

# ORIGIN OF THE PEYOTE RELIGION IN THE UNITED STATES

by

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## ABSTRACT

Peyotism in the United States was dependent upon the Peyote cactus, *Lophophora williamsii*, which has a very limited distribution along the lower Rio Grande River, centered around Laredo, Texas. The Lipan Apache Indians in the vicinity of Laredo, 1760 to 1850's, learned of the properties of Peyote and the ritual for its use from Coahuiltecan-speaking Carrizo and Tonkawa and in turn taught Peyotism to the Comanche and Kiowa.

Since the 1880's it has been known that the Kiowa, Comanche, Kiowa-Apache, Caddo, Wichita, Cheyenne, and Arapaho of the southwestern region of the present state of Oklahoma have used Peyote in rituals. It has been common knowledge among those who knew of Peyote that the source of supply was north central Mexico and that section of Texas southeast of Laredo. From the 1880's to the present, Eagle Pass and Laredo, Texas, have been known as ports of entry for the importation of Peyote from Mexico, although the small, spineless cactus could be collected on the dry, rocky hills east of Laredo, near Aguilares, Oilton, and Mirando City, in Webb County, Texas. The border town of Roma, Starr County, Texas, is near the range of hills in northeastern Mexico designated "Lomerias de Peyotes" (Rouhier 1927:12) and which parallels the Rio Grande for almost 200 miles, from near Eagle Pass to Roma.

For the United States, Laredo has been far and away the most important center of Peyote distribution since 1886, with Eagle Pass a distant second. I have found no documented record of Indians actually gathering Peyote in the United States, except east of Laredo in the vicinity of the towns named above. This is surprising in view of the fact that Rouhier (1927:8) places the northern limit of natural Peyote growth at a line from "Deming, New Mexico to Corpus Christi, Texas." On his map Rouhier was more explicit in depicting the natural area of Peyote, ending the northwestern zone just southeast of El Paso (Fig. 1).

Ethnographic reports of Mexican Indian use of Peyote are limited to the Tarahumara, Huichol, and their neighbors who were visited by Carl Lumholtz, 1890 to 1898. He reported on their Peyote Religion at about the same time James Mooney was describing the Peyote Religion he discovered in Oklahoma in 1891. Lumholtz (1902, I:362) described the "perilous journey" the Tarahumara made from their mountain retreats to the eastern edge of their pre-Columbian territory and into the region of the Bolson de Mapimi, near the railroad station of Jimenez, Chihuahua, to gather Peyote. The Huichol traveled to Real Catorce, in the State of San Luis Potosi to collect supplies of the little cactus. The Chihuahua source of Peyote is about 300 miles south of El Paso and about 150 miles southwest of Presidio, Texas. The Huichol Peyote fields are another 300 miles further south from Jimenez.

Notwithstanding the statement and map of Rouhier, I have found no documented evidence that Peyote has ever been collected north of parallel 30° north latitude. Boke and Anderson (1970:569) expressed a similar view based on modern botanical field work devoted to collecting *Lophophora* as follows: "Boke's field collections . . . came from a site on U.S. Highway 67 about six miles south of Shafter, Texas. This location is as far west and north as the species is known to exist." By coincidence, this was the same locality near which Dr. V. Havard, Captain and assistant Surgeon, U.S. Army, learned of Peyote in 1880 while stationed near Presidio, Texas, 20 miles south of Shafter. Of the vicinity of Presidio, Havard (1885:420) wrote: "Of the abundant Cacti the most remarkable species are: *Anhelonia fissurata* (Pellote) bearing a beautiful flower and used medicinally by Mexicans; *Anhelonia Williamsii* not before observed on this side of the Rio Grande." Havard (1885:521) was later more definite:

ANHALONIUM FISSURATUM, ENG. (Peyote.) Napi-form cactus, with flat, fissured top, hardly rising above the

ground, producing a handsome pink flower in the early summer. Found on rocky highlands west of Devil's River [which enters the Rio Grande just west of Del Rio, Texas], specially in Presidio County, extending thence into Mexico.

The fleshy part of the plant is used, and pieces are found in most Mexican houses. An infusion of it is said to be good in fevers. It is principally as an intoxicant that the Peyote has become noted, being often added to "tizwin" or other mild fermented native drink to render it more inebriating. If chewed it produces a sort of delirious exhilaration which has won for it the designation of "dry whiskey."

It is remarkable that this first "Flora of Western and Southern Texas" failed to mention that Peyote was used by Indians, but did record its use by Mexicans. Havard (1885:500) noted the much wider distribution of "*Sophora secundiflora*, Lag. (Frijolillo; Coral Bean)" from the Gulf Coast to El Paso and added, "According to Dr. Rothrock . . . 'The Indians near San Antonio used this bean as an intoxicant, half a bean producing delirious exhilaration . . . a whole bean would kill a man'." Of *Opuntia* (Prickly Pear) Havard (1885:521) noted: "Mexicans and Indians are fond of them." Thus Havard demonstrated an interest in reporting Indian use of plants, so that his failure to mention Indian use of Peyote and only its use by Mexicans, implies that the Indians may not have obtained Peyote from its natural growth area in west Texas in Havard's time. The view that Havard presented in 1896 to the effect that: "The Kiowa Indians were formerly much addicted to the use of the plant [peyote] in their religious ceremonies when dwelling on the Rio Grande and, although now living in the Indian territory, have not yet given it up," comes with slight alteration from Drs. Prentiss and Morgan, who cited James Mooney in their 1895 article in the *Therapeutic Gazette*. Havard's 1885 statement represents his own field observation, but his 1896 article, "Drink Plants of the North American Indians," is a popular presentation of some of his own research, plus a summary of some published work of others.

Although European botanists, building upon reports of early Spanish researchers (such as Hernandez's book of 1790) named and described Peyote before Havard, his seems to have been the first American reference, and it remained little noticed even though it had been published by the U.S. National Museum. The next published reference appeared in 1886 in the annual report of J. Lee Hall, Agent of the Kiowa, Comanche, and Wichita Agency, Anadarko Indian Territory. Caddoes, Delawares, and Kiowa-Apaches were also under the agency. Hall said little except that "The Comanches and a few of the Kiowas secure the tops of a kind of cactus that comes from Mexico, which they eat, and it produces the same effect as opium . . .

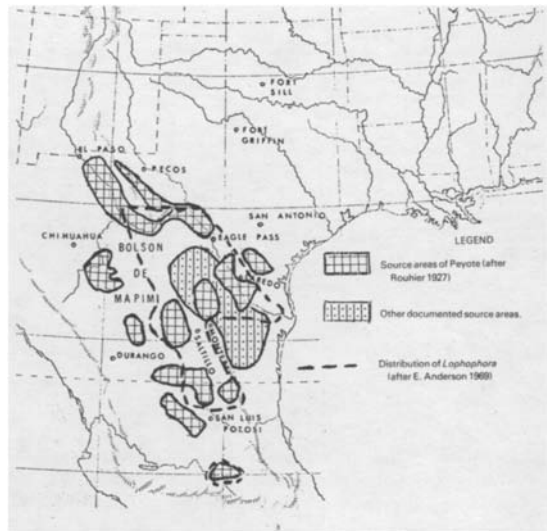


Figure 1. Source areas of Peyote.

suggest that the same should be made contraband . . ."

Special Agent E. E. White replaced Hall, and on June 6, 1888, he posted an order for the Kiowa, Comanche, and Wichita Reservation prohibiting use of Peyote. He explained his action in his annual report (1888:98-99) dated 18 August 1888, as follows:

Thus it is seen that this hallucination is liable to assume a dangerous form . . . I issued an order in writing, forbidding any Indian to use the beans [Peyote] or have any in his possession, and declaring that I would punish any violations of the order by withholding rations, annuity goods, and lease money. At first the Comanches declared that they would not obey the order. They said they would rather die than be deprived of their Woqui. I went down to Fort Sill and had a talk with them [especially Chief Quanah Parker, a leader of the Peyote Religion], the result of which was an agreement that I would permit them to eat their [Peyote] beans one night at each full moon for three or four months . . ."

White reported also "For two years or more . . . many of the Comanches and Apaches and a few of the Kiowa have become addicted to the use of a fruit which they procure from Mexico."

The question that has not been answered up to now is this: How could the Indians in what is now western Oklahoma become addicted to, or learn the properties of, an obscure little spineless cactus which grew only along the Rio Grande and in Mexico at least 300 miles from the nearest edge of the Reservation? Little effort has been directed to answering this question by the ethnologists who

have reported on Peyotism since James Mooney made the first announcement of the ritual use of Peyote in a speech to the Washington Anthropological Society, November, 1891, followed by articles in January, 1892. Strangely, it is a letter stimulated by that first order by Special Agent White, June, 1888, prohibiting the use of Peyote on the Kiowa-Comanche Reservation which provides more insight than any other single document of the period. It is a letter from E. L. Clark, identified by White in his letter transmitting Clark's letter to Washington, July 6, 1888, as "a gentleman who has lived among the Comanche many years and knows their habits and language probably better than any person on the Reservation. He is a truthful man . . ." Although available in the National Archives, it appears that Clark's letter has been overlooked by everyone except Slotkin, who reproduced part of it in a footnote (1956:107). Clark wrote, in part:

The Spanish name is Piote or Peotah . . . The Indians of this reservation have used very little of this article prior to 4 years ago except a few of the Quahadis [Comanche of the band of Quanah Parker] who happened to be associated with the Lipan Apaches. These Apaches having practiced the use of the Wok-wave for the last 20 or 30 years. . .

Ten years ago [1878] during the period of the subjugation of the Kiowa and Comanche and other Indians of this and Cheyenne Reservations by General Mackenzie there was but a very little of this medicine in circulation and became very difficult for the Indians to obtain. They paid one dollar a piece for it, but since that time it has been introduced more and more by Mexicans and renegade Apaches and Comanches. But now having been such a source of speculation the price is greatly reduced. I understand it is kept by almost all of the little stores in Greer County near the border of this reservation, also in large quantities at Doran's Store . . . Four or five years ago [*i.e.*, 1883 or 1884], a Mexican named *Sit-chees-toque* or *Che-wow-wah*, having been a captive of the Comanche . . . escaped punishment by remaining with the Apache in New Mexico. He returned to this reservation during P. B. Hunt's term of office [1878-1885], bringing with him quite a sack full of these Opium Buttons (as I call them) and traded them to the Comanches for several head of horses and cattle he now holds on West Cache Creek . . . He is still one of the ring leaders in the use of the Medicine . . .

This Old Man Paddy Quall . . . calls himself a medicine man . . . His whole attention is directed towards the [Peyote] Button; calling a party of young men numbering from 8 to 15 together for purpose as often as twice or three times a week.

The usual dose of these Buttons some four years ago [1884] were from 4 to 6 per night . . . Now they use from 20 to 50 per night . . . Seeing or imagining all kinds of things. These visions . . . were communicated to them through the Wok-Wave and they come direct from the Great Spirit [they said].

The above was written three years before the Kiowa Peyote Ritual was observed by Mooney in the company of a Mexican and a Comanche (Mooney 1892a).

By remarkable coincidence it was in June, 1886,

that Dr. J. R. Briggs in Fort Worth, Texas, was experimenting on himself by eating Peyote, which he called Mescale Buttons, and recording his physiological reactions. He reported his experience in the *Medical Register*, April 9, 1887, in part as follows:

Learning *first* from my brother, who has spent several years among the different tribes of wild Indians, and subsequently from Mexicans, that both Indians and Mexicans eat (or chew and swallow the juice) this fruit for purposes of intoxication, I became interested in its physiological effects. The Indians use it that they may forget their troubles and see "beautiful visions" . . . so far as I am aware it is indigenous to Mexico only, and is very valuable, being sent from there to the various tribes of wild Indians throughout the Southwest and sold for a high price. It is regarded by the Indians as a *sacred* plant, and is eaten only by the "medicine men," the chief, and other notable worthies . . . An Indian will eat from six to ten of these "buttons," after properly arranging himself in his "tepee" . . .

Briggs admitted he had never seen Indians using Peyote, but the second hand account of the amount eaten and the mention that the Indians properly arranged themselves in a tepee suggest the authenticity of the report to Briggs. The consequences of Briggs' letter were outlined in an article entitled "Rough and Ready Research — 1887 Style" by G. A. Bender (1898:159-166). Parke, Davis & Company, Detroit, entered into correspondence with Briggs with a request for supplies to test for its usefulness. On June, 1887, Briggs reported Kiowa Indians were using Peyote. He said he could obtain the cactus from a Mexican for \$15, a bushel of dried buttons, approximately 3500 pieces. By August, 1887, the Mexican was identified as E. A. Paffrath, an associate of general merchandise wholesaler J. R. Wood of Vernon, Texas.

An interesting point to me in this correspondence is the fact that the first wholesaler of Peyote buttons discovered by Briggs for Parke, Davis & Company was located at Vernon, Wilberger County, north central Texas, about 20 miles from the edge of the Kiowa, Comanche and Wichita Reservation in Oklahoma, and only 60 miles by modern roads from Cache, Oklahoma, the home of Chief Quanah Parker. On the other hand, about 450 miles separates Vernon from Laredo, Texas, and there is a distance of about 380 miles between Vernon and Eagle Pass, Texas.

Paffrath would not reveal to Parke, Davis & Company the source of his supplies and after some delays in payments and questioning of the medicinal value of Peyote, Parke, Davis & Company established liason with another source of Peyote buttons. Anna B. Nickels, of Laredo, Texas, a collector and dealer in cactus, informed the Detroit company in 29 May 1888, that she had 3000 plants growing in her

garden, and could collect all she could “find sale for.” In a letter dated 11 July 1888, Mrs. Nickels volunteered information that

The Mexicans here in Laredo buy them [Peyote buttons] off me at 5 cents each, 1 or 2 at a time to make a drink (they say for headache). They pound fresh ones and soak them in water, then strain and drink the water. They use the pulp left to bind on any sort of sores (Bender 1968:164).

Mrs. Nickels also wrote: “I am certain the Mescal buttons are the real ones used by the Indians as a drink because the same man that goes with me collecting them gathered 30,000 of the same last fall [1887] for a Mexican Merchant of this place and he sliced and dried them here in Laredo and shipped them to some Agency . . . I am also sure ‘tis Anhalonium Williamsii.” It was from the supplies of Peyote obtained from Texas that Parke, Davis & Company in 1888 provided materials to L. Lewin and P. Henning in Berlin, Germany, with which to start their historic scientific analysis of the cactus (Bender 1968:163).

The records presented above answer the question as to the source of supply of Peyote used by the Indians of western Oklahoma territory in the 1880’s. It was supplied from Laredo by wholesalers with the aid of Mexican collectors. The size of the supply and ability of local Laredo merchants to satisfy the demand, mostly by mail, was documented in 1909 by Chief Special Officer of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, William E. Johnson, who carried out his plan to stop the Peyote traffic, because Peyote was an intoxicant, by the simple device of buying and destroying “the entire visible supply at Laredo, Texas, amounting to about 200,000 peyotes” (Johnson 1909a). Nine firms in and near Laredo sold their stocks of Peyote for \$2.50 per thousand (Johnson 1909b).

Even with the insights provided by the documents already examined, there remains the question of how the Indians learned of Peyote so that they would want to obtain supplies at some trouble and expense to themselves. As a medicine, as reported by Mrs. Nickels (1888) and Dr. V. Havard (1885) there would be no need for the thousands of buttons shipped to the reservations. The large supplies provided in the 1880’s and thereafter, as revealed by the information presented above, suggests that there were many Peyote religious services as described by Mooney and suggested by documents reviewed above during which 20 to 30 Indians assembled and ate one or more buttons each during the religious service.

A problem remains. How did the Kiowa, Comanche, Lipan Apache, and other tribes acquire sufficient knowledge of Peyote to develop a complex

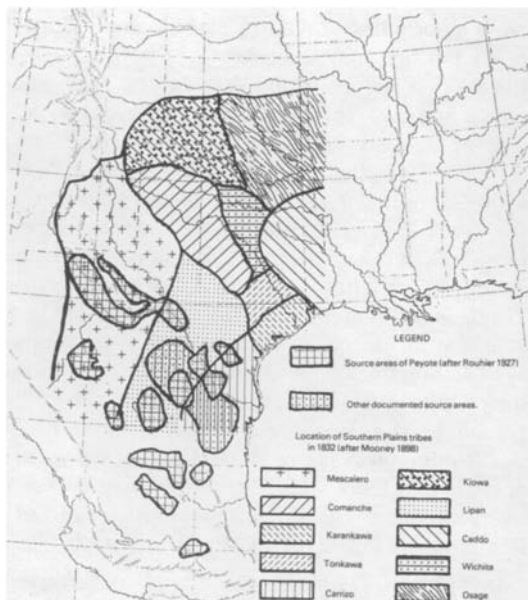


Figure 2. Location of Southern Plains tribes in 1832 (after Mooney 1898).

religious ritual of the type suggested by references of the 1880’s and described by Mooney in 1892? Did these Oklahoma tribes learn the ritual as they learned of the medicinal and stimulating qualities of the cactus plant? Historic evidence strongly supports the idea that Peyotists in Oklahoma in the 1880’s had learned of Peyote during the century and a half before 1880, while the tribes who were finally settled in Oklahoma were themselves in the Peyote-growing areas of southeast Texas, and in north central Mexico.

If we start with Mooney’s map of the distribution of South Plains Tribes as of 1832, we see that the Carrizo, Lipan Apache, and Mescalero Apache were the tribes assigned to the northern Mexico Peyote-growing area of that date. It was in the territory of the Coahuilteco tribes, given by Mooney to the Lipan, that the Jaliscan Friars in 1688 established the mission of Nombre de Jesus Peyotes, which was renamed ten years later by the Franciscans as Mission del Dulce Nombre Jesus de Peyotes (Bancroft 1883, 1:378). Neophytes from this area were transferred to San Antonio by Father Olivares in 1718. Also from the mission in the Peyote area near Laredo was Father Hidalgo, who reported use of Peyote among the Caddo of east Texas in 1716, even though the Caddo lived well beyond the natural range of Peyote (Swanton 1942:219).

From 1757 to 1771, missions expressly for the

Lipan Apache were maintained by the Spanish in Texas, first on the San Saba River about a hundred miles north of the Peyote-growing area, then at San Lorenzo de la Santa Cruz on the upper Nueces River about fifty miles from the Peyote fields of the Rio Grande (Tunnell and Newcomb 1969). The Lipan Apache were associated with other mission Indians, with Tlaxcalteco Indians, and with Mexican militiamen and farmers. While the Spanish authorities were helping the Lipan Apache move into southeastern Texas, Father Bartholome Garcia, at the mission of San Antonio, published (1760) a manual aid in confessions in several dialects of the Coahuiltecan linguistic family (Swanton 1940:4). The questions prepared in native languages included: "Have you eaten Peyote? Have you eaten fixollio?" The Carrizo were one of the groups of Coahuiltecan-speaking Indians among whom the Spanish were helping the Apache-speaking Lipan to settle within the Peyote-growing area.

In 1770, Father Lizarras reported the Apache in Mexico at San Fernando, across the Rio Grande from Eagle Pass, at Gigedo [Xigedo], fifty miles south of Eagle Pass, at the Mission of Peyotes, and at Bizarron. The same year Father de la Pena at the mission Nombre de Jesus de Peyote reported Mescalero Apache participating in Peyote ceremonies with local Julimenos Indians (Stewart 1948:34).

In the 1830 *Journals of Berlandier* (1969) edited by John C. Ewers, we find confirmed the association of the Coahuiltecan and Apache-speaking Indians in the Peyote-growing area of the lower Rio Grande. In his map based on Berlandier's journals and the maps of Stephen A. Austin, 1829, and of General Teran, Ewers places only the Lipan and Carrizo in the vicinity of the Peyote fields of the Laredo region. The Mescalero are located as of 1830 west of the Pecos in Texas north of the Big Bend area and beyond the extreme northern and western limit of abundant Peyote growth. Kiowa, Kiowa-Apache, and Comanche are shown in west Texas on the headwaters of the Colorado and Brazos Rivers.

A few quotations from Berlandier's journal indicate the way the Comanche and their northern allies could have learned of Peyote in southern Texas in 1830. For example, while discussing Indian drinking habits, he wrote

Thus the Lipans and Carrizos, and almost all the rest of the peoples who live along the Rio Bravo del Norte [Rio Grande] are the ones who consume the most hard liquor . . . . Before the time of the conquerors, several of the Anahuac nations used to get drunk by chewing a plant known in Mexican as *peiotl* and in Creole as *peyote*. The coastal peoples, the Tancahuas [Tonkawas], the Lipans, and several other native groups of the northern reaches of Tamaulipas still use this intoxicating plant in their feasts. Each year, they gather

a store of it, and . . . they make a sort of rosary of it, and keep it by them to use as need be (Ewers 1969:62).

Berlandier reports on both the friendship and enmity between the Lipan and Comanche. When a war between them began, the Lipan killed a Comanche man who had married a Lipan woman and had settled with the Lipan (Ewers 1969:62): "The Lipans, after living at peace with the Comanches for many years, have since sworn eternal warfare against them . . ."

In 1828, Berlandier wrote: "During our first stay at the presidio of Laredo, the Lipans roamed through the streets after sundown singing their songs of peace" (p. 65). Further along we read: "Creole [*i.e.*, Mexican] prisoners taken by the Indians in war against the villages and garrisons of the frontiers receive fair treatment . . . The Comanches and the Lipans waged a lengthy war against the inhabitants of the inland provinces of the east . . . but never did they slay captives who fell into their hands . . ." (p. 75). "Among the Lipans there are Creole [Mexican] prisoners, but the Comanches hold five or six hundred" (p. 76).

The journals of Bollaert (1956) for the period from December, 1841, to April, 1844, reported that the Comanche spent months at a time in southeastern Texas living on wild mustangs, which were killed in great numbers. Bollaert (1850:277) also reported: "Lipan women are noted for their prettiness and good figures; on this account the Comanche have often made war upon the Lipan so as to become possessed of their women."

For further bases for Comanche raiding into Mexico, see the article by R. A. Smith (1961) with the map entitled "Comanche roads from the South Plains into Mexico, about 1840-1870," from which the roads were copied on a map (Fig. 3) for this article. Smith documents raids for the years 1834-1844 from official records in the Mexican states of Durango, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas. Motivation for the raids, according to Smith (1961:54-56) were:

The demand for Mexican livestock, captives, and plunder increased after American commissioners made treaties of amity and trade with the Indians of the South Plains in the 1830's. The Comanche and Kiowa consequently stepped up their predatory raids below the Rio Grande . . . Their deepest penetrations of Mexico put the Indians at points a thousand miles straight south of their home range in Kansas and Oklahoma . . .

Smith wrote further (1961:59): "Plains Indians might spend an entire winter in the Bolson [de Mapimi], enjoying the climate, rounding out herds for the long drives, and giving grass time to grow out along the trail northward." One can suspect the

warriors might also have learned about and experimented with the little spineless cactus, Peyote, which grew in the area. "From the Bolson they made raids over neighboring departments . . . They gathered in hundreds of women and children, much plunder, and thousands of head of horses and mules over the years," wrote Smith (1961:56). One Comanche "spoke Spanish fluently and desired to join us Mexicans and to become a Catholic" after he was captured, as Smith (1961:66) found reported in one document of a successful reprisal by Mexican troops.

In the 1890's, the Kiowa settled on their reservation in Oklahoma and further documented Kiowa, Comanche, and Kiowa-Apache raids into Mexico for the period 1834 to 1874, by means of their unique pictorial calendar history painted on buffalo hides. Mooney (1898:164) came to the conclusion that the Kiowa made a lasting peace with the Comanche in about 1790, which could be considered an alliance which was equal to a confederation of the two tribes. Mooney (1898:164-165) explained further:

The raids of the Kiowa on the Mexican settlements, hitherto desultory and ineffective, now became constant and destructive and continued until both tribes were finally subjugated and confined to their reservations after the outbreak of 1874 . . . Old men are still living in the tribe [in 1896] who have raided as far south as the city of Durango (which they knew by this name) . . . In the east they made captives on Matagorda Bay, Texas.

The calendar history specified raids into Tamaulipas in 1840-1841, 1842-1843, and 1850-1851. Chihuahua was named for 1834-1835, 1853-1854, and 1855-1856. Of special interest is the raid during the winter of 1844-1845, for which Comanche, Kiowa, and Kiowa-Apache were together on the Salado River called "Sen P'a, 'Cactus River'." The Salado flows through the Peyote Hills, the *Lomerias de Peyotes*, and Peyote is called "Seni." Possibly the Kiowa name should have been translated "Peyote River."

In light of these data, it is evident that a number of different tribal groups had opportunities to learn of Peyote in Texas and Mexico during the century before its use in Oklahoma was discovered in 1886. Any one of the tribes which knew of Peyote, or all together, may have been instrumental in the establishment of the Peyote Religion in Oklahoma in time for it to have become an established complex ritual for Mooney to observe and describe in 1891. Coahuiltecan speakers, Julimenos and Carrizo, in the vicinity of Laredo, the center of abundant harvests of the Peyote cactus at the northern limits of its growth, might be thought of as the primary teachers. Both groups have disappeared as identifiable

entities, but in 1907, the *Handbook* (Hodge 1907: 1:209) reported: "Some Carrizo captives still live among the Kiowas."

In 1935, Opler (1938, 1939) learned from a Lipan Apache informant the tradition that it was the Carrizo who taught Peyotism to both the Tonkawa and the Lipan. Recall that the three tribes were reported as using Peyote by Berlandier in his 1830 journal. La Barre (1938) cited Opler to focus attention on the Carrizo as an intermediary for the transmission of Peyotism to the Indians in the United States.

Not previously published is this same view, sent to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1909 by Special Officer W. E. Johnson, after working in and around Laredo and Eagle Pass in the attempt to stop the shipment of Peyote as mentioned above. Johnson wrote, in part:

The establishment of the commercial market of the peyotes (sic) at Laredo, Texas, has a peculiar history. About thirty years ago [*i.e.*, 1879] in the vicinity of Carrizo, Texas, now the county seat of Zapata Co., Texas, there was a considerable band of Indians known as the "Carrizo Indians;" these Indians, now extinct, were large users of the peyotes; they were used chiefly in connection with their dances; the Indians would sit about the fire. At intervals during the dance the leader would take a bean, chew it a few times and then pass it on to the next one, who would also chew the same bean, and so on, until the entire company had chewed on this same quid.

The fame of these performances reached the Indians of Oklahoma Territory. About twenty-three years ago [*i.e.*, 1886], a white man appeared at Laredo from the Territory in quest of peyotes. He learned from the Indians up north, that in a range of hills about forty miles east of Laredo, these peyotes could be found. He employed Mexicans to gather a supply, which he took north with him (1909b).

By strange coincidence, Special Officer Johnson in 1909 learned some of the same facts that were recorded in the Parke, Davis & Company letters. The man from up north may have been Mr. Paffrath (1887) of Vernon, Texas. The Mexican collector may have been the one Mrs. Nickels (1888) reported sold 30,000 Peyote plants, sliced and dried. The Indians may have been the Kiowa with their Carrizo captives, who knew the Laredo Peyote area so intimately.

The Tonkawa were shown by Mooney (1898), as of 1832, as northern neighbors of the Carrizo and Lipan. Berlandier (Ewers 1969), observing the region of Laredo in 1830, identified the Tonkawa as being in the Peyote-growing area and using Peyote along with the Lipan and Carrizo. Indian tradition of the Tonkawa being devotees of Peyotism learned from the Carrizo (Opler 1938) gains significance when it is discovered that informants reported to La Barre (1938:117, 119) that the Oto and Sac learned a

Christianized Peyotism directly from the Tonkawa as early as 1876. The diffusion of Peyotism from Tonkawa to Oto was also reported by E. S. Curtis (1930,XIX:203), by Shonle (1925:54), and by Howard (1956:432).

Because of the stormy history of the Tonkawa, some further background seems appropriate. According to H. E. Bolton (1910, II:778-783) who wrote the article on the Tonkawa for the *Handbook*, there is an extensive record of Tonkawa relations with the French, Spanish, Comanche, and Apache, alternately friendly and hostile, in Texas from 1691 to 1857. During that century and a half the Tonkawa were frequently in or near the growth area of Peyote. The reason for the 1857 date is supplied by Bolton as follows:

In the fall of 1855 the Government settled them [the Tonkawa] together with the Caddo, Kichai, Waco, Tawakoni [Wichita], and Penateka Comanche, upon two small reservations on the Clear Fork of Brazos r., Texas. In consequence of the violent opposition of the Texans, culminating in an attack upon the agency, the Indians were removed in 1857 to Washita r., Okla., the Tonkawa being temporarily camped about the mouth of Tonkawa cr., just above the present Anadarko.

It is obvious that two years on the same reservation would have been sufficient time for Peyotist Tonkawa to have instructed Comanche, Caddo and Wichita in the use of Peyote if they were all friendly with one another. Bolton documents subsequent Tonkawa history which clouds the issue:

In the confusion brought about by the civil war the other tribes saw an opportunity to pay off old scores against the Tonkawa, who were generally hated for their cannibalistic practices as well as for serving as government scouts against the more western tribes. On the excuse that the Tonkawa and their agent were in alliance with the Confederacy, a body of Delaware, Shawnee, and Caddo attacked the Anadarko agency and the Tonkawa camp on the night of Oct. 25, 1862, killing two of the agency employees and massacring 137 men, women, and children out of a total of about 300 of the Tonkawa tribe. The survivors, after some years of miserable wandering, were finally gathered in at Fort Griffin, Texas, to save them from complete extermination by their [Indian] enemies. In 1884 all that were left — 92, including a number of Lipan — were removed to Oklahoma, being assigned the next year to their present [1910] location at Oakland Agency, near Ponca.

For the Oto and Sac to report learning of Peyote from the Tonkawa, who moved in 1884 to an adjoining reservation in northern Oklahoma from their refuge in Texas, suggests that the Tonkawa had in fact retained their use of Peyote from the time they were in the Peyote area as recorded by Berlandier in 1830. The enmity between the Tonkawa and their neighbors of 1859-1862 in southwestern Oklahoma could have inhibited the Kiowa, Comanche, Kiowa-Apache, Wichita, Delaware, Caddo, Shaw-

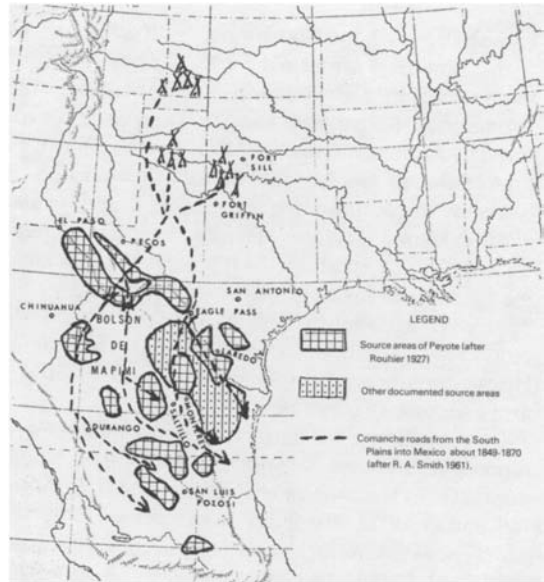


Figure 3. Comanche roads from the South Plains into Mexico, about 1840-1870 (after R. A. Smith 1961).

nee, etc., from sharing Peyotism with the Tonkawa. In any event, the Tonkawa as Peyotists before 1830 and as proselytizers to the Oto and Sac (La Barre 1938:117-119) are examples of cultural continuity in spite of difficulties. Opler (1939:433) suggests cultural continuity. The Oakland Agency is 650 miles from the source of Peyote at Laredo.

From the historical data presented, it is clear that the Lipan Apache had ample opportunity to learn about Peyotism as early as 1770 in the Spanish missions of the Peyote area. The confirmation of their use of Peyote by Berlandier in 1830 establishes the continuation of the practice. The Lipan were named as teachers of Peyotism to the Comanche during the years 1850 to 1880 by Clark in his letter of 1888, cited above.

Early influence as conveyors of Peyotism from Mexico to tribes in the United States was attributed to the Lipan by Opler (1936, 1938, and 1939). La Barre (1938) repeated Opler's views.

A little new evidence of direct influence of Lipan Apache on Comanche Peyotism was recorded by McAllester (1949:32-33), who found two old Lipan living with the Comanche in Oklahoma who supplied Lipan Apache Peyote songs, which were learned and sung by the Comanche. One of the Lipan Peyote singers named by McAllester was called Civato, which suggests he is the same person as "Chevata (Billy Chevatts), a Lipan Apache who

came to live with the Comanche," and who appears with Comanche on an old Fort Sill photograph of Indian men in a Peyote tepee. Furthermore, the White boy, Herman Lehman (1927), who was captured by Apache in Texas in 1870, named Chiwat as one of the young warriors about his own age of twelve who captured him. Pinero, who also helped capture Herman, wrote: "Before closing this chapter I want to say that one of the Apaches that stole me . . . afterward became a chief of his tribe . . . This chief's name is Chiwat, and he now lives among the Comanches at Indianahoma, in Oklahoma. His picture appears elsewhere in this book. Pinero and Esacona also live here."

By coincidence, Pinero made a sworn statement regarding Peyotism on September 24, 1918, which appeared in the *American Indian YMCA Bulletin*, November, 1918. He said in part:

My name is Pa-na-ro. I am a Lipan Apache; I live five miles northeast of Indianahoma, [Comanche County] Oklahoma, on my own allotment. I am about 57 years old.

I knew about peyote before any of these Indians in the Oklahoma country knew about it. I first ate peyote in Mexico. My great-grandfather was the first [Lipan] to make use of it in Mexico, and it was brought among the Indians here years after. It was used as a medicine at first, and no woman or young people ate it as they do now. It is called mescal-peyote in Mexico; here in Oklahoma it is called peyote . . .

One time when I was sixteen years old [ca. 1878] I ate forty peyote beans at a feast and was crazy for two days . . .

Pe-na-ro reported that the Peyote rituals were unsanitary.

From the unusual and unexpected sources above comes evidence to support the earlier opinion that the Lipan were primary contributors to the process of the establishment of the Peyote Religion in Oklahoma. The data presented demands the interpretation that the Lipan could have taught Peyotism to the Comanche without the intermediary of the Mescalero.

On Mooney's (1898) map showing the location of southern Plains tribes in 1832, partially reproduced for this paper (Fig. 2), the Mescalero occupy the greatest extent of territory both in the United States and in Mexico. The territory assigned to the Mescalero by Mooney encompassed the Peyote-growing area of west Texas, according to Rouhier (1927), as well as the confirmed Peyote growing region of Chihuahua, including part of the Bolson de Mapimi. An entire book is required to adequately document the extent of Apache raiding in northern Mexico for the period, 1769-1791. M. L. Moorhead's (1968) book *The Apache Frontier*, sets forth the problems Jacobo Ugarte had in trying to keep peace along the northern border of New Spain. The Mescalero were primarily in Chihuahua, but were recorded in the Peyote area of Coahuila in 1770, as reported above.

Mescalero raids into Chihuahua did not end until the death of Victorio in 1880. In 1896, the Tarahumara reported to Lumholtz (1902i:359-373) that Peyote would protect him from the Apache, indicating that the fear of Apache raids, probably Mescalero, persisted among that tribe of Mexican Indians.

Except for the one reference from Coahuila given above, no documents explicitly connect the Mescalero with Peyotism in Mexico. We are dependent upon later reports of traditions from New Mexico and Oklahoma to project back Mescalero Peyotism.

Although recorded long after the observations, it remains true that the two earliest accounts of Peyotism in the United States, following the period of Spanish occupation, come from two boys captured by the Indians from non-Indian homes. If correctly dated, the observations of Andele or Andes Martinez, shortly after being taken by Mescalero from his home at Las Vegas, New Mexico, in 1866, would be the earliest known dated Peyote rituals during the American period. The following is from Methvin (1899:37) who recorded the life story of Andele: "But as he [Andele] anxiously watched he discovered the [Mescalero] Indians, painted in most fantastic style, were gathering around a tepee . . . The tom-tom, the rattle gourd, and the discordant song began in earnest, and the Indians were indulging in a . . . [Peyote meeting]." The ceremony lasted all night.

Another captive of the Lipan and Mescalero, this one a White boy of German parents, Herman Lehman (1899:95; and 1927:80), already mentioned, who was interviewed twice by writers of books, gave slightly different accounts. In both he reported four-day rituals with the use of "hoosh," a close approximation to the Apache word for Peyote. "We all ate nothing but 'hoosh' for four days, and we felt so light and happy that we loved everybody and wanted to fly away. There is a plant which grows in Mexico which is called peyote, and is held in great veneration by the Indians and it is quite possible that the medicine men used this in preparation of the 'hoosh' also." Although originally captured by Lipan, Lehman traveled with the Mescalero before ending his captivity with the Comanche.

The fame of the Mescalero as the probable originators of the Peyote Religion in the United States was established by James Mooney, in at least five published statements to that effect from 1896 to 1915. It is possible that Mooney overemphasized the importance of the Mescalero Apache in the history of Peyotism, just as he overemphasized their Peyotism, under its false name mescal, by writing: "The Mescalero Apache take their name from it" [Peyote called Mesca] (Mooney 1896b:7). In 1897,

Mooney wrote (p. 330): "The Kiowas have come from the north and first learned of the plant from the southern tribes, particularly the Mescaleros of New Mexico, who are regarded by all their neighbors as the highpriests of the ceremony." Before a congressional committee in 1915, Mooney was a little less explicitly in favor of the Mescalero: "The Kiowa say the Comanche knew of it before they did. Both tribes say they got it from the Mescalero and Tonkawa" (Statement 1915:70).

Mooney's emphasis on the Mescalero may have come about through his friendship with the Mexican captive of the Mescalero, Andele, mentioned above, who later lived with the Kiowa and who was Mooney's friend, interpreter, and, apparently, companion in Mooney's first participation in a Peyote meeting in 1891.

Notwithstanding Mooney's statements as to the position of the Mescalero in Peyotism, his visit to the Mescalero reservation in September, 1897, in order to advance his knowledge of the history of the Peyote Religion, was disappointing. Introducing a short report of Mooney's year's activities, the Director of the Bureau of American Ethnology repeated Mooney's error regarding the basis for the name of the Mescalero (1900:xvi):

These Indians, whose popular name is derived from their use of the "mescal" or peyote, are regarded by the Plains tribes as masters in all that concerns the plant; but from information received through their best informants, as well as from actually witnessing the ceremony, Mr. Mooney found the rite to be declining among them, largely through the difficulty of procuring the plant in their isolated condition, as it requires five days' journey on horseback to obtain a supply.

The Mescal cactus, agave, from which the Mescalero were named, furnished a staple food, and was not Peyote (*Handbook*, I:846).

As to the location of the Peyote field from which the Mescalero collected supplies, the information that "it requires five days' journey" is very indefinite. The Annual Report (1900:xviii) gives the additional information that "Mr. Mooney next proceeded to the mountain country of Texas, southeast of El Paso, for the purpose of locating the peyote, from information given by the Mescalero. Two or more varieties of the plant were found in this section, on both sides of the Rio Grande. In January Mr. Mooney continued southward to the Tarahumari country. . . ." (cited as Mooney 1900). As short as it is, the above report places the Peyote field visited by Mooney in 1897 at, or near, Shafter, Texas, where Havard made collections in the early 1880's, where J. G. McAllister collected it in the 1940's (W. W. Newcomb 1971); where Norman Boke collected it in

the 1950's (Boke and Anderson 1970:569); and where Roland H. Wauer, Chief Park Naturalist, Big Bend Natural Park, reported it occurred (Wauer 1974).

Shafter, Texas, is about 240 miles from Mescalero, New Mexico, as the crow flies, not as far as the Comanche reservation is from the Peyote fields of Eagle Pass or Laredo.

There is good evidence of Mescalero raiding into Mexico from 1700 to 1880 (Sonnichsen 1958), where they could have learned of the properties of Peyote by experimentation, by being instructed by Mexican captives, or by association with either Huichol or Tarahumara Indians. Considering this, as well as the statement by Andele that he observed a Peyote meeting in 1866, the traditional date learned by Opler (1936:191, fn.) is surprising. He wrote: "Peyote was introduced among the Mescalero about 1870. After 1910 its use was decidedly on the wane."

From the evidence here presented the claim for the Mescalero playing a significant role as intermediaries for the transmission of Peyotism from Mexico to Oklahoma appears very weak indeed.

The origin of Peyote ritual described by Mooney (1892, 1896b, 1897, 1910) remains controversial. Basically, questions arrange themselves around two problems: (1) How many and which of the elements of ritual and theology of the Peyote Religion can be attributed to diffusion, or borrowing, from Mexico? (2) What part of the Peyote Religion in the United States came from local, non-Mexican, tribal ceremonies through development in the United States and which tribes contributed which elements of ritual or theology?

Mooney's ideas, expressed in the *Handbook* (1910, II:237) seem to have been accepted more or less as final. He wrote:

North of the Rio Grande this top [of the cactus] alone is used, being sliced and dried to form the so-called "button." In Mexico the whole plant is cut into slices, dried, and used in decoction, while the ceremony also is essentially different from that of the northern tribes. . . .

Among the Tarahumara and others of Mexico the chief feature of the ceremony, as described by Lumholtz, is a dance. Among the Kiowa, Comanche, and other Plains tribes it is rather a ceremony of prayer and quiet contemplation.

Lumholtz and others have made clear, however, that notwithstanding the dancing, Mexican Peyotism also involved "prayers and quiet contemplation." In fact, dozens of elements of ritual and theology in Mexico are similar to those in the United States. Space does not permit full treatment of this comparison, but is presented with the data above to support the belief that ideas and cultural elements

diffused from Mexico along with the Peyote cactus.

Mooney's description of the Peyote ritual of the Kiowa and Comanche may well serve as the basis for discussion (*Handbook*, 1910, II:337):

It is usually performed as an invocation for the recovery of some sick person. It is held in a tipi specially erected for the purpose, and begins usually at night, continuing until the sun is well up in the morning. As many men as can sit comfortably within the tipi may participate, but, as a rule, women do not take part in the ceremony proper, but occupy themselves with the preparation of the sacred food and of the feast in which all join at the close of the performance. A fire is kept burning in the center of the tipi, inclosed within a crescent-shaped mound, on the top of which is placed a sacred peyote. Following an opening prayer by the chief priest, four peyotes are distributed to each participant, who chews and swallows them, after which the sacred songs begin to the accompaniment of the drum and rattle, each man singing four songs in turn, and are kept up all night, varied by the intervals of prayer and other distributions of peyote, with a peculiar baptismal ceremony at midnight. The number of "buttons" eaten by one individual during the night varies from 10 to 40, and even more, the drug producing a sort of spiritual exaltation differing entirely from that produced by any other known drug, and apparently without any reaction. The effect is heightened by the weird lullaby of the songs, the constant sound of the drum and rattle, and the fitful glare of the fire. At some point during the ceremony the sick person is usually brought in to be prayed for, and is allowed to eat one or more specially consecrated peyotes. At daylight the Morning Star song is sung, when the women pass in the sacred food, of which each worshiper partakes, and their ceremony concludes with the Meat song. The rest of the morning is given to friendly gossip, followed by a dinner under leafy arbors, after which the various families disperse to their homes.

Numerous parallels to the above ritual were presented by Lumholtz (1902) based on his research with Huichol and Tarahumara. A few of these are listed with the page references: Curing in Peyote ceremony (I, 318); All night ceremony (I, 319); Women restricted with regard to Peyote (I, 360); Sacred food and feast prepared by women (I, 363); Fire kept burning in center of ritual area (I, 365); A sacred Peyote placed near fire, near center of area (I, 365); Rattles (I, 313); All night singing (I, 371); Morning Star important in religion (I, 297). Numerous other ritual parallels between Peyotism in Mexico and the United States are known. Bennett and Zingg (1935, Table I) listed the following ceremonial traits also found in U. S. Peyotism: ceremonial journey for Peyote; ritual number four; ceremonial circuits; ceremonial use of tobacco; incense; sprinkling sacred liquid; ceremonial cross; ceremonial altar; ceremonial meal; and ceremonial cleansing in fire. Of more general nature is the belief that Peyote teaches, foretells the future, protects from evil witchcraft, and aids in communication with the supernatural.

Following his earliest experience as a participant-

observer in a Kiowa Peyote meeting, Mooney (1892b:65) mentioned Christian elements as follows:

It may be proper to state that many of the . . . [Peyote] eaters wear crucifixes, which they regard as sacred emblems of the rite, the cross representing the cross of scented leaves upon which the consecrated . . . [Peyote button] rests during the ceremony, while the Christ is the . . . [Peyote] goddess.

Lumholtz (1902) in many places reported the integration of Christianity and Peyotism in Mexico. The Peyotism learned while visiting missions in Mexico may have been tinged with Christianity, so that Christian elements were in Peyotism before it reached the U. S. Christianity in Peyotism may have become stronger in the United States as a result of continuing acculturative pressures from Christian churches in the U. S.

The aim of this paper has been to focus upon the problems resulting from a religion based upon a product which occurs only naturally hundreds of miles from the place where the religion was discovered. No final answers are proposed to all the questions raised, but it is hoped that the tentative answers bring some new light on the subject.

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