

THE INFLUENCE OF ABORIGINAL PATTERN AND WHITE
CONTACT ON A RECENTLY INTRODUCED CEREMONY, THE
MESCALERO PEYOTE RITE

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The study of the cults and rites which have sprung up among American Indian tribes in respect to the use of peyote offers sociological and psychological material of no small importance. The spread and increased prominence of peyote ceremonies coincided suggestively with the final triumph of white civilization over the tribes of our western plains, those very groups upon whom peyote attained so strong a hold. As a possible clue to the results of culture contact, therefore, the investigation of the origin, growth, and character of the peyote cult among the various tribes who accepted it promises valuable reward in theory and insight.

It is evidently not generally known that the Mescalero Apache Indians ate peyote. They are not represented on Shonle's map of the distribution of the use of peyote in the United States.¹ In a much consulted booklet compiled under the aegis of the Bureau of Indian Affairs they are listed as non-users.²

During recent field-work, however, it was discovered that the Mescalero once practiced rather elaborate ceremonies centering about the utilization of peyote, and it was found possible to gather considerable data from former peyote eaters concerning the details of these rites and their place in the total religious life of the tribe.³

That place in the religious life, it may be said, is a unique one. The informants uniformly explained that peyote had come to the Mescalero in comparatively recent times. They agreed in general that peyote had been introduced within the memory of the oldest living men of the tribe. Yet despite the recency of its introduction, peyote ceremonies among these Apache enjoyed a rapid development and achieved unusual prominence.⁴

¹ Ruth Shonle, "Peyote—Giver of Visions," *American Anthropologist*, n. s., Vol. 27, No. 1, 1925, pp. 53—75.

² Robert E. L. Newberne, *Peyote*, Lawrence, Kansas, Haskell Institute, 1925.

³ The field studies on the Mescalero Indian Reservation from which data for this paper were drawn covered a two-year period. The writer began work as a fellow of the Laboratory of Anthropology of Santa Fe under the direction of Dr. Ruth F. Benedict and continued under a fellowship of the Social Science Research Council. The University of Chicago, Columbia University, and the Southwest Society have given financial aid. To all these organizations and institutions grateful acknowledgment is made.

⁴ Peyote was introduced among the Mescalero about 1870. After 1910 its use was decidedly on the wane.

There is another feature of the Mescalero peyote rites which heightens our interest in them. Among many of the Plains tribes to which peyote spread, the resulting ceremony has been marked by intrusive elements of Christian evangelism. Biblical terms and symbolism are freely employed and much fervent testimony concerning a new and better life to which the convert has been led by peyote is often offered. The Mescalero practice differs conspicuously in this respect. There is no hint of the influence of Christianity in the Mescalero use of peyote. The growth of the peyote cult among these people has been maintained entirely within the traditional bounds of Apache ceremonialism. Indeed, far from becoming a weakened and Christianized version of native beliefs, the Mescalero Apache acceptance of peyote resulted instead in an intensification of the aboriginal religious values and concepts at many points. The process by which this was accomplished has revealed for us a most arresting case of the remolding of a complex to accommodate it to a tribal pattern.

It cannot be doubted that peyote was brought to the door of the Mescalero in that general movement which resulted in its adoption by a large number of the tribes of the United States. In externals the Mescalero use of peyote bears marked resemblance to the practices of the Plains tribes and the tribes marginal to the plains. There are the ceremonial tipi with its door facing the east; the peyote leader with his staff and rattle, and with his drummer to sit next to him and assist him; the crescent shaped mound before the fire-pit, and the large "chief" peyote which is placed on it and which remains uneaten. Among the Mescalero as well as among many of these other tribes eagle tail feathers are used in feeding the "buttons," and the peyote is passed in ceremonial circuit around the tipi. Drumming and singing continue throughout the night, the drum being passed in ceremonial circuit to each person in turn, and everyone is expected to sing four songs before handing the drum to his neighbor.

But with such general and formal similarities to the pattern found elsewhere Mescalero conformity ends. A further appreciation of the Mescalero peyote cult must have reference to the ceremonial practices and religious ideology which are specifically Apache. To the end that we may understand the pattern to which the Mescalero peyote cult was shaped and that we may comprehend the degree to which adaptation was realized, it may be helpful to state, in briefest summary, the concepts which underlie Apache ceremonialism.

The Mescalero Apache conceives the world to be permeated by a vague, undefined supernatural power. This power has no definite attribute of good or evil; its virtue is its potency. An Apache who could control some of this power might accomplish things close to his heart, it is felt. In contrast to the might of supernatural power stands the human individual. Alone, he is a pitiable object, a prey to sickness, to

enemies, to want, to the machinations of evil men. And so he hopes for supernatural help; he awaits the time when supernatural power will approach him through some channel and he will acquire "something to live by." Now supernatural power, amorphous and ubiquitous as it is, cannot approach man directly. It reaches him through the agency of some plant, animal, or natural phenomenon. And so it is that the Apache, usually at a time of mental or physical stress, lies down and believes himself to be approached and addressed by one of the agents to which reference has been made above. We would call the incident a dream; the Apache recognizes it as a vision experience. Whatever has come to this Apache speaks to him of his weakness, of his need for something which will warn him of danger, which will be ever at his call, which will help him cure the illnesses of his children, relatives, and friends. The power offers him a ceremony, and, if he accepts it, the songs and prayers which establish the rapport between the power and the practitioner are revealed; the details of the ceremony, the uses to which it can be put, and the evils against which it will prove efficacious are all explained. If it is a bear that has approached this particular Apache, for instance, those who are cognizant of his encounter with the animal will say that their friend "knows" bear, or that bear "works through" him. Thereafter anyone who becomes sick from bear (for to see, smell, or touch a bear, or to cross its tracks, can cause sickness, as can the efforts against one of a witch who controls bear power) may come to this man to have a curative ceremony performed. Sometimes a man does not at once reveal that he has obtained a ceremony. Very often his power forbids him to inform others of it until the passage of a certain length of time. Normally he never openly announces the circumstances of his supernatural experience and his ceremony until he is "found out" by his fellows; he subtly hints at his acquisition of power by cryptic remarks or by wearing some body part or symbol of the "power" which he now knows. Encouraged by these signs, a sick person will finally request his help, and in the ceremony which follows the whole episode of the acquisition of the power will be recounted. One who has obtained a ceremony through such a personal experience may pass the ceremony on to others, subject to the approval of the power. There are ways to determine whether a power wishes to "work through" a candidate.

Not every Apache cares to use his personal power for the curing of outsiders. Some are content to have their power perform no more than the services of a guardian spirit for them. When they are in danger or perplexed such Apaches appeal to their powers, but they do not care to make more public or extensive use of them.

In former times every adult Apache, man or woman, normally "knew" some power which he used in his own interests and that of his immediate family, at least. But no matter how modest and retiring an Apache seemed, one never knew when he would be persuaded to accept some

particularly difficult case, effect a spectacular cure, and find his services in sudden demand. It may be said, then, that the Mescalero Apache were a tribe of shamans, active or potentially active. Some, of course, were better fitted temperamentally for traffic with supernaturals than were others. Therefore, since there was no limit to the number of powers which one might "know," some Mescalero Apache possessed the right to conduct several ceremonies. The birds, plants, or animals from which one Apache had obtained his several ceremonies were said to "work together." One of the most fascinating aspects of Apache ceremonialism is the study of such combinations in the realm of the supernatural, and the examination of the psychological factors which prompted them.

But not all people who are approached by supernatural power advise their fellows of their good fortune or endeavor to use their knowledge for beneficial ends. Instead, some guard their secrets, and employ their power silently and malevolently against those who oppose them or excite their envy. These people are the witches, and most of the sickness or misfortune which befalls the Mescalero is credited to them. It is true that disease and ill-luck result from encounters with bears, snakes, lizards, and others of an abhorred set of animals and natural forces. Yet behind the actual encounter and instigating it in almost every case, stands the witch. In other words, power is thought of in terms of undefined quality until it is put into operation. What that quality becomes depends on the character of the individual who has the right to manipulate it.

It is of interest and significance that the activities of the witch and the resistance to witchcraft were conceived of by these warlike and predatory people in terms of battle psychology. The witch brings good folk low by "shooting his arrows" into them. Such "arrows" turn out to be fragments of curiously incised and designed bone or strands of hair said to originate from the bodies of the dead. These "arrows" are located by the shaman to whom the sick go with their ailments. At the curing ceremony there ensues a lively "battle" between the supernatural powers of the shaman and the witch. The shaman is likely to be foiled three times by the "strength" of the witch. After these repulsions he bends his best efforts to the singing of his most compelling songs and uses his full stock of paraphernalia. The fourth time he succeeds in sucking out the object and "sends" it back to the witch. A witch thus shot by his own arrow is certain to die before long.

As some of the statements already made may suggest, Apache ceremonialism had for its primary object the curing of disease. But, though rites to heal the sick far outnumbered those held for any other purpose, ceremonies to find lost objects, to determine the proximity of the enemy, to control the weather, and to achieve many other objectives were held as well. And in the course of curing ceremonies interests other than those of health were not neglected. Prophecy and advice were no small part

of the performance. It was rarely that his power did not vouchsafe the shaman some reassuring information concerning the longevity of his patient, the number of grandchildren with which he would be blessed, and the future state of his fortunes.

As can be well imagined, many jealousies, accusations, and feuds were sure to arise in a tribe of shamans. A man's friends and relatives would hail him as a wielder of beneficent power; his enemies would whisper it about that he was a witch.

Mescalero ceremonies, while they differ in detail from shaman to shaman, all conform to a general pattern. A tipi or shelter is erected with the door facing east. To this the patient is brought. The shaman lights a cigarette and puffs smoke to the four directions, starting with the east and continuing in a clockwise direction. He marks the patient and himself with pollen and then begins the singing of his songs and the chanting of his prayers. The songs refer to his power and to the place and the circumstance under which it was obtained. The prayers are likely to be informal appeals to the power to aid the sick. Some object, symbolic of the power whose ceremony is being used, is often employed. If it be an owl ceremony, the feather of an owl will be prominent among the ceremonial paraphernalia utilized. Various medicines concocted from herbs are frequently administered, always marked with a cross of pollen first and delivered to the lips of the patient on the fourth motion, after three ritual feints to the mouth have been made. Frequently, too, some object of witchcraft is sucked from the patient's body by the shaman. This, the climax of the rite, always takes place near the ceremony's end. A ceremony usually takes place at night and lasts through four nights. For the first three nights the singing ceases about midnight and the participants and spectators retire. These first nights are devoted mainly to securing the unqualified support of the power, to determining the cause and seriousness of the ailment, and to preliminary tussles with the evil forces responsible for the malady. The fourth night the ceremony continues until dawn, and it is about sunrise when the final measures of the rite are taken. Occasionally a ceremony is conducted in the daytime or for a longer or shorter period than four days.

Each shaman has his own instructions from his power and therefore his own particular usages. Each requires that certain ceremonial gifts, four in number, be tendered him before he can begin his work. The nature of this ceremonial payment differs for each shaman. Some shamans tell you they must sing softly; others have no particular bias concerning tone of voice when singing. Some do not allow those in attendance at a ceremony conducted by them to leave while the rite is in progress. Others are little exercised over this, but insist that all present use a small stick instead of fingernails for scratching. The taboos vary, but ordinarily at least one is invoked.

During a ceremony a shaman drums for himself much of the time to provide the necessary accompaniment to his singing. But he often has one or more assistants (those who are learning his ceremony in some cases) to join with him on the choruses, or to drum for him when he is busy administering medicine or abstracting "arrows" of the witch.

It will be understood that this outline of Apache ceremonialism is a most condensed and simplified statement, designed to serve no other purpose than to furnish a background against which we may observe the articulation of the Mescalero peyote rites with the larger round of ritual.

With this general impression of Mescalero ceremonialism in mind, let us endeavor to describe the peyote rite, and to consider and weigh its elements against the setting of the older pattern.

The first question which naturally arises is that of origin. Does the Mescalero hold that the peyote ceremony, like other Mescalero ceremonies, had its genesis in a personal supernatural experience? In all the accounts which have been obtained from informants, the origin, in best Mescalero fashion, is attributed to a personal encounter of an individual with the power, peyote. But, interestingly enough, the intrusive nature of the ceremony is acknowledged by attributing this first experience to a member of a tribe other than the Mescalero. The place of origin is almost always laid to the south, and the Tonkawas, Lipans, and Yaquis¹ are variously mentioned as having transmitted the rite to the Mescalero. Such self-effacement in respect to ceremonialism is not often met in Mescalero stories. Even where Mescalero ceremonies bear striking resemblances to comparable rites of closely related Apache tribes, the Mescalero are prone to insist that the rite originated with them.

But, while the Mescalero waive the credit for having discovered that peyote was a possible source of supernatural power, once it was introduced they perpetuated it in terms of Mescalero ideology. Thereafter Mescalero were considered candidates for supernatural experiences with peyote, and Mescalero who had gained their peyote ceremony through transmission from another might have that knowledge and power enhanced by a personal supernatural encounter of the traditional Mescalero type. An excerpt from a native account will illustrate this last statement:

"While this boy was down in the south he was thinking of taking some peyote with him, of bringing it back here and using it in ceremonies. While he was out on his hunt for peyote he found a clump of them. There was one big one standing by itself. He walked up to it, and he said that just before he touched it, that peyote moved around and said, 'What do you want of me?'

"'I like you, that's why I'm going to take you.'

"'Don't take me. Mark me with your hand, make a cross on me, and

¹ The word Yaqui is often loosely used by the Mescalero for any non-Apache tribe of northern Mexico.

then take those others. They will be enough for your purposes. I know why you have come.'

"He took the ones that were growing there. When he had filled his sack, he looked back at the big one and found that it had disappeared. He looked and looked. Then he turned his head, and before him stood a man.

"'What are you looking for?'

"'Oh,' he said, 'it isn't anything. I'm looking for that peyote that was right here. There was a big one standing right here.'

"'I am the one.'

"'Oh!' he said. It surprised him.

"From that time on he certainly had his part in the peyote meetings, and he did well."

The ready acceptance of peyote by the Mescalero, though it was admittedly an introduction from the outside, can likewise be comprehended in terms of the general pattern. As we have seen, the Mescalero entertained the conception of an animate universe in which all animals, plants, and objects were potential sources of supernatural power. That a plant of which they had not before known or whose potency had not hitherto been demonstrated should prove to share this characteristic, would not in the least disconcert them. And so peyote became one more source of supernatural power, and the man who had meaningful experiences with peyote, or who learned a ceremony from one who had been vouchsafed such an experience, became a peyote shaman with the same validity and justification with which one who had supernatural traffic with bear or learned a bear ceremony became a bear shaman. These shamans became the leaders of the peyote camp or the "peyote chiefs" and were in charge whenever a peyote ceremony took place.

It will be readily grasped, however, that since peyote leadership and the conduct of peyote rites were open to any who claimed a supernatural experience with the plant, since, in other words, an individualistic, shamanistic premise underlay the utilization of peyote for religious purposes, centralized leadership and definite organization could not be achieved. The Mescalero use of peyote never developed into a cult or society with a regular membership and place of meeting, with officers and principals selected by or agreeable to the entire body of devotees, as we shall see.

The acknowledged aims of the peyote rite are likewise referable to the general ceremonial configuration. The emphasis, in Mescalero ceremonialism, is on curative rites, and peyote was molded to this formal pattern. So it was that peyote rites took place most often to cure the sick. Ordinarily the relatives of a sick man, when his family felt (perhaps after trying shamans who manipulated other powers in vain) that a cure through the power of peyote could be effected, approached a peyote shaman whom they believed had great knowledge of his subject, and asked him, with proper deference and ceremonial gifts, to conduct his ceremony. Occasionally a peyote meeting was called for some other

purpose, — for peyote, like other sources of supernatural power, was believed to be efficacious for locating the enemy, finding lost objects, foretelling the results of a venture, etc. But more often, and in agreement with the general pattern, such problems were treated incidentally in the course of a curing rite. On the other hand, the tendency to associate ceremonies with curing was so insistent, that even when peyote meetings were called for other purposes, patients presented themselves for treatment.

Yet in spite of superficial appearances, it would be a gross simplification to assert that peyote was neatly and perfectly reinterpreted in terms of the former Mescalero ceremonial pattern. It must be manifest that there remains, deeper than we have yet probed, a fundamental incongruity between the shamanistic principle of Mescalero ritual and the requirements of the acceptance of peyote.

In the older ceremonial pattern, it will be remembered that the shaman was the cynosure of all attention; he was the central figure. Others were present when the cure was to be effected; there were the patient, the relatives and friends of the ailing person, and friends of the shaman. But the position of these people was distinctly subordinate to the shaman throughout. They had no share in the rite except when the shaman asked their assistance and cooperation. If they heard voices or saw visions, it was a vicarious participation, for these were induced by the words and prophecies of the shaman and were a concomitant of his ceremony. At such a time religious ecstasy, visions, and communication with supernaturals were the prerogatives of the shaman and the validation of his power and efficacy. The on-lookers were present to observe and affirm his potency or were there out of respect for their sick relative. If anyone other than the officiating shaman possessed supernatural power of some variety, he had no right to parade it at a ceremony for which he was not specifically hired. Such a power in the hands of an on-looker was a passive or latent tool not to be exhibited or manipulated on this occasion. The old Mescalero curing ceremony, in briefest summary, was a relationship between patient and shaman, in which the latter played by far the dominant and spectacular role. Witnesses, friends, and relatives were present, and their presence necessarily compelled zest and showmanship in the performance of the shaman. They might be enthusiasts well satisfied with and stimulated by the shamanistic display; they might be unfriendly critics of the shaman's antics. In either case their role was essentially passive; they were, after all, spectators and not participants.

The difficulty in maintaining such a relationship in a peyote ceremony can be gaged at once. After all, peyote is a drug and stimulant. It has certain definite physiological effects and is a respecter neither of men nor of old ceremonial patterns. Those who use it, almost without exception, become subject to ecstasy, visions, and all the feeling of *afflatus ordi-*

narly associated by the Mescalero with the successful wielding of supernatural power. It is this factor, the common bond of sensation and ecstatic experience among many men, which has given the eating of peyote its group character elsewhere, and which is responsible for the appearance of so many peyote ceremonies within a framework of cults or societies. Emotionally peyote induces a fervor and exaltation in all who eat it which is akin to that experienced by the Mescalero shaman alone as he warms to his task through the media of his impassioned songs and prayers. This is undoubtedly the reason why, under the influence of American evangelism, peyote ceremonies in so many places were punctuated by the fervid "testimony" of the participants. We may posit, then, an interesting conflict between the older pattern which recognized the shaman as the focus for the supreme supernatural experience in any rite, and the group use of peyote, which tended to provide for everyone present those satisfactions and excitations associated with the leadership of a rite and the manipulation of supernatural power for the benefit of others.

How, we may ask, was this opposition resolved? The answer is one of the most remarkable lessons in cultural patterning and reinterpretation which preliterate society has had to offer.

The shaman, as has already been pointed out, was retained. As a concession to the older pattern, he remained as the figure-head. The peyote ceremony was his ceremony, obtained through the traditional channels of personal supernatural experience or transmission from another. Just as the shamans of other rites, he had to be approached humbly and his consent obtained before the ceremony could transpire. Theoretically the ceremony was his, and the cure or other desirable objective was to be realized through his good offices.

But a shift occurred in the composition and attitude of the audience which gathered about him for the ceremony. The Apache were too realistic to suppose that any shaman could impress, control, and dwarf others who were also eating peyote and partaking of its stimulating effects. Instead, what the ceremony became was a gathering of shamans under the control and guidance of the peyote chief. The peyote chief or peyote shaman, when his aid was requested and arrangements for a ceremony had been concluded, invited all those who wished to attend to come and lend the aid of their own powers and ceremonies. The conception was that each person who attended would, through the stimulation of peyote, get in rapport with his own personal power, with "that which he lived by." He was expected to utilize this means of communication with his supernatural power for the general purpose of the ceremony, to add to its effectiveness. Interestingly enough, while the emphasis here is quite different from that of any other Mescalero rite, the mechanisms in terms of which this group participation is rationalized are found elsewhere in Mescalero ideology.

Thus it is not uncommon in Apache ritual to find that two or more men sometimes worked in concert to conduct a ceremony. Very often, when an older shaman transmitted his knowledge to a younger man, the two would cooperate for some years in the performance of ritual before the older man died or surrendered his place entirely to the novice.

Within the older pattern, too, it was quite permissible for a shaman to possess or "know" more than one power. Such multiple powers of a man were expected to "work together" amicably and by their united effort to give a person a decided advantage in his ceremonial endeavors. It was acceptable to the Mescalero mind, therefore, to think of peyote as an agency through which other powers could be approached and utilized. Peyote, to a large degree, was thought of as a power that was best to "use with something else." To translate the Apache concept to our own terms, it might be said that the Mescalero obliquely recognized the proper office of peyote in making possible and heightening supernatural experiences for all, but were determined that these experiences should be compressed into the shamanistic crucible.

How, one may inquire, did the peyote shaman fare within this framework? It was true that much of his uniqueness disappeared as his fellows crowded forward to display their supernatural wares in the midst of his ceremony. Yet what he lost in one direction, he probably gained in another. After all, he was the acknowledged authority there, whose word was to be obeyed. It was an enviable position to sit at the head of so select a gathering as a company of powerful shamans. Over these he was arbiter and mediator. It was his place to see that no shaman present forgot the purpose of the occasion and overstepped bounds by using his power for less agreeable objectives. As we shall presently see, this was an almost insuperable task. The function of the peyote shaman was enough transformed from the older pattern that he did not always himself conduct the actual curing which took place at dawn, though he might often do so. If someone present had demonstrated prowess in things supernatural by the vehemence and variety of his songs during the night, the peyote shaman could request him to take charge of the rites of curing in the morning. To effect the cure, a man thus honored would use his own personal power and ceremony. However, the peyote shaman, by virtue of his right of selection, exercised control over the ceremony which was conducted, even though he did not perform it himself. Then too, there were numerous privileges, specific duties, and symbols of authority which emphasized the leadership of the peyote shaman, and compensated for the loss of the absolute sway which the average shaman in other rites maintained over his audience.

What peyote had to offer the individual who attended the rites at which it was eaten is quite plain. For some it promised a way of helping a sick friend. It offered, moreover, a means by which one's own religious experiences could be stimulated and reaffirmed. The visions and proph-

ecies obtained under such auspices were, of course, considered exceptionally valid. Thus it became a method of inquiring into the future. There was also a very understandable sense of expectation and curiosity attendant upon going to such a meeting. This was a place where one heard his fellows' ritual songs, where a person who had but lately obtained a supernatural visitation and ceremony revealed himself. For an Apache, who considered it of utmost importance to his health and protection to know the ritual stock-in-trade of his tribesmen, this was a tempting inducement.

The enlargement of the ritual scene to admit all those present as participants could not but have a noticeable effect on the very outline of the ceremony itself. No matter how uniformly the native accounts repeat the formula that these were curing rites, the descriptions themselves reveal that in practice the attention was diverted to an intense shamanistic display by one individual after another. Whereas at other curing rites the patient is ever present and remains the point of departure for all the shaman's songs, prayers, and ceremonial gestures, in the peyote rite the patient is brought in only towards morning, and the time lavished upon him is drastically reduced. In fact, the peyote rite seldom is continued beyond one night, while the ordinary curing ceremony most often takes place for four successive nights.

To bring together a group of shamans, many of them proud and boastful of their powers, all of them rivals, some suspected by others of witchcraft, and to have them lift their inhibitions by the consumption of peyote, is to invite disaster, or at least a stirring evening. The results, as gleaned from informants' accounts, were quite in keeping with the most colorful theoretical expectations.

In the first place, the peyote ceremony was recognized as an excellent place at which to discover the nature and extent of the power of one who was disliked or mistrusted. Often it is very difficult to ascertain what rite an Apache controls. Under ordinary circumstances an Apache is very uncommunicative concerning the nature and extent of his power. Even today it is not an uncommon practice to ply a rival with drink in the hopes that he will talk freely of his supernatural experiences when intoxicated.

"The peyote," one informant cynically remarked, "the only reason they make it is to find out all the different powers." An experience based on such a feeling was described to the writer as follows: "I could see he was looking at me though I had a blanket over my head. He was looking sharp and thinking, 'There's a new man. I wonder what ceremony he has.' I felt his power come and search me and then go away. It never came back." Again the writer was told, "In peyote meeting they try to find everyone out. One man shouts, 'I'm afraid to show myself!' Then they give him the drum. They want to hear his songs. He gives himself away like this."

Another account illustrates the extent to which peyote was found useful in the determination of the source of another's power.

"E was a man who was pretty strong in power, but no one knew what he had. Everybody tried to find out what it was. They tried to find out at peyote meetings, but they never could find out what he knew.

"He explained what he knew one time. He said, 'Squirrel sits in the tree and never looks on the ground at all. He looks into the sky. He fixes his eyes like a field-glass and nothing can hide from him at any distance, whether it is behind the mountain or on the ground.'

"He said this just one time, and that was during a big peyote meeting in Nogal. They did not find out what he had till he mentioned the squirrel that time.

"While he was talking he suddenly stopped short. Then the drum was handed to him."

Another informant gave this description of the interest evinced in the supernatural power of one whose ceremony was not known: "If you know Turkey (power) they look where you are sitting and they will see Turkey. A man gives away what he knows by the sounds he makes, and he wears or brings in whatever he knows. Sometimes one will have a bear's foot tied to his belt, sometimes feathers will be brought in."

It need hardly be said, of course, that the peyote meeting afforded quite as good an opportunity for one who wished to make known his powers as it did for those who were possessed of a gnawing curiosity to learn what the power would prove to be.

If the interest in the ceremonies of others had gone no further, much trouble might have been avoided. On the part of some people, however, the interest was thought to be morbid and trained to unscrupulous ends; it was thought to be an interest in a neighbor's supernatural protection, for the purpose of stealing his power or doing him personal injury if he proved the weaker. "These peyote meetings," a native explained, "led to lots of trouble, lots of witching. The men there were jealous of each other." Another informant phrased the difficulties thus: "You would bring in what you knew of power. If you were weak the man next to you might take your power away. There was lots of witching in there and it led to a lot of trouble." Their judgment is clearly borne out by this tale of a shaman who met his nemesis and lost his power at a peyote meeting.

"This man usually worked on the head of his patient. He used the golden-crowned kinglet power for healing. He used pollen with it. He was a great healer before he entered the peyote meeting. There it was taken away from him.

"He made a queer noise when he worked. He marked the tail feathers with pollen and put the tail of the bird on the head of the sick one and left it there. He also put pollen in the mouth of the sick person.

"My brother had the measles, as I found out afterward. This old man said it nearly turned out to be nine-day sickness (pneumonia), but he said he took out everything, and the boy was safe. All he asked of us were a buckskin, a gun, and a horse.

"The second time I saw him working was on an old woman, Jose S 's wife. She was pretty sick. Her jaw bone had started to grow out.

"He tried his ceremony in every way he knew. He found out that he was pretty weak. This was after he had entered the peyote meeting. He tried it again and kept it up for sixteen nights. At the end of that time the bird spoke to him and told him that he didn't belong to him any more but to someone else. He had been taken away at a peyote meeting. The bird told the man he had no power left, and that there was no use trying.

"He told the woman his power was gone. The woman felt very badly. She died two days later. It was too late to do anything."

The fear of stronger peyote eaters is encountered in nearly every native discussion. One narrative contains these conclusive sentences: "All these men who go in there are pretty powerful. They want more power. They look at the weak man there and take his power away from him. That was a bad thing, but it was always practiced."

The informant then went on to indicate that the malice of stronger people sometimes went beyond the mere theft of power: "And another bad thing: When a man sees everything is under him there, and he's a witch, he does just what he pleases. He may kill a man right there." As proof of this lugubrious statement the following story was related:

"Old M was killed there where the gate was witched. He said that he knew he was witched when he was in peyote meeting with another man, C He said that C came around behind him, took out his heart, and lifted it up four times. Then he knew he was witched. He told us that at Albuquerque when he came to see his boy. He died on the way back. I hate to say it. They say lots of bad things about old C"

The virulence of these rivalries and attempts to harm others at peyote meetings led to the development of a number of protective measures and safeguards. Those who feared that their power might be stolen took a piece of coral into the meeting with them, for this was thought to conceal successfully their supernatural possessions. And it was thought extremely dangerous for anyone to enter a peyote meeting who did not have considerable resistance against such aggressions in the way of supernatural power. This consideration even militated to limit the number of relatives of the sick person who might be present. Only the close male relatives of a sick man were permitted to attend. If a woman were to be cured her close female relatives might come, "but not a menstruating woman." For protection, moreover, each person who entered took with him some object representative of the power he knew, and this was held throughout the night in the right hand. Even when he drummed or sang it was not relinquished. It might be a feather, some grass, or some animal part.

The danger that awaited the ritually weak at a peyote rite and the train of conflict and death that might be incurred are graphically portrayed in the tale that follows:

"There was a man who knew the power of Clark's crow, and he was one of the biggest peyote eaters. In one meeting they had all strong men there; only one was weak. They told him not to come, that he was too weak. They asked him, 'Aren't you afraid to come, afraid of being witched?'"

"No, there is nothing to being witched."

"His name was Jack L , brother to Jimmy L And there was a distant relative of his there who was very angry because he came."

"After eating some peyote, Jack said, 'I see my own leg over there.'"

"M said, 'Don't talk that way. Say only good things.'"

"He began to sing the second time he ate peyote, and he was surely frightened. He made a noise, looking around."

"M stopped him and said, 'Say only good things; be careful. Talk only about the fruits and pollen and such things.'"

"But he did it again, and again they stopped him. A fourth time he did it, and he saw a spider walking around the fire-pit. It came straight towards him and into the ground in front of him. He began to dig for it. Right there M found him out. He said, 'Run out with it! You're witched!' But he wouldn't do it."

"All sorts of things happened to him before morning. He told what happened. But he was not afraid."

"So the peyote chief said to the man who had witched him, 'You had better take care of it before it comes true.'"

"But this man said, 'You have to be stronger than I am to make me fix it. I have my way about everything.' And the peyote chief let it go."

"And so this man who knew the Clark's crow came forth and said to the witch, 'Now isn't that nice, to witch your own relative! You'd better stop or I'll have it out with you. And you're going to find out what witchcraft is then.'"

"I'll kill you."

"That's nothing. If I die, you'll die."

"And so before morning they worked on each other pretty thoroughly. The witch had shot Jack with a water beetle, right square in his stomach. Then the man who knew the crow took his feather and pulled it out and shot it back in the witch's mouth. 'This is your medicine. Now you've got it back,' he said."

"The witch then tried to shoot the man who knew the crow in such a way that the white man was going to kill him. It didn't work. He tried to witch him so that a horse was going to kill him. It didn't work."

"In the end at morning those present tried to fix it. But for this last man, the witch, nothing could be done. He was shot by his own 'arrows.' He died out in the hills afterward. He just dropped dead before they could cure him. Before he died he lost two children. The man he had shot with the water beetle died too. So there were four deaths that wouldn't have happened if he had played the game fair. But nothing happened to the Clark's crow man. He was too strong."

It was in this charged and turbulent atmosphere that a peyote shaman was supposed to keep the peace. His office has been described to the writer as follows:

"He knows more about peyote than any of the others. He sees that everything goes the way he wants it and that no witching goes on, and he sees that any man he's afraid of is below him. This means that he

finds this man out, that he knows more than this man all the time, and that he's the head of this man all the time.

"All during the night the head peyote man tells his visions. He stops and says, 'I see a bad man in here. He wants to harm someone. I warn him not to try it. It will be too bad for him.' He says, 'There's a man in here thinking nothing but evil. We don't want that. Have nothing but fruits in your mind. All right, go ahead if you want to, but after the next peyote meeting we'll fix you.'

"If you see anything bad you are supposed to report it to the head peyote man. But he knows all about it; you don't have to tell him. Many a time, though, there will be a good peyote chief in charge. What the peyote chief says, goes.

"There's one over there who's trying to witch or take a man's power away,' the peyote chief says. 'Watch out what you are doing.' He stops it.

"But a bad peyote leader doesn't care what's going on, witching or anything."

The last remark points to another onus of the peyote leader. If a meeting held under his direction ends in feud or recrimination, he is certain to be censured for allowing the incident to transpire.

The peyote shaman had to be extremely careful, for in relinquishing to another his right to cure he might invite a round of accusation and personal rancor which could have unpleasant repercussions. Such an incident, and one which ended fatally, was recounted by a native in these words:

"K. knew rabbit power. The power of the cottontail rabbit was known by this man, and it was shown to others in peyote meeting. This man never ate rabbits at all. He killed rabbits but never ate them because he knew the power of rabbits well, and he's the only one I have heard of who knew it.

"There was a peyote meeting held one time in the south when these two brothers, K. and N. , were very young. K. sang of the rabbit at the beginning. He was sitting close to the door and so started the ceremony. He was the first one who began to eat peyote, for it was distributed from the east to the south and west, clockwise around the tipi. He was sitting first on the east.

"By morning when everybody was feeling good, he started to sing a very familiar song, and by his song it was recognized that he was singing of the cottontail rabbit. He sang four songs about the rabbit. It was something hard to understand, for it was the first time that someone had sung about the rabbit. His brother sang rabbit songs too, and the people were not sure which of them knew this rabbit power. They thought it was his brother that knew it.

"After the ceremony when everything was all over, while they were lying around at sunrise, the people looked at each other, and they started to look for the rabbit. The people surely did use their ceremonial songs. They were not supposed to look at one another, but were supposed to lie quiet with heads covered and use their own power.

"Then they began to think about this. Then the rabbit ran among them. It went to everybody and then left. It puzzled everyone, and they did not find out to whom it belonged.

"Then some of the men began to get over their drunkenness. The sun was high in the sky, but some were not over it yet. The rabbit and

other things ran around for a while, and then the people were called to eat. Some still sat out there, they were still drunk, but the peyote chief called them, and they came to eat. They were asking each other who owned that rabbit.

"Then the rabbit appeared at a second ceremony another time. Then it appeared at a third peyote ceremony.

"The fourth time it appeared, K..... showed them. He got up in the form of a cottontail. They knew who it was now.

"He said, 'In the morning I'm going to do the curing this time, and I want all of you to help. We have made rough work of it many times, but this time we are going to go smoothly.'

"Then everything was over. The sick person was brought to him. It was a boy. He was about ten or twelve years old. He was very sick by the looks of him. Everybody knew what was wrong with him when they laid him down.

"They laid him down before the peyote chief, and K..... was selected from the crowd to cure him. The peyote chief selected him.

"K..... got in front of the crowd and said a few things. The rabbit came in, ran around the fire, and went up to the boy. They all saw it. The rabbit moved around the boy till K..... was through singing something softly to himself. Then it left.

"Then K..... started. By sucking with his mouth he took out the disease that was going to kill the boy. It was in different colors, blue, white, yellow, and black, and red, all mixed. Everybody looked at this and said, 'What a number!' They said these colors showed that the witch who had done it was strong.

"The man who had put the disease in this boy was present, and then they all knew him. But they all said purposely, 'Well, it's pretty difficult to say who did this.' They had sent the right man against the witch. He was using the rabbit.

"K..... was very angry with that man who had harmed the boy. But while this ceremony was being performed, the witch did not say much, and the ceremony ended without trouble.

"The boy gained his strength back and he somehow grew up to be a man and found out what had made him sick in his young days. He was a pretty tough customer.

"He took his bow and arrow, and he had a rifle too. He went to hunt up this man who had witched him. He did not say anything. His father and mother thought he was out hunting. He was about nineteen or twenty years old.

"The man who had witched him was standing around with others at a hoop and pole game. He did not pay attention to this boy who was coming towards him. The boy laid his gun down. The man had a ceremony that made it impossible to kill him with a gun. So the boy turned up the sleeve on his arm and took his bow and arrow. He took a handful of arrows from his quiver and told the man to look at him. As he did so, the boy drew his bow and said, 'This is what you want,' and he let the arrow fly.

"'I kill in sight, not by a secret way that nobody sees.'

"The arrow entered below the man's ribs; the backbone was hit by the metal of the arrow. The witch got up and stood there for a while and then fell."

The necessity, in the face of the undercurrent of tension and antagonism which dominated the peyote meeting, for an impartial and sternly

just peyote chief, was well recognized. One was needed, it was felt, who was above suspicion. The pitfalls of the office were considered real and serious, for the peyote chief was supposed to know all that passed in the minds of those present, and it was always a temptation to take sides or to overlook the transgressions against one's personal enemies. This attitude led, interestingly enough, to one of the few Mescalero instances of discrimination against women in things ceremonial. The slight bias against women, the feeling that they are somehow inferior to and less reliable than men, which exists as an undercurrent of belief throughout the cultural forms, here finds direct expression. A woman, no matter how great her knowledge of peyote, or how large her store of achievements in the realm of the supernatural, was never allowed to become a peyote chief. The following excerpt from an interesting story, which cannot be given in full here because of considerations of space, expresses the Apache point of view upon the disqualification of women for the role:

"The woman who knew the raccoon and peyote was not a leader of peyote. She just attended always. She was just as strong as any of these men though. If there was anything she didn't like she straightened it or made the peyote chief straighten it. She got after him if he didn't want to straighten it, or she went after the witch herself, and then the trouble began, for she made enemies. That's the main part. They say many witchings were stopped by her.

"But there was never a woman peyote chief, for they say a man is hard to tempt, but a woman is easy, that is, in a supernatural way."

The tenet of female inferiority found an outlet in one other direction, too. Menstruating women were not permitted to attend the meeting, and were, in fact, expected to remove themselves from hearing distance of the drum. This, however, was hardly a departure from the aboriginal pattern, for the injunction against the presence of menstruating women at ceremonies was general.

The fear that unfair advantage would be taken of one in the peyote meeting was so real, that not even the peyote chief was considered exempt from the attacks of witches. The peyote chief was assisted in his work by two younger and less experienced helpers, and it was the favorite diversion of witches to weaken and confound the leader by causing these novices to vomit. "If the peyote chief is strong," a former peyote eater told the writer, "he has another boy in there to help him. And if he's not strong, they try to make the boy vomit up. That's a bad sign for the peyote chief, certain death. When I was there the first time, the peyote chief made me sit by him and drum for him. He gave me the peyote on eagle tail feathers, then he motioned to me with his staff. I never did it before, but I started right in singing. They told me how the witches make boys vomit. I said, 'I'm not going to vomit.' If you have a boy in there with you, you watch out for him, don't let him get witched."

In his efforts to discover and thwart the designs of witches against himself, his helpers, or any others present, the peyote chief was aided

by the possession of a peyote button, larger than any brought for the purpose of eating. This peyote fetish was placed immediately before the chief, and he frequently consulted it to ascertain whether anything was amiss. Any evil thoughts or efforts at witchcraft were said to "show" on this "chief peyote."

It has been necessary to comment first upon the emotional unrest which seethes below the surface in a peyote ceremony, for a description from a spectator's vantage would not reveal much of this and would certainly encourage an erroneous impression of the essential meaning of the rite and the relative functions of the participants.

Now that we have obtained some insight into peyote's place in the Mescalero conceptual and religious life, we can turn profitably to a descriptive summary of the more overt details.

When a peyote shaman has agreed to conduct his rite for the benefit of a sick person, the news spreads rapidly, and at noon on the appointed day, all who intend to be present bathe themselves. The "peyote camp," a large tipi¹, is erected that afternoon near the home of the patient², and at evening-fall the peyote-eaters make their way to it. The door of the tipi faces the east.

The peyote chief is already in attendance. He sits, facing east, behind the central fire-pit. He holds a gourd rattle in one hand and a wooden staff, incised and designed, in the other. The staff is his protection against witchcraft, and he is said to "sing to it." When he drums, the gourd passes to one of the helpers, but the staff is retained in his left hand. Before the peyote chief, on an eagle feather or a piece of buckskin, lies the large talismanic peyote, called "chief peyote" or "Old Man Peyote." This is never eaten, but is saved at the end of the ceremony for the next occasion. Some peyote shamans traced a cross of pollen on the "chief peyote," some did not.

The peyote chief is assisted by two helpers, one the fire-tender and the other the door-keeper. The fire-tender builds a mound of earth around the fire-pit in the form of a crescent with the ends pointing to the west. He then kindles the fire in the pit and does not allow it to go out for the remainder of the rite. The office of fire-tender was deemed of some importance and aspirants to peyote shamanism often received first instruction in the pursuance of these duties. Having completed his task, the fire-tender takes a place at the side of the peyote chief.

The door-keeper stations himself at the entrance as the people enter, and sees that they pass clockwise around the tipi in search of a seat. He

¹ "The biggest that can be found," according to one informant.

² One informant stated, "They have to be away from the public, away from the women," a remark of interest in connection with the discriminations leveled against women in Mescalero peyote. It may be assumed that when the patient is seriously ill the tipi is erected near his camp. Where he is able to walk the peyote camp is set up at some outlying spot.

also makes sure that there is no unnecessary talking. At the peyote meeting whispering is permitted to those attending the first time, silence is enjoined upon all others.¹ Everyone sits on the bare ground; otherwise when the peyote takes effect, a person would think of himself as "far away."

Once a person has entered the peyote meeting, he is not supposed to leave the tipi until morning. An eagle feather is laid at each side of the entrance, and, should it become necessary to go out, the individual takes one of these feathers by the quill end and makes his exit, returning as soon as possible. Voiding of air is prohibited during the ceremony.

When all is in readiness the helpers bring in the peyote to be eaten. In some cases they were arranged in rows on a woven tray, sometimes they were kept in a sack. Occasionally the peyote were arranged in circular fashion around the fire-pit with the "chief peyote" to the east and two narrow lanes separating it from the others.² Then, when the peyote were to be eaten, the leader passed them out, beginning with the one to the southeast of the "chief peyote."³

The peyote chief is first to taste of the peyote. Then he administers their first button to those who have never eaten it before. For this he uses two eagle tail feathers as a spoon. The initiate is led before him, and he deposits the peyote in the person's mouth after three ritual feints. On the fourth motion the peyote is said to fly into the mouth of the novice without effort on the shaman's part.

The helpers now pass clockwise around the tipi with eagle feather spoons and peyote buttons and feed those who wish to eat of it. The peyote button was taken whole by the Mescalero, chewed, and swallowed. It was eaten either fresh or dried; most often it was dried by the time it was used. While the peyote is being eaten, the peyote chief prays. "The head man is just sitting there with his stick. His head is down. He's talking, but not to be heard. I never heard a word of what he said."

The drumming and singing begin almost at once. The drum, of tambourine type, is passed to each person in turn, starting at the doorway, at the southeast, and continuing around the tipi clockwise. Occasionally the drumming started with the first man to the north side of the doorway, passed "through the door" and continued in the clockwise circuit. Each person who accepted the drum was expected to sing four

¹ The ban against talking refers, of course, to secular affairs. To relate a vision experience, report an instance of witchcraft, etc., would not come under this heading.

² This has an analog in another important rite, the girl's puberty rite, where on the last night the singers erect, in clockwise order, a circle of small sticks, one for every song sung.

³ Care was taken to keep the "fuzz" from the top of the peyote button from coming in contact with the eye, for it was thought to cause blindness.

songs before passing it to another. A participant might sing his own ceremonial songs or songs induced by vision. If a person had no desire to sing, he had to pass the drum four times around the fire in a clockwise circuit before handing it to his neighbor to the left. This clockwise circuit was observed in all things at the peyote meeting. If the drum were passed to the peyote chief, or if the peyote chief wished to smoke, and therefore had to tender his gourd rattle to one of his helpers, he would first encircle the fire four times with it.

During the singing, the drum was frequently passed to the peyote chief. He was the one "who did most singing." Often he would have one of his helpers sing instead, and he would then indicate his wishes by reversing his staff and prodding the assistant with it. The peyote chief alone used the gourd rattle, and he or one of his assistants shook it continually during the singing. All except the singer, the peyote chief and his helpers, sat huddled and swathed in blankets during the songs. Between songs, those who wished to eat peyote would signify this and a helper would tend to their needs. At irregular intervals smoking was indulged in. A red-stone pipe, said to have been made elsewhere and to have reached the Mescalero via the Sioux Indians, was then passed clockwise around the tipi after the leader had ignited and puffed at it. For some peyote ceremonies the smoking of oak-leaf cigarettes is mentioned.¹

The Mescalero peyote eater was warned to fix his thinking on something pleasant or holy, for whatever visions appeared as soon as peyote took effect were likely to remain with one throughout the night. "Whatever you start with in that ceremony, that's what you'll see all through it. If you see a girl when the ceremony starts, you'll see nothing but girls. You'll want all of them."

As the evening progressed, individuals were moved to tell of their visions and experiences. "If you feel like it, you tell what you see." If a person betrayed by his remarks that he was thinking of something profane or obscene, an attempt was made to stop him. "One fellow had a vision of a woman. He talked right out, 'Ah, there's a girl over there; she likes me.' They made him stop, saying, 'Hush, hush!'"

The diversity and personal content of the vision experiences are a corollary of the shamanistic and individualistic spirit in which peyote was approached; a testimony to the lack of any one underlying purpose for the rite. Some typical visions, drawn from the accounts of a number of informants, follow:

¹ The slight variations in pattern which have been mentioned from time to time, and those still to be enumerated, undoubtedly owe their existence to the fact that there were a number of peyote shamans, each eager to assert his own individuality and "way" by some minor departure or "rule." The use of eagle-bone whistles, for instance, is reported for some peyote ceremonies and not for others.

"I heard funny things. One fellow was finding lots of plums. Another was filling his pockets with money. . . . I saw a rainbow. I was standing in between the ends, in the middle of it. I looked back. I saw nothing but a little juniper tree standing there alone. I listened to the singing. I started to talk. They stopped me."

"The man on the other side of me yelled out. I said, 'Be quiet, you're at peyote meeting.' Then I looked at him. I saw he was following trails. He came to the place where they crossed. He counted four and then took one trail. That's why he had called out."

"You can see more supernatural things in peyote than any other place. In other places your power has to fix it so you can see, but here you just see; you sit and see it.¹ I saw many awful looking animals, fishes, and trees. But mostly I saw young boys and girls dancing. You don't know to whom they belong unless you have power."

"It's a great medicine. When I was young, I saw myself all grey. Now I am an old man. When the Indians were eating peyote I saw one of my relatives with blood going down the cheek as if he was shot. Later it happened just like that. The enemy came and this man was shot right through the cheek."

"It all depended on the will of peyote. People would see different things. One would see himself as a big chief."

"This ceremony was given for my wife. My brother was there. My brother said, 'My sister-in-law is going to get well (he saw this in a vision), so I am going to dance.' He danced. Then my wife was brought in."

It was believed that if a peyote eater were terrified by a vision of impending misfortune and ran from the tipi, his worst fears would be certainly realized in life. The aim in such a case was to head off the excited individual, learn the nature of his fears, and bend efforts in prayer and song to correct his future fortunes.

Throughout the night a Mescalero might eat from four to forty buttons, depending on his experience with the stimulant. The latter amount was exceptional; a peyote chief might eat that many. Twelve buttons would be considered a generous number.

When morning approached the curing took place. The sick person was brought into the tipi in clockwise circuit and led or carried before the peyote shaman. The peyote leader, when he effected the cure, used the "chief peyote" in diagnosis and treatment. Upon the surface of the "chief peyote" he could see any evidence of witchcraft, and through the same agency he learned the proper measures to take. As has been mentioned, sometimes the peyote chief selected another to perform the cure.

The treatment was concluded by dawn and all left the tipi. "In the morning, about sunrise, after eating peyote all night, that's when you feel good. Everyone came out at sunrise. The men had their shirts off and were dancing around and singing. Then, before breakfast, all were lying around. That's when you see visions. One man saw himself, and

¹ Note the comparison made between peyote eating and an individual's power on the grounds that both induce vision experiences.

he was being killed by a burro. After a while they called you to eat breakfast. The songs which were sung in the morning were called 'sun songs.' The peyote chief began them and then the others joined in."

Throughout the rite and before breakfast no food is taken, though it is permissible to drink water during the night.

The food, prepared and served by the relatives of the patient, was passed around. The eaters were warned not to go back to their own camps while under the influence of peyote. As the effects of the peyote subsided the people made their way homeward. At noon they bathed. About noon, also, the ceremonial tipi was dismantled.

It should be added that peyote was not, under any circumstances, supposed to be eaten privately by an individual who did not "know" the peyote ceremony, or consumed anywhere except at a peyote ceremony such as has been described.¹ To use it habitually or as a personal stimulant was thought to drive the person mad, and a number of instances to illustrate this were offered. The peyote shamans took trips to the south to replenish the supply of buttons. They kept these for ceremonial occasions and refused to give them out to individuals.

We have now come to the end of our descriptive analysis, and it is our task to account, so far as we can, for the particular constellation of traits and attitudes with which we have been concerned. We have seen that the formal or outward peyote configuration, which has such a wide distribution throughout the tribes of the United States, was retained by the Mescalero almost without change. The reason for this slavish acceptance is not far to seek. The elements, or quite similar ones, were already present in Apache ceremonial usage.

The Mescalero adopted some changes to make room for unfamiliar paraphernalia, it is true. Thus the gourd rattle appears in the Mescalero peyote ceremony and in no other Mescalero rite. But the Mescalero Apache had long since used buffalo hoof rattles, deer hoof rattles, and the like; the step was not a challenging transformation. Likewise, in no other Mescalero ceremony is a mound of earth in the shape of a crescent to be found. On the other hand, crude ground tracings did grace a Mescalero rite occasionally, and the moon was much in evidence in ritual song and design. The staff of the peyote shaman seems an innovation at first thought; yet it has a counterpart in the "old age stick" held by the singer in the girl's puberty rite. Practically all other elements of the generalized and wide-spread peyote rite struck responsive chords somewhere in Mescalero ceremonialism. Ritual smoking, the use of eagle feathers, a ceremonial circuit, and practically all peyote traits which

¹ It is a general Mescalero belief that those who make use of a ceremony to which they have no rightful claim will die or go mad. The extension of this rule to peyote is indicative of the shamanistic background of the ceremony. The peyote shaman who knows its lore in full is the only one who can handle peyote at will with immunity, therefore.

might be called to mind were scarcely new when the Mescalero first became acquainted with the use of peyote. The formal pattern could easily be accepted by the Mescalero without concession or loss, especially since they proceeded at once to interpret the inner meaning in their own terms.

In some places, peyote has been associated with anti-white feeling, and it may be wondered, perhaps, why the rite did not organize such attitudes for the Mescalero.¹ It so happens that the place of ritual opposition against the whites was already usurped before the introduction of peyote. There is an aboriginal Mescalero ceremony which has as its function the consternation and defeat of enemies, and this was immediately directed against the whites at the time of first contact.

Another query that might arise concerns the lack of Christian elements in the Mescalero peyote cult. There are a number of factors which together may be responsible for this. The Mescalero were a nomadic people, and there had been no opportunity until comparatively recent times to establish missions among them with any success. They were one of the last groups of American Indians to be thoroughly subdued, moreover. The influence of Christian dogma upon them was consequently slight. Most important of all, the Christianized version of peyote was not the tenor of the first wave or movement. As Radin has so well demonstrated in his Winnebago material, the ascendancy of Christian symbology was the result of a reinterpretation or secondary movement, and by the time this movement gained force, Mescalero peyote was rapidly losing ground and was soon to be virtually abandoned.

We have noted that the ideological forms, meanings, and values which Mescalero peyote assumed were those of a former pattern. That pattern consisted in a congeries of elements which included shamanism, the rivalry and dislike between shamans, the cure as essential to ritual, and the fear of witches. That the hostility and suspicion which sprang up among those in attendance at a peyote rite derived in the first instance from the strongly individualistic, shamanistic premise of aboriginal Mescalero religion is beyond cavil. What we have to take cognizance of now is a factor which apparently encouraged this asymmetrical, antagonistic outgrowth and provided the setting and framework within which traditional suspicions and fears might have easy and direct expression. We refer to white contact.

By this time the Mescalero had experienced the first shock of white impingement and cultural dislocation. Their range and freedom had been largely curtailed. The buffalo herds had been destroyed, their old basis of economy truncated. Hitherto they had gained confidence and self-satisfaction from forays against non-Apache groups. Now the complete-

¹ The writer has recorded an interesting description of a Tonkawa peyote ceremony where the anti-white manifestations were clearly marked.

ness and relentlessness of white invasion and Apache subjugation effectively prevented the Mescalero from moving against traditional foes or new masters. Antagonism there had always been among these people. But such antagonisms were diffused and diluted by distance before. These people had lived in small, rather widely separated local groups, and these local groups, with their acknowledged leaders, were independent and self-sufficient economic units. The suspicions and misgivings which the members of one bore the members of another did not often find opportunity to come to a head in open opposition. Except for a few festive occasions there were no large gatherings under aboriginal conditions.

The beginning of the reservation period precipitated a startling transformation. These little groups, with their heritage of independence on the one hand and mutual suspicions on the other, were thrust together within the reservation boundaries while their world of local autonomy, hunting, freedom, and raiding, tumbled about their ears. One possession the whites had not yet wrested from them, — their ceremonies. Peyote became the intensification and apotheosis of traditional religious values at a time when frustration and unwelcome reservation problems turned aggressions towards the nearest and only available victims. A predatory people, shorn of their weapons, over-awed by white soldiery, unable to advance against former Mexican and Indian foes, warred among themselves at another level. The particular emphasis upon contest and rivalry in Mescalero peyote, then, may be interpreted as a consequence of the interaction of aboriginal patterns and conditions arising from white contact.

But this ugly and unhealthy emphasis carried within it the very contradictions which were to destroy it. The feuds and reprisals which grew out of the peyote rite shocked and alienated even many of its former adherents. The antagonisms became so open and bloody that they invited interference on the part of agency officials, and, since the shamanistic principle prevailed, it was possible, for all practical purposes, to root out the rite by directing attacks upon the few men who controlled it. With the passage of time the Mescalero became more adapted to reservation life. If former enmities did not entirely disappear, they at least grew more attenuated. The shamans flung the weight of their ceremonies against white encroachments, but white ascendancy was not impaired. The young went to school and came to look with less favor and confidence on the shaman. With the diminution of the shaman's prestige, the peyote ceremony lost much of its motive power. Today peyote is seldom eaten at Mescalero, and then with little of the ritual and attention which once surrounded its use.