, humble, and through lengthy

⁶⁰Riggs, *Dakota Grammar*, p. 214.

⁶¹John G. Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux* (New York: Pocket Books, 1972). Originally published in 1932.

⁶²From the video *Sacred Circle*, Part 1.

preparation, a person seeks a gift from the spirits. The spirits take pity on the human individual and grant a gift, *sicun* (power). An individual quests for a dream/vision in order to obtain power. The power is given by a particular spirit which then becomes the dreamer's spirit helper. As such, the dreamer and the spirit helper are obligated to fulfil certain duties which are seen as correct behaviour, conduct, or action in any relationship; serving as a model for how to live correctly, the fundamental way of relating with another living being is with respect and reciprocity.

The vision quest has been called, by Clark Wissler, "routinized mysticism" because through the vision quest every individual had access to direct personal experience of the sacred. Typically, a young boy⁶³ goes on his first vision quest at the onset of puberty. The vision quest is actually a rite of passage that transforms the young boy into the status of an adult. The object of the vision quest is to acquire a guardian spirit or spirit helper and to "find out who you are" or what you should become. After lengthy preparation the youth is taken to a secluded place, some distance away from the community. This place has been prepared ahead of time in a ritual fashion--ie., a sacred place has

⁶³I refer specifically to the male vision quest because it is the male experience which I am most familiar with. I am not sure if the female vision quest experience is the same. It is the same in the sense that the young girl's self is composed of the same components as the young man's and the girl does seek a vision for the same reasons as the boy. However, the ritual procedure and space has most likely been developed differently by the women spiritual leaders. The girls definitely have their own rituals.

been established. Here, the youth remains for four days, fasting, praying, and making himself wretched and pitiful with the hopes of receiving a dream and thereby acquiring a dream guardian/guardian spirit/spirit helper/sicun. While the individual is on the hill in his vision pit it is said that he no longer belongs to the world of people. As one elder puts it, "You don't talk to that person and he doesn't talk to you." The person has left the world of humans and has entered the spirit world. When the shaman goes to get the individual at the end of the four days, the individual is brought back and enters the place where the initial dream interpretation takes place, the inipi (sweat-lodge). The inipi is symbolic of the mothers womb, a place of rebirth. As Amiotte explained, creating this structure is a recapitulative process; it is a recreation of the universe, a microcosmic replication of the macrocosm. Here, the individual is integrated back into the human social world. The shaman blows into the quester's eyes and says "see again as a man"; blows into his ears and says "hear again as a man"; blows into his mouth and says "speak again as a man." Then, the person must give a full account of the experience to the shaman and the shaman fulfils his function as *iyeska* ("medium" or "interpreter"); anything mysterious gets revealed. I am not certain of the interpretive process because written records are not kept by the *iyeska*. Furthermore, one does not freely talk about one's vision experience because doing so would run the risk of losing the power obtained from it. Nevertheless, according to Amiotte, retrospective accounts given by older distinguished shamans do exist.

Although a literal rendering of the dream is not articulated in words, something of the dream content can be glimpsed at through its dramatization in dance, music, song, or some type of ritual or ceremonial manifestation. For example, an individual could be compelled to participate in a sundance as a means of fulfilling a dream-inspired instruction, or, the dream guardian may be represented on a shield or a dwelling. In addition, as Wilson D. Wallis was told "all medicines and all medicine bundles are the result of dreams."⁶⁴ For example, Amiotte related the account of an individual who brought back knowledge about the use of certain medicinal herbs and roots whose usage had been forgotten. Later, it was discovered that, in that ritual space of the vision quest and buried where the quester had rested his head, there was a human skull or jawbone. The jawbone had belonged to the individual who knew the use of those herbs and medicines and that information was passed on to the vision quester. The quester then carried around the jawbone as a hierophany. He used it in ceremonies to receive the sicun of the "jaw man." The jaw actually functioned as a container of the sicun, as well as a visual representation of power and a mnemonic reminder of the dream experience, the role of medicine bundles.

⁶⁴Wilson Wallis, "The Canadian Dakota." *American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers*, vol. 41, 1919: p. 82.

Dream Cults or Societies of Dreamers

A most obvious indication of the type of dream experience that an individual has had is the particular "dream cult" he/she is compelled to join. Individuals who share similar dream experiences form associations. Using the university as a metaphor, these associations can be perceived as departments or research groups. The dreamers are intellectuals; the functional equivalent of philosophers, religionists, historians, psychologists, medical specialists, etc. Inter-communication with fellow dreamers functions as ongoing therapy and interpretation of the dream experience, as well as a way of learning from older and other intellectuals in the same field. The public dances and dramas serve as a platform for "lecturing" (teaching) as well as a means of validating one's experience and presenting the "dreamer's" credentials. Public recognition is important because members of these cults serve the society as psycho-spiritual and physical healers as well as educators.

The phrase "dream cult" was coined by Clark Wissler in *Societies and Ceremonial Associations in the Oglala Division of Teton Dakota*.⁶⁵ In this article Wissler identifies "Dream Cults" of the Oglalas. He defines "dream cults" as being "groups of shamans, having similar wakan dreams."⁶⁶ The dream cults that he discusses

⁶⁵Clark Wissler, "Societies and Ceremonial Associations in the Oglala Division of the Teton-Dakota." *Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. XI. New York: Published by Order of the Trustees, 1916: pp. 1-100.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 81.

are: Heyoka; Elk; Bear; Black-Tail Deer; Wolf; Buffalo; Berdache; Double-Woman; Dreaming-Pair; Mountain Sheep; Rabbit; Horse; Woman's Medicine; Mescal; and, the Dog cult. He also notes that for the Eastern Dakota, "the older literature" often refers to them as clans, but that "clans" should not be taken to mean what is commonly meant by "clans" but rather refers to what he means by "cult."⁶⁷ Looking at the older literature, then, we find that the Dream cults identified by Wissler have been written about, to various extent, and at different points in history, by missionaries, traders, travellers, and explorers.

It is uncertain what Wissler considers to be the "older literature." Can we take "older" to include the Riggs and Pond material? I think that we must because, as we have already seen, the pre-eighteen hundred literature is vague and does not identify the dream societies to any great extent, if at all. It is with the Pond and Riggs material that more detailed information is provided. However, the dream societies are generally discussed in the context of dances and when Pond uses the word "clan" he does not seem to be talking about what Wissler means by "cult." A perfect example of the Dakota parallel to the Lakota dream cults mentioned by Wissler is found in the "Tree-dweller Cult", a member group of the Wakan Wacipi society (mystery dance, holy dance society).

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, footnote 1, p. 81.

Wakan Wacipi (Mystery Dance, Holy Dance)

In terms of the written literature, the Wakan Wacipi was first described by Johnathan Carver in his section on the "Pawwaw or Black Dance"; a dance about which the "people of the colonies tell a thousand ridiculous stories of the devil being raised."⁶⁸ Regarding this dance, Carver says, "though I did not actually see the devil raised by it, I was witness to some scenes that could only be performed by such as dealt with him, or were very expert and dextrous jugglers."⁶⁹ Following this statement, Carver goes on to relate one such dance among the "Naudowessies". This dance was held after someone was initiated into the "Wakon-Kitchewa," or as Carver translates it, "the Friendly Society of the Spirit".⁷⁰ Carver is the first to link Dakota spiritual leaders to a society; a society composed of men and women of "unexceptionable character".⁷¹ In addition, Carver's is the first account of the initiation of a candidate to the Wakan Wacipi.⁷²

Regarding the initiation, Carver says that the initiation was "attended with some very singular circumstance, which, as I have before observed, must be either the effect of magic, or of amazing

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. 270.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 271.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 271.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 271.

⁷²I have quoted Carver's account of the initiation in full in Appendix A.

dexterity".⁷³ Carver's description of the initiation depicts the shamanic ecstasy of the spiritual leader and the shamanic ecstasy/death-resurrection of the initiate. As Carver informs us, one of the spiritual leaders (he refers to them collectively as chiefs) said to the initiate that,

he (the chief) was now agitated by the same spirit which he should in a few moments communicate to him (the initiate), that it would strike him (the latter) dead, but that he would instantly be restored again to life; to this he (the chief) added, that the communication, however terrifying, was a necessary introduction to the advantages enjoyed by the community into which he (the initiate) was on the point of being admitted.⁷⁴

The spiritual leader then threw what Carver thought was a "bean" at the initiate, striking the initiate "to all appearance bereft of life."⁷⁵ After steps were taken, by the four "chiefs" conducting the initiation, to bring the initiate back to life, the initiate began to recover and vomited the "bean" that had been thrown at him. (As later authors will reveal, the "bean" was actually a shell; these authors, such as Gideon Pond and Alanson Skinner, point out that the members of the Wakan Wacipi believe that each member has one of these shells in his/her body.) The initiation ended, the new member was given a new set of clothes and the dance began. Concerning the Wakan Wacipi, Carver says,

I could not help laughing at a singular childish custom I observed they introduced into this dance, and which was the only one that had the least appearance of

⁷³*Ibid.*, p. 272.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p. 274. Brackets are mine.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p. 274.

conjunction. Most of the members carried in their hands an otter or martin's skin, which being taken whole from the body, and filled with wind, on being compressed made a squeaking noise through a small piece of wood organically formed and fixed in its mouth. When this instrument was presented to the face of any of the company, and the sound emitted, the person receiving it instantly fell down to appearance dead. Sometimes two or three, both men and women, were on the ground together; but immediately recovering, they rose up and joined again in the dance. This seemed to afford, even the chiefs themselves, infinite diversion. I afterwards learned that these were their Dii Penates or Household Gods.⁷⁶

The Wakan Wacipi initiation is almost identical to the Anishnabe Midewiwin or Medicine Society. Different authors have noted the connection between the Wakan Wacipi and the Anishnabe Midewiwin. The relationship between these two religious organizations has been examined in more detail by Joseph Nicollet, G. Pond, J. Lynd, and others. James Howard also links the Wakan Wacipi with the "Midewiwin lodge of the Ojibwa, Cree, and Central-Algonkin tribes and the similar medicine lodges of the Southern-Siouan groups."⁷⁷

Nicollet preferred the Anishnabe religio-cultural life to the Dakota.⁷⁸ In his Journals he relates that he attended several

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, p. 277-278. Alanson Skinner provides photographs of the medicine dance paraphernalia including the "martins skins." See, Alanson B. Skinner, "Medicine Ceremony of the Menomini, Iowa and Wahpeton Dakota, With Notes on the Ceremony Among the Ponca, Bung Ojibwa and Potawatomi." *Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, Indian Notes and Monographs*, vol. 4, 1920: pp. 262-357.

⁷⁷Howard, *Canadian*, p. 608.

⁷⁸His notes about the Anishnabe have been edited by Martha Coleman Bray and appear in: Martha Coleman Bray ed., *The Journals of Joseph N. Nicollet*. Translated by André Ferty. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1970).

celebrations of the "midewiwin" (the Anishnabe word which Nicollet uses when referring to the Wakan Wacipi) held by the "mendewakantous", one of which was attended by "more than three hundred mide men and women."⁷⁹ It seems to me that this is the first historical indication of the number of members participating in the Wakan Wacipi. G. Pond later indicates the number of "medicine-men" and "medicine-women" present at each village. Although, he doesn't identify how many of the medicine-men/woman are members of the Wakan Wacipi.

James Lynd, one of the first authors to compare Dakota and Lakota religious expressions, notes that "those Dakota who belong to the Medicine Dance, esteem Unktehi as the greatest divinity. The western tribes neglect that deity, and pay their main devotion to Tunkan (Inyan), the Stone God, or Lingam."⁸⁰ Lynd says that the Medicine Dance is no part of the western Lakota's hereditary creed.⁸¹ Furthermore, he claims that even among the eastern Dakota the Medicine Dance is an intrusive religious form; he adds that the Dakota learned it from the Anishnabe. As such, Lynd declares that an analysis of the medicine dance "belongs properly to a history of the nation and race to which those dances are clearly traceable"--

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, p. 211.

⁸⁰James Lynd, "The Religion of the Dakota." *Minnesota Historical Society Collections*, vol. 2, part 2, 1864. 2nd ed., 1881: p. 159.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, p. 160.

the Anishnabe.⁸² He further asserts that the medicine dance is not as important as some have ascribed it to be; that what is important is "Wiwang Wacipi, or Sun Worship (Sundance) and Hanmdepi or God Seeking," (vision quest) which incorporate purification and sacrifice as underlying elements.⁸³

Alanson Skinner, in his article "Medicine Ceremony of the Menomini, Iowa, and Wahpeton Dakota, With Notes on the Ceremony Among the Ponca, Bungi Ojibwa, and Potawatomi," provides the most detailed account of the Wakan Wacipi. In this article, he includes information on: membership; ritual paraphernalia, such as medicine bags, rattles, water drum, paints, medicines; birch bark song records; feast bowls; lodge structure; initiation ceremony; the "Ten Rules of Life" (similar to the ten commandments); funeral ceremony; and, the societies origin myth. Skinner was told about the Wahpeton Dakota Wakan Wacipi by Jingling Cloud, who, although not a member, had "seen the ceremony on one or two occasions and has frequently heard it discussed."⁸⁴ Skinner wrote that Jingling Cloud told him in 1914 that the Wahpeton Dakota Wakan Wacipi or "medicine-lodge" was composed of four "bands" and that "membership

⁸²*Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁸³*Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁸⁴Alanson Skinner, "Medicine Ceremony of the Menomini, Iowa and Wahpeton Dakota, with Notes on the Ceremony Among the Ponca." *Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, Indian Notes and Monographs*, vol. 4, 1920: p. 262.

in each band was based on similar visions."⁸⁵ Again, in that same article, Skinner writes:

When the lodge is erected and all is in readiness, the dancers approach in groups, each group, according to Jingling-cloud, being of a cult whose members had the same animal dream guardian in common, except one, the Becdeka, or Sauk cult.⁸⁶

However, Skinner also points out that Jingling-Cloud's grandmother *Taisnahotewin* (Grey-shawl) who was a member of the society said that "membership in any band was optional with the candidate who applied to the leader of the band preferred."⁸⁷ Despite the conflicting statements by Jingling-cloud and Grey-shawl it would seem that at least one group of the Wakan Wacipi did consist of individuals who had the same dream guardian in common; namely, the Tree-dweller dreamers.

The preceding discourse has provided the written historical context in which Dakota shamanism has been understood and communicated. It has established the inadequacy of using foreign words and concepts when attempting to understand the Dakota Wicasta/Winyan Wakan and the benefit of attempts such as William Powers' to communicate an understanding of Dakota shamanism which is based upon how the Lakota categorize the different types of shamans in their tradition. Powers reveals that the Lakota classify their shamans based upon such factors as gender, ways in

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, p. 262.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, p. 295.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, p. 263.

which men and women perform their sacred duties, the sources of their power, fields of specialization, public performances, doing harm to others, and cross-dressing. Identifying the shamans' sources of power is particularly significant to this dissertation because the sources of power are the shamans' spirit helpers. As the subtitle of this dissertation indicates, power is the mediator, structurally, between the shamans and their spirit helpers. The preceeding chapter has revealed that power is the gift given to the shamans by their spirit helpers through a dream/vision; necessitating a discussion of the vision quest and the Dakota concept of multiple-souls. It was further revealed that shamans who shared similar visions joined together to form dream societies and that a particular society known as the Tree-dweller Dreamers were a member group of the most significant association of shamans, historically, in Dakota society--the Wakan Wacipi. The next chapter is an elaboration on the Tree-dweller Dreamers and their spirit helpers--the Little People. The relationship that is established between the Tree-dweller Dreamers and the Little People will serve as an exemplary model for correct relationship. The next chapter will provide the data from which conclusions will be drawn in the last chapter.

Chapter III THE TREE-DWELLER DREAMERS AND THE LITTLE PEOPLE

As has already been stated, if one wants to understand Dakota religiousness, one must look to the Dakota Wicasta Wakan, the religious specialists "par excellence", they exemplify what it means to be religious through their relationship with their spirit helpers. This dissertation could have examined the relationship between the Bear Dreamers and the Bear, the Elk Dreamers and the Elk, the Heyoka and the Thunder-beings or any other relationship between a particular dreamer and their spirit helper, as a model of correct relationship. The relationship between the Tree-dweller Dreamers and the Little People was chosen as an exemplary model of relationship as a result of personal interest, the neglect of any in-depth exploration of the Little People in the written literature and the wide-spread and prominent place of the Little People in Dakota and other Native American religious traditions. This chapter will identify who the Little People are in the context of the written literature; it will provide the data from which conclusions will be drawn in the final chapter.

The Little People: Worldwide

It is an interesting fact that stories about fairies, leprechauns or little people with magical, supernatural powers are found in the oral traditions and/or written literature of cultures the world over. Invariably they are identified as being mischievous yet at the same time they can bring good luck. What is the meaning of these stories, of what significance do they have in the lives of

the people who have heard, read, told stories or dreamed of them?

Carl Jung was interested in the Little People as can be seen from selections of his book *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*.¹ They appeared to him in his dreams and he had one who was one of his "spirit teachers". Jung informs us that in one of his descensus ad inferos dream experiences he encountered a "dwarf with a leathery skin, as if he were mummified." The dwarf stood at the entrance to a dark cave, as if it were some guardian of the passage to death--hence its mummified form. Of another dream sequence Jung says that on a grapevine formed out of black iron on the wall of a castle "at intervals of six feet on the horizontal branches were tiny houses--I saw distinctly a tiny, iron hooded gnome, a cucullatus, scurrying from one little hut to the next."² Jung identifies one of his spirit teachers called Ka as "a spirit of nature like the Anthroparion of Greek alchemy."³ In a descriptive footnote to this quote, the editor Aniela Jaffe adds:

The Anthroparion is a tiny man, a kind of homunculus. He is found, for example, in the visions of Zosimos of Panopolis, an important alchemist of the third century. To the group which includes the Anthroparion belong the gnomes, the Dactyls of classical antiquity, and the homunculi of the alchemists. As the spirit of quicksilver, the alchemical Mercurius was also an Anthroparion.⁴

¹C.G. Jung. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. Aniela Jaffé (ed.) (New York: Random House Inc., 1963) p. 179.

²*Ibid.*, p. 281.

³*Ibid.*, p. 185.

⁴*Ibid.*

Later, when chiselling a large stone for his "tower", he chiselled out a "tiny homunculus." According to Jung:

Soon something else emerged. I began to see on the front face, in the natural structure of the stone, a small circle, a sort of eye, which looked at me. I chiselled it into the stone, and in the center made a tiny homunculus. This corresponds to the "little doll" (pupilla)--yourself--which you see in the pupil of another's eye; a kind of Kabir, or the Telesphoros of Asklepios. Ancient statues show him wearing a hooded cloak and carrying a lantern. At the same time he is a pointer of the way.⁵

At one point in his writings he identifies the "cabiri", "hobgoblins", "homunculi", or "pygmies" as representing "'infantile' or unconscious forces."⁶ I mention Jung's association with the Little People not to suggest that one needs to apply a psychological interpretation to understand the Little People, but rather, it is intriguing to note the significance that the Little People had to such a cultural icon or intellectual "giant" as Jung.

The Little People, fairies, elves, goblins, dwarfs, hobbits, and other diminutive beings are part and parcel of European folk and fairy tales. The Irish leprechauns are perhaps the most well-known of these beings, as are the Liliputians who are immortalized in *Gulliver's Travels*.⁷

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 227.

⁶C.G. Jung, *Dreams*. R.F.C. Hull (Trans.) (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 273. Other references in this compilation are found on pp. 126, 132, 140, 210, 231, and 252.

⁷There has been so much written that one hardly knows where to begin referencing. As a point of entry see: Johnathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc, 1957); W.B. Yeats (ed.). *Fairy and Folk Tales of Ireland* (New York:

The Little People in General in the Americas

Despite the extensive publication of works on Irish fairies and leprechauns and of little people in cultures throughout the world, no comprehensive study exists for North and South America. There are a few interesting studies, nonetheless. R.G. Haliburton saw stories about the Little People as being possible evidence for the existence of Dwarf or Pygmy races in the Americas.⁸

A significant exception to the absence of scholarly attention to the stories about the Little People is the interpretation provided by Lévi-Strauss in *The Jealous Potter*.⁹ Dwarfs are integral to Lévi-Strauss' demonstration of what he calls "zoemes"; animals serving a semantic function. He begins with South American myths related to the sloth, representing anal retention, which is associated with a bird--the goatsucker--representing oral greediness. The sloth is rarely seen to excrete, but when it does, it comes down from its tree and excretes on the ground. If it fails

Macmillan Publishing Company, 1983)--contains material first published in 1888 and 1882; J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd, 1968).

⁸R.G. Haliburton, "Dwarf Survivals and Traditions as to Pygmy Races." *The Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science*. Vol. XLIV, 1895: pp. 1-12. Haliburton, R.G. "Survivals of Dwarf Races in the New World." *The Proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science*. Vol. XLIII, Salem, 1895.

⁹Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Jealous Potter*. Translated by Bénédicte Chorier (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

to come down and just drops its excrement from the tree the world will turn upside down and the dwarfs will come to the surface. There are no sloths in North America, but mythic thought, according to Lévi-Strauss, operates in such a way that a replacement can be found. He notes that stories about dwarfs occur in both hemispheres. Further investigation reveals that in the Northern Hemisphere these stories associate the dwarfs with birds related to the goatsucker which are also associated with oral greediness. Nevertheless, *The Jealous Potter* is by no means an in-depth study of the Little People.

Not only is a general, cross-cultural synthesis of the material on the Little People in the Americas unavailable, but--although the odd paragraph or the occasional introductory article appears--a comprehensive work for a single Native North or South American culture remains unwritten (or, at least, unpublished). This might lead the uninformed or careless observer to conclude that stories about the Little People are more typical of Europe and Asia than of the Americas. This is precisely the conclusion reached by the author of the article "Fairies" in *The New Encyclopedia of Religion*.

"Fairies are found under various names in many countries, but they are more typical of Europe and Asia than of the Americas and Africa."¹⁰

It would seem that the Little People are exhibiting their famed

¹⁰Venetia Newall. "Fairies", *The Encyclopedia of Religion*. Editor in Chief, Mircea Eliade. Vol. 5 (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), p. 246.

elusiveness even in the written literature. Yet, if one looks closely, one can see that the written literature on the Native cultures of the Americas abounds in scattered references to the Little People, who are variously referred to as little tree dwellers, little spirits, fairies, dwarfs, elves, pygmies, mermaids, sea men, etc.¹¹

The Iroquois call the Little People djonh-geh-onh and, according to their instructions, perform the dark dance in their honour.¹² The Anishnabe and Cree call them mamagwasewug, "the hidden

¹¹These names are the English translations of specific names that the Little People are called in the various languages in the Americas.

¹²Barbeau, C.M. "Huron and Wyandot Mythology." *Canadian Department of Mines Memoir 80, Anthropological series number eleven*, Ottawa, 1915: pp. 111-113. Joseph Bruchac, "The Gifts of the Little People." *Iroquois Stories: Heroes and Heroines Monsters and Magic* (Freedom, C.A.: The Crossing Press, 1985), pp. 41-46 (see Appendix A for the story). Converse, H. "Iroquois Myths and Legends." A.C. Parker, ed. *New York State Museum Bulletin 125*, 1908: pp. 101-107. Cornplanter, Jesse J. *Legends of the Longhouse* (Port Washington, New York: Ira J. Friedman, Inc, 1963). Originally published by Jesse J. Cornplanter and Namee Price Henricks, 1938 (see Appendix A for information on Jesse Cornplanter). M.R. Harrington, "The Dark Dance of Ji-Gé-Onh: A Seneca Adventure." *The Masterkey*, vol. VII, no. 3, May, 1933. M.R. Harrington, "Some Unusual Iroquois Specimens." (*American Anthropologist*, N.S. 11, 1909) 9. Morgan, Lewis H. *The League of the Ho-de-no-sau-nee, or Iroquois* (Rochester, 1851: p. 166). Parker, A.C. "The Code of Handsome Lake." *New York State Museum Bulletin 163*, 1913: p. 119. Parker, Arthur C. *The History of the Seneca Indians* (Port Washington, Long Island, N, Y.: Ira J. Friedman, Inc., 1967). Originally published in 1926: pp. 79-80 (see Appendix A). Eminne A. Smith, "Myths of the Iroquois." *2nd Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology 1880-81* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1916), pp.65-67. Before his mysterious disappearance, Canadian anthropologist Frederick Waugh collected three stories about the Little People (one in 1915 and two in 1918). From his unpublished manuscript in the Canadian Ethnological Service Archives the titles and

or covered beings",¹³ mimikwisiwak,¹⁴ or memegwisiwak¹⁵ and they are "called in" by the shamans at the shaking tent ceremony.¹⁶ The Seminoles in their Muskogee language call them "fsti lvpucki"¹⁷ and

references are as follows: "THE SNAKE BRIDE" BY DAVID JACK Grand River Reserve, August 6, 1915 Handnotes--201 F 10 (pp. 22-23) Notebook 2; "THE PIGMY'S CAVE", BY JOE SMOKE (CAYUGA) Grand River Reserve, July, 1918 Handnotes 202 F16 (pp. 29-30) Notebook 3; and, "THE PIGMY WIFE" BY ABRAM CHARLES (CAYUGA) Grand River Reserve, August, 1918 Handnotes--202 F21 (pp. 47-49) Notebook 8. Weitlaner, R.J. "Seneca Tales and Beliefs." *Journal of American Folklore*, 16, 1915. John Witthoft and Wendell S. Hadlock, "Cherokee-Iroquois Little People." *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 59, no. 233, July-Sept, 1946: pp. 413-422 (see Appendix A).

¹³David G. Mandelbaum, *The Plains Cree: An Ethnographic, Historical and Comparative Study* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1979), pp. 178-180, 315, 344: called Mamagwasewug "the hidden or covered beings." Part I of this text was originally published in 1940 by the American Museum of Natural History under the title "The Plains Cree."

¹⁴Brown, Jennifer S.H. and Robert Brightman. *The Orders of the Dreamed: George Nelson on Cree and Northern Ojibwa Religion and Myth, 1823* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press/St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988). "Mermaid and "Sea man" a class of miniature beings called by the Crees mimikwisiwak, p. 124.

¹⁵Alex F. Chamberlain, "Some Items of Algonkian Folk-lore." *Journal of American Folklore*, 1900:68 (13/50: 271-277). The author takes information from Abbé Cuog's dictionary of the Nipissing dialect *Lexique de la langue algonquine* (Montreal, 1886). (See Appendix A).

¹⁶Brown, *Orders*, p. 105. When discussing "Souls or Spirits" that enter the shaking tent, Nelson identifies "Children almost at the instant of birth, Dwarfs, Giants".

¹⁷James H. Howard, *Oklahoma Seminoles: Medicine, Magic, and Religion* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984) pp. 210-211 (see Appendix A).

the Micmac call them Wiguladumooch¹⁸ or Micumwess.¹⁹ A cursory glance at the literature reveals that references to the Little People can also be found for the Mascoutens or Potawatomi, Sauk, Fox, Kickapoo, Menomini, Winnebago, Lenape, Delawares, Shawnee,²⁰ Ponka, Tewa, Chickasaw, Creek, Salishan (Coeur d'Alène, Okanagon, Flathead), Mohegan-Pequot, Californian groups, and Inuit. It is certain that a systematic search incorporating oral traditions would uncover stories about the Little People for every cultural group in the Americas.

The Abode of the Little People

The abode of the Little People varies from hollow tree or the woods, to cliffs along Lake Superior, to under the water or a waterfall, to earth mound. As we shall see for the Dakota/Lakota, the Little People (canotindan) of the Eastern division Isantee

¹⁸Rev. Silas Tertius Rand. *Legends of the Micmacs* (New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971). Reprinted from 1894 edition (New York and London: Longmans, Green, and co.), pp. 367-368, 431-433 (see Appendix A). McMillan, *Native Peoples*, p. 49 (see Appendix A). Macfarlan, Allan A. *Fireside Book of North American Indian Folktales* (Harrisburg, Pa: Stackpole Books, 1974), pp. 150-152 (see Appendix A). Clark, Ella E. *Indian Legends of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1960), pp. 115-119 (see Appendix A).

¹⁹Leland, Charles G. *The Algonquin Legends of New England or Myths and Folk Lore of the Micmac, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot Tribes* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1885), see Appendix A.

²⁰For the preceding references see: Alanson B. Skinner, "Tree-Dweller Bundle Of The Wahpeton Dakota." *Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, Indian Notes and Monographs*, vol. 2, 1925.

Dakota (a predominantly woodlands people) live in the woods or a hollow tree, whereas the Little People of the Western division Teton Lakota (a predominantly plains people who completed their move from the woodlands to the plains in the 1700's and who apparently "dropped as excess cultural baggage the belief in tree spirits" upon this move)²¹ have been reported to reside in "a large mound in the midst of the plain" or, as Gordon MacGregor puts it, "live about the countryside." What is the significance of such differences in abode? Is there some sort of symbolic significance or do the Little People choose to live in the woods in the Isantee area and in the Teton area choose to live in the mounds on the plains as a result of geographic practicality; or, if the Little People do choose their abode, why do they and what are the symbolic repercussions of such choice?

It is almost certain that the widespread belief in the Little People in the Americas is indigenous; that is, stories about or beliefs in the Little People were not obtained from Europeans. Even as early as 1636, the *Jesuit Relations* included stories about the Little People.²²

²¹Arthur Amiotte, personal communication.

²²*Relations des Jésuites* contenant ce qui s'est passé de plus remarquable dans les missions des Pères de la compagnie de Jésus dans la Nouvelle-France, Montréal, Editions du Jour 1972 [1858]. Tome I 1611-1636, tome VI -- 1672 (see Appendix A). *Relations inédites de la Nouvelle-France* (1672-1679) pour faire suite aux anciennes relations (1615-1672), tome I, Montréal, Editions Elysée, 1974 (see Appendix A).

The Little People Today

The Little People have made recent appearances in the local newspapers. On Nov. 5, 1990 an article by Laurie Sardadi appeared in the *Gazette* and the *Ottawa Citizen* titled "Tall Tales of Tiny Tribe Abound in North" and "'Hi Little Guy' N.W.T legislator says that's how to talk to those legendary, tiny folk who roam the Arctic". Apparently the MLA for the High Arctic, Ludy Pudluk, "gave the Northwest Territories legislative assembly a lesson on how to greet a tiny tribe of Little People said to roam the High Arctic."²³ This article could have come from any region in North or South America. The elements in the report are standard: metre-high people, clothed in traditional skins and carrying bows and arrows, who are unusually strong and fast-footed and have a particular disdain for civilization; people leave food out for them, and, the proper relationship behaviour is to treat them with respect.

The Little People have even made an appearance on the popular television show "Unsolved Mysteries." One episode traced the path of what was believed to be a mummy of one of the Little People. The mummy was submitted for scientific analysis in 1976 and its whereabouts at present is unknown. The scientific community would like to find it to submit it to analysis using modern medical technology and Native groups in the area want to find it to return it to its proper resting place. Removing the mummy from its burial

²³See Appendix A.

site was a violation of proper relationship behaviour; it was disrespectful. Mysterious accidents and premature deaths followed the paths of those who were in possession of the mummy.

Belief in the Little People is very much alive today in the Cree, Anishnabe, Assiniboine and Dakota traditions in Manitoba and Saskatchewan (and, I assume, in traditions across the Americas). I have talked to several people over the past few years who have related stories about the Little People, some have even told of their own personal experiences and pointed out locations where the Little People inhabit.

The Dakota Little People--The Canotida

The Dakota name for the Little People is canotidan (little dweller in the woods).²⁴ It is with the aid of the canotindan that the shaman who has dreamed of them uses their gift of power to perform such duties as curing psycho-spiritual and physical illnesses, seeing into the future, finding lost articles, and achieving success in hunting. These shamans or "Dreamers" had, at one time, formed a member group of the Wakan Wacipi Society and "call in" their spirit helpers at the Yuwipi, a major contemporary Lakota ritual.

For the Dakota, the written history of the Little People begins with the writings of the Recollect missionary Father Louis Hennepin. One of the things that he was told by the Dakota was:

That Spirits, and Pygmies, or men of little Stature, did inhabit there [North], as they [the Dakota] had been

²⁴I will return to a discussion of definitions later.

inform'd by the people that liv'd farther up than themselves.²⁵

It wasn't until over a century after this initial reference to pygmies and men of little stature that the little spirits or Little People would again be heard from in the literature. In 1805 Lewis and Clark described a large mound on the prairies which, as they were informed, "is called the mountain of Little People, or Little Spirits" and which, according to their informant, "is believed to be the abode of little devils in human form." On August 25, 1805, Lewis and Clark's party:

went to see an object deemed very extraordinary among all the neighboring Indians...a large mound in the midst of the plain about N. 20 o W. from the mouth of Whitestone river, from which it is nine miles distant...the Indians have made it a great article of their superstition: it is called the mountain of Little People, or Little Spirits, and they believe that it is the abode of little devils, in the human form, of about eighteen inches high and with remarkably large heads; they are armed with sharp arrows, with which they are very skilful, and are always on the watch to kill those who should have the hardihood to approach their residence. The tradition is, that many have suffered from these little evil spirits, and among others, three Maha Indians fell a sacrifice to them a few years since. This has inspired all the neighboring nations, Sioux, Mahas, and Ottoes, with such terror, that no consideration could tempt them to visit the hill.²⁶

In 1824 William H. Keating met a spiritual leader who consulted "a little stone idol;" the spiritual leader referred to this idol as his "little man." Then, in 1849, the earliest published data in any detail on Dakota religion appeared in Mary

²⁵Elias, Nation.

²⁶Meriwether Lewis, *Lewis & Clark Journals*. Vol. 1, (New York: New Amsterdam Book Co.).

Eastman's book titled *Dahcotah: or Life and Legends of the Sioux Around Fort Snelling*. In her chapter "Gods of the Dahcotas," Eastman identifies the "Can-o-tindan" or "little dweller in the woods" who is said to live in a forest in a hollow tree. This is the first time that the little tree dweller is mentioned by its Dakota name. Since that time, scattered notes and articles have appeared contributing to the information concerning the tree dweller complex, however, a complete synthesis of the available material remains unpublished. James Howard's "The Tree-Dweller Cults of the Dakota" is the best and most recent attempt to synthesize the historical documents, with added original material provided by Howard. Nonetheless, his summation is incomplete and inaccurate. For example, whereas Howard credits S.R. Riggs as the first author to mention the tree dweller by its Dakota name--canotindan--this recognition goes to Mary Eastman (1849). In Howard's defence, however, I doubt very much that he was attempting to be exhaustive; his intention was most likely to contextualize his original materials.

While Eastman may have published the Dakota name for the tree dweller before S.R. Riggs, Eastman admits that she is indebted to Riggs for much of the information on Dakota religion. In the years following the publication of Eastman's *Dachota*, Stephan Riggs published a number of important works on Dakota Religion and language. These books provide useful definitions of the canotindan. Wilson Wallis began his unpublished manuscript on the Little People with definitions from Riggs.

Wilson Wallis: "Dwarfs, Manikins, and Tree Cult"

One of the most important archival holdings on the Canadian Dakota is the Wallis Collection in the Canadian Ethnology Service Archives at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Quebec. The collection contains field notes and other material from the field research of Wilson Dallam Wallis with the Canadian Dakota in 1914 and 1954. In 1954 he was accompanied by his wife and fellow anthropologist Ruth Sawtell Wallis; who contributed a great deal of material to the Collection. The significance of Ruth Sawtell Wallis' contribution to "The Wallis Collection" makes one wonder if it would be more appropriate to call these archival holdings "The Wallis' Collection."²⁷ In "Box 293, Folders 1-34" Ruth Sawtell

²⁷There are some telling correspondences between Ruth Sawtell Wallis and the head Archivist at the Canadian Ethnological Service Archives, in 1974, Ms. Helena Montminy. At some time during the two months preceding November 4, 1974, Ms. Montminy sent a letter to Wilson D. Wallis requesting, as she wrote, "his assistance in properly fitting materials he had deposited" in the archives. On November 4, Ruth Sawtell Wallis typed a letter to Ms. Montminy informing her that Wilson Dallam Wallis died March 15, 1970. However, she added that as Wilson Wallis' wife, and an anthropologist and "his companion in his last four field summers among the Indians of Canada," she would be competent to comply with the request made by the museum. Wallis further added that she would be willing to let the museum have her manuscripts and photographs, as well as:

A delightful picture of Barbeau, Jenness, and Wallis standing behind their three seated teachers of anthropology at Oxford, Arthur Thomson, R.R. Marett, and Henry Balfour...taken in the spring of 1910 just after the boys had all passed the examination for the diploma in anthropology.

Ms. Montminy and Ruth Wallis corresponded over the next couple of years, exchanging information, items, and chit chat--with Wallis attempting to get copies of photographs of Manitoba Dakota medicine bags and their contents and Montminy replying that "as a result of the increased interest and heightened emotions of many

Wallis even has an unpublished manuscript for a book she was preparing called *Dakota Women*.²⁸

The bulk of the material in "The Wallis Collection" remains unpublished; including some 200 pages of Dakota tales collected by W.D. Wallis in 1914, 1952 and 1953. The information found in the section of Wilson Dallam Wallis' manuscript titled "Dwarfs, Manikins, and Tree Cult," is important to the written information on the Little People in Canadian Dakota religious history. Of major interest is the original narratives Wallis recorded. I will include

natives in such objects" they "are not permitted to give out information or photographs on medicine bundles." Wallis convinced the museum that she wanted them for comparative purposes only and would under no conditions reproduce them in any publications--the museum conceded and sent the photographs to a very satisfied Mrs. Wallis. Wallis responded by informing the museum that she has bequeathed to the Museum her manuscripts and photographs and expressed her wish to thank the chief ethnologist, Dr. Reynolds, for--as Mrs. Wallis' puts it--"making an exception to a rule you certainly need in these uncertain and sometimes violent times."

²⁸Beginning in Folder 1 with an outline for her proposed book, the Folders in Box 293: deal with various cultural themes; include interviews with Dakota women, and; contain information dealing with the following religio-spiritual topics:

- Folder 15. Virgin Ceremonies;
- " " 20. Missionaries;
- " " 26. Wakan Women;
- " " 27. "Two-Women";
- " " 28. Wakan Children--Twins;
- " " 29. Women in Folk Tales.

Ruth Wallis also contributed an extensive photographic collection to these holdings; including a compilation of photo's for her book, snapshots of Dakota Women and pictures of the "book informants." This photographic collection is found in Box 291, Folders 1-3.

A further bestowal to the archives are the "notes and graphs for a Comparative Education study" undertaken by Ruth Sawtell Wallis with the Manitoba Dakota in Canada in the early 1950's. The results of this study are found in Box 294, Folders 1-31.

these narratives in full here because they are important references to the Little People that will be referred to later in this dissertation (as WW1-WW7) and which do not appear anywhere else, other than the Wallis archives. These narratives are as follows:

- 1 In 1952 we were told at Oak River reserve that a medicineman sometimes makes something resembling a person, keeps it in his medicine bag, and has great respect for it. Sometimes this calls him. It was carved out of birch, which is wakan. (Black poplar also is wakan, but was not used for this purpose.) A man made a hole in the ground, placed the image in the hole, shook his rattle, and danced. The image came up from the hole and danced. if a woman is near, it will not come out. After it has danced, it goes back into the hole. this is done only for some definite reason, for example, to cure the sick. After a medicineman has the image do this, the patient improves.

- 2 In 1954 Mrs. Lawrence, at Prairie Island, stated that her mother told her about a wooden figure of a man put inside a section of a tree trunk by a group of wakan men. They would place a bag of red feathers on top of the tree-trunk box and sit around it, singing. the little man would then come out and dance. This figure was called cha o ti'da.

- 3 At Oak River reserve we recorded the designation as tco'wa ti'da (tco, tree, wa ti'da, stays in).

- 4 As recounted at the last mentioned reserve, these dwarfs live at certain places, and the thunder never goes there. Sometimes you hear them shooting at the thunder. They live in a hole in a tree. When you hear something that sounds like the discharge of a gun, they are shooting at the thunder. This is sometimes heard on a clear morning. If in the morning you go to that place, you will certainly get game--a bear or other game.

- 5 A dwarf lived in a valley near Virden (southwestern Manitoba). After the Whites settled there, he left. Water drips out of one side of a hill. On this hill the

dwarf lived. He lived in the hollow of a tree. Some Frenchmen (French Canadians) saw a very large tree a considerable distance away and could hear something there like flying bullets, as though some one was shooting. It was always like that.

They went to the tree, climbed it, and found a hollow in it. There was no rain at that place. Rain clouds would appear, then go away, and no rain fell. They decided to cut the tree down. They wanted a certain sum of money for doing this, and they got permission to cut down the tree.

Several men went to cut it down. One man struck it (with his axe). When he was about to do so a second time, he turned around as though he was dizzy, blood came from his mouth, and he died. A second man made the attempt, and the same thing happened to him. Others tried with swift strokes of the axe to cut it down, but ten men died in this attempt before the tree fell. This was the dwarf's power, which decreased with each succeeding man. Under the trunk of the tree they found a hole which extended under the ground toward a large mountain. They thought it went to the mountain. They dug into it some distance, and still it went in that direction. It led to the mountain. They found the dwarf inside the mountain.

The hole in the tree which he had occupied was filled with the tail and wing feathers of woodpeckers. These were the arrows which he had been shooting. At the place where a dwarf lives no rain falls. It shoots at the thunder and keeps the rain away.

6 This is true. I saw it before 1905.

Thunder does not come to a place where a dwarf dwells. he lives in an elm or in an oak tree. I found one of these trees. The wind had blown it down. There was a large hole in it, and in the limbs, too, were holes filled with feathers. The feathers are the arrows of the dwarfs. They had moved from that tree. When a storm is brewing, the dwarf shoots his arrows into the air to protect him. Thunder does not come over him if he does that. If it should do so, the arrows would kill Thunder.

7 A man invited a friend to a feast and said he would cause one of these dwarfs to dance. He fashioned a piece of wood into the shape of a dwarf, with head, eyes, ears, legs--all complete. The man who was going to do this knew all about dwarfs; hence he could do this. Not everybody could do it. Usually the man collects much food, cooks it, and has four prizes. When all is ready,

those who have been invited bring in a large wooden bowl. He sings, and the people eat the food brought in this bowl.

The man who first finishes eating his portion of the food receives the first prize; and so on to the fourth prize. This was done here, near Oak River reserve, in the winter, in a house. The people sat on one side, and in the middle of the room was earth. The man made a hole in it, and the dwarf was supposed to come from that hole.

I could see something; it was pigment, sticking out of the hole.

The man sang; then the thing came up as high as the man's neck, and looked about. The man chewed something, put it on the dwarf, the dwarf came out, beat a drum, and danced. When the man stopped singing, the dwarf would go down; and would come up again when the man resumed his singing. The dwarf did this about ten times. I saw this. I was looking into the room through a window. Many persons now do not believe these things; they think the man worked this device with a stick. But that was not the case. That is what the Dakota used to do long ago. That is all.

Wallis began the section "Dwarfs, Manikins, and Tree Cult" of his unpublished manuscript with two definitions of "chanotidan" from Riggs. The first is found in Stephan Return Riggs' *A Dakota-English Dictionary* ²⁹ and the second in *Tah-Koo Wah-Kan*.³⁰ Wallis writes:

Riggs defines can o' ti dan, as "the Dakota god of the woods--an unknown animal said to resemble a man, which the Dakota worship. The monkey;" and in *Tah-Koo Wah-Kan* he refers to "household gods" made in the image of "a little man, and...enclosed in a cylindrical wooden case...enveloped in sacred swan's down."³¹

²⁹Stephan R. Riggs. *A Dakota-English Dictionary* (James Owen Dorsey, ed. Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, Inc., 1968), p. 91.

³⁰Riggs, *Tah-Koo*, p. 71.

³¹Box 291. Folder 8. p. 211-1.

Later on in his manuscript Wallis also adds a definition from Riggs' *Theogeny of the Sioux*.³² As Wallis records:

Riggs defines chan-o-tedan as: "Dweller in the woods. Sometimes they are harmless household gods. The chan-o-tena is represented as a little child, only it has a tail. Many Indians affirm that they have seen them not only in night dreams but in day visions."³³

The other names associated with the canotindan, as defined by Riggs, but not found in the Wallis manuscript, are very revealing and integral to a more complete understanding of the illustration of the canotindan in the literature. These names and their definitions are as follows:

o-hno-gi-ca-dan, n. a bird like a small owl;³⁴

O-hno-gi-ca-dan, n. an imaginary being worshipped by the Dakotas. Same as Canotidan. See Hohnogicadan. T., Ungnagicala;³⁵

Ho-hno-gi-ca, n.p. a Dakota god, a fabulous being; A household god, related to Canotindan, by which mothers scare their children;³⁶

Ho-hno-gi-ca-dan, n.p. dim. of Hohnogica;³⁷ and,

un-gna-gi-ca-la, n. T. a bird like a small owl. See Hohnogicadan and Ohnogicadan.³⁸

³²Stephan R. Riggs. *Theogeny of the Sioux*, p. 270.

³³From Box 291, Folder 8, p. (211-3).

³⁴Riggs, *Dictionary*, p.355.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 152.

³⁷*Ibid.*

³⁸*Ibid*, p. 484.

The same word used for "a bird like a small owl", o-hno-gi-ca-dan, is used to refer to the canotindan. Lévi-Strauss could have a structural heyday with such information. In fact, the association between the Little People and owls, the battle between the Little People and the thunders (quoted in WW4 and WW6 above), the association with the color red in WW2, and the transformation of Little People from racoons mentioned below, can all be used to lend support to Lévi-Strauss' analysis in *The Jealous Potter*; he has found such associations in other stories about the Little People in the Americas. It will be interesting to enlarge upon Lévi-Strauss' analysis with the Dakota material. However, the significance of the Little People to this dissertation is the relationship that the Tree-dweller Dreamers have with them. The dreamers seem to have a positive relationship with the Little People, probably due to the proper respect that the dreamers have for them. Those who are disrespectful towards them, however, may meet with the Little People's malevolent side.

Evil-Good/Malevolent-Benevolent

"Divinities of Evil"

Most authors tend to highlight the malevolent aspects of the canotindan, classifying them among the "Divinities of Evil" or the "Malevolent Gods." One of the earliest descriptions is from James Lynd, who met an untimely death in the Minnesota Conflict of 1862. According to Lynd,

The Divinities of Evil among the Dakotas may be called legion. Their special delight is to make man miserable or to destroy him...(They have) one great governing object in view, the misery and destruction of the human race...The stray lodge becomes the delight of the wild Ohnogica...Canotidan draws the hungry hunters to the depths of the wood by imitating the voices of animals, or by the nefarious "cico! cico" (the form of invitation to a feast) when he scares them out of their senses by showing himself to them.³⁹

A passage from Charles Eastman's *Wigwam Evenings*, p. 167-174 and Mary Eastman's *American Aboriginal Portfolio*, p. 54, quoted by Wallis, also accentuates the malevolent character of the canotindan:

Uncle told me today when I was hunting to beware of the Little Man of the Woods, for if I should meet him I might lose my way and never smell the camp fire again! This Chanotedah is...a mischievous fellow. He is no larger than a three-year-old child, and is covered with hair.

His home is in a hollow tree, and his weapons are the brilliantly colored feathers of gay birds. He delights in confusing the lone hunter who is so unlucky as to come upon him in the depths of the forest...This little man has a grudge against our race.⁴⁰

The Dakota women have fanciful stories of Cha-o-tee-da, a woods god who dwells in a hollow tree, and of his attendants, the birds of the forests, and of Canotidan, a god who dwells in a hollow tree in the depths of the woods...Birds in the highest branches are sentinels to warn these 'gods' of an approaching enemy so that the 'gods' can prepare to do battle.⁴¹

Wallis also provides a tale found in "the Word-Carrier, a paper printed at the Santee Mission school 1883-1887 (Reprinted in

³⁹Lynd, "Religion," pp. 153-154.

⁴⁰Box 291. Folder 8, p. 211-5.

⁴¹Box 291. Folder 8, p. 211-10.

Nebraska Folklore Pamphlets, 21, *Santee-Sioux Legends*, 1939)."⁴²

The tale, titled *Canktewin, the Ill-Fated Woman* (p. 12), runs as follows:

She heard a soft voice calling her name. She spies a dwarf sitting in the branches of a tree. He tries in every way to make her speak. She resists, but finally his insolence makes her tell him to be still. He then comes down from the tree and tells her she cannot pass until she has shot arrows with him. She shoots and loses the arrows. He leads her into an enclosure and tells her she is his slave. He prepares to sacrifice to Tahkushkanskan (the motion god) for giving him another slave. He calls the girl to come to him in his round hut and bring him his heated stone. He pulls off her scalp, binds her, and seats her in his round house. After a while she sees a large black round stone descending on her from the top of the roof. She throws up her hand in which she holds a sharp stick and pierces the soft centre which is the dwarf's heart, immediately killing him.⁴³

The violence in this reference is completely uncharacteristic.

Alanson B. Skinner also describes the canotindan's malevolent aspects. According to his informants,

at times the being suddenly confronts some lonely hunter in the forest and fires at him a volley of questions in a confusing way. If the hunter forgets himself for an instant, and answers any question in the affirmative, the first person of his immediate family whom he meets on the way back to his lodge must shortly die, because, no matter how innocent the question of the Tree-dweller sounded, it is a distorted request for the life of the first relative met in the manner mentioned.⁴⁴

Howard, Walker, and Landes all echo the malevolent aspects outlined by Lynd and Skinner, as well as add to this information. Howard maintains that in addition to causing hunters to lose their

⁴²Box 291. Folder 8, p. 211-10.

⁴³*Ibid.*

⁴⁴Skinner, "Tree-Dweller Bundle," pp. 70-71.

way, the canotindan spoils their luck in hunting;⁴⁵ Walker says that the "elves can assume the forms of beasts or birds for the purpose of enticing mankind into their power;"⁴⁶ and Landes outlines the "mystical dangers" of "dizziness, weakness, and aphasia" which the "wood elf" causes in hunters.⁴⁷ Landes also relates a particular story of a hunter who fell under the spell of the canotindan and was cured by a shaman, explaining thus:

Once a man failed to return and John (the shaman) went out after him, tracing the lost one's tracks round and round, the trail returning upon itself in circles; and John followed this all night. He found his man west of the circling trail, before a great hollow tree sheltering a hairy Dwarf called tca (tree) otida (dweller). The Dwarf had "stolen the man's mind" so that he could only circle; this sometimes afflicted hunters. The Dwarf would have caused death if not for John. But John took his gun and shot the track of the bewildered frozen man, so releasing the hunter's mind. The Dwarf dizzied by causing a hunter to see a man's first tracks, then two sets of these, then three, and so on in endless rings. John treated his man in a sweat lodge outside the camp to restore his sanity. Next day the men did not hunt but cared for their comrade. When they resumed hunting, John had them avoid the Dwarf's locality. Hunting all day, they brought back much deer at night, deer-feasted that night, and invited one another back and forth.⁴⁸

The solitary hunter seems to be the one most afflicted by the Little Peoples' malevolence. Why? Is it because the hunter was trespassing on the Little Peoples' hunting area, without respect,

⁴⁵Howard, *Canadian*, p. 108.

⁴⁶Walker, "Sun Dance," p. 89.

⁴⁷Ruth Landes, *The Mystic Lake Sioux: Sociology of the Mdewakantonwan Santee* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968), pp. 53 & 181.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 53.

without establishing a proper relationship with them? Did the hunter fail to leave food or tobacco out for them? Were they told to do so in a dream and neglect to do so? Wilson Wallis pointed out numerous occasions when individuals were punished by the Thunders for failing to follow their dream instructions. The fact is, the narratives that have been collected do not provide us with enough information. It is true that the Little People have a reputation for being mischievous, even harmful, but it is my understanding that their actions are not precarious but are predicated on inappropriate, disrespectful behaviour; this reasoning is consistent with Dakota religious philosophy and the fact that the Little People--far from having "one great governing object in view, the misery and destruction of the human race"--can give shamans the power to cure, to find lost articles, prophesize and achieve success in hunting.

The Benevolent Nature of the Little People

While most authors tend to stress the malevolent aspects of the canotindan, classifying them among the "Divinities of Evil" or "Malevolent Gods", a classification system which polarizes "good" and "evil" does not validly reflect the worldview of the Dakota. For example, the Wakinyan (Thunderbirds) may cause flooding, destroy crops, or strike individuals dead with lightning during a violent storm, but peace, fertility, and growth also follow their presence. The Unktehe ("underwater panthers") may cause flooding, and death through drowning, but they are also the patrons of the

Wakan Wacipi and have instructed human beings in the use of curative roots and herbs. Likewise, the canotindan may cause a hunter to get lost, lose his or her sanity, and die, but they can also, to borrow the words of James Howard, "confer great power for good if approached in the correct manner."⁴⁹ Howard mentions that the way for the hunter to approach the canotindan, in order to obtain "hunting prowess", is to "come up behind the elf...and capture it."⁵⁰ The canotindan will trade the power of hunting prowess in return for its freedom. One of Howard's informants, Charles Padani, also says that, "some men...could overcome the elf and get power from him. These people could cure the sick using a medicine sweat bath (Inipi)."⁵¹ The extent of this association of "medicine people" with tree dweller power was made clearer by Alanson B. Skinner. The association with medicine people completely refutes a classification system which categorizes the Little People as "divinities of evil." Medicine people use their power to heal.

The Tree-dweller Dreamers and the Wakan Wacipi

In 1920, Skinner wrote an article which dealt with the Wahpeton Dakota Wakan Wacipi Society (the Dakota parallel to the Anishnabe Midewiwin).⁵² In this article, Skinner's informant

⁴⁹Howard, *Canadian*, p. 101.

⁵⁰*Ibid.* p. 108.

⁵¹*Ibid.*

⁵²Alanson B. Skinner, "Medicine Ceremony of the Menomini, Iowa and Wahpeton Dakota, With Notes on the Ceremony Among the

identified the "Tree Dweller Band" as one of the most important of the four bands which composed the medicine lodge. Furthermore, Skinner provided a photograph of a "medicine packet containing (a) wooden image of the tree-dweller and various charms and medicines."⁵³ In another article, titled "Tree-Dweller Bundle of the Wahpeton Dakota," Skinner says that, "these Tree-dweller bundles (medicine packets) are the visible credentials of power given to their owners in visions"⁵⁴ by the canotindan. In this same article, Skinner declares that,

The Tree-dweller...is able to grant mysterious power to mortals, and he is, or rather was, the patron of a certain group of the Medicine Dance Society, all of whom used his image and model of his forest home, instead of, or perhaps in addition to, the animal-skin medicine-bags of other members. The owners of these images are able to make them dance magically during the rites of the society, and are renowned as hunters, for the Tree-dweller is a notable dispenser of luck to followers of the chase. Owners of these bundles were able to prophesy, and, as the owner of the first example described it [i.e. the owner of the first medicine bundle discussed in Skinner's article], once foretold a successful foray against the Chippewa, saying that the warrior who bore this bundle should count the first coup.⁵⁵

Notice that while some narratives assert that the hunter is the one most afflicted by the Little People's malevolence, this quote indicates that the canotindan can grant good luck in hunting, in

Ponca, Bung Ojibwa and Potawatomi." *Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, Indian Notes and Monographs*, vol. 4, 1920.

⁵³"*Ibid.*," p. 296.

⁵⁴Skinner, "Tree-Dweller Bundle," p. 70.

⁵⁵"*Ibid.*," p. 71.

addition to the power to cure, the potential to prophesy, and the ability to count coup if a soldier took a Tree-dweller Dreamers medicine bundle into battle with him. This last ability mentioned does not mean that the soldier had permanent possession of tree-dweller power. Rather, a tree-dweller shaman can lend the soldier his bundle, thus lending the soldier the "sicun" or power which is inherent in the bundle. Concerning medicine bundles (fetishes)⁵⁶ and sicun (potency), James Walker says,

...a Fetish may have the potency (sicun) of any God, except that of "Skan," the Great Spirit, and of the Sun, the Chief of the Gods. A Fetish whose "sicun" is a "nagila," or spirit-like, is potent only to remedy wounds or diseases, or to impose disorders on mankind. Such a Fetish is called "piyaha," or a medicine bag. The contents of a medicine bag may be either the material, the spirit-like of which is the potency, or material to which potency has been imparted.⁵⁷

Following this statement, Walker identifies the "Can Oti" in a discussion of "sicun (which) are the dissociated spirits that wander over the world; but (which) are classed with the Malevolent Gods."⁵⁸ Dissociated means that they are a separate class on one level but in the same class on another.

Skinner is the only author to indicate that the tree dweller shamans were a band of the Wakan Wacipi society. Howard, however, reveals that an individual by the name of Judge Zahn "mentioned seeing, as a boy, a group of masked dancers--probably both Upper

⁵⁶The term "fetish" is no longer considered appropriate in reference to medicine bundles.

⁵⁷Walker, "Sun Dance," p. 88.

⁵⁸"*Ibid.*", pp. 88-89.

Yanktonai and Teton--who imitated the tree dweller. He (Judge Zahn) stated that these dancers were united by common dreams of the elf."⁵⁹ In this same article, Howard refers to another account of an individual masked tree dweller dreamer,⁶⁰ as well as a fairly detailed account of a tree dweller shaman's curing ceremony (with accompanying diagram of elements of the ceremonial setting).⁶¹

The Little People in Cosmogonic Myth

As one would expect, the canotindan has a place in the myths of the Dakota/Lakota people. An indication of that place can be found in the book *Lakota Myth*.⁶² As was mentioned earlier, *Lakota Myth* is a collection of the previously unpublished narratives recorded and compiled by James Walker. Walker apparently tapped the more esoteric, philosophical base of Lakota religious thought through his relationship with Lakota intellectuals/philosophers/storytellers/shamans. One myth, told by the Lakota shaman Little Wound, is titled "The Feast by Tate." This story is about "a feast of the gods that leads to the creation of the world and various conditions within it."⁶³ Little Wound mentions "the Can Oti who

⁵⁹James H. Howard, "The Tree Dweller Cults of the Dakota." *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. 68, 1955: p 173.

⁶⁰"*Ibid.*", p. 173.

⁶¹"*Ibid.*," pp. 172-173.

⁶²Walker, *Lakota Myth*.

⁶³*Ibid.*, p. 157.

are wakans of the Forest" and "the Hognogica who are wakan of the tipi,"⁶⁴ as two categories of guests invited to the feast. The next three occurrences are found in the section labelled "Walker's Literary Cycle." This section is categorized into three segments: the first is Walker's formulation of the creation story; the second segment, the "Pte" cycle, "tells of life among the "Pte", or buffalo, people before the Lakotas emerged from the lower level to this earth and began their current way of life;"⁶⁵ and the third segment is "an expanded story of how the four winds founded the four directions."⁶⁶ The myth in the Pte cycle that mentions the "Can Oti" is actually a story which tells of the origin of the Can Oti. While other sources connect the canotindan with the owl, this story connects the canotindan to the raccoon.⁶⁷ Apparently, Iktomi, the trickster, had no friends because of his tricks, so he held a feast and persuaded the raccoons to give up two of their young--a male and female--if Iktomi promised never to trick any of the offspring of these two babies and not to trick any raccoons. Iktomi agreed, and after obtaining the two young, he transformed them into "the form of small babes of the Pte people."⁶⁸ However, because Iktomi did not know how to care for infants, he took them

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 194.

⁶⁷Compare with Lévi-Strauss.

⁶⁸Walker, *Lakota Myth*, p. 288.

to Anog Ite. She refused to care for them because she was angry with Iktomi for all the tricks which he had played on her. Then Iktomi took the babes to Wakanka (the witch) and she said:

I will care for your babes but because they are offspring of raccoons they will grow but as long as raccoons grow and when full grown will be of the stature of little children. Because you made them, they will be cunning as you are and because 'Skan' has imparted no spirit to them, they will live in the woods as did their ancestors and will be called 'Can Oti' (Wood Dwellers) and their delight will be to lure others into the depths of gloomy forests and bewilder them there.⁶⁹

The tale concludes by stating: "These two begot offspring of their kind, and to this day, they dwell in the woods and try to bewilder any who will follow them."⁷⁰ The next two mentions of the can oti are in the third segment of Walker's Literary Cycle. In one mention, the four brothers (personifications of the four winds and four directions) are warned to beware of the "tricks and wiles" of the Can Oti,⁷¹ and in the other, the witch (Wakanka) declares--when the four brothers do not return from their travels--that the Can Oti are "alluring and may have enticed the brothers."⁷²

The Little People and the Yuwipi

Interest in the Yuwipi predominates the present scholarship concerning the religious life of the Oglala Lakota. The Yuwipi is

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p. 289.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p. 289.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, p. 340.

⁷²*Ibid.*, p. 355.

reported to be one of the most important Lakota religious rituals at present, and is related to the "shaking tent ceremony of the northern Algonquin tribes as described by Ray, Cooper, Flannery and others."⁷³ According to Wesley R. Hurt Jr. and James H. Howard, "at one time or another all seven divisions of the Dakota tribe have possessed some form of the Yuwipi rite, although at present shamans are apparently found only among members of the Teton division, living on the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations in South Dakota."⁷⁴ I suspect that further research will reveal that Yuwipi shamans are not found only among the Teton but also among the descendants of the Minnesota Santee Dakota living in Canada, and that the little spirits at their Yuwipi are identified, in some instances, as the canotindan.⁷⁵

The first time that the specific term "Yuwipi" is mentioned in the literature is in 1946 by Gordon Macgregor.⁷⁶ Macgregor

⁷³From Wesley R. Hurt Jr. and James Howard, "A Dakota Conjuring Ceremony." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 8, no. 3, 1952: p. 294. See Verne F. Ray, "Historic Backgrounds of the Conjuring Complex in the Plateau and the Plains." In L. Spier, ed., *Language Culture and Personality: Essays in Memory of Edward Sapir* (Menasha, Wisconsin, 1941) pp. 204-216. John M. Cooper, "The Shaking Tent Rite Among the Plains and Forest Algonquians." *Primitive Man*, vol. 17, 1944: pp. 60-84. Regina Flannery, "The Gros Ventre Shaking Tent." *Primitive Man*, vol. 17, 1944: pp. 54-59.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, "Conjuring", p. 287.

⁷⁵I have talked to people who have been to Dakota Yuwipis in Canada, but I can not say if the Little People were present.

⁷⁶Gordon Macgregor, *Warriors Without Weapons: A Study of the Society and Personality Development of the Pine Ridge Sioux* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946).

identifies the Yuwipi as, "the only continuing cult of the old Dakota religion, whose ceremonial and functions in the old culture have scarcely been touched upon in the ethnological literature."⁷⁷

Macgregor summarizes the Yuwipi as follows:

The ceremony is held in a cabin completely darkened while the medicine man performs magical feats and calls in their spirits. Sounds of knocking, stones, strange noises, and flashing lights appear in all parts of the room as the spirits respond. The medicine man talks to them, while four men drum and sing. Suddenly all the sounds stop and the medicine man recounts to the group, before the lamps are relit, the cures and information learned from the spirits.

Before the ceremony begins, the medicine man is bound very tightly by others and placed under a blanket (the most salient feature of the Yuwipi). Those who have requested his services place offerings around the altar or platform where the medicine man is bound. When the lights go on, he is instantly free from his bindings, and the offerings have disappeared.⁷⁸

Regarding the spirits who are called in, Macgregor says,

The objective of the Yuwipi ritual is the calling of the spirits, or "little people," who live about the countryside, to advise the medicine man in curing or finding lost articles.⁷⁹

In a note to this statement, Macgregor informs the reader that "the 'little people' were reported by Lewis and Clark in the nineteenth century. No ethnological accounts known to the author describe them or the whole Yuwipi practices."⁸⁰ Stephan Feraca also

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, p. 98. See Wesley R. Hurt Jr. and James Howard, "A Dakota Conjuring Ceremony," *Ibid.*, for some examples of authors prior to Macgregor who have mentioned, although not under the name Yuwipi, features of the Yuwipi.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, "Warriors", p. 99.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, see note number 19, p. 99.

recognizes the connection between Lewis and Clark's mention of the Little People with the Yuwipi and connects the cult with a "woodland" past. As Feraca says,

Lewis and Clark mention the "little people" among the Sioux; and it is the writer's belief that the original Yuwipi men specialized in being untied by small, hairy, man-like monsters. A woodland past...seems to be evident when various practices and artifacts connected with the cult are taken into account.⁸¹

The most comprehensive discussion of the Yuwipi is found in William K. Powers' book *Yuwipi: Vision and Experience in Oglala Ritual*. Concerning the spirits who are "called in", Powers says,

They (the Oglala) knew they (the spirits) were the little people, perhaps three feet tall, who wore breech cloths and carried miniature bows and arrows. They went barefoot and their bodies were daubed with mud. They were Indian people who lived generations ago before the whiteman.⁸²

The above data establishes that despite their elusiveness in the written literature, a close and careful examination reveals that their presence permeates written narratives, revealing their special significance in Dakota religious history. The Little People are integral to the Dakota worldview and have a prominent place in major contemporary Dakota healing ceremonies. They can be malevolent but can also be benevolent. Authors who classify them as divinities of evil are in error. If the Little People are "evil" then it is inconsistent to say that they grant healing powers:

⁸¹Stephan Feraca, "The Yuwipi Cult of the Oglala and Sicangu Teton Sioux." *Plains Anthropologist*, vol. 6, no. 13, August, 1961: pp. 155-163.

⁸²William K. Powers, *Yuwipi: Vision and Experience in Oglala Ritual* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).

dangerous, yes; harmful, yes; but, evil, no. It is more plausible to suggest that the authors who provide narratives of malevolence fail to set these narratives in the context of the Dakota worldview. The next chapter will provide the context within which these narratives should be understood.

Chapter IV MITAKUYE OYASIN--"WE ARE ALL RELATED"

[Mitakuye oyasin] is a single prayer by itself, if there is a group having a ceremonial gathering, whether it is a sweat lodge, or a night ceremony; but it also comes at the end of most prayers. Mitakuye oyasin: "All my relatives--I am related to all." It's a closure, a recognition of relationship.

Arthur Amiotte¹

The phrase "Mitakuye oyasin" is the most profound expression of Dakota religiousness; "a single prayer by itself", but one that is also uttered at the end of most prayers. The meaning of this expression points directly to what it means to be religious, to be human. It reflects a fundamental cosmological orientation that forms the basis of how human beings should think, act, and interact with the cosmos. All aspects of religious life reflect the relational perspective; ceremonies are directed towards actualizing the principles inherent in a relational orientation. The basic social unit in Dakota society--the Tiyospaye--is grounded in this orientation and economic relations are guided by it. The following chapter will support the validity of this particular understanding of Dakota religiousness by detailing the specifics of how this cosmological orientation is expressed in the Dakota religious tradition.

Before proceeding to the Dakota tradition it is significant to note the contemporary interest in exploring or expounding the significance of a relational approach to understanding the world in which we live. Turning to the Dakota tradition, the importance of

¹Arthur Amiotte, "Giveaway for the Gods." *Parabola*, vol XV, no. 4, Nov., 1990: p.49.

relationship will be outlined in the context of the kinship system (the Tiyospaye) and the economic and political spheres. Next, in the following sections, the relational perspective will be established as a fundamental religious principle, grounded in the cosmology, connected linguistically to the word for "to pray", and expressed in other aspects of the cumulative tradition: through the use of the pipe and tobacco; feasting; the giveaway; and, dancing and singing.

The Cross-disciplinary and Popular Significance of Relationship.

While exploring relationship as the quintessential religious orientation in Dakota religious philosophy, I unsuspectingly came across something in the writings of Sigmund Freud that expressed the importance of relationship for understanding religiousness and humanity. In *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud wrote:

...the humanization of nature is derived from the need to put an end to man's perplexity and helplessness in the face of its dreaded forces, to get into a relation with them and finally to influence them...when man personifies the forces of nature he is again following an infantile model. He has learnt from the persons in his earliest environment that the way to influence them is to establish a relation with them.²

Post-Freudian "Object Relations" theorists, a more contemporary psychoanalytic fashion, also interpret "relationship" as being the operative principle for understanding the human being. James W.

²Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. XXI. James Strachey trans. (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), p.22.

Jones outlines some post-Freudian/Jungian relational perspectives in *Contemporary Psychoanalysis and Religion: Transference and Transcendence*. He uses W.R.D. Fairbairn as a representative of the British school of object relations theorists. Quoting Fairbairn, Jones writes:

Libidinal aims are of secondary importance in comparison with object-relations...a relationship with an object and not the gratification of an impulse is the ultimate aim of libidinal striving.³

As Jones explains:

In Freud's biologically driven theory, the primary motivation is simply the release of pent-up tension. The object of that impulse is of lesser importance. For Fairbairn it is precisely the object and entering into relationship with that object that is the primary human motivation. In classical Freudian terms, there is no transition from narcissistic to object libido; we are object seeking, relationally oriented from the beginning.⁴

Jones details other "models of relationship" by object relations theorists, all of which support a relational approach to understanding the human being.

Philosophy, as well, has its proponents of the relational perspective. Moral philosopher John Macmurray, in his book *Persons in Relation*, points out how philosophy has moved from the Cartesian "I think therefore I am" to "I am a person in relationship with other persons therefore I am." Regarding the result Macmurray hopes

³James W. Jones, *Contemporary Psychoanalysis and Religion: Transference and Transcendence* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 13.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

to achieve in his book, he writes:

...that it ends the solitariness of the 'thinking self', sets man firmly in the world which he knows, and restores him to his proper existence as a community of persons in relation. It is the purpose of this book to show how the personal relation of persons is constitutive of personal existence.⁵

Although Dakota religiousness would perhaps best be characterized by the axiom "I am a person in relationship with other living beings, therefore I am," it is significant to note the contemporary interest in relationship across a variety of disciplines. Even the Gaia theory, propounded by James Lovelock, which views the entire world as an inter-connected living entity, has become a fashionable way from a natural science perspective to perceive the world in which we live. Certainly, Environmentalists, Eco-Feminists and proponents of the New Age movement are concerned with articulating the importance of relationship; an articulation which is informed by Native American thought. In *Weaving The Visions: New Patterns in Feminist Spirituality*, the editors note that the notion of the self as relational is prominent in feminist thinking."⁶ Part 3 "Self in Relation" consists of articles by authors who all "agree that the self is essentially relational."⁷

⁵John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation* (New Jersey and London: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1991), p. 12. First published in 1961 from John Macmurray's 1953-54 Gifford Lectures, delivered at the University of Glasgow.

⁶Judith Plaskow and Carol P. Christ (eds.), *Weaving the Visions: New Patterns in Feminist Spirituality* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1989), p. 173.

⁷*Ibid.*

The cross-disciplinary interest in relational conceptualizations are noted here, not to compare or contrast them to one another or to the Dakota perspective, but, merely to inform the reader about the contemporary intellectual interest in mapping the relational moment. This plethora of intellectual activity focusing on the dynamic of relationship reinforces the need to explore the relational moment in human existence as an expression of religiousness. Moreover, in the case of the Dakota, the historical and living record demands such a hermeneutic. As this chapter will demonstrate, for the Dakota, relationship is at the centre of what it means to be religious, to be human.

Dakota Kinship System: Tiyospaye

The primary social unit in the *Dakota Oyate* (Dakota Nation) is the *Tiyospaye*, the extended family. As Lakota anthropologist Ella Deloria explains, the word *tiyospaye* "is essential in describing tribal life. It denotes a group of families, bound together by blood and marriage ties, that lived side by side in the camp-circle."⁸ In the section on *Tiospaye* in the mimeographed material from the James Walker collection,⁹ the editor, T.E. Symms, begins

⁸Ella Deloria, *Speaking of Indians* (New York: Friendship Press, 1944), p. 40.

⁹In *Lakota Myth*, Elaine Jahner notes that mimeographed copies of material from the James Walker collection were prepared by staff members at the Oglala Sioux Culture Center of the Red Cloud Indian School for use as curriculum materials to teach Lakota literature and mythology (p.x). Jahner notes that the wide circulation of these materials among various colleges and

by quoting Deloria. Deloria provides an emic understanding of the importance of kinship:

Kinship was the all-important matter. Its demands and dictates for all phases of social life were relentless and exact...By kinship all Dakota people were held together in a great relationship that was theoretically all-inclusive...I can safely say that the ultimate aim of Dakota life, stripped of accessories, was quite simple: One must obey kinship rules; one must be a good relative. No Dakota who has participated in that life will dispute that. In the last analysis every other consideration was secondary--property, personal ambition, glory, good times, life itself. Without that aim and the constant struggle to attain it, the people would no longer be Dakotas in truth. They would no longer even be human. To be a good Dakota, then, was to be humanized, civilized. And to be civilized was to keep the rules imposed by kinship for achieving civility, good manners, and a sense of responsibility toward each individual dealt with.¹⁰

A better statement of the importance of kinship cannot be found. Deloria states the matter succinctly and in no uncertain terms. To be human is to live in accord with the kinship rules--"one must be a good relative"; "the ultimate aim of Dakota life," the very nature of what it means to be human, to be religious.

The formal rules of correct kinship behaviour requires that specific forms of address be used when speaking to different

universities have "had a profound influence on the way people view Lakota literature, and many of Walker's stories have become part of contemporary Lakota oral tradition" (p. xi). This mimeographed material supplies an extremely insightful articulation of Lakota religious thought. Throughout this chapter, this material will be referred to as the Symms material, from its editor T.E. Symms.

¹⁰Taken from mimeographed material edited by T.E. Symms who has quoted from: Deloria, *Speaking of Indians*, pp. 24-25 (emphasis added).

members in the kinship system.¹¹ For example, the men who are addressed as "father" are those who are addressed as brother or cousin by a person's father. These forms of address are accompanied by appropriate attitudes and behaviours towards each kin. According to Deloria:

The core of the matter was that a proper mental attitude and a proper conventional behavior prescribed by kinship must accompany the speaking of each term. As you said 'Uncle'--or 'Father' or 'Brother'--in either address or reference, you must immediately control your thinking of him; you must assume the correct mental attitude due the particular relative addressed, and you must express that attitude in its fitting outward behaviour and mien, according to the accepted convention.¹²

There is more to being a good relative than respectfully using appropriate forms of address, one must even control ones thoughts or mental attitude. Using the correct form of address and controlling ones thoughts and mental attitude are ways of showing respect. As Luther Standing Bear says, "The rules of polite behavior that formed Lakota etiquette were called woyuonihan, meaning 'full of respect'; those failing to practice these rules were wachola sni, that is, 'without respect,' therefore rude and ill-bred."¹³ Mutual respect (ohokicilapi) and reciprocity are the underlying principles to be adhered to in order to be a good relative, to be human, to be religious. In Dakota or Lakota

¹¹For an elaboration, see: Landes, *Mystic Lake*, pp. 95-160.

¹²Deloria, *Speaking of Indians*, pp. 29-30.

¹³Luther Standing Bear, *The Land of the Spotted Eagle* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), p. 148. Originally published in 1933.

society, the individual who fails to follow the rules of polite behaviour, is disrespectful, neglects proper kinship behaviour, is less than Dakota, less than human.

Kinship: Economic and Political Relations

The foundational influence of a relational perspective even extended to economic and political relations with individuals who were not born into a Dakota family. The historical record reveals that in all interactions (relationships) with Europeans, the Dakota would conduct a ritual that would constitute a kinship bond; commonly referred to as "fictive" or "social" kinship. The missionaries, traders, government representatives, etc., had to be situated through ritual adoption into the Dakota kinship system. When Hennipin, Duluth, Radisson & Groseillier, Carver, American Government representatives such as Pike, and the missionaries such as Pond, Riggs and Williamson met the Dakota, they were fitted into the Dakota kinship system; a relationship was established. Recall from Chapter I that when Hennepin and his two canoe men Michel Accou and Picard du Gay met up with a group of Dakota men in 1680, they were subsequently adopted by the Dakota.

In *Kinsmen of Another Kind: Dakota-White Relations in the Upper Mississippi Valley 1650-1882*, Gary Clayton Anderson examined the Dakota's relationship with the missionaries, traders, etc. from the relational perspective of the Dakota kinship system. Anderson concluded that the Minnesota Conflict of 1862 was a response to the culmination of years of kinship transgressions. As Anderson points

out:

Friendly relations were based upon a system of reciprocity and kinship that traders and government agents like Taliaferro continued well into the nineteenth century. Their treaties of 1830, 1837, and even 1851 expanded these well established reciprocal patterns, and the eastern Sioux came to believe that the government would take care of all their needs. But once the Indians were on the reservations, the promises of assistance initially fell short of expectations and eventually proved limited to those who nominally became whites. Thus the treaties became instruments of cultural change rather than reinforcers of reciprocal friendship.¹⁴

In the final analysis, a substantial number of Sioux men concluded that the white man had abandoned, seemingly forever, the obligations and promises of assistance that formed the basis for the Dakota communal existence and all relations with people. Revenge through war, even though a futile gesture, was the only response to such a betrayal.¹⁵

In most cases, those saved from the tomahawk had demonstrated friendship with certain Sioux people and attained some degree of fictive kinship ties.¹⁶

The breakdown in relations between Europeans and Dakotas came as a result of two very different world views. The Dakota who went to war went out of their traditional obligation to their kin. Such blatant kinship violations and disregard for fundamental principles of decency could not be tolerated. The Europeans and American government representatives revealed by their actions that they were less than human--they were *waohola sni* (without respect).

¹⁴Gary Clayton Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind: Dakota-White Relations in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1650-1862* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), p. 257.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 260.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 264.

Retaliation for kinship transgressions was the logical response. The precedent was set in the cosmology and maintained throughout time in relations with the spirit world, the natural world, and the human world. The following section will expand upon the relational perspective as a fundamental religious principle.

Relationship: A Fundamental Religious Principle

Ella Deloria clearly articulates the ultimate importance of relationship in its human, social manifestation in the kinship system, in the *tiyospaye*. Gary Clayton Anderson analyzed the socio-economic manifestation of relationship by outlining how "economic partners" are fitted into the kinship system. The position articulated in this dissertation is that relationship manifested in the kinship system and economic relations is grounded in a larger cosmological framework, a fundamental religious orientation that extends beyond the limits of the *tiyospaye* and which is encapsulated by the phrase/prayer "Mitakuye oyasin." While adhering to the relational perspective one is living in harmony with the cosmic order, failing to live by the principles of respect and reciprocity is tantamount to a violation of cosmic order. On the concept of *ohokicilapi*, "mutual respect" and its cosmic significance, Symms explains:

This concept, *ohokicilapi*, refers to an innate power in the universe by which all things are bound together. Respect is the intrinsic power which causes atoms and planets to move in a circle around the source of light - as devotees perambulate a sacred place or person. The orderly procession of the stars and the constancy of the seasons are expressions of fidelity, a faithfulness which

is founded on respect, on mutual respect, ohokicilapi.

When using correct forms of address and having a proper mental attitude toward the relative being addressed, the individual is living in accord with the cosmic order. As the Symms material so eloquently illustrates:

When the child says 'grandfather' and the grandfather replies 'grandson', it is as if two strings on a musical instrument are plucked. The resonance of respect issues as an overtone. If the conduct which ensues between grandfather and grandson is true to the resonance within those two relational names, then one of the attributes of Tob Tob Kin is literally incorporated by the Tiospaye as a power flowing on the current of respect.

Incorporating attributes of the Tob Tob Kin (the four times four, the sixteen attributes of Wakan Tanka, the Great Mystery) is the task of the Tiyospaye.¹⁷ According to the Symms material:

During the first three months of each year beginning at Spring Equinox, there is a vertical downpouring of the 16 powers to the people and into all creation. Then for the rest of the year there is a horizontal circulation of this infused power within the precise energy patterns of the Tiospaye.

The Spring Equinox is the time of the Sun Dance, a world-renewal ceremony, and the beginning of the new year. By embodying the sixteen attributes in the Tiyospaye the Tiyospaye becomes sanctified, it "participates in reality", is "saturated with being."¹⁸

¹⁷Symms material.

¹⁸Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*. Translated From the French by Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich, 1959), pp. 12-13.

The sixteen attributes are the sixteen attributes of Wakan Tanka, the Great Mystery, the totality, the sixteen, while separate, are also one. The sixteen are called the Tob Tob Kin, the four times four, they are introduced in the cosmogony as gendered and non-gendered beings (the four intimate powers are non-gendered). The four groups with four powers in each group, from the Symms material, are as follows:

WAKAN ANKANTU (superior powers)

1. The Sun - Anpetu Wikan
2. The Sky - Mahpiyatokan (Skan)
3. The Earth - Makakan
4. The Rock - Inyankan

WAKAN KOLAYA (associate powers)

1. The Moon - Hanwikan
2. The Wind - Tatekan
3. The Beauty - Wohpekan
4. The Winged Thunder - Wakinyan Tanka

WAKAN KUYA (subordinate powers)

1. The Buffalo - Tatankakan
2. The Bear - Hununpakan
3. The Four Winds - Tateyotopakan
4. The Whirlwind - Yumkan

WAKANLAPI (intimate powers)

1. The Soul - Nagikan
2. Breath of Life - Niyakan
3. Little Soul - like - Nagilakan
4. Intelligence - Sicunkan (ton)

As mentioned in Chapter One, the central importance of relationship is expressed by the Tob Tob Kin in the Lakota cosmogony. In describing the creation story in the Walker material Jahner writes:

Walker begins the mythic action by dramatizing the belief that spiritual power functions through a network of relationships, Inyan, or Rock, is the personified

image of primal power. He longs to exercise his power but cannot do so, for there is "no other that he might exercise his power upon." So he initiates the creation process and reveals the first dimension of his essential nature. As blood flows from Inyan, Sky (Skan) and Earth (Maka) are created. Earth represents materiality and Sky Spirituality, qualities that are then identified with femininity and masculinity, respectively; each needs the other and both recognize the role of reciprocity in social life. With the beginning of relationship comes the need for knowledge, or light. Earth can then see what she lacks and she begins to demand further creation.¹⁹

Through Maka's (Earth) complaining to Skan (Sky), Wi (Sun) is created; these three along with Inyan (Rock) become known as the Wakan Ankatu (superior powers). Associate powers (Wakan Kolaya) are created as companions to the superior powers. Some (Tateyotopakan and Yumkan) of the subordinate powers (Wakan Kuya) result from the union of Tate (wind) and Ite (the daughter of Wazi and Wakanka who are the leaders of the Pte Oyate--Buffalo People--the ancestors of humankind). The other two subordinate powers are Tatankakan (Buffalo) and Hununpakan (Bear). The four intimate powers (Wakanlapi) were discussed earlier under the concept of "multiple-souls." Lakota mythology is characterized by the interactions (relationships) of the Tob Tob Kin and other created beings.

Wacekiya: "To Address a Relative", "To Pray"

Deloria notes that the "need of first establishing proper relationship prevailed even when one came to pray. It gave a man

¹⁹Walker, *Myth*, p. 194.

status with the Supernatural as well as with man."²⁰ In fact, as Deloria points out, the same word, *Wacekiya*, is used "to address a relative" and "to pray". When one prays, one is addressing a relative. When the tree-dweller dreamer calls-in his spirit helpers, as the Yuwipi Wicasta do in the Yuwipi ceremony, to ask information from the Little People, or invokes their presence to cure, the tree-dweller dreamer is praying and addressing a relative. The dreamer is someone who has established a relationship with the Little People through dreams. As is consistent with proper relationship behaviour gifts are exchanged (reciprocity). Food and tobacco are set out for the Little People and the dreamers are given the power to heal by curing psycho-spiritual and physical illnesses, to see into the future, to find lost articles, and achieve success in hunting. Both are living according to correct relationship behaviour through mutual respect, *ohokicilapi*, and reciprocity. If the dreamer or anyone is disrespectful towards the Little People, they face the risk of some sort of punishment or negative repercussion. They may bring bad luck upon themselves. The same is true of any relationship with the supernaturals, the spirits, the *taku-wakan*. A person is guided by behaviours and attitudes fundamental to what it means to be religious, to be human. The data covered in chapter three reveals the malevolent nature of the Little People. They can be quite dangerous, but only to those who are disrespectful. They also have the power to

²⁰Deloria, *Speaking of Indians*, pp. 28.

confer great power for good to those who are worthy.

Relationship: Expressed in the Cumulative Tradition

By 'cumulative tradition' I mean the entire mass of overt objective data that constitute the historical deposit, as it were, of the past religious life of the community in question: temples, scriptures, theological systems, dance patterns, legal and other social institutions, conventions, moral codes, myths, and so on; anything that can be and is transmitted from one person, one generation, to another, and that an historian can observe.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith²¹

It is often said that in Native languages no word exists to translate the word "religion". What this actually means is that no word exists to refer to what has, in the West, been called "religion"; a separate system of institutionalized beliefs and doctrines. Instead, Native languages speak of "the way", a way of life, a way of being that encompasses all aspects of a persons life. Prayer and worship are not things reserved for Sunday, they permeate all aspects of life, are lived day to day. This understanding speaks directly to what Wilfred Cantwell Smith calls for in his understanding or definition of religion. For Smith, "nothing in heaven or on earth" answers to the name of "religion" as it has come to be defined in the West. Like Native American understandings of "the way", Smith recognizes that religion is a way of life which is lived day to day. The Lakota refer to this as

²¹Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (Toronto: Mentor Books, 1964), p. 141.

Lakolya or Lakol Wicoha:

...practicing the cultural ideals as a matter of habit or automatic response with full commitment with the knowledge that by doing so one is moving, doing, and being in both a human and sacred manner as prescribed by Lakota tradition.²²

If an individual can grasp the profundity of the expression "Mitakuye oyasin" and actualize the principles of respect and reciprocity inherent in such an orientation, then an individual is living the Lakol Wicoha, the Lakota Way. We have already seen how living this way is expressed in some aspects of the cumulative tradition; in the tiyospaye, in economic and political relations, in mythology, in the shamans' relationship with their spirit helpers. The following sections continue to elaborate the expressions of relationship in the cumulative tradition.

The Pipe and Tobacco

When a Lakota does anything in a formal manner he should first smoke the pipe. This is because the spirit in the pipe smoke is pleasing to Wakan Tanka and to all spirits. In any ceremony this should be the first thing that is done.

George Sword²³

The primary ceremonial act of establishing a relationship is to smoke the pipe. A special bond is created amongst those who smoke together. Smoking the pipe is equivalent to saying "Mitakuye oyasin". When the pipe is lit it is offered to the four directions, the powers below, and the powers above. All orders of creation are

²²Arthur Amiotte, class notes.

²³Walker, *Belief*, p. 75.

represented in the pipe's construction and when the human being smokes it he/she is binding his/her self to the totality, to Wakan Tanka. As Sword points out in the epigram above, smoking the pipe should be the first thing that is done in any ceremony. It is an act of affirming that "you are related to all". It is also a form of respect towards Wakan Tanka and the spirits because, as Sword points out, "the spirit in the pipe smoke is pleasing to Wakan Tanka and to all spirits." Tobacco itself can be considered the primary offering or gift to the spirits. Tobacco is given, out of respect, to shamans when they are consulted or when they are conducting a sweatlodge. Tobacco is offered to the rocks and the willows when they are taken to be used in a sweatlodge. Tobacco is placed in the centre pit where the rocks will be placed and in the holes which are dug around the centre where the willows will be placed. A tobacco rosary along with a filled pipe is taken with the vision quester to the vision quest site. Tobacco is left for the Thunder-beings at the approach of a thunderstorm. Tobacco is left at Wakan places such as a waterfall or special, wakan, natural formation. Tobacco is always offered to the spirit of the animal which is killed. On all of these occasions, tobacco is offered out of respect. It is a reciprocal act of gift giving, as thanks for answered prayers, or to petition for blessings, or out of admiration and respect.

Feasting

...the distribution of food is a means of connectedness between sacred principles and what we are as human beings. It is a reciprocal kind of activity in which we are reminded of sacred principles. Indeed the very ceremonies which have come down to us all include the distribution of food either before or after or during the rite itself.

Arthur Amiotte²⁴

Tobacco is not the only offering given; food is also offered, shared, given. Feasting, the sharing of food, accompanies all ceremonies or gatherings. Sometimes people leave out food for the Little People. Throughout the written literature, authors continually refer to the offering of "first fruits". The spirit of the foodstuffs (plant or animal) is offered a portion of the food. The "sacred feasts" are all held as an obligation to the particular spirit helper, a reciprocal act out of respect. Memorial feasts are held whereby families and friends share a meal with the spirits of their dead ancestors. In fact, as Amiotte stresses, the sharing of food is part of all ceremonies. The giving of food, the sharing of food is a reciprocal act, a sacred act fundamental to being religious, to living in correct relationship.

The Giveaway

Another sacred, reciprocal activity is what has been called "the giveaway". At the giveaway, goods are distributed to friends and relatives in the community or whoever is in attendance on the particular occasion. I have been to several giveaways and most of

²⁴Amiotte, "Giveaway," p. 39.

them were held at pow-wows. The giveaways were held by a particular family in memory of a family member who died. Specific goods were given to people who were particularly close to the deceased or who supported the family in their time of grief. After the particular people are acknowledged and given something, the other people present are invited to come forward, pick out something and shake the hands of the family whose relative died. Accepting the gift, to my understanding, is also a sacred act done out of respect for the family and their loved one. Memorial giveaways are not the only occasion for a giveaway. As Amiotte writes,

There are numerous occasions connected with the giveaway. The feast and the giveaway actually accompany all major ceremonies. They are an integral part of them. They become like one of the offerings that is made to the gods and to the people on all these occasions.²⁵

Dancing and Singing

I saw so many of their different varieties of dances amongst the Sioux that I should almost be disposed to denominate them the "*dancing Indians!*" It would actually seem as if they had dances for everything.

George Catlin²⁶

George Catlin recognized the importance to the Dakota of dancing and singing. Along with feasts and giveaways, dances and songs are means of honouring, of showing respect, of reciprocating, of giving. Regarding dancing, Catlin correctly observed that:

...it enters into their forms of worship, and is often their mode of appealing to the Great Spirit--of paying

²⁵"*Ibid.*", p. 41.

²⁶Catlin, *Manners and Notes*, p. 244.

their usual devotions to their *medicine*--and of honouring and entertaining strangers of distinction in their country.²⁷

Dancing and singing are sacred acts, forms of prayer and devotion. Wilson Wallis outlined many of the different dances held by the Canadian Dakota.²⁸ All of the dances were held as a result of a dream instruction. As was demonstrated in Chapter Two of this dissertation, dreams are of utmost importance to the Dakota. It is through dreams that individuals establish relationships with the spirits. It was pointed out that individuals who shared similar dreams formed societies and that these societies held public performances dramatizing their dream experience. One of the major societies mentioned was the Wakan Wacipi Society. Dancing, singing, and feasting are all part of the Wakan Wacipi; held in honour of Unktehi, "the god of the waters", the patron of the society.

Wallis provides numerous accounts of individuals who were instructed in a dream by the Thunderers, Buffalo, or some other wakan being, to hold a certain dance in their honour. If the individual neglected to do so, serious negative repercussions resulted. An individual who neglected their dreams might be: struck by lightning;²⁹ made sick or be killed;³⁰ be gored by a buffalo;³¹

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Wallis, *Canadian Dakota*.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

or, have some other misfortune befall them. If the individual fulfilled their dream instructions, then blessings followed; more often than not the individual would become a medicine man and be able to heal others, find the buffalo, or perform other shamanic functions.

Often a person Sundances as a result of a dream inspired instruction. The Sundance is one of the most important ceremonies, it is held partly to honour the sun as one of the most wakan hierophanies, partly to acknowledge or re-establish the inter-relatedness of all things, and partly to request blessings. At the sundance is one of the greatest forms of giving--self-sacrifice, giving of oneself so that others may live. The ultimate reason for holding a Sundance is so that others may live, so that the world will continue.

The Wakan Wacipi, the Sundance and other dances, feasts, and giveaways all exemplify the relational perspective. Humans, the wakan beings, the animals, and Wakan Tankan are acknowledged and respected through feasting, praying, singing, dancing, and gift giving.

CONCLUSIONS: SHAMANS, POWER AND SPIRIT HELPERS

The Canadian Dakota are members of an aboriginal North American nation belonging to the Siouan linguistic family. They have been and are commonly referred to as the "Sioux", due to historical circumstances related to the early encounter between Europeans and Native Americans. The Dakota in Canada are part of a larger alliance (Dakota/Nakota/Lakota) whose divisions reflect geographical, linguistic, cultural and political differences. Archeological and historical evidence supports the position that the Canadian Dakota have ties to a woodlands and plains cultural heritage despite the fact that, due to the notoriety of their Lakota kin, they are often mistakenly classified exclusively as a plains culture. Their presence in Canada is directly traceable to The Minnesota Conflict of 1862 and to a lesser extent the Battle of Little Big Horn.

The Canadian Dakota have a rich religious heritage expressing an understanding of the cosmos and our place in it. The phrase "Mitakuye Oyasin" has been used in this dissertation as a profound expression encapsulating what it means to be religious, to be human. It reflects a fundamental cosmological orientation that forms the basis of how human beings should think, act, and interact with the cosmos. All aspects of religious life reflect the relational perspective; ceremonies are directed towards actualizing the principles inherent in a relational orientation. The basic social unit in Dakota society--the Tiyospaye--is grounded in this orientation and economic relations are guided by it.

At the centre of Dakota religious teachings are individuals who are often referred to in English as shamans or medicine men/women, but who in their own language are classified according to such factors as gender, ways in which men and women perform their sacred duties, the sources of their power, fields of specialization, public performances, doing harm to others and cross-dressing. Chapter three establishes the inadequacy of using foreign words and concepts when attempting to understand the Dakota Wicasta/Winyan Wakan and the benefit of attempts to communicate an understanding of Dakota shamanism based on how the Dakota categorize the different types of shamans in their tradition. Chapter three has also provided the written historical context in which Dakota shamanism has been understood and communicated. The discussion of Dakota shamanism has situated Dakota shamanism in relation to the various levels of discourse on shamanism, providing an awareness of the conceptual contexts in which the shaman and shamanism are understood and facilitating a better understanding of what Dakota shamanism is and is not.

The shamans have a mystical awareness of what I have termed "the Mitakuye Oyasin perspective" and exemplify this in everything they do. They exemplify the Mitakuye Oyasin perspective particularly in their relations with the spirit world, but also in relation to all living things. It is a sacred way of life that is lived day to day and noticeably evident in religious ceremonies. All of the ceremonies are directed toward establishing or maintaining harmony, balance. If there has been a violation or

disruption in the cosmic order, ceremonies are held to re-establish order.

Individuals who are shamans are said to be gifted. They are gifted to heal, prophesize, find lost objects, and charm and divine the whereabouts of the game. The gifts that are given, are given by their spirit helpers through a dream/vision. In English, it is said that they are given power. Power is an inadequate English translation of the Dakota word *sicun*. *Sicun* is the gift that is given to the shamans, a special relationship is formed between the shaman and his or her spirit helper (the source of power). Shamans who have similar dreams (share the same source of power) form societies of dreamers. These dreamers are categorized according to their source of power; for example, Bear Dreamers, Elk Dreamers, Thunder Dreamers, Tree-dweller Dreamers, etc. The societies of dreamers know, according to cultural teachings, that proper relationship behaviour requires that they be respectful and reciprocate by: holding sacred dances; singing sacred songs; and, offering food, tobacco, coloured cloth, or the pipe.

This dissertation has focussed on a particular source of power --the canotidan, the Little People--and has used the relationship between the Tree-dweller Dreamer and the Little People as an exemplary model of relationship. The narratives which have been provided in this dissertation are used to exemplify the relational perspective, I have not attempted to supply possible symbolic interpretations. Nonetheless, the documentation provided in this dissertation reveals source material for endless interpretive

explorations to be carried out at a later point by myself or other theorists. The data reveals that the Little People have a central part to play in Dakota and other Native American religious traditions and is a call for more extensive analysis of the role and meaning of these ever-elusive beings.

It has been established that the written literature seems to offer a contradictory picture of these Little People. Most authors tend to identify them as evil or at the very least malevolent, yet some authors have noted that the Little People can be a source of power. Certain human beings are gifted by the Little People. Shamans who have dreamt of the Little People are given the power to cure psycho-spiritual and physical illnesses, see into the future, find lost articles, and charm and divine the animals for the purposes of hunting. It was also pointed out that the Little People are called in at the Yuwipi, an important contemporary Dakota ceremony. The Little People untie the ropes that bind the Yuwipi man and help the Yuwipi to diagnose disease and find lost articles. Why is there such an inconsistency in the literature? Is it simply because some of the narratives that were collected are not developed, the whole story is not pursued? Often the narratives tell us that the Little People cause a hunter to get lost, why do the Little People do this? What happened to the hunter days, weeks, or months later? Did the Little People give him a message? Did he become a Tree-dweller Dreamer? Wilson Wallis provided quite a few narratives of people who were led astray in order to be communicated to by the wakan beings. "I have caused you to lose

your way in order that I may speak to you,"³² is a common refrain echoed in the narratives provided by Wallis under the section "Medicine Powers Acquired By A Person Who Was Lost."³³ If this is such a common occurrence, one wonders if the Little People lead human beings astray not to be malicious or because they are inherently evil, but to grant powers. Furthermore, even if leading humans astray is done to grant powers, it may also be the case that they are led astray out of punishment for some relational violation. This does not make the Little People evil, as I pointed out in Chapter Three, they can be dangerous. From the Dakota perspective, people are responsible for their actions. If there is disharmony, if there is a break in the cosmic order, something must be done to set things right. If someone has committed an offence, violated proper relational behaviour, then they are held accountable for their actions. Consistent with the cultural injunction to "forgive and forget after proper restitution has been made"³⁴ the obligation to restore proper relations rests with the violator not the victim. All the ceremonies are directed towards establishing or re-establishing harmony or balance. If someone becomes sick or has a string of bad luck it may be because they or a relative have upset the cosmic order, creating an imbalance or disharmony.

³²*Ibid.*, p. 89.

³³*Ibid.*, p. 84 ff.

³⁴Arthur Amiotte, class notes.

The sources have revealed that the early writers were judgemental, narrow-minded, cursed with ethnocentric Christian biases, and their knowledge or understanding of Dakota religion was affected by the limited time that they spent with the Dakota. Later authors, it was discovered, were able to become progressively more open-minded or open-hearted, learning the Dakota language, participating in Dakota ceremonies and marrying into a Dakota family; this allowed for a better understanding of the Dakota religious tradition. When Dakota people themselves started to write about their own traditions, the written literature became much more detailed, revealing subtleties and complexities overlooked by outsiders who were not privy to the deeper philosophical insights of the Dakota intellectuals. It is through the writings of Dakota and Lakota intellectuals that the Mitakuye Oyasin perspective becomes obvious. The literature reveals that no other conclusion is possible. To be religious means to recognize the inter-relatedness of all living things. To be religious means to treat all living things with respect and to reciprocate, to give. The literature reveals that the Mitakuye Oyasin perspective is lived out in economic and political relations, in social relations in the Tiyospaye, and in all aspects of ceremonial life. The shamans as religious and ceremonial leaders are the primary exemplifiers of the Mitakuye Oyasin perspective. A significant extension of this dissertation would consist of extensive field research to map out how relationship manifests itself in contemporary Canadian Dakota religious life.

The cross-disciplinary interest in the relational perspective, outlined at the beginning of Chapter Four, reveals that people are beginning to understand, either directly or indirectly, the perennial wisdom inherent in the "Mitakuye Oyasin" perspective. This dissertation adds to the emerging intellectual and popular discourse related to the theme of relationship. The relational perspective has relevance and value to our North American society, international relations, our emerging global village with its religious pluralism, and environmental issues. In relation to the environment, sustainable development is perhaps a step in the right direction towards a corollary of the Mitakuye Oyasin perspective which expresses the ideal that we should not live just for today, with only ourselves in mind. We should live for the seventh generation, so that they may live. Ho hecetu yelo. Mitakuye Oyasin.

APPENDIX A

NARRATIVES ON THE LITTLE PEOPLE

Joseph Bruchac, "The Gifts of the Little People." Iroquois Stories: Heroes and Heroines Monsters and Magic. Freedom, California: The Crossing Press, 1985: pp. 41-46.

There once was a boy whose parents had died. He live with his uncle who did not treat him well. The uncle dressed the boy in rags and because of this the boy was called Dirty Clothes.

This boy, Dirty Clothes, was a good hunter. He would spend many hours in the forest hunting food for his lazy uncle who would not hunt for himself.

One day Dirty Clothes walked near the river, two squirrels that he had shot hanging from his belt. He walked near the cliffs which rose from the water. This is where the Little People, the Jo-Ge-Oh, often beat their drums. Most of the hunters from the village were afraid to go near this place, but Dirty Clothes remembered the words his mother had spoken years ago, "Whenever you walk with good in your heart, you should never be afraid."

A hickory tree grew there near the river. He saw something moving in its branches. A black squirrel was hopping about high up in the top of the tree. Then Dirty Clothes heard a small voice. "Shoot again, Brother," the small voice said. "You still have not hit him." (Quite different than the canotindan who has special hunting power.

Cornplanter, Jesse J. Legends of the Longhouse. Port Washington, New York: Ira J. Friedman, Inc, 1963. Originally published by Jesse J. Cornplanter and Namee Price Henricks, 1938.

Two of the letters contained in the collection deal with legends of the Djonh-geh-onh, the "Great Little People." The first letter, written on November 13, 1936, concerns the origin of the "Dark Dance" or the "Dance of the Little People."

Jesse J. Cornplanter is a Seneca member of the Snipe Clan and lived on the Tonawanda Seneca Reservation. This book is a compilation of letters written--between October 13, 1936 and June 1, 1937--by Cornplanter to someone whom he greets as "dear Seneca sister," Mrs. Walter A. Henricks. The author of the introduction, Carl Carmer, describes Cornplanter as a soldier, craftsman, musician, actor, and tale-teller. Carmer adds that Cornplanter is "an imaginative and sensitive man" (p. 8) and "a Senecan poet in the tradition of his fathers, a lover of his people's

memories, reared in their reverence and appreciative of the Senecan creative genius." (p.9) Carner informs the reader that Cornplanter hoped to communicate in the English language, the "feeling" of what his stories are like when they are told in the Seneca language.

Parker, Arthur C. The History of the Seneca Indians. Port Washington, Long Island, N. Y.: Ira J. Friedman, Inc., 1967. Originally published in 1926. pp. 79-80.

The Seneca believed in fairies and pygmies, and many are the tales of these tiny people who were friendly to man. Some of the pygmies lived in rocky glens as at the upper falls of the Genesee* (The Senecas believed that a tribe of fairies lived beneath each fall at Letchworth Park), and others under the water. Another tribe lived in the woods and had as its task the turning of the face of fruit so that it would ripen in the sun. These "little folk" were unable to do many things for themselves and gave favor in exchange for services rendered them by their human friends. They asked that small bags of tobacco be thrown over the cliffs for them and that boys and girls often trim their finger nails, so that they could use the parings to frighten away bad animals, for the nails smelled like human beings and thus the animals became afraid. Often when they needed human help, they would be heard drumming in the glens, and this was always a signal that mankind should hold a dance for them and sing pygmy songs.

John Witthoft and Wendell S. Hadlock, "Cherokee-Iroquois Little People." Journal of American Folklore, vol. 59, no. 233, July-Sept, 1946: pp. 413-422.

The Seneca call dwarfs dju.ngago (Sherman Redeye, Allegany Reservation) and the Mohawk, yagodinya yu.yocks (they throw stones) (Mrs. Susan Hill, Six Nations Reserve). The Onondaga name for them is tcigahe.ya (Levi Batiste, Six Nations) and among the Cayuga they are called djugat, while the male is called degala (my story?) and the female tcega.ha. The Tuscarora know them as ogwes.ha.i (Little People) Cornelius Owens, Six Nations). The Wyandot, according to Barbeau, call the Little People tikaén'a (twins).

Brown, Jennifer S.H. and Robert Brightman. The Orders of the Dreamed: George Nelson on Cree and Northern Ojibwa Religion and Myth, 1823. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press/St. Paul:

Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988. "Mermaid and "Sea man" a class of miniature beings called by the Crees mimikwisiwak, p. 124.

[Nelson, George (1786-1859), diaries] An interdisciplinary collection of essays organized around George Nelson's narratives. Information on shaking tent rite described in detail. An essay by Emman LaRocque concerning the ethical issues raised by historical ethnographic documents is included. The title is derived from the dream quest, the central experience of Algonquin Subarctic religion. Also mentions the O-may-me-thay-day-ace-cae-wuck [Cree omemihoeteshesiwak 'hairy-heart beings'] "Ancients", p. 110.

Alex F. Chamberlain, "Some Items of Algonkian Folk-lore." Journal of American Folklore, 1900:68 (13/50: 271-277). The author takes information from Abbe Cuog's dictionary of the Nipissing dialect Lexique de la langue algonquine (Montreal, 1886).

Memegwesiwak (plural of memegwesi), "a sort of sirens of water-nymphs, which, the Indians believe, live in the water and in hollow rocks" (p. 43). They are said to steal very much and to speak with a nasal twang. There are many sayings about them. Cuog tells us that "when, by mischance, when travelling by water, one has let fall anything into the river or lake, it is the custom to say memegwesi o kat aian = "The memegwesi will have that," or "that is for the memegwesi." Certain rocks or staones haveing some resemblances to parts of the human body are called memegwesi-wabik = "memegwesi-rock;" and, in passing by these, the canoe-men, even now, "either in jest or in superstition, toss at them a piece of tobacco," etc. Of these "nymphs" the saying goes: Memegwesi ta kimotasapi, nitakimotiwak, memegwesiwak, " the memegwesi will rob the net; they are thieves, the memegwesi." The "nasal twang" of these creatures has furnished an expression of a figurative sort to the language in memegwesiko, "to speak with a nasal twang," literally "to imitate the memegwesi."

Pakwatcininins, "the little man of the woods" (p. 325). A sort of Indian elf or fairy. The word is derived from pakwadc, "belonging to the woods" and ininins (diminutive of inini), "little man" These creatures figure much in myth and legend.

James H. Howard, Oklahoma Seminoles: Medicine, Magic, and Religion. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984: pp. 210-211.

The Little People. "Like the Creeks, Choctaws, and Chickasaws, the Seminoles frequently speak of a race of diminutive human beings. These Little People are invisible most of the time, but occasionally let themselves be seen by young children and by medicine men. They are described by Seminoles as looking like Indians and speaking Muskogee. Sometimes they are described as wearing "old time" Indian garb, made of buckskin. They frequently take in small children who have wandered away from home. They feed and care for these children and often teach them the use of herb remedies. Seminole parents, therefore, are not unduly concerned when a small child turns up missing, since the child is thought to be with the Little People, and will reappear unharmed in a day or two. The Muskogee name for these Little People is *fsti lvpucki*."

Howard gives account of an interview with people whose young son plays with the Little People; son says they're ugly. Story of some who lived in a grove of trees, clump of trees. Ugly, but just like old-time Indians. They have women and children and live in trees. Willie had never heard that the bones of Little People were a medicine.

Rev. Silas Tertius Rand. Legends of the Micmacs. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971. Reprinted from 1894 edition (New York and London: Longmans, Green, and co.): pp. 367-368, 431-433.

A Fairy Tale. (Newel Jeddore, Jim Paul, and Prosper Newell were some years ago passing along up the Musquedobit River, near its embouchure, when they came to a place where the bluff was high. Jim Paul informed his companions that it was reported to be a haunt of Wiguladumooch, or Fairies.) Man insulted Fairy. Went to sleep. Woke up with hands and feet tied. pleaded with Fairy to untie. Fairy did.

The Fairy. Four bro's. little man with big appetite comes asking to be fed. 1st feeds, next day 2nd feeds, 3rd feeds, 4th refuses. They battle. little man is stronger. 4th Bro lets go. Fairy runs, man throws knife into him fairy asks him to remove it in exchange for 4 wives. a deal is struck. Fairy has healing power.

McMillan, Alan D. Native Peoples and Cultures of Canada: An Anthropological Overview. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1988: p. 49.

Under Micmac and Malecite religious belief McMillan states: Lesser deities included some that were human in form but were immortal and had supernatural powers...At the lowest level of the pantheon were supernatural races, ranging from giants to the forest-dwelling "little people."

Macfarlan, Allan A. Fireside Book of North American Indian Folktales. Harrisburg, Pa: Stackpole Books, 1974: pp. 150-152.

"Little-People Magic" (Micmac) "These tiny beings were said to have magic powers. Because of this, they were to be treated kindly, or bad luck would follow. Midget Indians, they possessed all the Indian liking for merrymaking and jokes. This is why they were considered mischievous." Same story as in Wild Drum and?

Clark, Ella E. Indian Legends of Canada. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1960: pp. 115-119.

"The Little People" (Micmac) (pp. 115-116) This story is almost identical to the one told in Wild Drums by Alex Grisdale. A summary is offered at the beginning of the tale: A belief in dwarfs, "the Little People," was held by most North American tribes. There are scattered references to them in many myths and legends; the Little People are often said to have done the picture-writing and painting on the rocks, and to keep the paint fresh; they were thought, by some tribes, to have strong spirit-power and so were greatly desired as guardian spirits. One of these dwarfs seems to be very similar to Robin Goodfellow of British folklore. They live in caves or burrow in the ground. Roam around the forest. Are invisible.

"The Little People and the greedy hunters." (pp. 115-116) "The Little People who lived in the early world left their carvings to beautify rocks and cliffs and caves. And they helped the early Indians. Small though they were, the Little People were so strong that they killed many of the monster animals that were dangerous to man. "Our mission is to help you," a pigmy once told an Indian hunter. The bones of extinct animals found in their travels, the Indians believed, were the bones of the monsters that had been destroyed by the Little People.

The following legend of the Senecas, called a true story by the man who told it, reveals a little about the pigmies and also an attitude toward greediness and waste expressed in the stories of several North American tribes."

"The Water Fairies" (Micmac) (pp. 118-119) "This story from the Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia has some interesting parallels with the old Danish folktale that Matthew Arnold used in his poem "A Forsaken Mermaid" and also with "The Mortal Who Married a Mermaid," from the Coos Indians of the Oregon coast." "dressed in the costumes of the old days." They live under the water, presumably in the sea in this case.

Leland, Charles G. The Algonquin Legends of New England or Myths and Folk Lore of the Micmac, Passamaquoddy, and Penobscot Tribes. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1885.

The frontpiece is a drawing of "Mic Um Wess" "The Indian Puck, or Robin Good-fellow." It is described as "From a scraping on birch bark by Thomah Josephs, Indian Governor at Peter Dana's Point, Maine. The Mik um wess always wears a red cap like the Norse Goblin." He makes a connection with Norse mythology--the Edda--throughout

"How Glooskap made the Elves and Fairies, and then Man of an Ash Tree, and last of all, Beasts, and of his Coming at the Last Day."

First born were the Mikumwess, the Oonahgemessuk, the small Elves, little men, dwellers in rocks.

And in this way he made Man: He took his bow and arrows and shot at trees, the basket-trees, the Ash. Then Indians came out of the bark of the Ash-tree. And then the Mikumwess said...called tree-man...(The relater, an old woman, was quite unintelligible at this point).

"Of the Surprising and Singular Adventures of two Water Fairies who were also Weasels, and how they each became the Bride of a Star. Including the Mysterious and Wonderful Works of Lox, the Great Indian Devil, who rose from the Dead." (Micmac and Passamaquoddy) (pp. 140 f.)

"...he saw many maids merrily bathing in the lake: and these were of the fairy race, who dwell in deep waters and dark caves, and keep away from mankind...For being tinctured with magic and learned in the lore of all kind of golblins, elves, and witches, Master Marten

knew that when Naiads are naked and a man has their garments he holds them at his mercy. For in the apparel lies their fairy power..." (p. 142)

Relations des Jésuites contenant ce quis s'est passé de plus remarquable dans les missions des Pères de la compagnie de Jésus dans la Nouvelle-France, Montréal, Editions du Jour 1972 [1858]. Tome I 1611-1636, tome VI -- 1672. Thanks to Dr. Roger Lapoint, University of Ottawa, for gathering these references.

- 1 ...ils [les Hurons] reconnaissent comme une espèce de Dieu en guerre; ils le figurent comme un petit Nain. A les entendre, il parait à plusieurs, lorsqu'on est sur le point d'aller in guerre; il caresse les uns, et c'est un signe, disent-ils, qu'ils retournent victorieux; les autres, il les frappe au front, et ceux-là peuvent bien dire qu'ils n'iront point à la guerre sans y laisser la vie. (1636, p. 112)
- 2 L'origine de toute cette folie vient d'un nommé Oatarra, ou d'une petite idole en forme d'une poupée, qu'il demanda pour sa guérison à une douzaine d'Enchanteurs qui l'étaient venu voir, et laquelle ayant mis en son sac de Petun, elle se remua là dedans, ordonna les banquets et autres cérémonies de la danse, à ce qu'ils content. (1636, p. 117)
- 3 ...auquel [l'enfant abandonné par l'ours et le lièvre] elle donna le nom de Tchadabech. Cet enfant ne crut point en grnadeur, demeurant tujours comme un enfant au maillot...lequel [arbre] s'éleva et grandit au souffle de ce petit Nain... (1637, p. 54)
- 4 Ces festins qu'ils[les Hurons d'Oenrio] appellent Aoutaerohi, qu'ils font, disent-ils, pour apaiser un certain petit démon auquel il donne ce nom. (1637, p. 137)
- 5 ...Ascouandic ou diable familier... (1639, p. 97) Il est dans le sac de médecine, donc petit
- 6 Un Onontagué revenant de la nation du Chat raconte: il fit rencontre d'une Tortue d'une grosseur incroyable; et quelque temps après, il vit un Démon en forme d'un petit Nain, qu'ils disent etre déjà apparu à quelque autre; ils l'appellent Taronhiaonagui, qui signifie celui qui tient le ciel. (1656, p.34)
- 7 Outre cette cause générale des maladies [manque à faire festin], il y en a de particulieres, qui sont certains petits génies malfaisants de leur nature, qui se fourrent d'eux-memes, ou sont jetés par quelque ennemi

dans le parties du corps qui sont les plus malades.
(1667, p. 13)

- 8 Au nord du lac Champlain, il y a une ardoisière et des pierres à fusil en sont charriées sur le rivage. Une légende iroquoise attribue cela à "une nation d'hommes invisibles [appelés "petits hommes" un peu plus loin], qui habitent là, dans le fond de l'eau, et s'occupent à préparer des pierres à fusil, presque toutes taillées aux passants, pourvu qu'ils leur rendent leurs devoirs en leur présentant du petun...(1668, p. 5)
- 9 Songe d'un vieillard onontagué ennemi des jésuites: "un homme de la hauteur d'une coudée et qu'il lui avait montré premièrement des gouttes de sang lesquelles tombaient du Ciel.. Il ajoutait de plus, qu'il en était même tombé des hommes, mais dans un pitoyable état; car on leur avait coupé les doigts et le nez, en un mot on les avait traités en captifs. Enfin ce vieillard assurait qu'un de ces petits hommes lui avait dit qu'on le traiterait ainsi dans le Ciel...(1669, p. 8.)

Relations inédites de la Nouvelle-France (1672-1679) pour faire suite aux anciennes relations (1615-1672), tome I, Montréal, Editions Elysée, 1974.

- 1) ...les jongleurs feignaient de faire sortir du corps de l'enfant des dents d'ours et de chien, de porc et de cerf, des cheveux d'homme et choses d'semblables qu'ils appellent de *otkis*, c'est-à-dire des sort ou petits démons...(p. 264)

Article by Laurie Sardadi appeared in the *Gazette and the Ottawa Citizen* titled "Tall Tales of Tiny Tribe Abound in North" and "'Hi Little Guy' N.W.T. legislator says that's how to talk to those legendary, tiny folk who roam the Arctic." November 5, 1990.

Ludy Pudluk wasn't belittling the situation when he gave the Northwest Territories legislative assembly a lesson on how to greet a tiny tribe of little people said to roam the High Arctic. He just wanted to make sure the shy, but ferocious, mini-nomads are treated with respect if they decide to wander through the corridors of power.

"When they're ready to appear in front of you, just say, 'Hi little guy,' and be nice to them and in the future they will be no more shy," the Inuktitut-speaking Pudluk, MLA for the High Arctic, said last

week.

"I'm asking the federal government, do not make any study on them for a while yet," a smiling Pudluk added.

The legend of the little people--a tribe of about 70, metre-high warriors clothed in traditional caribour skins who tote bows and arrows above the Arctic Circle--has resurfaced with recent sightings at the Cambridge Bay Dump.

Some people of the Arctic Ocean coastal community are so convinced the little people exist, they have even tried to coax them into town.

"People are leaving food out there, hoping if they were out there they'd take it and come into town and try to be friendly," said Sean Peterson, recreational director for the Inuit settlement of 1,000 people.

Peterson, 30, said he believe it's possible a nomadic tribe of 60-70 little people could have evaded detection all these years.

His own search for them proved futile, but an old rock dwelling near the dump that is so small you have to crawl to get into it, fuels speculation the tribe is alive and well.

"All the elderly people say they're real. They've come across their camp sites and some people see them on the tundra hunting."

The little people are said to be unusually strong and fast-footed with a particular disdain for civilization.

"We even see them occasionally in Yellowknife," government leader Dennis Patterson told the assembly when another member asked him where the little people live.

"I know that in Scotland and Ireland these little people are known to live in the hills. I'm not sure exactly where they live in the Kitikmeot area but I am glad to hear that they've been sighted."

APPENDIX B

HENNEPIN, CARVER EASTMAN AND POND

HENNEPIN'S INFORMATION ON NATIVE "JUGGLERS"

Under the subtitle "Remedies Against Diseases" Hennepin says, There are charlatans whom they call jugglers. These are certain old men who live at other people's expense, by counterfeiting physicians in a superstitious manner. They do not use remedies, but when one of them is called to a sick man, he makes them entreat him, as if it were for some affair of great importance and very difficult. After many solicitations he comes, he approaches the patient, touches him all over the body, and after he has well considered and handled him, he tells him that he has a spell in such or such a part, for example, in the head, leg or stomach, which must be removed, but that this can be done only with great difficulty, and many things must be done previously. This spell is very malicious, he says; but it must be made to come out at any cost. All the sick man's friends who fall into the trap, say "T. Chagon, T. Chagon, courage, courage;" "do what you can, spare nothing" The juggler sits down, deliberates for a time on the remedies which he wishes to employ, then rises as if coming out of a deep sleep, and cries out. "See the thing is done! Listen, such a one, your wife or child's life is at stake, so spare nothing, you must give a feast, to day," "give such or such a thing," or do something else of the kind. At the same time that these orders of this juggler are carried out, the men enter the vapor bath and sing at the top of their voice, rattling tortoise shells or gourds full of Indian corn, to the sound of which the men and women dance. Sometimes even they all get intoxicated, so that they make frightful orgies. While all are thus engaged, this superstitious old man is near the patient, whom he torments, holding his feet or legs, or pressing his chest, according to the spot where he has said the spell is, in such a way that he makes him undergo pain sufficient to kill him. He often makes the blood issue from the tips of his fingers or toes At last after making a hundred grimaces, he displays a piece of skin or a lock or hair or something of the kind, making them believe it to be the spell which he has drawn from the patient's body, which is however, only a pure trick. (284-287)

Although Hennepin makes use of a Mohawk word, "T. Chagon", he is speaking of the manners of the Indians and Native "jugglers" in general. Hennepin also speaks generally about the Native "jugglers" at another point in the *Nouveau Voyage*; he says,

There's no Nation but what have their Jugglers, which some count sorcerers but 'tis not likely that they are under any

Covenant, or hold communication with the Devil. At the same time, one may venture to say, that the evil Spirit has a hand in the Tricks of these Jugglers, and makes use of them to amuse these poor People, and render them more incapable of receiving the knowledge of the true God. They are very fond of these Jugglers, tho they cozen them perpetually.

These Imposters would be counted Prophets, who foretel things to come: they boast that they make Rain or fair Weather, Calms and Storms, Fruitfulness or Barenness of the Ground, Hunting lucky or unlucky. They serve for Physicians too and frequently apply such Remedies, as have no manner of virtue to cure the Distemper.

Nothing can be imagin'd more horrible than the Cries and Yellings, and strange Contortions of these Rascals, when they fall to juggling or conjuring; at the same time they do it very cleverly. They never cure any one, nor predict any thing that falls out, but purely by chance mean time they have a thousand Fetches to bubble (i.e., cheat) the poor people, when the accident does not answer their Predictions and Remedies; for, as I said, they are both Prophets and Quacks. They do nothing without Presents or Reward. 'Tis true, if these impostors are not very dexterous at recommending themselves, and bringing themselves off, when any person dies under their hands, or Enterprizes do not succeed as they promis'd, they are sometimes murdered upon the place, without any more Formality. (464-465 Vast)

CARVER'S DISCUSSION OF THE INITIATION OF THE CANDIDATE INTO THE WAKAN WACIPI SOCIETY.

The young candidate was placed in the centre, and four of the chiefs took their stations close to him; after exhorting him, by turns, not to faint under the operation he was about to go through, but to behave like an Indian and a man, two of them took hold of his arms, and caused him to kneel; another placed himself behind him so as to receive him when he fell, and the last of the four retired to the distance of about twelve feet from him exactly in front. This disposition being completed, the chief that stood before the kneeling candidate, began to speak to him with an audible voice. He told him that he himself was now agitated by the same spirit which he should in a few moments communicate to him; that it would strike him dead, but that he would instantly be restored again to life; to this he added, that the communication, however terrifying, was a necessary introduction to the advantages

enjoyed by the community into which he was on the point of being admitted.

As he spoke this, he appeared to be greatly agitated; till at last his emotions became so violent, that his countenance was distorted, and his whole frame convulsed. At this juncture he threw something that appeared both in shape and colour like a small bean, at the young man, which seemed to enter his mouth, and he instantly fell as motionless as if he had been shot. The chief that was placed behind him received him in his arms, and, by the assistance of the other two, laid him on the ground to all appearance bereft of life.

Having done this, they immediately began to rub his limbs, and to strike him on the back, giving him such blows, as seemed more calculated to still the quick than to raise the dead. During these extraordinary applications, the speaker continued his harangue, desiring the spectators not to be surprized or to despair of the young man's recovery, as his present inanimate situation proceeded only from the forcible operation of the spirit, on faculties that had hitherto been unused to inspirations of this kind.

The candidate lay several minutes without sense or motion; but at length, after receiving many violent blows, he began to discover some symptoms of returning life. These, however, were attended with strong convulsions, and an apparent obstruction in his throat. But they were soon at an end; for having discharged from his mouth the bean, or whatever it was that the chief had thrown at him, but which on the closest inspection I had not perceived to enter it, he soon after appeared to be tolerably recovered. (273-75)

EASTMAN'S INFORMATION ON NATIVE "MEDICINE MEN."

In her section on Indian Doctors, Eastman describes how to apply to a medicine-man for assistance and then she describes the medicine-mans procedure.

When an Indian is sick and wants "the Doctor" as we say, or a medicine man, as they say,--they call them also priests, doctors and jugglers,--a messenger is sent for one, with a pipe filled in one hand, and payment in the other; which fee may be a gun, blanket, kettle or anything in the way of present. The messenger enters the wigwam (or teepee, as the houses of the Sioux are called) of the juggler, presents the pipe, and lays the present or

fee beside him. Having smoked, the Doctor goes to the teepee of the patient, takes a seat at some distance from him, divests himself of coat or blanket, and pulls his leggings to his ankles. He then calls for a gourd, which has been suitably prepared, by drying and putting small beads or gravel stones in it, to make a rattling noise. Taking the gourd, he begins to rattle it and to sing, thereby to charm the animal that has entered the body of the sick Sioux. After singing hi-he-hi-hah in quick succession, the chorus ha-ha-ha, hahahah is more solemnly and gravely chaunted. On due repetition of this the doctor stops to smoke; then sings and rattles again. He sometimes attempts to draw with his mouth the disease from an arm or a limb that he fancies to be affected. Then rising, apparently almost suffocated, groaning terribly and thrusting his face into a bowl of water, he makes all sorts of gestures and noises. This is to get rid of the disease that he pretends to have drawn from the sick person. When he thinks that some animal, fowl or fish, has possession of the sick man, so as to cause the disease, it becomes necessary to destroy the animal by shooting it. To accomplish this, the doctor makes the shape of the animal of bark, which is placed in a bowl of water mixed with red earth, which he sets outside of the wigwam where some young men are standing, who are instructed by the doctor how and when to shoot the animal.

When all is ready, the doctor pops his head out of the wigwam, on his hands and knees. At this moment the young men fire at the little bark animal blowing it to atoms; when the doctor jumps at the bowl, thrusting his face into the water, grunting, groaning and making a vast deal of fuss. Suddenly a woman jumps upon his back, then dismounts, takes the doctor by the hair, and drags him back into the teepee. All fragments of the bark animal are then collected and burned. The ceremony there ceases. (xxii-xxiii)

Defining the sacred rattle Eastman says,

Sacred rattle. This is generally a gourd, but is sometimes made of bark. Small beads are put into it. The Sioux suppose that this rattle, in the hands of one of their medicine men or women, possesses a certain virtue to charm away sickness or evil spirits. They shake it over a sick person, using a circular motion. It is never, however, put in requisition against the worst spirits with which the Red Man has to contend" (34)

GIDEON H. POND'S DISCUSSION OF THE "MEDICINE MANS" PRE-NATAL EXISTENCE.

Dacota medicine-men do not spring into existence under the ordinary operations of natural laws, but according to their faith, these men and women (for females too are wakan) first wake into conscious intellectual existence in the form of winged seeds, such as the thistle, and are wafted, by the intelligent influence of the Four Winds, through the aerial regions, till eventually they are conducted to the abode of some one of the Taku Wakan, by whom they are received into intimate communion. Here they remain till they become acquainted with the character and abilities of the class of gods whose guests they happen to be, and until they have themselves imbibed their spirit, and are acquainted with all the chants, feasts, dances, and sacrificial rites which the gods deem it necessary to impose on men. In this manner some of them pass through a succession of inspirations with different classes of the divinities, till they are fully wakenized, and prepared for human incarnation. Particularly they are invested with the invisible wakan powers of the gods, their knowledge and cunning, and their omnipresent influence over mind, instinct, and passion. They are taught to inflict diseases and heal them, discover concealed causes, manufacture implements of war, and impart to them the tonwan power of the gods; and also the art of making such application of paints, that they will protect from the powers of enemies.

This process of inspiration is called "dreaming of the gods." Thus prepared, and retaining his primitive form, the demi-god now again rides forth, on the wings of the wind, over the length and breadth of the earth, till he has carefully observed the characters and usages of all the different tribes of men; then selecting his location, he enters one about to become a mother and, in due time, makes his appearance among men, to fulfil the mysterious purposes for which the gods designed him. It is proper, perhaps, here to state, that when one of these wakan-men dies, he returns to the abode of his god, from whom he receives a new inspiration; after which he passes through another incarnation, as before, and serves another generation, according to the will of the gods. In this manner they pass through four incarnations (four is a sacred number), and then return to their original nothingness. Thus the medicine-man come clothed with power." (646)

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