

THE WOLVES OF HEAVEN

Cheyenne Shamanism, Ceremonies, and Prehistoric Origins

By **Karl H. Schlesier** Drawings by *Wah-pah-nah-yah*, Dick West



Dick West '84
(wah-pah-nah-yah)

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THE WOLVES OF HEAVEN

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*Blue, blue light far away
Blue, blue light far away
Blue, blue light far away
Downward the spirit came
Downward the spirit came
Downward the spirit came
Spinning, spinning, spinning
Spinning, spinning, spinning
Spinning, spinning, spinning
Earth, beautiful earth.*

—EVENK SHAMAN'S SONG, IKENIPKE
CEREMONY, NORTHERN SIBERIA

"Nanēhov meohotoxc" ("I am the star of dawn")

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and Prehistoric Origins*

By Karl H. Schlesier

Drawings by Wah-pah-nah-yah, Dick West

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For *vonom*. For my parents who are part of it, Karl and Maria Schlesier, Edward and Minnie Red Hat. "Haho naheve." For the Tsistsistas, who have been there for a very long time and who should be there in the future.

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Preface

THIS BOOK deals with the early Tsistsistas (Cheyenne) times in the Plains. Tsistsistas is the name the Cheyennes use to denote themselves as a people separate from other peoples and as participants in a unique cultural tradition. The word Tsistsistas derives from the root *zes* (pronounced like *ts* in *colts*), meaning “something extended, pointing forward, drawn out” (Petter 1915:228). In contrast, the term Cheyenne, by which the tribe generally is addressed, stems from the Sioux name given to them, in Lakota *Shahi-yena*, *Shai-ena*, or *Shai-ela*, meaning “people of alien speech” (Mooney 1907:362). Although the term Cheyenne includes all members of this tribe on tribal rolls in Oklahoma and Montana, the term Tsistsistas excludes the Suhtai branch of Northern Cheyennes. The Suhtais, originally an independent tribe, associated themselves with the Tsistsistas during the eighteenth century. They did not become Tsistsistas, however. Descendants of this branch perform in Tsistsistas ceremonies to the present as Suhtais, not as Tsistsistas. Because of the time period under consideration here, the term Tsistsistas is used in this book.

This book focuses on the transition period of people becoming Tsistsistas from an earlier population (Proto-Tsistsistas). This transition took place in the Dakotas, after, linguistically speaking, bands of Western Algonquian taiga hunters arrived in the northeastern portion of the Plains from the north. Whether they were a people with shared ethnic boundaries upon their arrival cannot be deduced. They became Tsistsistas through the gift of an earth-giving ceremony, the *Massaum*, which required the formation of an ethnic entity closed to outsiders, an entity that had to be maintained over time. This event took place sometime between 500 and 300 B.C.

The definition of the *Massaum* as an earth-giving ceremony, of its importance for the development of the Tsistsistas as a people, and of the time and place of the transition expounded in this book contradicts *all* of the extant literature on the Cheyennes. That literature assumes that Tsistsistas institutions emphasized by ethnographers dur-

ing reservation-period fieldwork were initiated by the tribe after its removal from the Minnesota River area to the Missouri River and the Black Hills during the eighteenth century, thus preceding the beginning of reservation time by little more than a century. The flat historical perspective extolled in the literature denies Tsistsistas cultural depth and perseverance over a span of time comparable to that of nation-states.

The question what Tsistsistas culture might have been before the year 1700 had never been seriously raised by anthropologists or historians until I began research for this book. The literature sees them as a cluster of bands, not yet a people, coming out of empty space, apparently without a culture, and then, during the course of the eighteenth century, achieving ethnic unity and a Plains-adapted culture by pragmatically assembling parts and pieces learned from Indian groups already present in the region. These fallacious speculations are taught in Oklahoma classrooms and elsewhere as scientific facts. Thus Cheyenne children have been forced to believe that their ancestors came into the grasslands late, after Europeans had already made their appearance there, that they were recent immigrants from elsewhere, that the Tsistsistas never possessed sovereignty and therefore should not claim special rights to parts of their former range.

This book deals not with the factual Tsistsistas' reentry into the mixed-grass prairie during the eighteenth century or with the episode of their absence but with the Tsistsistas' presence in the same region at a much earlier time. It reconstructs the Massaum, thereby allowing a reinterpretation of Tsistsistas culture acceptable to the Tsistsistas, and a delineation of much older pre-Massaum (Proto-Tsistsistas) cultural elements as well as of those that came into being with the Massaum.

It also places the Tsistsistas' world understanding in the context of Algonquian thought and traces the history of this language family through the archaeological record to its first manifestations in North America around 8000 B.C. In a concise comparison of the Tsistsistas world view (here representing Algonquian groups) with that of northern Siberian groups, in which 134 religious and philosophical categories are listed, it is documented that they shared in a common heritage that survived in both North America and northern Siberia through the European invasions and in significant aspects to the present.

This book superimposes Tsistsistas cultural categories, many of which are defined and explained here for a first time, on archaeologi-

cal remains in the northern Plains, thus establishing the Tsistsistas presence there during the period from about 500 B.C. to A.D. 800. It is hoped that this effort furthers the understanding by students of the cultural history of the Middle Missouri and northern Plains region during the Late Archaic, or Late Early Woodland and subsequent periods, because early Tsistsistas ceremonialism influenced other early cultures that entered the area from the east and southeast.

The Massaum (derived from the word *massa'ne*, "crazy" or acting contrary to normal; see Grinnell 1923, 2: 285; Petter 1915: 300, 313-14) is the most elusive of Tsistsistas tribal ceremonies. There are a number of reasons for this.

One is that the ceremony disappeared over fifty years ago. The last performance was held in Montana in 1911 and in Oklahoma in 1927. The second reason is that from the beginning of the Tsistsistas reservation period in the 1870s to the final performances the ceremony was conducted only a very few times both in Oklahoma and in Montana. Petter (1915: 335-36), writing in 1914, says that it had not been held "for over 22 years among the Southern Cheyenne." Curtis (1911: 115), commenting on the Montana situation, mentions that it had been "long obsolete until reenacted in the summer of 1909" (the next-to-last performance there). A third reason is that during the hard decades preceding reservation time, from the 1830s to the 1870s, because of incessant warfare and the destruction of human life by epidemics of smallpox, measles, cholera, and the like, the ceremony was held only sporadically. A fourth reason is that throughout this time period, that is, for nearly a full century, the ceremony was perhaps never conducted according to its full requirements.

After 1934, when external pressure on the Tsistsistas subsided somewhat and religious freedom of Indian tribes was recognized through the Indian Reorganization Act, the Massaum did not return. Its complexity and the extermination by whites of Plains animals that had to be participants in the ceremony are factors leading to its termination.

Considering the facts given here, ethnographers had little opportunity to observe a Massaum, and none at all to record a complete one. Grinnell's (1923, 2: 285-336) account of the 1911 Montana Massaum is the only careful description of the ceremony published until now. His work, as is usual for him, is excellent. The ceremony, however, was seriously flawed by mistakes and omissions, and the priests explained nothing to him.

This book makes use of all written sources on the Tsistsistas and of

information from the great volume of works on Middle Missouri and northern Plains ethnology, ethnohistory, prehistory, and linguistics. In addition, Tsistsistas ceremonial men and women provided important testimony.

This book would not have been possible without my action anthropology engagement with the Tsistsistas, which began in 1969 and continues (Schlesier 1974, 1980b, 1981). I began it in the tradition of the Chicago school, where I had been a student of Sol Tax and an eyewitness to the end of the Fox Project, but it appears that I have gone beyond it. This is not the place to elaborate on it especially, because my action anthropology “project” has been discussed relatively widely elsewhere. It is, perhaps, the place to thank Sol for what he taught me and for the strength that he passed on to me. In this book I have combined action anthropology with the best principles of the cultural anthropological method—those of cognitive anthropology. This approach uses language itself, here the Tsistsistas language, as the datum of the description and bases interpretation on cognitive categories and mental structures inherent in the language.

As a consequence, and to verify the authenticity of my challenging reinterpretation of Tsistsistas world perception and cultural features, it was essential to use Tsistsistas terms here as key elements of the data. Most are not of common Tsistsistas language but belong to the hidden language of *ononeovätaneo*, the esoteric group of old that comprised the shamans (*zemaheonevesso*) and persons working for the sacred (*maheonhetaneo*). Petter long ago collected and published many of them in his dictionary. I have invoked them not without hesitation. They are, however, the undeniable messengers of truth. Without their protection I would have been seen as standing on shaky ground. Their being revealed here, in another positive way, will return them for discussion and reflection to a wide Tsistsistas audience, including those Cheyennes who have forgotten much.

This book could not have been written without the compassion and support of Edward Red Hat and his family. Keeper of *nimā-henan*, the sacred arrows, he instructed me in Tsistsistas religion from his first visit to my house in Wichita on October 15, 1971, to his death on February 24, 1982. My work on the Massaum and Tsistsistas beginnings started when he placed me in the Massaum position in a ceremony held at the Tsistsistas sacred mountain, Nowah’wus (Bear Butte, South Dakota), on September 24, 1979. He guided my search into the past with a keen, unflinching interest. To him and to my

wife, Claire, I owe more than I can say. Our daughters, Sedna and Sibylle, and my mothers were with us in Tsistsistas country at important occasions.

I am grateful to Bill Red Hat, Jr., Ted J. Brassler, Gordon M. Day, L. Adrien Hannus, E. Leigh Syms, and James V. Wright, who commented on the manuscript with knowledge and vigor. James H. Howard had agreed to read the manuscript, but he passed away before he could do so.

At Wichita State University, I thank Martin Reif, Frederick Sudermann, John Breazcaale, Lloyd Benningfield, and Paul Magelli, who trusted me and who gave me the time I needed and some financial help when it was urgent. I am grateful to the Stiftung Volkswagenwerk for a grant that made possible basic research on the issues explored. At the University of Oklahoma, John H. Moore was helpful whenever I called upon him.

The lot of making visible in drawings crucial moments of his people's past fell to Dick West, my friend, who had seen a Massaum in Oklahoma when he was a boy. It is one of the many strange occurrences related to this book that he had already painted for me the sacred runners of the great ceremony before we ever met.

KARL H. SCHLESIER

Wichita, Kansas

Pronunciation Guide

RODOLPHE PETER's *English-Cheyenne Dictionary* (1915) and *Cheyenne Grammar* (1952) are the classic reference works on these subjects because they achieved a high degree of accuracy. Because of this I have generally followed his spelling of Tsistsistas words. Where I added some which he had not included, I used his rules of transcription. Each letter written is pronounced.

That Petter was a native speaker of German may have been an advantage because the Tsistsistas sound system is much closer to German than to English; vowels have the same sound as those in German. Petter's tendency to capitalize some Tsistsistas nouns is perhaps due to his own language background. I found it useful to do the same in certain instances to emphasize the special quality of a specific term. Moore (1974: iv) observed in a tongue-in-cheek statement that if a non-Tsistsistas speaks Tsistsistas according to Petter's instructions he will have a slight German accent.

The following is a key to the Tsistsistas alphabet as written by Petter (1915: vi).

- a*, as in *papa*; *-â-* = *a* + *o*, pronounced like *ou* in *house*; *-ä-* = *a* + *e*, pronounced like *I*; *-ā-* is a long *a*; *-á-* (hiatus) is *a* followed by a short gasp; *-à-* is *a* spoken with expiring breath.
- b*, as in *babe*.
- c*, is used to express the combined sound of *c* and *h*, as in *church*, but softer.
- d*, as in *dad*.
- e*, as in *prey*; *-ē-* is long *e*, similar to *a* in *ate*; *-é-* is *e* followed by a short gasp (hiatus).
- g*, as in *go*.
- h*, as in *hate*, with strong aspirate sound.
- i*, as in *pit*.
- k*, as in *key*.
- m*, as in *moment*.
- n*, as in *none*.

- o*, as in *obey*; *-ô-* is long like *o* in *home*; *-ô-* = *o* + *e*, pronounced like *oy* in *decoy*; *-ô-* is *o* with hiatus; *-ò-* is *o* with expired breath.
- p*, as in *paper*.
- q*, similar to *coo* in *coop*, but expired.
- s*, as in *sense*; *-s'* like *ss* but separated by a hiatus; *-ŝ-* as *sh* in *she*.
- t*, as in *table*.
- v*, like *f* in *of*.
- x*, as *ch* in the German *ach*.
- y*, as in *year*.
- z*, as *ts* or German *z*.

THE WOLVES OF HEAVEN

I. Tsistsistas World Description and Shamanism¹

*Wolf I am.
In darkness
in light
wherever I search
wherever I run
wherever I stand
everything
will be good
because Maheo
protects us.
Ea ea ea ho.*

—SONG OF A TSISTSISTAS SCOUT
TRAVELING IN ENEMY TERRITORY.

A SEARCH leading to the Massaum must start with a recognition of Tsistsistas shamanism and the philosophical principles upon which it is based. The Massaum, initiated by a shaman, is irrevocably derived from the shamanistic world interpretation. The same is true for tribal ceremonies that came in later, such as the Maxhoetonstov (Ceremony of the Sacred Arrows) and the Oxheheom (New Life Lodge, "Sun Dance"). Unfortunately, ethnographers who have worked with the Tsistsistas have failed to produce a study of Tsistsistas shamanism and have generally ignored the phenomenon altogether.

¹A note of advice to the readers. This book has a story to tell, the story of the early Tsistsistas in the grasslands, where they came from, how they became Tsistsistas, and how their presence can be recognized in the archaeological record. Like a good play, it develops the story slowly from scene to scene to end. And, again, like a good play, it does not explain everything in the first scenes; rather, each chapter is a functional part of the whole. Although the preface sets the stage and shows the direction, and the table of contents the internal structure, some readers might be puzzled about some engrossing early matter-of-fact statements given without immediate verification. The

This chapter addresses itself to the issue and provides a description of the old—and in many ways continuing—Tsistsistas view of life and the universe that existed already during the initiation of the Massaum. It must be assumed that its roots were founded far back in the Proto-Tsistsistas past.

Tsistsistas World View as Shamanistic World Interpretation

Hestanov is the Tsistsistas term for the universe. Standing on the grass surface of the earth, a viewer is located in *votostoom*, the middle zone that bridges *heamahestanov*, the world above, and *atonoom*, the world below. *Votostoom* ends a few yards under the viewer's feet where the roots of trees and grasses end. Below lies *nsthoaman*, the deep earth, which provides the substance of physical life on earth.

To the realm of the deep earth belong the *makeonoxsz*, the sacred caves, where human seekers of knowledge may be received and instructed by the *maiyn*, powerful spirits. The *makeonoxsz* serve as models for the Tsistsistas institution of spirit lodges where shamans conduct seances. The ceremonial structures of the great Tsistsistas ceremonies—the wolf tipi of the Massaum, the world lodge of the Oxheheom, and Motseyoef's tipi of the Maxhoetonstov—are images of the *makeonoxsz* where the original granting of the ceremonies took place. The most prominent sacred cave of the Tsistsistas tradition is located inside Nowah'wus (The Sacred Mountain Where People Are Taught), Bear Butte, at the northeast edge of the Black Hills.

To the realm of the deep earth belong also the *heszevoxxsz*, the animal caverns, where the spirits, *hematasoomao* (or *matasoomao*), of animals of all species are gathered. From there they may be released to join physical form, that is, become available as animals once again, or they may be kept there, that is, refused rebirth. The present worldwide skinking of animal populations and the accelerating extinction of species in Tsistsistas interpretation represents a conscious withholding of animal *hematasoomao* by their *maiyn* protectors to exclude the original animals from the destruction of the earth waged by the industrial nations. After the self-destruction of the global

evidence is forthcoming, but, as in a good play, it appears at the proper place. Because of my singular rewriting of Tsistsistas world understanding and primary cultural features, any other approach would have rendered the book unreadable. It is possible to read it as though nothing had ever been published about the Tsistsistas before. In fact, even some professionals steeped in extant works on the Tsistsistas might not recognize the culture described but for some familiar terms.

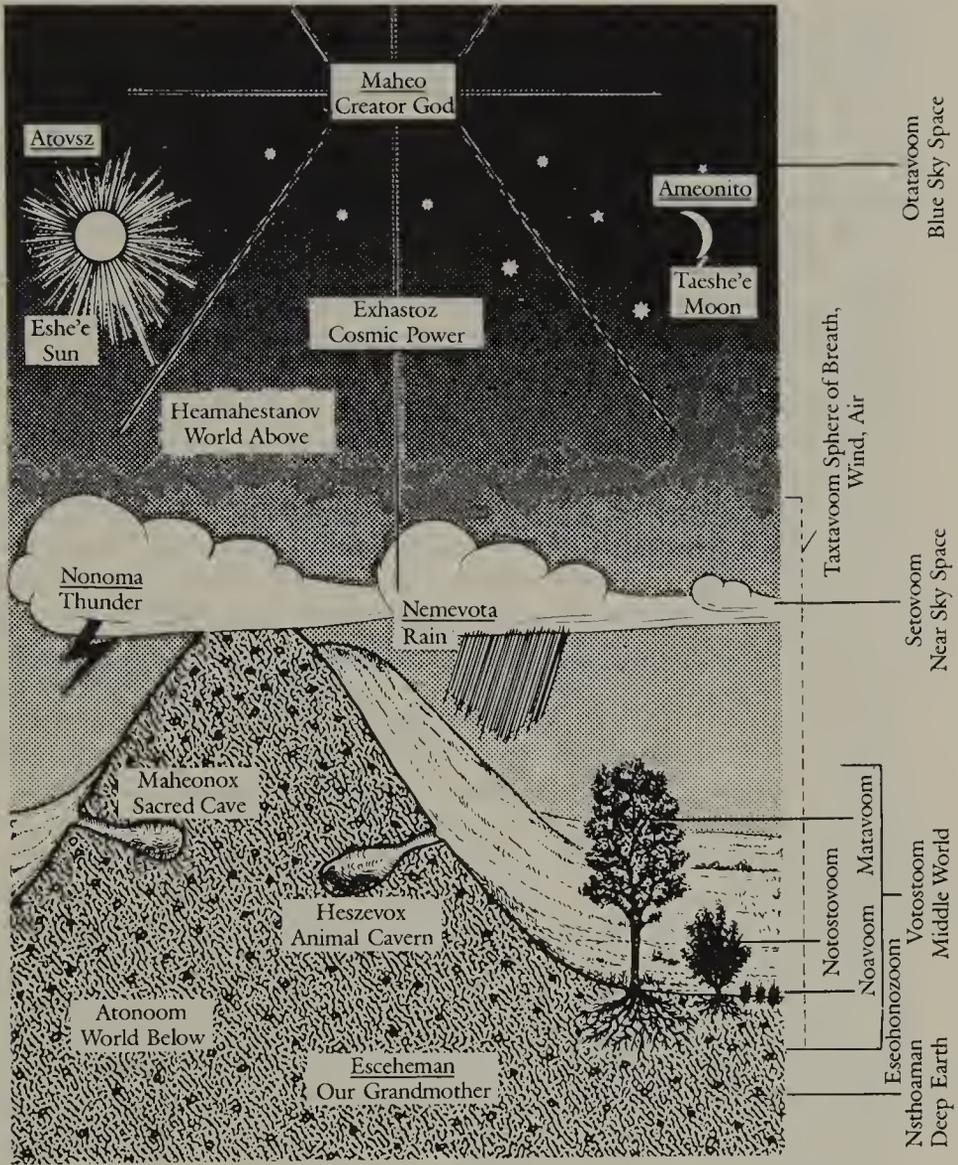


FIG. 1. The Tsistsistas universe, *hestanov*. *Hestanov*, the generally visible world includes *matasoomhestanov*, the generally invisible world of spirits. Underlined words denote the personal ceremonial names of spirits (*maiyun*) who represent powerful potencies in the world. *Nsthoaman*, the deep earth, begins below the region of roots but includes surface areas free of vegetation such as high mountains. Mountain peaks are especially sacred places because there the deep earth and the near sky space come into direct contact.

mass of human population, the *maiyun* are to rehabilitate physical conditions on earth and reopen the *heszevoxsz*.

During Tsistsistas ceremonies, when sod is excavated to provide sacred space to enact ritual, performers operate directly on the deep earth. Thus they are in contact with the powerful substance of *nsthoaman* and in the proximity of the *maheonoxsz* and *heszevoxsz*. The painted buffalo skull imbedded in excavated ground in the Massaum and Oxheheom ceremonies represents the *maiyun* of the deep earth, who, resting on *nsthoaman*, participates in the sacred drama. Trees are powerful beings because their roots penetrate into *nsthoaman*. The deep earth is directly accessible where it is not blanketed with vegetation, for example, in pebbles and rocks, mountain peaks, sandbars, desert stretches, the interior of caves, and so forth. These are considered powerful manifestations.

The region where the roots of trees and grasses end marks both the surface of *atonom*, the world below, and the lowest part of *votostoom*, the transition zone of *heamahestanov*, the world above. The lowest region of *votostoom* is *eseohonozoom*, the region of roots, where badgers and rodents have their homes, where bears often hibernate and wolves and coyotes den. Above the surface of the ground, *votostoom* includes three more regions: *noavoom*, the region of short grasses, sedges, low-growing plants and small animals; *notostovoom*, the region of tall grasses, bushes, humans, and large animals; and *mata-voom*, the region of trees and forests. In the Massaum the sacred food prepared by the Hohnuhka Society to feed the *maiyun* included three plants that represented the lower three of the four growth regions of *votostoom*. These stood symbolically for all edible wild fruits and for all of plant life in general.

The four regions of *votostoom* are connected with the next region of the world above, *setovoom*, the near sky space, through *taxtavoom*, the sphere of breath, wind, and air. It is *taxtavoom* that makes physical life possible through its power of *omotomhestoz*, the gift or quality of breath. *Taxtavoom* ends above the clouds and the peaks of high mountains.

Setovoom, the near sky space, is the region of mountains and clouds and bends upward into *otatavoom*, the blue sky. Mountains are sacred places because their bare peaks, parts of the deep earth, reach directly into the sky space. Thunderstorms, tornadoes, and the high-flying formations of migratory birds in spring and fall, all move in the region of *setovoom*.

The most sacred region of the Tsistsistas universe is *otatavoom*, (literally “blue sky lodge,” from *otatav*, “blue sky,” and *om*, “lodge”), the blue sky space. Its color blue visually represents Maheo, the Supreme Being. He created *emämanstoon*, “all the world,” and gave it the order, *vonoom*, to which the Tsistsistas world description is adapted. From him emanates the cosmic power, *exhastoz*, that permeates and maintains the world. The world descriptions of other small ethnic societies are seen by the Tsistsistas as meaningful variations of their own world experience. The annual Tsistsistas tribal ceremonies, held in the presence of Maheo and the spiritual powers of the universe, depict the ancient order, *vonoom*, of the creation and serve its preservation. Today the Tsistsistas, forced to live in an environment destroyed by others, view the physical destruction of the world as an episode nearing its frightful end.

In the Massaum ceremony the creation of the world and its order was ritually reenacted. The ceremony began with nonexistence before existence, the time before all time. On the second day of the secret part of the ceremony, in the seclusion of the wolf tipi, the priest knelt on the ground west of the center pole. Because the center of the tipi had been cleared from sod, he knelt on the deep earth. He gently pressed the thumb of his right hand into the smooth earth. He marked four more spots about five inches from the central one, on the northeast, southeast, southwest, and northwest.

The universe was created from the center. The priest who represented Maheo in this action, opened the ground with a digging stick at the location of his first thumbprint (the cosmological singularity). He broke earth from the opening four times and placed it on the markers of the four ceremonial directions. The round opening, now about three inches wide and deep, was in the center of four small mounds. Between these, extending from the opening, he painted on the ground a white cross whose arms extended in the cardinal directions. The cross and the four mounds of the corners delineated *hestanov*, the universe. He covered the southeastern and southwestern mounds with red powder and the other two with black. These represented the mountains of the *maheyuno*, the four sacred guardians at the corners of the universe.

Then the priest made the *maiyun* (the spirits who work in the seven regions of the universe) and the *hematasoomao*, the immortal spiritual forms of plants, animals, and human beings.

Stars, *hotoxceo*, belong to *otatavoom*, the blue sky. Like all other

manifestations in the Tsistsistas universe, they possess spiritual and physical forms. Tsistsistas language differentiates the two, using separate words in referring to one category or the other. The sun as daylight, for instance, is called *eshe'e*; his name as a *maiyun* (perceived in Tsistsistas as male) is Atovsz. The moon as a body of light is called *taeshe'e* (night sun); as a *maiyun* (also perceived as male) his name is Ameonito.

Physical and spiritual life in the universe comes from Maheo; the *maiyun* work according to his plan. Physical forms of plants, animals, and human beings are made possible through the potencies of the *maiyun* Atovsz (Sun), Nonoma (Thunder, who directs the clouds), Nemevota (Rain, assisting Thunder) and Eschewan (Our Grandmother), the female spirit of the deep earth. In Tsistsistas ceremonies or prayers, the *maiyun* are addressed only by their personal spirit names.

Because of their sacredness the *maheyuno* have personal spirit names only. The keeper of the southeast is Hesenota; he of the Southwest is Sovota; Onxsovota guards the northwest, and Notamota the northeast. *Maheyuno* and *maiyun*, for special reasons, may reveal themselves to a Tsistsistas in physical form. The appearance they select for this purpose uses a symbolism with which Tsistsistas are familiar.

The *maiyun* most responsible for physical life on earth belong either to the deep earth or to the sky spaces. In Tsistsistas ceremonies they are celebrated especially and represented through plant and animal forms. Animals close to Eschewan, the *maiyun* of the deep earth, are the badger, buffalo, bear, and wolf. Animals close to the *maiyun* of the near sky space are the wolf, raven, red-headed woodpecker, dragonfly, whooping crane, and so forth. The golden eagle, the gyrfalcon ("white eagle"), and magpie belong to the blue sky and Maheo. In Tsistsistas ceremonies plant and animal forms signifying the *maiyun* or aspects of the *maiyun* are entwined with plant and animal forms that represent the seven levels of the Tsistsistas universe.

In accordance with the long Tsistsistas hunting tradition the ceremonies generally feature predatory animals over game animals. Among the exceptions is the buffalo, which is regarded both as a game animal and as a powerful spiritual being.

Each animal species has its species-specific protector (*Artgeist*) who is also a *maiyun* but serves under the *maiyun* of the deep earth and the sky spaces. He is considered male and may make himself

visible on important occasions as an animal of great size. He is erroneously sometimes called “father” of a species. He punishes hunters for abuse of animals under his protection by withholding game or by inflicting injury on the offender(s). Conversely, he may grant special privileges.

The bear *maiyun*, Voxpenako, for example, appears as an enormous white bear in Tsistsistas seances and visionary experiences. It is interesting that he exhibits the physical characteristics not of the modern North American bears but of the North Asian brown bear (*Ursus arctos*). The wolf *maiyun*, Maheone’honehe, is a very large red wolf; Moore (1974 : 176, 239) reports that the rare solitary red wolf of the Plains, Xaenone, was considered to be one of his manifestations.

The dark side of existence is reflected through owls, who are considered *mista*, spooks, or close to *mista*. *Mista* have come into the world through the misuse of shamanistic power.

Plant, animal, and human physical forms originate from the reproduction process as given in each species. The initiation of new life, however, is not solely the result of the biological fusion of parental particles but requires, for procreation, the infusion of spiritual forms that remain with the organism until death.

The spiritual forms of every living being under the laws of Maheo’s order (*vonoom*) consist of *omotome*, the immortal gift of breath essentially derived from *exhastoz*, cosmic power, and the immortal *hematasooma* (see also Moore 1974 : 166; Straus 1976, 1978), the spiritual potential consisting of four separate forces. This concept is basic to an understanding of Tsistsistas religious as well as everyday life.

Upon physical death the *hematasooma* of a Tsistsistas becomes free; after killing an animal the hunter is obligated to free ceremonially its *hematasooma*. The *omotome* of both become localized in those body remains that resist decay longest (teeth, bones, claws, feathers, etc.) that they eventually depart to rejoin their *hematasoomao* to become spirit selves in the spirit world. The *hematasooma* of an animal returns to the *heszevoxsz* and the protection of the *maiyun* Eschewan (female spirit of the deep earth) and Nonoma (Thunder), the animal keepers. The *hematasoomao* of the Tsistsistas may travel through the sky spaces of the world above, may join once again a new *omotome* for reincarnation as a Tsistsistas in physical form, or may remain near Tsistsistas living in physical form and participate in the continuing expressions of Tsistsistas culture as guardians and helpers.

It appears that Proto-Tsistsistas and early Tsistsistas may have observed two phases of the freeing of the spirit from the body that would have been reflected in burial custom: a preliminary first burial to start the process of disengaging the *omotome* and a secondary burial to free the *omotome* for joining it with the *hematasooma* already free. The secondary burial would have concluded with the sending away of the spirit self or by its temporary formal retention in an object (“keeping the soul”) by a shaman. It seems that similar burial customs were practiced for animals also.

Parts of animals kept for ceremonial purposes (claws, teeth, bones, feathers, etc.) with permission of the animal spirits provided the human practitioner with a part of the *omotome* of a guardian animal into which its *hematasooma* could be called for action or assistance.

The *hematasooma* of an animal or the *hematasoomao* of animals of different species might choose to associate with the *hematasooma* of a human for the time of his physical existence and grant him spiritual influence on one or more species. A specially qualified person, a shaman, might project one or two parts of his or her *hematasooma* into game animals with the assistance of the *hematasoomao* of his or her guardian animals belonging to the species and call them near hunters or into prearranged structures, such as pounds. Every human distinguished by tutelary animals accepted personal responsibilities in regard to the species involved which had been defined by the animals.

In the past the temporary, conscious detachment of parts of one’s *hematasooma* could be achieved by nearly all Tsistsistas. This allowed for phenomena interpreted as paranormal in the European literature; their culmination was reached in Tsistsistas shamanism. The unconscious separation of three of the four parts of one’s *hematasooma* led to sickness and eventually to physical death.

The original order of the universe as created by Maheo requires ethnic entities that occupy life zones—as animal species do—that they are charged to protect. This responsibility, for instance, is exemplified in Tsistsistas ceremonies that were originally taught by the *maiyun* and are held annually in their presence.

As each animal species, each ethnic entity was endowed by the creator with a limited number of *hematasoomao*; the total of all *hematasoomao* expresses the plan of life of the cosmos as instituted by Maheo. Plants and animals domesticated by humans remain outside the primal order and because they have no access to *hematasoomao* are only physical. They are nonexistent in terms of this order. The same applies to the great mass of global human population today. In Tsis-

tsistas thought, the self-domestication of ethnic groups to civilizations and to a condition of exploiting the world has led to a withdrawal of *hematasoomao*.

World Experience and Tsistsistas Shamanism

In Tsistsistas thought the differences between all forms of life as granted in the original order were minimal.

Plants, excluding the domesticated forms, have both a physical and a spiritual component. The only domesticated plant granted original status is corn, which entered the Tsistsistas realm late in history. The tradition describes the consecration of corn by the *maiyun* Escheleman, who gave the plant ceremoniously to the Tsistsistas for use. Edible plants were regarded as powerful beings because they allowed animal and human physical life. Without the use of plant physical forms in artifacts and a wide range of cultural activities, human life would not have been possible. Plants could not be abused, and plants physically killed had to be propitiated.

The ingestion of plant food made animals and humans part of the plant community. Plants sought by Tsistsistas shamans and herbalists could not be used without the consent of their *hematasoomao*. Often plants revealed themselves to a specific person and disclosed their healing properties. The Tsistsistas tradition retains examples where the *hematasoomao* of shamans identified with specific plant species. In their plant manifestations, some are celebrated in Tsistsistas ceremonies to the present.

Because of their solidarity with plants, Tsistsistas shamans used their spiritual power to heal plant diseases or to change weather conditions harmful to vegetation growth.

Because game animals sustain themselves with the original, powerful potency of plants, the Tsistsistas regard their flesh as sacred. The ingestion of animal flesh made the human a part of the animal community also. Because of the transience of physical form and the transmutability of *hematasoomao*, occasionally a Tsistsistas hunter might kill a buffalo into whom a Tsistsistas *hematasooma* had entered. Or, a hunter who had been joined by the *hematasooma* of a buffalo might kill a buffalo endowed with either a buffalo or a Tsistsistas spirit, or with both. What was slain, however, was physical form alone, not a *hematasooma*, either buffalo or Tsistsistas. The dark fear of the Iglulik shaman Aua—"We, hunting animals as we do, live by slaying other souls" (Halifax 1979, 164–65)—does not pertain to the Tsistsistas. The formal releasing of the *hematasooma* after taking an animal and

the respectful treatment of all physical parts including those that retained the *omotome* (especially, skulls) were founded in Tsistsistas hunting laws controlled by the *maiyn*.

In Tsistsistas thought, the human body, after the *hematasooma* had separated, first became animal food, of maggots, birds, coyotes, and so forth. After the *omotome* had departed, the body became plant food and so an inseparable participant in plant and animal existence according to the eternal cycle of transformation. This cycle meant that all participants in the exchange—plants, animals, and the human hunters—were parts of each other in a kinship as deep as the mystery of life.

It follows that Tsistsistas hunting was a sacred ritual ruled by the game, not by the hunter. Without their and their *maiyn* protectors' assent, animals could not be taken. Animals were celebrated as beautiful, mysterious, powerful, dangerous, and benevolent. In Tsistsistas memories, animals talked with humans, took pity on them, protected and taught them, gave to them special power and knowledge, healed them from wounds and sicknesses, kept them alive with self-sacrifice and, finally, became human themselves to help them in great need. This is the story of Ehyophstah, the yellow-haired buffalo maiden of the Massaum ceremony.

The early Tsistsistas material—and ceremonial—culture derived largely from the bodies and spirits of animals. The Tsistsistas dressed as animals because their clothing consisted of skins and furs. The Tsistsistas fashioned themselves after animals of their choosing, or rather, after animals that had chosen them. The person who was selected by wolves, for example, became a wolf without changing physical form, although some could do so according to Tsistsistas experiences. He or she certainly dreamed wolf dreams, possessed wolf skills and power, acted like a wolf, immersed himself or herself in wolf lore, talked with wolves, hunted with wolves, was taught by wolves, protected wolves, painted himself or herself as a wolf and wore wolf *omotome* on his or her body and in a bundle. Here the border between a human and a wolf had been cracked in the physical world. In *matasoomhestanov*, the world of spirits, human being and wolf had become the same.

Because of their solidarity with animals Tsistsistas shamans used their spiritual power to heal animals and animal diseases and to protect species against hunters of their own human community.

In Tsistsistas thought each Tsistsistas was also a powerful being, as were people in Tsistsistas-like original human communities. Each

Tsistsistas had had personal experiences that confirmed the reality of the Tsistsistas world understanding. The so-called vision quest, about which much has been written, was not really what the term indicates. It rather represented a formal submission by the individual to the spiritual powers of the universe, a readiness to accept the solidarity of life and the solidarity of physical death, an opening of the self to *exhastoz*, cosmic power, and to the entering of out-of-body spirit selves, *hematasoomao*. The latter act was considered a real event, not a vision. It also meant self-purification, not as suppression of the individual but as a freeing of the individual from materialistic and immature restraints initiating a sharing in the mysterious and beautiful physical and spiritual workings of the world.

Whenever the spirit selves of plants, animals, or Tsistsistas, or the *maiyun* associated themselves with a human, during a quest or at any other time, the selection was made by them; the human was "adopted." This organization of relationships was available to every Tsistsistas and determined the direction of his or her life.

This organic Tsistsistas world description, in which all parts of the universe were interrelated, saw life as wondrous. Physical form meant only a temporary constraint; spiritual form was immortal and free in space and time. This is perhaps the greatest achievement of shamanism since its development during, perhaps, the Middle Paleolithic: to interpret the world with all its manifestations as a place of miracles, transformations, and immortality where fear has no reason.

Some Tsistsistas, because of unusual sensitivity, great creative talent, and propensity for physical ordeal were distinguished by *hematasoomao* and the *maiyun* more highly, or more severely, than others. These were the intellectual leaders of Tsistsistas culture who introduced new institutions when it was necessary. Generally, they were called by the *maheyuno* and *maiyun* and were instructed in the *maheonoxsz*, the sacred caves, or from the *heszevoxsz*, the animal caverns. Because of these relationships and because of obedience to their strenuous vocation, they were sometimes considered to be of the *maiyun* world when still in physical form. In Tsistsistas memories, these persons had power over physical form and physical death, including their own.

This is mentioned in the Motseyoef stories (Curtis 1930: 117; Grinnell 1908: 271–72, 282–83; 1923, 2: 345–47) where the prophet, as a boy, kills himself during a shamans' meeting and brings himself back to life. It is the feat of the androgyne shaman (for a discussion of this phenomenon, see Eliade 1965: 78–124).

Zemaheonevsz (“the mysterious one,” plural, *zemaheonevesso*) and *maheonhetan* (someone who serves the sacred, plural *maheonhetaneo*) are the Tsistsistas terms for shaman; the latter term refers to one who has also served as priest in one of the great ceremonies. The term for shamanism is *ehōneheonevestoz*. Physicians and healers, *náetan* or *náe* (plural *náo*), who often work without the assistance of a helping spirit or a *maiyun*, are not considered shamans. A personal spirit helper, or guardian spirit (sometimes called “familiar” in the literature), who represents the *hematasooma* of a human or an animal, is called *nisimōn*. *Maiyun-ef* is the term for someone who was granted spiritual power by the *maiyun*; the suffix *ef* (*iv*) attached to a person’s name denotes the same condition.

Originally shamans formed an esoteric, closed group, *ononeovātaneo*, which used language hidden to outsiders. In a much-reduced form, the *ononeovātaneo* and its special language persist to the present; the terms here used belong to it.

To resist the call of the *maiyun* was not possible for shamans. For the interpretation of details of the vocation the neonate might turn to an experienced shaman. The *ononeovātaneo* was composed of men and women. Because shamanistic power was granted by the *maheyuno*, *maiyun*, and *hematasoomao* alone, no one could purchase or obtain shamanistic knowledge from other shamans. After the *maiyun* introduced, through shamans, tribal ceremonies such as the Massaum, Maxhoetonstov, and Oxheheom, a group of priests developed, *zevonhävesso* (*vonhātaneo*, male priests; *vonhäv*, priestesses), who remained responsible for their maintenance. All of these, well into the reservation period, were shamans also. Up to the present, priests and priestesses need *maiyun* permission and support for their service; that is, they submit to the old shamanistic rules.

As a group, Tsistsistas shamans represented the spiritual powers of the seven regions of the universe. Within the *ononeovātaneo*, shamans associated with the sky spaces were separate. They were androgyne shamans, that is, concerned with primordial time and the creation of the universe—the dissolution of opposites. They represented, some of them within themselves, the *coincidentia oppositorum*, the mystery of totality (Schlesier 1982). Their separateness, their quest for the reconciliation of contraries, was expressed in appearance and behavior.

The *hemaneh* (“half-man, half-woman”) were transvestite shamans associated with the blue sky space. Because of their ritual bisexuality, they were barred from sexual acts. They symbolically represented

the union of the blue sky with the deep earth; they were famous physicians.

Tsistsistas memory dimly retains knowledge of another group of shamans also associated with the blue sky space. These appear to have represented cosmic fire including, perhaps, the *maiyun* of the sun, Atovsz. During special performances, they ate burning coals, drank boiling soup, and walked through fires with naked feet. It seems that these shamans joined in the Hohnuhka contrary society with the introduction of the Massaum. This ritual secret society performed during the Massaum as the spiritual assistants of the *maiyun*. At these occasions, they acted through their contrary behavior as sacred clowns. They healed sicknesses or wounds with contrary techniques, for example, with fire or throwing patients high into the air or jumping over people. During these demonstrations, they were capable of extraordinary physical and mental feats.

A third group of persons associated with the blue sky space was mentioned by Petter (1915 : 1009) in 1914. He wrote that “an old informant said that the Cheyenne used to have experts who knew the stars and the names of all their different groups, but this knowledge had been gradually neglected and forgotten.” For the correct performance of the Massaum, as will be seen in chapter 5, the knowledge of these specialists of celestial forms was essential. Their passing contributed to the demise of the ceremony. No one today knows if these were shamans. Because star constellations provided signals at certain times for Tsistsistas actions on earth and because some star clusters are considered Tsistsistas spirits, relatives in the sky, it would be surprising if they had not been shamans.

Associated with the near sky space were shamans who were also called Hohnuhka because of their contrary behavior; they used inverted speech. They never joined the Hohnuhka secret society, however. Members of this group had received their vocation from Nonoma, the *maiyun* of Thunder, and served as keepers of a *Hohnuhkawo*, a spirit lance in contrary form (“bow lance”). These shamans were capable of calling *nonoma hemahé*, Nonoma’s arrow, lightning, into the spirit lance and of unleashing its striking power over distance. Because of this great power, they were isolated from other Tsistsistas and committed to a life of privation and meditation; it was required that they remain celibate. Shamans representing *votostoom*, the middle or transition zone, and the deep earth were called by the *maiyun* Esceheman, by the species-specific protector *maiyun*, or by the *hemata-soomao* of animals and Tsistsistas.

Shamans who were associated with Eschewan possessed influence over game species, held ceremonies concerning the protection of animals and the propitiation of animal spirits, and directed medicine hunts in which they led animals into Tsistsistas camps or into prepared structures, such as pounds. Medicine hunts (see chapter 4) were preceded by spirit lodge (*nisimàtozom*) or sweat lodge (*vonhääom*) ceremonies in which shamans of this group called on the *hematasoomao* of their spirit allies to bring the animals in. Following medicine hunts, a second ceremony was held in which the *hematasoomao* of the slain animals were ritually freed, propitiated, and released to the *heszevoxsz*. Another ceremony, also held in a sweat lodge, dealt with healing sick and disabled persons, or revived a person already physically dead; the power of Eschewan and the shaman's spirit helpers assisted him or her.

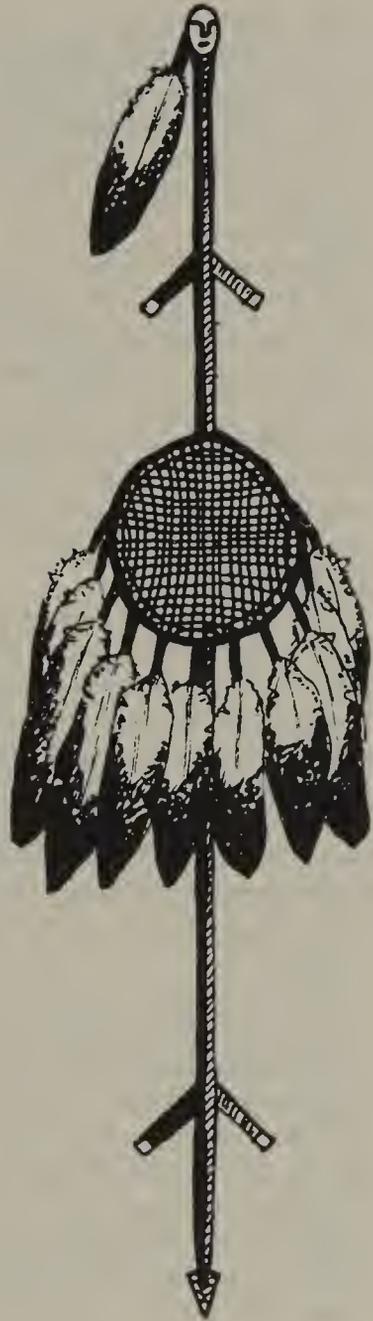
Shamans associated with *votostoom* were distinguished by plant, animal, and Tsistsistas spirit helpers. They also conducted spirit lodge seances (Schlesier 1983; see also chapter 4) in which the *hematasoomao* of the Tsistsistas, or even the *maiyun*, were called to provide advice and information concerning questions of the past, present, and future. Phenomena defined by modern parapsychology as out-of-body experiences and psychokinesis were integral parts of these seances.

E'ehyo'm is the Tsistsistas term for shamans who were able to do harm over long distances. This group included the Hohnuhka keepers of a *hohnuhkawo'* and other shamans who had control over an *oxzem*, a spirit lance (see fig. 2). Attached to its shaft near the point was a small braided wheel into which a specific spirit could be called who moved the *oxzem* physically. To this category of shamans, up to the present time, belongs the keeper of *nimāhenan*, the sacred arrows.

After the arrival of *nimāhenan*, the male keeper assumed the highest position among the *makeonhetaneo* (persons serving the sacred). Through *nimāhenan*, he belongs most intimately to the blue sky space; he nevertheless represents all seven levels of the Tsistsistas universe. He serves under the mandate of Motseyoef and in his succession. Because of this, he is qualified to make the Tsistsistas earth drawing that was originally granted to Motseyoef in the presence of Maheo, the *makeyuno*, and the *maiyun* to mark the earth region given to his people (see chapter 5). Therefore, this earth drawing is acknowledged by all spiritual powers of the universe. The keeper of *nimāhenan* bears great responsibility concerning the internal unity of the Tsistsistas world and its boundary delineation to the outside.

FIG. 2. *Oxzem*, spirit lance, also called wheel lance. Its length is about five feet. The shaft of this particular weapon is carved and arranged to present symbolically a humanlike physical image that either housed a shaman's spirit helper permanently or on special occasions. The right side of its body is painted black, the left side red. A single eagle feather is attached to the head. The braided spirit wheel features a black hoop on the outside, a red hoop on the inside; eleven eagle feathers are attached. The stone lance point is painted blue.

During the time in Tsistsistas history when spirit lances were prominent, no *oxzem* was like any other in detail because each exemplified secret knowledge and power and was made according to the instructions of the spirits. Each represented a dangerous gift from the spirit world to its shaman keeper who alone mastered the required ritual and care. As with the *hohmuhkawo'*, negligence or disobedience to the rules imposed by the spirits turned the *oxzem* against its keeper. Upon his death, the weapon was either buried with him or deposited at a hidden place, that is, returned to the spirit world.



Earth drawings left open, that is, not ritually erased at the conclusion of ceremonies, hold forever the attention and protection of cosmic powers for Tsistsistas lands.

When the Evenks of Siberia described, to Anisimov (1963a: 106–11), “mythical fences,” *marylya*, consisting of spirit helpers called up by shamans to protect “clan” territories, they expressed very similar thoughts.

The power of Tsistsistas shamans was inescapably linked to the obligation demanded by *maheyuno* and *maiyun* that it be used within the order of Maheo’s design. Witchcraft, *ehonestoz*, was possible, especially through *ovahoamazistoz*, magical shooting, because the power necessary for its execution was available. Tsistsistas ethics, however, demanded that any unjust harm caused innocents struck back at the person who had abused power and punished members of his or her own family. This law is understood to prevail to the present and is known to every Tsistsistas. It has certainly not prevented witchcraft but has curbed it.

Tsistsistas shamans acted on the highest level of achievement possible to humans in the frame of a world description that they originally formulated a very long time ago. Each shaman used complex “techniques” through which, for example, during seances he or she made spiritual potencies available in invisible or physically recognizable form. He or she assessed the primary source of power (“energy”), *exhastoz* (see chapter 9), which produced his or her verified feats, as located essentially outside of himself or herself, that is, granted through the intrusion of spirits who responded to his or her call. Calling techniques had been taught by those who let themselves be called.

“Possession phenomena,” so called by Western authors, generally associated with shamanistic performances, did not exist in Tsistsistas shamanism. To each Tsistsistas, the *Viereinigkeit* (unity of four fissionable parts) of his or her *hematasooma* was an empirical certainty that allowed for a wide range of interesting possibilities. The entering of a free *hematasooma* or the appearance of a *maiyun* in the mental process of a person was understood as a distinction (Schlesier 1981). When a *maiyun* spoke directly through the mind and the vocal cords of a person, it resulted, as I have observed, neither in ventriloquism nor in ecstatic stammering but in intelligent speech.

2. Northern Siberian World Description and Shamanism

*This ceremony for successful hunting—
Mother of Animals
in olden times
you have made it so.
You must predict the catch.
Show me the game
that you will give to us.
In early times
it was so decided
when everything was given life.
After the earth was made
it was always this way.
For shingken, your woolen threads,
your animal spirits,
I am asking you.
Speak to me!
At the campfire I will call you.
To the center of the earth
I will follow you,
Mother of Morning,
on this search for your animals.
Show yourself to me!
Show me the place
which I should reach.
Ancestors, you who are circling around me,
do also speak to me!
Come quietly
hargi spirits
mälkän spirits
fly before me.
Whatever you say
all around
all around.*

—EVENK SHAMAN'S SONG, SHINGKELEVUN CEREMONY, SYM RIVER,
RECORDED BY N.P. NIKULSHIN

I HAVE SUGGESTED that the Tsistsistas world description and institutions as outlined in chapter 1 were essentially in existence during the time of the Proto-Tsistsistas' arrival in the northeastern Plains and that their roots reached back far beyond. The evidence for this assessment derives from a close look at cultures in northern Siberia. A comparison of the principles and cultural features of their world understanding with those of the Tsistsistas shows, beside interesting differences, significant similarities. Both sets of phenomena must be taken into account.

It is concluded here that groups ancestral to northern Siberian cultures once shared a common heritage with groups ancestral to the North American Algonquian language family, including Tsistsistas. Because they were physically separated from each other for an unknown number of millennia and because no linguistic relationships remained, the time of the development of their common heritage must significantly precede their separation.

Northern Siberian World View as Shamanistic World Interpretation

The universe of northern Siberian tribes consists of three layers: the world above, the middle world, and the world below. Some groups separate the sky space into three, seven, or nine regions and view the world below as having an equal number. Perhaps observation of the seeming annual circular movement of the sky led to the concept, nearly universal in northern Siberia, that the universe turns around a world axis, a cosmic pole or tree that connects the three major parts. In northern Siberia special poles set outside structures or in a central position within structures, including tents, represent the cosmic tree. These poles are usually carved with seven indentations that symbolize the seven layers of the world above through which a shaman's spirit potential may travel. A young tree, birch or larch, with seven branches left at the top, jutting from the smoke hole of a circular lodge, the trunk wedged firmly in the center of the ground, is called the "shaman's tree." It represents the world tree and serves as a ladder for the shaman's ascent during seances.

The Kets of the Yenisey River view the world below as an immense cavern with seven successive layers sealed by the ceiling of the middle world. A Khané shaman, when visiting the Earth Mother, traveled along the seven underground marks of the cosmic tree (Paulson 1962: 31). The Nanays of the Lower Amur perceive of three world trees, one for every region of the universe, and of a cosmic mountain that arises from an earth navel located in the center of the deep earth.

In northern Siberia the vault of heaven is often interpreted as an immense tent roof with the North Star as sky navel. In Dolgan, Nanay, and Evenk thought, the Supreme Being rests at the apex of the cosmic tree, in the uppermost sky region. There shamans take the spirit selves of deceased humans to reside as little birds in high branches near the Supreme Being. And from there they are brought back by shamans for reincarnation in their original human community.

The Evenks, in all dialects, call the three-layered universe *buga* or *dunne* (Vasilevich 1963a:48–83). Both terms refer also to all the world outside the *chum*, the circular living tent, or to “locality,” “original land,” “place of birth,” or “grave” because ancestral graves marked ethnic territorial boundaries. Evenks of the Podkamenaya Tunguska sometimes called the vault in heaven *kalan* (kettle), expressing the poetic idea that the sky is a kettle turned upside down. It is interesting that a kettle tied to the sacred arrows’ pole during one part of the Tsistsistas Maxhoctonstov ceremony is based on identical thought. Vasilevich states, however, that the oldest Evenk idea of the heavens is that of a skin thrown over the earth, with the North Star as an opening, a passage to the world above.

Anisimov (1963a:108) gives the term *ugu dunne* for the world above, which the Evenks believed to consist of several heavens. The uppermost is the region of Amaka Sheveki, the Supreme Being; the second is the region of Eksheri Sheveki, protector of birds, animals, fishes, and plants. In the rest of the heavens are the other spiritual beings of the upper world: Delyacha, Sun; Bega, Moon; Agdy, Thunder; *asiktal*, stars; *tukse*, clouds, and so on. “The light-blue canopy of heaven is the taiga of the upper world, the Milky Way the tracks of the heavenly people’s skis, the constellation Ursa Major is the scene of the heavenly people’s collective hunt” (Anisimov 1963a:108).

Among Evenks of the Yenisey Basin existed a shamanistic concept of three worlds located outside the original three (Vasilevich 1963a:56–57). According to this cosmogony, the principal river of shamans, *engdekit* (literally “place of prohibition”), connects the three levels, flowing from the upper world, *tymanitki*, toward the east, eventually falling into *bukit*, the world below. *Tymanitki* lies to the east, where the sun rises, above the sources of *engdekit*. Some shamans could travel along *engdekit* into the world above after passing through seven layers, or clouds. The world below could only be entered by a specific category of shamans (Vasilevich 1963a:57). During the Evenk Earth Renewal Ceremony, Ikenipke, the sky shaman, assisted by his spirit helpers, penetrated the highest level of the world above. Beings living

in the middle world were invisible to beings of the other two worlds, and vice versa, a condition that was important, for example, in Evenk spirit lodge ceremonies.

Evenks of the Podkamenaya Tunguska place animal spirits free of physical form in the deep earth under the protection of Bugady Mushun, or Dunne Enin, the Earth Mother, also called Eneke, Grandmother, spirit of the earth and keeper of animals. She resides in the deep earth with her husband but can be reached by shamans who undertake the arduous journey.

In the annual ceremony called Shingkelevun (Anisimov 1963b: 175–78; Rudy 1963: 67–75), an Evenk ethnic entity (perhaps erroneously called a “clan” by Soviet scholars) camped in the fall, before the hunting season, at a *bugady*, a sacred place, in this instance a sacred mountain, that served as entrance to the realm of Dunne Enin.

During the first part of the complex Shingkelevun, the earth shaman, assisted by his or her spirit helpers, sent parts of his or her spiritual potential through the *bugady* to Dunne Enin to request from her the number of game animals needed for the survival of his or her people. After the earth spirit granted a specific number of *shingken*, animal spirits contained in woolen threads, he or she was permitted a spirit hunt among Dunne Enin’s spirit herds, catching the precise number of animals allowed. Upon return to the middle world, *dulugu buga*, he or she distributed the *shingken* in the taiga where they turned into live animals.

The following parts of the ceremony featured (1) dances in which the animals were invited to join—which they did, represented by human participants dressed lavishly in animal costumes; (2) the construction of an artificial taiga made from young trees into which the game was called; (3) a ritual hunt concluded with the propitiation of the slain animals; and (4) purification of the hunters.

Another Evenk ceremony, Girkumki, also featured an elaborate pantomime of drawing game released by the Earth Mother into the hunters’ range.

The Kets say that Tomam, mother of animals, “whose eyes are like the sky and whose cheeks resemble dawn,” comes to the middle world in spring. Standing on a high cliff above the Yenisey, she shakes her sleeves over the river. The falling-down feathers transform into ducks, geese, swans, and other migratory birds that are thus once more released for their journey north (Anisimov 1963b: 188).

Ceremonies similar to the Shingkelevun, Girkumki, and Kamlanye (see following text) were practiced in northern Siberia as far east as

among the Itelmens on Kamchatka (Rudy 1962:73) and among the Koryaks of the Kolyma Range (Rudy 1962:78). Soviet scholars, following Okladnikov (1964:54–57), generally identify Neolithic populations of the Upper Amur and Upper and Middle Lena rivers, and of the Lake Baikal region, as ancestral to Evenk and Yukagir. These are considered to be Paleo-Siberian, suggesting an even earlier presence. Early Neolithic rock engravings on the Upper (e.g., Shishkino) and Middle Lena are viewed as representing powerful shamanistic animal spirit helpers in the tradition of the Evenk ceremonies mentioned (Rudy 1963:73–78). Okladnikov (1970:92–100) has interpreted drawings on the cliff of Suruk-taakh-kaya, on the Markha River near the Middle Lena, in terms of the Shingkelevun ceremony, and has found, through the artifacts recovered that were deposited there as offerings, that the site was used continuously from the Late Neolithic to the nineteenth century.

The Evenk spirit lodge ceremony, Kamlanye (Anisimov 1963a), was interpreted as originating from instruction by spirits of the world below. The structure of the circular conical *shevenchedek*, the shaman's lodge raised for this occasion, was an enlarged *chum* to accommodate many observers. The entrance was to the east. Prior to the ceremony, the shaman fasted for an extended period of time, during which he sent his *khargi*, one of his spiritual forms transformed into an animal, to the world below. The *khargi* sought instruction relative to the precise organization and emphasis of the Kamlanye.

The large lodge symbolized a *bugady*, a sacred mountain, as well as all of the middle world. The shamanistic cosmic tree, *turu*, was drawn through the smoke hole; the butt was dug into the center of the lodge next to the fire. The shaman sat on a small platform on the west side. Two galleries were raised outside. One, the *darpe*, was placed east of the lodge, consisting of a long row of young trees. Wooden carvings representing spirits in human and animal physical forms were put between the tree trunks. The *darpe* represented the world above, place of origin of the river *engdekit* with which the spirits were associated. Behind the lodge (the middle world), the second gallery, *onang*, was sent up on the western side. Because it represented the world below, the region where the *engdekit* ends, it was built from wind-fallen, dead trees. Here also stood numerous images in anthropomorphic and animal form, spirits of the lower world.

A *turu* pole was raised southeast of the *darpe* and covered with gifts for the most sacred spirits of the universe: red or white cloth for the Supreme Being, black cloth for the earth spirit, and additional cloth

for others. A sacrificial animal hide hung from a crosspiece fastened to the top of the pole. Sun circle and moon sickle were carved on wood and suspended, along with other images called *khomokor* (cf. *khomoty*, “bear”). All around the lodge, the galleries, and the *туру* pole was placed a circle of young larches to form an unbroken wall.

Within it the whole universe and all its spiritual powers were represented. Before the ceremony of calling the spirits began, *darpe* (the world above), and *onang* (the world below) were ritually closed, and the observers of Kamlanye were locked with the shaman in the middle world of the *shevenchedek* and the enfolding drama of the struggle of spirits.

The Evenk term *nimngakavun* (Vasilevich 1963a:46) refers to the beginning of the universe, when everything was formed. Perhaps it is the equivalent of Tsistsistas *vonoom*, the original order given by the Supreme Being. *Nimngakavun* also means “legend, origin story”: *nimngakan*, “to put on a shamanistic performance”; *nimngamat*, “to induce spirit helpers to enter one’s body”; and *nimngangki*, “shaman’s drum.” The creation of the universe is interpreted as a shamanistic performance, the first one, by the Supreme Being when spirits were called—brought into the world.

That the northern Siberian middle world sank beneath waters and was rescued by bird helpers of the Supreme Being represents a secondary event. Among Evenks, Nenets, Yuraks, and Mansis, the bird that dives below and brings the earth back to the surface is the loon or the goldeneye; among the Ilimpeya Evenks, the helper is a crow (Vasilevich 1963a:74). Once the earth had partly risen above the waters the mammoth, *sheli*, decided to help humans. He put his tusks under the water and drew out so much *nyangnya* (“dirt”, “mud”) (Anisimov 1963b:166) that the earth became complete again. The giant serpent, *dyabdar*, helped the mammoth to smooth the clods pulled up. Both recreated the earth’s surface. When this work was done, the mammoth returned to the world below with all his offspring. Regarding this great service in Yenisey Evenk art, the mythical mammoth helper is crowned with moose antlers, whereas the tail of a fish is attached to his body.

According to Vasilevich (1963a:73), the stories of the rescue of the earth from a watery waste originated at the end of the last glaciation when vast areas of northern Siberia were covered with glacial lakes and melt waters of retreating ice masses: “The fact that analogous concepts are present among certain North American Indian tribes

further suggests that they arose before various groups had ceased moving from Asia to America.”

Generally, the Supreme Being of northern Siberian tribes is a distant creator of the universe (*deus otiosus*) who is not represented in art and rarely addressed directly in ceremonies. Although He provided the spiritual and physical forms of life in the universe, He rarely interferes in his creation. The existence of the three worlds of the universe is guarded and controlled by powerful mediator spirits who act according to the given cosmic order. Evenks and Koryaks sacrificed white (albino) reindeer to the Supreme Being—those present faced east during the ritual (Paulson 1962: 41, 51). Shirokogoroff (Paulson 1962: 40), however, insisted that no attempt was made to influence the Supreme Being; apparently, as among Plains Indians generally, an albino, because of its color, was considered a rare visitor not to be used by humans as common game (see chapter 4).

The Ket term for the Supreme Being is *Es*, Yukagir *Pon*, Itelmen *Kutkhu*, Koryak *Naininen*, Samoyed *Num*, Khant *Num-turam*, Mansi *Numi-taram* (Paulson 1962: 41–61), and Nivkhi (Gilyak) *Kurn* (Sternberg 1905: 244).

For some northern Siberian groups, the stars represented openings to the higher levels of the world above. In one story a woman, after arriving in the upper world, looks down through a hole. Out of longing for her native land she weeps tears, and the people on earth think that it is rain (Anisimov 1963b: 217).

For others, the constellations of the night sky provided signals for events on earth. Sternberg (1905) observed the Nivkhis followed “heavenly bodies during certain periods of the year because the migratory fish come with astronomic precision in specific months, on a specific day.”

Generally the universe was conceived of as a living being and was often identified with images of animals. Most of the Evenk tribes called the constellation Ursa Major *kheglun*, moose. The cosmic bear, *mangi*, was viewed as the constellations Boötes and Arcturus hunting *kheglun* across the skies and killing him. *Mangi* is half-animal, half-human: He is a bear but pursues the great moose on skis. In Evenk shamanism, *mangi* represents the mythical first ancestor, closely linked to the shaman’s vocation and to the transformations of the shaman’s spiritual powers (Anisimov 1963b: 164).

On shamans’ drums of northern Siberia, beside the sun and moon, Venus and the Pleiades are often depicted, suggesting special atten-

tion by shamans. Unfortunately, ethnographers have failed to establish their meaning (see Mandoki 1963, for critique). Evenks called Venus rising in the morning *tymani typhenin* (literally “wedge of morning”).

In Evenk thought, two spirits of the world above played an important role in the annual cycle, both benevolently. Dylacha, Sun, the spirit of heat and light, stored the heat in the fall and released it again with full power in spring. Upon the first signs of warmth returning to the middle world, Agdy, Thunder, the old man of the heavens, struck his flint causing rumbling, the sparks turning into lightning that destroyed evil forces (Anisimov 1963b:161). It was at that time that Evenks held the *ikenipke* (literally “revivals”) earth renewal ceremony that featured a cosmic hunt in pantomime during which the sacred heavenly animal was slain, came to life again, and with it all of nature: The river ice broke up, the snows melted, fresh green covered the earth, and young animals were born (Anisimov 1963b:163).

Some animals were associated in northern Siberia with specifically sacred regions of the universe and treated with awe. Holmberg (1922: 28) reported that among Yakuts, Dolgans, and Evenks birds such as the “diver, the goose, the swan, the eagle enjoyed so great a respect that even their names are never mentioned and it is regarded as wrong to point at them with the finger.” When a hunter found one of these birds dead, he placed the body with ceremony on a burial platform. They were never hunted. A Buryat shaman’s song also mentions animals as important to regions: “The grey hare is our runner, the grey wolf our messenger, the bird *Khon* our *khubilgan*, the eagle *Khoto* our emissary” (Holmberg 1922: 29).

The concept that powerful spirits protected all animals was universal in northern Siberia. They held the threads of animal physical life and were keepers of the immortal animal spiritual forms. These protector spirits were grouped in several categories in a hierarchical order to which every northern Siberian group directed constant concern. These spirits were revered, celebrated, and placated. Without their permission, no game became available. Animals themselves were also objects of veneration; without their consent, they would not be taken either.

Because hunting and fishing had been the only means of human survival in northern Siberia since the first arrival of humans there, the adaptation of human cultures to the region had to be as perfect as, for example, that of the wolf. Shirokogoroff (1929, 1935) has eloquently testified to the intelligence of Evenk understanding of

human–animal relationships and to the functional quality of their hunting customs. The relatively recent aboriginal introduction of reindeer breeding in some areas of northern Siberia did not significantly change the old order or question its meaning. The cultures of the people of the North were altered dramatically as a result of Tsarist and Soviet invasions, and first the Christian, then the Soviet ideological persecutions of shamanism.

The highest spirits were those who protected all of animal life of the northern Siberian world. Some were female, for example, Yanebya, the Earth Mother of the Nentsys (Levin and Potapov 1964: 564), Dunne Enin of the Evenks, and Tomam of the Kets, both already mentioned, or Ylyunda Kotta of the Selkups (Anisimov 1963b: 191–92). Some were male, for example, Eksheri Sheveki of some Evenk groups (Anisimov 1963b: 160–61), and Bua of the Udegeys and Orochis (Levin and Potapov 1964: 743, 757). Kalgama of the Nanays was androgynous (Paulson 1961: 88).

Next came spirits of regions: of taiga or tundra, and, for coastal tribes, of the sea. Again, as in all Siberian categories of spirits, some were female (“mothers”), some male (“fathers”). The Yukagirs distinguished a spirit of the earth, Lebie-po’gil, a spirit of freshwater, O’jin-po’gil, and a spirit of the sea, Cobun-po’gil (Paulson 1961: 55). The Koryaks knew a spirit of the land, Picvu’cin, and a female spirit of the sea, Anqa’ken-etinvilan (Paulson 1961: 67–68). A similar recognition of a protector spirit of land animal and one for sea creatures (including sea mammals) existed among the Chukchis (Levin and Potapov 1964: 822; Paulson 1961: 60–65), Itelmens (Paulson 1961: 69), Yakuts (Paulson 1961: 90–92), Khants (Paulson 1961: 107–12), Nivkhis (Paulson 1961: 74), and others. Some tribes of the Amur River area identified the taiga spirit with the tiger, for example, the Udegeys and Orochis (Levin and Potapov 1964: 743, 757).

Below these spirits were spirits of specific localities: of a mountain or a river, a valley, a lake, a point on the coast, a cove, or a jutting rock.

Each animal species had its species-specific protector spirit (*Artgeist*) who was viewed as serving under the earth spirits and the spirits of land and sea. An *Artgeist* was also either female (e.g., the Chukchi “mother of walrus”) or male (e.g., Nivkhi Tlangi-ys’n, “master of wild reindeer,” from *ys*, “master”). *Artgeister* might make themselves visible to human beings as animals of extraordinary, sometimes miniature, size. Like the higher spirits, they also would punish game abuse, refuse or bless hunters.

Throughout northern Siberia the physical form of every living being was understood to possess reincarnate spiritual form. Because, without the infusion of reincarnate spiritual form, new life was not possible, spiritual as well as physical forms were limited in total numbers following the original intent of the creation. Belief in multiple souls, including one reincarnate soul, remained universal well into the Russian occupation.

Chernetsov (1963) describes a concept of four souls from the Khants and Mansis. The first one, called *is*, "soul shadow," is also called "big soul" or "grave soul." It is a material soul and connected with the visible shadow cast by every object. It remains with physical form but continues only as long as something remains of the body. With the decay of flesh and bone, the *is* transforms itself into a water beetle. As long as the *is* exists in a grave, the person interred is not considered dead.

The second soul is called *lonxal'minne is*, "the soul that goes down the river," and it appears primarily only after a person's death. It leaves a person regularly during sleep, traveling widely. Shamans, during a Kamlaniye (shamanistic performance, Chernetsov's spelling), detach their second soul for special assignments. This soul lives on the surface of a person. Khants and Mansis tattooed birds on person's shoulders for this soul to enter, attempting to hold it close. After a person's death, the second soul becomes *urt*, traveling to the afterworld in the form of a bird, swallow, magpie, or cuckoo. But it does not set out on its journey immediately. "In the course of the period during which the body lies at home, it wanders over the whole earth. It goes to those places where it used to be. Only afterward does it go down forever [that is, in the direction of the Lower Ob] (Chernetsov 1963:25). During group ceremonies sacrificial food was placed on sticks around the camp to feed passing soul birds.

The third soul lives outside a person and comes to him or her only during sleep. Therefore it is called *ulem is*, "the dreaming soul." It is an external taiga soul in the form of a wood grouse. If it perishes, and if a shaman with his or her spirit helpers' assistance cannot catch it in time, the person dies.

The fourth soul is the reincarnation soul, *man is*, "little soul," which stays with a person most of the time but moves with the speed of the mind, traveling during sleep. Its dwelling place is the head, particularly the hair. Chernetsov (1963:24) interprets the former Khant and Mansi custom of scalping as an attempt to keep the main soul of an enemy and hence prevent his rebirth. The "little soul"

often appears as a soul bird on a person's head in aid and defense of his or her "master." The "little soul" is inherited from generation to generation in persons of the same descent group. Because each child represents the reincarnation of a past ancestor, the correct ancestral name is bestowed on the child after a long and probing search. Names are limited in numbers, matching the original grant of "little souls."

Khants and Mansis perceive of three stages of death. When the second soul leaves a person permanently, he is an "inwardly living dead man." The second stage of death occurs when his fourth soul abandons him. Final death takes place when the body decays and the "soul shadow" leaves. Because of these concepts, the Khants and Mansis practiced a first platform burial followed later by a secondary burial of the nearly decomposed bones. Oftentimes the reincarnate soul of the deceased was kept by attaching a lock of his hair to a small wooden figurine (*agan*, "doll"). This doll was treated as the original live person until it was freed (buried or burned) a few years later.

The Kets believed in seven souls, the Yukagirs in three, and the Koryaks in two (Paulson 1962: 118-23).

The Nanays (Anisimov 1963b: 206-207) recognized three souls: *omia*; *uksuki*, identified with *ergeni*, "breathing"; and *fanya*, identified with shadow. The first stage of death occurs when the *omia* leaves a person's body to return to the ancestral place of *omia*, whereas the breath soul remains with the body. The second stage occurs after the first funeral when the shaman settles the shadow soul in a wooden doll. The third stage is represented by the last funeral when the shaman removes the shadow soul from its figurine container and joins it with the *omia* already free. After the two have merged into one, the *omia* is once more available for reincarnation.

Evenks also believed in three souls (Anisimov 1963b: 203-205). In the Evenk Anan Ceremony, the shaman escorted the *omi*, the reincarnate soul of the deceased, safely to the ancestral place in the world above. In the Omilattan Ceremony, he journeyed there to obtain an *omi* for a future child upon request of a woman who wished to become pregnant. Holmberg (1926: 40) mentions that Evenks in the past scalped enemies for apparently the same reasons the Khants and Mansis did.

Because of the general belief in northern Siberia that a body soul survived in bones and skulls for many years, burial customs, though varied, were elaborate everywhere. Because the same concept was extended to animals, these were included in the burial complex also.

The only difference between human and animal burials was in degree; the former was somewhat more complex.

The one animal treated nearly everywhere with the same elaboration as a deceased human was the bear. A number of Siberian groups buried the whole bear skeleton (Holmberg 1926: 39–40; Obayashi and Paproth 1966: 224–28). Where a special treatment of human skulls (as depositories of reincarnate souls) was emphasized, bear—and wolf and tiger—skulls were specially treated also. Where tree or platform burial was practiced, bears and some other animals, already mentioned, were buried the same way.

Generally in northern Siberia, animal skulls and bones were handled with great care and were deposited undamaged (Holmberg 1926; Paulson 1963). Where it was customary to keep bones or skulls of a deceased relative (e.g., among the Yukagirs), bones, teeth, claws, feathers, and skulls of animals were kept for the same reason. Actually, from the Samis of the northern Scandinavia to Kamchatka, bear claws and teeth as well as teeth, beaks, and claws of many predators were kept for the protection of humans by the animals' spirits. Surviving physical parts of many nonpredatory animals were included in this complex also.

Animal reincarnate souls, once freed from physical form by the hunters, returned, as human souls did, into the custody of spirit protectors in the spirit world.

Small animal figurines in bone, stone, and ivory were important in many areas of Siberia until recently and may have served as "soul catchers" similar to the human dolls of the Khants, Mansis, Nanays, and others. Animal and human figurines found at the Paleolithic campsite Mal'ta, on the Belaya River northwest of Lake Baikal (Gerasimov 1964), document the great antiquity of the northern Siberian world description.

World Experience and Northern Siberian Shamanism

Thinking this world description to conclusion, one could say that the middle world constitutes a meeting ground where the same spirits meet again and again since time began. Reborn to physical form through the chains of generations, the same hunters may always hunt the same animals. Or, because of openness to transformation, an animal spirit may choose reïmbodiment in human physical form and, for a time, become a hunter of his former species, adding new spiritual properties to a human descent group. Transformation into objects other than animal and human was possible also. In a Chukchi

story (Anisimov 1963b: 216–17) a girl, fleeing from the physical advances of the Moon spirit, changes herself into a hillock and a lamp, but may, judging by the text, turn also into a hammer, a stone block, a pole, a sack, a particle of earth, and so forth.

Spirits are the only enduring, indestructible entities who act out a dreamlike drama on the stage of the middle world. However intricate the play, offense is possible only against temporary physical form. Still, future physical form can be denied by the spirits' withholding of themselves or through their retention by keeper spirits. This, in the interpretation of the old world of northern Siberia, is the reason for the disappearance of species and of human ethnic groups. Because their spirits are immortal, they reside as, for example, the mammoth spirits (see *sheli*, previously mentioned), in the spirit world whence they might rejoin physical form in the future.

In the “creativity of life,” as Anisimov (1963b: 217) calls it, “every material object can act according to its own will (*gekulilin*, as the Chukchis say, i.e., ‘it has its own voice’).” This concept naturally included plants and trees also; vegetation and animals were created before humans. Some Siberian groups traced their descent from trees. The Chumikan and Upper Zeya Evenks related that “man was born from a tree. There was a tree, it split in two. Two people came out. One was a man, the other a woman. Until a child was born they were covered with hair. The first child was born without hair” (Vasilevich 1963a: 68). Among the Negidals, persons came from a larch. Among Sym Evenks, the mythical reindeer *epkachan* splits a pine tree, and in the center appears a woman who sings.

In Evenk origin stories, all animals received their names and had their place and the purpose of their existence defined upon their creation by the Supreme Being, Amaka Sheveki (Vasilevich 1963a: 69). They were given the characteristics of physical form at the same time. The goldeneye duck, for example, that assisted in rescuing the earth from submergence in waters, was kissed on its head by the creator and carries a white mark there since. Each species was given its territory to be respected by others. For each species, laws were made as it had to be hunted (for Yakuts, Paulson 1961: 90) by predators later, including humans. Sometimes the hunting weapons were presented to the spirit keepers of game before the hunt (for Chukchis, see Levin and Potapov 1964: 822). These relations, according to Shirokogoroff (1929: 43), writing about Manchurian Evenks (Tungus), “compel the Tungus, first of all, to know every valley thoroughly, and also to know which animals inhabit it. He must know where he may

travel without annoying other animals, just as he does in reference to other ethnical groups.”

Throughout northern Siberia, animals were regarded as sacred (for Nentsys, see Paulson 1961:94–95), their death as sacrifice (Holmberg 1926:43–44). The hunting laws imposed by the spirits, including the animal spirits, demanded that no animal should suffer when slain (Holmberg 1926:20). The use of all physical parts of an animal was subject to stringent rules. Greatest care was exercised in the freeing, propitiation, and the Iomante (in Ainu, “sending off”) of the spirit.

Regarding the taking of game, Shirokogoroff (1935:89) lists these Evenk rules:

- (1) no animals must be killed if the hunter cannot carry the spoil;
- (2) animals which are not needed by hunter must not be killed;
- (3) the animals especially cervines of certain age and sex must not be killed at certain periods;
- (4) the animal wounded must be followed by the hunter until it is killed.

Some animals were considered to have been human. The Selkups said that “the bear was once a man, and that man also now lives in the bear” (Prokofyeva 1963:145). The Eastern Evenks recounted that the wolf at one time had been an Evenk, and “when meeting him one had to step aside, having asked him to leave one alone” (Vasilevich 1963a:71). The Podkamenaya Tunguska Evenks had the same attitude toward the eelpout because they felt that his face looked like an Evenk face; they also had a story about how an eelpout once had fed an abandoned boy with his liver. The Chukchis (Levin and Potapov 1964:824) considered the wolf a changeling and never hunted him.

Many Siberian groups traced their descent from animals. The Sym and Baykit Evenks told about their origin as coming from the bear:

A girl, *Kheladan*, was walking on and on until at last she came to the bear. The bear said: “Kill me and cut me up. Place my heart to sleep beside you, put my kidneys in the place of honor (*malu*) behind the hearth, my duodenum and rectum place opposite you, spread out my fur in a dry ditch, hang my small intestine on a dry, bent-over tree, and put my head to sleep near *malu*.” *Kheladan* killed the bear and did all as he had ordered. In the morning she awoke and looked. At the place of honor there were two children (the kidneys) playing, an old man (the head) was sleeping near them, while opposite him were sleeping an old man and an old woman (the intestines). She glanced outside—there were some reindeer (the fur) walking about and the little valley was full

of reindeer. She ran out of the yurt, and there were some halters (the small intestines) hanging on the slanting tree. [Vasilevich 1963a:68]

Some Sakhalin and Okhotsk Evenks had a story about the descent of some Evenks from a girl whose husbands were a man and a bear. "This girl lived at a time when there was no bow and arrow, and when people hunted wild animals with a pointed stone held in the hand" (Vasilevich 1963a:68). The Udegeys and other groups of the Lower Amur also attributed their origin to the marriage of a girl with a bear (Levin and Potapov 1964:743). Some Amur peoples traced their descent from a tiger (Holmberg 1922:26).

In Siberian thought, the bear, a visitor in the middle world especially beneficial to humans, is associated with both the world above and the world below. He is the cosmic hunter visible in the night skies, mentioned before, and the powerful being released in the Iomante bear festivals of the Amur, Sakhalin, and Hokkaido tribes to his homeland in the sacred high mountains (Paproth 1976:13–14; Slawik 1952). But because the sacred mountains are entrances to the world below, in the symbolism of shamans' costumes, he represents this region of the universe more deeply than any other animal spirit. The underground dwellings of the Selkup Earth Mother, *Ylyunda kotta*, for example, are guarded by her two protectors, half-bear, half-man (Prokofyeva 1963:145). Other animal spirits generally associated with the world below are the otter and the loon.

The sacred birds of the world above are swan, crane, magpie, and eagle. The eagle was considered the chief intermediary between humans and the Supreme Being. Enets, for example, called the eagle *minley* "son of god," "sovereign of the wind," who "could take the shape of a man" (Prokofyeva 1963:133). To the Buryats, the eagle was an emissary sent by the Supreme Being to protect humans from disease. He was the first shaman made by the creator, but people did not understand him. Finally, he approached a woman sleeping under a tree and left her with a child that grew up to become the first Buryat shaman (Holmberg 1922:26). Among some groups, the children of a swan woman became the first shamans (Findeisen 1957:28).

Throughout northern Siberia (as among early Tsistsistas) "the ancient hunters strove to make themselves resemble beasts: They disguised themselves in their skins and later for the same purpose wore special costumes resembling the animal in form—special caps with horns, jackets made of wild-reindeer skins, and others" (Anisimov 1963a:109). Lavish animal costumes were integral parts of fall game-

bringing ceremonies of Shingkelevun and Girkumki types, and of releasing, “sending-off” (Iomante) ceremonies. The animal impersonators in such ceremonies identified with the “social groups” (Slawik 1952:194) of species as members.

The most intensively studied of Iomante ceremonies are those concerning the bear. Bear festivals culminating in the “sending off” of the slain bear’s spirit retained a wide distribution until the beginning of this century. Hallowell (1926) and Paproth (1976) have traced bear festivals in a number of variations from northern Scandinavia across Eurasia to the northern half of North America and the Greenland Eskimos. With shamanistic performances and ceremonies concerning animals, bear ceremonialism seems to have been practiced at least as early as the European Upper Palaeolithic, as Narr (1959, 1961, 1966), Lommel (1967), and Zotz (1958) have concluded from the evidence extant in the art and archaeological remains of the period.

Although bear ceremonialism rarely retained in North America (Munsee-Mahicans, chapter 8) the complexity with which it had survived in vast regions of northern Siberia, significant traces are found among Eskimos, many Athapaskan groups, on the Northwest Coast, among some Siouan tribes (Assiniboines, Santees) and, especially, northern, central, and eastern Algonquian groups (Montagnais-Naskapis, Crees, Ojibwas, Ottawas, Algonquins, Menominitis, Sauks, Foxes, Micmacs, Malecites, Penobscots, Abnakis, Delawares) (Hallowell 1926). If the proto-Tsistsistas had participated in bear ceremonialism in the past, they may have lost it as a result of their removal into the Plains.

Bear ceremonialism, however, should not be treated as an isolated phenomenon. Although the bear Iomante does justice to a specific—and magnificent—animal, the laws of the early northern Siberian and North American world descriptions required that justice was done to *all* animals. These laws were obeyed in “sending-off” ceremonies everywhere that, although often overlooked by ethnographers, existed side by side with the bear Iomante, and also existed where a complex bear ceremonialism was not practiced.

In northern Siberia each person not only participated in the expressions characteristic of the world experience of his or her specific group but also played an active part as an individual—much as in early Tsistsistas culture described in chapter 1. That human beings as groups and as individuals, were also considered powerful beings has already been shown in this chapter and requires no further evidence.

Perhaps the *gekulilin* concept of the Chukchis should be remembered: *everything* “has its own voice.”

The power of the individual’s perseverance and creative drive, inherent in all original stories collected among northern Siberian groups, has nevertheless been largely ignored by ethnographers because observation has always been tilted toward group expressions (“cults”) and the shamans—although, in regard to both, much of the literature is corrupted by either Western scientific bias or by Christian religious or Marxist materialist superstitions (see also Golovin 1981 on this issue). In aboriginal times, the human condition in northern Siberia, as that of the Tsistsistas, required that each individual was a finely tuned entity by himself or herself. That cooperation with others was equally important was the second law. Both laws were taught by the one animal that peoples of northern Siberia and the Tsistsistas regarded as the master hunter par excellence—the wolf. (Note that Lopez 1978 has suggested that more could be learned about the origins of humans as social animals by studying the social structure of wolf packs than could be learned by studying primates.)

In many types of group expressions, shaman leadership was not required. Among the Evenks (Anisimov 1963a: 99), each family owned a bundle containing ancestor guardian spirits that was used first when a family member had fallen ill. Only if the case proved to need extraordinary measures was a shaman called in. Among the Nivkhis (Taksami 1963: 437–44), after a band had moved to a new location, each family fed the spirits of the locality and the river spirits at the ice-fishing hole with specially prepared food. When a person went away for a visit, a family member fed the earth spirit, depositing a spoonful of food at a nearby tree, asking for a safe journey. Upon return, the person himself or herself made a gift of thanksgiving at the same place. Nivkhi band ceremonies held at the closing of the Amur with ice, at the time of the thawing of the river, and the Festival of the Sky in winter were directed by the oldest male of the group. Similar rules were observed throughout northern Siberia.

Shamans were individuals—male and female—singled out by the spirits as unusually gifted to serve as mediators between the spiritual forces in the regions of the universe and spirits temporarily embodied in physical form in the middle world. Vasilevich (1963a: 75) believes that shamanism was originally a woman’s prerogative. Anisimov (1963a: 97) mentions that the robe of an Evenk shaman is always cut in the characteristic design of a woman’s garment.

An Evenk shaman was not permitted to accept payments for his or her services (Vasilevich 1963b : 379). Even the gifts placed on a *туру* at the beginning of a spirit lodge ceremony (Kamlanye), during which the shaman was strained to the limits of his or her physical and mental endurance, were afterward not granted him or her but were distributed among ailing members of the group (Vasilevich 1963a : 379), perhaps because they had been touched by cosmic power during the performance. Because of their constant attention to information coming from the spirit world, Evenk shamans lived largely a secluded life.

In Evenk, member of the Tungus language family, there are four terms for shaman. *Saman* (*šaman*) is the least complex of these. It is this term, introduced through Russian into the literature, that has become the technical term for the phenomenon of the shaman worldwide. The word *saman* appears in all Tungusic languages, and in Turkic and Mongolian.

According to Vasilevich (1963b : 369–72), three other Evenk terms are considerably older in origin. One derives from the stem *seven* (*sheven*), meaning “spirit,” “spirit helper” of the shaman; *sevenche*, “to shamanize” or “to be in the condition of *seven*,” that is, “inhaling helping spirits,” “to reach for the soul of a sick person.” Another stems from *nimngakan*, or *nimngan*, “to put on a shamanistic performance”; *nimngamat*, “to induce spirit helpers to enter one’s body”; *nimngangki*, “shaman’s drum”; and *nimngavka*, “to ask to shamanize.” The last, and the oldest of all, is *yayan*, “shaman”; *yaya*, “to perform by the campfire,” “to shamanize.” *Yaya* also designates the shaman’s drum. Among non-Tungusic Paleo-Asiatic groups such as the Chukchis and Koryaks, the Evenk term *yaya* occurs in derivation: Chukchi *jarar* and Koryak *jajaj* mean both “drum” and the “shamanistic performance.”

The eastern Algonquian Penobscots called the shaman *medo’olinu*, “drum sound person,” derived from the stem *mede*, “sound of drumming.” For Penobscots and their linguistic relatives, the Abnakis, Wavenocks, Malecites, Passamaquoddys, and Micmacs, the shaman’s power was thought partly to lie in his drum (Speck 1919 : 240–41).

Throughout northern Siberia, individuals who were to become shamans were elected by the spirits and forced by them to accept the vocation (see also Kalweit 1984 : 146). Refusal led to mental illness and death.

Oftentimes the office was inherited. In extensive genealogies that Vasilevich (1963b : 374–75) has recorded among Evenk groups, she

found forty-eight cases in which it was remembered that shamans had inherited the helping spirits of shaman ancestors. In forty of these, they came from a grandfather or father/mother who had been shamans.

Anisimov (1963a: 115–16) calls this process the “passive means of obtaining the shamanistic gift.” As “active means,” he describes a quest that would lead a person into the forest where he or she would “reproduce all the features characteristic of the shamanistic choosing, acquire by long fasting and physical exhaustion an appropriate patron spirit and then be considered capable of shamanistic service. The patron spirit . . . [most frequently an animal or a bird] . . . taught the person all the particulars of the shamanistic ritual and provided the requisite number of spirit helpers.” Vasilevich (1963b: 375) was told that spirit helpers of deceased shamans who did not elect a successor among members of the descent group traveled in the taiga until they met and entered a person of their choice.

Among Manchurian Evenks, Anisimov’s two categories are the basis for two classes of “great shamans”—those who inherit through the descent group and those who are independent of it (Shirokogoroff 1935: 344). Among Buryats, shamanism also is either inherited or brought about by intervention of the sky spirits, for example, by striking a person with lightning or showing him or her stones dropping from the sky (Eliade 1974: 19).

Generally, election by the spirits had dramatic consequences. The neophyte suffered a severe initiatory illness followed by his or her experience of death, resurrection, and transformation (see also Kalweit 1984: 101–16).

Lying in a comalike trance, he or she was forced into out-of-body experiences in which he or she was drawn into the spirit world where he or she became a passive witness of his or her own dismemberment: the limbs and organs were removed, the flesh scraped from the bones to be exposed, cooked, and eaten. Among tribes that practiced bear festivals, such as Yakuts, Evenks, and Buryats, the neophyte’s body was dissected and consumed by the spirits as that of the bear by humans in the Iomante feast (Lehtisalo 1937: 19–20).

After having seen themselves reduced to a skeleton, stripped utterly of their former physical appearance, they also observed their reconstitution by the spirits. They were rebuilt from their bones to a new life and a mystical condition that permitted them direct association with the spirit world.

Which spirits elected the neophytes decided their capabilities as

shamans. Because they themselves could not choose, they had no control over the process. The spirits' attachment did not lead to "pseudo-possession," "possession," or a split personality. Rather, as Paulson (1962:129) has concluded, based on information from throughout northern Eurasia, shamans remained themselves but gained another dimension.

Three categories of spirits can be distinguished with whom a shaman might be associated. The first comprised the powerful beings of sky and earth spaces, of celestial bodies, or regions, localities and *Artgeister* (species-specific protector spirits). One of these might call on a shaman for special services or might be agreeable to provide guidance, even respond to a shaman's call and speak in a seance.

Most intimately, however, a shaman was connected with a being of the second category—a tutelary spirit. This spirit, also called in the literature guardian or patron spirit or "a familiar" because of his familiarity with the shaman, was usually an animal spirit who had adopted the shaman for life. Here a fusion took place: the tutelary spirit became the shaman's alter ego, his or her double into which, in many cases, he or she could transform himself or herself physically and become a bear, a wolf, a crane, a deer, and so forth. Where shaman's robes were used in northern Siberia, the robe itself was conceived as a visual, material expression of the tutelary spirit.

Helping spirits formed the third category. They might be enlisted by the tutelary spirit, could be inherited (i.e., join a neophyte along the descent line) as a group or could choose a person singly in succession over time. Helping spirits were added as physical representations to the shaman's robe in the form of pendants, dolls, small figurines, masks, and the like. Shamans were capable of joining a part of their soul with a helping spirit who performed tasks in the spirit world. They responded to his call in seances, assisted in healing and in the safe conduct of human souls to the spirit world, and provided information on matters of the past, present, and future. They also served as guardians—as a magical fence—around the territory of the shaman's human social group.

Among the Nanays, according to Sternberg (Eliade 1974:71–73), the tutelary spirit was called *ayami*, the helping spirit, *syven*. In one Nanay shaman's confession, he revealed that his *ayami* was a beautiful, small woman with one half of her face painted red, the other half black. She could appear in the guise of an old woman, a wolf, or a winged tiger. She had provided him with three spirit helpers: *jarga*, (leopard), *doonto* (bear) and *amba* (tiger). "When I am shamaning,

the *ayami* and the assistant spirits . . . penetrate me, as smoke or vapor would. When the *ayami* is within me, it is she who speaks through my mouth, and she does everything herself.”

Generally, because spirits were not visible to humans alive in the middle world, shamans, because they could see, were in condition of a living dead person.

After the initiatory experience of death and resurrection, the spirits taught the neophyte their special knowledge including songs, terms, and ritual signs with which to call them: a secret language not to be used by others who were not in the shaman's condition. A non-shaman using a shaman's equipment and spirit songs might be able to call the spirits up but would suffer death or permanent injury because he was unprepared for their power.

Generally, in northern Siberia, after the first teachings of the spirits the new shaman received additional training from an experienced shaman that included the preparation of paraphernalia and objects necessary for his specific performance of the craft. Among the Evenks (Anisimov 1963a : 116–17), the whole group participated in their making; once they were completed each person of the group was expected to handle them before they were turned over to the new shaman. He or she then vivified the equipment, settling the spirits in their symbolic physical lodgings; afterward, because of the spirits' presence in it, the equipment, with the exception of the drum, could not be used by anyone but him or her. Upon his or her death, his equipment was either deposited at the grave or placed on a tree in the taiga (Paulson 1962 : 132).

Most important of the shaman's equipment were the robe (often consisting of two pieces), headdress, face mask, boots, gloves, drum, drumstick and staff. Generally the costume was most elaborate in the central and northwestern regions of northern Siberia, rather simple in the northeast (Chukchis, Koryaks) and southeast (on the Amur).

Holmberg (1922 : 14–18) distinguished three categories of shaman costumes: the reindeer, bear, and bird types. Findeisen (1957 : 81) added one more: the deer costume. Each costume represented the total physical form of the animal guardian spirit, including its skeleton, in elaborate ornamentation. In the case of the three mammals, the legs of the shaman (including his boots) were the animal's hind legs, the arms (including the gloves) were the animal's front legs. Of the headdresses most conspicuous were those of bird and reindeer costumes. The first often featured a feather bonnet (Diószegi 1963, figs. 2, 3, 48, 49, 59, 63, 70, 74) with feathers of the tutelary spirit bird

(eagle, owl, crane, etc.), the second reindeer antlers on a crownlike frame (Holmberg 1922, fig. 6; Prokofyeva 1963, fig. 19). Among the spirit helper representations added to the costume as pendants were often actual physical parts of these animal spirits, including wolf- or foxtails, bear paws, claw necklaces, and so forth. It appears that among the earliest artistic descriptions of a masked reindeer shaman preserved is a wall painting in Trois Frères Cave, in southern France, of the Magdalenian period of the Upper Paleolithic (Miyakawa and Kollautz 1966:162–64, 185). One of the best preserved Evenk costumes was published in detail by Lommel (1967: figs. 17–21, 24).

In regard to the regions of the universe, the bird shaman generally was associated with the sky space, the bear shaman with the deep earth, whereas reindeer and deer shamans could be associated with either region or the middle world.

The shaman's drum was considered a living being once its owner spirit ("master") had been called into it. In Enets' shamanism, the drum was regarded as a symbol of the universe (Prokofyeva 1963:150), the iconography of its painting, done in red and black colors, expressing the spirits of the regions. Everywhere in northern Siberia the drum was the chief instrument of the shaman when he communicated with the spirits. The drum also served as vehicle of his or her magical flights. The drum of a male shaman was covered with the skin of a buck; that of a female shaman with the skin of a doe. Occasionally, during seances a shaman's assistant might work the drum for him or her when he or she was hung from a pole. On drumsticks, often a face was carved; among the Enets it represented *kua kaza*, the "birch man," spirit of the drumstick made of birch (Prokofyeva 1963:150–52) and was "greased," that is, fed, before a performance.

Among some groups, for example, Enets, Selkups, Nenets, shamans of the highest order (sky shamans) also had a staff or wand that was used for protection when traveling in the spirit world. A face cut into the upper end of the staff depicted its owner spirit; the lower end was fashioned as a deer hoof. It appears that the animal spirit of this staff was also fed at times.

As the northern Siberian universe consisted of different regions, each protected by spirits of different categories and power, there were also different categories of shamans. The vast literature reveals this only indirectly; ethnographers who worked there generally did not ask such questions and therefore received no answers. There are exceptions, however. Using her husband's excellent field notes, Prokofyeva (1963:124, 149) was able to discover three categories of sha-

mans among the Enets and related groups on the Yenisey that pertain to regions: (1) *budtode*, “having power to contact celestial spirits”; (2) *dyano*, “defending people from malicious spirits”; and (3) *savode*, “communicating with the world of the dead.” *Budtode* shamans had two drums: “one for shamanizing to the upper world, the other for the lower world.” The first drum was called *nano peddi*, “the sky drum,” the second, *dyano peddi*, “the earth drum.” *Dyano* shamans possessed only one drum, the *dyano peddi*, because they were tied to the world below.

Androgyne shamans of transvestite type have been reported from northeastern Siberia among Chukchis, Koryaks, Asiatic Eskimos, and groups on Kamchatka (Findeisen 1957: 140–47). If their vocation represented a symbolical union of sky and earth spaces (as among the Tsistsistas) has been left unexplored in the literature. It is interesting, however, that among Koryaks the transvestite shaman was considered the most powerful of all shamans (Halifax 1979: 24, after Jochelson).

North Siberian shamans served as protectors of their ethnic groups with respect to any danger. They played a key role in intergroup warfare where they used their spirit allies against enemies, killing over a distance. Evenk shaman leadership on a dangerous trail is expressed in the following lines written by the Evenk poet Aleksey Salatkin (Anisimov 1963a: 118):

And on their journey they were led by
The shaman himself, the clan’s eldest,
Making signs upon tree trunks,
That they might go unimpeded.

In summary, the main tasks of northern Siberian shamans were these: (1) to maintain harmony among all physical and spiritual forms within a territory identified with their ethnic group; (2) to protect this territory against outside abuse (repel foreign intrusion) and remedy abuse from within it (by members of one’s own group); (3) to assist annually in the spring the regeneration of life by directing earth renewal ceremonies (Evenk, Ikenipke) in which the solidarity of all living forms according to the original purpose of the creation was acted out in sacred play; (4) to provide annually in the fall the game animals required over the year for the physical survival of their ethnic group by directing ceremonies (Evenk, Girkumki, Shingkelevun) at the sacred place where they could reach the Earth Spirit and achieve her assent; (5) to heal illness of members of the ethnic group; and (6) to guard the dying, lead their souls safely to their places in the spirit

world, and return from there souls for reincarnation to maintain equilibrium in the ethnic group and territory.

In concordance with the old northern Siberian world experience, I might ask: Who needed the shaman most? The answer is: the spirits themselves. They made the shaman; they acted, and they explained the world through the shaman.

The Khanty tale *pro sovnu* ("for the owl") (Chernetsov 1963: 40) has a lesson that rings into our time. The spirit master of the world above asks the owl: "Of whom are there more on earth, the living or the dead?" The owl answers that there are more dead. "Since when," says the spirit in surprise, "was it a success to die?"

3. Concepts and Expressions of World Description and Shamanism Among Northern Siberian Groups and Tsistsistas: A Comparison

*My black mountains
where I have walked
are deserted now—
my land
of golden grasses
where I have walked.
My black mountains are left behind.
My white mountain peaks are left behind.
All my strength is left behind.
Of my large tribe
I alone am still alive.
My lakes
where I have fished
are left behind.
I cannot see them any more.
My tent is rotting
and my bark clothing hangs in shreds.
It is over.*

—LAMENT OF A SAMOYED SHAMAN, RECORDED BY KAI DONNER

AROUND 500 B.C., bands of Proto-Tsistsistas taiga hunters entered the northeastern edge of the Plains. That their distant ancestors once had been there may have been beyond their memory. They came as strangers into territory unknown to them. They came from the north where, for a very long time, they had hunted the subarctic woodland and the transitional zone between woodland and tundra of the southern Keewatin and southeastern Mackenzie districts (see chapter 8). Their main game animals had been caribou and moose. They had largely depended upon the forest but had used the barrens seasonally.

Their withdrawal southward appears to have occurred around 1000 B.C., after climatic changes, beginning in 1500 B.C., resulted in

the southward retreat of the tree line up to distances of two hundred miles. At around 1000 B.C., the tundra reached south well into northern Manitoba and northeastern Saskatchewan. Added to the pressure of a changing environment may have been population pressure as a result of crowding and the advance of Pre-Dorset Eskimo hunters who, already established in the barrens, followed the expanding tundra south.

Proto-Tsistsistas bands did not move south alone. They were part of a general migration of northern Algonquian hunters that would eventually lead some into the Plains, others into southern Ontario, the Great Lakes region, and beyond.

In the north, in the region west of Hudson Bay (southeastern Mackenzie and southern Keewatin districts, northern Manitoba, northern Saskatchewan and northwestern Ontario), they had all been participants in what Wright (1972b) calls the Shield Archaic way of life. It is suggested here that at the time of their withdrawal they had shared in concepts described for Tsistsistas in chapter 1. The re-evaluation of the ethnographies of historic western and central Algonquian groups, cutting through the familiar pictures passed on through the literature would, I believe, reveal the ancient common base. To extend the investigation to all historic Algonquian groups would be illuminating and requires attention but reaches beyond the scope of this book.

It is not proposed that Proto-Tsistsistas culture remained the same after the arrival in the Dakotas. On the contrary, the Massaum ceremony and some of its associated features represent a significant cultural change leading to a perfect adaptation to the northern Plains. The principal structures of the Proto-Tsistsistas world description, nevertheless, remained intact and, over 2000 years later, were carried into the reservation period.

The facts presented in chapter 2 force the conclusion that northern Siberian cultures once shared with the Algonquians a common heritage. Because of the time span of the separation, it follows that the principles of the Tsistsistas world description and shamanism as outlined in chapter 1 existed far back in the Proto-Tsistsistas past.

The strength of these statements rests on the following comparison that excludes functional categories and material traits.

The last three units of data in table 1 appear both in the Evenk *shevenchedek* of the Kamlanye ceremony and in the wolf lodge of the Massaum (see chapter 6).

Table I. Selected Comparative Data

Concept	Northern Siberia	Tsistsistas
The universe is multilayered	x	x
Each layer possesses powerful spirits	x	x
Deep earth	x	x
Earth spirit as keeper of animals	x	x
Animal spirits are underground	x	x
Cosmic tree	x	x
Vault of heaven as skin thrown over earth	x	—
Vault of heaven as a kettle	x	x
North Star as sky navel	x	—
Several sky regions	x	x
Supreme Being in uppermost sky region	x	x
Supreme Being as creator of universe	x	x
Creation of universe as shamanistic act	x	x
Four sacred guardians at four corners of universe	—	x
Shamanistic concept of a second uni- verse outside the first	x	x
Sacred mountain as entrance to deep earth and earth spirit	x	x
Ceremony in which game is obtained from earth spirit	x	x
Animal impersonators in ceremony	x	x
Center pole of ceremonial lodge represents Supreme Being	x	x
Earth renewal ceremony in spring	x	x
Spirit lodge ceremonies for healing and the propitiation of game spirits	x	x
Spirit lodge as sacred mountain	x	x
Sweat lodge	—	x
Story about the earth rescued from waters with bird assistance	x	x
Mammoth as helper in retrieving earth from beneath waters	x	—
Giant serpent	x	x
Supreme Being as <i>deus otiosus</i>	x	?
Sacrifices to Supreme Being	x	x
Sacrifices to Supreme Being of white (albino) animals	x	x

Concept	Northern Siberia	Tsistsistas
Cosmic order guarded by powerful mediator spirits	x	x
Stars as opening to higher levels of the world above	x	?
Star constellations as relatives or mythical ancestors	x	x
Stars providing signals for actions below	x	x
Importance of number 7	x	x
Importance of number 4	—	x
Sky spirits cause seasonal changes on earth	x	x
Specific animals sacred to different regions of universe	x	x
Powerful spirit protectors of animals	x	x
Animals are objects of veneration	x	x
Animals themselves grant slaying	x	x
Earth spirit female	x	x
Earth spirit male	x	—
Spirits of regions (taiga, tundra, etc.)	x	?
Spirits of localities	x	x
Species-specific protector spirits (<i>Artgeister</i>)	x	x
All physical form alive is endowed with reincarnate spirit (soul)	x	x
Concept of multiple souls, or spirit with multiple parts including one reincarnate one	x	x
Original grant of spirits limited for humans and animals	x	x
Spirits are indestructable	x	x
Transmutability of spirits	x	x
Spirits inherited in descent group or species	x	x
Concept of death as long process of separation of souls	x	x
This is true for humans and animals	x	x
During first stage of death, a person's spirit travels far	x	x
One part of spirit remains in skeleton until decay of bones	x	x

Concept	Northern Siberia	Tsistsistas
Temporary retention of body soul of humans and animals	x	x
First and secondary burial of humans	x	x
Embodying spirit of deceased in figurine or object	x	x
Special laws regarding treatment of animal bones	x	x
Burial of animal remains	x	x
Embodying animal spirits in figurines	x	x
Animals can be withheld from reincarnation by spirit keepers	x	x
Human spirits can refuse reincarnation	x	x
Spirits travel with the speed of thought	x	x
"Everything has its own voice"	x	x
Trees and plants have spirits also	x	x
Animal species have territories as human groups have	x	x
Animals are regarded as sacred	x	x
Hunting as sacred ritual designed by game and spirit keepers	x	x
Abuse of animals punished by spirits	x	x
Sometimes humans descended from animals	x	x
Bear associated with the world below	x	x
The bear as celestial hunter	x	?
Iomante (sending-off) rituals	x	x
Bear iomante	x	—
Eagle as sacred bird of world above	x	x
Crane as sacred bird of world above	x	x
Magpie as sacred bird of world above	x	x
Swan as sacred bird of world above	x	—
Humans fashion themselves after animals	x	x
Wolf as master hunter; special rules concerning wolves	x	x
Bundles containing spirits	x	x
Feeding spirits for special reasons	x	x
Conscious detachment of parts of one's spirit possible to most people	—	x
Conscious detachment of parts of one's spirit exercised by shamans	x	x

Concept	Northern	
	Siberia	Tsistsistas
Almost every person has a tutelary spirit	—	X
Each shaman has a tutelary spirit	X	X
Each shaman has helping spirits	X	X
A shaman may inherit a tutelary spirit	X	—
A shaman may seek or is sought by a spirit	X	X
A shaman is capable of "paranormal" demonstrations	X	X
A shaman is elected by spirits	X	X
During his or her initiation, a shaman is dismembered and resurrected	X	—
During his or her initiation, the shaman experiences a transformation	X	X
The power of the spirits decides the shaman's capabilities	X	X
Spirits may use a shaman's speech apparatus directly to express themselves	X	X
A shaman is taught first by the spirits	X	X
Later he or she receives additional training from an experienced shaman	X	X
A shaman's equipment is vivified	X	X
A shaman's equipment cannot be used by others	X	X
A shaman's equipment is abandoned after his or her death	X	X
Shaman's mask	X	—
Shaman's face painting	?	X
Shaman's robe	X	X
Shaman's belt	X	X
Shaman's gloves and boots	X	—
Shaman's headdress	X	X
Shaman's drum	X	X
Shaman's rattle	—	X
Shaman's use of eagle, magpie, crane feathers	X	X
Sky shamans	X	X
Some shamans are specialists on stars	X	X
Earth shamans	X	X
The shaman has a sky bow	X	X

Concept	Northern Siberia	Tsistsistas
On shaman's staffs a spirit face may be carved	x	x
<i>Oxzem</i> (spirit wheel)	—	x
Spirit catchers (animal figurines)	x	x
Shaman's dolls	x	x
Shamans represent every region of universe	x	x
Shamans use a secret language	x	x
Shamans form an esoteric group	?	x
Contrary shamans	x	x
Transvestite shamans	x	x
Shamans kill over distance	x	x
Shamans protect territory with spirit help	x	x
Shamans take the souls of the dead to the afterworld	x	—
Shamans bring souls from the afterworld for reincarnation	x	—
Shamans may control death, including their own	x	x
Shamans direct ceremonies	x	x
Medicine hunts	?	x
Sacred poles	x	x
During one type of spirit lodge performance, the lodge has a center tree	x	x
The tree has seven markings	x	x
The tree is the world tree	x	x

4. The Coming of Strangers

There used to be a children's game called nakonistoz, bear play. One player represented a she bear in a den. The others approached with a pole featuring a sharpened, split end. They poked cautiously into the den and, touching the she-bear player, twisted the jagged point into the animal's fur before attempting to pull it out. While they were preparing to do this, they would comment loudly what kind of game was hidden there, listing names of other animals, although they knew it was a bear. They were not allowed to use bear terms, for example, nako, "bear," nakoová, "bear hairy," and so forth. The game prescribed that finally one of the players would speak one of the forbidden words. The she bear, upon hearing her name would charge from the den and chase and overpower the hunters. This game recapitulated Proto-Tsistsistas bear hunting rules as they had been practiced in the old north country.

In the story of the Pleiades, the celestial she bear, maheonhovàn, Nako, came to earth to punish those who had insulted bears by calling their name. It happened near the Black Hills, and of the Tsistsistas camp destroyed by the giant bear spirit, only a girl survived. On her flight before maheonhovàn a powerful spirit tried to help by throwing obstacles behind her to stop the pursuer, but still she came. Then Manohotoxceo, the Seven Brothers (Pleiades), came from the sky to help her but they fought the bear without success.

Finally, in answer to the girl's prayers, a great mountain grew up under their feet, so steep and smooth that the she bear could not climb it. She tried and tried but always slid back, tearing deep grooves into the mountain's sides with her claws. She went to the river and painted her face with red clay. She came back and called: "Give me the girl. If you do not, I shall hug this mountain and throw it down."

But they refused. Four times she called up, but still the brothers refused. The bear rose on her hind legs and reached her forepaws around the mountain. She hugged hard, twisting and pushing, so that it began to lean.

Some say the youngest of the brothers killed her then. Others say that he tried but could not and that they fled to the sky taking the girl with them as their sister. The bear followed, they say, and is still chasing them across the dome of the night sky.

Others say that it was Motseyoef who, using his shamanistic power, made the mountain open up, bring Nako in, and close behind her. According to this tra-

dition, she is still there, alive, waiting to be unleashed from her confinement to take revenge on those who are destroying the wild animal world.

The mountain that rose to protect the girl and the Seven Brothers is just to the Northwest of the Black Hills. Tsistsistas call it Nakoevē, Bear Peak. On road maps it is listed as Devil's Tower.

ONE OF THE EARLIEST Tsistsistas stories, generally misunderstood because some of its features are assumed by ethnographers to have biblical connotations, places the Proto-Tsistsistas in the far north. Their withdrawal from the region as told in the story is seen here as the one leading to their eventual arrival in the Dakotas. The story describes the beginning of their movement, in which a shaman played a crucial role, with these words:

Many thousands of years ago the Cheyenne inhabited a country in the far north, across a great body of water. For two or three years they had been overpowered by an enemy that outnumbered them . . . and they were filled with sorrow. Among their number was a great medicine-man who possessed a wooden hoop like those used in the games of to-day. On one side of the hoop were tied magpie feathers, while opposite them, on the other side of the hoop, was a flint spear head, with the point projecting toward the center of the hoop. One night . . . he told the people to come to a certain place. When they were assembled he led them away. He kept in advance of them all the time, and in his left hand he held a long staff, and in his right hand he held his hoop horizontally in front of him with the spear head of the hoop pointing forward. No one was allowed to go in front of him. [Dorsey 1905, 1:37]

From the analyses provided in Chapters 1 and 2 it is obvious that he carried a shaman' staff and an *axzem*, a spirit wheel, whose spirit guided the trek to a new territory. There are great bodies of water around the location pinpointed in the last chapter.

Regarding the social and political organization of the Proto-Tsistsistas, very little is known. Callendar (1962:73–75) sees Proto-Central Algonquians, with whom the Proto-Tsistsistas were related during these times, as small nomadic hunting groups. Proto-Tsistsistas bands may have been relatively independent but would have cooperated seasonally with others in activities requiring concentration, for example, ceremonies, collective hunts and trading; perhaps marriages were formed at such times. The story quoted here may suggest that bands saw themselves as a people with ethnic boundaries. The term "tribe" does not seem applicable (see Fried 1975) because systems of tribal chiefs and soldier societies, with which Tsistsistas en-

tered the late historic period, were not necessary yet and had not yet been developed.

It is most likely that Proto-Tsistsistas and related groups brought from the North an annual fall ceremony through which game was obtained from the Earth Mother, similar to the Evenk Shingkelevun and Girkumki, and an annual earth renewal ceremony held in spring, similar to the Ikenipke. The Massaum would have built on the first, whereas the Oxheheom (New Life Lodge, "Sun Dance"), introduced later, would have developed out of the second. Both the Massaum and the Oxheheom have a "northern cast," especially the latter because the annual spring ice breakup and the earth regeneration is nowhere experienced more intensely than in arctic and subarctic regions. It is therefore not surprising that the Plains "Sun Dance" of historic times had achieved its deepest and most complex expressions among formerly Northern Algonquian hunters: Suhtais, Tsistsistas, Arapahos, and Atsinas.

Some Proto-Tsistsistas institutions were incorporated in the Massaum, although they also continued a powerful presence outside of it. Without explaining these, the Massaum cannot be understood. They have already been mentioned briefly in chapter 1. The following descriptions discuss these in more detail.

Medicine Hunts

The Tsistsistas used the term *medicine hunt* for a collective hunt in which members of one band or a number of bands acted under shaman directorship abiding by strict rules. Proto-Tsistsistas bands carried a full-blown medicine hunt complex into the Dakotas; medicine hunts were continued to the late 1860s. After that date, ceaseless armed conflict with White intrusion, coupled with the beginning destruction of the great herds, made them impossible.

The adoption of maize horticulture before 1700 and the acquisition of horses after 1700 never jeopardized the Tsistsistas medicine hunt complex because it was deeply embedded in the Massaum. Horses, as "new" and "foreign" animals, were kept outside the Massaum and therefore were never given a significant role in medicine hunts either.

In medicine hunts, a Tsistsistas antelope shaman used his antelope spirit helper to call antelopes into pits, and a buffalo shaman used his buffalo spirit helper to call a buffalo herd into camp or pound. Whatever the technique that was employed, the treatment of animal bodies and spirits necessarily obeyed the laws formulated by the animals

themselves. This is why the Proto-Tsistsistas and the Tsistsistas, unlike other peoples of the northern Plains, refused the cruel method of driving game herds over cliffs but called them into camps and pounds instead. The driving of antelopes over cliffs in the 1870s, reported from the Northern Cheyennes (e.g., Wooden Leg, in Marquis 1967: 88), represents an aberration and an offense against the Massaum law.

The Tsistsistas used three types of buffalo medicine hunts: (1) the surround; (2) bringing a herd into the camp circle; (3) bringing a herd into a pound. What particular type was used in a specific situation may have been determined by seasonal game conditions in a given region besides the shaman's personal power and preference. Each of the three types of buffalo procurement was put into action and controlled by a shaman or, rarely, by shamans working together.

The medicine hunt was preceded by the shaman's performance in a spirit lodge or sweat lodge culminating in the sending out of his buffalo spirit helper to bring a herd in. Often during the ceremony, physical parts containing buffalo *omotome* (e.g., skulls, hooves) were used in addition to special equipment from the shaman's sacred bundle, the *nisimōnevehaneo*. *Naoetaevoan* is the Tsistsistas term for a shaman who had the power to call buffalo. The end of the medicine hunt took place once again in the closed lodge where the shaman propitiated the slain animals, released their spirits, and fed and thanked his spirit helper before letting him return to the spirit world.

If four successive attempts to bring a herd in had failed, the shaman, or members of his family, stood to suffer personal injury inflicted by the spirits. The same happened if the bodies and spirits of animals were not treated properly after a hunt by either the shaman or the hunters; he alone was held responsible for misconduct. If a shaman either abused the secret formulas guiding his relationship to his spirit helpers, or erred in the application, the spirits might kill him (see the fate of Listening-to-the-Ground, in Grinnell 1926: 170).

When the surround was used, the shaman caused a herd to be brought near the camp or, if a herd was already close, caused it to remain there. The hunters, led by the shaman, walked to the herd, preferably numbering from twenty to forty buffalo (Grinnell 1923, 1:265). They surrounded it, closed in on the animals, and forced them to run in a circle within the "human pound" (an appropriate phrase used by Kehoe 1973: 179), where they were killed. According to a description published by Grinnell (1907, 182–83), the first buffalo killed might receive special attention: He was smoked; his head was turned to the four directions and the sun; and his meat was used

for the ceremonial feast concluding the hunt and was finally shared as sacred food by all people in camp. Perhaps this was the lead animal whose actions to a considerable degree determined success or failure of the hunt. Among some northern Plains tribes (e.g., the Plains Ojibwas), the “bison leader” was allowed to escape, whereas among others (e.g., some Blackfoot bands), he was killed and ritualized (Kehoe 1973: 185).

Motseyoef called buffalo herds to a surround near camp (Grinnell 1923, 2: 366–67) during a four-day spirit lodge performance long before he brought *nimāhenan*, the sacred arrows, to the Tsistsistas. After he had introduced *nimāhenan* and the Ceremony of the Sacred Arrows, buffalo used to appear at the end of the ceremony and allowed themselves to be taken outside the camp (Dorsey 1905, 1: 46). Keepers of *nimāhenan* used two of the sacred arrows to cause buffalo to run in a circle until the number of animals needed was killed. “When they did this the rule was to take everything except the head, and to leave the horns on, and to leave the backbone attached to the head and the tail. Every animal killed with the medicine-arrows had to be treated in that way” (Dorsey 1905, 1: 2).

In the story of Mukije (Short Woman), collected by Hoebel (1978: 45–49), the woman shaman introduces a medicine hunt ritual focusing on a holy woman using a buffalo stone for bringing game. This is reminiscent of the Blackfoot concept in which a holy woman serves as drive ritualist with the assistance of the *iniskim* buffalo stone (Grinnell 1962: 125–26; Kehoe 1973: 180–81; Schaeffer 1962: 30–31). Mukije belongs in the Suhtai tradition; contrary to Hoebel’s belief, she had no influence on Tsistsistas culture. The woman celebrated in Tsistsistas religion and hunting tradition is Ehyophstah, the buffalo spirit of the Massaum.

When a herd was brought into the camp circle, the camp itself served as a pound.

In one of the Motseyoef stories, the camp was located west of No-wah’wus, Bear Butte; the opening faced the sacred mountain and sunrise. Before he held a buffalo-calling ceremony in a spirit lodge set in the camp’s center, he advised the people “to take the dog-travois and to fill up all the gaps in the circle between the lodges; and the people did so. This work occupied four days” (Grinnell 1908: 316). During the first night of Motseyoef’s performance, the buffalo surrounded the camp. During the second night the buffalo “began to run against the travois in the gaps between the lodges.” During

the third night, they entered the camp circle “and followed it around,” and “they were killed from the doors of the lodges as they passed.” The spirit-releasing part of the ritual took place the following morning. Part of the ceremonial feast is described as follows:

The next morning they took all the tongues into the lodge in the center of the village, and cooked them by digging a hole in the center of the lodge, and putting into it green hide for a lining, and putting in water and tongues, and throwing hot stones into the water, and so boiling the tongues. [Grinnell 1908: 317]

During the fourth night, Motseyoef brought buffalo again into the camp circle. “There were so many of them that the young calves and cows rubbed against the lodges, and caused the poles to bend and squeak.” Motseyoef ordered the killing stopped when an adequate number of buffalo had been taken.

The presence of young calves in the herd indicates that this event took place in the fall. Informants told this story reverently to Grinnell and with astonishing detail because it is part of the account of Motseyoef’s return from Nowah’wus with *nimāhenan*.

It is likely, although not mentioned in Grinnell’s report, that all lodges in camp were closed during the buffalo-calling ritual, including the smoke holes, and that all fires were extinguished. Grinnell’s (1907:182) informants described this in another medicine hunt account. It is to be expected that the dogs were taken inside the lodges and were muzzled before and during the arrival of the buffalo.

The impounding of buffalo in a camp circle was a common type of Tsistsistas buffalo hunting. In another account published by Grinnell (1923, 1:264–69), two shamans walked to a herd and, using eagle wing fans, lead it through the entrance into camp.

When a herd was brought into a pound, the location and construction of the feature was determined by the shaman who conducted the buffalo-calling ceremony. As the impounding portion of the Mas-saum ceremony (chapter 6) indicates, the spirit lodge was built in the center of the camp, the corral next to it; ideally, the lodges were arranged in a half circle behind both. Because Tsistsistas corrals were usually built in an arroyo or “under a cutbank or bluff, which formed one or more walls of the pen” (Grinnell 1923, 1:264), an arrangement of the camp in a clean half-circle was sometimes made impossible by dissected terrain. Nevertheless, semblance to it was required.

Usually, a Tsistsistas enclosure was “a large pen out of wood and

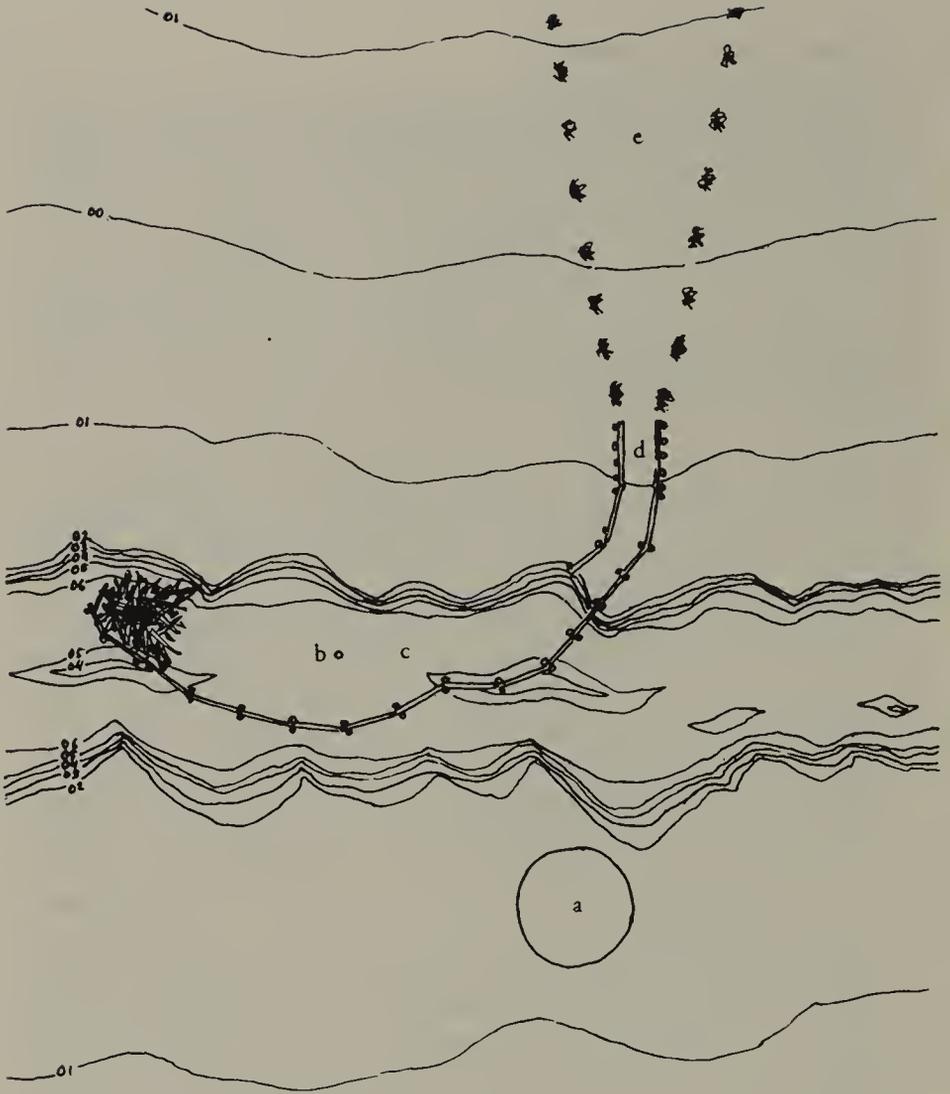


FIG. 3. Buffalo pound of a Tsistsistas medicine hunt. Contour intervals in meters. A corral such as the one shown needed only one restraining wall downslope because the cutbank of the arroyo formed a natural second wall too steep for the trapped animals to breach. The lower end of the corral was closed with driftwood and tree branches. The restraining wall started at the chute and consisted of heavy timber stacked between paired posts. The structure was sturdy enough to withstand and deflect the weight of the herd on its downhill rush. The brush wings of the drive lane extended well beyond the crest of the hill, thus masking the trap waiting below. Once the herd had passed the crest of the hill, its own speed and mass made an escape, from the chute looming up, impossible. (a) Spirit lodge; (b) medicine lance or medicine pole; (c) corral; (d) chute; and (e) brush wings of drive lane.



FIG. 4. The sketch of the buffalo pound is made from the perspective of the spirit lodge.

brush, with a gap in one side, and a chute with diverging wings running far out on the prairie, fences which shall hide the people from the buffalo” (Grinnell 1923, 1:266).

Variations in the construction were due to the individual shaman’s, the “poundmaker’s,” demands. He himself was instructed concerning the pound in a dream, or his design was confirmed in a dream.

Generally the entrance to the corral was formed by two tight fences eight to ten feet high—the chute—behind which trenches were dug where guards hid until the buffalo were passing. From these parallel fences the wings, consisting of spaced branches and young trees, extended perhaps 500 yards out. Rock piles, reported from buffalo drive features of many northern Plains tribes (e.g., Kehoe 1973; Malouf and Conner 1962), are neither reported nor remembered as having been used in Tsistsistas wing composition.

To bring a herd into a pound, a shaman used the ritual already described. In one case mentioned by Grinnell (1923, 1:266–68), two shamans walked to a herd and led it into the wings and the corral using eagle wing fans and singing their spirit songs.

Sometimes two buffalo lances, later, arrows, were made by the shaman and were used as ritual emblems by two messengers who went out, circled a buffalo herd, and coached it with the shafts to walk into the wings and into the corral from where the shaman was calling. For antelope medicine hunts, antelope arrows were used (see drawing,

Grinnell 1923, 1:284). Sometimes, and even in the Late Historic period, such an arrow, which bore no semblance to an arrow or dart released from a weapon, consisted of

a long upright, with a short cross-piece tied to it near the upper end. The upright and the cross-piece were wound with a strip of wolf fur, and to the top of the upright was tied a magpie feather. [Grinnell 1923, 1:290]

Planted in the corral itself, this Tsistsistas medicine lance resembles the "medicine pole" observed as a feature of Plains Cree and Assiniboine pounds (see Kehoe 1973:174-75) and may serve to explain the latter. The medicine lance of the Massaum ceremony (chapter 6) is used in the corral.

The decoration of the medicine lance described previously in Tsistsistas religious symbolism signifies two animals important in the medicine hunt complex: the magpie, who helped the Tsistsistas runner in the Great Race near the Black Hills, and who won it with him, and the wolves, gamekeepers of the spirit herds, assistants of Ehyophstah and messengers of the Massaum.

The two men using buffalo lances, or arrows, should be called messengers, not runners, because they neither ran nor pulled a herd in. In the Tsistsistas interpretation, the animal spirit helpers of the shaman were placed in the ceremonial weapons for the duration of the hunt; their power stirred the herd into movement and gave it direction. Runners achieved great ritual and technical importance in Blackfoot buffalo drives (Grinnell 1926:230; Kehoe 1973; Schaeffer 1962). In Tsistsistas medicine hunts, runners were not used because the animals were not "driven" but were called.

The Tsistsistas took elk in medicine hunts featuring ritual and pounds similar to buffalo hunts. Antelope were called into surrounds or into pits.

It is suggested here that virtually every Proto-Tsistsistas and, perhaps, until the eighteenth century, every Tsistsistas collective hunt was a medicine hunt under shaman leadership. After this date, the Tsistsistas dispersions coupled with the acquisition of horses initiated collective buffalo "runs" on horseback outside the continuing medicine hunt complex.

The Spirit Lodge

The Proto-Tsistsistas spirit lodge ritual, as expressed in Tsistsistas time, was of four types: (1) the lodge where spirits were called for

information or advice regarding important matters; (2) the lodge where spirit allies were called before medicine hunts and from which they were released after the slain animals' spirits had been formally freed and sent away; (3) the lodge from which the *omotome* of the deceased were released after the conclusion of the secondary burial or where a *hematasooma* might be joined with an *omotome* to be kept temporarily by a person or persons of the family of the deceased; and (4) the lodge where a sick person was healed or where a person physically "dead" was revived by calling his *hematasooma*, already free, back into his body.

The wolf lodge of the Massaum must also be seen as a spirit lodge where the *maheyuno* and *maiyun* were called and where some spirits were joined with the physical forms of impersonators who played roles in the sacred drama.

The old Proto-Tsistsistas and Tsistsistas concept of the spirit lodge derives from the configuration of the sacred mountain (e.g., Noah'wus, Bear Butte) that itself is a spirit lodge and that is associated with *makeonoxsz*, the sacred caves, and *heszevoxsz*, the underground caverns where the animal spirits reside.

Two Tsistsistas terms for the spirit lodge ritual are *nisimàtozom* (from *nisimàtoz*, "bringing a spirit ally," or "conjuring" a spirit helper, and *om*, "lodge") and *mxeom* (from *mxee*, "apparition," "manifestation from the spirit world," and *om*, "lodge").

The first of the four types of spirit lodge performances listed has survived to the present. It is related, as is to be expected, to the "shaking tent rite" of other Algonquian groups (e.g., see Burgesse 1944; Cooper 1944; Flannery 1944), indicating a common origin.

In this *mxeom*, the shaman causes spirits to come to the lodge and to express themselves there. In its most dramatic form, sketched later, the shaman places himself at the mercy of the spirits; without their swift intervention, he would not survive the ordeal. He neither becomes "possessed" nor ecstatic. He does not perform tricks and does not speak in voices, although his speech apparatus might be used by the spirits directly at other times. He does not send out from the spirit lodge forces of his *hematasooma*, as he would during game-calling ceremonies.

This ritual was conducted by a shaman following a request by a member or members of his group or, on the last day of the Maxhoctonstov, the Ceremony of the Sacred Arrows, as a regular feature integrated with the ceremony. There were many variations of this performance, all dependent on a specific shaman's style that in turn

was dependent on the spirits' tolerance. Reduced to essentials, the main events were the following:

A large lodge, the *mxeeom*, consisting of two or three regular tipi covers, was raised in the evening facing east. Behind it a bundle of tall willows or saplings was tied to a pole on which offerings of cloth were exposed (compare the Evenk's *kamlanye* and *turu* pole with gifts of cloth outside the spirit lodge). Near dawn, at the end of the ritual, these offerings were distributed in camp. Because they had been touched by the spirits during the night they had acquired protective power.

Inside the lodge a fire was started after nightfall, and many witnesses assembled, sitting in a tight circle along the inner wall of the lodge. On the west side of the fireplace, a small buffalo-skin tipi was erected; sometimes, instead, a small sweat lodge was built there. A line of coals extended from the entrance of the buffalo tipi across the fire to the east entrance of the large lodge; on these, sweetgrass was burned all night. The shaman entered wearing a breechclout and moccasins; he was usually painted red.

He was tied barefoot within the packed circle of witnesses. He was tied with four bowstrings: each finger of each hand separately to the next finger, both hands tied together behind his back; each toe of each foot separately to the next toe; both feet tied together and tied securely to his bound hands. This operation was executed by sceptics who were called up and charged to tie the shaman as hard as their strength permitted. Their efforts were closely watched by the people present.

In a bent, inextricable position he was placed inside the buffalo tipi; sometimes, when no interior lodge was used he was tied to a tipi pole (Grinnell 1923, 2: 113). A rope was tied around his neck and, extending through the pole frame of the buffalo tipi, was held by either four or eight men sitting next to it on opposite sides. A painted rattle and an eagle-bone whistle were placed near the shaman before the buffalo tipi was closed.

The fires had died down. The shaman sang one summoning song to call one of his spirit helpers. When he had ended, the assistants raised him inside the buffalo tipi by pulling hard on the rope. When the men dropped him he lay dead.

The helping spirit, traveling with the speed of thought, entered at the top of the *mxeeom* and rushed down to free and revive his shaman associate. The rope slackened. He came with the force of a whirlwind and caused the large lodge to vibrate violently. The whistle sounded,

the rattle bounced among the lodge poles, and lightning flashes lit the dark.

Then the spirit helper spoke. He identified himself by name. If he was the spirit self of a person who had died within the memory of persons present, he was recognized by voice. He answered questions and informed on missing persons or objects and predicted future events.

Some spirits who came were *maiyun*; some were celestial spirits. All of a shaman's spirit helpers could come one after another. All arrived with a terrifying display of power. Animal voices approached from below ground and from the night sky. The spirits left after the shaman, who sometimes had remained silent after the inviting songs, released them with a parting song. Their departure was as impressive as their arrival had been. The fire was started again, and the shaman left the buffalo tipi. The bowstrings with which he had been tied were found knotted into a ball, sometimes in an observer's clothing.

During the spirit lodge ritual of the 1908 Maxhoetonstov, as outlined by William Somers, a participant, to Truman Michelson (in Powell 1969, 2: 889–90), four inviting songs were sung not by the shaman, Bull Thigh, but by “medicine people, both men and women.” The spirits who were called were not Bull Thigh's spirit helpers but seven celestial spirits. They advised on tribal affairs and prophesied the Tsistsistas future. Bull Thigh, in this performance not permitted to call on his personal spirit allies, faced certain death by hanging in the small tipi if the first of the spirits had not responded quickly to the summoning calls of the medicine people.

The spirit lodge has remained an integral part of the Maxhoetonstov from Motseyoef's original instruction of this ceremony to the present. Motseyoef, who was prominent in Proto-Tsistsistas and Tsistsistas history, was a famous spirit lodge conductor.

Some shamans, during a spirit lodge ritual or at other occasions, were able, with the aid of *maiyun* helpers, to dissolve physical form temporarily, thus making themselves invisible and, after moving their *hematasooma* to another location, to reconnect the two there. Castaneda (1979: 301–10) surprised readers by describing an action with a similar outcome in which he says he participated. Tsistsistas memory retains the names of persons who could perform such feats. Grinnell (1923, 2: 114–17) mentions Stone Forehead and Ice in this context, and publishes Ice's personal account and interpretation in full (see also Curtis 1911: 123–24).

Tsistsistas lore also recounts many instances in which shamans

called on their spirit allies in emergencies in broad daylight, in view of many witnesses, and caused them to move objects, cover the Tsistsistas against enemies, or change weather conditions to hide people in flight.

The Sweat Lodge

The Proto-Tsistsistas pre-Massaum sweat lodge is mentioned in the Ehyophstah accounts (Grinnell 1907: 173–78; Kroeber 1900: 179–81) in which the spirits heal the injured young man in a sweat lodge set inside a mountain (see chapter 5 for a detailed interpretation). That the healing performance centered on four successive applications of water to hot stones is listed there; the physical structure of the sweat lodge, however, is not described.

It appears that originally the Proto-Tsistsistas' sweat lodge was a special kind of spirit lodge in which heat and steam were used for purification so that participants could receive the unadulterated power of the spirits unharmed directly. Its physical structure did not symbolize a sacred mountain as that of the spirit lodge described in the preceding section but the skeletal form of a sacred animal. During Plains times, the Tsistsistas sweat lodge, with its oval form, its north-to-south organized willow frame, and its single willow shaft extending from the east entrance to the western end, binding the feature as a backbone, may, as Curtis (1911: 116–17) suggests, have symbolized a buffalo who in turn symbolized the earth. Previously, in northern Canada, the frame may have symbolized a caribou or a moose.

During early Tsistsistas times the sweat lodge served the following purposes: (1) to heal a sick person or revive a person already physically dead; (2) to place participants in a purified condition before major ceremonies or a war expedition and to change them to normal condition afterwards; and (3) to call spirit helpers before and after medicine hunts, including in this sequence the sending away of the spirits of the slain animals.

Apparently, either a spirit lodge or a sweat lodge could be used at the time of the secondary burial of humans when the *omotome* of the deceased were joined with their *hematasoomao* in a special ceremony. Animals, whole or in part interred with the bundles containing the human remains, received a similar treatment.

According to information collected by Curtis (1911: 117) among the Northern Cheyennes, the origin of the sweat lodge was ascribed by them to the buffalo, thus giving the Suhtai version. It is interesting that other northern Plains tribes (e.g., Mandans, see Bowers 1950:

221–23) also traced the origin of the sweat lodge to instruction by animal spirits.

After Motseyoef had used shamanistic power to clear the Black Hills from the mortal enemies of the Tsistsistas, the mysterious Two Faces (chapter 5), he collected the skulls and bones of slain members of his people and brought them back to life in a sweat-lodge ceremony. The miraculous boy, Stone (Grinnell 1926: 180–81), performed the same feat in a sweat lodge for his seven murdered uncles, and Falling Star (Grinnell 1926: 182–83) used the sweat lodge to heal the severely injured victims of powerful sorcerers.

Two Tsistsistas terms for the sweat lodge are *emaom* (from *ema*, “concealed,” and *om*, “lodge”) and *vonhäom* (from *vonä* or *vonhä*, “to lose by heat,” and *om*, “lodge”). The first, the “concealed lodge,” refers to a small sweat lodge taken by a single person or a number of persons with or without elaborate ritual. The second designates a ceremonial sweat lodge, a “lodge of purification by heat.” Petter (1915: 1029, 1035) was told by a priest, Lefthandbull, that the *vonhäom* observed during reservation time, with its emphasis on curing, was a rather recent derivation. Curtis (1911: 118–19) published a sweat lodge prayer in which the shaman conductor called “my sweat lodge” *nai-maomé*; either the rendition should have been *naemaom*, or Curtis recorded a valid dialect variation based on the term *emaom*.

Grinnell (1923, 1: 272–73) quoted an account dated 1867 in which a sweat lodge was used for purification prior to sacrificing the skin of a freshly killed white buffalo to the Supreme Being:

The next day a pole was set in the ground to which the white hide was to be tied. Before this was done a very large sweat-house was built, and many of the old men went in to take a sweat and pray. Before they went in, women came in crowds, bringing their children, and various offerings—calico, beads, moccasins, and other gifts—which were to be tied to the pole. . . . Before it was folded up to be tied to the pole, the hide was painted on the hair side with blue paint. The folded hide was tied to the pole by an old man who was naked, and was painted. While he was tying the hide to the pole he was constantly praying, and as each child was brought to him with an offering he prayed, passing his hands over its head, arms, and sides, and asking for good luck for it, long life, health, and abundance of everything. Other old men stood about the man who was tying the hide, praying fervently.

The Buffalo Ceremony of the sweat lodge, which was observed in part by Grinnell (1919) in 1906 and interpreted by Anderson (1956), is a Suhtai derivation emphasizing health and healing built upon old

Tsistsistas and Suhtai concepts. It is significant that the ceremonial bundle associated with this ceremony was sheltered in the Suhtai Sacred Hat Tipi (Anderson 1956: 95). The sweat lodge frame of this ceremony did not use a single east-to-west willow ridge pole to bind the other poles but used two (Grinnell 1919: 367–69), thus altering the original structure.

A *vonhäom* was held by a shaman on his own cognizance or following a request made by a pledger and his wife. In the latter case, both had important roles in the ceremony. Often, four to eight persons participated; at special occasions many more took part. Each performance varied in detail, according to the shaman's personal approach. Because of this, sometimes young trees were implanted in the ground around the sweat lodge. Each detail of the ceremony had symbolic significance. After preparations, the ceremony might last one day or one day and one night. When a sweat lodge was conducted on a war expedition (Grinnell 1923, 2: 10, 196–97), it was of necessity of shorter duration. From World War I to the Vietnam War, Tsistsistas serving in the U.S. Army underwent a secret purification ritual related to the sweat lodge before going into combat. With this ritual they also submitted themselves to the ancient law of Tsistsistas tribal soldiers to protect war prisoners and noncombatants, if necessary with their own lives.

The principal element groupings of the sweat lodge might be outlined as follows (see Curtis 1911: 116–23; 1930: 140–42; Grinnell 1919; 1923, 2: 133):

A circular hole about eighteen inches in diameter and twelve inches deep was cut. The sod removed was shaped into a low mound about thirty-five feet slightly northeast of the hole, and a buffalo bull skull was placed on it. Over the hole the sweat lodge frame was raised, consisting of willow shoots placed in the ground on the south and north sides. These were bent and tied together in the center in north-south pairs. Because of the east-west orientation of the lodge, a single willow ridge pole tied the frame securely from east to west. The central hole was sometimes covered with sand in which an earth painting was outlined in red. The ground inside the lodge was laid out with sage. The willow poles were painted red on the south side, black on the north side. The frame was closed with five buffalo robes; four were attached from the four ceremonial directions; one was placed on top. Then a tipi cover was put over the structure.

An earth indentation was made on smoothed ground before the buffalo skull, which had been painted and faced the lodge entrance.

Later the ashes from the ceremonial smoking of the sacred pipe were deposited on the earth indentation. On the east side of the lodge below the buffalo skull a log-and-boulder pyramid a few feet high was raised to heat the stones.

The first five stones brought into the sweat lodge were painted by the pledger's wife: two red, two black, one red and black. They were placed in the earth hole in their ceremonial positions. Two fire sticks were used to carry the stones: One was painted red; the other was painted black. Cedar and other herbs were placed on the heated painted stones for purification. More hot stones were carried in, and the lodge was closed tightly.

Four cycles of four spirit songs each were sung. After each song, water was poured on the stones. Each person present received a drink of water before steam filled the lodge. After each cycle of four parts, the lodge covers were raised on the west and east side to clear the lodge of steam. A sacred pipe was passed before each cycle, was smoked out, and the ashes were deposited carefully on the earth indentation before the buffalo skull. The ceremony was concluded with final prayers and a ceremonial smoke; the participants sat in a row to the east of the sweat lodge facing the rising sun.

Curtis (1911: 116) stated:

With the Cheyenne the sweat bath is one of the most essential religious observances. Through its agency their purified minds and bodies are brought into accord with the supernatural powers. Even when it is employed in healing disease the thought is that the power of the spirits, not the steam, will expel the sickness.

By the time the sweat lodge descriptions extant in the literature were collected by ethnographers, a shift had taken place in the use of the sweat lodge, emphasizing healing. The important spirit lodge aspect of the sweat lodge, as the spirit lodge itself, along with the mystical orientation of Tsistsistas shamanism outlawed by missionaries and reservation officials, had declined. What was left had gone underground. With the game herds gone, animals could no longer be brought by a shaman's animal spirit ally—or perhaps both had agreed to leave it be. With the rise of Christianized and acculturated Cheyenne factions promoted by all segments of White society, eventually the last of the Tsistsistas *zemaheonevesso*—the shaman group—formed a circle around the Sacred Arrow tipi that was invisible to outsiders.

The Tsistsistas sweat lodge as a purification and healing institution has endured to the present.

The *Coincidentia Oppositorum*

When Proto-Tsistsistas bands entered the Dakota grasslands, they brought with them institutionalized contrary behavior patterns expressed through individuals.

In his study of the various aspects of this behavior, Ray (1945), although omitting the ceremonial clowns of the Pueblos, sees the center of development among Algonquian groups of the Great Lakes area and the diffusion of traits from there into the Plains. He agrees that the Tsistsistas achieved the greatest elaboration of contrary themes of any North American group but believes that “the Cheyenne were essentially borrowers” (Ray 1945:105), adopting traits from Assiniboines, Dakotas, Pawnees, and others.

Ray’s interpretation of Tsistsistas borrowing is based solely on the assumption maintained in the literature on Plains archaeology, ethnohistory, and ethnology that these tribes preceded Tsistsistas into the grasslands. This assumption is false; the Proto-Tsistsistas, in my view, arrived in the Dakotas nearly 1,500 years earlier than the groups mentioned. If borrowing of contrary behavior took place in the Plains, there is no question that the Tsistsistas were the chief donors. Contrary and noncontrary thoughts and actions are essential to the Massaum, which features the ceremonial union of both and, therefore, the dissolution of opposites.

In Proto-Tsistsistas time, there were two types of contrary shamans—*hemaneh* and *hohnuhka*—both representing achievement in symbolic androgynization while each pursued and realized it on different levels (see chapter 1). Although they provided one of the intellectual and ethical foundations that made the Massaum possible, they remained outside it after they had assisted in the formulation of the Massaum Hohnuhka society. In the literature on the Cheyenne all three have been thoroughly misunderstood.

Eliade (1965) wrote a lucid book, which was a conclusive set of statements on the great volume of ancient and modern literature concerning the *coincidentia oppositorum*, or, the mystery of the totality, and androgyny, the union of opposites preceding the creation of the universe.

This vast literature, built on ancient universal beliefs, sees, according to Eliade, creation as a divine intervention dissecting the compact and homogeneous primal mass, or the “chaos” of undifferentiated unity, into form in order that the universe could exist. With creation, division into parts and into sets of opposites, such as light and dark,

earth and sky, male and female sexuality, physical and spiritual form, and so forth took place. Androgyny describes a return to the plenitude and totality of potentialities before separation, a search for the oneness of all things.

The Proto-Tsistsistas might perhaps not have said it exactly in this way, but they must have thought it. *Hemaneh* and *hohnuhka* are both travelers in the androgynal quest.

Hemaneh in Tsistsistas means “half-man, half-woman” (chapter 1). Hoebel (1978: 83–85), speaking of the nineteenth century, describes them as highly respected doctors and officiators at the “scalp dance” and social dances. His interpretation of the *hemaneh* phenomenon, however, is flawed because of his injection of psychological notions inadequate for the understanding of Tsistsistas concepts. He sees the *hemaneh* as “neurotically anxious about sex relations and their own virility” and as finding “their refuge in total rejection of male sexuality” (Hoebel 1978: 102).

The opposite is true. A *hemaneh* united in himself both male and female sexuality. His own person constituted a sacred marriage. Grinnell (1923, 2: 39) reports that a *hemaneh* had both a man and a woman’s name. According to Eliade (1965: 116), the transvestite shaman “symbolically restores the unity of Sky and Earth, and consequently assures communication between Gods and men. This bisexuality is lived ritually and ecstatically; it is assumed as an indispensable condition for transcending the condition of profane man.”

This ritual bisexuality was sometimes triggered by the demands of a shaman’s spirit helper (e.g., among Chukchis, see Eliade 1974: 125) or by a “celestial spouse” (Eliade 1974: 168) or followed selection by supernatural powers (e.g., among Ngadju Dayaks of Borneo, see Eliade 1974: 352–53). As a specific feature, it was generally found wherever shamanism existed.

Tsistsistas *hemaneh* wore women’s clothes to make visible the “other,” the contrary condition of struggle for the termination of opposites in physical and spiritual appearances. Their struggle was life-long; because of their ritual bisexuality, they were barred from sexual behavior. They did not have to use inverted speech because they were inverted by costume already.

The last two *hemaneh* shamans died in 1868 (Pipe–Pipe Woman) and 1879 (Good Road–Good Road Woman) (Grinnell 1923, 2: 39–40). During the bitter White wars of these decades, they had been forced to hide their identity to outsiders behind dressing up “as old men.”

Hobnubka in Tsistsistas refers to doing the opposite of what is said (chapter 1). They used inverted speech; others addressing them had to apply the same pattern.

Dorsey (1905, 1:24–26) described them as inverted warriors forming a society apart from other warrior societies; they were regarded as pure; they were philosophers. Hoebel (1978:102–103) maligned these contraries by asserting that they “seek validation in an exaggerated male rejection of heterosexuality.” He adds that “the Contrary, then, is the Cheyenne warrior male with a monomania for what might be called military virility.” About their main symbol, Hoebel has remarked: “Symbolically, the Thunder Bow suggests the male sex organ tied and restrained.”

Grinnell (1923, 2:79–86), however, like Dorsey, treated the *hobnubka* with respect. He saw them as individuals set apart from other men. He reported that at any time there was only a handful of them; they were not a society. A man became *hobnubka* because he feared Thunder. He carried “a peculiar lance which was the especial property of Thunder” and that protected him. Originally, he said, they were single men living alone, but during the 1860s a few married men carried Thunder Bows. A man remained a *hobnubka* until another man requested the lance after incurring overwhelming fear of Thunder. They and their few possessions were painted red because they were imbued with the power of Thunder. They could not be touched by anyone.

I see the *hobnubka* of the middle of the nineteenth century as keepers of a *hobnubkawo*’, a lightning lance, which was passed from keeper to keeper through time. The lance itself was reinterpreted as bow lance with an unstrung bowstring after the Tsistsistas adopted the bow and arrow, perhaps sometime during the fifth century A.D. Although it was topped with a projectile point painted blue, it was a shamanistic spirit weapon, not a physical weapon comparable to other lances. In form, the *hobnubkawo*’ itself was inverted: It was a lance shaped like a bow five feet long. The inversion of this ritual weapon was based on its meaning: It was capable of containing the spiritual and the striking power of lightning.

Originally, the *hobnubka* shamans appear to have played a key role in the defense of Proto-Tsistsistas and Tsistsistas territory against intrusion by outsiders. Late in Tsistsistas history, after the formation of soldier societies, their services were no longer crucial for survival.

During the nineteenth century, *hobnubka* rarely participated in raiding. In defensive warfare, they fought with extreme bravery, off

FIG. 5. *Hohnuhkawo'*, the awesome lightning lance in the form of a double-curved thunder bow. The sketch attempts to depict the weapon that, according to Tsistsistas tradition, was once carried by Motseyoef himself. It was nearly six feet long, with a white wooden shaft and a white bowstring. The handle was wrapped with white "male" sage tied in two places with white bear intestines, the ends of which hung down loosely. Three bundles of five eagle feathers each were tied to the handle and both arms of the weapon. Whether or not the stone projectile point was painted is not known today.

Instead of eagle feathers, Thunder bows sometimes featured owl, hawk, or magpie feathers. Occasionally, the complete body of a bird was tied near the tip. Usually the shaft was painted red, the projectile point blue.



by themselves, carrying only their mysterious weapon. These lances were repaired and renewed at the time of the Ceremony of the Sacred Arrows.

In Proto-Tsistsistas and early Tsistsistas times, when lances and darts were used in hunting and warfare, the lightning lance must have featured an inverted “crooked” shaft.

Ultimately, the *hobnuhkawo'* was a special type of spirit lance reserved for *nonoma hemāhe*, the spirit of lightning as the messenger and dart of Nonoma, the *maiyun* of Thunder. He was called into the *hobnuhkawo'* by the shaman keeper at special instances under the power granted to him by Nonoma.

Perhaps the *hobnuhka* of the middle nineteenth century were no longer shamans and were no longer capable of using the spirit lance for its original purpose—the unleashing of the *tremendum* of lightning from the *hobnuhkawo'*. Perhaps they had become mere keepers who reverently maintained the sacred object. Still, the initiatory terror of selection by Nonoma remained the prerequisite for becoming a *hobnuhkawo'* keeper.

The significance of the *hobnuhkawo'* and the *hobnuhka* shaman in Proto-Tsistsistas and early Tsistsistas times can be deduced from analogy. Among the Enets (or Khantys) of the Yenisey River of northern Siberia, for instance, the highest of three categories of shamans, the *budtode*, had the power to contact the sky spirits (Prokofyeva 1963:124). They were shamans who used a “sky drum” and a “sky bow” (Prokofyeva 1963:153, fig. 31) in their association with the “upper world and the sky god.” The *budtode*, as separate from the other categories of Enet shamans, also possessed an “earth drum” for their work with the spirits of the world below. They comprised both opposites within their own person. Therefore, according to the terms discussed earlier, the *budtode* were acting in the realm of the *coincidentia oppositorum* and were travelers in the androgynal quest.

Proto-Tsistsistas and early Tsistsistas *hobnuhka* shamans transcended opposition through obedience to the sacred, through solitude, meditation, asexuality, and a contrary behavior denoting the fearsome, irrevocable selection by Nonoma and the presence of the *hobnuhkawo'*.

The third Tsistsistas contrary institution, the Hohnuhka Society, was created with the Massaum as essential element in the ceremony. The society was based on concepts already expressed in *hemaneh* and *hobnuhka*; It carried Tsistsistas contrary philosophy to a logical conclusion. The name Massaum derives from the performance of the

Hohnuhka Society in the ceremony, *massa'ne* meaning “crazy,” or more precisely, “acting contrary to normal.”

The *hemaneh* and *hohnuhka* in possession of a *hohnukawo'* remained outside the Hohnuhka Society. Members of this society were shamans, both men and women, and they conducted initiation ceremonies for new members once every few years. Grinnell (1923, 2: 204–10) observed the public part of one from outside the ceremonial contrary lodge in which the main events took place. The main task of the Hohnuhka Society was its performance in the Massaum. Its members expressed contrary behavior clearly during (1) the initiation ceremony; (2) in the contrary lodge set up inside the Massaum camp circle; and (3) in the actions of members during the Massaum.

Curtis (1911: 115), who saw the society perform in Oklahoma and Montana, says that it claimed

the ability to perform remarkable if not supernatural feats, such as lifting great weights, jumping extraordinary distances, throwing their fellow men about as though they were without weight, taking objects from the bottom of kettles filled with boiling soup, and dancing barefoot on hot coals. The Indians state that they used internally some herb to make it possible for them to perform these superhuman feats of strength.

Petter (1915: 699–700) gives the Tsistsistas term for this herb as *hestamōkan*.

Their astounding feats are mentioned also by Mooney (1907: 415) and are corroborated by Tsistsistas participants and observers of the last Massaum ceremonies held in Oklahoma (in 1926 and 1927). When in a contrary condition, Hohnuhka Society members accomplished great feats in healing the sick and disabled, applying inverted techniques that included jumping high over people or tossing people through the air.

Membership in the Hohnuhka Society derived from—and may have been limited to—the group of shamans that represented cosmic fire (see Chapter 1). They are clearly related to the *wabeno* shamans of the Central Algonquians (Grim 1983: 67, 129, 144–49) and shared with them a common heritage.

The *wabeno* phenomenon is not clearly understood; it is well known, however, that shamans of this category opposed European intrusion as well as the rise of the Midewiwin Medicine Society. This society developed among Central Algonquians during the seventeenth century (Müller 1954) as a reaction to European encroachment (Keesing 1939: 48–49) and fearful population losses as result of small-

pox epidemics introduced by Europeans (Schlesier 1975, 1976). Hickerson (1963) has demonstrated that the Midewiwin was not aboriginal. Ethnographers who investigated the Midewiwin generally adopted the opinion of practitioners of this society who were in conflict with the *wabeno* and therefore put them in an unfavorable light.

In his recent study of the *wabeno*, Krusche (1981) has summarized the existing knowledge. The term *wabeno* (*wabano*) means "it dawns," "it is day." *Wabanowiwini* refers to "men to the dawn"; some sources describe them as associated with the star of dawn, or the morning star. The ceremonial object most characteristic of *wabeno* shamans was a flat tambourine drum painted with the image of the tutelary spirit; some *wabeno* were capable of shooting tiny, "magic" arrows from it. Wooden spirit figurines were set on the east side of a *wabeno* shaman's lodge. They were said to be capable of transforming themselves into various animals, and at night one might "be seen flying rapidly along in the shape of a ball of fire, or a pair of fiery sparks, like the eyes of some monstrous beast" (Krusche 1981: 83, after Hoffman). Most significant are reports about their control of heat, including the "mouthing" of red-hot stones, boiling water, bubbling maple syrup, and gunpowder set afire in their mouths. Predicting a cosmic crisis because of the European destruction of the Central Algonquian world, the *wabeno* said the world would be consumed by flames, that a *wabeno*, however, would be "standing in flames, but not to be burnt."

The Central Algonquian *wabeno* represented an ancient Northern Algonquian shamanistic tradition from which also Proto-Tsistsistas shamans of cosmic fire and contrary shamans are derived. The Hot Dances of the Hidatsas, Mandans, Arikaras, Pawnees, and others clearly originated from these Algonquian sources.

In the Massaum ceremony, Hohnuhka Society members served as the physical and spiritual doubles of spirits who assist Nonoma in the fertilization and regeneration of the earth and who ride and direct the thunder clouds bearing a *hohnuhkawo'* in their left hand.

Because the Massaum is an earth-giving ceremony, it is a ceremony of totalization performed in order that the success of a beginning (the beginning of Tsistsistas as a ceremonial and cultural unit in the realm of time and physical space with all its things) is assured.

Because of the requirement of totality, the Hohnuhka Society performed in the ceremony the "other"—the position of the opposite. The sacred animals of the Massaum could not be hunted by human

hunters or by the spirit selves of shamans assisted by animal spirits, as animals were hunted at other times.

In the Massaum, they were hunted by the doubles of the thunder spirits dressed as sacred clowns—contraries—using sacred miniature sky bows with four types of miniature arrows: one sharp, one blunt, one softened by chewing at the point, and one with a hardened rawhide point. These were ritual arrows used by ritual hunters on ritual game. Before the time of arrows, they were miniature sky lances. They killed ritually (using the herb *vanovan* that caused profuse bleeding) and brought the dead game back to life immediately. Ritually, at the same time, those killed, the sacred animals, also healed humans and themselves. One of the messages of the Massaum is that all is dead while alive, and alive while dead: Life and death have meaning only in regard to physical form but no meaning in the spirit world.

5. The Rise of the Tsistsistas

When the boy was about ten years old he desired to go and take part in one of the magic dances given by the great medicine-men. He insisted that his grandmother go to the chief of the medicine-men and gain for him admission to the dance. His grandmother told one of the medicine-men of the boy's desire, and so they let him enter the lodge. When the boy went into the lodge the chief said to him, "Where do you want to live?" Without ceremony the boy took his seat beside the chief. He wore his robe, and had the man who brought him in paint his body red, with black rings around his face, and around each wrist and ankle. The performance began at one end of the circle. When the boy's turn to perform came he told the people what he was going to do. With sweet grass he burned incense. Through the incense he passed his buffalo sinew bow-string east, south, west, and north. Then he asked two men to assist him while he performed. First he had them tie his bow-string around his neck, then cover his body with his robe, then pull at the ends of the string. They pulled with all their might, but could not move him. He told them to pull harder, and as they pulled at the string again his head was cut off and rolled from under his robe, and his body was left under the robe. They took his head and placed it under the robe with his body. Next they removed the robe, and there sat a very old man in place of the boy. They covered the old man with the robe, and when they removed the robe again, there was a pile of human bones with a skull. They spread the robe over the bones, and when it was removed there was nothing there. Again they spread the robe, and when they removed it, there was the boy again.

He arose with a smile. He did this once to show the people what he was. A long time afterward he grew up.

—A PART OF THE MOTSEYOEF STORY AS RECORDED BY GEORGE A. DORSEY AND EDWARD S. CURTIS

WHEN GROUPS with a world description and a shamanistic world interpretation related to those discussed in chapters 1 and 2 broke away from their old territories and searched for new ones, they were vulnerable not only to resistance by other groups already there but to the land itself. They were strangers to its physical features, the impact of its seasonal changes, the animal and plant species and their specific

ways, and so forth. Especially, they were ignorant of its spiritual life and therefore in danger of offending all spirits there. To overcome “spirit fences” set against them by shamans of other groups, they were forced to find and to plead with the major spirits of the region to receive permission to stay and the permission to hunt from the spirit gamekeepers and the animals themselves.

This quest was shaman’s work and dangerous; if it was successful, the new arrivals could stay; if not, they would depart. If permission to stay was granted along the hierarchy of spiritual powers, the newcomers entered a phase of instruction that eventually led to their integration with all forms of physical and spiritual life in the region. This achievement was always evidenced through solemn explanation in ceremonies granted by the spirits and acted out formally in their presence. The covenant that bound together all participants included a definition of the relationship between the new groups and older groups in or near the area. These understandings may underlie many, perhaps most, “movements” of North American Indian groups from prehistoric times to at least the early part of the European era.

When Northern Athapaskan groups ancestral to Navajos, for example, arrived in the Southwest before A.D. 1500, they passed through the stages outlined previously. Their shamans located the sacred mountain, Rim Hill (on maps often identified as Yale Point, northwest of Chinle), where Black God, who travels by lightning, keeps animal spirits under his protection. The Navajo Deer Huntingway (Luckert 1975: 22–59) describes the granting of hunting rights and hunting laws to Navajos by four sacred deer, the deer’s journey north and south from Black God’s home to mark Navajo territorial boundaries, and their naming of prominent locations within with Navajo words. Thus these northern hunters became Navajo. For centuries after, however, the spirits of the dead were thought to return to the north country—the “ancestral ghostland” (Luckert 1975: 199).

And Dhegiha Sioux groups passed through these stages when they arrived in the prairie country of northwestern Iowa between A.D. 1650 and 1660. Refugees and survivors of the smallpox epidemics that had decimated their people in Indiana during the 1640s and earlier, they meandered through portions of southeastern South Dakota and southwestern Minnesota (Schlesier 1975: 186–88). Eventually, perhaps coached by Iowa–Oto groups, they attempted to build their first permanent settlement since leaving the Ohio near the pipestone quarries. Their sorrows were not over. Because the Tsistsistas considered this area as part of their territory at that time, they struck the

newcomers hard, leaving so many Dhegiha Sioux dead that a great mound was raised over their bodies (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1972, 1:73). Additional years of wandering in country still hostile to them followed. Eventually the land accepted them and so did the Tsistsistas.

When negotiating a binding peace with the Tsistsistas, they received the sacred pole made from a mysterious tree as a gift from Thunder. "The Thunder birds come and go upon this tree, making a trail of fire that leaves four paths on the burnt grass that stretch toward the Four Winds. When the Thunder birds alight upon the tree it bursts into flame and the fire mounts to the top" (Fletcher and LaFlesche 1972, 1:218). The sacred pole became their symbol of identity. At the location of their peace meeting with the Tsistsistas (on the loop of the Big Sioux River; Schlesier 1980a:27-28, 146-47), they organized themselves into tribal divisions, formulated their political organization bound together with two sacred tribal pipes, and made three sacred tents: one to contain the sacred pole imbued with the power of Thunder, one to hold the white buffalo hide that allowed them to hunt buffalo, one to receive the war bundle to defend them against enemies. Thus they became Omaha.

The Origin of the Massaum

The earliest stories about the Proto-Tsistsistas, collected in Oklahoma by George Bent, son of William Bent and Owl Woman, from 1905 to his death in 1918, mention the ancient homeland "on the shore of great lakes in the far north" of a time "before the Cheyenne had bows and arrows" (Hyde 1968:4). From there they moved south, stopping at a number of places for some time. Eventually they reached the prairie of northeastern North Dakota: "There was no wood, nothing but the tall grass. . . . In this country there were no buffalo, but deer abounded" (Hyde 1968:6). Upon their arrival they were in the situation already discussed in regard to Navajos and Omahas. The stories, however, do not indicate that there were other groups in the region at that time.

The Ehyophstah account, in rudimentary versions published by Kroeber (1900:179-81) and Grinnell (1907:173-78; 1926:244-52), represents "the story of the beginning of the people, way up on the other side of the Missouri River" (Grinnell 1907:173). It is a sacred story because it describes the first stage in the initiation of the Massaum. It is presented in the following version in its essential elements using both published and unpublished sources:

They were camped in the foreign tall grass country. They were confused, and they were starving because animals were withheld from them. The country was empty and hostile. Two young men, the elder of whom was a shaman, were sent out as ceremonial scouts "to find something for the whole tribe, and bring back good news." The two traveled many days until, near death, they reached a blue mountain with a body of water at its base. They decided to die together on the mountain. When they crossed the water, the younger one was caught by a great horned water serpent, *ax-xea*, that slowly pulled him under. He said, "Tell my people what has happened to me. Tell them not to cry for me. Some mysterious power holds me." They parted crying, and the shaman continued walking toward the mountain. There a man appeared wearing a red wolf skin on his head and back, and he rushed in and killed the serpent. He told the shaman, "Go to the peak. You will see there a big rock, which is a door. There you will find an old woman. Tell her that grandfather has killed the serpent he has so long been trying to get."

When the shaman reached the rock, it opened like a door, and an old, old woman came out. He reported what had happened, and she followed him to the water. The Wolf Man and the shaman pulled the injured young man and the serpent out; the Old Woman butchered the *ax-xea*. Together they carried the young man and the serpent's meat to the mountain door. Inside was a large lodge, the *maheonox*, with a sweat lodge on one side. It was the lodge of the Wolf Man and the Old Woman. These two *maiyun* held a sweat lodge ritual for the dying young man and healed him. Then the Old Woman gave each of them a white flint knife and fed them from stone bowls that were white as snow. She asked them about the purpose of their visit, and they explained the condition of their people.

The two spirits took pity on them. A very handsome young woman, Ehyophstah, was brought into the lodge, and the Wolf Man asked, "Do you want to take this woman for your sister, or do either of you wish to marry her?" The shaman answered, "My friend here is poorer than I [in regard to shamanistic knowledge]; let him take her for his wife." So it was agreed.

Then the Wolf Man let them see animals in the four directions, and said, "Now you shall go to your home. Take our daughter with you to your camp. It is very fortunate that one of you took her for his wife. She is to be a great helping power to your people. She will take everything that I have shown you to your people. Everything will follow her."

Before the three left, the Wolf Man instructed his daughter, "I send you there for a special purpose. Those poor people have only fish and a few birds to eat, but now that you are there, there will be plenty of game of all kinds; the skins of all these animals will also be useful for wearing."

When they stepped from the *maheonox* they faced south, standing in

this order: The Old Woman was on the east side; at her right side the Wolf Man, next to him Ehyophstah, then her husband, then the shaman. When they parted, the Wolf Man said, "My daughter, rest four times on your way." He meant four stops, not four nights, because he had given her the power to travel fast. When the three reached the camp of their people, the hidden animals of the Plains had followed them and let themselves be killed. The buffalo came up to the lodge in which Ehyophstah lived and rubbed against it, and she sat and laughed. She was loved, but she was not like other women; she would hardly ever speak.

Thus the strangers were admitted to the grasslands and were given the right to slay animals that lived there.

But the Wolf Man had given Ehyophstah one other instruction: If ever a buffalo calf was brought into camp, she should not express pity. After she had lived with her husband for eight years she disobeyed this rule one day and had to leave the people for her parent's lodge in the mountain. Her husband went with her, and never returned.

The Wolf Man of the story is Nonoma; the Old Woman is Eschelman; both are the keepers of animal spirits of the Plains. Ehyophstah, Yellow-haired Woman, is a buffalo spirit turned into a human to assist the Tsistsistas: Her parents placed her in the position of master spirit of animals and therefore gave her the power to bring game (among Selkups of northern Siberia it was also the daughter of the forest spirit who gave the animals to the hunters, Anisimov 1963b : 189).

Of the two young men, the elder is Motseyoef, the prophet and immortal androgyne shaman who, in Tsistsistas religious tradition, has played a crucial role from the first organization of Tsistsistas culture through later innovations to the present time. According to this tradition, he has been with the Tsistsistas a number of times, always returning when the survival of his people was seriously threatened. The *maheonox*, lodge of the *maiyun*, where Ehyophstah was given to Motseyoef's companion, is Nowah'wus—Bear Butte.

The healing ritual conducted in the sacred mountain reaffirmed the power of the sweat lodge as demonstrated by the *maiyun* themselves. It was again given by them to Motseyoef and Ehyophstah's husband because they had participated, that is, had been instructed in it. The ritual held inside Nowah'wus brought about the revivification of the young man who thereby was brought into a special condition that allowed him to eat of the spirit food served by Eschelman and to be with the holy woman, Ehyophstah. Motseyoef, because he was a shaman, already was in the condition of the initiated.

The giving of the Ehyophstah established a kin relationship be-

tween the *maiyun* and the Tsistsistas and a kin relationship between the Tsistsistas and the animals under the tutelage of the *maiyun* and Ehyophstah.

Because Ehyophstah had represented in her person the center of this relationship, her leaving put everything in question. And so the second stage in the intitation of the Massaum began.

Motseyoef returned alone to Nowah'wus where the *maiyun* made him the spiritual representative of the Tsistsistas. Nonoma and Esceheman taught him, for the Tsistsistas, the circular earth drawing, which is maintained to this day, that marks the earth region given to his people. This drawing is recognized by all spiritual powers of the universe and, when executed, calls for their attention and protection.

The earth giving to the Tsistsistas at Bear Butte was embedded in a larger frame of instruction by the *maiyun*—the Massaum. The ceremony, as taught to Motseyoef by Nonoma and Esceheman, explains the giving of the earth in the four directions around Nowah'wus. It commemorates the relationship of the Tsistsistas to the spirit world of the grasslands, the sacred relationship with animals as expressed through Ehyophstah's continuing spiritual presence, and the proper approach of hunting Plains herd animals by calling them into camps and pounds.

Motseyoef went back and led those who wanted to participate across the Missouri to Moxtavhohona—the Black Hills. He conducted the first Massaum ceremony at the foot of Nowah'wus. All of Tsistsistas tradition agrees that the Massaum was brought by Motseyoef and that the place, where the “wonderful dance” (Curtis 1930: 135) was begun, is at Bear Butte.

The gift of the Massaum required the existence of a cultural entity to which earth could be given and that served as protector of the realm over time under the laws annually explained in the performance of the ceremony. Thus formerly Northern Algonquian bands were forged into the Tsistsistas.

According to Tsistsistas tradition, they encountered the first resistance in the grasslands after they had moved to the Black Hills. These enemies are still called *haztova hotoxceo* (from *haztova*, “both,” in the sense of “on either side different,” and *hotoxceo*, “stars”)—two face star people. They preyed on Tsistsistas camps, killed people, and ate their flesh. They appeared invincible until Motseyoef, using shaman power, and acting under the grant of the spirits of the region, found their hideout in a cave in the southern part of the Black Hills and entirely destroyed them. He restored the remains of slaughtered

Tsistsistas to life in a sweat lodge ceremony which he conducted at the cave.

The Black Hills became the first and the permanent Tsistsistas homeland in the Plains. Nowah'wus has remained the very center of their world because the *maiyun* still speak there to those who go there on pilgrimages today.

But their movements after the granting of the Massaum were not restricted to the Black Hills and the adjacent region. Because the Massaum was an earth-giving ceremony, it granted to the Tsistsistas the right to hunt in the four directions from the wolf lodge—the ritual counterpart of Nowah'wus—wherever the ceremony was held. Therefore, any shifts of Tsistsistas hunting ranges were presaged by the staging of the Massaum. Once a Massaum was held in new territory in the grasslands for whatever reasons, including climatic changes and shifts in animal populations, the region accepted Tsistsistas guardianship.

This state of affairs had consequences concerning the relations of the Tsistsistas with other groups in the northern Plains. In a move of northern Tsistsistas and Suhtai against the Crows as late as either 1872 or 1873, for example, as Wooden Leg reported (Marquis 1967: 18–19), two abbreviated Massaums were held on two locations on the Little Bighorn River in the month of June on lands then hunted by the Crows. With the two performances, the Tsistsistas laid claim to this area versus Crow “ownership” or, perhaps, reconfirmed aboriginal rights to this area because they had hunted there a millennium before groups ancestral to the Crows arrived from the east.

The Massaum Camp and the Maheonox—the Wolf Lodge

Because of the nature of the Massaum, it had to be performed annually, and in midsummer (see the following section). For the duration of the ceremony, the Massaum camp, in which attendance of all Tsistsistas bands was required, represented the universe of the grasslands. Outside of it the world stood still. Ultimately, the Massaum camp was a spirit camp in which all spirits were present, from the Supreme Being, Maheo, through the *maheyuno* to the *maiyun*, to the spirits of animals and plants and to the spirits of the Tsistsistas. Each Massaum performance was a renewal of the covenant granted by the *maiyun* through the medium of the Tsistsistas: Here humans served as impersonators of the spirits.

Some spirits were too powerful to associate with humans directly. Maheo was venerated in the tree of the wolf lodge; the *maheyuno* were

represented in sacred bundles attached to the four major lodge poles.

The *maiyun* instructors of the Massaum—Nonoma and Esceheman—were impersonated by shaman actors after a purification ritual. This was also required of the other main performers including Hohnuhka Society members and the many who represented animal spirits.

The physical arrangement of the Massaum camp circle followed the demands of the ceremony. The Massaum camp circle consisted basically of three camps organized in relationship to the wolf lodge.

Because the wolf lodge was the ritual expression of the Maheonox, lodge of the *maiyun*, Bear Butte, it stood in the center of the camp circle. During the ceremony, it represented the center of the universe.

It was surrounded in a wide horseshoe circle by the lodges of the Tsistsistas camp representing the Tsistsistas. Within this was a second circle of lodges, the animal camp, whose spirits were impersonated by Tsistsistas performers. The camp of the Thunder spirits consisted of the single contrary lodge of the Hohnuhka Society raised to the southwest of the wolf lodge in front of animal lodges. After *nimāhenan*, the sacred arrows, had come to the Tsistsistas, their tipi stood to the southeast of the wolf lodge in front of the animal lodges.

The opening of the camp circle had to be directed toward Nowah'wus, Bear Butte, wherever the ceremony was held, to allow the extension of an unimpeded line connecting the lodge of the *maiyun* with its ritual counterpart in the Massaum camp. Furthermore, because on the fifth day of the ceremony (see chapter 6) the animals were called into the sacred pound constructed next to the wolf lodge, it was necessary that they enter from the direction of the sacred mountain and the *heszevoxsz*, the underground animal caverns, from where they had been released. A sizable source of water, preferably a running stream, was needed about half a mile beyond the opening of the camp circle for the cleansing ritual at the end of the ceremony.

Because the Massaum camp represented the universe of the grasslands, everything in it participated in the ceremony. From the sky derived the water used; from the ground the many paints applied by the performers. All species of vegetation were either directly or symbolically contained in the huge artifact inventory of the ceremony. Furthermore, the tree of the wolf lodge stood for the universe itself. All animal species were directly or symbolically represented by impersonators.

Each animal lodge represented a specific species or symbolically a

large number of species through one. Each animal lodge was under the direction of a shaman or a person whose tutelary spirit belonged to the species of that lodge.

Animal lodges were preparatory lodges in which participants were ritually transformed into animals before they responded to Ehyophstah's call (see chapter 6). In the context of the ceremony, animal lodges were the ritual equivalent of the *heszevoxsz*, the underground caverns in which Eschewan retained the animal spirits and from which she and Nonoma granted adequate numbers to maintain balance in the physical world of the grasslands.

The exception was a pair of sacred wolves and a kit fox who were not associated with the lodges of their species. The two wolves, one red, one white, belonged to the *maheonox*, the center lodge of the Massaum that was named "wolf lodge" in the ceremony because of their service. These and the kit fox were directly connected with the sacred mountain.

The male red wolf—*Maheone honehe*—is the wolf *maiyun*, the species-specific protector spirit, or *Artgeist*, of wolves. His female companion, the white wolf, is *Eversev honehe*—the Horned Wolf. They are the master animals of all wolves and are the guardians of the sacred mountain and the messengers of the *maiyun*. They were also the master hunters of the grasslands and, with their species, the protectors of animals. Nonoma wore the red wolf skin in the Ehyophstah story; sometimes he appeared as a red wolf in the physical world. In the Massaum, the red wolf was the messenger during the day; the white wolf was the messenger during the night.

After the Proto-Tsistsistas had become the Tsistsistas through adoption of the Massaum ceremony and the Massaum law, the two sacred wolves had been instructed by the *maiyun* to teach the newcomers the hunting way of the grasslands.

The wolves became—if they had not been already—the benefactors of the Tsistsistas, animal hunters emulated by human hunters. As the "invitation song" of wolves called raven, coyote, and fox to share in their kill, so did Tsistsistas hunters call wolves to their kill or set meat aside for their use.

Because the Massaum law emphasized the calling of game into camp or pound, the pound structure including the brush wings of the "drive lane" was built by women organized in a Young Wolf Society who acted as assistants to Ehyophstah and the sacred wolves (see chapter 6). This appears to have been the first society initiated by the Tsistsistas. Wolf songs addressed to wolf spirit helpers as mes-

sengers were often used by shamans in game-calling ceremonies in the spirit lodge or sweat lodge. According to Bent (Hyde 1968: 9–11), Tsistsistas dogs, and well into the late historic period, were nearly pure wolf.

In the *Massaum* observed by Grinnell (1923, 2: 285–336) in Montana in 1911, the skin of a yellow wolf (photograph in Powell 1969, 2: 455) was used instead of that of a red wolf, suggesting either error or a Suhtai modification because that performance was directed by White Frog, a Suhtai, and the bundle of the Suhtai priest Box Elder served in a prominent role (on Box Elder's wolf helpers, see Grinnell 1923, 2: 112). Throssel (Curtis 1911: 115–16) failed to mention the two special wolves in his two-page remarks about the *Massaum* he saw in Montana in 1909. During the last performances in Oklahoma, the single gray wolves of the 1926 (Curtis 1930: 128–31) and 1927 ceremonies were unpainted.

Voh'kis, the female kit fox, also belonged to the *maheonox*, the wolf lodge of the *Massaum*, and was prepared, that is, brought to life there. She served under the two wolves; the symbolism concerning this animal spirit is discussed later and described in detail in chapter 6.

The Blue Star, Spirit Wheels of Stone

The main persons of the Ehyophstah account were also the main performers in the *Massaum*. The instructors in the ceremony represented Nonoma and Esceheman. The female and male pledgers represented Ehyophstah and her husband. The ceremonial man who sat on the southeast side in the wolf lodge behind the Tsistsistas earth drawing, who served as witness throughout the ceremony and who formally concluded it on the fifth day, represented Motseyoef. Grinnell (1923, 2: 290), who did not understand the *Massaum*, called this priest “the master of ceremonies” (Bobtail Horse served in this position in 1911).

The annual ceremonial period recognized by the Tsistsistas before the adoption of the Oxheheom (the New Life Lodge) was begun and ended by signals from the sky. After the Suhtais were admitted, the Oxheheom was held at the time of the summer solstice; it was preceded on the camp site by the Maxhoetonstov (Ceremony of the Sacred Arrows) and was followed directly by the *Massaum*. This arrangement was a compromise resulting from intratribal and external demands; it altered the original requirements of the *Massaum*.

The early Tsistsistas ceremonial period consisted of fifty-six days. It started with the heliacal rising of the red star—Aldebaran (∞ Tau),

around June 22, on the same day or one day before summer solstice. This star flashed briefly in early dawn above the northeastern horizon. It ended fifty-six days later when the white star—Sirius (∞ CMa)—rose heliacally in the southeast. The Massaum was annually held in the middle of this period. The fifth, public day of the ceremony was tied to the heliacal rising of the blue star of summer dawn—Rigel (β Ori)—that flashed across the horizon from the Southeast. Rigel appeared for the first time exactly twenty-eight days after Aldebaran's first rising and was in turn followed by the rising of Sirius twenty-eight days later.

Bound between the brilliant beacons of Aldebaran and Sirius, the Massaum focused on Rigel. When the five main persons of the Ehyophstah account stepped outside the maheonox of Bear Butte, they stood facing south, observing the blue flash of Rigel in the early dawn. When the five main performers of the Massaum stepped from the wolf lodge in the dawn of the fifth day of the ceremony, they waited for Rigel's signal before they walked to the corral to start the sacred hunt.

In the Massaum, the blue star design in the traditional form of the German iron cross was painted on the buffalo skull placed on the deep earth on the west side of the wolf lodge and on the faces of Ehyophstah, her husband, and the seven women of the Young Wolf Society (chapter 6). Voh'kis, the kit fox, was also painted with blue lines. Instead of a kit fox, a blue fox could be used who would not require the ceremonial blue paint.

On the deepest levels of Massaum symbolism, Aldebaran represented Maheone Honehe, the Red Wolf *maiyun* (also a manifestation of Nonoma); Sirius represented Enevsev Honehe, Horned Wolf (also a manifestation of Eschewan); and Rigel represented Voh'kis (also a manifestation of Ehyophstah).

Most likely, scattered bands of Tsistsistas began moving toward the designated Massaum camp site following Aldebaran's rising, which would have allowed for a twenty-three day period prior to the first day of the ceremony. Experts able to accurately predict the day of Aldebaran's first appearance at dawn were available (Chapter 1).

Among surviving boulder configurations in the northern Plains, two, because of the complexity of their features and their structural alignments, have caused considerable attention. One is the Bighorn Mountain Medicine Wheel, located near the summit of Medicine Mountain of the Bighorn Mountains in northern Wyoming, at an

altitude of about 10,000 feet. The other is the Moose Mountain Medicine Wheel, situated atop Moose Mountain in the rolling prairie of southeastern Saskatchewan.

The Bighorn wheel consists of an irregular circle of large stones with a diameter of about ninety feet. In the center of this circle is an inner circle of large stones about twelve feet in outside diameter and about seven feet inside (Grinnell 1922 : 300). From the wall of this hub twenty-eight lines of small stones (spokes) radiate to the outer circle, leaving a small opening on the southeast side. At intervals along the periphery of the wheel are six cairns of rocks. One is inside the circle on the west side; the others are either attached to the outside of the circle or are entirely away from it. Grinnell (1922 : 304) recorded six additional cairns from between 71 and 277 feet outside the hub of the wheel; these apparently no longer exist today.

The Moose Mountain wheel consists of a large stone pile (totaling about eighty tons; Eddy 1981 : 20) as the center from which six lines of stones radiate, each with a cairn at the end. The total configuration is nearly twice as large as the Bighorn wheel if the original outlying cairns of the latter are discounted.

The astronomer John Eddy investigated the Bighorn wheel first; he later cooperated with archaeologists Alice and Thomas Kehoe on the Moose Mountain feature. He noted that the twenty-eight spokes of the Bighorn wheel were close to the number of days in a lunar month and that the positions of the cairns might be related to astronomical phenomena. As a result of his investigation, he concluded (Eddy 1974 : 1981) that the cairn alignments were oriented toward the heliacal risings of Aldebaran (and summer solstice), Rigel, and Sirius. Based on a computation of the exact locations where the three stars appeared briefly above the horizon in the past, he suggested that the Bighorn wheel was built between A.D. 1600 and 1700.

At the Moose Mountain wheel, Eddy found cairn alignments also pointing to Aldebaran, Rigel, and Sirius's risings. Here, however, he arrived at a date somewhere between A.D. 100 and 500 for the deposition of the structure. Excavation of portions of the feature by the Kehoes (1979) in 1976 led to one radiocarbon date of 2650 ± 245 years on charcoal fragments interpreted as resulting from burning off the grass before construction. Although the radiocarbon date appears to be too early, it supports Eddy's contention based on careful mathematical computation that the structure is of considerable antiquity.

The three investigators have no answer concerning the purpose

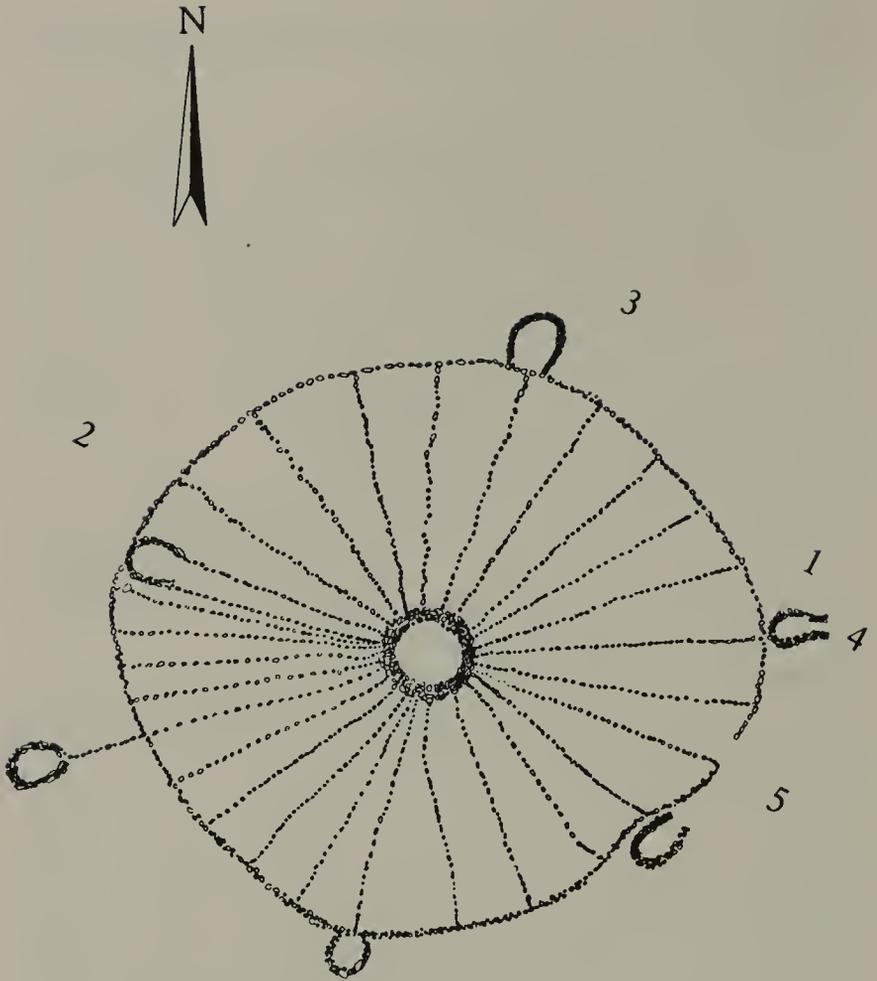


FIG. 6. Diagram of the Bighorn Medicine Wheel. The astronomer John Eddy discovered that the arrangement of peripheral cairns with the central cairn of the feature is directed toward celestial events in the summer sky. Most important of these are the heliacal risings of three stars that follow one another consecutively in the predawn: Aldebaran, the brightest star in the constellation Taurus; Rigel, the brightest star in Orion; and Sirius, the brightest star in the sky. (1) Sunrise at summer solstice; (2) sundown at summer solstice; (3) Aldebaran rises; (4) Rigel rises; and (5) Sirius rises.

of both structures. Grinnell (1922 : 307–308) suggested long ago that the Bighorn wheel represents the ground plan of the Tsistsistas Oxheheom lodge.

If the Bighorn wheel represents the structure of a Tsistsistas ceremonial lodge on a horizontal plane oriented toward Aldebaran, Rigel, and Sirius, this would be not an Oxheheom lodge but a Massaum wolf lodge built on a twenty-eight pole frame with a center tree. When Grinnell (1922 : 307) asked Cheyenne informants about the wheel, Elk River told him that the cairn within the circle on the west side was “the place from which thunder came.” In the wolf lodge of the Massaum, both Nonoma and Esceheman are positioned on the west side, and Nonoma, in addition, is painted on the inside lodge cover in this location (chapter 6). In the Oxheheom ceremony, the summer solstice is significant; Aldebaran, Rigel, and Sirius are not.

I suggest that the Bighorn and Moose Mountain structures were indeed built by the Tsistsistas after the initiation of the Massaum because the alignments are in agreement with the heliacal risings of the three stars. It follows that they are not solstice aligned. I further suggest that they do not represent observation points. It is significant that Stands in Timber (1972 : 124) saw the Bighorn wheel as a Tsistsistas boundary mark; “there were rocks placed in a few places.”

I believe that the Bighorn and Moose Mountain structures represent surviving Tsistsistas *oxzemeo*, spirit wheels of stone, marking the Tsistsistas presence in the region as granted through the Earth-giving Ceremony (Massaum). Because they are located on mountaintops and not visible from below, they are directed to the sky—toward the spirits of the world above.

If this is correct, they also may represent territorial “fences” (chapter 1) into which spirits could be called by shamans for protection. Their locations and the time frame of their construction are clearly within Tsistsistas time and distribution ranges (chapter 7).

Because of their unique religious significance, the state of Wyoming and the province of Saskatchewan should undertake serious measures for their protection.

6. The Massaum Ceremony

The original prophet of the Cheyenne [Motseyoef] foretold all that has come to pass. Everything that he foretold has taken place in exactly the way he said it would. He told the following about the coming of the white man: "A person who has long hair on chin and on legs, and carries with him sickness of all kinds, is coming to you in the future. With him he will bring an animal that has flashing eyes, and a tail that touches the ground, and one hoof on each foot. This animal will be restless, and the hairy person will also be restless. Do not try to be like them. This hairy person will also bring a spotted animal with horns, big eyes. This animal will live on dirt, and will eat anything. If you take after it and eat it, you will eat almost anything else." He prophesied of the future of the Cheyenne in this language: "My brothers and children, and all my people of this earth! Listen and remember my words, for they are as sharp as the points of the great sacred arrows, and keep my prophecies of the future in your minds as long as your people and the earth last, and then the Cheyenne as a people will never become extinct as long as the blue heavens, the sun, moon, and earth last. Do not forget your sacred arrows. Remember them always, and no other. You will renew your sacred arrow shafts four times."

—PART OF THE MOTSEYOEF STORY AS RECORDED BY GEORGE A. DORSEY

THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION of the Massaum represents a reconstruction of the core of the ceremony. Because the ceremony has an inherent logical structure, the essential sequences and events can be recaptured. Any omission of these would distort the ceremony. Although the Massaum was intruded by new features in the course of centuries, these were nonessential because the core could not be jeopardized without damaging its meaning and purpose.

Because the existence of the Tsistsistas as a people of hunters in the grasslands was founded upon the Massaum covenant, Tsistsistas violations of it in Tsistsistas world understanding meant self-destruction.

They did not violate it. They maintained the ceremony for over two millennia. They tried tenaciously to keep it alive long after they had been confined to reservations; half a century after their sacred

animals had been slaughtered by the Whites, they were forced to let it go.

Details of the following description are defined as parts of the core of the ceremony and therefore as ancient. Details that are omitted here, although contained in the four Massaum reports in the literature or in the recollection of participants, are considered as nonessential additions of later times.

A critical review of the literature on the Massaum is not necessary; there is so little of it. Ethnographers who have written about the Cheyennes either omit the ceremony altogether (Dorsey 1905; Mooney 1907; Moore 1974; Powell 1969) or base brief descriptions (Anderson 1970:152–55; Hoebel 1978:23–24) on Grinnell's (1923, 2:285–336) account of the 1911 ceremony. Of the four eyewitness reports, Throssel's account (Curtis 1911:115–16) of the 1909 Massaum, and Curtis's (1930:128–31) description of the 1926 ceremony are too brief and too random to be of assistance. Medicine Elk, who served as male pledger of the last, shortened performance in 1927 (Edelmann 1970, appendix A) was never told what he was doing. The participants never received, perhaps never sought, interpretations of what they saw, or, in Medicine Elk's case, acted out. Grinnell, a veteran interpreter of Indian thought, might have arrived at an understanding if the priests had not denied him access.

In my description, I do not distinguish between conflicting sources, published or unpublished, because it is meaningless to the presentation. Some information was kept secret by the Tsistsistas until used here. Therefore, it was necessary to publish it so that the truth about the Massaum order and Tsistsistas rights in the grasslands could be established.

To hold the Massaum required a pledger who accepted the serious responsibility voluntarily. Because Ehyophstah was the focal point of the ceremony, the pledger was a woman. If she was married, her husband could serve as Ehyophstah's ritual husband in the ceremony; if not, another man had to pledge himself to take this position.

The Ehyophstah pledger could be a member of the Young Wolf Society but did not have to be. After completion of the ceremony, she was qualified to serve as instructor of woman pledgers in Massaum performances in later years.

The Ehyophstah pledger had to secure the instructors who would assume the positions of Nonoma and Esceheman; both had to have been pledgers before. Together, they chose the ceremonial man to serve in the position of Motseyoef. It was the pledger's responsibility

to determine the location where the ceremony was to be held. Because of the implications of this decision, already discussed, it is most likely that it was made in agreement with Tsistsistas ceremonial leaders.

After the location had been decided, messengers were sent to dispersed Tsistsistas bands. When they assembled for the ceremony after the middle of July, the camp circle opening faced the direction of Bear Butte. When the lodges had been raised, the main performers went through sweat lodge purification ceremonies, thereby undergoing transformation into a condition in which they could act unharmed as receptacles of sacred power.

The main events of the five days described next were accompanied by complex ritual, which are not recaptured here, that included prayer, cycles of songs, ceremonial sign language, ceremonial painting, ceremonial smoking, and combinations of these. The pipes used were of the ancient "straight" type, made from shank bones of deer or antelope. The five main performers and additional assistants or singers who came into the ceremony at specific times were painted with the sacred color, red. The important transformational paints of Ehyophstah and her husband are mentioned separately.

First Day (the Maheonox)

There were four main actions on this day.

Bringing the Sacred Tree

The tree was selected in a grove near camp by the male instructor. With him were the woman instructor, the pledgers, and the man who played the role of Motseyoef. The tree generally chosen was a straight, young cottonwood, perhaps twenty-five feet high and five to seven inches at the base. After a pipe had been smoked with the tree spirit, the purpose of the people's coming was explained. Then the tree was felled; all branches were removed except for seven at the top. The pledger and her instructor moved the tree to the center of the camp circle.

After a hole had been excavated by the male pledger, the tree was raised with lodge poles because it could no longer be touched with hands. This work was done by seven women of the Young Wolf Society.

Raising the Lodge

The four-post frame of the wolf lodge consisted of four tipi poles lashed together in pairs and lifted by Young Wolves over the standing tree. These poles were pulled in the four ceremonial directions: southeast, southwest, northwest, northeast. Next, the remaining twenty-four lodge poles were leaned against the forks, and two lodge covers were put up. The lodge had no door; it was entered by raising the lodge cover. The tree stood in the center of the lodge, and its trunk extended through the smoke hole above which the top branches formed a rustling canopy.

Smoothing the Earth

Inside the wolf lodge, the living grass was removed. A large circular space was excavated through the sod to the surface of the deep earth around the base of the tree, leaving a strip of ground six feet wide between the lodge poles and the edge of the circle. The sod removed was taken outside the lodge. The shallow bench around the circle was covered with a bed of white sage, except on the east side where a narrow strip of cleared surface was left untouched. The floor of the excavated circle was carefully smoothed.

The Fireplace

On the east side of the tree base a fire was started within the circle. In this lodge, any wood could be used for firewood except cedar and pine because these two trees represent an association with Nonoma that were not to be invoked in the Massaum.

At the end of the first day, the wolf lodge represents the universe before creation. It is built from the center, and it represents the shell of the universe with its central creative force, the Supreme Being Maheo, who is visualized in the symbol of the tree. The tree is the world tree, the world pillar, or the navel from which the universe is born. The wolf lodge returns to the primordial totality before time when Maheo was everything.

The “tree that becomes a cult object is not worshipped as a *tree*, but as a *hierophany*, a manifestation of the sacred” (Eliade 1965: 199). In the created universe, the world tree is also an *axis mundi*—a world axis—that connects the lower, middle, and upper worlds.

In the northern Siberian world description, the tree protruding through the smoke hole of the circular lodge became a road to the

sky (chapter 2). In Evenk ceremonialism, the *turu*, the shaman's tree, was an essential part of the shaman's tent in a number of ceremonies. The *turu* was a "tall young larch . . . placed in the center of the shaman's tent, with its top drawn through the smoke hole" (Anisimov 1963a: 85–86, also figs. 4, 8, 9). It became the shaman's ladder for his journey into the upper world; his spirit helpers rested on its branches. "In the shaman's concept, the *turu* larch symbolized the shamanistic world tree."

Among Ngadju Dayaks, the world tree, represented with seven branches, also served as the shaman's ladder "by which he climbs to the sky to bring back the patient's fugitive soul" (Eliade 1974: 285).

Among the Tsistsistas, the Massaum world tree with seven branches represents the seven levels of the universe. It precedes the sacred pole of the Maxhoetonstov Ceremony to which, with the sacred arrows, seven branches (six chokecherry, one plum) are tied. Thus the arrows' pole ritually becomes the world tree.

The number 7 is important in both ceremonies. Seven refers especially to the celestial spirits of the Seven Brothers prominent in Tsistsistas thought (Curtis 1930: 143–48; Grinnell 1926: 178–82, 216–31). In the night sky, they are identified as *manohotoxceo*, with the Pleiades.

The fire lit in the wolf lodge during the first night represents the power of life inherent in the universe due to Maheo's will. From the second day of the Massaum on, it also symbolizes the presence of Atovsz, the spirit of the sun, or is its ritual counterpart.

Second Day (the Creation of the Universe, the Lodge of the *Maiyun*, the Tsistsistas Earth)

There were four main actions on this day.

The Universe and the Maheyuno

Early in the morning the male instructor made a sand painting on the west side of the circle halfway between the world tree and the edge of the sage-covered bench. In this performance, he did not represent Nonoma, and the other main actors of the ritual play did not assume their Massaum positions. All did not exist yet in time, for time did not yet exist. They were eyewitnesses to the ritual creation of the universe.

The male instructor acted in the following movements in the role of the Supreme Being, Maheo, and near the world tree in His presence. He touched the ground firmly with his thumb, then made four more indentations about five inches to the southeast, southwest,

northwest, and northeast. The universe was about to be created from its center. With a digging stick, he excavated a circular hole (the cosmological singularity) about three inches wide, three inches deep, in the spot he had marked first. The earth was removed four times and placed on the four directional indentations in the order used earlier. Four little mounds had arisen. He covered the two to the south with a red color, the two to the north with a black color. These represented the four sacred mountains of the *maheyuno*—the guardians placed by Maheo at the four corners of the universe.

Starting from the opening in the center, the male instructor marked, on the ground in white powdered gypsum, a line to the south about five inches long, one to the north, one to the west, and one to the east. Thus the opening in the ground became the center of a white cross that extended to the four cardinal points. With the four mounds, the sand painting became the symbol of the universe after creation with Maheo at the center.

Next, four bundles of white sage were tied to the four main poles of the wolf lodge about seven feet above ground. In their positions, the posts and bundles were directly in line with the four small mounds on the ground. A fifth bundle was tied to the westernmost pole of the lodge frame. The bundles represented Maheo and the *maheyuno*; the wolf lodge itself had become the universe after the act of creation.

The Maiyun

In this action, the *maiyun* and the lodge of the *maiyun*, Nowah'wus, were created. The male instructor, still in his sacred role of Maheo, went outside the lodge and painted a red disk on the lodge cover on the east side at the height of a man's head. This represented the spirit of the sun, Atovsz. On the west side, he painted a blue-black crescent, the spirit of the moon, Ameenito. Thus with their guardian spirits, day and night were made. Returning inside, he painted on the wall next to the bundle of Sovota, the *maheyuno* of the southwest, the figure of a man wearing horns, with eagle talons as feet, and a body spotted with black dots. This painting represented Nonoma.

Next Esceheman was made. The woman pledger left the lodge and returned carrying a buffalo skull, placing it on the west side of the sage-covered bench facing the world tree. The skull was painted by the male instructor after the eye sockets and the nasal cavity had been filled with round bundles of grass. The male instructor drew a black line from the back of the skull down its center to the nasal opening, then traced, along both sides of the black line, two lines with white

color. The remainder of the skull, including the horn cores, was covered with dry red paint. The three lines represented day and night; the red paint of the skull the earth. Next the three grass plugs were painted red; they represented all the vegetation that grows from the earth.

On the top of the skull, between the horn cores and the eyes, a drawing in solid blue was executed, resembling in form a German iron cross; this represented the blue star of midsummer dawn (Rigel). When a solid red disk (the sun) was painted on her right jaw and a black crescent (the moon) on the left, Esceheman had been made and was ritually present.

Next she was put in the location that represented her home. The painted skull was moved, and in the exact place on the west side of the bench an opening was excavated to the bottom of the sod layer, to the deep earth, starting again from the center, then removing sections of sod around it from the southeast, southwest, northwest, northeast. The sod removed was placed in a little mound on the southwestern side next to the tent cover. The painted buffalo skull was set in the earth opening. A bundle of white sage was placed in front of its nose (east), a buffalo chip behind the skull (west).

From this point in the ceremony on, the male instructor represented Nonoma, the female instructor, Esceheman. The wolf lodge had turned into the lodge of the *maiyun*, the sacred mountain (see fig. 7 for more information regarding this entire ceremony).

The Tsistsistas Earth

The seating order in the wolf lodge during the next action was the following: on the sage cover to the south of the buffalo skull sat Esceheman, to her right Nonoma, who was followed by the woman pledger and the male pledger. This line of performers, therefore, was representative of the ritual southwestern direction, from which, in Tsistsistas world perception, Nonoma brings the life-giving thunderstorms and rain clouds in the spring.

The man who would represent Motseyoef sat on the southeastern side of the bench in front of the bundle of Hesenota, the *maheyuno* of the southeastern corner of the universe. After receiving instruction from Nonoma, the man bent forward and drew, with the thumb of his right hand, a small spiraling circle about two inches in diameter in the smooth, powdered surface of the interior circle of the lodge.

This act represented the creation of the Tsistsistas as a people in the lodge of the *maiyun* through Nonoma and Esceheman, in the presence of the *maheyuno*, with the power granted by Maheo.

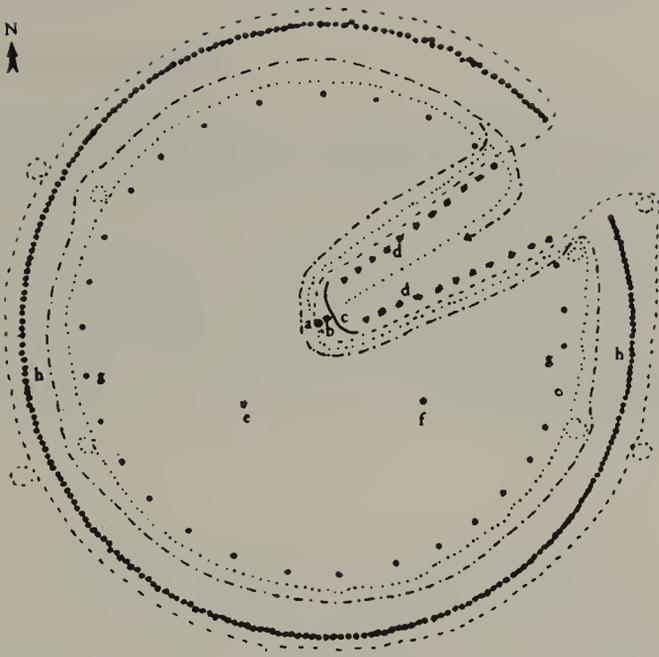


FIG. 7. Diagram of a Massaum camp around 700 A.D. The camp circle opens to the northeast, that is, the camp is located southwest of Bear Butte. The Tsistsistas camp circle consists here of 260 tipis; because six persons should be considered as average per tipi, approximately 1560 people are present. The total Tsistsistas population around 700 A.D. may have numbered at least three times this figure, perhaps considerably more. Features include (a) wolf lodge (*maheonox*); (b) frames on which the two wolves and the kit fox were exhibited late in the afternoon of the fourth day; (c) corral; (d) wings of the drive lane; (e) lodge of the hohnuhka society; (f) lodge of the sacred arrows; (g) animal lodges (*heszevoxsz*); (h) the Tsistsistas camp.

- Trail of the red wolf on the evening of the fourth day. When he calls from the four sacred directions he marks a small circle.
- Trail of the white she-wolf on the evening of the fourth day. She also calls four times and marks circles in the sacred directions.
- Trail of the female kit fox at early dawn on the fifth day. From the wolf lodge, she follows the trail of the white wolf to the last animal lodge in the northeast. She had also called from the four sacred directions. She continues her run by entering the drive lane, thus approaching the corral from the direction of Bear Butte. When she reaches the corral, because she represents Ehyophstah, the blue star, Ehyophstah has symbolically and physically returned to the Tsistsistas.
- - - Animals execute a full circle around the animal camp before they enter the drive lane. While completing the circle, they are not allowed to cross the opening of the camp circle; if they would stray into it they would block the invisible line connecting Bear Butte with the spirit performers present in the corral. On its trail, the mass of animals, therefore, moves around the pound and the wolf lodge. When they finally enter the drive lane in response to Ehyophstah's call, they enter from the direction of Bear Butte.

Through this act, Moseyoef was made the spiritual representative of the Tsistsistas. For this people, he was given a ritual position in the world of spirits, the southeast. This is also the direction of the blue star's heliacal rising.

The circular earth drawing represents the Tsistsistas earth, the Tsistsistas physical place in the universe, and documents their right to live in this world as Tsistsistas as formulated by the spirits.

Motseyoef remained seated in the southeastern position behind the Tsistsistas earth throughout the remainder of the ceremony conducted in the wolf lodge.

Teaching the Tsistsistas

The impeccable skins of a male red wolf, a female white wolf, and a female kit fox were brought into the lodge and placed on the sage north of the buffalo skull, in the northwestern position. Painted rattles were taken to the southwestern side. Additional people came into the lodge, both men and women.

When night had fallen, the lodge of the *maiyn* revealed itself as a spirit lodge. From the eastern arm of the white cross to the base of the world tree eight coals were placed in intervals, and sweet grass was burned on these for a number of hours. The two Tsistsistas present in the lodge of the *maiyn* (Motseyoef and his companion who would become Ehyophstah's husband) were taught spirit songs, *maheonenootoz*, and were instructed in the calling of spirits of animals of the world of the grasslands and in the rules regarding their use.

Third Day (Ehyophstah and the Master Hunters)

There were four main actions on this day.

The Giving of Ehyophstah

Early in the morning, Ehyophstah was ritually created and given to the Tsistsistas companion of Motseyoef. All five main performers were present in the wolf lodge. Eschewan painted black rings around Ehyophstah's ankles and wrists, a black sun between her breasts, a black crescent moon on her right shoulder blade, and black vertical lines on her face: one reaching from the hair across the forehead to the end of the nose, three on each cheek. This was her father's paint.

Nonoma lit a pipe and passed it to Ehyophstah. She smoked alone. Thus she had ritually accepted the obligation of service to the Tsistsistas as requested by Nonoma and Eschewan.

Next a pipe was offered by the male pledger. After it had been passed in smoking among the five persons, Ehyophstah had been ritually joined with a Tsistsistas husband in the presence of her parents and the keeper of the Tsistsistas earth—Motseyoef.

When Ehyophstah later assisted Nonoma in the preparation of the red wolf, Eschelman had painted her daughter's face with green color in the same design that she had followed earlier. This was Ehyophstah's mother's paint. In Tsistsistas color symbolism, green represents new life, the fresh growth of spring emerging from the earth; it also represents hailstones derived from thunder clouds that accompany Nonoma's gift of moisture.

The Master Hunters

After the giving of Ehyophstah, a woman of the Young Wolf Society was called into the wolf lodge and instructed to bring the two men who had been selected to prepare the white wolf and the kit fox. She was painted with the design of her society: a red line extending from the hair down the forehead to the root of the nose; the lower half of her face was solidly painted red. She served as a messenger during the remainder of the ceremony held in the lodge.

She returned with the two men who took their places next to the animal hides on the northwestern side. Seven white stone bowls were brought in containing clear water in one and paint in the other six—blue, black, white, yellow, light red, dark red. Assisted by Ehyophstah, Nonoma began to work on the red male wolf hide while the two men prepared the female white wolf and the female kit fox.

They needed most of the day for this work. When they were done, the three animal skins rested in a line on the sage of the northwestern side of the wolf lodge. The red wolf was next to the buffalo skull followed by the white wolf and the kit fox.

Maheone honehe, the sacred red wolf, was carefully stretched and combed and was painted on both the head and body. His head was modeled by sewing together the skin of muzzle and throat and inserted grass bundles. From the nose to ears, his face was first painted blue-black. On this base, numerous lines were drawn horizontally, using the four directional colors: white (southeast), red (southwest), yellow (northwest), black (northeast), and the ceremonial color of the star of midsummer dawn—blue.

The lines of alternating colors numbered fifty five. Starting from the wolf's nose, the eleventh (blue), twenty-second (red), thirty-third (yellow), forty-fourth (black), and fifty-fifth (white) lines were

executed larger than the others. The last line (white) reached the top of the wolf's head just behind the ears.

The body painting of the wolf was done in blue-black color. On the back of his head a face was drawn in abstract design; the wolf's ears stood like horns attached to it. The body of a man was indicated by two parallel lines extending from the face across the wolf's back to his tail. The center of this man drawing, which represented Nonoma, was marked with a round spot—the heart. On both sides of the skin, two parallel crescent-shaped lines indicated rainbows. In the rainbow of the animal's right side was the symbol of the sun; on the left side appeared the moon sickle. Four small wheels, *oxzemeo*, were painted red, representing the *maheyuno*; they were sewed to the hide at the shoulders and hips. A larger wheel representing Maheo was fastened to the middle of the back above the heart of the man figure. The flesh side of the hide was painted white.

Evevêv honehe, the white wolf, wore a long strip of buffalo fur attached to the carefully modeled head. It extended along the female's back beyond her tail, actually trailing on the ground when the wolf was worn by a runner the following day. Two polished buffalo-horn tips were tied to the sides of the buffalo skin directly behind the wolf's ears. The immaculate white fur of Evevêv honehe was not painted. The flesh side of her skin was painted white.

Voh'kis, the kit fox, was painted with a blue line across her glossy yellow fur from the tip of her nose to the tip of her tail. Blue lines ran up her black feet and joined the line along her back. On her right side was a blue sun disk; on her left was the blue moon crescent. The head of the kit fox had also been shaped to give a lifelike appearance. The flesh side of her hide was painted yellow.

This part of the Massaum was concluded when the *maiyun* present ritually made the three animals come alive.

Maheone honehe, the wolf *maiyun* and male master wolf, was also a manifestation of Nonoma; Evevêv honehe, the female master wolf, was a manifestation of Eschewan. In appearances and range of obligations regarding animals, they also represented the sky and earth, day and night. Together they were the game keepers of animals released from the *heszevaxsz* and controlled hunting by predators, including the Tsistsistas. They were instructed by the *maiyun* to teach the Tsistsistas the right hunting way once the Tsistsistas had been granted the earth in the grasslands.

Voh'kis was the servant of the master wolves because she is associated with the blue star. Tsistsistas hunting time, as it was with the

wolf packs of the Plains, began formally each day with the rise of the morning star (including *vō*, Venus), heralding the end of night and the coming of the sun.

Sharing Food with the Spirits

At noon, while work on the three hides was still in progress, food was brought into the wolf lodge by women of the Hohnuhka Society. It consisted of four categories: meat and food from plants that grow underground, from the ground, and above ground (chokecherries).

The meat was dog meat (puppy), which was flesh from an animal as distant from a wolf as could be obtained during times before domesticated animals were available because in the lodge of the *maiyn* the flesh of animals spiritually and physically related to Eschewan and Nonoma was not admitted. The original food of the *maiyn* was the flesh of the *ax-xea*, the great horned water serpent hunted by Nonoma (chapter 5)—a monster outside Eschewan's care. In the Massaum, dog meat served as a substitute for the flesh of the *ax-xea* because it was "contrary" to other animal flesh.

The more domesticated dogs became the farther they were removed from Eschewan's guardianship. The Tsistsistas used dog meat only as sacred food in ceremonies that demanded "nonnatural" meat. For this reason, dog meat played a role in the meetings and initiation rituals of the Hohnuhka Society. It was also used in spirit lodge performances when the spirits were ritually fed. In Tsistsistas culture, dogs were highly regarded; to profane dogs constituted an offense against the spirits.

At noon in the wolf lodge five small portions of each of the four types of food brought in were deposited at the base of the world tree and under each of the *makeyuno* bundles. The remainder was passed reverently among all present in the lodge and consumed.

The Teaching of the Tsistsistas

When night had fallen, the wolf lodge again turned into a spirit lodge. Another line of eight coals was placed next to the ashes of the first row. Sweet grass was burned. The spirit songs taught during this night included *honehe nenootoz*—songs of the wolf spirits who were present.

Fourth Day (the Camp Is the Universe)

The five main performers had not eaten again after they had shared the food of the spirits on the day before. They would break their fast

after the conclusion of the ceremony on the fifth day. On the evening of the fourth day, they were joined in their fast by everyone in camp, an exception made only for very small children. There were six main actions on this day.

The Animal Lodges

Early in the morning, a second camp circle was raised within the first camp circle of Tsistsistas lodges, perhaps a hundred yards apart from it. This inner ring of lodges symbolized the animal dens below the sacred mountain. Together the lodges represented all animal life of the grasslands. The opening of this camp circle was also oriented toward Nowah'wus. After the lodges were in place, each was joined by those who would, on the next day, impersonate the animals that belonged to it. Because of the great number of species, nearly a sixth of the Tsistsistas population had to take the part of animals. Both sexes and all age groups were needed, including children.

Considerable amounts of equipment and materials were moved to the animal camp to be worked into the elaborate costumes worn on the next day. In the early afternoon, the lodges were closed. In each lodge, instructors prepared participants for their sacred roles with a purification ritual followed by instruction and, finally, ritual transformation into animals.

The Hohnuhka lodge had already been set up the day before in the open space halfway between the wolf lodge and the other animal lodges, to the southwest. After *nimāhenan* had come to the Tsistsistas, the tipi of the sacred arrows stood southeast of the wolf lodge. True to the contrary principle, the appearance of the Hohnuhka lodge was different from all other lodges in camp: The tipi poles were on the outside; the lodge cover was turned inside out; the smoke flaps were turned the wrong way. Hohnuhka Society members had already assembled and passed their secret transformation ceremony before they had cooked the sacred food for the wolf lodge.

Preparing to Come Out into the World

In the wolf lodge on this morning were the five main performers and the two men who had prepared Evevêv honehe and Voh'kis.

Four freshly cut, straight shafts of cottonwood were shortened to a length of about thirty inches to serve as walking sticks. Five bundles of white sage were attached to the top of each stick. Because the walking sticks were used by the wolf runners of the Massaum as

the front legs of the animals, Maheone honehe and Evevšev honehe were symbolically endowed with the power of the center (the Supreme Being) and the power of the four sacred directions (*maheyuno*) and therefore controlled animals in the four directions of the universe. The walking sticks of the red wolf were painted red; those of the white wolf were peeled and painted white. After they had been finished, they were placed along the sides of the animals resting on the sage.

Next, the pipe to be used in the animal-calling part of the Massaum was prepared. This was a sinew-wrapped deer-bone pipe rubbed with red paint. Nonoma instructed Ehyophstah's husband how to handle it correctly. First, the bottom of the pipe was closed with a ball of sinew. Four portions of smoking material (herbs mixed with buffalo kidney fat) were put in; when the pipe was formally smoked on the next day, all of plant and animal life was symbolically present in it. The pipe opening was sealed with a piece of animal fat.

Ehyophstah moved a coal from the fire with a fire stick and placed sweet grass on it. After the pipe had been purified in it, it was made alive; it was placed in front of the buffalo skull along with a pipe stick.

Seven women, Young Wolves, were called into the lodge. They wore the face painting of their society, which has already been described. They represented the human doubles of wolf spirit helpers and were charged with constructing the pound. Now they were purified by Nonoma and formally instructed where the pound should be built; they left to do their work.

Three men were called into the wolf lodge who had been selected to impersonate the three animal spirits. They were purified and taught regarding their roles.

The Sacred Pound

The seven Young Wolves erected a high, crescent-shaped shade about twenty feet away from the wolf lodge; the opening faced the opening in the camp circle and Nowah'wus. About a dozen lodge poles and four lodge coverings were used. Next, freshly cut cottonwood trees and branches from ten to fifteen feet high were planted in prepared holes in the ground extending from near the horns of the shade (the corral) in two long, expanding lines to points just behind the circle of animal lodges but in front of the opening in the Tsistsistas camp circle. These were the wings of the "drive lane" of the sacred pound (see fig. 7). A chute, oftentimes a feature of Tsistsistas buffalo

pounds (see chapter 4) was not built here because it was not needed. The work was completed in the middle of the afternoon. Next, the Young Wolves raised three low three-pole frames in the narrow space between the rear of the corral and the wolf lodge.

Maheone honehe, Evevêev honehe, and Voh'kis Are Coming Out

During this time in the wolf lodge, the two men who would wear the wolves' attire were painted with the ceremonial designs of their position. They had stripped to breechclout and moccasins. The body of the man who would represent the red wolf was painted red; the body of the man who would wear the white wolf attire was painted white. A black sun was marked on their chests, and a black moon was drawn on their right shoulder blades. The white wolf runner was painted with short, vertical black lines under the eyes.

Next, Ehyophstah and her husband were ritually brought into the condition to conduct the sacred animals from the sacred mountain out into the world. They undressed to breechclout and moccasins and were painted red over their body and hair, with black rings around their ankles and wrists, and black suns and moons on their chest and shoulder blade. They dressed again. All waited.

A Young Wolf came and reported that the pound had been completed. Then Nonoma sent a crier to announce to the Tsistsistas camp that the sacred animals were coming out. After a while, Ehyophstah and her husband were instructed how to proceed in taking the animals out. Maheone honehe came first. With their hands together, they stood over the wolf; they motioned three times, and with a fourth motion placed their hands firmly on his back. With four motions they lifted him, and three times they moved him with his head outside beneath the raised lodge cover before they carried him out. With four motions, they placed him on the first frame. Evevêev honehe came next, then Voh'kis. They were handled the same way and placed on the remaining frames. Ehyophstah and her husband returned to the closed lodge.

Now came the first public part of the ceremony. From the Tsistsistas camp, many people came to stand and look at the three animals from a distance. They stood silently, observing closely and confirming the details. No one came from the animal lodges because the Tsistsistas there were ritually animals then. When they had dispersed, Ehyophstah and her husband brought the three animals back into the wolf lodge.

Making the World Holy

It was evening, and all the lodges in the camp were closed, the fires extinguished. All camp dogs had been taken inside the Tsistsistas lodges. No one was allowed to move outside the camp circle or within.

When the first runner was prepared, Nonoma put the red wolf on the man's back and tied him securely; the wolf's head projected over the man's forehead. Nonoma placed the walking sticks in his hands. The rattles began, and wolf songs were sung when Maheone honehe left the wolf lodge and ran beside the right wing of the "drive lane" and beyond the Tsistsistas lodges. He ran into the prairie and turned to his right.

When he reached the first of the sacred directions outside the camp, he howled the calling song of the hunting master wolf. He continued, running around the Tsistsistas camp, calling from the three remaining positions. Thus he had stopped at the southeast, southwest, northwest and northeast, marking a small circle at each location. He reentered the camp at the opening and ran outside the left wing of the brush line, passed the corral, and slipped back into the wolf lodge.

Nonoma put the white she-wolf on her runner's back, secured the hide, and handed the man the walking sticks. Again the rattles and wolf songs resounded as Eevšev honehe left the lodge and ran along the right wing of the brush lane. She ran beyond the animal lodge camp circle but turned right before reaching the Tsistsistas circle. She ran between the two rings of lodges, stopping at the four sacred places to make the calling songs of the master wolf. She entered beside the left brush line and returned running to the wolf lodge.

The whole camp had become the universe. Everything had been made holy inside and outside the wolf lodge. Outside the camp circle, time stood still. The animal lodges had become *heszevaxsz*, the dens of the animal spirits in the deep earth of Eschewan's realm.

The Teaching of the Tsistsistas

With the dark, the wolf lodge became a spirit lodge again. Another line of eight coals was placed beside the ashes of the lines of the preceding nights. The smell of sweet grass arose once more. This was the last night of teaching the Tsistsistas the calling songs of the animal spirits.

Fifth Day (the Coming of Ehyophstah, the Sacred Hunt)

There were six clusters of actions on this day.

The Coming of the Spirits

Very early in the morning, when it was still dark outside, the main performers in the wolf lodge prepared their coming out. Present were the five spirits, the two painters (instructors) of Evevšev honehe and Voh'kis, and three men who impersonated the master wolves and the kit fox. The body and facial paints worn on the previous day were put on again. The Voh'kis runner was painted yellow by his instructor, with vertical black lines under his eyes, and blue dots running along his sides from ankles to shoulders—from there along the outside of his arms to his wrists.

Esceheman painted a blue cross on Ehyophstah's face; its four branches encased the forehead, eyes, and nose. The painter of Voh'kis painted Ehyophstah's husband the same way. The seven Young Wolves entered the lodge; they were also painted with the blue star design by Esceheman.

Ehyophstah's husband left the wolf lodge, lifted an unpainted, bleached buffalo skull lying south of the lodge, and carried it into the enclosure of the pound where he put it on the ground halfway between the horns, facing the open space between the brush wings of the "drive lane." He returned to the ceremonial lodge.

The Blue Star

All waited until it was nearly morning. The five spirits left the wolf lodge first. They stood and faced southeast in the order used when they had stepped from Nowah'wus upon the leaving of Ehyophstah with the two Tsistsistas (chapter 5): Esceheman on the left, Nonoma to her right, Ehyophstah, her husband, and Motseyoef following in line.

They stood and waited for the signal from the sky. Finally, the blue beacon of Rigel blazed above the dark horizon. They stood and watched. For a few minutes the star shone intensely, then dimmed and quickly disappeared.

They walked into the enclosure and sat in a line on both sides of the buffalo skull, Esceheman and Ehyophstah on the left, Nonoma, Ehyophstah's husband, and Motseyoef on the right. Behind this group sat the seven women of the Young Wolf Society. The Voh'kis

instructor sat next to Ehyophstah, with the two wolves and the second instructor to his left. The sacred straight pipe was placed in front of the buffalo skull on a bundle of white sage. Inside the left horn of the enclosure, a medicine lance and a sheet of dried buffalo meat were placed on the ground. The medicine lance, or “medicine pole,” (for a description, see chapter 4) had been prepared by a shaman in one of the animal lodges.

The ceremonial hunt had formally begun. People waited silently in the early dawn everywhere in camp. Voh’kis emerged from the wolf lodge and ran her sacred circle around the *heszevaxsz* on the trail of the white wolf of the evening before.

She called the eagerly awaited signals from the four sacred directions. She entered the “drive lane” and the enclosure. Nonoma removed the kit fox from the runner and placed her, fleshside down, on the buffalo skull, facing the opening of the wings and Nowah’wus.

The Sacred Hunt

Now the great public display of the Massaum began. The lodge covers of the tipis of the Tsistsistas camp circle were pulled up; the people looked out. The costumed, masked, painted impersonators of many animal species spilled from the animal dens.

Herd animals and animals that lived in small groups emerged in bands from their dens: buffalos, elks, deer, antelopes, otters, wolves, and birds, such as cranes. Solitary animals appeared with single representatives: coyote, badger, grizzly bear, black bear, cougar, different kinds of foxes, eagles, hawks, raven, magpie, and so forth. Actors imitated the behavior of the species they represented. The colorful mass of animals walked, circled, or ran in the space between the Tsistsistas camp circle and the ring of animal lodges, drifting in clockwise fashion.

In the enclosure, Esceheman lifted the sacred pipe up and placed it in Ehyophstah’s hand. These two, followed by the seven Young Wolves, walked into the wings of the pound. They stood there quietly, praying. Ehyophstah, holding the pipe with both hands, offered it toward the opening and Nowah’wus, thus calling the animals. “*Nanēhov meohotoxc*,” “I am the star of dawn.”

The act confirmed that Ehyophstah had been granted the position of master spirit of animals in the realm of the grasslands given to Tsistsistas guardianship.

Maheone honeche, Evevšev honeche, and Voh’kis left the enclosure

and ran along the stream of animals, forcing it to complete a full circle around the animal camp before entering the drive lane. While making the circle, the animals did not cross the opening of the brush wings but passed behind the wings, the enclosure, and the wolf lodge. Calling songs were sung when the animals finally came in and surrounded the nine women.

From the Hohnuhka lodge seven contraries (Thunder spirits) ran up, dressed only in breechclout, with their body and hair painted white. The hair that was tied in a knot over the forehead was decorated with a single eagle feather. They carried miniature sky lances painted red. After the bow and arrow had been adopted (chapter 4), they used miniature sky bows and four types of miniature arrows. Here they acted as sacred hunters, *emhoniin*, and because they were ritually in a contrary condition, as sacred clowns.

They passed along the sacred animals milling around in the pound, ritually killing with stabbing motions. Animals who were struck staggered and fell, spurting blood, but raised themselves again. The mimicry in the display of injured and bleeding animals was extraordinary.

After the animals had completed a dance around Esceheman, Ehyophstah, and the Young Wolves, they filed out of the brush lane and returned to the dens. While they were moving back, the doctoring portion of the Massaum began. Those in the Tsistsistas camp who were ill or disabled or who wanted a blessing directly from the animal spirits sat motionless in front of the lodges. When passing them, the animals performed brief shamanistic healing or cleansing rituals. Hohnuhka who were asked to doctor treated patients in their mysterious contrary way at this time.

Esceheman, Ehyophstah, and the Young Wolves had returned to their places in the enclosure when the animals were leaving the pound. They waited. When the *heszevoxsz* were closed once again, the second hunt began.

Esceheman placed Maheonę honehe on Ehyophstah, tying the wolf securely to the woman's neck and shoulders; the wolf's head projected over her forehead. Both, followed by the Young Wolves, again went midway between the wings, this time walking there in a circle. By wearing the wolf *maiyun*, Nonoma's red master wolf was shown as the servant of Ehyophstah to the Tsistsistas and animal witnesses who were present. It also testified that the power of her father, Nonoma, was with her.

Again the animals streamed from their lodges, and the actions of

the preceding hunt were repeated. The third hunt followed the second hunt in detail; Ehyophstah again wore the wolf *maiyun*. The fourth hunt repeated the first hunt, and Ehyophstah once more stood with the pipe.

This time the group of women again stood silently in the dancing, colorful mass of animals that was prodded by Hohnuhka hunters. Ehyophstah offered the pipe to the animal spirits a last time. At the conclusion of this last impounding, the animals did not return to their dens. They stood watching the last acts performed in the enclosure. It was midday.

The Medicine Lance and the Sacred Food

Eschewan, Ehyophstah, and the Young Wolves had returned to the enclosure. The sacred pipe rested again in its special place. Nonoma placed the sheet of dried buffalo meat on the grass in front of the buffalo skull. He handed the medicine lance to Ehyophstah and her husband and instructed them how to proceed. With four motions they thrust the tip of the ceremonial weapon through the meat, raised the shaft, and stuck it in an opening in the ground near the buffalo skull. Nonoma placed four buffalo chips on the grass a few yards away from the medicine pole, marking the four sacred directions.

The Maheone honeche runner walked up with the red wolf hide attached to his head and back. He placed his hands and feet on the four buffalo chips, facing the medicine lance, the buffalo skull, and the five spirits. The act demonstrated the power of the master wolf over the hunting of game to the southeast, southwest, northwest, and northeast.

The coyote came running, and with three feints, crawled through under Maheone honeche with the fourth motion. This act symbolized the power of the red wolf over all other predators. It also commissioned the coyote to perform the servant's role in the next event.

When the coyote had passed under the Maheone honeche, Voh'kis, after three feints, ripped the dried meat from the medicine lance with a fourth jump. Because she had signaled the arrival of hunting time, she also signaled the end of four successful hunts by making the food of the sacred animals available for distribution.

Immediately, the *hohnuhka* snatched the meat from the kit fox and tore it into seven portions. They ran out in seven directions to the Tsistsistas camp, and they distributed tiny fractions of the meat to every person, to share in the animal food blessed by the spirits.

The Coyote Leader and the Animal Race

Coyote placed himself at the head of the animal groups when they moved out of the wings and into the prairie in the direction of No-wah'wus. On both sides the Tsistsistas people followed them from the distance. The coyote caused the joyful mass of animals to stop four times before they reached the stream. A Massaum song was sung at each stop. After the fourth song, a race took place that carried all to the water's edge. Everyone took a drink, thus ritually ending the fast. This act also made the stream holy because the sacred animals had blessed it by their drinking.

On returning, the animals stopped again four times to sing a Massaum song; they dispersed immediately after reaching the "drive lane." The *hohmuhka*, who had accompanied them to the stream, returned to their own lodge for the "brushing-off" ritual that ended their contrary condition. All through the camp, Tsistsistas and animal impersonators ended the ceremony by using white sage for the "brushing" that returned them to their ordinary condition.

The Lodge of the Maiyun

The main performers, with the two wolves, the kit fox, and their instructors had returned to the wolf lodge. Once again the five spirits took the seating order that had been established on the second day of the ceremony when the Tsistsistas earth had been made. On the sage cover south of the buffalo skull sat Esceheman, followed on her right by Nonoma, Ehyophstah, and her husband. Motseyoef sat on the southeastern side alone, behind the Tsistsistas earth. The wolf and the kit fox hides were removed from the runners and displayed on the northwestern side of the lodge. Behind, and next to them, sat the instructors.

Ehyophstah took the sacred pipe to Motseyoef, who broke the seal and lit it. The pipe passed from Motseyoef along the line to the Voh'kis instructor who was sitting in the northernmost position and directly back from him to Motseyoef. When the pipe was smoked completely, it was passed to him again. He placed the ashes in four motions upon the Tsistsistas earth in front of him. He used the pipe stick to brush ashes and the earth symbol to the fireplace, leaving no trace on the clean, smooth ground.

Now Nonoma erased the sand painting of the universe on the western side of the world tree. One by one the performers stood in

front of him. He brushed them with a small bundle of white sage, touching them lightly along both sides of their bodies from their heads to the earth. The Massaum had ended.

They left the lodge, taking the animal hides, rattles, pipe, and other articles with them. They would go to the sweat lodges later. The Young Wolves removed the cover of the wolf lodge on the next day. Because it had served as the sacred mountain, it belonged to the spirits. They took it to the stream and placed it gently in the waters.

The world tree and the twenty-eight pole frame were left standing. During the following days, the large camp broke up. The various bands went away to their fall locations where the impounding of real game in accordance with the Massaum law would begin later.

7. Early Tsistsistas in the Northern Plains

The object of the ceremony [Oxheheom, New Life Lodge, "Sun Dance"] is to make the whole world over again, and from the time the Lodge-Maker makes his vow everything is supposed to begin to take on new life, for the Medicine-Spirit, having heard the prayer of the pledger, begins at once to answer it. When the man makes the vow, he does it not so much for himself or his family, as for the whole tribe. Attending upon his vow and its fulfillment is an abundance of good water and good breath of the wind, which is the same as the breath of the Medicine-Spirit who regards all things. At the time of the Lone Tipi, when the earth is first created, it is just beginning to grow. As the ceremony progresses, this earth increases in size, and when the lodge itself is erected we build a fire which represents the heat of the sun, and we place the lodge to face the east that the heavenly bodies may pass over it and fertilize it.

—EXPLANATION OF THE MEANING OF THE OXHEHEOM CEREMONY AS TOLD TO GEORGE A. DORSEY

THERE IS ONE Tsistsistas sacred story that goes beyond the Ehyopstah accounts published by Grinnell and Kroeber. On October 15, 1971, the keeper of the *nimāhenan*, the sacred arrows, Edward Red Hat, came to my house for a serious visit. He was accompanied by two arrow priests as eyewitnesses (Schlesier 1974:279–80; 1980b:55). Events leading to this visit, and the results of it, have been discussed elsewhere (1974, 1980b) and will not be repeated here.

During this visit it was considered as necessary by the arrow keeper that I should be informed about Tsistsistas origins in order to comprehend their unrelenting struggle for survival and their long journey through time. The visitors had come prepared with a tape recorder. When they switched it on, we listened to an instructor's voice telling carefully in English the sacred story of the creation of the Tsistsistas as a people of the grasslands. It is a spirit story and had never been told outside a small circle of persons within the *ononeo-vātaneo* and perhaps never will be told again.

In my presentation in this book of the Massaum and its significance for the formation of Tsistsistas, I have not disclosed the sacred story but have assembled external facts and internal Tsistsistas perceptions that are in agreement with it. I am permitted to give the location and date of the creation of the Tsistsistas; both have already been mentioned in this text—North Dakota, around 500 B.C. This is the information I started with when I described the time and place of the Proto-Tsistsistas—Tsistsistas transition.

The place and date do not invalidate Tsistsistas stories about the ancient homeland in the far north but complement them. The Tsistsistas themselves draw a line between the Tsistsistas and their distant ancestors. They see themselves as having been the same people in the far north, but then something special happened to them in the grasslands.

Some readers might argue that it is impossible to base a reconstruction of Tsistsistas beginnings and early times on “oral tradition,” even though two facts come from a sacred story that demands that it be preserved unaltered over time. This is perhaps true in many cases, but regarding the Tsistsistas I disagree. Over the many years of my close relationship with Tsistsistas ceremonial people, I have found them to be astonishingly accurate concerning events of the near and distant past. In contrast, I have found the ethnological literature about Cheyennes oftentimes woefully inept and erroneous. Generally—and there are good exceptions—errors once printed become embedded in later publications because anthropologists sometimes tend to perpetuate errors from each other’s works instead of asking their informants directly.

The following section may decide if the Tsistsistas and I are right when I identify the early Tsistsistas with archaeological remains in the northern Plains. For this effort, the preceding chapters are essential because the Tsistsistas world description and specific features and behavior derived from it must be superimposed on archaeological material to distinguish the early Tsistsistas presence from the presence of other groups.

Groups Coexisting with the Tsistsistas

Groups of the Pelican Lake Phase

“Pelican Lake” is the type name for a distinctive projectile point (Pelican Lake Corner Notched) found in all components of what Reeves (1970:68) defines as a phase. He assigned “some 90 archaeological

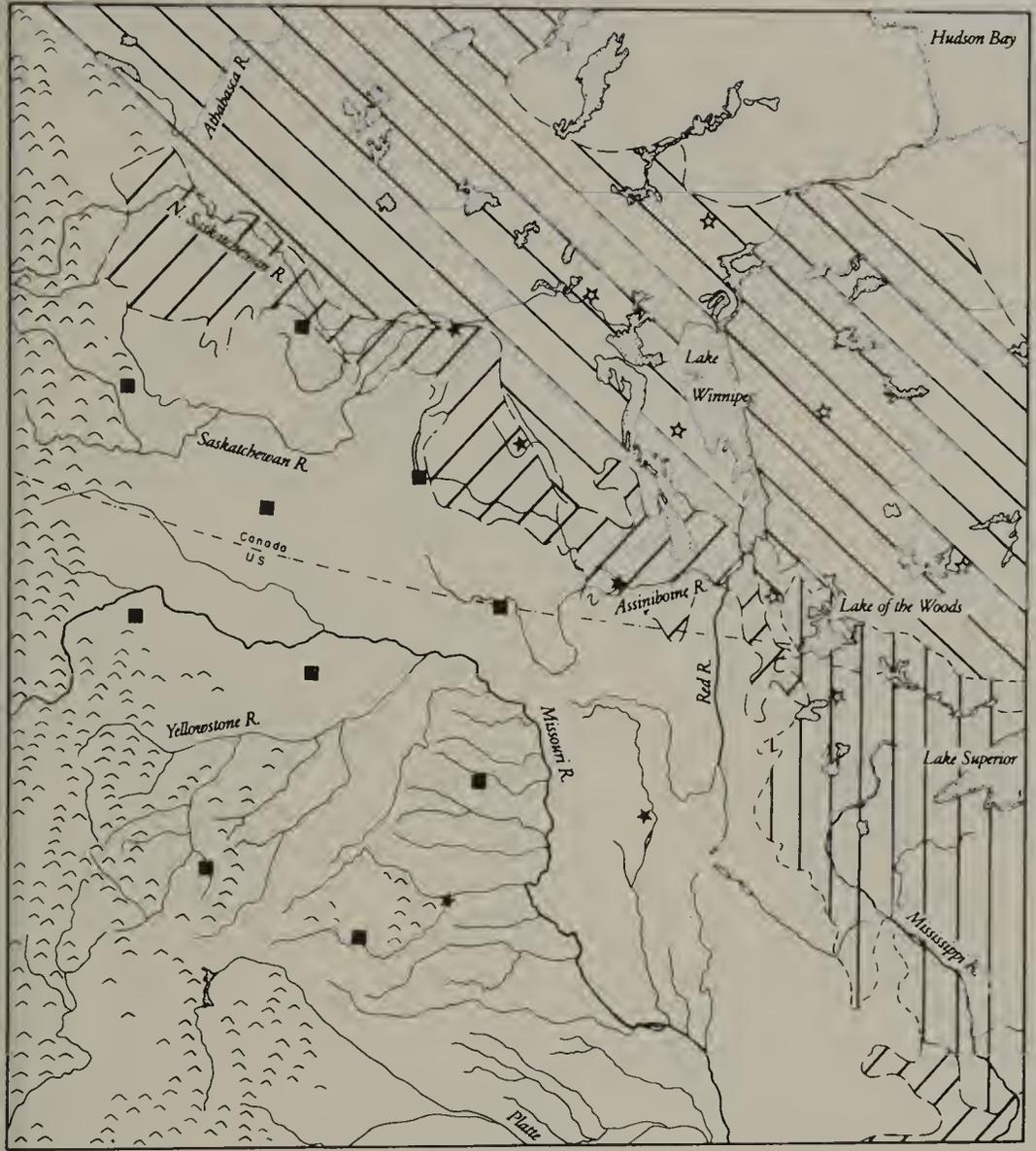
components” to this phase and divided it into 8 regional subphases that he sees as corresponding in varying degrees to distinctive environmental areas of the northern Plains (1970:68–72). It should be noted that Foor (1982:25–29, 81) defined Pelican Lake as a culture. Because I believe that groups participating in Pelican Lake are of different cultural backgrounds and represent a number of different language stocks, I cannot agree with the use of this term. This essay will use Reeves’s terms and categories.

Sites of the Pelican Lake Phase extend from the northern half of Colorado through western Nebraska, Wyoming, South Dakota, and Montana to Alberta, southern Saskatchewan, and southwestern Manitoba (Reeves 1970, fig. 3). The heaviest concentrations are in Wyoming and Montana.

The time period of this phase extends in the High Plains from at least 1000 B.C. to A.D. 250. Temporal and spatial distributions of sites signal a withdrawal of Pelican Lake Phase groups westward from the eastern portions of the region (southern Manitoba, South Dakota, and Nebraska) around A.D. 100 and from the Saskatchewan Basin, northern Montana and eastern Wyoming between A.D. 200 and 250 (Reeves 1970, fig. 7). In the Rocky Mountains of Alberta and Montana, in southern Montana, and in the Bighorn Basin, sites continue until about A.D. 700; Foor (1982:84–89) has suggested that they lasted there until A.D. 1000.

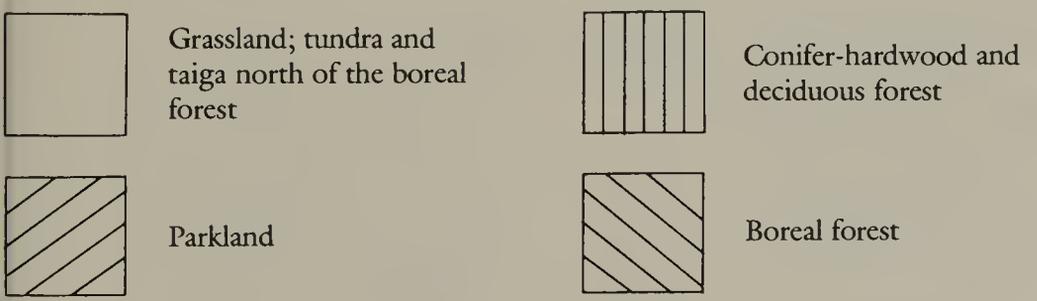
Reeves (1970:142–49) interprets the Pelican Lake phase as a serial component of a cultural tradition he calls TUNAXA, which is divided into three temporal phases—McKean, Hanna, and Pelican Lake.

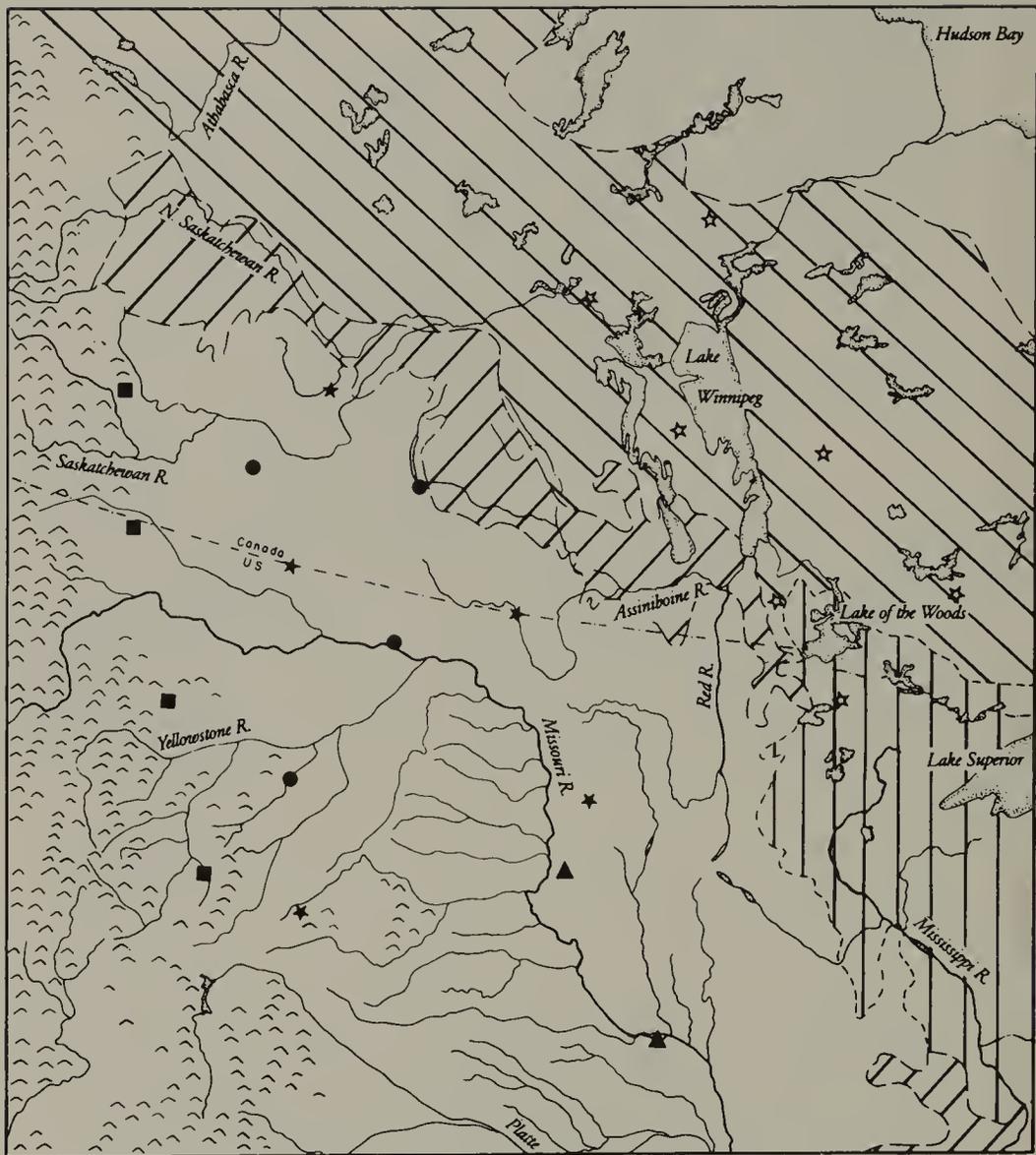
The McKean Phase, named after the diagnostic lanceolate projectile point found at the McKean site in northeastern Wyoming, appeared in the western High Plains around 3600 B.C. (G. Wright 1982:150). The earliest dates come from the Bighorn Mountains and southern Montana. Although sites of this phase occur from western Nebraska to Manitoba and from Wyoming to Alberta, the heaviest concentration is in Wyoming (Reeves 1973, fig. 6). Two other projectile points are often associated with McKean points in sites of this phase—Duncan and Hanna. A gradual transition from the McKean Phase to the Hanna Phase apparently began around 2000 B.C. The last dates for McKean, so far, range from about 1500 B.C. (Brumley 1978:176; G. Wright 1982:150) to 1230 B.C. (Greiser 1985:121). Development from the Hanna Phase to the Pelican Lake Phase began around 1300 B.C., as is evidenced by the low incidence of Pelican Lake points



MAP I. The northern plains and adjacent regions, 200 B.C.

Vegetation zones





MAP 2. The northern plains and adjacent regions, A.D. 300

Archaeological entities and their linguistic affiliations

■ Pelican Lake (Aztec-Tanoan)

☆ Laurel (Algonquian)

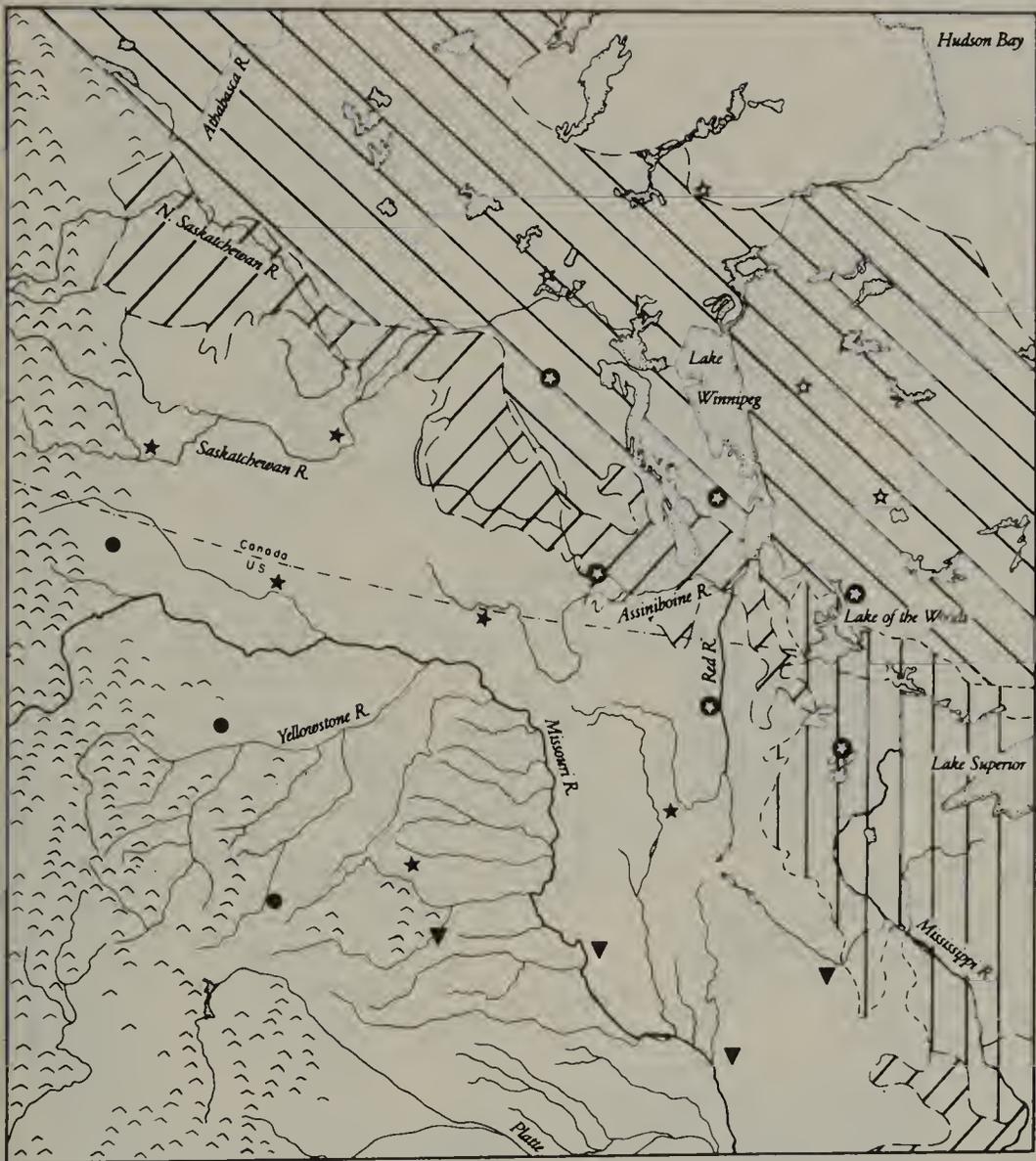
● Avonlea (Athapaskan)

⊛ Blackduck (Algonquian)

▲ Valley (Caddoan)

▼ Proto-Mandan (Hokan-Siouan)

★ Besant (Algonquian)



MAP 3. The northern plains and adjacent regions, A.D. 800

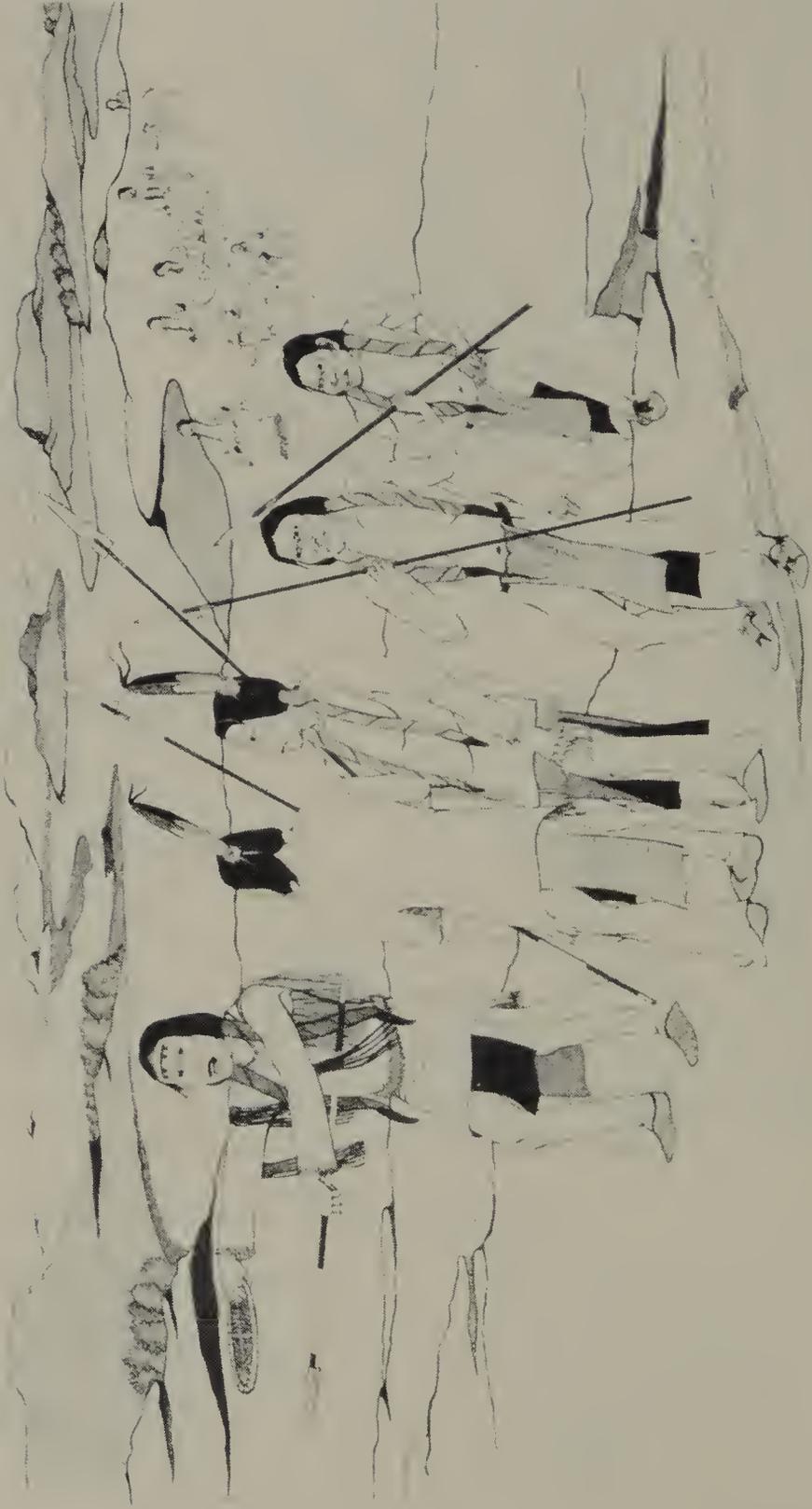


FIG. 8. A shaman leads the migration from the far north. When the Proto-Tsististas started on their long journey, they were led by a shaman who walked ahead of the people with an *axzem*, a spirit wheel, in his right hand. The shaman's spirit helper in the *axzem* showed him the trail to be taken. Drawing by Dick West.

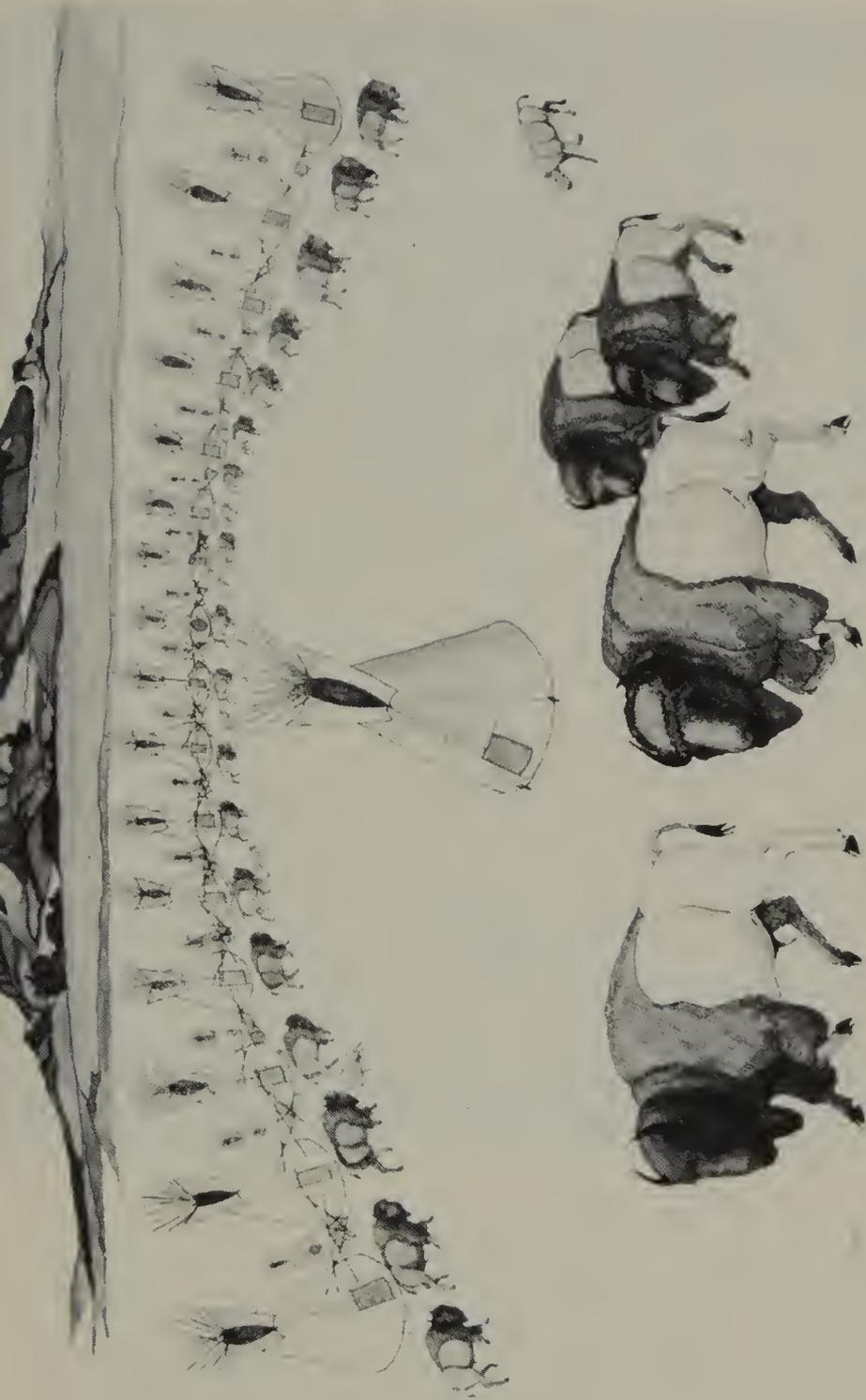


FIG. 9. A medicine hunt near the sacred mountain. The proto-Tsistsistas arrived in the Plains with a fully developed medicine hunt system. A medicine hunt was a communal hunt in which an animal herd was brought into camp or constructed pound by a shaman's spirit helper. The medicine hunt here depicted took place near the Tsistsistas sacred mountain—Bear Butte, South Dakota, which rises in the background. Drawing by Dick West.



FIG. 10. The giving of Ehyophstah in the spirit lodge of the sacred mountain. The two spirits (*maiyun*) who are the keepers of animal spirits of the Plains, Nonoma, the spirit of Thunder, and Eschewan, "Our Grandmother," the Earth spirit, gave their daughter Ehyophstah to Tsistsistas. Ehyophstah, "Yellow-haired Woman," was a young female buffalo transformed by her *maiyun* parents into a beautiful girl to help the Tsistsistas. Her parents placed her in the position of master spirit of animals and therefore gave her the power to bring game. She was given as a wife to one of two Tsistsistas ceremonial scouts who on their visionary, death-defying search had found the spirit lodge of the *maiyun*—Bear Butte. The white bear represents Voxpenako, servant and protector of Eschewan. Drawing by Dick West.



FIG. II. Tsistsistas shamans at the *axzem* on Moose Mountain, Saskatchewan. In the northern Plains, the Tsistsistas built large stone features on high elevations. They were regarded as *axzemeo*, spirit wheels of stone, and were directed to the spirits of the world above. They served as evidence of the Tsistsistas presence and called on the spirits for protection. They also served as boundary markers. The alignments of spokes and cairns were oriented in the direction of the heliacal risings of three stars of summer dawn important in Tsistsistas religious philosophy: Aldebaran, Rigel, and Sirius. Drawing by Dick West.

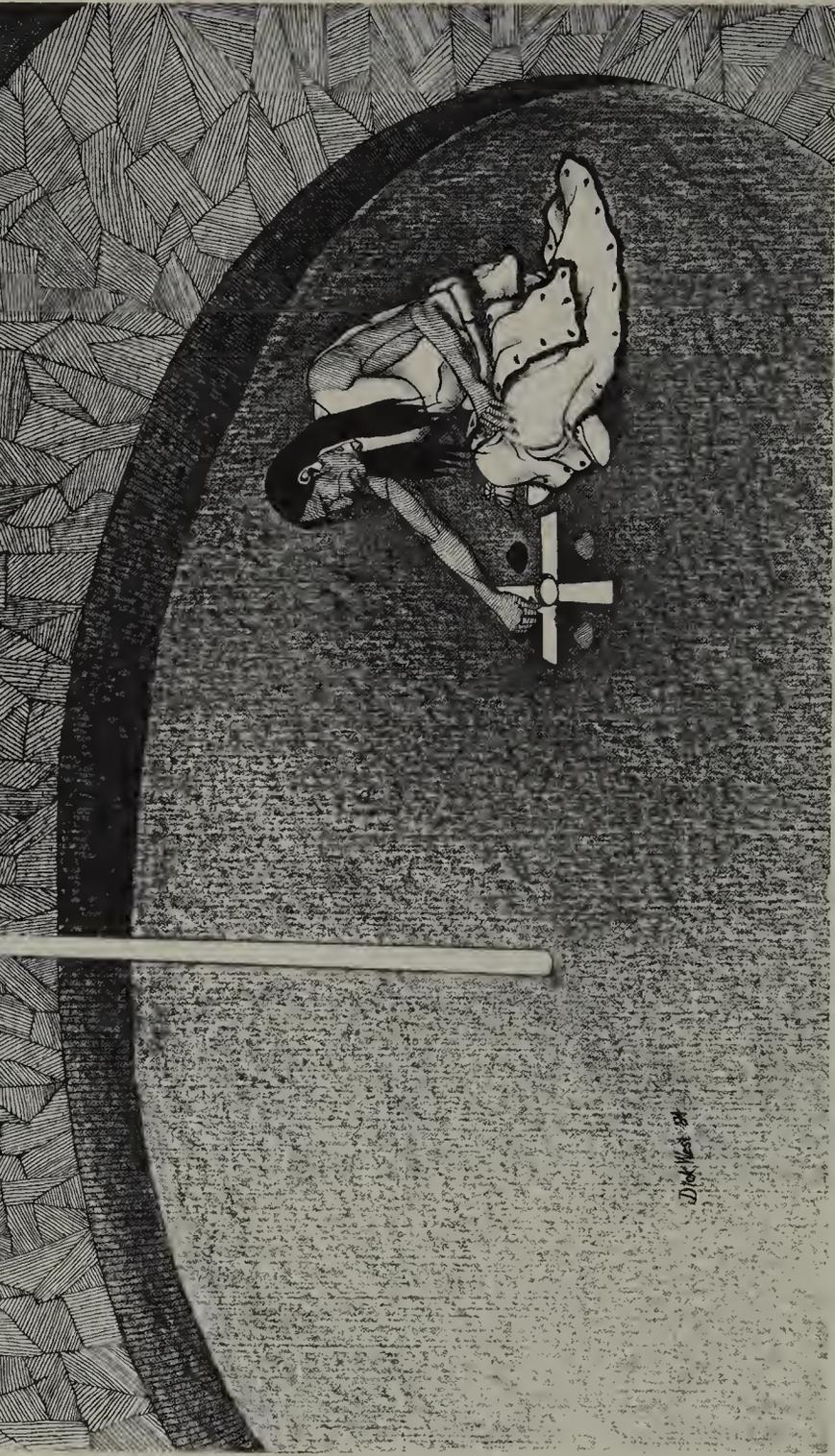


FIG. 12. The creation of the universe ritually reenacted and explained, Massaum, second day. In the seclusion of the ceremonial lodge, the priest knelt on the ground west of the center pole. In this action, he represented Maheo, the Supreme Being. The universe was created from a cosmological singularity. The singularity is at the very center of the earth painting that the priest is shown finishing. The small mounds in the ceremonial directions and the white cross extending in the cardinal directions represent *hestanor*, the universe, in the process of expansion immediately following on the event of the cosmological singularity. Drawing by Dick West.

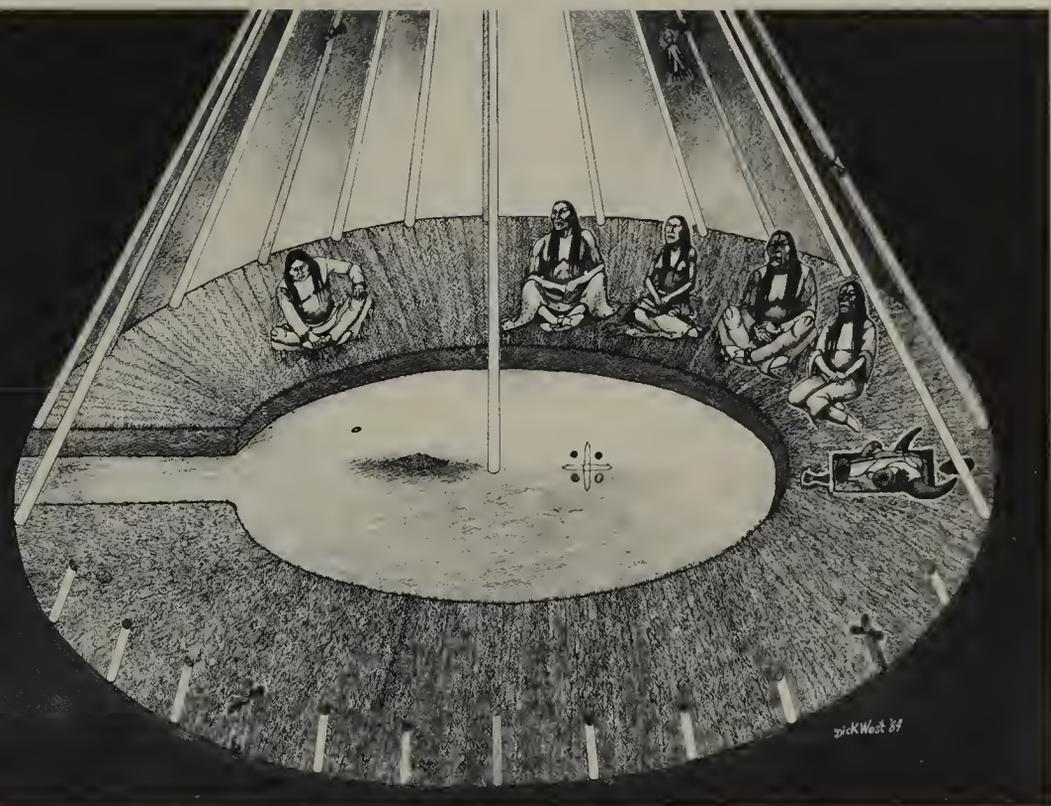


FIG. 13. Motseyoef and the Tsistsistas earth, Massaum, second day. The Massaum is here revealed as an earth-giving ceremony. Four of the five main performers sit in the southwestern position. Next to the painted buffalo skull is Esceheman, followed by Nonoma, Ehyophstah, and her husband. Motseyoef sits alone on the southeastern side. Nonoma has instructed him to execute a small circular earth drawing on the bare ground in front of him. This represents the earth given to Motseyoef as the spiritual representative of the Tsistsistas and grants to his people the right to the grasslands. The location where the Tsistsistas earth was given by Nonoma and Esceheman is the spirit lodge of Bear Butte, here represented by the Massaum wolf lodge. The artist's drawing shows this specific event as it is commemorated in the ceremony. Drawing by Dick West.

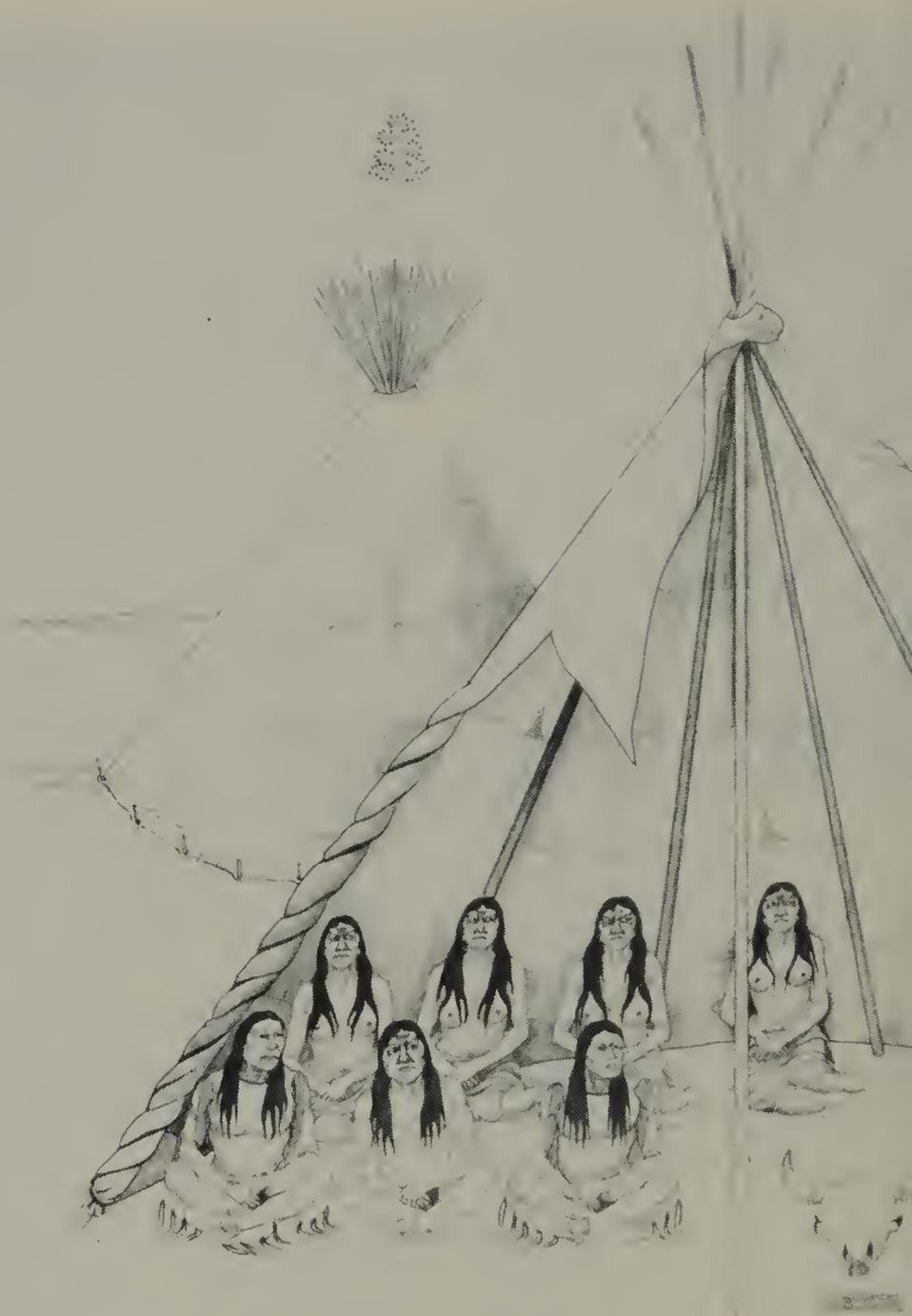


FIG. 14. The blue star, Voh'kis, descends from the sky to conduct the sacred hunt, Mas-saum, fifth day. In the predawn of the fifth day of the ceremony, after the actual heliacal rising and the quickly following disappearance of Voh'kis (the star Rigel) in the south-eastern sky, the yellow kit fox, painted with blue lines, appears and runs her circle around the wide arc of the animal camp. She enters the drive lane and the corral. She represents



both the star and Ehyophstah who has once again returned to the Tsistsistas. The major performers of the ceremony are waiting for her in the corral. Of these the woman pledger who plays the sacred role of Ehyophstah, her ritual husband, and the seven women of the Young Wolf Society are painted with the blue star design, the symbol of Voh'kis. Drawing by Dick West.



FIG. 15. Ehyophstah directs the sacred hunt, Massaum, fifth day. Ehyophstah calls the animals from the drive land near the corral. She stands silently, offering the sacred straight pipe to Bear Butte and the animals that are beginning to arrive and to dance around her.



Next to her stands her mother, Esceheman; behind her are the seven wolf helpers. Coyote, in the foreground, is watching the antics of two Hohnuhka Society members who perform as ritual hunters and sacred clowns. Drawing by Dick West.



FIG. 16. Red wolf, white wolf walking, Massaum, fifth day. The male red wolf is Maheone honehe, the wolf *maiyun* and species-specific protector spirit of wolves, or Artgeist. The white wolf is Èvevšev honehe, the horned wolf, the female counterpart of the red wolf. Both are the master hunters of all grassland predatory animals, the guardians of the sacred mountain, and the messengers of the spirit world. As game protectors, they taught the Tsistsistas the hunting etiquette of the grasslands. As spirits, they represent both the earth and the sky regions. In the Massaum symbolism, the red wolf also represents Nonoma, the Thunder spirit, and the red star Aldebaran. The white she-wolf represents Esceheman, the earth spirit, and the white star Sirius. On the fifth day of the Massaum, both wolves assist Ehyophstah in bringing the game into the drive lane and the corral. The carefully prepared and decorated skins of the two wolves are worn by painted runners. Drawing by Dick West.

associated with Hanna points after this date. Around 1000 B.C., Pelican Lake points dominate assemblages, signaling phase transition (Brumley 1978:176). A few Hanna corner-notched points are present in early Pelican Lake Phase sites.

According to Reeves (1970:87), the available data indicate that the Pelican Lake Phase economy was based primarily on the communal hunting of buffalo where buffalo populations were dense. In other areas, a more generalized hunting pattern existed, with the grinding of wild plants for food. North of Wyoming, grinding slabs and handstones are lacking. Riverine and lacustrine resources were utilized where they were advantageous. The Bighorn Basin and the Alberta and Montana Rocky Mountains were seasonally used by groups of this phase for hunting elk, deer, and sheep (Reeves 1970:84). Ceramics are extremely rare; Reeves (1970:80–81) considers this phase to be preceramic or aceramic. The main hunting weapon was the atlatl (spear thrower).

The bow and arrow were not adopted by groups of this phase although in southern Saskatchewan and eastern Montana, they lived for at least a century in close proximity to groups of the Avonlea Complex who had brought the bow and arrow with them into the region.

Buffalo kill sites, which are more prevalent in the northern area used by the people of the Pelican Lake Phase, include jumps and pounds. Post molds and logs representing holding corrals are occasionally preserved (Reeves 1970:83). Ceremonial structures have not been found.

According to the most recent investigations (Brink and Baldwin 1985), the burial system of Pelican Lake during the early stages and at least in some regions (Alberta, Saskatchewan, Montana) includes the following: placement of the burial site on a high, prominent spot usually with a commanding view and with interment in shallow sub-surface pits. Rock cairns are often placed over the infilled pits, and burials are almost always secondary burials, and more than one individual is usually represented. Red ocher covers nearly all the bones and appears to have been placed in the pit infill as well. There are always other grave goods, often in large numbers, and these typically include Pelican Lake projectile points, native copper, clam shell and clam shell beads, dentalia shells, and the like. Reeves (1970:88), however, reports primary flexed pit interments with few associated grave goods for the relatively late Glendo subphase of Pelican Lake in Wyoming.

Applying culture-specific categories to the Pelican Lake Phase archaeological evidence, it can be stated conclusively that this phase does not represent the Tsistsistas people. The beginning and ending dates of Pelican Lake and its location within the TUNAXA tradition further strengthen this conclusion.

The TUNAXA tradition entered the High Plains from the Rocky Mountain west (Benedict and Olson 1973; Husted 1969:91) and from the Great Basin (see, e.g., Brumley 1978:188). Linguistically, as Husted has suggested, at least a part of Pelican Lake should be identified with Aztec-Tanoan speakers. I would include the ancestors of the Kiowas and believe that groups ancestral to the Kutenais and Nez Perces participated in it also.

Groups of the Avonlea Phase

The Avonlea Phase is characterized by a distinctive triangular side-notched arrow point with frequent, finely serrated edges. The name derives from the Avonlea type site located southwest of Regina in south-central Saskatchewan. Reeves (1970, table 4) assigned thirty-six components to this phase.

Avonlea sites extend from southwestern Manitoba (where they are rare) through Saskatchewan to Alberta, south through Montana into northeastern Wyoming and western South Dakota (1970, fig. 5). The largest concentrations are in Saskatchewan, Alberta, Montana, and northeastern Wyoming. Avonlea artifacts occur quite often in association with Besant Phase material, indicating a high degree of contact between two different traditions sharing the same region.

Initial dates mark the arrival of groups of this phase in the Alberta and Saskatchewan Plains at the beginning of the Christian era. Their expansion southward is evidenced by sites in the Black Hills and Northeastern Wyoming dated around A.D. 400 (Reeves 1970, fig. 7). Coexistence with Besant groups in much of this area began well before this time. After A.D. 600, Avonlea groups concentrated in the western portions of the High Plains from Alberta to Wyoming. They may have been partly responsible for the withdrawal of Pelican Lake Phase groups into the Rocky Mountains and the Bighorn Basin. By A.D. 700 Avonlea groups had abandoned the Saskatchewan Basin, and the region was used almost exclusively by Besant Phase hunters. In southern Montana and adjacent areas in Wyoming, Avonlea sites continued until A.D. 1000 (Husted 1969:92–95; Reeves 1970, fig. 7).

At the Head-Smashed-In buffalo jump in southern Alberta

(Reeves 1978), Avonlea follows Pelican Lake in time; at the Gull Lake buffalo drive site in southwestern Saskatchewan, the terminal Avonlea presence is dated at A.D. 660 (Kehoe 1973:77).

The economy of the Avonlea Phase was based on highly efficient buffalo hunting in the regions of dense buffalo populations. Communal hunts were of considerable importance; jumps, pounds and traps were used. Avonlea is best known from kill sites. Habitation sites are located on stream terraces and in caves, and settlement features are still generally unknown. Smaller game formed only a minimal part of the diet (Reeves 1970:106). Collecting activities included fowling, fishing, and plant gathering.

Although no ceremonial structures associated with Avonlea buffalo drives have been found, two investigators (Kehoe and Kehoe 1968:28) believe that game-calling ceremonies played an important role. Ceramics existed throughout much of the Avonlea temporal range (Syms 1977:92–93). The Avonlea burial system featured a primary flexed or extended pit burial (Reeves 1970:106).

The Avonlea Phase must be credited with having introduced the bow and arrow into the northern Plains. It is interesting that Besant groups, generally on friendly terms with Avonlea people, continued use of the atlatl (spear thrower) for centuries after they knew about the bow-and-arrow performance. The Besant transition from atlatl to bow and arrow took place after A.D. 400 (Reeves 1970:89).

Applying culture-specific categories to the Avonlea archaeological evidence, it can be conclusively stated that this phase does not represent the historic Tsistsistas people.

Kehoe (1973:76–78, 192), against the unfounded objections of other investigators, has suggested that the Avonlea groups were Athapaskan speakers who entered the Alberta and Saskatchewan parks and grasslands from the north where they had hunted woodland buffalo earlier. He sees the Avonlea groups on the Montana-Wyoming border of the period around A.D. 1000 as the vanguard of historical Athapaskans of the central Plains and of Navajo and Apache groups in the Southwest. No evidence contradicts this interpretation.

It might also be suggested that Avonlea groups in Alberta became the historical Sarcee whose relationships with the historic Blackfoot were close and of long standing. It is therefore not surprising that Apache languages of the Southwest have their closest linguistic ties in the north with Sarcee (Krauss and Golla 1981:68). Both researchers have postulated, on the basis of Athapaskan language differentiation,

that an Athapaskan expansion occurred out of the upper drainages of the Yukon River and northern British Columbia in two directions. One was eastward into the Mackenzie River drainage, eventually reaching Hudson Bay. The other was south along the eastern Rockies (Krauss and Golla 1981:68). The latter appears to be reflected in the Avonlea arrival.

Archaeological evidence from the Great Slave Lake region documents the first expansion. Noble (1981:102–3) has defined the Taltheilei Shale Tradition as a major Athapaskan tradition. Its earliest manifestation, the Hennessey Complex, entered from the west and occupied territory from the Great Slave Lake to Lake Athabasca and eastward to Keewatin from 500 to 200 B.C. Avonlea was probably not part of this complex because the bow and arrow were not present in it.

The bow and arrow, however, were available in North British Columbia for the second Athapaskan expansion south into the Alberta Plains. In the Frazer Canyon, for example, stemmed arrow points appear around 1000 B.C., corner-notched arrow points about 350 B.C. (Reeves 1970:178).

Groups of the Laurel Tradition

The term *Laurel* was first applied to burial mounds in northern Minnesota and southwestern Ontario, located on both sides of the Rainy River. J. Wright (1967:2) calls Laurel a tradition because of the “perpetuation of a common archaeological material culture through time which lacks major discontinuities in either sequential change or regional variation.” Syms (1977:80) uses the term Laurel Composite because Laurel regional expressions “share a common core of traits: toggle head harpoons, overlapping projectile point typologies and conical ceramic vessels with varying frequencies of pseudoscallop shell stamping, linear stamping and stab-and-drag stamping decorative techniques applied to the upper part of the vessel.”

Laurel Tradition sites range from east-central Saskatchewan through most of Manitoba and Ontario to Northwestern Quebec. In the South, sites extend into Northern Minnesota and Michigan. J. Wright (1972:59; 1981:89–90) describes Laurel groups as Archaic peoples of the Canadian Shield who adopted pottery. Related groups in Quebec and Labrador did not accept pottery and thereby retained a Shield Archaic identification. J. Wright has revised the initial dates for Laurel from 300 B.C. (1981:90) to 600 B.C. (personal communica-

tion). According to Syms (1977:81, table 5), dates continue to A.D. 1030 with no evidence of clustering.

In the western portion of the region, the Laurel Tradition overlaps, beginning during the latter part of the eighth century A.D., with the Blackduck Tradition (Syms 1977:101, fig. 18). This tradition ended in Minnesota perhaps during the fifteenth century. In western Ontario, north and west of Lake Superior, it extended into historic times. The southern boundaries of Blackduck include the boreal forest portions of northern Minnesota, the aspen parkland of the Lower Red River Valley, the Pembina Valley, the Assiniboine River valley, and the grasslands of southwestern Manitoba (Syms 1977:103, fig. 18). Differences in the material culture of the two traditions are minimal, probably indicating a common economic base and a common heritage.

Laurel—and Blackduck—groups continued a way of life basically indistinguishable from that of their Shield Archaic ancestors. The only additions are ceramics and burial mounds for secondary interment. Both are believed to be the result of stimulus diffusion from regions further south. Because there are no similarities between Laurel pottery and ceramic complexes from which the stimulus should have come, J. Wright (1967:132–33) initially contemplated the possibility of a Siberian origin. All investigators are confident that burial mounds were first built by these groups in the southwestern portion of their range and that the concept was introduced to them by others. Perhaps so, but because these groups were culturally related to the Proto-Tsistsistas and the Tsistsistas and shared a very similar world description, they must have practiced a secondary burial system for a very long time before they used mounds in this region. Chernetsov (1963:41), after explaining the Ob Ugrian concepts of the soul (chapter 2), reminds us that

among the nomads of the steppes, and seminomadic hunters, the leaving of the dead in the dwelling, or in a structure imitating it, was most widespread. Such is the disposition of corpses in burial mounds, the leaving of the dead in the tent among the Nenets, or in houses with all the property belonging to them among the Yakuts, the Kamchadals, and some of the Ugrians.

Laurel sites are most often located on lake shores or river systems. Syms (1977:83) has defined at least three different subsistence economies based on hunting, fishing, and collecting: (1) seasonally inten-

sive utilization of fish on the Great Lakes, followed by diffuse hunting; (2) seasonal shifts across mixed conifer–hardwood and parkland biomes in Minnesota; and (3) scattered distribution of sites depending on diffuse resources in eastern and northern Manitoba and adjacent Ontario. Sedentary settlements were not advantageous.

The best information comes from the village debris used in the construction of the burial mounds. Most of the mounds are over fifty feet in diameter and six feet tall, and may contain up to 100 secondary burials. These usually consist of bones wrapped in bundles indicating that the dead had been allowed to decompose, perhaps on a platform or scaffold, prior to reburial (J. Wright 1972a:61). A range of artifacts made of hammered native copper includes awls, barbs, chisels, and beads. The occasional occurrence of Wyoming obsidian in Laurel sites suggests trade relations with Plains groups, perhaps with both Avonlea and Besant peoples.

In my opinion, Laurel groups were not Tsistsistas. They were marginal to the northern Plains during the time period under consideration. But I believe that both groups (or clusters of groups) derived from a common origin and that they must have had contact with each other over an extended period of time.

Linguistically, Laurel and Blackduck groups—as those of the later Selkirk Horizon in the area—were Algonquian speakers as J. Wright's (1972b, 1981) studies of Canadian Shield populations have clearly demonstrated. Differences between the three are insignificant in archaeological terms, although the cultural expressions of ethnic groups that composed these traditions (or horizons) must have shown interesting variations.

I believe that Laurel–Blackduck groups were directly ancestral to Central Algonquians. I am convinced that they were also ancestral to such Western Algonquians (chapter 7) as the historic Arapahos-Atsinas, and Suhtais. Further, in my opinion, Selkirk groups are direct ancestors of historic Algonquian tribes in the northwestern boreal forest portion of the Algonquian range.

Groups of the Valley Phase

Sites of the Valley Phase are characterized by a ceramic ware called Valley Cord-Roughened. It features vertical or spiral cord-roughening, a bulge at midpoint on the vessel, a straight rim lacking a shoulder, a single row of interior punctates below the lip, and occasionally incised lines; bases are tapered and rounded (Syms 1977:88). Reeves (1970:107, table 4) assigned eighteen components to this phase.

Valley sites are distributed from eastern Kansas through eastern Nebraska, following the Missouri upriver as far west as Havre, Montana. Neuman (1975:84) observed that Valley Phase ceramic traits are related to some pottery of his Sonota Complex. He also sees a close general resemblance between the side-notched projectile points, atlatl weights, bone tubes, and awls of the Valley Phase and Sonota. This is not surprising because Sonota is part of the Besant Phase. Although Besant and Valley each utilized a different subsistence system, groups of both phases were contemporaneous for a time in Montana, North Dakota, and the northern part of South Dakota. Syms (1977:88) views the Central Plains and South Dakota as the core area of the Valley Phase and regards its extension north of the Missouri River as secondary. Southwestern Manitoba was peripheral to these groups.

According to Reeves (1970:108-9), this phase developed during the first century A.D.; phase transition to the Loseke Phase occurred at A.D. 500-600. The distribution of Loseke Phase sites in northeastern Nebraska, southeastern South Dakota, and northwestern Iowa appears to signal a retreat of Valley groups from the Missouri River valley lying to the north. Syms (1977:88) describes the Valley Phase as at least contemporaneous with, and possibly later than, Kansas City Hopewell, which is dated from about 100 B.C. to 900 A.D.

Valley subsistence activities concentrated on diffuse, riverine resources. The taking of small game such as deer, antelope, water birds, turtles, and rabbits was important, as was shellfish collecting. Buffalo hunting was insignificant. Reeves (1970:111) believes that corn horticulture can be inferred from the abundance of ceramics and permanent habitations; he interprets Valley groups as semisedentary hunter-gatherer-horticulturists. It is curious that handstones and grinding slabs are absent. Habitation sites are located on creek and river terraces. Ceremonial structures have not been found. The burial system consisted of secondary burial in a pit with no overlying mound or secondary burial in a pit basin or on the mound floor below a mound (Reeves 1970:111).

Applying culture-specific categories to the Valley Phase archaeological remains, it can be stated conclusively that they do not represent the Tsistsistas.

The Valley Phase marks the intrusion of groups into the northern Plains from the central Plains and regions lying to the east. Linguistically, they may be identified as Caddoan speakers.

The Tsistsistas in the Northern Plains, 500 B.C. to A.D. 800

Tsistsistas are here identified, in archaeological terms, with the eastern regional subphase of the Besant Phase. Both Reeves (1970) and Syms (1977) include Neuman's (1975) Sonota Complex in Besant. Sonota is here considered as part of eastern Besant.

The Besant Phase: The Archaeological Evidence

The name Besant comes from the Besant Valley, in Saskatchewan. It designates the characteristic atlatl (spear thrower) projectile-point type (Besant Side-Notched) that was first described and named by Boyd Wettlaufer at the Mortlach site. Prairie Side-Notched (or Samantha in some areas) is the type designation for the corresponding arrow point. According to Reeves (1970:89), the technological transition in Besant from atlatl to arrow took place after A.D. 420.

Reeves (1970:89) originally assigned fifty-one components to this phase; more have been added since the time of his writing. No regional subphases have been defined until now.

Besant sites extend from southwestern Manitoba through Saskatchewan to Alberta, south into Montana and eastern Wyoming, and eastward into South Dakota (apparently excluding the southeastern portion of the state) and most of North Dakota. Besant is absent from the Bighorn and Shoshoni basins of Wyoming and from the central Plains, although Besant points appear there occasionally.

The earliest Besant sites are in the eastern part of the region. Boundary Mound 3, on the Missouri River in south-central North Dakota, provided a date of 250 B.C., which is considered to be too early by the investigator (Neuman 1975:88). Syms (1977:90) expects beginning dates for Besant in southwestern Manitoba around 100 B.C. Reeves (1970:91), agreeing that the Besant Phase initiation varies from east to west, views a beginning in the North Dakota–Missouri River area between A.D. 1–100, at A.D. 100–200 in the Belle Fourche and western Montana area, and at A.D. 150–250 in the Saskatchewan Basin. I believe that the early date in North Dakota (250 B.C.) is in agreement with the proposed time period of the Proto-Tsistsistas arrival in the prairies of Manitoba and Saskatchewan and with the Tsistsistas movement southwest toward the Black Hills (chapter 5). If this is correct, dates preceding that for Boundary Mound 3 should eventually come from the northeastern Plains edge.

In Manitoba, Besant boundaries are marked by Laurel people; in Minnesota, by Malmo groups. Some aspects of the burial systems of

Laurel and Malmo are similar to Besant. In Saskatchewan, Besant groups shared the region with Avonlea people after the latter's arrival. The location of the Tsistsistas stone spirit wheel, on Moose Mountain (chapter 5), nevertheless, suggests that they were careful to document their special rights there. Because the withdrawal of Pelican Lake groups westward coincides with the direction of the Besant and Avonlea penetration of the northern Plains, it appears reasonable to consider both the latter responsible for it. If the *haztova hotoxceo* enemies of Tsistsistas tradition, encountered in the Black Hills and removed from there, were actually people who resisted intrusion, as is most likely, I believe they would have been Pelican Lake groups. The termination of Besant, or its transformations, remain a puzzle in the archaeological literature.

In Alberta and the Saskatchewan Basin, the western Besant sub-phase is replaced by the Old Women's Phase around A.D. 750 (Reeves 1970:92, fig. 7), which lasted into the nineteenth century (Reeves 1978:165-66; Davis and Zeier 1978:227). Because the archaeological record shows a gradual transition from one phase to the next and no changes in the way of life are indicated, it may be assumed that both phases represent the same ethnic groups. Therefore, I suggest that western Besant represents Western Algonquian groups ancestral to the various Blackfoot divisions of the late Old Women's Phase and historic times.

Eastern Besant groups Tsistsistas appear to have abandoned the southwestern portion of their range (west and south of the Black Hills) after A.D. 600, slowly shifting back toward the region of their entrance a thousand years earlier.

Because their next withdrawal from the eastern portion of their range and the Black Hills coincides with the arrival there of Proto-Mandans (Mandans *before* the initiation of the Okipa ceremony; see chapter 8) of the Initial Middle Missouri Tradition, it seems reasonable to consider the latter responsible for it.

Wood (1967:119-66) has traced the evolving Mandan tradition on the Missouri River from the Thomas Riggs Focus (A.D. 1100-1400) through the Huff Focus (A.D. 1400-1600) and the Heart River Focus (A.D. 1600-1797) to Historic Mandan (A.D. 1797-1886). The Okipa ceremony, which required a permanent ceremonial lodge fronting a village plaza, was initiated at the beginning of the Thomas Riggs Focus, around A.D. 1100, because these features are an integral part of settlements of this focus (Wood 1967:156-57). From A.D. 1100 to the beginning of reservation time these features remained the center of

every Mandan village, although plaza location and the structure of the Okipa lodge itself changed over time. At the beginning of the Thomas Riggs Focus, Mandan settlements were distributed on the Missouri from the mouth of the White River, South Dakota, to the mouth of the Little Missouri in North Dakota, over a stretch of about 350 miles (Wood 1967:130).

Directly ancestral to the Thomas Riggs Focus and early Mandans is the Initial Middle Missouri Tradition that includes such archaeological entities as Cambria, Mill Creek, and Great Oasis and is dated from about A.D. 800–1300 (Syms 1977:112; Ludwickson et al. 1981:133–54). Archaeological sites range from southwestern Minnesota (Cambria, see Watrall 1974) to northwestern Iowa (Mill Creek, see Baerreis and Alex 1974), the upper Big Sioux and lower James rivers, and along the Missouri in South Dakota from the White to the Cheyenne River (Ludwickson et al. 1981:136, 142). The Proto-Mandan arrival, as documented archaeologically in Cambria, Great Oasis, and Mill Creek assemblages, introduced to the region sedentary villages with mixed horticultural and hunting subsistence activities.

Archaeology has essentially corroborated the Mandan traditions that describe a general migration from the southeast upriver on the Mississippi and the movement of separated bands into the mixed-grass prairie from the grassland edges in Minnesota and Iowa (Maximilian, n.d., 2:93–103; Bowers 1950:25–26, 156–63). The traditions also mention that some Proto-Mandan bands ranged west as far as the Black Hills and north into southwestern Manitoba before they began congregating on the Missouri River shortly before A.D. 1100; they nevertheless continued to use the area from the Black Hills northward seasonally.

The band specified by the tradition as having moved to the Black Hills from the first settlements of Proto-Mandans near the mouth of White River are the Awigaxa (Bowers 1950:160) who were led by the shaman Good Furred Robe whose skull has been kept in one of the major Mandan ceremonial bundles (Maximilian, n.d. 2:100; Bowers 1950:160, 196). According to Wolf Chief's narrative (Bowers 1950:162), one group of Awigaxa "was lost while making sinews near the Black Hills."

Perhaps the reason for their disappearance is to be found in the Awigaxa tradition collected by Maximilian at Fort Clark in the winter of 1833–34; it certainly mentions the first enemies of this band. Arriving near the Black Hills, Good Furred Robe's people "at that time knew nothing of enemies. Then, when a Mandan woman was scrap-

ing a hide, a Cheyenne came and killed her” (Maximilian, n.d., 2:100). Following this incident, long-lasting warfare developed with the Cheyennes (Maximilian, n.d., 2:100–103) who obviously defended their territory against the new arrivals. This condition led to the creation by Good Furred Robe of Awigaxa soldier societies (Maximilian, n.d., 2:101) that eventually defeated the Cheyennes in a great battle. The tradition continues in describing that the Awigaxa were later joined by a Hidatsa band that also suffered from Cheyenne raiding (Maximilian, n.d., 2:102). The combined strength of the two groups successfully resisted Cheyenne hostilities; this happened after the Awigaxa had moved to the Missouri River in North Dakota (2:102).

Because the early warfare near the Black Hills, according to Maximilian’s and Bowers’s informants, took place *before* the formulation of the Okipa, it belongs to a time period preceding the Thomas Riggs Focus, and therefore I believe must be located in the Initial Middle Missouri Tradition time, around and after A.D. 800. Because the first Hidatsa band settled near the Mandans after the extension of the Thomas Riggs Focus to the Little Missouri, that is after A.D. 1100, the traditions suggest a time span of nearly three hundred years of Tsistsistas-Mandan warfare. Archaeologically, the early Hidatsas appear to be represented by the entity called tentatively the Devil’s Lake–Sourisford Burial Complex, with sites distributed from eastern North Dakota to Southwestern Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan (Syms 1977:122–24, fig. 18; 1979:294–97, fig. 8). Syms’s (1979:301–302) proposed dates for this complex, A.D. 900–1400, are in agreement with my interpretation.

The Awigaxa presence near the Black Hills has recently been documented by archaeology. Adrien Hannus (personal communication) has found Initial Middle Missouri Tradition sites in the Fog Creek drainage in the South Dakota Badlands. Initial Middle Missouri Tradition village sites have been recorded at the southeastern edge of the Black Hills (site 39FA23), on the eastern slope (the Phelps site), and on the Belle Fourche River (site 39BU2) to the north. Dates for these sites, so far, cluster between A.D. 950 and 1300 (Adrien Hannus, personal communication). The latter site, called the Fortified Smiley Evans site by the excavators, Lynn and Bob Alex, with C¹⁴ dates around A.D. 1000, is only a few miles north of Bear Butte. Haug et al. (1980:31, 298) have found sites of the tradition in the southern part of the Black Hills, mainly as rockshelter occupations. They believe that these groups made extensive use of the Black Hills as a resource base.

In southeastern Saskatchewan and southern Manitoba, eastern Besant terminal dates are around A.D. 1000 (Reeves 1970, fig. 7; Syms 1977:90). It appears that before that date the first of their bands went south into the Red River–Minnesota River area, where I see them in the archaeological record as the entity called the Arvilla Complex. Ossenberg (1974:38–39), in her analysis of discrete traits in cranial samples from Minnesota and the adjacent plains of the time period 200 B.C. to A.D. 1700, appears to support this view. She has identified Arvilla skeletal material as ancestral Cheyenne. Syms (1981:37–38), after reviewing the evidence, at least agrees that “Arvilla includes a predominance of an Algonquian population spread throughout eastern and central Minnesota with the Red River as a western boundary.” Populations east of Arvilla were ancestral Dakota; Moore (1986a: 97–117, 145–54) has emphasized the long-standing and intimate Cheyenne-Dakota relationship in the region. In the 1680s their vanguard had abandoned the Minnesota River–Lake Traverse region to return to the Missouri, once again facing the Black Hills and Bear Butte. According to Tsistsistas tradition, the sacred mountain had been visited regularly, at least by ceremonial people, throughout the time periods mentioned.

Reeves (1970:176) views Besant as representative of a Plains cultural tradition separate from both the TUNAXA and the Plains Horticultural traditions. He named this tradition NAPIKWAN and believes that it resulted from the movement of groups into the northern Plains from the outside.

Frison (1978:223), after excavating two eastern Besant sites (Ruby, Muddy Creek), has this to say:

The Besant cultural incursion into the Northwestern Plains brought with it, or else developed there, the most sophisticated bison procurement methods the area had seen. Hunters were able to incorporate sophisticated artificial structures into certain features of the natural topography and produce highly efficient buffalo corrals or pounds. As a result, these hunters were less dependent upon the arroyo trap and the jump and consequently could set up operations in a wider variety of favorable bison habitat areas. Of particular interest is the effort expended on the construction of the two corrals [a reference to the Ruby and Muddy Creek sites] and the Ruby site religious structure. The latter indicates that the shaman's role in communal bison procurement was of considerable importance by at least about 1800 years ago. The corrals, the weaponry, and the drive lane complexes reflect a high level of competence in handling bison and careful attention to various details that helped ensure success.

I believe that Besant groups arriving in the northern plains from the boreal forest brought with them a world description common to all. After their entry, some clusters of bands underwent special developments (such as the elaboration of the Tsistsistas Massaum) that over a period of time, differentiated them culturally from others. Contemporaneous with these factors were movements of these band clusters in different directions where they adapted to specific environments and to new cultural influences. Once Besant groups were distributed from eastern North Dakota to Alberta, regional differences became more significant, although all would continue to share in a common, prevailing world-description base. Differences between them should, relatively speaking, be more pronounced at both ends of the spatial spectrum. Western and eastern groups would overlap and exchange with each other most in the middle of the Besant range. To differentiate one cluster of bands from the others in the archaeological record would be most difficult there.

Generally, the eastern subphase is here viewed as moving largely within southwestern Manitoba, southeastern Saskatchewan, the Dakotas, and northeastern Wyoming, living in different, specific regions over time. The western subphase is viewed as moving largely within western Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the High Plains of Montana, also favoring specific regions over time. It is to be expected that groups of both subphases made long-range visits and excursions into each other's territories. The eminence of Knife River flint in the artifact inventories of both eastern and western groups attests to this.

The archaeological evidence shows that ceremonial structures such as burial mounds and stone spirit wheels occur only in the eastern Besant culture and are lacking in western Besant sites. Spirit lodges were almost certainly used by both groups; as archaeological features, the evidence, so far, comes from eastern Besant (Ruby). Excavated basin-shaped, earth-filled hearths associated with the piles of fired rocks appear to occur among all groups (Reeves 1970:96) and may represent sweat lodge features (chapter 4). Heated rocks were, of course, also used for cooking in skin containers, a technique that made ceramics unimportant. Ceramics do occur and are more frequent in the eastern rather than in western Besant sites; the pottery consists of simple corded or punctated conoidal vessels. Ceremonial hunts by eastern Besant groups emphasized carefully constructed pounds according to the Massaum description; jumps were rejected. Western groups used jumps, arroyo traps, and pounds.

Knife River flint from southwest-central North Dakota and from

deposits such as West Horse quarry (site 39SH37, investigated by Adrien Hannus, personal communication) in southwestern South Dakota was the preferred material of eastern Besant knappers but occurs often also in western Besant sites. In addition, western groups in southern Montana used local materials such as basalt and obsidian (Davis and Zeier 1978:227–30), whereas in Alberta local Avon chert is significant (Reeves 1970:95).

Winter and summer habitation sites of both subphases may have been nearly identical due to the similar social organizations, the band system, and the nomadic way of life. Eastern Besant summer campsites, however, are occasionally associated with burial mounds (e.g., the Stelzer site; Neuman 1975:3–37). The western Besant Rose Glen winter campsite in southeastern Alberta, investigated by Quigg (1981), features eighteen stone circles (indicating tipis of up to eight meters in diameter) grouped in two adjacent clusters. Sites such as this continued throughout the northern Plains into the early historic period. Quigg (1981:13–15) thinks that at Rose Glen two bands comprising about 100 people camped together for a few weeks in the early fall around A.D. 500. Of two eastern Besant sites, the Main Muddy Creek Village in southeastern Wyoming (Frison 1983:87–88; Reher 1983:202–203) contains an estimated seventy-three stone circle features located directly southeast of the bison pound, whereas the Sprenger site, in central North Dakota (Schneider 1983:94–96), had eighty-one tipi rings.

The Besant Phase economy of all regions concentrated on the communal hunting of buffalo. Collecting activities included both fowling and fishing and some shell collecting. The general lack of grinding implements indicates little reliance on seed grinding. Throughout Besant, “bone uprights” (bones stuck vertically in the ground with articular surfaces upward) may have been used as “anvils” in the manufacture of stone tools, a technique already applied in the eastern European Upper Paleolithic, for example, in Kostenki I on the Don River (Klein 1969:120, 127–29; Semenov 1964:174).

Eastern Besant: Important Archaeological Features

If the assessment of Sonota by its main investigator, Neuman (1975:79–95), is correct, and if Syms’s (1977:89–90) discussion of south-central Manitoba is considered, the archaeological record at present shows five probable centers of eastern Besant ceremonial structures—burial mounds.

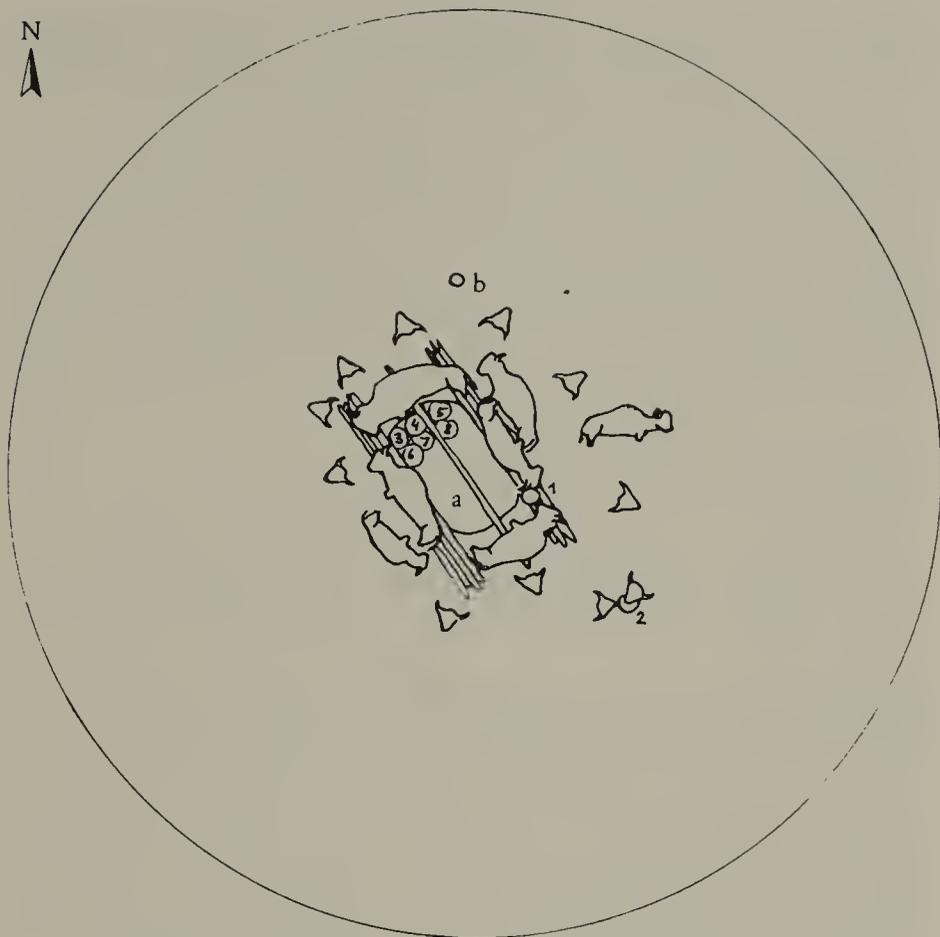


FIG. 17. Reconstruction of features, Mound 2, Swift Bird site. The site is located on a terrace above the western edge of the Missouri River floodplain, seven and a half miles across the river and downstream from Mobridge, South Dakota. Features include (a) subfloor burial pit; (3-8) bundles with multiple secondary interments. They contained skeletal remains of thirty-two individuals of all ages and both sexes; (1, 2) bundles with multiple secondary interments located on the mound floor. They contained remains of six persons. Burial 2 was partially covered by two bison skulls; and (b) a small, circular depression, 2.15 feet in diameter, stained with red ocher. Seven nearly complete skeletons of buffalo calves and yearlings and eleven skulls of mature bison surrounded the burial pit on the mound floor. Wood from a log lying along the edge of the burial pit has been dated at A.D. 350 \pm 100 years.

One is situated on the west side of the Missouri River about eight miles below the mouth of Grand River, in South Dakota. Within an area of two and a half miles are nine burial mounds: two at the Swift Bird site, four at Grover Hand, and three at Arpan. Associated with the Grover Hand burial mounds is the Stelzer habitation site, which is a Besant summer camp.

A second center is situated upstream on the same side of the river just across the North Dakota boundary line. Within an area of two miles there are five burial mounds, four at the Boundary Mound site, one at Alkire.

A third center consists of the eight burial mounds at the Schmidt site, located upriver southwest of Bismarck, North Dakota, once again on the west side of the Missouri.

A fourth center has two burial mounds at the Baldhill site on the east, situated on the east bank of the upper Sheyenne River.

And a fifth center lies to the north, in the Killarney locality of the Pembina Valley in south-central Manitoba, where an area within a two-mile radius features eastern Besant kill sites, habitation sites, and burial mounds.

It is curious that no similar clustering of burial mounds has been found in or around the Black Hills. This is perhaps due only to the fact that this area has not been sufficiently investigated archaeologically.

The burial mounds average about 70 feet in diameter and 2½ to 3 feet tall. The burial pits that underlie the mounds range in shape from ovoid to rectangular, with flat bottoms and vertical walls. In size, they range from about 12 feet by 6 feet, to 8 feet by 6 feet, with depths ranging from 4 to 2 feet below the mound floor. On the mound floor, they are usually lined with timber on the long sides. Neuman (1975:94) believes that portions of the pits had been lined with matting. Secondary bundle burials in pits range from eight to fifty individuals of both sexes and of all ages. Bundles usually include the bones of a number of persons, with many parts of the skeletal remains missing. Often, bones show incision marks indicating that parts of the skeleton structure had been dissected and cleaned before final burial.

Bones and bundles had been rubbed with red ocher. Among the many grave offerings, artifacts of more exotic nature are made of marine shell (olivella and dentalium) that were part of a trade network that reached the Pacific coast.

Associated with the burial pits are buffalo burials of whole carcasses, often of calves and yearlings, that line the pits on the mound

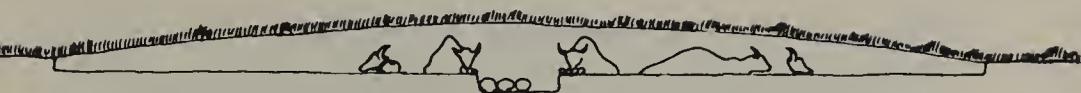


FIG. 18. Mound 2, Swift Bird site, in cross section. The tumulus measured 75 feet in diameter and had a maximum apical height of 3.1 feet above the surrounding ground surface. Before the burial pit was dug, sod was excavated from the mound floor later to be used as the mound surface. The pit measured 10.4 feet northwest-southeast, 6.4 feet northeast-southwest, and it extended 2.5 feet below the original ground surface. Before bundle interment, the burial pit has been laid out with sage. Before it was filled in and the mound raised, the bundles with human remains and the buffalo remains had been covered with red ocher.

floor. These are mixed with the skulls of mature animals. At Mound 2 of the Swift Bird site, for example, eighteen buffalos are represented, at Arpan Mound 1 no less than forty-eight.

The investigations have determined that prior to burial pit excavation, eastern Besant people removed the sod from the whole area that was later covered by the mound.

The Ruby site, located in the extreme southeastern part of the Powder River Basin, is a single-component Besant site consisting of three main cultural features. One of these is a buffalo pound, the second is a ceremonial structure, and the third is a processing area or a campsite. Frison (1971; 1978:213-23) excavated the first two areas and tested the third. The site has been dated A.D. 280. According to Frison, the presence in the bone beds of calves from five to eight months old suggests that the pound was used throughout the autumn.

The corral of the pound was built in the meander bend of an arroyo; its steep bank partly formed one side of the restraining wall. In its location, it was not visible from the flat terrain above. The chute, the final part of the drive lane leading to the corral, was built down-slope with a sharp bend that obscured the corral from view of the animals until they were committed to the final rush into it. Those portions of the chute (the wall facing the arroyo) where the heavy bodies of the buffalos exerted the greatest pressure were the most solidly constructed. There heavy timber was stacked between a system of paired posts forming a wall capable of deflecting the animals. Besant projectile points (from lances and dart shafts) begin to appear where the corral entrance first became visible from the chute. Almost certainly the pound originally featured brush wings on the terrain above, leading to the chute entrance, but these have disappeared. Frison

(1978:222) estimates that the pound was designed to take a nursery herd of about twenty-five animals, or a few more.

Another buffalo pound excavated by Frison near Muddy Creek located 100 miles southwest of Ruby in southeastern Wyoming has very similar features. Frison (1978:221) views it as closely related culturally to the one at the Ruby site. He also believes that a religious structure may have been present next to this pound but that it was destroyed by recent gullying.

What Frison (1971:85–86) calls the ceremonial structure at the Ruby site is a feature six feet east of the chute of the pound. Postholes outlined a structure thirty-nine feet long and fifteen feet wide (Frison 1978, fig. 1). It was ovoid in form, pointed at both the northern and southern ends. Additional postholes bridged the structure at its widest section. Inside the southern half were three small holes, each containing either the third or fourth bison thoracic vertebrae with the dorsal spines in the ground. Eight buffalo skulls were arranged around the southern ring of postholes. Two holes were located on the west side between the structure and the chute. One contained four thoracic vertebrae with the dorsal spines in the hole, the other the articulated cervical vertebrae excluding the axis and atlas (Frison 1971, fig. 3).

Postholes were perpendicular to the ground surface; the structure, therefore, should have had straight sides. Because of the positions and sizes of decomposed logs present, Frison believes that the southern half of the structure might have been roofed. There was no fire hearth. A posthole in the corral, surrounded by bone deposits (Frison 1971, fig. 3), suggests that a sturdy pole had been implanted before buffalo were impounded.

Cultural Interpretation of Eastern Besant Archaeological Features

The following Tsistsistas categories are shared with the burial mound and Ruby pound features.

Hohanenō is the Tsistsistas term for small mounds raised in ceremonial lodges during religious observances. *Vós* (plural *vósoz*) designates a sacred mound or mountain that arises from *nsthoaman*, the deep earth, and may be associated with a cave or den. A Besant burial mound represents a *vós* because it is built on *nsthoaman* that was laid open by sod removal before mound construction. The burial pit should be understood as an artificial sacred cave—*vox*.

For primary burials, platforms on trees or scaffolds were used near where a person died in order to start the process of decomposition,

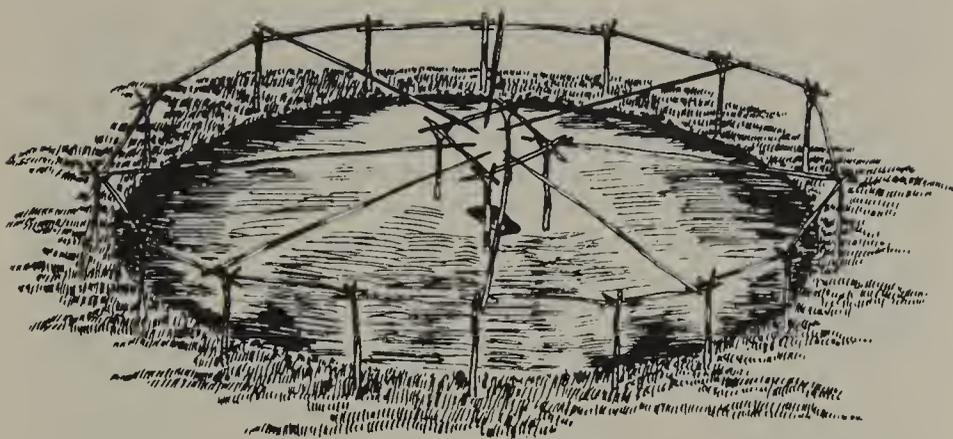


FIG. 19. Hypothetical reconstruction of the spirit lodge feature above mound floor and burial pit of the Swift Bird site before interment of human and buffalo remains. Because of the northwestern-southeastern orientation of the burial chamber, the four center posts must also have been oriented in these directions. Considering the size and shape of the burial mound and the Tsistsistas numerical symbol system it appears logical to assume that a circular structure based on sixteen forked peripheral posts was used. This would allow the placement of rafters from the four ceremonial—southeast, southwest, northwest, northeast—and the cardinal directions, a total of eight. The skeleton frame of this spirit lodge clearly resembles the traditional structure of the Tsistsistas “Sun Dance” lodge, although the latter features one center pole instead of the four-post arrangement. Because the spirit lodge was here raised over a burial pit, a center post was not feasible. The sketch shows the excavated mound floor and the burial chamber; at the conclusion of the ceremony the mound was raised above both. During the ceremony, the lodge must have been closed above with saplings and branches that were supported by the rafters and beams.

that is, the disengagement of the *omotome* of the deceased (chapter 1). After a number of years the remains were collected, apparently cleaned, bundled, and brought to a prearranged location for secondary burial. This took place in the late summer or fall, as shown by the presence of calves among the buffalo burials. Also, frozen ground would not have permitted the excavation of the burial pit.

The ceremony to free the *omotome* of all those whose remains had been brought began with the construction of a large spirit lodge. Its size was determined by the buffalo burials associated with the burial pit. Because of its size the lodge apparently was a vertical structure not unlike the circular Oxheom (New Life Lodge, “Sun Dance”)

lodge but without a center pole. Instead, it seems to have featured a four-post center frame joined by rafters with the exterior posts.

After the frame had been built and covered, sod was removed from the whole interior of the lodge and taken outside. Between the four center poles the burial pit was excavated and laid out with sage. On this bed the bundles containing the human bones and skulls were placed. Buffalo skulls, probably painted, were arranged near the pit. Probably the bodies of buffalo killed in the immediate vicinity of the spirit lodge were carried in before the ceremony began.

During the ceremony the bundles in the pit and perhaps the buffalo burials were sprinkled with red ochre—sacred paint. Probably sweetgrass was burned. In the ceremony, conducted by a shaman, the *omotome* of the deceased were formally released to join their *hemata-sooma* (chapter 1), already free, to become spirit beings in the spirit world. Also, the spirits of the slain animals were separated from physical form; the floor of the lodge became a *heszevox*—an animal den in the realm of the *maiyn* of the deep earth.

After the conclusion of the ceremony the burial pit was filled in. To permit construction of the mound, the center frame and the rafters of the lodge were removed and placed on the lodge floor alongside the pit. A mound was raised high enough to cover the bison carcasses (up to three feet). The sod excavated from the lodge floor was packed tightly across the mound surface. When this was finished, everything under the sod had become part of the deep earth and could never be opened again by a Tsistsistas.

What happened to the exterior poles of the lodge is uncertain. Perhaps they were left standing for some time, turned into a spirit fence by the shaman to protect the burial place. Or they were pulled out to make the burial place invisible from a distance in the rolling grass country.

Given the Tsistsistas intention to bury buffalo carcasses with human remains and to leave them undisturbed by predators, the concept of an earthen mound responds well to religious demands and proves highly functional. Locked in under a tightly packed, if shallow mound, the smell of rotting buffalo flesh would not escape and trigger predator scavenging.

It is highly probable that the Proto-Tsistsistas had a similar burial custom in the far north before their entering the Plains. Animal burials would have featured different species. What structure of enclosing human and animal remains would have been used is an open question, but a certain degree of permanence would have been neces-

sary. If the concept of burial mounds reached the Proto-Tsistsistas, or Tsistsistas, through stimulus diffusion at the northeastern edge of the plains, it could be argued that their much later adoption of circular earth lodges in the Red River–Minnesota River area was less the result of foreign influence than a logical development derived from the burial mound feature. A circular earth lodge, after all, was an artificial mound raised over an excavated floor, secured by an interior four-post frame connected by rafters with peripheral posts secured in place by beams. And it had a certain degree of permanence. Atonoomhetaneo, Mound People (from *atonoom*, the world below, and *hetaneo*, people), is the Tsistsistas term for people who lived in the ground.

Naoetaevoan is the Tsistsistas term for a shaman who had the power to call buffalo; *vohaenohonistoz* means the impounding of buffalo. *Vohaeátoz* is the word for the chute leading to the corral. These are ceremonial terms. The arrangement of structures at the Ruby bison pound reveals the features of the classic Tsistsistas medicine hunt as prescribed in the Massaum ceremony. I know of no other Plains people where the impounding of game *and* the pound structure itself were integral parts of a major tribal religious ceremony. The sacred hunt of the Massaum was the model for all Tsistsistas medicine hunts.

A camp of the size of the Besant Ross Glen site, consisting of eighteen lodges and, with an average of six people to a lodge, a population of slightly over one hundred, would have been sufficient to build the Ruby pound in a week to ten days. Frison (1978:216) estimated that a hunting group consisting of twenty males mobilizing the group effort might have required a period of ten days to two weeks to do the work. It should be remembered that in Tsistsistas pound construction women (the Young Wolves) played ceremonially and physically an important role, as is evidenced in the Massaum.

Another factor, generally neglected in the literature, requires consideration. The relatively high mobility of early Tsistsistas bands was made possible by the use of large, wolf like dogs for transporting lodge and camp equipment. George Bent (Hyde 1968:9), referring to Tsistsistas prehorse times based on testimony he collected in 1910, stated that

the tribe had a great number of large dogs, and these animals were employed to pack or drag burdens. When the people were moving about in the buffalo plains these dogs transported the little lodges and lodgepoles, all the camp equipage and baggage. The dogs were used just as horses were in later times. Some of the dogs had little pack-saddles or

saddlebags and carried loads on their backs; others were fitted up with little travois made of two small poles the ends of which dragged on the ground behind the dog. The load was fastened to the poles on short crosspieces. These dogs of the olden times were not like Indian dogs of today. They were just like wolves, they never barked but howled like wolves, and were half-wild animals. The old people say that every morning just as day was breaking, the dogs of the camp, several hundred of them, would collect in one band and all howl together, waking the whole camp.

It could be assumed that a camp of eighteen lodges, with a population of slightly over one hundred people, would require about the same number of adult dogs able to move loads. Including pups and younger animals, the dog population of a camp of this size might easily reach 150 and require a considerable meat supply consistently. The relatively high mobility of Besant groups, as demonstrated by the wide distribution of sites, was built on efficient dog traction that in turn was built on consistent hunting success.

At the Ruby site the pound was probably built after the location of the spirit lodge had been determined. Because both the pound organization and the spirit lodge structure were determined by the *naoetaevoan*, variations in impounding sites are due to his personal preferences in response to the demands of his spirit helpers (chapter 1). At the Ruby site, the spirit lodge featured buffalo parts (skulls and vertebrae) that still contained buffalo *omotome*.

It is significant that at the Ruby bison site, vertebrae were placed in exactly the same location where the sacred animals of the Mas-saum, the two wolves and the kit fox, were moved on the evening before the sacred hunt—in the narrow space between the spirit lodge (wolf lodge) and the corral (see chapter 6).

In Siberia, the vertebrae of sacrificed animals were treated with special attention, for example, among Evenks. Shirokogoroff (1935: 200) mentions that “in certain cases some parts are considered especially preferred by the spirits, as a mark of sacrifice, as for instance, vertebrae of sacrificed animals fixed to a post erected on the spot; skulls of sheep, bears or horses mounted on a special platform.”

The ovoid structure of the spirit lodge is reminiscent of Tsistsistas sweat lodges that were also used for game-calling ceremonies. Tsistsistas sweat lodges, with their oval frame and with a single pole binding the feature as a backbone, appear to have symbolized a buffalo. This concept may also underlie the Ruby lodge. Frison (1971:85) interprets one of the poles excavated at the site as a ridge pole that

may have extended from the southern end to the center of the structure. Perhaps a second ridge pole originally connected the center with the northern end. Because of the size of the structure, two ridge poles would have been needed if indeed a “backbone” was being expressed.

The vertical frame of the Ruby lodge may have been preferred over a tipi setting in order to accommodate a larger number of people in the ceremony. Cooper (1944:79), reporting on the spirit lodge structure of sixteen Central Algonquian groups, mentions considerable variations: “In all 16 cases this tent was cylindrical or barrel-shaped or ‘vertical’—not beehive or low-domed shaped as sweat lodges usually are, nor strictly conical like tipis.”

In this lodge, both the game-calling and the “sending-off” ceremonies were held. According to the Massaum prescription, wolf runners may have gone out after the game-calling performance to call a buffalo herd up. As discussed in chapter 4, the Tsistsistas preferred to corral small herds numbering from twenty to forty animals. During this part of the medicine hunt the dogs would have been taken into the lodges of the camp or tied.

There is an element in Tsistsistas medicine hunts that is difficult to perceive and acknowledge by anyone educated in the Western scientific world description. Joseph Medicine Crow, a participant in a panel discussion on buffalo jumps held in 1962 (Malouf and Conner 1962:41), mentioned it, but it was ignored by the non-Indian members of the conference. Regarding the Tsistsistas corralling of game, Medicine Crow had this to say:

They would dig at the foot of a hill, not necessarily a cliff, but a little hill. The medicine man would stand at the pit and go through his routine, and as the runners drove the herd near, the medicine man’s medicine would begin to stir out all the animals in this area and they couldn’t leave the area, they would come down the hill, and even birds couldn’t fly out of the area. There is something about it that we don’t know, it just drives them to the pit with little human effort. That’s why I think the medicine man had a very important part in the buffalo drive.

After the herd had been brought in, killed and butchered, and a portion of the meat taken to the camp on the stripped hides, the sending-off ceremonies would formally be held in the spirit lodge. The corral had been opened before butchering; after the ceremony, the dogs were released to feed on the carcasses and clean the corral. If predators such as wolves, coyotes, foxes, raven, and the like had been

drawn by the kill, they were let in unmolested. There were exceptions. In the story of Black Wolf (Grinnell 1926:112) this man used the spiritual power granted to him by wolves to heal two wolves who had been shot by the Tsistsistas after they "had been into a buffalo pound where people were."

By applying Tsistsistas medicine hunt concepts, it is likely that the Ruby pound was used four times over a period of perhaps two and a half months.

8. Through a Looking Glass; Origins; Of Space and Time

*We have lived with these things
a long time.
These things we have in this Tipi,
we are going to live a long time
with these things.*

*We have come a long way with this truth;
no one can say anything different—
on the side of us, in the front of us,
in the back of us.
We are not here to talk about anyone else.
This is what we should know;
we will go a long ways from now.*

*Look back and respect our law and religion;
be happy and know the truth,
do what is right.
People should look to what is
truth only.
Judge yourself what is good.
That is what Maheo taught us.*

—MESSAGE FROM THE TSISTSISTAS ARROW KEEPER,
EDWARD RED HAT, NOVEMBER 10, 1978

MUCH IN THIS BOOK is concerned with locating events in time. The first section of this chapter steps back very far, attempting to sketch some of the decisive events in the history of the Algonquian language family. These occurred over a period of about 9000 years. The most distant images of hunting bands belonging to this language family appear before the drama of colossal late and postglacial environmental changes, changes that were among the most profound the northern half of the continent had ever experienced. Here the images of these bands are traced over time through crucial migrations and cultural transformations. Within this frame, the origin and the position of the Proto-Tsistsistas become understandable.

The second section allows a glimpse of the diversity and the astounding continuity of expressions of the ancient Algonquian world perception. They remained close to Siberian thought despite the vast spatial separation. Two Algonquian world-renewal ceremonies are singled out as examples, located at the opposite ends of the distribution range of the language family. One was formulated by the Yuroks of the northwest California coast, the other, clear across the continent, by the Munsee-Mahicans who, at the time of the European arrival (the early sixteenth century), occupied the area comprising the present states of Vermont and New York. Both ceremonies presuppose the concept of an original earth giving at their locations by the spiritual powers of the universe. Both cultures, adapted to different environments and to different pre-European influences, nevertheless operated from the basis of a common world view that they shared with the Tsistsistas, far away in the middle of the continent. The carriers of the three cultures would have understood the ceremonies of the others if they had been given a chance to see them.

The Okipa ceremony of the Mandans, outlined in section three of this chapter, stands apart. It was necessary to look at this ceremony because many ethnohistorians and ethnographers believe that the Okipa influenced the Massaum. No evidence has ever been given to explain this interpretation. Here a concise comparison is made, and the question, in my opinion, is resolved.

The Long Walk, 8000 to 500 B.C.

Using archaeological, ethnohistorical, and linguistic evidence, J. Wright (1972a, 1972b, 1981) has concluded that the Algonquian language family, as it existed at the time of the European arrival, was spoken by people of the archaeological entity he has termed the Shield Archaic. The pattern of culture of this tradition, as a perfect adaptation to the harsh environment of the Canadian Shield, began well before 4000 B.C. and continued in some areas west, south, and east of Hudson Bay into historic times.

The Canadian Shield covers nearly one-half of Canada, including the Labrador coast and all of Quebec, all of Ontario but its southernmost portion, adjacent areas in Wisconsin and Minnesota, three-fourths of Manitoba, the northern half of Saskatchewan, the eastern half of the Northwest Territories, and most of Baffin Island in the North. The center of the shield is Hudson Bay. Most of this vast region is boreal forest, but its northernmost portions (in northern Labrador, Quebec, and in the Northwest Territories) consist of tundra.

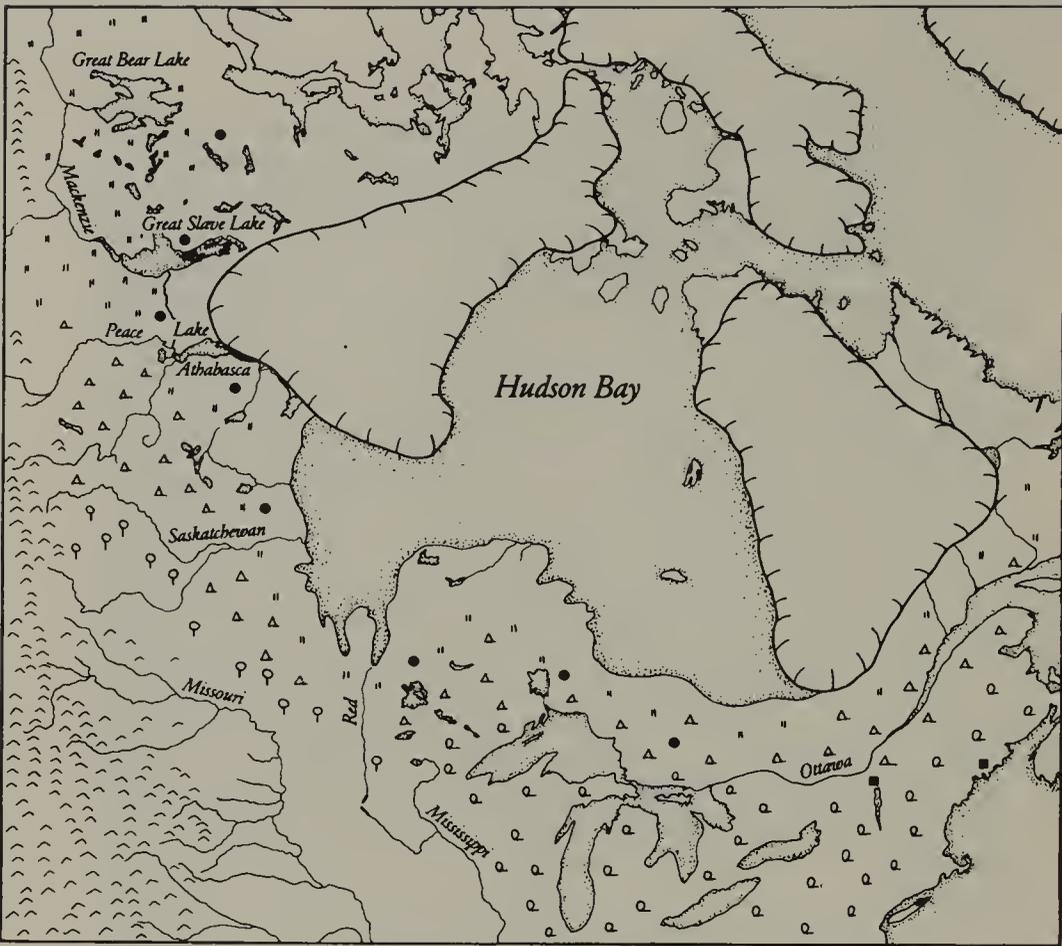
The shield represents the newest land surface on the continent because it was one of the regions covered by the inland ice of the glaciation of the Wisconsin period. The Laurentide ice sheet originated from highland growth centers in Greenland, on Ellesmere and Baffin islands, in Labrador and Quebec. Before 18,000 B.C. it had joined with the Cordilleran ice coming out of the Rocky Mountains. By 18,000 B.C. a great sheet of ice covered nearly all of the northern half of the continent; its southern border formed a wall that extended from the Washington coast to New York, through Idaho, Montana, the Dakotas, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Ice-free areas in Alaska were connected with northeast Asia by the Bering land bridge—a land mass a thousand miles wide during its maximum.

When deglaciation became significant, around 13,000 B.C., the ice retreated toward its centers of origin. By 10,500 B.C. the Laurentide and Cordilleran ice masses had separated, opening a slowly widening corridor that reached from Alberta north to the mouth of the Mackenzie River on the Arctic coast. Vegetation regions moved with the retreating ice. Around 18,000 B.C. the Plains had been a boreal and mixed forest except for a narrow north-south band at about 99W, from 35N to the Gulf Coast (Ross 1970:235; Wendland 1978:277). Around 13,000 B.C. the southern limit of the boreal forest was in Kansas; by 10,000 B.C., in South Dakota; and by 9000 B.C., in North Dakota.

Ice shrinkage in the northern half of the continent was not uniform. The Great Lakes had emerged after 7500 B.C., the Saint Lawrence and Labrador coasts after 6500 B.C., and much of the Northwest Territories by 5500 B.C. (Wendland 1978, figs. 2–5). The ultimate disappearance of the ice in mainland Canada occurred around 2500 B.C. in the mountains of north-central Quebec.

The retreat of the ice created changes nearly as drastic as its advance had. The earth's crust, relieved from the weight of the inland ice, rose, in some areas more than 500 feet. The rebound was unequal, depending on differences in the thickness of the erstwhile ice sheet. As a result, lake basins that collected melt waters were canted and found new drainages. Giant glacial lakes southwest (Lake Agassiz) and southeast (Lake Barlow–Ojibway) of Hudson Bay finally shrank back after 4500 B.C. The Canadian Shield reached essentially its present physiographic features west of Hudson Bay by 3500 B.C., south of James Bay around 4000 B.C., and in north-central Quebec after 2500 B.C.

Following in step with deglaciation, tundra, with boreal forest be-



MAP 4. The Canadian Shield and adjacent regions, 5000 B.C.

● Groups of the western Paleo-Indian tradition (Plano) ancestral to the Algonquian language stock, adapting to the emerging Canadian Shield

■ Groups of the eastern Paleo-Indian tradition in transition to the Maritime and Laurentian Archaic

Vegetation zones



Tundra and grassland



Conifer-hardwood and deciduous forest



Tundra and taiga



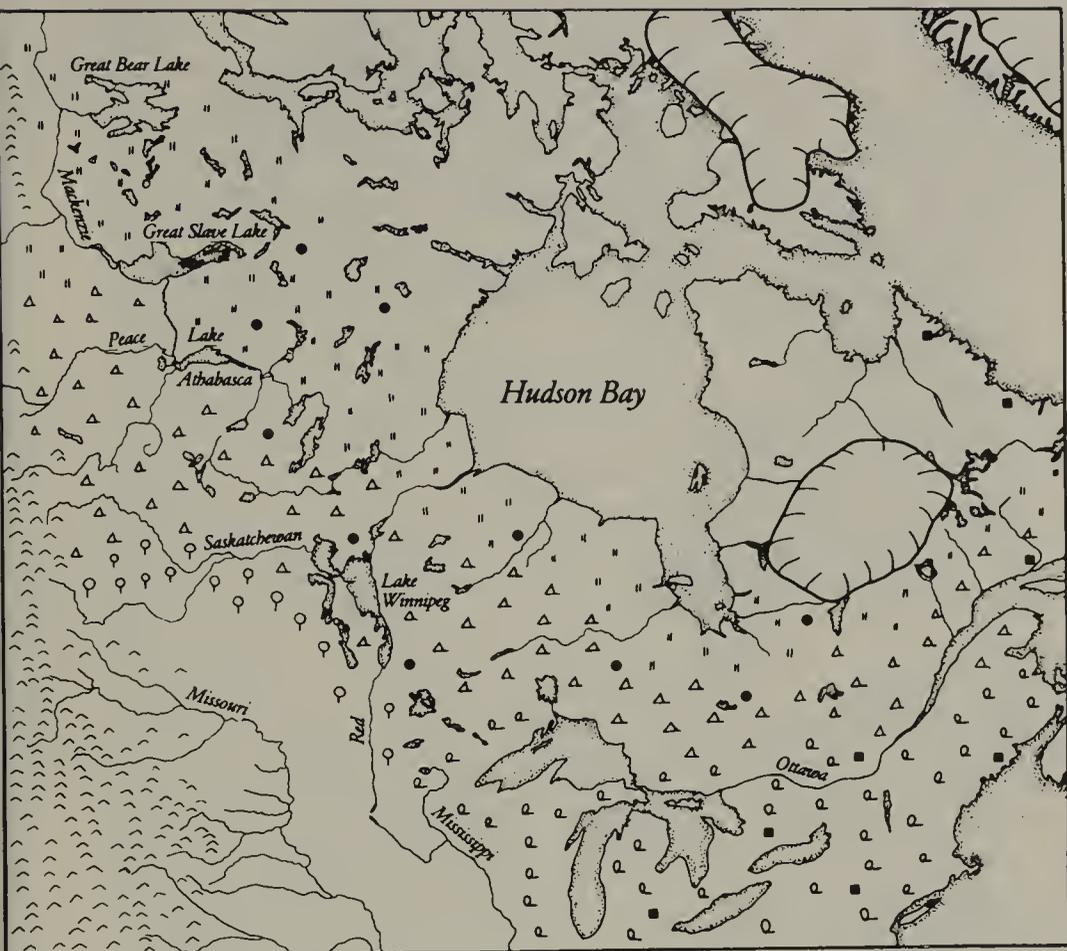
Parkland



Boreal forest

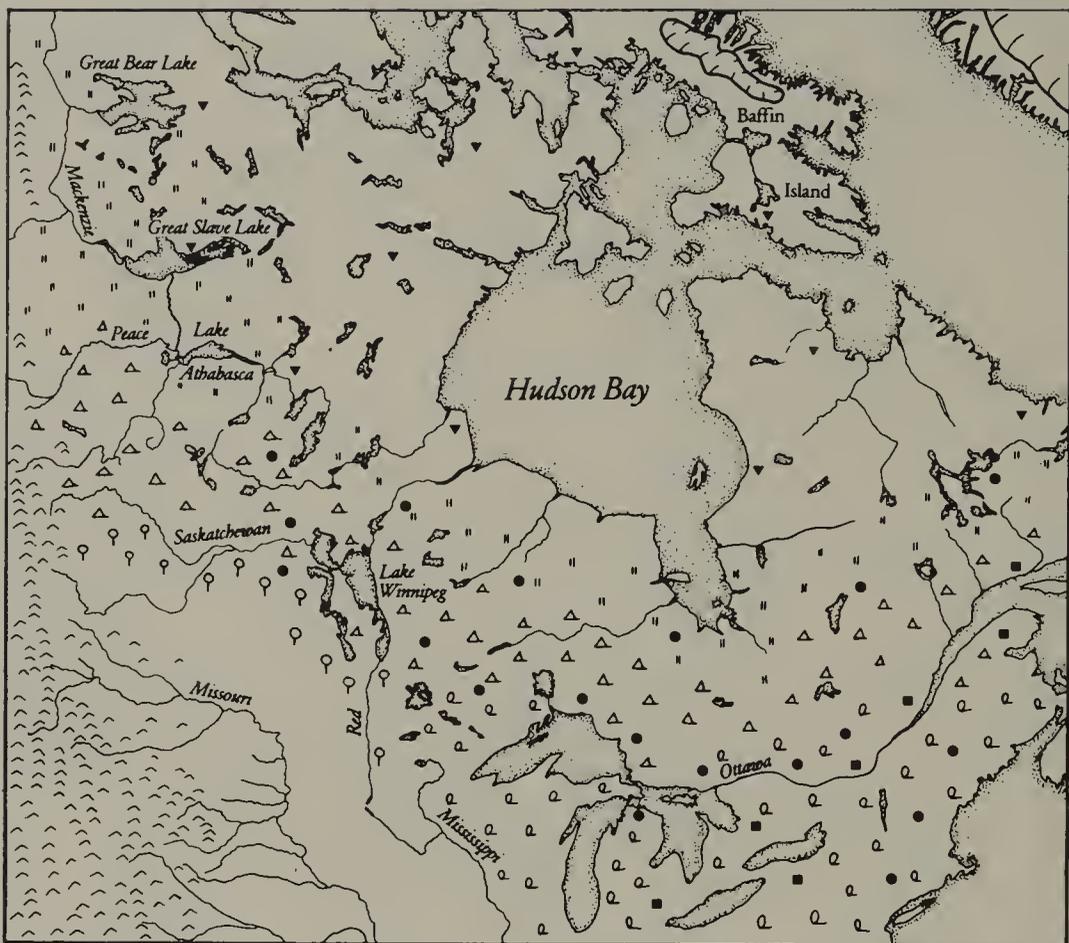


Border of ice shield



MAP 5. The Canadian Shield and adjacent regions, 3000 B.C.

- Shield Archaic groups ancestral to the Algonquian language stock
- Groups of the Maritime and Laurentian Archaic



MAP 6. The Canadian Shield and adjacent regions, 1000 B.C.

- Proto-Algonquian groups
- Late Archaic–Early Woodland groups, probably Proto-Iroquoian
- ▼ Pre-Dorset Eskimo groups

hind, expanded into newly liberated landscapes, and various faunal species were then drawn by their shifting ecosystems. Many species, however, suffered extinction during these times. Within the short period from 8000 to 6000 B.C., the North American megafauna, comprising such animals as mammoth, mastodon, camel, horse, giant bisons, four-horned antelope, tapir, and so forth, disappeared. Only three of these—mammoth, mastodon, and giant bisons—had been hunted significantly by human groups. Hester (1967:170) has argued cogently that early hunters could not have caused the extinction of the megafauna until after natural causes had greatly reduced the population of each species. He sees as an alternative explanation that changes in ecological niches resulting from the disappearance of the late Wisconsin ice sheet had subjected animal species to selective pressures. Hester's position is supported by evidence concerning the Pleistocene extinction of the megafauna in the Soviet Union (Vereshchagin 1967).

Animal species that survived the extinction, such as caribou, musk ox, moose, bear, beaver, wolf, and so on, occupied shield regions after the decline of the glaciation, wherever possible. The response of human populations came last and was delayed in some areas for another thousand years due to giant glacial lakes and the marine submergence of the Hudson Bay lowland.

During the period of the emergence of the shield, human penetration occurred from three directions. One followed its eastern periphery. It consisted of Archaic cultural groups derived ultimately from eastern Paleo-Indian big-game hunters who had used Clovis projectile points. Adjusted to the great changes that were occurring in the region, they expanded from Nova Scotia and parts of New Brunswick to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence coasts, Newfoundland, and the coast of Labrador. Tuck (1978, fig. 1) has called this archaeological entity the Maritime Archaic because the faunal resources of the sea played a key role in it. The habitation sites along the coast existed at a time when the vast interior of Quebec was still covered by an ice shield. These people built burial mounds on the Labrador coast beginning before 5000 B.C.: Ultimately, their burial ceremonialism gave rise to the Early Woodland ceremonial developments further south, eventually leading to the spectacular features of the Adena culture (Tuck 1978:43). Grave goods in Maritime Archaic cemeteries have shown a tool inventory with strong emphasis on sea-mammal hunting, especially seal and small whales (Harp 1978:108–11). This way of

life centered on the coast; incursions into the interior of the shield were sporadic at best, even after the decline of the Quebec ice shield.

J. Wright (1972b) has subsumed the Maritime Archaic into a larger entity he calls the Laurentian Archaic, of which the Maritime Archaic is the northeastern branch. The western branch appeared about 4000 B.C. in southern Ontario (J. Wright 1972a:27–33), extending eastward through the lower Ottawa River area to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. Populations used the resources of the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence forest zone, depending primarily on larger game (deer, elk, bear, beaver) and on fish. In a comparison of the Laurentian and Shield Archaic artifact classes, J. Wright (1972b, table 25) has demonstrated the significant differences between the two.

Laurentian populations, according to the archaeological evidence, were considerably larger than those of the shield to the North. Apparently they had settled comfortably into the hemlock-pine-hardwood forests and refused expansion into the boreal forest. Because, in portions of Ontario and Quebec, the dividing line between the two physiographic areas is quite sharp, Shield and Laurentian Archaic sites are often situated quite close to one another. J. Wright (1972b: 78) views the relationship between groups of both traditions to have been quite similar to the historic relationship between northern Algonquian and Iroquoian speakers in the same area.

The penetration of the fringe of the Canadian Shield by eastern Laurentian groups had no influence on the development of the Shield Archaic. This tradition was formed by groups entering the shield from two directions: from the northwest (the Northwest Territories) and the south (from around Lake Superior). These groups had a common origin in a big-game hunting tradition in which groups ancestral to the Laurentian had *not* participated—the Plano.

The Plano Tradition represents a Paleo-Indian tradition that had specialized in buffalo hunting in the Plains. Its beginnings are around 8000 B.C. in the northern Plains, near the corridor that had opened north to south between the retreating Cordilleran and Laurentide ice shields. Because the corridor had opened 2500 years before Plano emerged it may be assumed that populations who developed the tradition in Montana and Wyoming had entered from the north. Who their antecedents in the far north may have been is unclear; Müller (1982:201) sees them as “the people behind the ice” (north of the Wisconsin glaciation), as sea mammal and caribou hunters around the shores of the Arctic Ocean. That they developed their specific tool inventory favoring elegant lanceolate parallel-flaked projectile points

in the northern Plains is unquestionable; earlier in the north they may have used bone and ivory projectile points.

Readapting to the changing environment south of the retreating Laurentide ice shield, they became the most efficient buffalo hunters the Plains had ever seen. Their communal hunts had a medicine hunt aspect as is indicated by Dennis Stanford's excavations at the Jones-Miller site, where he found evidence of a medicine pole in a buffalo pound associated with artifacts that he interprets as ceremonial objects. He concludes that "if our assumptions about the postmold, offerings, and ceremonial lodge are correct, one must postulate 10,000 years of socio-religious continuity in the Northern Plains" (Stanford 1978:97). Frison (1978:149-77), who has excavated Plano sites in Wyoming featuring Agate Basin and Hell Gap projectile points, has commented on the efficient hunting techniques used by these groups; generally, small herds were impounded or killed in arroyo or sand dune traps.

While some Plano groups, after 8000 B.C., expanded into the southern Plains, others remained in the northern Plains, following game that followed the cold weather vegetation in the back of the retreating ice. One reason for this northward movement was the demise of the herds of giant bison.

Fronting the southwestern lobe of the ice shield were some Plano groups that favored Agate Basin lanceolate projectile points.

Some of these groups, perhaps around 6500 B.C., worked their way around the western edge of Lake Superior and entered the pocket to the north that was bounded in the west (Lake Agassiz) and east (Lake Barlow-Ojibway) by glacial inland seas, in the north by the wall of the ice sheet still south of Hudson Bay. The presence of these eastern Agate Basin hunters is documented by finds of their characteristic projectile points in Manitoba and the southwestern portion of northern Ontario (J. Wright 1972b:73; 1981:88). They also worked quarry sites along the north shore of the Great Lakes (J. Wright 1972a, map 2).

It is this area of the emerging Canadian Shield where the gradual transformation of these eastern Agate Basin groups from Plano to a Shield Archaic culture took place. They remained the same people; only their tool kit changed slowly through time. When passage through the boreal forest eastward had become possible, they expanded in that direction. In the Mistassini region of western Quebec, they appear with the tool inventory of the Shield Archaic in the Wenopsk Complex, dated around 4000 B.C. The investigators of the

Mistassini territory, Charles Martijn and Edward Rogers (J. Wright 1981:95–96), view the hunters of the Wenopsk Complex as having arrived from the boreal forest to the west. At 4000 B.C. and for another 1,500 years, when they were hunting caribou in the region, the diminishing ice shield of the Laurentide stood immediately to the east and northeast.

I identify these first groups of Shield Archaic hunters of the regions south and east of Hudson Bay with Algonquians who already were, or became those whom Goddard (1978b), in his linguistic classification, lists as Proto-Eastern Algonquian (PEA) speakers.

Some other Agate Basin groups, beginning also around 6500 B.C., worked their way northward along the west shore of Lake Agassiz that stood from east-central Saskatchewan southeasternward through Manitoba into northeastern North Dakota (Wendland 1978: figs. 4, 5, 6). Above this inland sea, which had temporarily separated eastern and western Agate Basin groups, was the slowly moving ice shield; its western wall still covered the northern half of Saskatchewan and the southeastern part of the Northwest Territories.

These western Agate Basin groups passed beyond the edge of the grassland into the boreal forest. In the north, McConnell glacial lake halted their further movement until about 5000 B.C., when it had shrunk into three discrete bodies of water: Lakes Athabasca, Great Slave, and Great Bear. Although a few Agate Basin groups may have stayed in the boreal forest east of Lake Athabasca, their vanguard moved into the developing spruce parkland and the tundra in the region extending from the north shore of Great Slave Lake northward to within seventy miles of the Arctic coast, below Coronation Gulf.

In this area, over a stretch of 350 miles north to south, consisting west to east of parkland and tundra, their presence, in archaeological terms, is designated the Acasta Lake Complex; its beginnings are dated at 5000 B.C. (Noble 1981:97–98). The tool inventory of these northern groups of western Agate Basin hunters includes artifacts for spearing and skinning game and for working bone, antlers, and wood. Noble (1981:97–98), who has investigated this region, found classic Agate Basin lanceolates as the most popular weapon point in addition to stemmed and incipient-stemmed varieties. There are also leaf-shaped side-notched projectile points, reflecting a direction in projectile point change that led directly to the Shield Archaic a thousand years later. Noble's (1981:98) archaeological fieldwork has shown, from the evidence of animal remains in roasting hearths, that these people lived in the boreal forest and parklands and used the tundra

seasonally. They were the first caribou hunters behind the retreating Laurentide ice.

Other Plano groups from the northern Plains, carrying different sets of projectile points, also participated in the Agate Basin move north but passed on their western flank and continued their movement into Alaska. Their presence is noted in a number of archaeological assemblages there (Tolstoy 1958:65–69; MacNeish 1962:140–41; 1964, fig. 82, 345), but few archaeologists would see them penetrate farther. It is a curious fact, however, that parallel-flaked Planolike projectile points of Plainview, Angostura, and Scottsbluff types appear in the Lena River basin and Lake Baikal regions in northern Siberia around 4000 B.C., where they last until 2000 B.C. (Tolstoy 1975:177). These characteristic projectile points are accompanied by other typical Plano artifacts such as paired sandstone shaft smootheners and tci-tho scrapers (Tolstoy 1958:65–69).

Perhaps it should be remembered that Franz Boas, Waldemar Bogoras, and Waldemar Jochelson, the chief investigators of the Jesup Expedition of 1897–1900, traced definite cultural similarities between groups in northern Siberia and some North American Indian groups to a postglacial movement of peoples from Alaska to northeastern Siberia (Boas 1910:15). They postulated that this “American” element in northern Siberia was boxed in and sealed off later by a Paleo-Eskimo intrusion. Müller (1982:10–33) has brought attention to this issue again.

Archaeological sites of the Acasta Lake Complex, deposited by the northern groups of western Agate Basin hunters, disappear from the first area of their concentration (from Great Slave to Great Bear lakes) after 4500 B.C. (Noble 1981:98–99). Apparently, they had followed the expanding tree line eastward into the southeastern areas of the Mackenzie District and southern Keewatin.

This is where J. Wright (1972b, fig. 1) has located their descendants; their transition to the Shield Archaic culture was concluded by 4000 B.C. Like their relatives in western Quebec, they continued to operate out of the boreal forest, hunting caribou around the southern lobe of the diminishing Keewatin ice center, which still covered the central and northern parts of the district. This inland ice mass dissolved completely after 3500 B.C. (Wendland 1978, figs. 6–8), opening central Keewatin to penetration by the northernmost of the Shield Archaic (formerly Agate Basin) groups by 3000 B.C.

Around 4000 B.C. culturally and linguistically related groups of common origin were living in two large areas of the Canadian Shield:

in western Quebec and west of Hudson Bay; in the latter area they extended from southeastern Mackenzie and southern Keewatin southward into Manitoba. The most common Plano points in Manitoba are of the Agate Basin type (J. Wright 1981:88). Transformation to the Shield Archaic appears to have been contemporaneous there with developments to the north. Around 4000 B.C. contact between western and eastern groups through the boreal forest may not have been intensive, as is suggested by the linguistic evidence. Tool inventories, however, were very similar, indicating that no cluster of groups was completely isolated from the other.

I identify the western groups of the Shield Archaic hunters with Algonquians who became those whom Goddard (1978b), in his linguistic classification, lists as Plains and Central-Algonquian speakers, both derived from the ancestral Proto-Algonquian (PA).

The tool kit of Shield Archaic groups, according to J. Wright (1981: 88–89), was dominated by three artifact classes: scrapers, bifacial blades (knives), and projectile points. Generally, during the early period, scrapers constitute 40 percent, bifacial blades 25 percent, and projectile points 15 percent of the stone-tool assemblage. It must be assumed that bone figured prominently in artifact manufacture, but the acid soils of the boreal forest destroyed all evidence. Through time the frequencies of scrapers and projectile points increased, whereas the frequency of bifacial blades decreased. Within the projectile point varieties, the most important single trend is the decrease through time of lanceolate points with a corresponding increase in smaller side-notched points. J. Wright (1981:89) lists as a significant negative trend the nearly complete absence of stone grinding in tool manufacture, posing a sharp contrast to Laurentian Archaic preferences.

Griffin (1978:237) has called the great arc of the Canadian Shield around Hudson Bay the “infertile crescent.” J. Wright (1981:86–87), in contrast, has emphasized the cultural continuity in the region, partly owing to the boreal environment, which lasted in many areas for the extraordinary time span of around 7,000 years. He has discovered the reasons for the homogeneity of both prehistoric and historic Algonquians over the enormous tracts of the shield in a number of inseparably related physical and cultural phenomena:

1. Food resources were closely linked with the lake and river networks that also provided the most effective routes of travel and communication, by birch-bark canoe in summer, in winter by snowshoes on the wind-packed snow atop the ice.

2. Two major food resources, caribou and fish, dominated the region, although other game, such as moose and beaver, with migrating waterfowl, were also important in some areas. Without caribou and fish, however, humans could not have occupied the total area on a permanent basis.

3. Enormous forest fires not only displaced all animals including the hunters but also caused a sequence of plant and animal reclamation of burned areas (sometimes more than 10,000 square miles wide) that led to forced shifts in hunting territories.

4. Small hunting groups and regional bands of Algonquians featured flexible residence and marriage patterns, and much individual freedom, while maintaining far-flung social connections. Under this system, women appear to have been very mobile.

5. The limitations imposed by the harsh environment on subsistence patterns and social organization inhibited culturally disruptive incursions of peoples and concepts inadequate to the region from the outside.

Noble (1981:99–100) has traced four incursions from the northern Plains into the eastern Great Slave Lake area, at the edge of the shield, between 3000 B.C. and A.D. 200 (in sequence, Artillery Lake, Oxbow, Caribou Island-Duncan, and Pelican Lake complexes). None penetrated to the barren grounds, and no exchange of ideas with the Shield Archaic appears to have taken place.

In his discussion of the origins of the Besant Phase, Reeves (1970: 173–76) has pointed to the occurrence of Besant or Besantlike points in the Lockhart River area northeast of Great Slave Lake, which was first noted by MacNeish (1964:404–405, fig. 87). MacNeish (1964, fig. 82) provided a tentative date of 1400 B.C. for the Lockhart River Complex; the date has been revised by Noble (1981:104) to the period A.D. 1100–1300. Perhaps both dates are in need of revision, especially because Noble agrees that corner and side-notched points make their first appearance in the area with this archaeological complex and that “the origin of this concept requires future clarification.” Because the Lockhart River area lies at the border of the northernmost Shield Archaic groups, it would be interesting to know if the proto-Tsistsistas people used Besant projectile points already in the far north before their removal toward the northern Plains.

Two events had great consequences for the Algonquians of the Shield Archaic: the arrival of Pre-Dorset Eskimos and the deterioration of the weather leading to a southward retreat of the boreal forest west and east of Hudson Bay, beginning around 1500 B.C.

After 3000 B.C., Pre-Dorset Eskimo groups expanded eastward along the Arctic coast from Alaska. Their movement developed rapidly, and within a few centuries they had passed through the islands of the Canadian archipelago into northern Greenland and to Baffin Island. The earliest sites, so far, are on the south coast of Baffin Island, dating to ca. 2400 B.C.; the Pre-Dorset Independence I Complex of northeastern Greenland is dated around 2000 B.C. (Harp 1978:116). They were firmly established around northern Hudson Bay by 2000 B.C.

Their arrival on the northern coast of Labrador coincided with the southward removal of the Maritime branch of the Laurentian Archaic. Tuck (1978:34) has investigated the time sequence of this removal; the north-to-south time slope leads from 1940 B.C. at Saglek Bay in northern Labrador to 1800 B.C. at Hamilton Inlet and to 1280 B.C. at Port au Choix on the west coast of the island of Newfoundland. Within a period of about seven hundred years, 700 miles of Labrador coast had been given up by Laurentian groups. In their wake the area was occupied by Pre-Dorset hunters equipped with short, recurved, composite bows, who had come farther south in Labrador and Newfoundland than any Eskimos had ever gone (Harp 1978:122). The Beothuk of the island of Newfoundland appear to have been linear descendants of the old Maritime Archaic of the Labrador coast. Their linguistic affiliation is an unresolved question because these groups were the first victims of the European intrusion in the early sixteenth century; they perished without a record.

Around 1500 B.C., when climatic changes began to force the tree line south to distances of about 200 miles, pre-Dorset hunters followed the expanding tundra along the west and east coasts of Hudson Bay (Harp 1978:116–117). They also entered the barren grounds of central Keewatin, where they adapted to the tundra-taiga as a distinctive culture emphasizing caribou hunting.

Between 1500 B.C. and 1000 B.C., Algonquian groups abandoned the southeastern Mackenzie and central Keewatin districts, pulling south (J. Wright 1972b:4–5; 1981:88–89). When the tree line had retreated into northeastern Saskatchewan and northern Manitoba, Pre-Dorset or related Eskimo groups expanded as far south as Lake Athabasca and Black Lake in Saskatchewan and to northeastern Manitoba (Noble 1981:100–101). The archaeological evidence indicates that they had adapted to the forest border by 1200 B.C. (Noble 1981:100). They were then either in direct competition with Algon-

quian groups of the Shield Archaic or, most likely, the latter had already completely withdrawn into the boreal forest.

It appears that the northernmost Algonquian groups left first. I believe that they passed other groups and, going south, eventually arrived in the northern plains, where they adapted to a different environment, which is known archaeologically as the Besant Phase. My identification of western Besant with groups ancestral to the various historic Blackfoot divisions and of eastern Besant with the Tsistsistas is in agreement with the linguistic data that gives both Blackfoot and Cheyenne, speakers of Plains or Western Algonquian, the greatest linguistic distance from the parental Proto-Algonquian core (Pentland 1978, figs. 1, 2).

Other Algonquian groups from west of Hudson Bay removed eastward through the boreal forest below Hudson Bay, where their presence may be reflected archaeologically in the Laurel and succeeding traditions. Perhaps again the northernmost groups, after the removal of those to become Plains Algonquians, may have passed others, who eventually became linguistically Central Algonquians, and whose future took them south of the Great Lakes: the Potawatomis, Menomini, Foxes and their congeners (Sauks and Kickapoos), Miami-Illinois, and Shawnees.

Taking the distribution of subarctic Algonquian languages of early historic times into account (Rhodes and Todd 1981, figs. 1, 2), groups comprising the various dialects of Ojibwa may have gone next and eventually occupied the regions north of the Great Lakes, from western Quebec (Algonquin) to Minnesota.

Perhaps last to shift eastward were groups speaking the various dialects of Cree who occupied the area to the north of Ojibwa speakers. They were to form an arc around the southern shores of Hudson and James bays, reaching from Labrador through Quebec and Ontario to Manitoba.

The arrival of Eastern Cree speakers (East Crees, Naskapis, Montagnais) in Quebec coincided with both the retreat of the taiga and the Pre-Dorset, or Dorset, advance along the Labrador and Hudson Bay coasts. These factors together may have triggered the final removal of eastern Shield Archaic groups (Proto-Eastern Algonquians) east and south across the Saint Lawrence, where they took up positions on the Atlantic coast, eventually extending from New Brunswick to North Carolina. Snow (1978:60) has emphasized the cultural continuity of Eastern Algonquian occupation in this area, from pre-

historic to historic times. Tuck (1978:34) has dated the beginning of the Proto-Eastern Algonquian movement across the Saint Lawrence around 1000 B.C. Goddard (1978a, 1978b) essentially concurs with this interpretation on the basis of an analysis of Algonquian linguistic developments.

There remains the question concerning the whereabouts, during these times of considerable change, of groups ancestral to Plains Algonquian-speakers such as Arapahos-Atsinas and Suhtai. Because these Arapahos-Atsinas are linguistically closer to Proto-Algonquians than Blackfeet and Cheyennes, or even Plains Crees, and Montagnais (Pentland 1978, figs. 1, 2), they must have separated from the Proto-Algonquian core later than the previously mentioned groups. I suspect that groups ancestral to the Arapahos-Atsinas may be represented archaeologically in the western depositions of the Blackduck Tradition (Syms 1977, fig. 18), reaching into the parkland and prairie zone of Manitoba around A.D. 800.

The Suhtais remain a puzzle. The general belief of plains ethnologists that the Tsistsistas and Suhtai languages were closely related is contradicted by the facts presented by Goddard (1978). The linguistic distance between the two is confirmed by the ethnographic evidence that states clearly that the Tsistsistas and Suhtais came in contact with each other only at the beginning of the historic period.

Relatives Through Space and Time

Yurok: Making the World Holy for the Deer Coming Through the Saltwater Sea

The Yuroks (from the Karok term *yuruk*, "downriver") are a small tribe on the northwestern coast of California (Pilling 1978). With their immediate neighbors on the south, the Wiyots (Elsasser 1978b), they are linguistically classed together under the name Ritwan. The controversy regarding the genetic relationship of Ritwan, completely isolated in California, has been resolved by Haas (1958:159), who has demonstrated that it belongs within the Algonquian language family. Archaeological evidence suggests that the Yuroks and the Wiyots arrived in the area of their historic occupation perhaps a thousand years ago. Elsasser (1978a:50) gives the earliest date on the coast for either group, or for both groups, as around A.D. 900. From what direction these Algonquian speakers penetrated to northwestern California is unknown.

At the time of Waterman's (1920) fieldwork, the Yuroks consisted

of two distinct dialect and regional divisions. One, the “river people,” occupied the lower thirty-six miles of the Klamath River. The other, the “coast people,” occupied the seashore from a few miles north of the mouth of the Klamath south to Trinidad Bay, over a distance of forty-two miles. Because of the wealth of food resources of the mountains, the river, and the sea coast, they lived in small sedentary villages.

Every summer the river people engaged in a series of ceremonies in which a medicine hunt (corralling of salmon) played an important role. The corrals (*tse'tsin*, “corral”), ten in number, were traps built into a fish dam annually constructed to span the river at two locations: at Kepel and farther upstream at Lo'olego (Waterman and Kroeber 1938:50). Although Erikson (1943:277) gives 1906 as the last year of fish-dam ceremonies at Kepel, Pilling (1978:149) places this event in 1913. The following is a reconstruction of the essential elements of Yurok summer ceremonies at Kepel for which the previously mentioned literature provided the initial information.

The Supreme Being (We'sona-me'getol, World Maker), after he had made the universe, the earth, sea, mountains, rivers, and immortal spirits, created the blue sky at qe'nek, on the Klamath, a few miles upstream from Kepel. He made a giant net, took hold of it, and threw it upward. As it sailed high, it became solid and stretches above us as the blue sky. Above it is an upper sky country, *wo'noiyik*, which extends to the ends of the universe. Later, when animals and people were created by the spirit Wohpekumeu, the upper sky country became the place where the spirits of children and deer reside, close to the Supreme Being. This is also where the geese fly on their annual migration to the northwest. In the blue sky is a sky hole through which geese fly to *wo'noiyik* and through which spirits and shamans are able to pass. Just above Kepel (at Qe'nek-pul, Downstream from Qe'nek) is an invisible ladder, that leads to the upper sky country. The Supreme Being, in northern Siberian fashion (see chapter 2), remained a *deus otiosus*—a distant god.

The Klamath River country, with its vegetation, animals, and the Yuroks, was made by the spirit Wohpekumeu, who had come across the sea. He established a binding boundary line between the salt-water sea and the river, placed the deer in the mountains, and initiated the salmon runs. He presides over the spirits in any physical form: in rock, deer, acorns, salmon, sea lion, Yurok, and so forth.

He keeps the salmon across the ocean at “salmon house,” *kowe'tsik*, under the guardianship of the salmon chief (Artgeist) Nepêwoi and annually releases enough salmon for the Yuroks to catch. During his

creation activity he was assisted by Thunder, Earthquake, and other spirits, including a giant horned serpent that made some of the physical features of Yurok country (such as creeks) with the weight of its body. The “old woman who lives in the earth,” the earth spirit, is the protector of things that come from the ground but not of salmon.

At the end of his creation activity any of the immortal spirits who were in existence before Wohpekumeu’s work had become animals, trees, and rocks. They remained teachers of the Yuroks in many ceremonial activities after Wohpekumeu’s leaving for his home on the other side of the world, due west from the mouth of the Klamath. These spirits, *woge*, are those who force a woman to become a shaman “doctor.” Male shamans belonged to a different shaman group associated with animals (sea lion skull depositories), sky spaces (deer and “jumping” ceremonies), and the salmon.

The annual Yurok “river people” summer ceremonies featured the return of Wohpekumeu to the place of his creation, reestablishing for another year the order that he had given this part of the world. In this he required the Yuroks to reenact the events of the original time of his creation. The sacred salmon, the deer of the saltwater sea, accompanied him from salmon house as proof of his continuing benevolence.

Salmon caught at the Kepel fish dam (or salmon-deer pound) during the medicine hunt were called “deer.” In Yurok there were no stories about salmon because they were too sacred to be talked about.

The summer ceremonies began in the spring at the river mouth. A shaman of the coast Yuroks, ceremonially responsible for the border between the saltwater and the river, of the village of Welkwä, held a secret ceremony in which he ritually removed the barrier for the time of the salmon runs to allow salmon to cross and swim upriver. This concept is reminiscent of Samoyeds of northern Siberia (Paulson 1961:99) where the shaman held a similar ceremony at the mouth of the Ob River.

Word was passed upriver when the ceremony was completed. Until the beginning of the ceremonial hunt at Kepel, it was prohibited to catch salmon; breaking this taboo meant death for the offender inflicted by the salmon.

Upriver the ceremonies were initiated and conducted throughout by the *wi-lo-hego* shaman (“dam maker”; this term was usually shortened to *lo*). He set out on a ceremonial journey dressed in a deer-hide blanket wrapped with a deerskin belt; on his forehead he wore a

piece of eel net, which symbolized the original form of the blue sky during creation. He carried his medicine bundle and was accompanied by an assistant who paddled the dugout on the river. Their faces were painted black, Wohpekumeu's ceremonial color.

At the town of Sa'a, adjacent to Kepel, they moved into a specially raised sweat house. It represented the world house; its sacred center pole was the world pillar. With his assistant the shaman went through secret calling ceremonies; the people in both settlements were confined to their houses. Wind blowing from downriver into the rear door of the sweat house provided this signal: "When I blow in there, I am calling you."

Fresh oak twigs were placed on the sweat house roof, and four crescent-shaped rocks, later to be used for pounding in the stakes of the dam, were put on top. Now bright new fires were lit in the closed village houses with everyone listening. The shaman, unseen, stood on the four stones atop the sweat house (ritually he stood on the four corners of the universe). Burning sacred angelica root, he purified the Klamath world for the return of Wohpekumeu. He shouted the sacred formulas downriver and upriver.

With Wohpekumeu arrived other spirits as well, and the spirits of deceased Yuroks assembled on the opposite (north) side of the river to be present. Lo stayed during ten days in the sweat house during daytime. At night, leaving through the sacred (downriver) door, he traveled the landmarks set by Wohpekumeu in river Yurok lands, following the sacred route of the creator, speaking the sacred words of creation at the spirit places. He traveled for ten nights, with his assistant; he was allowed one meager meal after sundown and no water. No one was allowed to see him. After ten days he began timber cutting in the mountains. Perhaps two thousand people assembled, living in temporary camps on the south side of the Klamath.

Now the shaman journeyed to the mountains to take the first three stakes from the tree spirits: one for the center, two as the flanking stakes of the dam. This work was done ritually, after praying with the trees, with stone tools. The shaman returned to the sweat house for a four-day period of secret ceremonies and set the date for the beginning of dam construction. All over Yurok lands, trees were cut by selected teams with stone tools and elkhorn wedges, so that all of the different kinds of tree spirits were present in the dam.

The building of the dam required ten full days. The shaman supervised the placing of the first three stakes, only speaking the cere-

monial language. All people went into a ten-day fast that allowed, despite the hard labor, one small meal a day. Men working in cutting and construction slept in sweat houses during this time. During the day, the shaman sat silently on a small mound raised for him on the north shore—the spirit side. Because the dam was built across the river from both shores simultaneously, workers operating on the north shore were under the most severe restrictions.

The ten days of fasting were imposed in honor of the salmon pushing up from the sea. Salmon needed about ten days to reach Kepel; they had begun their migrational fast after leaving the saltwater.

Waterman (1920:179) has called the Kepel dam “the largest mechanical enterprise undertaken by the Yurok, or for that matter by any northwest California Indian.” The completed wooden structure spanned a fast river and featured ten pens, or corrals, also called “salmon houses.” The first corral gate, in the center of the dam, was built by the shaman. When he started it, he sang the sacred song to the salmon chief across the sea, calling salmon up. Then he put up the gate, working under water. When he came up, he was allowed to speak in everyday language to everyone.

After construction was completed, deer and “jumping” dances were held, featuring, among much elaborate regalia, the skins of white deer, headbands of wolf fur and others to which the scalps of red-headed woodpeckers were attached. This obviously represented the spirits of the upper sky country who had come down the sky ladder at qe'nekpul, performing the sky ceremonies that they held everyday at Rkrgr, in Wohpekumeu's spirit country across the ocean. White hides and wolf fur, in northern Siberian and in Algonquian thought, clearly represented the upper sky region; in Algonquian world renewal ceremonies (e.g., Suhtai and Tsistsistas Oxheheom, New Life Lodge, and “Sun Dance”), the red-headed woodpecker symbolizes the spirit of the sun.

After the ceremonies had been held, for a period of ten days only, salmon were “impounded,” trapped in the pens, taken out, split, and dried for winter use. This was only done in the afternoons; the shaman controlled the handling of the salmon. The first salmon, or deer, was treated with great ceremony. In the mornings and at night three floodgates in the structure were opened to allow the salmon passage upriver.

After ten days the killing was stopped. Propitiation or Iomante ceremonies are not reported in the sketchy literature about the Kepel ceremonies, perhaps only because anthropologists failed to ask the

right question. But they must have been held, perhaps by the shaman and his assistant—and alone in the confinement of the sweat house.

Concluding ceremonies featured a feeding of the spirits including children participants who seem to have represented the spirit children of the upper sky world. All participants were free of restrictions after the concluding ceremonies, but the shaman stayed at the Kepel dam another month until it was washed away by the river. Then the holy period initiating another year was over.

Yurok summer ceremonies at Kepel were an adaptation of ancient Algonquian world renewal concepts to the specific condition of the Klamath River country in northwestern California. In another place the Tsistsistas developed the Massaum based on these concepts; both are variations in form of a common world perception.

Erikson (1943:282) asked the following question:

The creator is said to have liberated the salmon; *is* he the salmon? If so, he lives unharmed through the magic battle at Kepel, for the salmon says: "I shall not be taken. I shall travel as far as the river extends. I shall leave my scales on nets and they will turn into salmon, but *I myself shall go by and not be killed.*"

Munsee-Mahican: Sky Bear, Earth Bear

Munsee and Unami are two closely related Eastern Algonquian languages. Groups speaking dialects of either language were included by early European settlers on the East Coast in the tribal designation Delaware. Although Munsee and Unami speakers were culturally similar, they had never formed a single political unit. Mahican is Eastern Algonquian but is sharply distinct linguistically from Munsee (Goddard 1978d:213); culturally Mahican and Munsee groups were very similar. At the beginning of the European invasion the Mahicans were in the Upper Hudson River Valley and in western Vermont (Brasser 1978:198); the Munsees lived directly to the south, on the Lower Hudson and Upper Delaware rivers, whereas the Unamis were farther south, on the lower Delaware and on both sides of Delaware Bay (Goddard 1978d:214–15). They had occupied these regions since perhaps 1000 B.C. (see above).

Neighbors northwest and west of the Muncees and Mahicans were the Iroquois. Falling back step by step before the European advance across the continent, drastically reduced in population by epidemics and warfare, Unami survivors and some Munsees eventually reached Kansas (1835) and Indian Territory (Oklahoma, 1876). Some Munsee groups and affiliated Mahicans settled on the Fox River in Wisconsin



FIG. 20. The celestial bear has come to earth and goes to his sacrifice in the Munsee–Mahican Big House. The Munsee–Mahican world renewal ceremony featured a bear sacrifice in which a bear of the forest became ritually the representative of the celestial bear. During the ceremony, the Big House represented the world house, or universe. Two large smoke openings in the roof allowed the celestial bear to gaze down upon the sacrifice of his counterpart and the correct performance of the ceremony. The sacrificial bear was selected in a dream by a woman dreamer. Thirteen hunters were sent out to locate the bear's den hidden in deep snows, raise him from hibernation, and explain to him his role



in the ceremony. The animal had to be male; sows were giving birth to cubs in their dens at about the time the ceremony was held or a little later. During the twelve nights of the ceremony, the bear's flesh served as sacred food. With undamaged skull and skin tied to the center pole of the Big House, the bear was an eyewitness to the ceremony. His spirit was later formally released as messenger to the Supreme Being and the spirit world. This Munsee–Mahican ceremony is very closely related to Siberian, especially Evenk, bear ceremonialism. Drawing by Dick West.

in 1828; others had crossed with the Iroquois into Canada (Ontario) following the Revolutionary War. One band, termed *Musee-Mahican* by Speck (1945:7–16), joined the Iroquois on Six Nations reserve.

The most important religious event in the annual ceremonial cycle of Mahicans, Munsees, and Unamis was a world renewal ceremony. The Mahicans' ceremony featured a midwinter bear sacrifice (Brasser 1978:199); the Munsees and Unamis' ceremony consisted of the twelve-night fall ceremony of the Big House. Both ceremonies are ancient. Two variations of the world-renewal concepts of the three linguistic groups survived into the reservation period. Of these, the Oklahoma Big House ceremony, utilized largely by Unami descendants, has received the most attention by ethnographers (summaries in Speck 1945:18–20; Miller 1980:110–11), perhaps because it survived as a complete ceremony to 1924. After that date it was suspended because of "friction, the lack of new visionaries, and the related growth of evil and impurity in the world" (Miller 1980:109); three brief Big House meetings, however, were held during World War II to "pray for the World and the safe return of servicemen."

The Munsee-Mahican ceremony, participated in by the most traditionally oriented segments of these groups, represented a unique creation because it blended the core of Mahican bear sacrifice and Munsee Big House theology into one overarching structure. Unfortunately, it was last held on Six Nations reserve in 1850. It was reconstructed in Speck's (1945) single account based on testimony provided by the Munsee ceremonial man *Nekatcit* during fieldwork done between 1932 and 1938. About *Nekatcit* and his collaboration, Speck (1945:xiii) has written this:

Without riches to leave behind, without heroic deeds to be recited by his descendants, without a career or accomplishment in leadership, his mission was to leave behind an epic of the poetical philosophy and religious drama of his people. It was destined to be written down by one who came into his life only within its last decade. That was my privilege, and it was not the first time that such fell to my lot.

Some Munsee Big House elements in the joint Munsee-Mahican ceremony reflected old concepts that were used by Miller (1980) in his structural analysis of the Oklahoma Unami ceremony for the interpretation of specific features of the latter. The infusion of the Mahican bear sacrifice ritual into the Munsee-Mahican ceremony added a dimension that had not been foreign to Munsees and Unamis.

One of the important ceremonial officials of the Unami Big House

was the *missingw* (mask spirit) impersonator who supervised the ceremonial deer hunt. His costume consisted of a bearskin body suit (Speck 1931:39–44, fig. 9) and a mask painted red on the right half of the face, black on the left half. He carried a turtle-shell rattle and a shaman's staff. Harrington (1921:32–33) wrote that this was the “most remarkable deity” who was “made guardian by the creator of all the wild animals of the forest, and was sometimes seen riding on the back of a buck, herding the deer.” Speck (1931:44) felt that the *missingw* “is fraught with the possibilities of an archaic northern background, into which fits a series of beliefs and practices extending across boreal North America through northeastern Asia. The game owner concept, in short, stands forth in high relief among the far northern Algonkian.”

In the Munsee-Mahican ceremony no game-owner spirit appearing as a bear was featured. Instead, the celestial bear itself, come to earth for his sacrifice in the physical form of a bear of the forest, was the focal point of the ceremony.

Munsee-Mahican tradition does not seem to explain when the ceremony began. It does, however, describe that during a time in the past, when still in their old country on the Hudson River, they failed to practice it because “they were still under a spiritual ban” (Speck 1945:41). The Supreme Being, Pa'tama'was (literally Being Prayed To), interfered and showed himself as a giant stone face on a mountain side. They reinitiated the ceremony and carved his face, as they had seen it, on the center pole and the doorposts of the Big House.

The ceremony was celebrated in the presence of the Supreme Being and the spirits, the eternal unity of all creation and the continuing relationship between sky beings and earth beings. It was held in January at the appearance of the first phase of the moon, lasted originally twelve nights, and started a new year (*withke'katen*). The medium through which the order of the universe, as given by the Supreme Being, was expressed was the bear who also served as messenger between earth and sky beings.

The date for the ceremony was set by annual signals from the sky. Mahicans, Munsees, Unamis, many other Eastern Algonquian groups, and some Central Algonquian groups viewed the constellation Ursa Major as a celestial bear hunt (Müller 1956:291–95). In their interpretation the four stars of Ursa Major, that form an irregular rectangle mark the body of the cosmic bear, and the three stars that form the handle of the “Dipper” represent three hunters accompanied by a dog (the star Alcor). Revolving around the North Star,

the cosmic bear leaves his den (Corona Borealis) in spring followed by seven hunters—the three of the “Dipper” handle and the four consisting of Arcturus and the three stars of the constellation Boötis. They trail the bear through the summer and slay him in the fall. The Abenakis attribute

the autumnal reddening of the forest foliage to the tinting of the leaves by the blood of the celestial bear slain at this turn of the season by the star hunters, and the white mantle of early winter snow on earth to the coating of white bear’s grease falling upon earth when the sky hunters try out the fat of the slain bear. [Speck 1945:57]

But the celestial bear comes to life again, remaining dormant during the winter and once again emerging from his den in spring to reenact the eternal drama of the hunt in the sky.

It is significant in this context that in northern Siberian (Evenks) thought, the constellations Ursa Major, Boötis, and Arcturus also represent a celestial hunt. Here, however, Ursa Major is the cosmic moose, *kheglun*, who is hunted by the bear *mangi* who is visible in the constellations Boötis and Arcturus (see chapter 2). Perhaps this Evenk concept explains the position of the *missingw* as the spirit controlling the ceremonial deer hunt in the Unami Big House ceremony—a reenactment of a celestial hunt. This, then, is based on ideas that have their closest counterpart in northern Siberia (see Ikenipke, chapter 2).

If my interpretation is correct, Munsee-Mahicans and Unamis practiced *two* versions of a sky hunt in their renewal ceremonies: In the first version the bear was the prey of spirit hunters; in the second the bear was the spirit hunter himself. It is remarkable that both existed side by side within three closely affiliated Eastern Algonquian groups.

Speck (1945:32) has written this about the symbolism of the Munsee–Mahican ceremony:

The Munsee–Mahican Big House is a sky projection upon earth, specifically the constellation Ursa Major projected upon the floor of the Big House sanctuary. The interior furnishings of the sanctuary and the stations formally occupied by the ceremonial officials correspond to the position of the stars forming the constellation. The acts and movements of the ritual performers parallel the movements of Ursa Major as the events of the annual life cycle of the earth bear sacrificed in the ceremony is conceived as a fragment of the celestial bear, and everything done during the ritual is a transcendental reference to him.

The ceremony was held in the Big House, Xwate'k'an, a rectangular wooden building (fifty by thirty feet) with its long axis running east to west. The structure represented the universe: its bare floor the earth, its four walls the four directions, its ceiling, the sky spaces thought to consist of twelve layers atop which the Supreme Being resides. The center pole, a tree trunk, symbolized the world tree (*axis mundi*). There were an east door and a west door. Halfway between the doors and the center pole were two fires; there were two smoke holes in the roof above them. A carved wooden mask above each door faced the center pole; the one on the east side was white; the one on the west side was red. Two more masks, suspended on the center pole, faced east and west. The one on the east side was red; the one on the west side white. Thus two red masks faced east, two white masks faced west, indicating the colors of the two directions and the inherent dualism in the universe (earth-sky, life-death, male-female). This concept was also expressed in the arrangement of participants: Women were located in the eastern half of the structure, men in the western half. (Perhaps it should be recalled that, of the sacred wolves of the Massaum, the male wolf was red, the female wolf, white.)

The skin of the sacrificed bear was tied around the center pole beneath the red and white face masks, thus ceremonially unifying both opposites on the world tree.

During the ceremony four male drummers were stationed on the men's (west) side. During the second part of the ceremony they used a deerskin stitched into a rectangular cushion, with the hair side in, serving as a drum (Speck 1945, fig. 3). One half of this unique drum was painted red, the other white. A bear painted black was superimposed on the red, facing a black crescent moon in the white field. Four drum beaters were paddle-shaped, painted white and red, with a star in the white field. Howard (1980:153), commenting on the Oklahoma Unami ceremony, observed that the deerskin drum represented a "very ancient and unique type of drum in North America . . . of probable Asiatic origin." In one Tsistsistas ceremony a buffalo hide is used as a drum.

Another important object in the ceremony was a turtle-shell rattle that was used exclusively by visionaries when they recited their visions in the Big House. In Munsee-Mahican and in Unami thought the earth region rested symbolically on the back of a great turtle, placed there by the creator after the separation of sea and land. Because the shield structure of the turtle is organized in recurrent num-

bers of twelve, the turtle carried the mark of the twelve layers of the sky space. In Munsee-Mahican directional interpretations, the turtle represented also the west-to-east transition, therefore repeating the orientation of the world house—the Big House of the ceremony.

The ceremony required that a woman dreamed the bear to be sacrificed, or rather, the bear spirit selected a woman dreamer, revealing himself and his location, thus initiating the ceremony. The dreamer of the 1850 ceremony was Twenyucis (Speck 1945:50, 61), a woman of Munsee and Tutelo tribal descent. The dreamer described the details to the chief who apparently played the role of the Supreme Being in the ceremony. He selected twelve ceremonial men and the *maxkok*—the leader of the sacred hunt. The thirteen men left at dark to reach, at daybreak, the bear's hibernation place seen by the dreamer, sometimes traveling many miles. They stayed a day and a night around the den, in silence. At daybreak the *maxkok* struck the den, telling the bear: "You we have found" (Speck 1945:61). And: "The chief wants you. Now you go and take the lead." With the bear leading, the group walked through the forest to the Big House, entering through the eastern door. He was killed with blow to his head at the center pole by the chief.

The chief addressed the animal, "telling him that they would later all meet above [in the sky]. He admonished him to go in advance of his slayers and to inform the spirits in the sky that everything was right on earth, that men were faithful to their obligations to each other and to the spirits of the deceased" (Speck 1945:65).

The *maxkok* skinned the animal ceremonially, that is, reversing the cutting of animals killed for food or fur. He removed from the center pole the bear hide of the last ceremony and tied the fresh hide in its place, just beneath the red and white masks. The bear's body was removed to the cookhouse at the east side of the Big House where it was entrusted to a number of selected women and a male helper. Through the twelve nights of the ceremony, all participants shared in the sacred food at the conclusion of each night's performance. The bear's head was used as were all other parts of his body. The bones were carefully collected and burned in the eastern fire of the Big House close to the end of the ceremony. The bear's flesh alone was the sacred food; neither salt nor plant matter was added.

The Big House night portions of the ceremony began on the night of the bear's death. No ethnographer appears to have asked why the performances were held only at night, and therefore no answer was given. Asking the question now, the answer is obvious to me: Only

at night was the celestial counterpart of the sacrificial bear of the ceremony visible, gazing down into the Big House from the northern sky.

The ceremony was apparently separated into three equal parts. For the first four nights, for short periods only that were ended by the rising moon, the leader of the ceremony explained the purpose of the ceremony and gave thanks to all forces and spiritual and physical forms of the universe. For four nights, the ritual of spirit experiences, *alo'man*, followed, in which the performers were accompanied by four singers using the deerskin drum. This section of the ceremony was concluded by a men's dance, a mixed dance, and a women's dance. After these, the ceremonial objects (deerskin drum and drum beaters, turtle-shell rattle) were removed. The last four nights were devoted to dances that featured animal representations and masked performers as well as social dances, the latter "to afford social relaxation to the people" (Speck 1945:73). These were accompanied with a water drum painted red with the four directions. The ceremony was ended before daybreak following the twelfth night. At that time the moon had reached its full phase.

The main reason Speck gives for the disappearance of this ceremony after 1850 is the conversion of the Munsee-Mahican band to Christianity. Perhaps so. In a world emptied of old symbolism and old physical form, an earth bear, acting under the instruction of a celestial bear, no longer reached a dreamer open to the dream. Perhaps the disappearance of the dreamer initiated the physical disappearance of the bear.

Close Enemies of Long Ago: The Okipa and the Massaum

Mandans: Suffering for the Buffalo

The Mandans are a Hokan-Siouan-speaking tribe residing on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota. Before 1780 they consisted of five divisions: Is'topa, Nuptadi, Manana're, Awigaxa, and Nuitadi (Bowers 1950:24-25), each with a number of permanent villages. These were located along the Missouri River, extending from the Heart River upstream to the Painted Woods. They lost 80 percent of their population in the smallpox epidemic of 1780; the survivors joined in two earth-lodge villages below Knife River (Wedel 1961:202). In 1837 another smallpox epidemic took four-fifths of their remaining people (Schlesier 1968:43). In 1862, the shattered bands of survivors of the sedentary tribes of the Missouri River region—Mandans, Hidat-

sas, and Arikaras, who together had numbered close to a hundred thousand people before 1780—assembled in a single village near Fort Berthold (Schlesier 1968:43).

As the Proto-Tsistsistas became the Tsistsistas through the introduction of the Massaum ceremony, Proto-Mandans became Mandans through the introduction of the Okipa ceremony. With the Okipa a permanent ceremonial lodge that faced a village plaza was built. Because these features are an integral part of the Thomas Riggs Focus, which begins around A.D. 1100, Wood (1967:156–57) has concluded that the Okipa was developed at the initiation of this archaeological entity (for Mandan prehistory and protohistory, see chapter 7).

The ceremony required that it was performed annually. It was last held in 1890; after that date it was prohibited by the army officer in charge of the reservation (Bowers 1950:119). When the Collier administration, in response to the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, lifted the ban, the Okipa did not return. The annihilation of the bison had made it unnecessary; the death of a whole generation of priests and knowledgeable participants during the intervening years had made it impossible.

Curtis (1930:128) believed that “certain features” of the Massaum “suggest borrowings from the Mandan Okipé.” Hoebel (1978:23) also thought it “highly probable that the Cheyennes borrowed . . . from the Mandan Okepa ceremony, which they would have had occasion to see during the period of their stay on the Missouri River,” referring to the time after 1700. Both argue the case on the notion that the Tsistsistas were latecomers to the region occupied by the Mandans already for nearly a thousand years, a notion that is rebuked by Mandan tradition itself (chapter 7).

What the Tsistsistas are supposed to have borrowed Curtis and Hoebel did not say. If their logic that the people in place passed knowledge to those who came later applies, the Tsistsistas contributed to the Mandan ceremony, not vice versa. Tsistsistas warfare with Proto-Mandans before and during the period in which the Okipa developed may not have given the latter a chance to observe a Massaum directly, although they could have learned about it through a third party. A solution to the question depends on a comparison of the two ceremonies.

According to Mandan tradition, Proto-Mandan bands arrived in the northeastern Plains from the Mississippi River and entered the grasslands separately from different points (southwestern Minnesota, northwestern Iowa, see chapter 7). The Awigaxa tradition states that

they arrived with a Corn Medicine Ceremony (Bowers 1950, 158–60). Expanding to the Black Hills, the Awigaxa found the land itself and the people they encountered (the Tsistsistas) hostile: “In the mountains they planted corn out there, but the seasons were too short, and the yields were small” (Bowers 1950:163). They were visited by the Supreme Being (First Creator) and Lone Man, his son, who became the spiritual representative of the Mandans. Mandan tradition explains that he has been with them a number of times during their long history in the grasslands. First, Creator and Lone Man together taught them the first version of the Buffalo Dance, which was elaborated over many following years and eventually incorporated in the Okipa ceremony.

While Proto-Mandan bands still ranged over a wide region, extending from southwestern Manitoba to the White River in South Dakota, First Creator and Lone Man, the tradition says, prepared their final homeland in North Dakota; First Creator restructured the land west of the Missouri River, Lone Man the country lying east (Maximilian, n.d., 2:94–95). When eventually Proto-Mandans concentrated in sedentary villages along the Missouri, Lone Man caused himself to be born into the Nuptadi division. He organized the Nuptadis and other northern Proto-Mandan bands into the buffalo moiety, adding a number of matrilineal clans. At a time when buffalo and all other game were confined to a mountain (Dog Den Butte) by Hoita, the eagle spirit of the people above, Lone Man brought about the animals’ release by introducing the Okipa.

Because the ceremony was held annually thereafter, each Mandan village was reorganized to feature a plaza fronting the permanent Okipa lodge. The traditions state that Lone Man protected his people during a great flood (caused by the spirits after Mandans had abused buffalo calves) by erecting a fence that the waters did not overcome. A symbol of this spirit fence was erected afterward on each Mandan plaza. When the Awigaxa and southern Mandan bands (the Corn People) joined their upriver relatives (the Buffalo People), they became the corn moiety. In the seating arrangement of the Okipa lodge, the matrilineal clans of the buffalo moiety sat on the west side, those of the corn moiety on the east side (Bowers 1950:113). The total number of clans was sixteen; they were called out by name on the fourth day of the ceremony (Bowers 1950:147–48).

The Okipa commemorated the freeing of animals from Dog Den Butte where Hoita had held them captive after a quarrel over a white buffalo hide (Bowers 1950:349–51, 356–59). Because his people were

starving, Lone Man went into Dog Den Butte disguised as a rabbit and observed the Buffalo Dance there. He learned the songs and dance steps, and after his return advised the Mandans to hold a ceremony modeled after the animal dance in the mountain. This was the first Okipa held. Hoita came over and watched it, then released the animals. "He sent the black-tail deer to the badlands, the white-tail deer to the timber, the bears to the points in the river, the buffalo to the flat, and the antelope to the hills" (Bowers 1950:351).

The word Okipa means "to look alike," referring to the bull dancers who were dressed and painted as the animal dancers in Dog Den Butte. The songs and prayers of the ceremony were in the Nuptadi dialect. The main Okipa ceremonial bundle was inherited through the WaxikEna clan that Lone Man had established after he had been born into the Nuptadis (Bowers 1950:113, 118).

The ceremony was held in the summer in each Mandan village; often there were two performances in each village (Bowers 1950:122). The Okipa lodge with its six central posts and rectangular form was a replica of Dog Den Butte. In front of it, on the plaza, stood the small circular structure of cottonwood planks that symbolized the spirit fence erected by Lone Man during the great flood (Catlin 1976, plate 2). A red-painted cedar post inside the enclosure "represents Lone Man and all the people," as White Calf told Bowers (1950:352). During the Okipa performance the Hoita impersonator directed the activities inside the ceremonial lodge, the Lone Man impersonator those held outside. Women were not allowed to participate in the ceremony or to enter the Okipa lodge during the performance. Some women fasted on top of the structure from the morning of the first day to sunset on the third day (Bowers 1950:147), perhaps for the benefit of sons or husbands who were undergoing torture features.

The main performers in the Okipa were Lone Man (Numakmax-Ena), the Speckled Eagle (Hoita), and the pledger, or Okipa maker (Koni'saka); it was required that the latter had dreamed of the ceremony and had heard buffalo singing Okipa songs (Bowers 1950:121). The Lone Man impersonator had to be a member of the WaxikEna clan; the priest taking the Hoita position belonged either to the WaxikEna or Tamisik clans (Bowers 1950:120). After the dates had been set, the Okipa lodge was cleaned, and sage was placed on the bare earth. The three eastern posts were painted with red bands a few inches wide, the western posts with black bands. The crier went through the village before daylight announcing that Lone Man would open the lodge at sunrise on the following morning.

On this morning Lone Man approached from the prairie to the south. He was dressed in a wolf robe; his body and face were painted white. He wore a headdress of jackrabbit fur and porcupine hair to which a raven was tied. In his left hand he carried a pipe, in his right hand a flat ash club with a moon and thunderbird design on one side, morning star and sun on the other (Bowers 1950:125). At the village entrance, he was stopped by members of a soldier society. He explained who he was and the purpose of his return. He was taken directly to the Okipa lodge. There he told the sacred story of his relationship with the Mandans, including the origin story of the ceremony. Then he passed through the village from lodge to lodge, addressing the people directly.

The ceremony began in the evening. After the participants had assembled in the Okipa lodge, Hoita and the Okipa maker sat on the north side, and Lone Man sat on the west side in front of a dry buffalo hide rolled up like a cylinder to serve as a drum (Bowers 1950:126). Many male fasters sat along the walls, according to clan and moiety membership. An altar was set up between the northeast and northwest posts of the lodge, consisting of a four-post frame symbolic of the four posts of the universe (Bowers 1950:128). The knives and splints for the torture features were placed beneath the altar. The altar was flanked on the west and east sides by two pairs of human skulls and two pairs of buffalo skulls (Bowers 1950:127; Catlin 1976, plate 3).

On this evening, Lone Man transferred his pipe to the Okipa maker, thus placing him in charge of the ceremony. Then he called on Hoita to supervise the performance and to see that every detail of the dance was done correctly (Bowers 1950:128). The dance began at once and lasted until midnight; the drummers used the hide drum.

On the morning of the first day, the Okipa maker left the lodge and stood at the spirit fence on the plaza, touching the wooden planks with both hands, his forehead against the wood. Standing on a buffalo skull, he prayed to the original Lone Man "to hear him . . . and to bring the buffaloes near the villages, and to keep all bad luck away" (Bowers 1950:129). While he was standing there, the fasters came out covered with buffalo robes, with the hair on the outside. Accompanied by the drummers, they danced toward the sacred cedar, imitating a buffalo herd. During the first day this performance was repeated four times: at sunrise, before noon, midafternoon, and before sunset. At sunset the Lone Man impersonator went out to collect from their keepers three water-filled hide drums called "turtle

drums,” which replaced the cylinder-shaped hide drum used previously. Dances in the Okipa lodge lasted until midnight.

On the second day eight elaborately dressed buffalo bull dancers (Catlin 1976: plate 4) performed eight times on the plaze while the Okipa maker stood praying at the spirit fence. The fasters imitating a buffalo herd danced once.

On this day the torture feature began (Catlin 1976, plates 10, 11). Fasters presented themselves to clan “fathers” who took knives from the altar and cut holes through muscle and flesh for the skewers:

Two skewers were inserted through the skin on the back or the breast by which the candidate was suspended in midair by a lariat fastened over a pole in the Okipa lodge. Other skewers were inserted through the skin of the legs to which buffalo skulls were attached [Bowers 1950:135].

The fasters thus suspended were violently turned until they lost consciousness; then they were lowered down but left untouched on the ground until they came to.

The third day was called “Everything Comes Back.” The bull dancers performed twelve times on the plaza. They were joined by new dancers representing spirits featured in sacred bundles of other Mandan ceremonies and had been selected by bundle owners. The spiritual powers of these bundles were joined with the Okipa; this demonstrated the primary position of the Okipa in Mandan religious life. In this display of spirits, performers in elaborate costumes represented day and night (Catlin 1976, plate 7), bald eagles, holy women (impersonated by male dancers), swans, snakes (Catlin 1976, plate 8), calumet eagle, hawk, grizzly bears, black bears, beavers, wolves, coyote, meadowlark, and antelopes.

The torture feature continued. After the first dance of the day was completed, the Foolish One (OxinhEde) arrived from the prairie, running up painted black with white circles on his body and white teeth painted around his mouth (Catlin 1976, plate 9). He carried a staff with a symbolic human head attached; he “wore a rod and two small pumpkins representing male genitals” (Bowers 1950:145). He represented a spirit hostile to the ceremony. In attempting to mate with the dancing bulls and running at women in the crowd of on-lookers, he acted in contrary fashion (Catlin 1976; plate 4). Eventually, he was arrested by the Okipa maker. Stripped of headdress and necklace, his staff broken, he was evicted from the village. Perhaps he also symbolized former enemies of the Mandans.

The fourth day was called the "Hunting Day." Only four bull dancers performed on the plaza on this day. They appeared sixteen times, one time for each of the original Mandan clans, which were recited by name. The Okipa maker and the remaining fasters were tortured before the "freeing of the animals" and the "animal hunt" took place, that is, after the last dance. Hoita emerged from the Okipa lodge carrying Lone Man's pipe. Now the bulls came out, four times and each time hunters, standing in line and using poles as lances, charged them, inflicting painful wounds.

After the hunt the bulls stood at the four cardinal points, calling. The north buffalo represented winter buffalo, the east, spring buffalo, the south, summer buffalo, and the west, fall buffalo. The ceremony neared its end when the last fasters, with heavy buffalo skulls attached to their flesh, were dragged around the plaza in a frantic, painful race until they fainted (Catlin 1976, plate 12).

George Catlin (1976:67), who observed the ceremony in 1832, remarked about this scene:

In this pitiable condition each sufferer was left, his life again entrusted to the keeping of the Great Spirit, the sacredness of which privilege no one had a right to infringe upon by offering a helping hand. Each one in turn lay in this condition until the Great Spirit gave him strength to rise upon his feet.

For the permission to take animal life, humans voluntarily suffered for the animals as these had suffered for humans so often. Those who had offered severe pain all had experienced ritual death and transformation. The tools used in the sacrifices (knives, skewers, ropes) were dropped into the Missouri, as gifts to the river, along with other gifts. A sweat lodge ceremony for all participants closed the Okipa.

The comparison of the essential concepts and features of the two ceremonies indicates that both are incompatible as are the world descriptions of the two cultures. The Tsistsistas ceremony takes one to deep levels, beyond the act of creation by the Supreme Being to the perceived undifferentiated unity of form, and carries in logical sequence existence through time to the gift of the grassland earth that was received from the spirits. In contrast, the Mandan ceremony refers to one event described by the tradition as having occurred relatively recently. Where similarities between the two ceremonies are visually the most striking, for example, in the extensive use of animal impersonators, they are incongruous in meaning.

Table 2. Selected Comparative Data

Concept	Massaum	Okipa
The ceremonial lodge is the universe	x	—
The ceremonial lodge has a center pole	x	—
The ceremonial lodge is a permanent structure	—	x
The creation of the universe is reenacted	x	—
The guardians of the four corners are made	x	—
The spirits are made	x	—
The ceremonial lodge is a spirit lodge	x	x
The ceremonial lodge is an animal den	x	x
The ceremony is held in the summer	x	x
The ceremony is an earth-giving ceremony	x	—
The ceremony describes a specific event	x	x
This event focuses on buffalo	x	x
The earth spirit is the keeper of animals	x	—
Two important spirits are donors of the ceremony	x	—
The animals are the donors	—	x
A buffalo maiden is given to a human	x	—
Two important shamans are in the ceremony	x	x
One shaman is the spiritual representative of the people and returns in dangerous times	x	x
In the ceremony hunting rules are taught	x	—
Two master wolves are the master hunters	x	—
Women perform in the ceremony	x	—
The ceremony features a ceremonial hunt	x	x
The ceremonial hunt describes a specific hunting technique	x	—
All animal species are represented	x	—
Animals are ritually killed	x	x
They are killed by spirit hunters (contraries)	x	—
They are killed by ordinary human hunters	—	x
A contrary society is important in the ceremony	x	—
One contrary acts in a prominent role	—	x
Impersonators represent spirits who have initiated other ceremonies and sacred bundles	—	x
Night and day are represented	x	x
Night and day are represented by impersonators	—	x
Torture features (suffering for the animals)	—	x
Healing features (the animals are the healers)	x	—
Membership in a special group, or clan, decides selection of chief performers	—	x

The Tsistsistas, when they had an opportunity to observe an Okipa, had nothing to learn from a ceremony that was initiated over a thousand years after the Massaum, and was alien to their world perception. Conversely, the Massaum must have been alien to Mandan observers if they were ever told its meaning. On its own terms each ceremony was complete and needed no additions from alien sources. It is unlikely that either influenced the other.

9. Conclusion

We need another and a wiser and perhaps a more mystical concept of animals. Remote from universal nature, and living by complicated artifice, man in civilization surveys the creature through the glass of his knowledge and sees thereby a feather magnified and the whole image in distortion. We patronize them for their incompleteness, for their tragic fate of having taken form so far below ourselves. And therein we err, and greatly err. For the animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours they move finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are not brethren, they are not underlings; they are other nations caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth.

—HENRY BESTON, *THE OUTERMOST HOUSE*

The English philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, writing about human inquiry into the nature of the universe, said that in simply discussing the issues, the merest hint of dogmatic certainty is an exhibition of folly. This tolerance for mystery invigorates the imagination; and it is the imagination that gives shape to the universe.

—BARRY LOPEZ, *OF WOLVES AND MEN*

“Reality” means “everything you can think about.” This is not “that-which-is.” No idea can capture “truth” in the sense of that-which-is.

—DAVID BOHM, IN A LECTURE GIVEN AT BERKELEY, APRIL, 1977

THE FOUNDATION of Tsistsistas and Proto-Tsistsistas cultures is a shamanistic world interpretation originally shared with all fellow members of the Algonquian language family.

This shamanistic world interpretation persisted through historic times into the reservation period and in important aspects has survived to the present as is evidenced by the continuing annual performance of the Maxhoetonstov and Oxheheom ceremonies.

It was carried by groups ancestral to the Algonquians from the

Arctic into regions south of the retreating Wisconsin glaciation ice shield, at least 12,000 years ago.

It was shared earlier in common by groups ancestral to the Algonquians with groups ancestral to early populations in northern Siberia. In intricate variations of its themes and in many identical and near-identical features, it continued in both regions for millennia after the groups were separated on two separate continents.

The Tsistsistas Massaum ceremony has its closest relative not in North America but in the Shingkelevun of the Evenks of northern Siberia. Next in order are concepts underlying New Year ceremonies such as those of the Yuroks and Munsee-Mahicans, expressed at opposite ends of the Algonquian spatial distribution. Both these, through space and time, have independently closely related expressions in northern Siberia also (see chapter 2).

The major ceremonies described in this book, in northern Siberia as well as in North America, have perished due to centuries of oppression of native groups by materialist civilizations in both regions and the destruction of their environments waged.

In terms of cultural evolution, the old Tsistsistas world description, like that of the Yuroks, Evenks, Yukagirs, Orochis, and so forth must be defined as culturally successful because the principles upon which it is built are at least one thousand, perhaps two thousand generations old. Without the European conquests it would not have been in jeopardy.

It is obvious, therefore, that the world interpretation as explained in Tsistsistas shamanism is not rejected by a universe viewed as unexplicable by modern physics. That it is rejected by a scientific rationalism that developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is irrelevant because the latter constitutes nothing but another world description in Europe. Thus two different world descriptions oppose each other.

Of the two, that of the Tsistsistas—and of the Yuroks, Evenks, Yukagirs, Orochis, and so on—objectively is the superior because it allows recognition of the other. The rationalistic world description, in contrast, has excluded the experience of the other because of its anthropocentric and mechanistic orientation and its ethnocentric discrimination.

The development of a sophisticated technology made possible by the rationalistic concept of science appears, viewed from the Tsistsistas world description, as a fetishism of physical existence and a trivial

manipulation of particles and potencies. An artificial intercontinental flight vehicle does not impress someone whose *hematasooma* is capable of superluminal intergalactic space travel. The new scientific paradigm initiated by physics and astronomy during the last decades has not only overthrown the rationalistic description that has dominated science for merely four centuries but is testing concepts regarded as factual in the Tsistsistas world description.

The Tsistsistas world description understands power (“energy”) in the universe, following on the cosmological singularity, as cosmic power, *exhastoz*. *Exhastoz* conglobates in spiritual potencies: *maiyun*, *hematasoomao*, which have unrestrained access to *exhastoz*. They are not limited by time or space. Both may join with physical form. Both are generally invisible to the human diagnostic senses but may enter human cognition visually and audibly and execute tasks that can be measured physically; that is, they have control over quantum phenomena.

In Tsistsistas understanding, they are causal (they can be brought about by specific Tsistsistas behavior) and noncausal (they may manifest themselves without a trigger). They are nonlocal (i.e., they are everywhere) and local (i.e., they may appear in a specific locality or in a specific physical form). They are fissionable: They may be local at a number of places at the same time. They are outside, or, outside *and* within the construct of time and therefore represent universal “information.”

The old Tsistsistas culture, as the others mentioned, concentrated its attention on spiritual forces, those residing in physical form and those that were free. To be a Tsistsistas meant to know the interplay of spiritual and physical forms and to participate in it. The power of the *maiyun* and *hematasoomao* over a wide range of manifestations in the universe was empirical knowledge to each Tsistsistas. If this had not been so, this world description would neither have developed nor would it have existed through an enormous number of generations. To observe and experience the metamorphosis of forces was considered normal in Tsistsistas culture. What would have been paranormal cannot now be known.

Epilogue: To the Tsistsistas

WHEN HIS, our Old Man's, the Arrow Keeper's eyes failed, I became his eyes as an eagle's, looking deep. He took me into his heart, made me dream with him of eagle men, of spirit circles standing wide, of the white bear, of hide turning heavy as a buffalo bull. They were sitting there with us, *maheyuno*. He did not apologize, just explained, and they looked way into my bones. He asked them or rather told. He wanted me to tell about the long, long time, about what was, and what still is. For the Tsistsistas, most of all. For the Tsistsistas to come back. Silently they watched, *maheyuno*. So they and he watched me while I was doing this book, keeping me straight. This was the most severe test of all; to get the evidence, however dissected in literature and life, was nothing, compared.

So I say I did us something, a favor perhaps, but I didn't do it alone. Many there are who have been with me. Perhaps it is not too late. But judge for yourself and think about it when you are reading it. Words are difficult and a gift. To bring it all together in a sequence, on paper, to sit there squarely, in black, well, spirits are indestructible, and they can dream it in colors different and still be right. But I use what I must, and I tried to be perfect. Remember that the badger still lives underground, the red-headed woodpecker still flies, and wolves still roam somewhere.

So do we.

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Karl H. Schlesier is Emeritus Professor of Anthropology in Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas. He received the Ph.D. degree in anthropology from the University of Bonn and held a postdoctoral fellowship in the University of Chicago. A noted authority on Cheyenne culture past and present, he has had a continuing close association with the tribe since 1969.

Dick West, *Wah-pah-nah-yah* (Light-footed Runner), is internationally known as one of the most distinguished of North American Indian painters, with exhibitions of his works in major American and European art centers.

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