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Insert disc recording / side 1: Hotoke-Oroshi (manifesting spirits of the dead),
Jizō Festival; side 2: from The Deer Secret, performed by Alonzo Gonzales Mó.
See pp. 147-48 for notes.

Illustration credits: pp. 49, 51, 60, Hagiwara, Hidosaburo; p. 75, Tozzer Library, Harvard
Gary Snyder

A Note On The Interface

The people now called Ainu (earlier Emishi, Kai, Kai, Ezo —) at one time possibly occupied all the Japanese islands: Kyushu, Shikoku, and Honshu. In the seventh century AD they still controlled everything north of the 36th parallel, or a line from Tokyo Bay on the Pacific to Wakasa Bay on the Japan Sea. At this date great Buddhist temples were already being built in Nara, and the Wa, or Yamato culture (“Japanese”) was a half-Sinified wet-rice agricultural society fascinated by the image of great central government and power presented by the court of Tang China.

The long, peaceful, and ultimately decadent Heian court was destroyed by the unruly Minamoto clan from the east. These were men who had grown up fighting the Ainu. They respected the Ainu as fine warriors, who had, they said, “solved the problem of life and death.” Thus it seems the Samurai style evolved out of the struggles with the only people the Japanese ever fought on their own soil — the Ainu.

By the late ninth century the Japanese had nominal political control over the lowlands of all Honshu and Ainu power was left in mountain valleys or across the straits on Watarishima — “Crossing-over-Island”, “Ezo Island” now called “Hokkaido.” Ainu intransigence on the main island of Honshu wasn’t done until the 18th century.

On Hokkaido, and out into the Kurile islands; north again across Soya straits and on the island of Sakhalin, the Ainu continued further centuries of hunting, story-telling, and fishing. It was a world in which the Goddess of Fire, enshrined in the hearth, was the center; and the River a kind of artery between the Spirit-land of the deep interior mountains and the Spirit-land of the deep sea. Beings came as visitors from both ends, to be entertained (killed and eaten) and sent back with gifts.

On the SW corner of Hokkaido, with a more Japan-like climate, a tiny population of Japanese had a trading foothold tolerated by the Ainu. After a blacksmith named Kajimura killed an Ainu in 1456 the chief Koshamain swept through the SW and killed all the Japanese but those who made it into the fort of the Kakizaki family. Many such incidents are in the records.

The Kakizaki changed their name to Matsumae and were enfeoffed by the Shogun (military dictator) of Japan in 1614. They were a tiny clan with no land — but given in essence a trade monopoly with the Ainu. Thus, slowly, year by year and fort by fort, Japanese power crept out along the south coast. Trade was in hawks (for falconry) and hawk feathers (for fletching); sea-otter pelts, gold dust, “maba” (the fourteen best feathers of a full grown eagle, used for fletching arrows), seal skins, bearskins, dried storks, salted salmon, dried mushrooms, elm-bark cloth. In return the Ainu got iron pots, knives, spear-points, fish-hooks, pottery, and — alcohol. The alcohol was the worst, a half-poisonous saké made only for the Ainu trade. In this trading, the Ainu were at a disadvantage and always deceived.

The great chief Shakushain led a war for independence from all this in 1669. With a pan-tribal army (there were many Ainu groups) armed with bows against early firearms, he hoped to drive the Japanese off the whole south coast. They did well in the field. As winter came on and the two forces were about to dis-
engage, the Japanese offered a truce and a parley. Filled with food and sake, Shakushain and his officers were all massacred at the party.

After that, things got really nasty as coastal Ainu were rounded up and made virtual slaves in various summer industries, such as edible seaweed-gathering, and left to starve in the winter. Syphilis and other diseases decimated them. The Kunashiri uprising of 1789 was out of desperation — its thirty-seven leaders were all executed by the Matsumae bosses.

Still, the vast hinterland of Hokkaido, and the northern coasts, were untouched. Only when Russian fur traders began to come down from the north did the Japanese central government pay attention. Quite suddenly, in 1798, it took the island away from the Matsumae and put it under direct management. A policy of Ainu assimilation was begun. Inter-marriage was encouraged, Ainu were permitted to learn Japanese and forbidden to tattoo themselves or wear earrings. Buddhist missionaries were sent in. The wearing of Japanese style rainhats and raincapes was permitted.

Laws can be passed in Tokyo, but the world does what it pleases. The Bear Ceremony itself had been outlawed, but in Hokkaido the hunting and fishing went on. Then, with the Meiji restoration and the ousting of the Shogunate, Japan deliberately adopted occidental ways of development and in 1869 established a government bureau for Hokkaido called "The Office of Exploitation." A sort of homestead law was enacted, and farmers were encouraged to emigrate north. American experts from the administration of Ulysses Grant were invited to survey the agricultural and mineral possibilities — a whole story in that — and for a while a full-size venison cannery was running.

In the 1880's the Ainu tribal structures were broken up, the land declared "all Japanese" and tiny parcels of worthless land issued to the Ainu in return. They were forbidden to hunt and told to become farmers. They were swept into poverty and despair, living in tiny wretched enclaves as the industrious Japanese logged, fished, and farmed everything in sight.

The last of the great yukar (epic) collecting was done in the 1930's by Dr. Kindaiichi and associates. Also, from the thirties onward, an Ainu political consciousness begins to gleam: culminating perhaps for the time in the "Ainu kakumei ron": "Discourse on Ainu Revolution" by OTA Ryu, an Ainu, published in 1972. OTA makes these points:

1. To circulate Japanese translations of Ainu yukar — thus putting the problem on a new level.
2. Get in touch with the American Indians.
3. Do away with "Ainu anthropology"— such scholars are only working for our acculturation.
4. Revive Ainu art.
5. Refuse assimilation. Learn our own history.
6. Revive the Ainu language.

Racially pure Ainu are really few now. The language is virtually lost. Yet, some younger Hokkaido Japanese, Japanese environmentalists, and third-world and fourth-world revolutionaries hear this Ainu call. The eloquent prison letters of HASHINE Naohiko (his Japanese name) are being circulated.

The Bear-spirit of the inner mountains may yet be there, and the re-inhabitation of Hokkaido about to begin.
The following bilingual text (Ainu-English) is selected from Donald L. Philippi's extensive translations of the oral god-songs and epics of the Ainu, which are scheduled to appear soon in a multi-volume edition from University of Tokyo Press.

Donald L. Philippi, translator

Kimun Kamui Isoitak

Translator's Introduction

This selection was recorded in writing by Kubodera Itsuhiko in 1932 from the female reciter Hiraga Etenoa of Shin-Piraka village in the Saru river region of Hidaka.

The song was sung with the burden Howewé hum, which obviously is an imitation of the sound of a bear’s growling.

The speaker in the selection is a bear who calls himself “mountain god" (nupuri-kor-kamui, "god ruling the mountain"). These gods are benevolent bears with black fur who dwell deep in the mountains. They are gentle, wise, and friendly towards the humans. When they appear in human form, they are dressed in black robes. Such bears are capable of imparting profound blessings to the humans. Other types of bears may be ferocious, unreasonable, and violently inclined towards the humans; these bears are feared and called “monster bears" (arsarush). However, even bears of the benevolent type could behave violently towards the humans under certain circumstances, as we see in this particular song.

The selection is especially interesting because it presents the unfolding of the entire relationship between bears and humans. The hunting magic practiced by the Ainu hunters in the mountains, the eery night spent by the bear’s soul by the fireside in the mountains, the trip down to the human village, the welcome given to the visiting deity by the Fire Goddess, the magnificent bear ceremony, the delivery of piles of presents from the humans, and the feast held by the god after his return to his own country are all depicted with great beauty. One can well understand the central role played by bear ceremonialism in the life of the Ainu people.

Song Of A Bear

I am
a Mountain God.
My wife,
Woman-of-the-
Shiny-Fur-
so much did I respect her
that I would not even allow her to draw water
or to kindle a fire.
We lived
on and on
in this way,
and finally

Nupuri-kor-kamui
a-ne wa an-an.
Rush-kurka-wa-
ko-torake-mat
a-ante machi
wakka ta poka
ape ari poka
a-e-ainu-kor
oka-an ruwe
ramma kane
ne rok awa,
tanepo tapne
pirka pompe
a-ukosanke
ramma kane
oka-an ruwe
ne rok awa,
shinean to ta
yainu-an humi
ene okahi:

“Ohashir hoppa ka
a-e-shiruoka-
epotara
anakki korka
ranke kanto
kor kamui
turano kaiki
shisak tokui ne
ukar-an ahi kusu
a-ko-shinewe rusui.”

Tampekusu
Rush-kurka-wa-
ko-torake-mat
a-ante machi
a-ko-itakmuye
ki ruwe ne.
Ranke kanto
kor kamui
a-ko-shinewe kusu
arpa-an hine,
ranke kanto
kor kamui
orta kaiki
shirepa-an wa
tap orwano
pirka uweneusar
a-ki kane kor
oka-an ruwe
otu keshto ta
ore keshto ta
oka-an ruwe
ne rok aine,
shiyoaka-epotara
a-ki korka
wen kashuino
ranke kanto

a beautiful baby
was born between us.
On and on
we continued to live
in this way.
Then, one day,
this is what
I thought to myself:

“If I were to leave home,
I would be worried
about things at home in my absence.
Still,
I want to go and visit
the god ruling
the lower heavens,
for he and I
have gotten to be
the greatest of friends.”

Thus,
I gave parting instructions
to my wife,
Woman-of-the-
Shiny-Fur.
Then
I went
to pay a visit to
the god ruling
the lower heavens.
I arrived
at the abode
of the god ruling
the lower heavens.
Then we began
to enjoy
pleasant conversation together,
and we remained
day in
and day out
occupied in this way.
As time went on,
even though I was worried
about things at home in my absence,
the god ruling
the lower heavens
kor kamui
itak rui kashpa
emko kusu
sole-an kuni
a-yaikasure
an-an ruwe
ne rok awa,
shinean to ta
ar-ekushkonna
apa-sam-ushpe
paskur keushut
tokpa-tokpa
rishpa-rishpa
eni itaki:

was so exceedingly
talkative
that I
continued to put off
leaving for home,
and I still
remained there.
Then, one day,
all of a sudden,
Uncle Crow [appeared and]
kept pecking
and scratching
at the post by the doorway.
This is what he said:

“Nupuri-kor-kamui
shi-pase kamui
enepo uisui
e-shiknak kashpa ruwe
e-okake ta
Rush-kurka-wa-
ko-torake-mat
e-ante machi
aimu orun
shinewe rusui
tampe kusu
e-kor pompe
hoppa hine,
puyar ne ushike
apa ne ushike
torat-tush ani
seshke-seshke
shina-shina
hoppa ruwe ne.
Tap orwano
nea pompe
e-kor pompe
puyar-ko-terke
apa-ko-terke
chish hau konna
ko-chorototke,
hapo ohai
totto ohai
raikotenke
kunne hene
tokap hene

“O Mountain God,
o most weighty deity,
are you blind
to such a degree?
After you left,
your wife,
Woman-of-the-
Shiny-Fur,
decided that she wanted
to visit the humans.
Therefore,
she left behind
your little baby.
She closed up tightly
the windows
and the door
and tied them shut
with leather thongs,
and left him behind.
Ever since then,
that little baby,
your little baby
has been jumping at the windows
and jumping at the door,
the sound of his weeping
ringing out noisily.
He continues to
scream out in distress
calling out for his mother
both night
and day.
While he continues to do this, can it be, o Mountain God, that you are blind to such a degree as this?

When I heard Crow Boy, Uncle Crow, say these things, I flew into a frenzied rage at the mere hearing of them. Therefore, I sprang up. I got up from the head of the fireplace and went rushing towards the doorway. I plunged head first through the middle of the door[hangings]. After that, I could feel blasts of wind whirling in my ears as I went down. I darted down onto the clearing outside my own house. This is what I heard then. Inside the house my little baby was crying, his cries ringing out noisily. Just then I headed toward the doorway. When I tried to go inside, the doorway had been tied shut with leather thongs. Then I cut
the leather thongs.
Breaking down
the doorway,
I went inside.
My little baby
was shrieking wildly
and jumping about as he cried.
He was jumping
at the windows.
Just then,
I rushed towards him.
Picking up
my little baby,
I tossed him up
onto my back
and tied up tightly
the carrying cords.
After that,
I went outside,
intending
to go down to
the human village
and to ravage
the human village.
After this,
I went down
along the course
of our native river,
and I could feel blasts of wind
whirling in my ears.
As I was going down,
Light-footed-one,
Swift-footed one
came dashing out
from somewhere.
He went running around and around
at a distance from me
and stretched his tail
far out
while barking to bewitch me.
Just then,
from behind a tree,
the top of a bow
could be seen sticking up.
Overjoyed,
I rushed
a-ko-ikamatu, towards it.
a-tumam kashi ta A pretty little arrow
pirka pon ai lodged itself with a thump
korkosanu, on my body.
ni sempir wa Two young men
tu okkaipo went running away
kira wa paye, from behind the tree.
tap orwano after that,
setur kashike I began to chase
a-yairarire right after them.
iki-an awa As I went on,
Kema-koshne-kur Light-footed-one,
Kema-tunash-kur Swift-footed-one
iki-anawa paused while barking to bewitch me.
Kema-koshne-kur He slipped through
Kema-tunash-kur right under my neck
i-katkar pause and keep running in circles
e-sar-otuima- around and around me.
anuhitara, while stretching his tail
a-rekut poki far out
chi-peshishpare, while barking to bewitch me.
i-pishkanike wa He slipped through
chi-karire wa right under my neck
ne wa anpe and keep running in circles
a-rushka kusu around and around me.
tap orwano I got angry
Kema-koshne-kur at this
Kema-tunash-kur and began to try
tap orwano to strike at
Kema-koshne-kur Light-footed-one,
Kema-tunash-kur Swift-footed-one,
a-kik kusu ne kor but he slipped
a-tek ururuhi between my hands.
a-oka-ne-anpe between my hands.
haita-haita I continued to strike at him
a-ekot poka and miss him again and again.
ewenitara When I had been doing this
iki-an aine for some time,
rapkikite ta the God of Aconite Poison
shuruku kamui came dashing out [and said]:
chi-saekatta,

"Kamui huchi
i-utek hawe
ene okahi:

'Pase kamui
ratchitara
i-ko-shinewe yakne
ratchi uweneusar
a-e-unukar kusu

"The Fire Goddess
has sent me
to bear this message:

'O weighty deity,
please come peaceably
to pay me a visit,
and let us meet
and enjoy
I have come because the Fire Goddess sent me to bring this message."

The God of Aconite Poison spoke these words, but I still continued to strike out violently. Light-footed-one, Swift-footed-one still continued to stretch his tail far out while barking to bewitch me as he ran around and around at a distance from me and came dashing up closer and closer to me. Just then, the Resin God came dashing out. He and the God of Aconite Poison, working together, wrapped themselves around my hind limbs and my fore limbs and seized me with their hands. I tumbled down and lay outstretched majestic and godlike. I lost all consciousness of what was happening. After sleeping for a while, I opened my eyes, and this is what I saw. I was sitting on a tree branch, with my hands and legs hanging down limply, and just at this point I regained consciousness. Underneath me, of all things, a big old he-bear
pito shinne
kamui shinne
rutkosanu
oka ruwe ne.
Nea shiyuk
kashi peka
shine pon peurep
shinot kor oka.
Ki rok awa
rapokke ta
ne rok okkaipo utar
utura hine
arki ruwe ne.
Uko-papir-e-itak hawe
eke okahi:

"Kamui netopa
ne noine tashi
a-ramupe orwa
katkor shiri
oka ya" sekor

anpe neshi
e-uko-papir-e-itak kane
seta utar
nea peurep
kesheampa rok wa
ne rok okkaipo utar
or kikkik,
nimakitar utar
ar-ukirare
okakehe ta
nea peurep
uina ruwe ne.
Orwa neshi
nea shiyuk
katu-karkarpa
ko-onkampia.
Orwa neshi
ni chi-e-humna-tuyep
e-raperoshki
nea kamui
sama ta
roshki hine

was lying
outstretched
majestic
and godlike.
On top of
that he-bear
a little bear-cub
was playing.
Just then
those same
[two] young men
came walking back
together.
They whispered
to each other,
saying:

"It seemed
as if this was
a benevolent deity,
but what was the meaning
of his behavior just now?"

As they were
whispering these things
to each other,
the dogs
went chasing after
the bear-cub, but
those young men
beat them off soundly.
The bare-fanged ones [the dogs]
went running away.
Afterwards,
they picked up
the bear-cub.
Then they began
to prepare
the he-bear
and worshipped him.
Then they whittled wing-shaped notches
on a stick of wood
with sharpened endings.
They stood it up
by the side of
that bear.
The young men worshipped it by running their hands together [saying:]

"Do you deities enjoy yourselves by conversing together by yourselves! It has already become dark by now, and since it is too late to move the bear, we will leave him here. When morning comes, we will come back. Then we will bring the weighty deity [the bear] down to the village. Do you deities both watch over each other by yourselves!"

While saying these things, they cut a stick of wood with sharpened endings, stood it up by the side of that bear, and worshipped it by rubbing their hands together. Then they put the bear-cub on their backs and went down the mountain. After they were gone, I wondered what was the purpose for which they had made this [stick of wood] and left it there. I continued to look steadily at it, but once, for a moment, I looked away. Then [when I looked back] a blazing bonfire
tekkiwamta had been kindled
ruirui ape
a-e-parsewa an ruwe ne.
Ape tekkiwamta
shine okkaipo
roku wa oka.
Itak haewa
enokeh

"Pase kamui
ape sam ta
rap wa ne yak
uweneusaran kusu
ne na" sekor

So he said.
Therefore,
I went down
beside the fire,
and we began
to engage in pleasant conversation.
While we were conversing,
birds
and different evil spirits
would come up
to steal the meat.
Then that young man
would stand up
with a club
and would go running
all around me,
beating off soundly
those creatures which had come
to steal the meat,
and chasing after them.
We continued to do this
for a long time, until
finally
morning came.
Just then,
the fire
was gone,
though I was sure
that a fire had been burning there.
That young man
isam ruwe ne.
Chi-e-humna-tuye chikuni
ash wa an ruwe ne.
Tanpe kusu
niteit ta
tarar hine
an-an awa,
rapokeeha ta
utar arki hau
ronronatki,
inne utar
arki ruwe ne.
Orwano
nea kamui
ripa ruwe ne.
Okake-an kor
inne utar
kam se utar
chi-sanasanke,
nea rok okkaipo utar
kiyanne hikhe
kamui maratto
orushkur maratto
se hi kusu,
niteit ta
nea kamui maratto
se a okaip
shikehe
kaifi un terke-an.
Kirokawa
san ko-yaiekush
oar wenhia wa
teksam orke
a-e-apkash ne
sap-an ruwe ne.
Sap-an ainer
ainu kotan
inne kotan
chi-shireanu.
Kotan noshki ta
moshir pak chise
ash ru konna
meunatara.
Chise erupshike ta
inau chipa
nusa chipa
was gone too.
There was standing there [only]
a stick of wood with sharpened endings.
Thus,
I went [back up]
onto the tree branch
and remained there.
Just then,
many people were heard coming this way
with a noisy clamor.
A large crowd of people
came walking up.
Then they began
to skin
that bear.
When they had finished,
the large crowd of people
got down the mountain
bearing the meat on their backs.
The elder one
of those [two] young men
carried on his back
the bear's head
with the fur still attached to it.
So I jumped down
from the tree branch
onto the bundle
of the man who was carrying
the bear's head.
When I did this,
he could hardly walk,
and he was having such a hard time
that [I] got off his back and went
walking down
by his side.
We walked downhill until
we came upon
a human village,
a populous village.
At the center of the village
an immense house
was seen standing
majestically.
I was seated
in the midst of
the spirit fence,
uko-uturke ta
a-i-are ruwe ne.
An-an awa
rapokke ta
Kamui huchi
kane kosome
twan kosome
uko-e-kutkor
twan kosome
twanna-atte
chinoye kuwa
twanna kuwa
etete kane
soine ruwe ne.

"Pase kamui anak
sekor iki kusu
ramu a-yep
ne kusu,
ratchitara
i-ko-shinewe yakun
ikoyairaike-anhi
a-ye hawe ne,"

sekor itak kor
soine ruwe ne.
Orwa kaiki
a-i-ahunte
ahun-an hine
rorun puyar pok
a-i-e-are.
A-ante machi
i-etoko ta
oka ruwe ne.
Pakno nekor
okkaipo topa
menokopo topa
uekarpa
shito kar kunip
ear-utomta-
terke kane,
inauke kuni
uko-epirkep-
hoshte kane
inau kan rok aine
tane ne kusu

the inau fence
just east of the house.
After I had remained
there for a while,
the Fire Goddess,
wearing sixfold layers
of magnificent robes
fastened under her girdle
and sixfold robes
hanging loosely,
came outside
hobbling along
on a crooked staff,
a magnificent staff.

"I thank you
for having come to pay me
a peaceable visit,
for it is
just such conduct
for which
a weighty deity
wins praise!"

Speaking these words,
she came outside.
After that
I was invited inside.
I went inside
and was seated
under the sacred window.
My wife
was already there
before me.
After that
crowds of young men
and crowds of young women
gathered together.
Those who were making dumplings
grew running about
this way and that.
Those who were whittling inau
were plying their whittling knives
together this way and that.
They continued making inau
until now finally
it was time
for me to be dismissed.
I was given
one bundle of **inau**
and one bundle of dumplings
and went outside.
After that
I went on my way
and finally came back
to my own house.
I went inside.
Before my arrival
bundles of dumplings
and piles of **inau**
had already been delivered in
through the window,
and the floor at the head of the fireplace
was filled up
with all the many dumplings
and all the many **inau**.
After that
I remained there
for two or three days.
Then my wife,
**Woman-of-the-Shiny-Fur**,
came along
after me.
She came back
laden with
much wine,
many **inau**,
and dumplings too.
After that
I sent out messages everywhere
to the gods dwelling nearby
and the gods dwelling far away,
and invited them to the feast).
The invited deities
were ushered in with much ceremony.
Then we began
to celebrate
the delightful banquet.
My wife
spoke these words:
"So exceedingly did I long to have the human wine and the human inau that I went to visit the humans. Then my husband, getting angry, came down intending to ravage the human village. Were he ever to do such a thing, no matter how weighty a deity he might be, he would be kicked down to the dank country, to the underworld. The Fox God, worried about this, bewitched my husband, and thanks to this his heart was calmed. Since I was afraid of him, he was given dismissal first, and after he had left I requested the humans to raise our little baby. For this reason, I had to wait while the wine was being brewed, and I was delayed because of that. This is why I have come back after [the return of] my husband. We are now holding this banquet for all of the gods.
with the wine
and the dumplings.
I implore you,
my husband,
do not
punish me!"

My wife
spoke
these words.
All of the gods
also
scolded me.
After that
again and again I made
many worshipful gestures,
countless worshipful gestures.
Afterwards,
all of the gods
left for home,
expressing
their thanks.
After that
we lived on
uneventfully.
After some time
had gone by,
our dear little child
came back
from the humans,
carrying on his back
much wine
and many inau.
Once again
we invited
the gods dwelling nearby
and the gods dwelling far away.
The invited guests
were shown in with much ceremony.
After that
we celebrated
the peerless drinking-feast.
Then
all of the gods
expressed
their thanks
soyempa wa isam.
Sekor okaipe
Nupuri-kor-kamui
isoitak.

Translator's Notes

Uncle Crow — In Kubodera's manuscript, the words kararat kamui? are inserted in parentheses after the words paskur keushut. Probably this means that the reciter, or Kubodera himself, thought that "Uncle Crow" might mean the "carcass crow deity." On the other hand, Chiri Mashiho says that paskur keushut means raven.

the human village — Ainu kotan means either "human (Ainu) village" or the "human homeland." In either case, the place inhabited by the humans (the Ainu) is meant.

Light-footed-one/Swift-footed-one — Names applied to fox (chironnup kamui). Foxes are known to have the ability of bewitching by barking. Here the fox is trying to bewitch the bear, for reasons which are explained later on.

God of Aconite Poison — Aconite poison, obtained from the root of the wolfbane (Aconitum subcuneatum Nakai) is used to make poisoned arrows (see Guss, above). The poison god (or goddess?) enters the hunted animal, depriving him of freedom of movement. The Poison God is here depicted as a messenger dispatched by the Fire Goddess.

The Fire Goddess — Here she formally invites the bear god to come to pay her a peaceful visit. She will entertain his spirit while he is visiting the humans.

O weighty deity — The Ainu word pase means "heavy" (the opposite of koshne, "light"). The "weighty" deities are the ones who are important and ponderous; the opposite would be "inconsequential."

Resin God — Fir or spruce resin is used to attach the arrowhead to the arrow shaft.

I was sitting/on a tree branch — A conventional formula applied to the soul after it has left the corpse. The soul sits above, either on a tree branch or on the rafters in the ceiling, and looks down uncomprehending upon the corpse which it has just left. Here the soul of the Mountain God does not recognize the corpse of the bear as its own.

but what was the meaning/of his behavior just now? — The Ainu hunters had thought that the bear wished to be taken by them and wondered why the bear seemed to be so enraged.

Then they began/to prepare/the he-bear — When Ainu hunters prepare a bear's carcass for ritual dismissal, they remove the brains and eyeballs from the head, which is then stuffed with wooden shavings. This is called "giving a deity's appearance" in preparation for the bear's "ascension."

a stick of wood/with sharpened endings — This describes the whittling of a "club inau" (shutu inau), also called "winged inau." It is a type of inau with flaps cut on the stem (the flaps are called "wings"). In this case, the club inau is set up to watch over the bear's carcass overnight (on the inau sticks see Guss, above).

an immense house — Literally, "a house the size of a mountain."

the spirit fence — Variously called inau chipa, nusa chipa, inau san, chipa san, nusa, or chipa, this is a fence of clustered inau erected a short distance outside the sacred window (rorun puyar) of the house. Skulls of bears are erected on it, and the fence has certain sections devoted to separate cult deities. It is a sort of outdoor altar or oratory where prayers and libations are offered to the deities.
magnificent robes — Literally, "metal robes."
magnificent staff — Literally, "metal staff."

the sacred window — This is at the eastern end of the house (the ror), the most sacred part of the house. The window is the entrance and exit for visiting deities, and a visiting god is always seated underneath it.

to be dismissed — Hopunire (as well as arpare, omante) means to "send off," "to give ritual dismissal," or "to cause to ascend." The soul of the visiting god is given many presents and sent back with elaborate ritual to the land of the gods.

the floor at the head of the fireplace — This is the expanse of floor between the head of the fireplace and the sacred window.

These things/a Mountain God/narrated — The mythic epics often end with such formulae in the third person singular, identifying the speaker who has been carrying on the narration in the first person singular. Everything up to this formula, in other words, is treated as if it were a quotation.
David Guss recently edited *Panjandrum IV* "Talking Leaves Issue" which includes the work of many contributors to these pages past and present, including Norman, Lenowitz, Doria, Rothenberg, Einzig, de Angulo, Callahan, and Philippi. Guss has also edited a *Selected Poems of Vincente Huidobro* (as yet no publisher), which will be the first collection of that major Chilean poet in English. Guss is presently in Venezuela, involved in a translation project there.

David M. Guss

**The Power Is Great:**

**God Songs and Epics of the Ainu**

I. The God Songs

Who does not know the ancient name and the present name of this river! In antiquity, when there was truly great magic, it was called Swiftstream. Today, because the magic has weakened, it is called Slowstream.¹

When the power was great, before man's true magic had abandoned him, a hunter was able to shoot an arrow along a path where a deer had passed a full day before, and Aconite God, the one who controls arrows, would search the deer out and bring him down. In those days, one arrow was all it ever took for a hunter to catch his prey. In those days, the amount of grain it took to fill the lines on the back of one's thumb was enough, when thrown into a pot, for a whole meal.

But mankind started to abuse this magic. They strained Aconite God's power by shooting their arrows where deer had passed three or four days before. They forced him to go further and further until he collapsed in exhaustion. They began to count the number of grains they threw into their pots. And then finally, when Okikurmi, the god sent to watch over the humans, sent his own sister to bring them food during a famine, an Ainu grabbed her and pulled her through the *rorun puyar*, the holy window, through which only gods were permitted to pass. For Okikurmi, this was the final insult. He took his younger sister and left *Yaukur Moshir* for good. He took his power too.

After Okikurmi left, his younger sister became so homesick for *Yaukur Moshir*, that she stopped eating completely and almost died. Okikurmi only saved her life by drawing such vivid pictures of their homeland, that upon seeing them, her spirits were immediately restored. Later on, she revealed the story of her illness and recovery to a pious old Ainu man in a dream. This story became a favorite of the Ainu and served as a consolation in their great loss. It also gave the Ainu the most perfect and enduring portrait they were ever to have of their homeland, *Yaukur Moshir*.

*Yaukur Moshir* means “Country of the Mainlanders.” The Japanese called it Hokkaido — North Sea Road — and that’s the name it has today. Twenty miles beyond the northern tip of Honshu, across the treacherous Tsugaru Strait, Hokkaido stretches out toward the Okhotsk Sea. From its most northwestern point one can see the enormous island of Sakhalin, and from its most northeastern, the Kuriles, forming an arc which has led sea hunters around the North Pacific Rim to the Aleutians and the Alaskan peninsula for thousands of years. Between this subarctic world and the more temperate climates of East Asia to its south, Hokkaido forms a mountainous transitional zone.

Before the Japanese began to intensify their colonization of Hokkaido in the mid-nineteenth century, it was an island rich with deer, bear, otter, fox and other game animals. Starting in May, when the snows were just melting, large runs of cherry salmon began their migrations up the rivers. At the beginning of the salmon season, the whole family would fish together using weirs and basket traps and a special type of spear known as a *marek*. But as the dog salmon started to appear, signalling the approach of the
Warm or Female Season (shiri-matne-pa), the women and children left for the hills to gather wild berries, nuts, seeds, roots and leaves. They collected lily bulbs and wild garlic and beat mugwort and chestnut into pastes, which they dried along with the salmon, to store away for the winter.

Hokkaido is covered with snow for five to seven months of the year and for the Ainu it was at the beginning and end of this Cold or Male Season (shiri-pinne-pa) when the hunting was at its best. This was when the deer’s fur was thickest and filled with its richest oils and it was also when the bear prepared to reenter and leave their dens. To be near the animals’ homes, the Ainu built small huts high in the mountains, where they hunted with stone and bamboo-tipped arrows dipped in aconite poison. They also used deer fences and a crossbow trap which they placed on the animals’ paths and set with trip lines.

The Ainu never domesticated any animals outside of the dog nor did they develop any agricultural skills of their own. Hokkaido’s great plenitude of fish and game alone enabled them to remain as hunters and gatherers without becoming nomadic. They lived in small villages of usually no more than ten families alongside the rivers and their salmon beds. Each village, under the leadership of a patrilineal chief, had strict control over its own hunting and fishing grounds. An early Japanese visitor to Hokkaido wrote that “outside one’s own boundary one is prohibited from cutting so much as even a blade of grass.” When necessity demanded, villages would band together to defend and control entire watersheds.

The Ainu are the ab origines of Hokkaido. Their original territory also included Sakhalin, The Kuriles and even parts of northern Honshu, but these settlements were either assimilated long ago or evacuated to Hokkaido as in the case of the Sakhalin Ainu after World War II. When or from where the Ainu came is a great mystery. Some scientists have studied their skull measurements and decided that they are of definite Australoid ancestry. Others have discovered shards of pottery and located the Ainu as the original inhabitants of Honshu, who were later pushed north by the Japanese. While still others, noting their bear ceremony and extensive use of shamanism, believe that they must have migrated from Central Asia hundreds of years ago. Unlike many of the Pacific island peoples, the Ainu have no myths of migration. Their language, although having elements of polyn- synthesis and incorporation similar to those of their Paleo-Asiatic neighbors, cannot be placed in any definite family. Physically they have many Caucasian features in a part of the world where every other group is Mongoloid. But for the Ainu, there is no mystery. They have always been there; ever since the Land Creator God came down to make Yaunkur Moshir.

The Land Creator God made Yaunkur Moshir with giant axes and mattocks. When he returned to heaven, he forgot the handle of one of these mattocks and it was from that handle that the Elm Goddess, Chikisani kamui, sprouted and came into being. The younger of the two brothers ruling the skies fell in love with her and began descending to the earth every night to visit. The other gods could see what was going on because whenever they met they created a huge fire. Finally the gods became so jealous of the young Sky God’s being the first to visit the earth that they waged a war against him. But the Elm Goddess was already pregnant with their child and the result was the birth of Okikurmi.

Okikurmi, who is also known as A-e-oina kamui, Oina kamui, and Ainurakkur, was the god sent down to rule over the humans (Aimu). He was the one entrusted with teaching them how to worship the gods, how to carve inau, how to hunt, how to hold feasts, how to make handicrafts; in short, how to behave as human beings. He was the culture giver who formed the Ainu into a civilization. Before his arrival, there was no civilization, no knowledge of “the way,” but only savages living in a chaotic, disordered world. And then Okikurmi became the “master” of the humans and formed them into a species being just as the bear, the grampus, the eagle and all the other gods had been formed into their own species by their own “masters.” It is in this sense that the humans are also gods, living like any other in their own homeland.

What differentiates other gods, however, is their ability to change their forms. They do this when they visit the land of the humans. The bear puts on his disguise of meat and fur, the grampus slips into his blubber and flippers, the eagle attaches his feathers and they all come to visit Yaunkur Moshir. They put on these masks or hayokpe (“armor”) for various reasons. On the one hand the human homeland is reputed to be the most beautiful of all known worlds and therefore a good place to visit. It’s so beautiful that many gods go just to have their babies there. But they also come “to do business” (irauketupa) with the Ainu. They bring their disguises to trade with them. In return for meat
and fur, for blubber and feathers, the humans give them wine, dumplings and inau fetishes. When they return to their own homeland, these “presents” are miraculously multiplied and the returning god immediately holds a feast in which he shares his new treasures with the other gods and “greatly enhances his glory as a god thereby.” The divine feast is made possible by a ritualistic human feast held simultaneously with it, in which the gifts are sent to the gods via inau. The feasts encourage other gods to come visit. This was the method by which the Ainu insured themselves of eternal prosperity.

It was the perfect wedding of myth and ecological balance; for if the Ainu did not treat all living things (and not merely animals) as the visiting gods they were, they would cease to return and famine and plague would surely follow. Therefore, an Ainu did not actually capture an animal when he went hunting; rather, the animal chose the hunter and gave itself to him willingly. The hunter understood this and knew that when he killed an animal he was merely freeing his spirit to return to its own homeland, where it lived just like an Ainu did. It was a transaction and he knew that if he did not treat this visitor as a sacred being there would be no food the next year. So if it was a bird, whose home was in the sky, he would say:

Winged creature that you are,
you travel through the skies, high above the land.
Therefore, your spirit is now to return

to the upper heavens.
You have been treated well
by the humans. Fire Goddess
commands it of you. You will rise
to the upper heavens. Obey

And if it was an animal whose home was in the mountains, he would say:

Let your spirit return atop the summit
of our native country, and abide there
as a newborn god. Take this inau,
this lovely inau, and glorify
yourself with it.

The animal’s spirit, satisfied with this “sendoff,” then departed, but at the same time it also remained as a protector of the hunter it had come to visit. It joined the companion spirits (turenpe) which every person was born with and which determined each person’s fate: whether they would be intelligent, strong, poor, crippled or whatever. The visiting god had chosen the hunter for his virtue and strength and so now added his own spirit to the hunter’s personal power. The animal’s skull was therefore saved and hung up as a symbol of this new power.

These were the things which Okikurmi showed the Ainu. And the way he did it was by teaching them how to sing:

I performed those same yukar, twisting
my deep-throated voice into subtle melodies,
and I sang the oina which I had heard.
After I had finished, I said that these
were the ways in which humans ought
to amuse themselves. Thus, I commanded
them to amuse themselves in such ways only.
As for the love-songs as well,
I made them models showing
the ways in which humans are to
act and to think, and I bid them
to do these things in the same manner.

Okikurmi was forced to learn and then teach these songs to the Ainu as proof of his worthiness to marry the daughter of the God of Heaven (Kanto-kor-kamui). He had seen her sitting in her golden chariot, watching the other gods playing beneath the moonlight. Later, when he learned that she was about to die of lovesickness for him, he went to the upper heavens to find her. But her father caught him. He chastised Okikurmi and told him that to marry his daughter he would first have to learn and then teach all the songs to the humans. Okikurmi did so and then returned to marry the God of Heaven’s daughter.

The kamui yukar or “god song” is the oldest of these Ainu songs and takes place in the mythic era when Okikurmi was still living among the Ainu and giving them their culture skills. This is the era which Mircea Eliade has called the “fabulous Time of the beginnings” and it is this age which is commemorated and reentered through the recital of the kamui yukar. The Ainu recognized the holiness of this period and called it shin nupur — the time when “the power was great.”

The kamui yukar are short narrative songs relating the adventures of many different gods as told by themselves in the first person voice. Their primary importance is a cosmogonic one: to reveal the origin and nature of the Ainu universe and to serve as a model for man’s proper relationship to it. They tell of the Land Creator God’s creation, the birth of the
human race through Okikurmi and of the origins of the various gods and their respective powers. In describing the origins of floods, tidal waves, epidemics, famine and other “natural” disasters, man is taught not only the cause but also the cure and prevention. The ceremonies and rites which guaranteed the Ainu’s harmonious relationship with his own world are constantly being acted out and reaffirmed in these songs. Their origins are revealed and the proper manner of their application imparted in the form of divine instruction.13

In “The Song of the Owl God,” the Owl God searches for someone to bring a message to the God of Game and the God of Fish who are causing a famine by refusing to let the deer and fish visit the human homeland. Dipper Lad is finally dispatched and returns with the reason for the famine. He explains that men have been hunting improperly, tossing away the heads of the deer and beating the fish with pieces of rotten wood. The animals have been “returning in tears” and have finally been prevented from coming altogether. However, the God of Game and the God of Fish say they will let them return in abundance if the humans will treat them properly. So the Owl God, “by means of dreams in their sleep,” teaches the humans the proper hunting rituals. He shows them how to make the special “beating clubs” which the fish like to be killed with and the correct way to decorate the deer heads with fetishes.14 The famine ends and the animals return once again, assured that the humans will no longer abuse them.

The endless struggle between the “bright” deities and the evil demons is also acted out in the god songs, and through exemplary battles of both wit and strength, the demons are vanquished and punished. To each of these the appropriate moral or forewarning is appended:

Therefore, oh hares of the present day I warn you not to cast evil spells.15

or

Ye dragons of the future do not on any account play pranks on the humans.16

Most often, the hero of these battles against the evil demons is Okikurmi, for during the period of the kamui yukar, he was not only the master of the humans, but their protector as well. It was Okikurmi who travelled to the middle of the ocean to slay the Earth Crone, that “most evil deity,” and bring an end to the famine in the human homeland. And when Mosirechikchik kidnapped the Sun Goddess and threatened the Ainu with death through “excessive sleep,” it was Okikurmi who rescued her and destroyed the “arch fiend.” He even saved the race of gods from extinction when the God of Porosir, in search of a successor, was killing them all off by forcing them to dive for “ayrak” fish in Porosir Lake.

Okikurmi punished swordfish who ignored human invocations, hares who cast evil spells, otters who broke the taboo of mentioning the name of the dead, dragons who killed both men and gods with their foul smell and even the Wind Goddess who caused destructive storms. He not only instructed man in his proper mode of behavior toward the gods but also the gods in theirs toward man. He established a system of mutual respect and responsibility between them and showed each one the terrible price to be paid for breaking it.

But Okikurmi was not alone in establishing this system and in protecting the humans. The Owl God, the Dipper God, the Goddess of the Hunt, the Kesorap God, the God of the Sea (the grampus), the God of the Mountains (the bear), and above all, the Fire Goddess, were just a few of the many other gods favorable to the humans who helped in their defense and instruction. These gods, along with Okikurmi and the many gods who witnessed his deeds or felt his wrath, are the speakers of the kamui yukar.

The kamui yukar are broken up into mouthfuls of approximately five syllables each, which when sung are alternated with a short burden known as the sakehe.17 The sakehe may either precede or follow the mouthfuls and may even on occasion be inserted at less regular intervals throughout the song.18 Sakehe means “place of the melody” and is what determines the melody of each song as well as often identifying the speaker. Although most of these refrains can no longer be deciphered, many are obviously onomatopoeic of the cry or sound of the speaker. The sakehe for a kamui yukar sung by a bear would be howei howei or we we in imitation of the bear’s sound. A frog’s song has the sakehe, tororo hanrok, hanrok; while that of a crow howa howa howa. The sakehe might also indicate the speaker through a symbolic characterization of one
of his movements or features, or possibly through a particular detail performed during the song, such as the sakehe of a Dipper God who comes to warn the humans of an impending mountain flood:

The high mountains are flooded, are flooded.
The low mountains are dry, are dry.

Most kamui yukar have only one sakehe throughout, but occasionally a change of speaker or an abrupt shift of mood or scene will initiate the use of a new one. Kndaichi Kyosuke actually recorded one kamui yukar in 1943 from an unidentified informant which contains four sakehe, shifting between four different bird speakers. The principal speaker is the sparrow, whose sakehe is hanchikiki while the other three are the crane, the woodpecker and the snipe. This short excerpt from it gives one a sense of how the mouthfuls look when alternated with a sakehe. The song opens with the sparrow’s preparations for a “great drinking feast”:

Hanchikiki Shine amam pusa A single ear of millet
Hanchikiki chitatatata I pounded over and over
Hanchikiki sakehe chikar to make wine.
Hanchikiki iwan shintoko Six wine tubs I set out
Hanchikiki ror aoshiyare at the head of the fireplace.
Hanchikiki kamui opitta All the gods
Hanchikiki aetakan ruwe-ne I invited.
Hanchikiki shisak tonoto The great drinking-feast
Hanchikiki aukomaktekka got under way.
Hanchikiki tane anakne Now
Hanchikiki iku noshki Hanchikiki shisak tonoto when the feast
Hanchikiki aetakan ruwe-ne was half over
Hanchikiki aukomaktekka I glanced over
Hanchikiki tane anakne inside the wine tubs.
Hanchikiki inkan ruwe ne Then he went outside
Hanchikiki orowa shoyempa and came back in
Hanchikiki shine niseu num with an acorn in his beak.
Hanchikiki ekupa wa ahup He dropped it in the wine.
Hanchikiki shintoko-or omare After that
Hanchikiki orowano po-hene the wine was better than ever.
Hanchikiki sake pirka wa All the gods
Hanchikiki kamui utar were overjoyed
Hanchikiki eukoyaikopuntek and the great drinking-feast
Hanchikiki shisak tonoto got under way again.
Hanchikiki aukomaktekka

The language of the kamui yukar, like that of the Ainu epics (yukar), is a special one. The Ainu have several names for this specialized form of speech. They call it kamui itak, “god speech,” sa-ko itak, “melodic speech,” and a-tomte itak, “decorated speech,” and differentiate it from their everyday “dis­connected” speech known as rupa itak and yayan itak. The vocabulary and grammar of this epic diction differs significantly from that of the colloquial Ainu. It uses a whole set of specialized pronominal forms while at the same time intensifying the use of incorporative complexes. Long word compounds are found which have no counterparts in the more broken-down and simpler everyday speech. Words such as nis-oparakuratte, “the clouds spread out far and wide across the sky,” and e-ruki-kur-raye, “to arrange one’s hair up high,” are formed by combining different parts of speech together and are words which could never be used in the Ainu’s conversational speech.

This sense of a more polished and refined speech is also heightened by the pervasive use of parallelisms. Parallelism and the formation of word pairs is the structure on which the Ainu language is based. Everywhere one sees this word pairing in evidence:

| Hanchikiki | Shine amam pusa | A single ear of millet |
| Hanchikiki | chitatatata | I pounded over and over |
| Hanchikiki | sakehe chikar | to make wine. |
| Hanchikiki | iwan shintoko | Six wine tubs I set out |
| Hanchikiki | ror aoshiyare | at the head of the fireplace. |
| Hanchikiki | kamui opitta | All the gods |
| Hanchikiki | aetakan ruwe-ne | I invited. |
| Hanchikiki | shisak tonoto | The great drinking-feast |
| Hanchikiki | aukomaktekka | got under way. |
| Hanchikiki | tane anakne | Now |
| Hanchikiki | iku noshki | when the feast |
| Hanchikiki | eyami okkayo | was half over |
| Hanchikiki | tapkar tapkar | jay boy |
| Hanchikiki | ki rok aine | got up and started to dance. |
| Hanchikiki | shintoko orun | As he was dancing |
| Hanchikiki | ikan ruwe ne | he glanced over |
| Hanchikiki | orowa shoyempa | inside the wine tubs. |
| Hanchikiki | shine niseu num | Then he went outside |
| Hanchikiki | ekupa wa ahup | and came back in |
| Hanchikiki | shintoko-or omare | with an acorn in his beak. |
| Hanchikiki | orowano po-hene | He dropped it in the wine. |
| Hanchikiki | sake pirka wa | After that |
| Hanchikiki | kamui utar | the wine was better than ever. |
| Hanchikiki | eukoyaikopuntek | All the gods |
| Hanchikiki | shisak tonoto | were overjoyed |
| Hanchikiki | aukomaktekka | and the great drinking-feast |
| Hanchikiki | aukomaktekka | got under way again. |

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This sense of a more polished and refined speech is also heightened by the pervasive use of parallelisms. Parallelism and the formation of word pairs is the structure on which the Ainu language is based. Everywhere one sees this word pairing in evidence:

ya (land) and rep (sea)
aimu (human) and kamui (god)
mak (back) and sa (front)
kim (mountain) and pish (beach)
yan (to come up) and san (to go down)

There is even an entire genre of prose tales based on the parallelism of the two characters Penappe, “the one who dwells upstream,” and Panampe, “the one who dwells downstream,” wherein they act out the dual nature of man’s character: one being wise and virtuous and the other being foolish and avaricious.

But it is in the language and syntax used throughout the Ainu oral tradition in which one finds the parallelism in its most perfected and developed form:
The fish were unable to even drink the water. As a result, famine has broken out in the homeland of the gods and in the homeland of the humans.  

Another characteristic of the epic diction found throughout the kamui yukar and yukar is the use of conventionalized formulae for depicting certain scenes, actions and states of consciousness. These expressions include such descriptions as the hero's upbringing, his castle, his various battles, his first view of an enemy shamaness and the way a person dies and is reborn. Many of these expressions are short descriptions used to create predictable emotions, such as the feeling of well-being and prosperity:

The fish were so plentiful that the stones would rub against the schools of fish on the bottom and the sunshine would scorch the schools of fish on top.  

Or the sense of a hunter's excitement and expectation as Okikurmi spots his first deer:

There was a big stag grazing leisurely. Taking clumps of grass nearby, he would raise up his antlers high, and taking clumps of grass farther away, he would draw his antlers back over his body.  

The audience is naturally familiar with these conventions and expects to hear them. They are so familiar with them in fact, that there is also a convention for omitting them and thereby shortening a longer epic. The reciter merely says "an-onomomonomo," and I describe in detail," and then goes on to the next part, leaving the listener to fill in the details himself.

The language of the Ainu oral tradition — with its unique pronominal forms and grammar, its complex word compounds and extensive use of parallelisms and conventional formulae — should not be understood merely as a specialized archaic language but also as the "language of the gods" which the Ainu felt it to be. They believed that the gods had wanted to distinguish their speech from that of the humans and had therefore established one of their own.

The fact that this separation exists is an important one, for combining this with the use of the sakehe and the first person speaker, one is led to the conclusion that the kamui yukar originated from shaman's songs (tusu shinotcha): that they were initially prophetic songs mediumistically obtained through shamans, which held such spiritual and ontological importance for the society as a whole that they were remembered and passed on from generation to generation. The idea of a separate speech, not readily accessible to the uninitiated, which the shaman was originally able to transmit as proof of its divine source; the unaltered use of the first person so that the divine visitor is actually present and speaking — originally through the shaman and now through the reciter who can more easily summon him; the spirit helper's call or cry, familiar to shamanism throughout the world, which is now transformed into the sakehe; the use of dreams for communicating much of the information in the songs and even many of the songs themselves; the recitation of origins used in curing illnesses and overcom-
ing enemies, which is the subject matter of so many of
the god songs; even the comparatively uniform short
length of the kamui yukar and the fact that both
reciters and shamans were women: all of these things,
which are such important components of both the shaman's song and the god song, force one to believe that
the god songs must certainly have had their origins in
the visions of shamans. After the shaman first trans-
mitted the message, the community at large and the
reciter in particular, remembered and preserved it by
passing it on orally. Through the reciter, the spirit
was insured a voice without the necessary concomi-
tant shamanic ecstasy. And, although the shaman may
now be replaced by the less specialized reciter, the
message and the words remain the same: the spirit is
still summoned, the presence still felt, and the voice
still listened to.

Chiri Mashiho, an Ainu scholar who was also the
nephew of one of Kindaichi's most important infor-
mants, Imekanu, has written that the earliest Ainu
chiefs were also the most powerful shamans, and that
it is very possible that Okikurmi was the greatest of
these shaman chiefs. Chiri claims that his attush coat
with its flaming hem and his sword with its flaming tip
were most likely a part of his shaman's costume and
that his powerful companion spirits which enabled him
to fly and remain invisible and which restored him to
life when he died in battle were merely the attributes
of the Ainu's greatest shaman. But the fact that
Okikurmi, unlike a shaman, is of divine ancestry and
that he does not receive the songs but sings them as
other gods do theirs, argues strongly against such
euhemerism.

The most important of Okikurmi's songs, which
relate the story of his origins and greatest deeds, form
a special subcategory within the kamui yukar known
as the oina. The oina are somewhat longer than the
average kamui yukar and make greater use of the con-
ventional formulae. Because of this and the fact that
they occasionally drop the sakehe altogether, they are
considered to be a transitional song between the god
song and the epic. What makes them special, how-
ever, is their sacred subject matter: the revelation of
the culture hero Okikurmi's life. The oina tell the tale
of his birth and upbringing and the accomplishment of
his heroic feats, such as bringing song and handicrafts
to the humans, saving the race of gods from extinction
by catching a fish which no other god was able to, and
rescuing the Sun Goddess and his betrothed from
fierce demons. Within the category of the oina, these
songs are known as the poro or "great" oina as distin-
guished from the pon or "little" oina.

The pon oina restrict themselves to telling the story
of how Okikurmi won his wife and are often told by her
as well. The most common version of the pon oina
describes how Okikurmi, disguised as the God of the
Western Seaboard, pays a visit to the Owl God, whose
daughter is betrothed to the evil God of Porosir. While
there, the Owl God holds a feast, during which the
God of Porosir suspects that his honor has been soiled
and that Okikurmi and his betrothed have been carry-
ning on behind his back. He stamps out, threatening
the Owl God and all his guests with death. At this
point, Okikurmi gets ready for battle and, after trans-
forming the Owl God's daughter into a female sword
guard so he can bring her along, flies out the smoke-
hole. The fighting, which usually lasts "six summers
and six winters," now begins and continues until
Okikurmi has single-handedly destroyed all of Porosir's armies and then finally, with a dramatic flourish,
Porosir himself. The hero then returns home and
restores the daughter of the Owl God to her former
self. His true identity now revealed, he bids her to
return to her home alone. Soon after, he pays her a
visit, at which time the Owl God joyfully offers his
daughter's hand in marriage. After the wedding feast
they return to Okikurmi's castle in Shishirmuka where
it is suspected they will live happily ever after. And
they probably would have too, if the Ainu had not
enraged Okikurmi with their irreverent behavior and
forced him to leave Yaunkur Moshir forever.

II. The Epics

Suddenly
over the chasm,
the chasm at
the headwaters of the river,
of our native river,
fierce fighting
breaks out.
The people of Kanepet,
the people of Shirarpet,
and Etu-rachichi all of them together
are tangling their swords,
their trusty swords,
in confused battle with
the sword of the yaunkur. From time to time
they appear together.
I lose them
in a maze of blood.
But now again
from time to time,
in the east
all of them together
are tangling their swords
in confused battle.
This goes on until
by and by
the swords of the repunkur
all at once
are broken off
next to the swordguards.
I lose them
in the west.
My vision is unclouded —
the sword of the yaunkur
is shining bright
in the east.
Just then,
down the river,
our native river,
a little kesorap is fluttering through
the heavens,
or so I thought.
But now
it disappears,
I don't know where.
I strengthen the power
of my shamanizing until
the little kesorap
is transformed
into raindrops and
is slipping
through the layers of earth.
As this goes on,
look!
Once again
he is changed
into a little kesorap and
is going downstream
along the river,
our native river.
Suddenly
fierce fighting
bursts forth
in our native land.
In a single swoop,
the settlements of the common folk
are completely ravaged.
After that
the sword of the yaunkur
and my elder brother's
trustysword
are tangled
in confused battle.
This continues until —
o what dreadful
thing is this? —
my elder brother's
trustysword
is broken off
next to the swordguard.
I lose it
in a maze of blood.
The sword of the yaunkur,
it seems to me,
is shining bright
in the east.
This is all,
the vision vanishes
from before my eyes.
O what terrible things
have I
been prophesying?

The speaker is an enemy shamaness who, through a trance, informs her brother, Shipish-un-kur, of the arrival of a Yaunkur warrior who will soon bring his downfall. The Yaunkur warrior is none other than Poiyaunpe, the "Little Mainlander," who now defends the Ainu as Okikurmi once did. But the enemy is no longer a vengeful demon or a prankish deity. It is now a human invader — the Repunkur, the "People of the Sea." And the new Ainu avatar is no longer a god either, but a human, who in his valor and fantastic deeds has become the embodiment of the former divine hero and the hero of the yukar epic.

Like Okikurmi, Poiyaunpe is raised by elder foster brothers and sisters, who during the course of the story, reveal the mystery of his upbringing to him. Like his predecessor, he is also eternally young and endowed with powerful companion spirits who enable him to fly and remain invisible in battles. He too fights alone, or with few allies, against overwhelming odds and undertakes feats which no other man has been able to achieve. But, whereas Okikurmi is forced to kill the enemy shamaness he was originally betrothed to, Poiyaunpe falls in love with her and turns her into a powerful ally who fights by his side. She becomes his companion in every battle, using her extraordinary shamanic skills to divine enemy movements and the course of battles occurring in distant lands. She also, through magic "puffs of breath," restores Poiyaunpe to life whenever he is mortally wounded in battle. The name of the shamaness may vary from epic to epic, but she will always be "incomparably beautiful" and "awe-
inspiring.” She will also always be a Repunkur, one of the People of the Sea.

The Repunkur are not merely a mythic enemy created by the Ainu epics but actual invaders who threatened the coasts of Hokkaido and Sakhalin for hundreds of years. They were part of a much larger culture complex of sea hunters which stretched from Northern Hokkaido through the Kuriles and Sakhalin, along the coast of Kamchatka where the Koryaks lived, and on to the Aleutians, Kodiak Island and the northwest part of Alaska. They were Paleo-Asiatic peoples who left heavy influences on the Ainu in their hunting, language and religious practices. The group remembered in the Ainu epics have been identified as the Okhotsk culture which disappeared suddenly around eight hundred years ago. Whether they were finally vanquished or assimilated remains uncertain, but we do know that they maintained settlements along the north coast of Hokkaido and Sakhalin and that from approximately 800 to 1100 A.D., they were engaged in almost continual warfare with the Ainu.36

Part of this confusion between mythic and historic time is due to the common usage of conventional formulae in both the god songs and the epics. The description of the hero’s castle, his battles, or even the physical make-up of his greatest rival might be identical in either genre. But the confusion is also an intentional one, for Poiyaunpe is a direct heir to Okikurmi as the ethnic ideal and the champion of his people, and must therefore be imbued with similar powers. And yet their missions differ, and although Poiyaunpe defends and protects the Ainu in much the same way as his predecessor, he still remains a human and never achieves the same religious significance which Okikurmi does. The epics do create a sense of cultural solidarity and reinforcement but only through the invocation of a common enemy (i.e., patriotism) and the reenactment of a familiar history. They create a model of behavior, but primarily in the way a great warrior should act. They contain none of the sacred or cosmogonic importance of the god songs, nor do they make any pretensions at revelation or instruction. Their primary importance is that of entertainment, or, as Kubodera Itsuhiko has written, as “a sort of war literature of the Ainu people.”39

The yukar evolved out of the more archaic god songs. Although the use of the sakehe has been completely dropped, they are still broken up into five-syllable mouthfuls when performed. They also retain the same specialized language found in the god songs with the single exception of the first person pronoun. The speaker is now the human Poiyaunpe and he therefore refers to himself with a and an rather than with the divine pronouns chi and ash. The use of conventionalized formulae, parallelisms and lengthy word compounds also remain the same while undergoing an even greater refinement in what was considered by

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The embroidered coat
I thrust myself into,
The golden clasped belt
I wound about me.
The cords of the little helmet
I tied for myself,
So that it sat firm on my head,
The graven sword
I thrust through my belt.
And though I tell it of myself,
I looked splendid as a god,
Splendid as a great god
Returning in glory.37

Poiyaunpe is not the only one transformed in this manner in the epics. The Repunkur are often turned into nitne kamui or “demons,” leaving the hero confused as to whether his opponents are actually humans or gods:

Again there came a noise
And a man came out,
If man not god one could call him,
For he was clothed from head to foot
In chain of gold,
In magic armour of gold,
So cased and folded
That I wondered he could lift his sword.38

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the Ainu to be a more developed and aesthetic genre; for, whereas a god song rarely exceeds 1,000 verses, the epics average at least 5,000 and may even reach beyond 20,000. To hear an epic might have been an event lasting from sunset to well into the next day.

The best epic reciters (yukar-kur) were considered to be men and although women reciters had epics in their repertories, their specialty was considered to be the god songs and the special women’s epics known as the menoko yukar. In former times, epic reciters were known to have performed while lying on their backs and using one of their hands to beat the time on their chests. Whether this was the common method is uncertain, for modern reciters sit at the fireplace and use rep-ni or “pounding sticks” to beat the time on the hearth frame. The audience may also have rep-ni to tap along with as they follow the narrative. The melodies of the epics are very simple, slow ones. However, as the action becomes more frenetic, such as during a battle, the tempo will pick up and the verses shorten. The audience will also chime in more frequently with their cries of 

|het! het!| hum! hum! |

Whereas every Ainu probably knew at least one or two of the shorter god songs, the epics were clearly the realm of the most skilled reciters. Good reciters often came from families where the members had been reciters for many generations, but there was no rule and any person who could find a teacher could become one. Epic reciters were not paid for their performances, nor were they part of any special class or elite. They sang to reaffirm their ties to nature and their ties to each other. They sang for both men and gods alike.

The Ainu say that “even the rats will laugh at a man who tells stories in the summer” and it was probably the case that singing was the main activity during the long house-bound winter months. But there were no special times when any of these songs were to be performed; and although an epic would usually be recited to entertain a divine visitor, such as a bear cub being “sent off” during the winter iyomante ceremony, they might be sung on any occasion.

The epics are broken up into cantos equalling the number of battles taking place in each one: there are three-battle epics, six-battle epics, eight-battle epics and so on. The yukar plots are usually very simple and whatever intricacy they achieve is only a device for engaging the hero in the battles which make up the main body of the story. But the plot is not what awakens the imagination of the listener, for in stories which are repeated over and over again with little if any variation, what importance would an intricate plot serve? The ending was always the same and the hero’s every adventure and love already well known. It was history, and beyond its commemorative value, the intrigue had to be found in the eloquence of the language and the richness of the descriptions.

In Kutune Shirka, one of the most famous and commonly recorded of the Ainu epics, the hero, after a brief description of his upbringing, goes off to steal a golden otter which the Lord of Ishkar has challenged anyone to catch in exchange for his sister’s hand and a lavish dowry. This theft incurs the wrath of the Repunkur who then launch great wars against him. One Repunkur who knows it is futile to fight against Poiyaunpe, is the shamaness, Nishop-tashum. When it is discovered that she is feigning illness in order to avoid fighting, the Repunkur decide to put her to death. A messenger informs Poiyaunpe of her imminent death and he rushes off to save her. She joins him and, together with his other allies, they vanquish the Repunkur in battle after battle until they finally return to Shinutapka to live out their days, or at least to rest until the next battle: for Poiyaunpe is above all the consummate warrior, and whereas Okikurmi may “live on uneventfully and peacefully,” the Little Mainlander lives only to do battle, and even when he marries, it is a warrior’s marriage:

The young woman has endured painful trials by your side in battle.
Marry her.
Then all your lives, in every battle you will protect and guard each other.

One of the most interesting of the yukar variations is that known as ak-humara-kur, “the one who searches for his younger brother.” Kotan Utunmai, recorded at the end of the 19th century by John Batchelor, is one of these. Poiyaunpe is being raised in a foreign country by his foster sister, Chiwashpet-unmat. One day some Yawnkur spirits come over his house and his own companion spirits fly out to greet them. This is his first hint that something is wrong, for why should his companion spirits speak the same language as that of the “foreign” Yawnkur? He asks his
elder sister to tell him the story of his childhood. Dreading his reaction, she tells him that when he was still a baby, his parents took him and his elder brother, Kamui-otopush, on a trading expedition. As they were passing the island of Sakhalin, they were lured ashore where they were tricked into drinking poisoned wine and then slain. During the battle, Chiwashpet-un-mat took Poiyaunpe, along with his father's armor and sword, to the barren and isolated land known as Kotan Utunnai, Moshir Utunnai, where she has been raising him ever since. In the meantime, Kamui-otopush has been at constant war with the Repunkur in search of his younger brother.44

Against his foster sister's protests, Poiyaunpe immediately puts on his father's armor and flies out the smokehole to look for Kamui-otopush. The battles now begin. He meets six Pestilence Deities who inform him that they have been his elder brother's protective spirits and would now like to be his as well. But Poiyaunpe, in a characteristic fit of irrationality, slays them anyway. Then, accompanied by Chiwashpet-un-mat, he stumbles across a campfire around which twelve soldiers from Metal River, twelve soldiers from Stone River and the arch villain, Dangling Nose, are gathered. Suddenly the ground begins to shake and he sees a "mortally wounded" man tied to the top of a tree. He instantly recognizes the brother he has never seen, Kamui-otopush. Chiwashpet-un-mat cuts him down and carries him off to Shinutapka, the hero's native home, as Poiyaunpe does battle with the soldiers.

After killing the last of them above the "battle chasm," he decides to visit Shipish-un-kur, the great lord whom the soldiers were planning to take Kamui-otopush to as tribute to be killed. Just as he approaches Shipish-un-kur's castle, he overhears the lord's younger sister, the "beautiful" Shipish-un-mat, prophesying his arrival and future victory. He bursts in and grabs her for a shield. As he drags her up the smokehole, her brother claims that her prophecy was a trick to demoralize him and that she is a traitor. Hearing this, she joins Poiyaunpe's side and from every direction soldiers arrive to try and kill them. Then, suddenly, Kamui-otopush appears to join the fight. Shipish-un-mat, through her powers of wizardry, tells Poiyaunpe that Chiwashpet-un-mat is fighting the fierce tumunchi demons and in danger of being killed. Leaving Kamui-otopush to finish the battle alone, they rush off to rescue her in the nick of time:

Only her chest was still attached to her robes. Only her backbone had they been unable to get at. Her entrails were hanging out. By now she would swing her sword once or twice, and in the intervals she would faint and then regain consciousness.45

Poiyaunpe slices her into "several bits" and with a prayer to the gods for her restoration, swings her up into the heavens, where she becomes "a new spirit."46 Then, with Shipish-un-mat's help, they go on to destroy the tumunchi demons. No sooner are they finished, than Shipish-un-mat, with tears in her eyes, prophesies their next battle with the kuruse demons, which "will be worse than two or three human battles."47 The kuruse attack in the form of a blinding black mist from which the hero barely escapes. Through Shipish-un-mat's magic "puffs of breath," he is restored to life only to begin his final and most difficult battle of the epic. The Storm Demon and his sister have impenetrable armor made from "the leather of sea animals and the leather of land animals sewn together." It is only with the greatest effort and a "stroke of luck" that Poiyaunpe is able to pierce the spot where the armor is sewn together. However, this only releases the demons from within who then challenge him to yet another battle in which he also succeeds in vanquishing them.

After this, Shipish-un-mat suggests it is time they had a rest and convinces Poiyaunpe to return to Shinutapka. When they arrive, both Chiwashpet-un-mat and Kamui-otopush are already there, along with Poiyaunpe's other brother and sister. The reunion is a moving one:

We waved swords at each other in salutation up to the point of slashing each other even going beyond slashing each other.48

A feast is then held for the gods who have been so long neglected during the wars and as in the end of an Elizabethan drama, the characters all pair up and decide to get married:
After that
my eldest sister
wrapped a carrying cord
around a large woman's bag.
She went together
with Iyochi-un-kur
to his village.
Iyochi-un-mat
was given in marriage to
my eldest brother, and
we lived on and on
uneventfully.
Kamui-otopush
married
Chiwashpet-un-mat.
The young woman,
Shipish-un-mat,
was given to me in marriage,
and we lived on and on
uneventfully
and peacefully. 49

But Poiyaunpe, like Okikurmi, was not to live out
his days in peace in Yaunkur Moshir. After a lifetime
of continual warfare in defense of the Ainu, he decided
to leave with his brother, Kamui-otopush, and to sail
for Samor Moshir, "the Adjacent Land," where he
planned to join Okikurmi in exile. So one day, the two
brothers gathered all their belongings together and
put them on a ship and sailed away from Yaunkur
Moshir forever. Along the way, they pulled into the
harbor at Otasam, where Kamui-otopush spoke to the
"Young Lord by the Sand," Otasam-un-kur. He told
him that Poiyaunpe was weary from his life of battle
and that they had decided to leave Yaunkur Moshir.
He said that Poiyaunpe had decided to entrust him
with the defense of the Ainu and that from that
moment forth the well-being of the Yaunkur would be
his, Otasam-un-kur's, responsibility. And then they
sailed away.

Otasam-un-kur never becomes the hero Poiyaunpe
was. He follows the great heroic tradition in his
upbringing, his youthfulness and his powerful com-
panion spirits, but his enemies are not the same
enraged demons and fierce Repunkur and his battles
are no longer sought for the society as a whole.
Rather, they are internecine struggles wherein the
foes are often women and other Ainu. In Poi-soya-un-
mat Shiptonere Shikamuinere ("Poi-soya-un-mat
Behaves With Outrageous Arrogance"), Otasam
fights against his betrothed, Poi-soya-un-mat, who in
an attempt to make him love her more, disguises her-
self as a man and breaks all the woman's taboos by
going into the mountains to hunt and fight. In Tuima-
sar-un-kur, the hero is shipwrecked through an
uncle's sorcery and forced to fight against a band of
mysterious demonesses.

It is not only the make-up of his enemies and the
nature of his battles which make him different, how-
ever. It is his whole character, for whereas Okikurmi
and Poiyaunpe had fits of irrationality and erratic
behavior, the new hero is a model of unpredictability.
Sullen and mysteriously silent, he will destroy an
entire village without the least provocation or reason.
Otasam is more unequivocally human than Poiyaunpe
and his behavior therefore, much less exemplary.

The Ainu recognized this new hero as representing
a historical transition which they called shirpan, "the
power is less." They also gave the epics relating the
adventures of Otasam-un-kur a special name. They
called them hau or "voice," as in the voice which is
sung. The hau represent the continued passage into
the everyday 'real' time of the Ainu world. The power
is now literally "less"; the magic made possible by the
culture hero's presence in the world, one step further
removed. The deeds of the new hero are not as mythic
and the division between human and divine more
sharply drawn. There is a new concentration on the
mundane and the commonplace. Details of village life
and the nature of Ainu sexual roles play a much larger
part now. The movement is toward realism in every
way, for not only are the hero and his world less ideal-
ized, but his enemies are also less mystified and more
recognizable.

This trend is also reflected in the hau's singular sty-
listic innovation. They are no longer limited to just one
speaker, and although still in the first person voice,
may now rotate from one participant to another dur-
ing the course of the epic. A hau such as Poi-soya-un-
mat Shiptonere Shikamuinere is actually told from
four different points of view, giving it a sense of per-
spective and psychological depth which the yukar
epic, limited to its one speaker, was never able to
achieve. The plots now become increasingly compli-
cated and intricate and the action more and more
novelistic.

Another epic of the shirpan period is the menoko
yukar or "women's epic," which was passed on and
recited by women alone. The protagonists of these
epics are also all women, whose identity, unlike the
heroes of the yukar and the hau, may vary from epic to
epic. Their contents as well are much more varied
than that of the yukar and the hau. Sometimes they sing of the heroic battles of such women as Shinuptakka-un-mat and Otasam-un-mat, but just as often they are love stories with little or no warfare involved. They are all songs of revelation however. This revelation is not only for the speaker who through the course of the narration realizes who she is but for every Ainu woman whose world is revealed and reaffirmed through the rich and detailed portrayal of her own traditional life.

I knew not what sort of creature I was; as time went on, I gradually became aware.

In *Repunnot-un-mat*, the heroine begins by telling the story of her upbringing with her elder brother, Repunnot-un-kur. They have been raising a bear cub for an *iyomante* ceremony and as the time approaches for the cub to be sent home, Repunnot-un-kur decides to go on a trading expedition to obtain Japanese sake for the festival. When he returns he goes to the neighboring village of Kotanra instead of returning home. Repunnot-un-mat is confused until her bear cub reveals to her in a dream the story of how her elder brother has been misled into thinking she has been having an affair with their cub. He also tells her that she is not who she believes herself to be:

The one who raised you is not your real elder brother.
You are a girl stolen from Tomisampet and now that you are grown up Repunnot-un-kur, the one who raised you, plans to marry you.

The next morning, Repunnot-un-kur attacks with a group of soldiers and Repunnot-un-mat flees on the back of her bear cub. This begins their long, battle-filled journey back to Repunnot-un-mat’s native homeland. With each battle, she becomes more and more “amazed” at how skilled in warfare her bear cub is. When they finally reach Tomisampet, her brothers are overjoyed to see her, and in their gratitude, they give the bear cub “a send-off greater than any god.” But by now Repunnot-un-mat and the bear cub have fallen in love, and so, soon after, he returns in the form of a handsome young man dressed “from head to toe in black robes.” Then, with everyone’s blessings, they get married and “live on and on, eventfully and peacefully.”

There are some menoko yukar which still retain the sakehe of the god songs. Among them are those which deal with the *koshimpu*, who are sprites or fairies that take the form of beautiful, god-like humans. They may come from either the sea or the mountains and are dressed entirely in white or black respectively. Through an elaborate blood-letting rite, they gain total control over young women who are about to be married:

From the front of his robe he took out a red knife and gashed himself with it again and again on the head. From the front of his robe he brought out a pretty little cup and gave me two or three sips of the crimson wine to drink. I drank it up. After that, I bared my own bosom and gashed my own bosom and stabbed my own bosom again and again. I gave the young man two or three sips of the crimson wine for him to drink. He drank it up.

The women then go into a period of insanity which threatens their wedding and thus releases them for the *koshimpu*. But their betrothed recognize what has happened and free them from the spell by means of a violent exorcism.

The historical consciousness which differentiates the menoko yukar and the hau represents a world view which flows throughout all the Ainu songs. It is a vision which, with every celebration and affirmation, also contains a sense of painful loss and abandonment; a feeling of inevitable cultural doom, begun with the departures of Okikurmi and Poiyaupe and continued with the less powerful Otasam-un-kur and the female
heroes of the menoko yukar. It is a continual movement from mythic and epic time into the reality of degraded present time; a persistent relinquishment of both personal and collective power.

As we know, the Ainu’s view of their own history was not merely a mythical one. The Japanese, immediately after the Meiji Restoration in 1868, declared Hokkaido to be an integral part of their empire. Whereas before, they had been content to trade sake, lacquer ware and textiles for Ainu furs, fish and hawks, they now began a massive resettling of the island. By the end of the century, the deer herds were nearly extinct and the hawks gone altogether. Fisheries decimated the salmon and the forests where the Ainu had gathered foods and medicines for hundreds of years cleared away. The bear ceremony and the use of poisoned arrows were outlawed. The Ainu were forced to give up their ancestral ways to become day laborers and contract fishermen for the Japanese. They were no longer hunters and gatherers and the songs which had been such an essential part of their ecological maintenance, began to lose all meaning.

The story from here becomes a familiar one. Ainu children are educated in Japanese schools and within a couple of generations are no longer able to speak their own language. With the pressures of discrimination and the model of a new dominant culture, they are encouraged to reject their own. They remain racially discernible, but are in every other way totally assimilated. Today the only remnant of traditional Ainu life in Hokkaido is in the form of “authentic villages” where Ainu are paid to dress up as their ancestors once did in order to sell souvenirs to tourists from Honshu.

The Ainu’s historical vision is coming to its own logical conclusion. Okikurmi and Poıyampa remain in exile. There is no one left to struggle against the demons. The gods have not been respected and no longer return. The bear, the eagle and the grampus no longer come to visit either. The salmon have gone home in tears for the last time. There is no one left to give their spirits a voice.

Footnotes


2. The Ainu derived their aconite poison from the young side roots of Aconitum japonicum. After drying them from summer till fall, a paste was pounded and the arrows dipped in it. “The activity of the poison is tested by placing a portion on the tongue. To insure its action, each arrow receives portions from three preparations. According to the Ainos, a wounded bear runs at the farthest not more than two hundred meters before falling dead.” (Romyn Hitchcock, “The Ainos of Yezo, Japan,” Report of the U.S. National Museum, Smithsonian Institution Reports for 1890).


4. The term Paleo-Asiatic includes such groups as the Koryaks, Chukchi, Eskimo, Gilaks and Aleuts. It is a catchall definition for various groups in the Siberian area not linked to the Turkic-Mongol language group whom they no doubt predate and were forced out by.

5. Chikisani kamui literally means “wood with which we make fire.” The origin of this name lies in the Ainus’ use of dried elm tree roots for fire drills. The Elm Goddess is not only important as a fire giver but also for the clothing she provides with her inner bark. “After softening the bark in water, they separate it into long slender threads, which they wind in balls and weave on a primitive loom into a coarse yellow fabric. The cloth is brittle when dry but very strong when damp.” (G.P. Murdock, Our Primitive Contemporaries, p. 171.) The Ainu call this cloth atnash and always depict Okikurmi as wearing a coat with a “flaming hem” made from it.

6. The name Okikurmi is of uncertain derivation. The Ainu scholar, Chiri Mashiho, has suggested that it comes from o – “hem,” kiki – “bright,” and ur – “garment”; ergo, “he wears a garment with a bright (or flaming) hem.” His other names are easier to ascertain. A-e-oina kamui and Oina kamui refer to “the god we sing about” or “the god of the oina.” Ainurakkur means “person smelling like a human” and comes from ainu – “human,” rak – “to smell,” and kur – “person.”

Of equal uncertainty is how the culture hero got so many names. They might have their origin in the various Ainu dialects or possibly through different epochs of the songs’ development. The most probable explanation however, is that because Okikurmi was singing the songs himself, there was
no need for him to mention his own name. Therefore, individual reciters may have used their own nicknames when they revealed the speaker as the end of each performance with such phrases as, “so spoke Okikurmi,” or “thus recounted Ainarakkur concerning himself.”

7. The inau are carvings usually made from fresh willow branches of from two to three feet in length. Each inau is made for a specific purpose and therefore the Ainu developed many hundreds of them. They were not only used as gifts for visiting deities but also as mediators to carry messages to them. Wine and food could be put on an inau and quickly transported to the land of the gods. Men alone were permitted to carve them and it was said that if an animal was killed and not offered one, he would wander forever as an evil spirit.


9. Ibid.

10. Within the god songs and epics, these companion spirits are often visualized in the same way one’s aura might be. Okikurmi, in describing an enemy shamaness from Shintopet, says that her visible spirits were like “dark bats flying around her head,” while her invisible ones were like “sparkling lights.”


13. Although the great majority of kamui yukar are both cosmogonic and instructive in terms of proper behavior and the consolidation of beliefs, there are also many humorous ones, recited solely for their value as entertainment. It is also important to note that the songs are not meant for the benefit of mankind alone and that many are told for a divine audience as well.

14. The “beating clubs” were called i-sapa-kik-ni, literally “club for beating them on the head,” and were a substitute for giving each fish an individual inau fetish. It was believed that a fish merely had to be beaten with this club in order to receive the treasured inau it had come for.


17. Each mouthful is a breath-equivalent. Therefore, if any are longer or shorter than the usual five syllables, the one reciting will accelerate or slow down accordingly. Kubodera wrote that the sign of a good reciter was the ability to regularize the lines in this manner.

18. Unfortunately, the great majority of kamui yukar we have today, thanks mainly to the work of Kindaichi Kyosuke and Kubodera Itsuhiko, were recorded by hand and do not include the placement of the sakehe but only a mention of the ones used.


21. The epic diction of the kamui yukar and yukar is used by the Ainu for a variety of other occasions as well, including greetings and salutations, prayers, exorcisms, funeral valedictions, lullabies, and the ritual form of litigation through argument, known as charanke. It is also the language used by shamans in their trances.

22. In her two articles, “Spatial Concepts of the Ainu of the Northwest Coast of Southern Sakhalin” (American Anthropologist, June, 1972) and “Concepts of Time Among the Ainu of the Northwest Coast of Sakhalin” (American Anthropologist, June, 1969), Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney describes how this linguistic view permeates the Ainu concepts of time and space as well, calling them “dyadic” — a “series of contrast sets in binary oppositions.” She divides Ainu space and time into the dichotomized areas of “super-Ainu” and “Ainu.”


This explains Kindaichi’s claim that a good reciter could sing an epic after having heard it only once. It also explains the first step in learning an epic, where only the barest details of the skeletal plot are repeated and everything else is
filled in with “an-onomnomomo.” The kamui yukar, which are usually comparatively short (i.e., from 300 to 1,000 mouthfuls), do not depend as heavily on the often lengthy conventional formulae as do the much longer yukar.

27. For examples of these tales, which are in essence a codification of the shamanic curative rites and combative techniques of reciting origins, see “Song of a Young Wolf God” (Chiri Yukie), “Song of a Chief” (Etenoa), “Lullaby” (Shimukan), “Prayer of Aeonía-kamui” (Nabesawa), and “Song of the Younger Sister of Okikurmi” (Etenoa).

28. Chiri Mashiko, “Yukara No Hitobito To Sono Seikotsu (2),” in Rekishika, No. 3, May, 1954 (Japan). Among the Hokkaido Ainu, most modern shamans have been women. Although women were restricted from worshipping the gods through prayer or with inau, shamanism was considered to be one of the most important feminine virtues along with, what else, but needlework. The parallel masculine virtues would have been eloquence and carving. As will be seen later on, the shamanses play an especially important part in the epics, where the hero always falls in love with an enemy shamaness of “incomparable beauty” who then joins him as a powerful ally.

29. The origin of the word oina is extremely uncertain. Batchelor said it carries the meaning “to teach.” Kitagawa claims it means “inheritance.” Kindaichi and Kubodera both translate it as “to recite the sacred traditions,” while Philippi says it may be derived from the ancient Ainu word for “to sing.” Chiri goes so far as to say that it comes from the Ainu word oira, “to forget,” as in a shaman’s trance and therefore means “to shamanize.”

30. It should be repeated here, to avoid confusion, that not every song sung by Okikurmi is an oina and not every oina is sung by Okikurmi: many of the ones he sings fall into the kamui yukar while at the same time several of the oina are sung by other participants, most notably by his wife-to-be, the daughter of the Owl God, Kotan-kor-kamui kot turesh.

31. Etu-rachichi means “Dangling Nose” and is the name of a Repunkur warrior appearing in many of the yukar epics. Another, apparently older, form of his name, is Etonrachichi, “Dangling Snot.” This character, as will be seen later, bears a striking resemblance to Okikurmi’s arch foe, Mosirechikhik. Kanapet and Skirarpet refer to the enemy locations of “Metal River” and “Stone River” respectively. The warriors of these places wear armor made from the substance named.

32. Yawnkur means “Mainlander” or “People of the Mainland” and is the name the Ainu used to refer to themselves. The habitual enemy of the Ainu are the Repunkur or “People of the Sea.”

33. “The kesorap, ‘speckled feathers,’ is a fabulous bird appearing in Ainu myths and legends. It is apparently based on native ideas obtained from peacock feathers.” (note of the translator, Donald L. Philippi). Here the kesorap is used to represent the arrival of the yawnkur hero.

34. Donald L. Philippi, unpublished translation from Kotan Utunnai, informant unknown, recorded by John Batchelor, Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan.

35. Yukar, which is translated as “song” in kamui yukar, is here translated as “epic.” Kubodera suggests that the epics may also have been called ainu yuakr or “human songs” in contrast to the god songs. Yukar derives from i — pronominal prefix for “it” or “things” and ukar — “to imitate.” Chiri claimed it derives from yu — “game animals” or “deer” and ukar — “to imitate,” meaning “to imitate game animals” and therefore referring to the ancient costumed mimetic dances of the shaman from which the earliest epics may have originated.

36. For more on the Okhotsk culture and their relationship to the Ainu, see Origins and Early Culture of the Koryak, R. S. Vasil’evskii, Russia, 1971.


38. Ibid., p. 222.


40. There is a Japanese drawing of a reciter performing in this manner in Ezo Kiko, Tani Genten, 1799.

41. The hearth is the home of Kamui Fuchi, the Fire Goddess, the most important protector of the Ainu home and the transmitter of all human messages to the gods. Therefore, any epic or god song told in her presence is guaranteed a divine audience.

42. Bear cubs were taken captives and raised as “orphans” by the hunter’s family. In the songs, bear cubs refer to their human families as “foster parents” and early Japanese paintings actually show Ainu women breast-feeding their cubs. After two or three years, the cub was told it was time to return to its “divine parents” now living in the Land of the Gods. Many villages would then gather together for the three-day bear ceremony known as iyomante (“ritual dismissal” or “sendoff”). This ceremony, which the Japanese have since outlawed as “unnecessarily cruel,” was the most important of all Ainu festivals.
43. Philippi, op. cit.

44. Kamui-otopush, whose name means “magnificent hair grows,” is second only to his brother, Poiyaunpe, in his fame and courage as a warrior. Like Samson, his great hair is the symbol of his strength:

   His hair hung in tendrils,
   Hung in eddies over his shoulders
   And in his hair-tips
   The light of day was entangled,
   Gleaming and glinting
   Over the hair of his head
   Golden waters seemed to drip.
   Who could he be this Ainu so splendid?

(from Kutune Shirka, translated by Arthur Waley, p. 225.)

45. Philippi, op. cit.

46. When the body is destroyed, the spirit either “rumbles off” toward the east where it becomes a “living spirit” or it “rumbles off” toward the west to become an “utterly dead spirit.”

47. “Kuruise are man-eating devils said to assume the form of huge predatory insects resembling grasshoppers.” (footnote from the unpublished translation of Kotan Utunnai by Donald L. Philippi.)

48. Philippi, op. cit.

49. Philippi, op. cit.

50. Ainu women had their own clans which they maintained completely separate from the men’s clans. These clans, which women identified themselves with through secret girdles known as upshoro kut, determined marriageability through matrilineal descent while at the same time providing them with their own support groups within the community as a whole. It is possible that menoko yukar had their origins in these clans, but because of the secrecy they maintained, it is impossible to be certain.


53. The bear cub must be dispatched to his divine family before he can change his hayokpe (“armor” or “disguise”) and transform himself into a human. The black robes are a symbol of the bear and the mountains he comes from. Had he been an animal from the sea, his robes would have been white.

54. The koshimpu’s initial manifestation may be in the form of a small animal such as a snail which hypnotizes the woman in preparation for his arrival. Although all the koshimpu in the menoko yukar are necessarily male, there are also female koshimpu who bewitch men in much the same way.


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HASHINE Naohiko

Report #5

"Chief Justice, there will come a time when you will be judged by us Ainu!"

What on earth is an "Ainu"? What is a "native"?

Chief Justice and public prosecutors, I don't know much as I'm not well-educated. However, I have one thing I don't understand. I really want to know the answer. What do you mean when you say, "Ainu"? And what is a "native" to you? If there is a name you use to call the natives or the Ainus, why isn't there our own law for our own society of Ainus and natives? I think it is because you Shamos haven't treated us as human beings. I'm not writing this to evade my punishment. Since I was born into this world and ever since the time I can now recall, I have wondered why I had to have such a hard time, be hit by adults, fooled by kids. Reflecting upon my murder this time, I can't help regretting that if you had had a true heart Yama-chan would never have lost his life. You might say, "What!? You killed him anyway, didn't you? It's your responsibility." This is the way you Shamos always say it. I did murder him, so I have no excuse. I'm ready to take the punishment. But you Shamos must remember, that your ancestors massacred us Ainus. You should recall it every time the word "Ainu" comes across the rim of your mind. If only some ten thousand people of the total Japanese population would seriously consider what the Ainus are, I think it deserves my life. I give my life to you Shamos for that purpose.

You Shamos might think that I, an Ainu, have a hard time of it in jail. My experience is, however, different from what you think. If one once has an experience — of being oppressed in society, it's more comfortable for him in jail. You Shamos may say it's surprising. I say, however, that you don't know the sufferings in society. It's rather a kind of disease for you Shamos. Certainly I suffer, being deprived of freedom in the cell, put in the dark from morning till night. But this is what I want to say: there is a big difference between the past and the present if you compare my sufferings. Though you may not understand me now, I am writing this hoping that you might understand me some day. Born into a human society but not treated as such, as an Ainu native, controlled by the law of Shamo society when something happens; such has been my life. And now I'm imprisoned. I'm treated as a Japanese when they judge me by the law. When I'm out in their society, they oppress us under the name of Ainu or "aborigine," according to their terminology. Each nation has its own language. If the language is different, you belong to a different nation. We Ainus have a language of our own; yet we don't have our own nation. You know that you Shamos forced us to go to your schools, restricting the freedom of the Ainus and making the Ainus the slaves of your society by restricting our freedom. Still more, you teach us the Shamo language instead of the Ainu language in order to prevent the resurrection of the Ainus. It's a great pity.

You Shamos have no right to talk about the "Northern Territory"

The Asahi Newspaper of July 20 says the following. As it has something to do with us I will quote it here.

The Special Committee of the Board of Directors of the House of Representatives finalizes the resolu-
tion to restore the Northern Territory. The Special Committee of the Lower House concerning the Okinawan and Northern Territory Problems, which convened on the 19th in preparation for the resolution concerning the restoration of the Northern Territory to be presented to the present Diet session, coordinated the drafts drawn by each party. A draft "Resolution concerning the Restoration of the Northern Territory" (tentative title) was drawn as a result of their discussion. After it was taken back to each party for discussion, it was decided that the Board of Directors meeting be held on the 20th to finalize the draft. The following is the final draft: "It is much to be regretted by the Japanese people that the Sakhalin Islands of Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashiri, Etorofu, etc., which were originally our territory, have not been returned to Japan for more than a quarter of a century since the conclusion of the Second World War. The government, therefore, should try to settle, in prompt time, this problem concerning the Northern Territory."

Okinawa has been returned, and next come the Sakhalin Islands. This is what you say. I say that the Shamos have no right to talk about the restoration of the Northern Territory. This is because the Sakhalin Islands weren't the Shamos' to begin with. They went to war for selfish reasons, defeated us, and made the nation of Ainus their possession for the same selfish reasons. (If I were cleverer, I could explain the reason better so that you Shamos would understand.) The Asahi Newspaper says, "It's much to be regretted that the Sakhalin Islands of Habomai, Shikotan, Kunashiri, Etorofu, etc., which were originally our territory, have not yet been returned." Your territory? It is not your territory! It is Ainu country. Have you really any right to talk about the restoration of the Northern Territory? Or will you say that you Shamos will retrieve the Northern Territory for the Ainus from the U.S.S.R.? To restore the Northern Territory because the Ainus live there, not because the Shamos live there? This question may not seem to have anything to do with my case, but wherever the word "Ainu" is spoken, Ainus are sure to have some connection. I have hated the word "Ainu" for the thirty-two years of my life in this world. I used to turn off the radio whenever I heard an Ainu-related song on popular-song programs. I used to run away whenever Ainu-related scenes were shown on TV. I saw only the movies, for there I didn't have to feel uneasy, because of the dark. But when the lights were put on in the theatre, I again felt humiliated. I can write my reports as I'm alone in here. If someone was with me, I would never be able to write. Though I've been distressed by the word "Ainu" for many years, I haven't really resisted it at all — I mean "resistance" in the sense of resistance in the courts. I didn't have the courage to do so, but from now on I shall have pride in myself as an Ainu. If someone tries to make a fool of me, I shall certainly fight back.

Chief Justice, do you see what I want to say? Perhaps you don't. You don't because you are a Shamo. Only a man with a serious disease will be able to understand his sufferings, and you, a Shamo, won't understand me for you are not an Ainu . . .

It is Sunday, July 22, today. I have been feeling ill since the 20th of this month. My head is not well today. I have had such symptoms for more than two years. The sentences I have written today may not be very correct, but this is the best I can do. Since I feel ill, I shall stop writing for now.

My grandfather's "Kamui-nomi": Don't be like the Shamos, the liars

I have already written in this report about running away from my step-mother by whom I was brought up. (Read the first chapter.) In the following I will add what I forgot there. My grandfather, Odo, was still well when I returned to my real parents' home after running away from my step-mother in 1960. I learned about the Ainu only from Odo, my grandfather. The night I came back to my parents' house, Odo asked me if I had told my step-mother about coming here. I was very much afraid of him because it was the first time for me to meet him. As this man with a beard that reached to his navel stared at me, I told a lie and said, "Yes, I did." Odo said to me softly, "Don't tell lies, my Ponhekachi (child)." Soon after that, Odo began the "Kamui-nomi" (Ainu prayer to God). I didn't know what he was doing. At the beginning of the second prayer, I took the "Yankara" (low-grade distilled liquor) to him from the cupboard on his request. I sat down, wondering what it was all about. "Naohiko," said my grandfather Odo, "you can't tell lies before the Kamui. So now, I shall ask the Kamui." He glared at me and said, "You told a lie, Naohiko, didn't you? If you didn't, you should be able to grasp this burning skewer. If you haven't told a lie, you won't get burnt." As he offered his "Kamui-nomi" to the red-hot skewer, he actually grasped it. He didn't get burnt at all. It still seems very strange to me. I think perhaps he had
his body well-trained. Odo said to me, “Think about this, Naohiko. Up to now, Ainus have been told lies by the Shamos. And now you imitate those liars, my child?” He warned me severely, “If you tell lies like the Shamos, there is nothing more for me to say to you. Go where the Shamos give you sayo (food).” Then, he added tenderly, “Naohido, it is going to be your world soon. From old times Ainus have never told lies. Don’t be like the Shamos who tell lies.” After that he told me the following story.

“Naohiko, one time when I was about 30 years old, I went into the mountains to capture racoon dogs. I went there with a pair of shoes in snow sandals since there were no long boots like the ones we have today. I noticed someone coming after me as I went about seven miles into the mountain. As soon as I stopped walking, it stopped too. I kept on walking with a strange feeling. I wondered if a racoon dog or a Shamo was trying to threaten me. I continued to walk, pretending not to have noticed anything. I soon found out, however, that I was fooling myself. It was nothing but the hair on my legs. They had been frozen, and as my legs hit each other, the iced hair made a sound. I was so young in those days. This was how strong-willed I was then compared to the Shamo youths. You, Naohiko, must grow strong after this. We Ainus have our own ways. Never shed tears. If a Shamo calls you names because you are an Ainu, ask him back if we Ainus have tails.”

It seems to me as if this were told me only yesterday. I still remember Odo’s words. His lesson was that when a Shamo makes a fool of you because you are an Ainu, be sure to fight back. Even though I am very small, I have never been beaten down by anybody. I have fought numerous times because I was called “Ainu.”

Even when I was taken to the police or any other place, I would never say that I had fought because I was called “Ainu.” When I was vending “o-den” (stew-type food) in Yoshiwara in around 1957 or 58, I was stopped by the Asakusa Police by mistake. The policemen there bullied me around. Though I remained patient while being hit and kicked around, the policemen put me in front of the other suspects and forced me to make a show of myself, since I was an Ainu from Hokkaido.

Even now I can recall how humiliated I felt then. Since then I have never told anybody that I am an Ainu. Whenever someone asked me meanly whether I was an Ainu, I would knock him down. So people who knew me well would never mention the word “Ainu.” And all my problems till now had some connection with the word “Ainu.” You Shamos may say, “What is wrong with calling an Ainu, ‘Ainu?’” You may be right. But there should be a better attitude toward using the word “Ainu.” Such an uneducated man as I should not have to explain why. You, you Shamos, know it best of all.

We Utaris are now a minority. Because we were oppressed by the Shamos, we have lost the pride of the Ainu. The Ainu youths have gone to Honshu (main island of Japan); some people have hidden the fact that they are Ainu, have married Shamos, and have become Ainu Niseis and Sanseis (second and third generations). This is all due to the heartless conduct of you Shamos. Perhaps you don’t understand these things. You study only laws, and when something happens, you know only how to make judgements with these laws. And these laws are the laws made by Shamos for their own purposes.

As I have killed a man, I cannot help but be judged by you Shamos. But there will come a time when you Shamos will be judged by us. You will be judged because you have robbed our Ainu-Moshiri (Ainu republic). This is written in history, so Mr. Chief Justice, you should be able to understand it too. The Shamos are cunning fellows. In spite of the fact that the Shamo ancestors have, in actuality, done evil things to us, you continue to oppress us instead of making up for what you have done.

*Retrieve the name of the trampled Utari*

Mr. Justice, do you know this song? “Though we have lost our nation, names, houses, and fields, we will never lose our hearts.” Whenever I read this song, I feel overwhelmed. Yes, “someone should retrieve the name of the trampled Utari.” Even an uneducated fellow like me can understand this. You, too, should understand it. Or is it that no one can understand it except the Ainus? No, it couldn’t be, because the person who wrote this song is Yaeko Mukai.

As I have said before, I’m not asking you to protect us Ainus. We can live by ourselves, without the protection of the Shamos. If we had our own land, our Ainu-Moshiri, we would never need the prevailing “culture” like today, nor would we need modern science. We want, more than anything else, the nature that our ancestors worshipped and preserved. Money, civilization, science, etc. have nothing to do with us.
Ainus. You should use them in your own Shamo society. We are troubled by the scientific society you made. Nature still remains, but it is fast diminishing. When I was in Hokkaido around 1950, I never heard of environmental pollution or contamination. Things have changed very much since then. Even a first grader would understand it. Why must our nation, our Ainu-Moshiri, be polluted by you Shamos? Why haven't you been judged by the law for having killed a great many people in the war, in environmental pollution and contamination? People's lives cannot be bought or sold for money, and yet the courts settle these problems with money, claiming that they couldn't have been helped because it was a war, or because it was caused by environmental pollution. If I were better educated, I wouldn't have to write as childishly as this.

Anyway, I don't want you to pollute our Ainu-Moshiri. You ignore our reasonable rights, try to hush us up with your power, and no one is really blamed. Perhaps this is all very simple to you judges and public prosecutors. But as the Japanese laws are made this way now, you judges and public prosecutors cannot do anything even if you wanted to. The job of the public prosecutors is to find flaws even in an evident fact. It can't be helped that you make judgments under the laws of the Shamo society. And the public prosecutors may want to say, "This problem has nothing to do with your case." Certainly it doesn't. But think of how I have been forced to live this way all my life. And please think about what the Ainus are. You would be able to understand us much better if you were in my place.

When I was out of jail around July of 1972, I went to Mukoai Hospital in Kanda because I didn't feel well. While I was sitting in the waiting room, a stranger spoke to me and his first word was, "You're an Ainu, aren't you?" The man said this in a loud voice, and all the people around me turned to look at me. Not being well then, I couldn't get angry at all; instead I felt very humiliated. I don't know why, but the man said in an even louder voice, "I'm studying the Ainu language." Then he said some strange words that I couldn't understand. The patients gathered around me. I felt so angry, vexed and ashamed. Talking with other men, the man boastfully continued to use the queer words. I was just about to hit him, but I stopped. I said to him, "Neptan ogui-mashita." Looking at me, the man said, "Hmmm. So, you are an Ainu!" Getting so angry, I asked him whether he could understand what I had said. The man answered proudly, "Why not? I'm studying your language." As the people around me looked at him with admiration, I asked him to explain the meaning of what I had said. Then, he tried to change the topic, evading my question. I had said to him, "Neptan ogui-mashita," which means, "The brat pissed." I came back home although I was still feeling sick.

Judges and public prosecutors, now I'd like to ask you again what you think Ainus are. Why do you scorn us and oppress us? I ask this because you despise us in so many respects. Japanese people go to foreign countries and do evil things there too. Their conduct is the manifestation of the meanness of the Japanese people. The Japanese people don't know their manners as compared to most other peoples. You Shamos do evil things even in foreign countries because you never really know manners in your own country. You Shamos might ask us in return, "Do you Ainus know your manners?" Of course we do, I would reply. If we Ainus had our own nation, we would love our nation, we would never destroy nature, and the Ainu-Utaris would never fight with each other. I think this is what "manners" really means. I think if you knew your manners, you would not have taken our Ainu-Moshiri by force. You not only took the Ainu-Moshiri by force, but also our language, which is most important for a human being, that is, for us Ainus.

You take pride in being a Shamo since you were born a Shamo. You want to hand down this pride to posterity, don't you? And we, too, want to do the same, much more so than you. You think that culture, machines and science are the best things for man, and you avail yourselves of them. But in this respect we are far different from you. If we had our Ainu-Moshiri, we would remain in harmony with nature and would preserve the things that Kamui has given us. If we held Ainu-Utari love for one another, what more could we ask for?

A few days ago, there was a newspaper article about the hijacking of a Japan Air Lines plane. It said, "The country will submit to the criminal's demand." Certainly, I agree that human life is sacred. The nation has an obligation to rescue this precious life even at the cost of selling itself. So, I ask you, "What would you do if I were the criminal?" Will you Shamos return the Ainu-Moshiri to us?

I realize that it's too late to say anything now because of the things that have already taken place. Though I myself can hardly do any great deed, the
Ainus themselves are a great people. I may safely say that someone among us Ainu-Utari will surely restore our Ainu-Moshiri even at the risk of losing his own life. Even Christ, who risked his life, is still respected now. We Ainus have had great men like Shaku-shain, too, but his greatness has been neglected by you. Shaku-shain is our Ainu hero, whom you have reduced to an ignoble, money-making object of curiosity. It's unfortunate indeed. As some of us Ainus have also been making the same mistakes, I know that I cannot easily criticize the Shamos on this point. But it is not the Ainu-Utaris that have made them make mistakes; it is your country that has made him ignoble. The Moshiri are a nation which has had no need for money or other things ever since the time of our ancestors. Judges, if you can't believe what I say in this report, read our Ainu history. You will find that all of it is true.

J udges: your ancestors killed our ancestors

How have the teachers been teaching us about Ainus in schools? I was never taught about Ainus when I was in school. I didn't go to school often, anyway. But when I did, I was made to feel uneasy all the time. I often went to a different class during history classes. So I was always studying things which had nothing to do with history. I remember that especially on such days, the teachers seemed very tender-hearted to me. I didn't have any textbooks either. In short, I had nothing to do with most classes at school. If you want to teach us something, you have to be good teachers. When they taught us about Emperor Hirohito at school, they taught us about him as if he were God, setting him on a pedestal, in spite of the fact that he is just another human being. Why? Why? If Emperor Hirohito can be the monarch of Japan, then it's natural for the Ainus to want a head of the Ainus.

Perhaps you Shamos will disagree with me if I say such things. It's natural. The Shamos have pride in themselves, and so do we Ainus. Our pride, however, is greater for we are the real natives of Japan. We need not get angry at being called “Ainus.” It shows that people don't know how to use the word “Ainus.” It's impossible for the Shamos to understand the meaning of the word “Ainus.” It's a bad habit of the Shamos to leave everything unknown. “Ainus” means “human being,” but it doesn't mean “all human beings.” We don't call the bad people “Ainus.” We call them “uempo.” We use the word “Ainus” for “Ainus nenoan Ainu” which means “humanly human being.” Consequently, “Ainus” means human beings worthy of respect. Long time ago, we called the Japanese people “Shisamu” which means “great neighbor.” You can see from this that we never made fools of our neighbors in mainland Japan. The Shamos, in return, call us Ainus “aborigines” and refuse to treat us as human beings. When they see us, they say, “A-inu!,” meaning, “Oh, a dog has come!” (This expression in Japanese coincides with the phonetic pronunciation “Ainu.”)

I'm getting used to being called “dog” everytime they see me. It's a sad thing, though. When I walk along the passage of the north building of the Tokyo Penitentiary to go to see visitors, some people shout, “Hey, Ainu, Ainu...” at me. Others call me names in loud voices, saying, “Mr. Dog is passing by!” I always really feel like hiding in a hole when this happens. I used to resent this so much when I thought about it in my room alone. I would say to myself, “I shouldn't have fought with such an intimate friend as Yamachan. If there was anybody I should have fought against, it was those guys.” I would never cry in front of people, but when I returned to my room and was alone and no one was watching, I used to cry very hard. I used to think often that if it weren't a crime to kill people, I would like to wipe out all the Shamos in Japan. It would be a lie if I said I had never thought of it.

One time a Minister of Japan said, “The poor should eat barley.” Everyone, at that time, got very angry. It was because what he said concerned them. When the matter does not concern them, the Shamos look upon it with indifference. Much worse, they are completely unconcerned about the Ainu problem. When they go to Hokkaido for sightseeing, they see the Ainus merely as sightseeing objects. It is not the real Ainu that they see. Nevertheless, when they really do meet an Ainu, they harass him. What have you done to us Ainus for the one hundred years since the beginning of the Meiji Era; for the four hundred years since the Tokugawa Era; and for the two hundred of those years, to reduce it a little, when I wasn't even born yet? Two hundred years may not seem very long. The facts, however, are shown vividly in your history.

Prime Minister Tanaka talks about the alteration of the Japanese Islands, but, for that matter, the alteration has been going on for the past two hundred years. For the Japanese, the Ainus have been a cumbersome presence. The country was made theirs only by assimilating the Ainus. The Shamos have been
altering this country for centuries; their alteration was of the most ignoble kind, the alteration of human beings.

When the human alteration of the Ainus was nearing completion, there came the alteration of the Japanese Islands. If things were that easy, even the Ainus would not have suffered so much. I guess the alteration of the Japanese Islands means letting the Ainus eat polluted fish. The Ainu-Moshiri, whether or not it's part of the Japanese Islands, has completely changed now and nothing retains its former image.

Mr. Judge, haven't your father or your ancestors killed anybody? If you trace back far enough, there is no saying they haven't. Your forefathers killed my ancestors. I'll never let you say they haven't. They have, because you Shamos took our Ainu-Moshiri by force.

Chief Justice, what you ought to study before you judge me is the “Law of Protection for Former Natives”

There is a book I read recently. I'll describe it briefly for you. Read it and consider it well.

An old woman, who was getting worried about her old age, said one time to her grown-up children who had families of their own, "I want to divide my land for you while I'm alive." When they went to register the land, the authorities concerned told them that they had found out that the land did not belong to the old woman. The confiscation clause of Article 3 of the "Law of Protection for Former Natives" had been applied to her land. The part which said, "When the land is not cleared within 15 years..." had allowed the Department of Home Affairs to confiscate her land in 1905. After 1945, all granted lands had to be put under inspection by the administration as to the conditions of land clearance. The old woman who couldn't read or write probably hadn't gone through the procedures which were required every 15 years. Nevertheless, she had lived there and had brought up her children by taking advantage of the land. All right, I'll admit that it was the fault of the old woman on that point. Practically speaking, however, who could have cleared the 5 hectares (about 12 acres) of land which had been granted to them by the "Law of Protection for Former Natives" in the Meiji Era? I heard from elderly Utaris that there were no farmhorses to be used. Without farmhorses or satisfactory farm tools, how could they have cleared the wastelands of Hokkaido? Judges, clearing the land is nothing like what you might think it is in your mind. They struggled hard to overcome the hardships. There is a life-and-death difference from just judging people with a pencil in your hand.

In the case of this old woman, the land was poor, with many big rocks, and it was in the midst of a mountain range with virgin forests. What kind of "protection" law is this which allows the confiscation of the land from someone on the condition that he doesn't clear such land within 15 years? The old woman was born there in the year 15 of the Meiji Era (1882), and her parents or ancestors had also grown up and lived on this land. They were robbed of this land under the name of the "Law of Protection for Former Natives." The hell with such protection laws! The "Protection Law," to me, is a law which forsook these people.

I think the "Protection Law" was all a plot of yours. We Ainu-Utaris could have maintained the Ainu-Moshiri by ourselves if you hadn't taken away the Ainu-Moshiri from us by force. Under the illusive name of the "Protection" law, you took not only the Ainu-Moshiri but also the things which had belonged to individuals. The Japanese law certainly is a splendid law! It's not a crime for her as a nation to rob a "country," and yet, if we make trouble, it punishes us without mercy. Or, would you Shamos claim that you bought our Ainu-Moshiri with money? I have read some history books, and I have never come across stories about buying or selling; but I have read stories of the many massacres of the Ainus.

Judges, before you judge me, I want you to check once more on what the "Law of Protection for Former Natives" is. I say this because the acts of Shamos in Shiraoi where I was born are beyond my endurance. As I have mentioned before, it's not just in Shiraoi, either. For that matter, I can't stand what is happening in all the tourist places where there are Utari Associations. Pretending to sympathize with the Ainus from whom you robbed the Ainu-Moshiri by force, you Shamos created these Utari Associations. You made the associations not for the Ainus but for the town officers or for the Shamos to make dirty money. Under the pretense of town development, you robbed the household goods which had been used in our Ainu homes for a long time. It's all very simple. You did it to make money for yourselves. If you had really done it for us Ainus, why should Shamos always be appointed the head of such associations? You know well enough that Utari means "Ainu comrade," don't you? Why then do Shamos take the seat of the head of Utari associations? The Shamos are so sly in every-
thing. Those in Shiraoi where I was born are the worst of all. Do you know how many pure Ainus there are now? You don't even have to count. Chief Miyamoto who has been the chief from the old days and who has succeeded to the true pride of the Ainus and a few others are about all there are. Poor Chief Miyamoto, he was robbed of his chieftom by people such as Sugiyama, Arai, Yamamaru, and Asari, the town head of Shiraoi. The present chief doesn't know anything and he has practically no authority. And yet, he is so eager to make money. He is only an Ainu spectacle fixed up by the Shamos. I don't want to call them "Ainu" or "Utari." If anything, they are more fit to be called buffoons. I have been troubled by the word "Ainu" up to now, but from now on, I shall take as great a pride in being an Ainu as the Shamos do in being themselves.

Although I have been oppressed till now, and still will be from now on, I will fight back when they fight me. I don't care if I get sentenced for many years in jail by the judges and prosecutors. To me the prosecutors are "demons" and the judges are "Shamos" anyway. Both of them have been our enemy since the time of our ancestors. Prosecutors and judges, have you ever heard of a story like this?

Because the Shamos are egocentric animals

The story goes like this. I was in a circus. One time I hit the son of the circus leader. He tied a rope around my whole body and called me all kinds of dirty names. He said, "You Ainus don't need names. You are not an Ainu but a dog. You know you have been kept alive because we let you have food. There was a man named Oba among your Ainu seniors. He was arrogant enough to be a school teacher; so, do you know what name we gave him? I'll let you know if you don't. You Ainus don't need names to begin with. But anyway, we Shamos gave a name especially to him. We called him Oba Bafun (Big horse shit)." Mr. Prosecutor, judges, I'm not talking about a comedy show or anything like that. You might laugh at it, but for me it is no laughing matter. Do you see that you Shamos have not treated us Ainus, the natives of Japan, as human beings? Or perhaps you still don't understand. You Shamos are egocentric animals anyway. I got quite angry at the talk, and that night after everyone had fallen asleep, I went to my room, which was an elephant's pen, and got the elephants' shit and piled it up like a mountain of shit in the center of the circus stage. As I knew I would be hit if I stayed there, I ran away. I went to see the movies the next day, but unluckily the circus company was there at the same theatre. The circus show was closed that day because of the shit. They had been cleaning up the mess, and for the afternoon they had come to the movies. At first I didn't know they were there, so I was enjoying the movie. But I was found by the company, brought back to the circus, and tortured to their satisfaction.

The circus leader asked me why I had done such a thing. I told him about last night's incident. The leader, saying nothing to me, gave me five thousand yen and told me to do something to divert my mind from such matters. Prosecutors and Judges, would you have understood the meaning of what I had done? I think I was 16 then. I asked him, "What's the difference between you and me? I've lived with the circus for the past two years or so and all that while I was called 'Ainu.' I don't care that I'm an Ainu. I've come this far thinking that I will surpass you some day. You know that I am performing as well as any other guy in the circus. Is there a person who can perform the trapeze as well as I can among the 20 top players in your company? They are 'top' in name only. Since I was helped by your father and was taken care of like a son, I have endured all the disgraces and maltreatment." The leader answered, "You are too young to understand anything. Naohiko, the proverb says that adversity often leads to perfection. You are thinking only of the present. Certainly you are good in your performances, but don't forget there is no end to perfection." As I was still a youngster, his words were painful for me. I soon left the circus, but I still feel a bad after-taste for having quit it.

The Elephants are not mean like you Shamos

Time flies. Sixteen years have passed since then. I wonder whether the elephants I tamed are still alive. I liked those big elephants named "Gingyo" and "Mampo." I like them better than you Shamos. If the elephants had been human, I would have made them my wife even if they were the ugliest creatures of them all. You might think it strange that I slept with the big elephants for more than two years. Elephants are beasts from man's point of view. But I say elephants are not mean like you. I used to lie on Gingyo's trunk at night, and she would always move me aside in the morning so I would not be in her way. She never stepped on me. I think there is nobody in this country who has lived with elephants. Right?

The elephants never do such hateful deeds as you
Shamos. The elephants can distinguish between good and bad people even with their small eyes. I was able to sleep in the straws where the elephants slept because we had sympathy for each other. The elephants are living animals too. So they too had their bad feelings. When other people came into their pen, they got restless and very excited. When I went in they would get calm. It was not always so, however. I used to buy them their favorite food at my own expense and give them food when they didn't calm down. I didn't have to hit them. Strange to say, sometimes they would not eat at all.

One day just such a thing happened. My salary then was so low that I hesitate to write the amount here. I was in trouble because I didn't have any money at all at that time. There was a lot of food in the store, but it wasn't mine. You also have pets, don't you? Those two elephants were more dear to me than anything else. I stole a box of sponge cake from the circus stand and gave it to them. But instead of eating it, the elephants grabbed the cake with their long trunks and threw it at me. I thought I knew their temperament, but I was so young then. When I thought they were making light of me, they started to look hateful to me. So, all that day the elephants couldn't put on the show. They wouldn't obey me, much less any one else. When somebody else went in, they became violent. It was no good even when I gave them leaves to eat. I didn't know why, but I started to feel so sorry for myself that I went to the back of the tent and cried. Wondering what on earth I could do for them, I returned to the tent and found them both lying down.

I saw it was serious and thought perhaps I had better call for a veterinarian. I had thought that only I could take care of them, but I realized to my distress that I could do nothing. Everybody in the circus was at a loss. Elephants cost some million or ten million yen. Moreover, even the veterinarian couldn't cure them. After a whole day, the elephants were so ill that they couldn't even move their own bodies. All that while I too felt so sorry for them that I didn't feel like eating anything. According to the veterinarian's diagnosis they were hopeless. That night, lying beside the elephants, I put, very casually, little pieces of salt in their mouths. Then, all of a sudden, the sick elephants started to get up. Although I didn't know their language, I spoke to them as I would to my brother. I stayed up all night to feed them salt little by little. That way I was able to make them stand again by the next day. That the elephants got into such a condition was due to my neglect of my duty. How much they should be fed "salt," "bran," "fodder" was set. Vitamins and all kinds of medicine are mixed with these. I used to think then that all animals are living creatures just like ourselves, and that you always have to care for them to satisfy them. I lived with Gingyo and Mampo until I left the circus.

I loved those elephants though they were beasts, and yet I could never really trust the Shamos. It was because animals don't tell lies. And also, once they are mistreated, they will never again come near you. Men change their attitudes if you give them money, but, prosecutors, these giant elephants loved me for those two years, letting me sleep safely beside them until morning. I did have some hard times with them once in a while. Since they are animals, they would sometimes shit or piss on me. One of the worst times was when they ate the only suit I had. If it was only the suit, it wouldn't have been so bad. They ate up everything I had, leaving me just the clothes I had on. In anger I hit them with a stick. As I had never hit them until then, they seemed to be so surprised that every time I went into the tent to feed them the fodder they would fall on their feet and bow to me. Though I kept pretending not to notice it, they remained bowing to me all the while I was there. I was moved to tears in spite of my will. Perhaps you Shamos have never had such an experience. I jumped at the giant elephants, hitting them all over as I cried. As though they knew my feelings, they remained patient and let me cry to my satisfaction.

I swear I will fight to retrieve the Ainu-Noshiri from you hateful Shamos

The reason I write this is as follows. We are hairy from our birth and may seem mean-looking to you Shamos. What I want to say is that no one can tell a people's character from the way they look. We Ainu-Utaris have particular features and this causes us great difficulty in finding jobs or getting married with Shamos. Sympathy, which even the elephants understand, is what you Shamos lack. It is not that you don't know it; you are just so concerned about your own desires that you don't even try to understand it.

You judges are one of them. Think seriously about this. You have studied hard to get promoted and have been judging people with the laws that you Shamos made. But have you ever once given a thought to us Ainu-Utaris when you go home and relax? You know that the Ainu-Moshiri was not part of your country
until the end of the Edo Era. In the Meiji Era, the Japanese government included the Ainu-Moshiri as a part of the Japanese national territory, and sent in a lot of Shamos to Hokkaido from Honshu. The so-called “land reclamation” which the Shamos speak so highly of is really a hateful word for the Ainus. What it meant in reality was that our land was ruined and stolen. We were cheated, driven hard and discriminated against. For us, the Shamos are hateful indeed.

Even though our lives have been destroyed, the Ainu language and soul still remain. Moreover, the Shamos forced us to assimilate so that they could rob us, and they taught us that being an Ainu was a bad thing. Those who accepted assimilation did not try to transmit this story to the next generation. These are all your doings. As part of the assimilation policy, we were taught only Japanese and the children gradually lost their mother tongue. I belong to such a generation.

Although your side has kept a great many documents about the fights with the Ainus, only a few have remained with us Ainus. It’s not that there are none. They were cunningly carried away and were made to be forgotten through your assimilation policy. All of us who have retained the power of being an Ainu know what has happened.

The Shamos often mention the Yukara, the Ainu Saga, when talking about the Ainus. Some speak very highly of the Yukara regardless of whether or not they really know about it. But why is this? That you praise the Yukara so much means that you have accepted the Ainus as the natives of Japan, isn’t it? The Yukara has been handed down to us through the many generations of Ainu-Utaris. But you Shamos have made only your heroes famous and have treated us only as aborigines and kept on discriminating against us. In truth, it is quite the opposite, and you Shamos don’t have real heroes. How can you call them heroes when they are the ones that slaughtered the Ainus?

Judges, what would you do if you were an Ainu? You might be able to answer me since you people are clever.

I’d like to finish writing my report since the court for my case is going to be held in another month. It took about four and a half months for me to write this.

Judges and prosecutors, you might think it is strange that it should have taken me so long to write this. I’m ashamed to say this, but I didn’t even go to elementary school. I don’t know how to write well. I know my sentences aren’t very good. I was barely able to write this report by using the dictionary to find the Kanjis (Chinese characters). Sometimes it took a whole day to write just one page. Some day this report will be read by the people, not by you judges or prosecutors. But if you do read it, I hope you won’t read it just for fun, or just because it has Ainu in it. Perhaps you can read this report in some ten minutes. It was like walking on a thorny path for me to write this. It was that difficult for me to finish it within the four and a half months. If you dare to read it just for fun, I swear you will not die a peaceful death.

When I finish the five years of punishment in prison (according to the first verdict), I am going back to the deep mountains of Hokkaido, and there I shall maintain my Ainu pride until I die. I am determined, indeed, never to become such a coward as I have been till now. This means that even when I am oppressed by you Shamos, I shall never lose my courage.

We Ainu-Utaris have been robbed of our language, robbed even of our Ainu-Moshiri. I intend to fight against you Shamos so that after some time, some hundreds or thousands of years, our Ainu-Moshiri will again become ours. I don’t mean fight in the sense of hitting or kicking. I’ve lived like that so far, but not any more. Uneducated as I am, I now know the word “pride.” I don’t care if you Shamos say that it is the only thing I know.

August 3, 1973
Frank Hoff

The 'Evocation' and 'Blessing' of Okina:
A Performance Version of Ritual Shamanism

Translator's Preface

What I am calling the 'Evocation' and the 'Blessing' of Okina are only two of thirty-five items which comprised an annual performance that took place until 1873 in the precinct of the temple of Kiyomizu Kannon at Futto (Aichi Prefecture, Kita-Shidara-gun, Toei-machi, Futto). Other festivals still performed in the area today include items similar to what is translated here: a sequence of songs (sarugo-bayashi) and a long recitation (katari) delivered by a figure wearing the characteristic old man's mask known as the okina mask. Though no longer a living tradition the version recorded at Futto is fuller in certain respects than those performed elsewhere today. For that reason I have chosen to translate it.

A certain nostalgia adheres to the demise of the Futto performance. Disbanded almost within living memory the festival left behind it masks and some other items as well as texts and written records. An effort to revive the festival not many years ago ended in failure. The first scholar to publish extensive information about the festivals in this area, Hayakawa, Kōtarō, began his investigations early enough in this century to be able to recover and preserve a valuable personal account of what it was like to take part in the festival at Futto; this supplements the material remains. The photograph and the memories of a single participant, who took part on two occasions, when he was seventeen and again when he was eighteen years old, became a part of Hayakawa's book published in 1930. The face seems to look out from these pages to remind us of how frail a link kept alive a certain number of these large-scale performances in Japan during the painful transition into our own age.

The text of the 'Evocation' and 'Blessing' published by Hayakawa was recorded in 1864. Since the appearance of his book two somewhat earlier texts have come to light, one of 1805, another of 1859. Written texts were intended either to refresh the performer's memory beforehand or actually to be read during the performance. We are not dealing, then, with an orally inventive tradition.

The festival was a conglomerate made up of events from several different performance types which originally were independent of one another. The 'Evocation' and the 'Blessing' once belonged in the repertory of groups of performers known as sarugaku. Groups of this sort made an important contribution to the development of classical Noh. They were active in the main centres of culture from as early as the late Heian period (794–1185). During the Japanese Middle Ages, especially during the turmoils of the 'Period of Wars,' political and economic necessity drove some of these groups into exile deep in the countryside. At places such as Futto they were able to survive. In this way sarugaku contributed its performing arts to the formation of local festivals.

In the fourteenth century the repertory of sarugaku groups in the main centres of culture, the Nara and Kyoto area, developed along a line leading toward classical Noh. In so doing, however, earlier types of performance were neglected and eventually dropped from the repertory as change led toward newer forms. Events fell out of use, then, which had served as a starting point for a process destined to culminate in the special type of play we are familiar with from the works of Kan-ami (1333–1384) and Zeami (1363–
In the countryside, on the other hand, earlier forms continued to be given in much the same way as they were when first brought to a place like Futto. Both separation from the centres of culture, where competition and an increasingly sophisticated audience hastened innovation in this period, and an association with the local festival served to fossilize events like the 'Evocation' and 'Blessing' which had once been a part of the evolving sarugaku repertory.

There is a record from 1867 of the order of events of Futto dengaku, as the festival is called. After a series of dances, some of which are related to ones still performed today elsewhere in neighboring areas, came the 11th, 12th and 13th numbers on the program; this is the sequence: sarugo-bayashi, Okina's katari and Sanbasô's katari. The order itself is significant: sarugo-bayashi is what I call the 'Evocation' of Okina. Sarugo (the word is related, of course, to the sarugaku performance type mentioned above) is the older name for an event involving a performer who wears a mask of the okina type, that is the mask of an old man. The word bayashi (hayashi) means to provide musical or rhythmic excitement. These songs serve as 'Evocation.' A comparative study of related performances elsewhere in Japan and of sequences of songs similar to these still sung today in festivals in the area adjacent to Futto suggests that the older intention of placing the number sarugo-bayashi first in the sequence was to imitate song which was sung in ritual in order to manifest a spirit.¹ A comparison of the imagery of song which accompanies shaman rites outside Japan tends to substantiate this observation based upon a comparative study of performance within Japan.²

After the song sequence a performer wearing the okina mask comes into the main performing area where he recites the long text translated here. The recitation, or 'Blessing' (the Japanese word, katari, generally means simply 'telling' or 'tale') is an articulated whole containing material some of which we might even term, in a suitably comparative context, an 'origin' or a 'creation myth.' A comparative study of some dozen texts, including ones still performed, shows that the following items constitute the complete version of this type of katari:

(1) First, Okina explains the origin of his mask.
(2) He says that he has appeared at the festival with this mask in order to dance a number in the sarugaku repertory.

(3) He worships the four directions and recites a passage about the past.
(4) He tells about the long-lived Old Man, himself, of course.
(5) He asks the people at the festival to provide music (hayashi) and then celebrates the everlasting felicity of the local 'lord' by enumerating in detail many types of blessings: treasures from India; treasures from China; treasures from the Devils' Island; treasures from Japan.
(6) He loads the blessings onto a boat to distribute among shrines of the various provinces of Japan, placing the treasures safely away in their storehouses.
(7) On his return trip he puts into his boat pestilence and evils abroad in the land. In this way he expels them from Japan, driving them off to the distant Southern Seas.
(8) Thus Okina insures endless blessing to the men and women of the village who are assembled together at its festival.
Lastly, he dances manzairaku to conclude his appearance. (Manzairaku means literally 'music for ten thousand years,' a term frequently used to designate items of a congratulatory nature in Japanese performing arts.)

'Evocation' and 'Blessing' were once within the repertoire of sarugaku groups. It seems likely that performers of this sort either created, or borrowed from elsewhere, a two part performance event which imitated true shamanism in one of the forms in which it was actually occurring 'outside the theatre': to manifest a spirit and to listen to its utterance. We are in an area of surmise, of course, especially if we care to go by means of a comparative study beyond the implications of texts as they can be examined in a version such as that at Futto. There is little concrete or datable evidence for the transition from ritual to performance. Earlier perhaps the katari may not have been exactly the one translated here. Perhaps it changed from recitation to recitation, first reproducing closely the spontaneous outpouring of a shaman, as we sometimes imagine that, until it reached the form, already relatively sophisticated and syncretic of Buddhist and Shinto elements, which was finally fixed in the tradition of sarugaku which came to Futto.

We may never have direct evidence for what came before texts such as these. We can, on the other hand, speculate with some accuracy upon their contribution to the later development of theatrical form. Imagine a performance event in which the katari is spoken by a performer wearing a mask type other than that of the old man, a young warrior for example. Imagine that what he speaks is not Okina's 'Blessing' but a secular story — the death of a warrior in battle, for example. What results with an alteration of mask type and katari material is not too remote from the normal 'spirit play' (mugen-nô) associated with classical Noh.

For the historian of theatre, then, the texts have the value of suggesting that some kind of process led from ritual shamanism to a pair of events like these at Futto; and that later these, in turn, contributed to the theatre in the period of Kanami and Zeami.

I am not translating the third item of the sequence at Futto, the katari of Sanbaso. This is because portions of the text present philological problems of some dimension. The performer wears a black mask. The text seems to repeat or echo at a human level the katari of Okina. This relationship — a 'straight' number and its 'parody' — is called modoki in the technical language of ritual and performance in Japan. Although the full translation is not given a short passage about the birth of Sanbaso will illustrate the nature of the third number in the sequence: Okina speaks of everlasting things at the opening of his katari; Sanbaso in the following speaks of human impregnation and birth.

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**'Birth of Sanbaso' from his katari**

The season was New Years.

My father and mother were happily arranging dango and mochi.

They had had a lot to eat and drink, and so

'Let's find some quiet place and lie down together,

'Let's find some quiet place and lie down,'

Is what they said.

Being by nature cleverer than my father, I

Crawled up and, lying down beside their pillow,

I didn't let them know that I was listening.

'We are stuck together. We're stuck together,' they said, and so

From that moment on I lodged in my mother's stomach.

One month, two months, three months, seven months, nine months, ten months.

'I think I will have my baby now.'

It was sometime in the middle of June when
My mother gathered together seven or eight handfuls of barley husk and of wheat husk, 'Perhaps the corner of the barn there. 'Perhaps the corner of this room with the looms,' she said walking here and there. What I thought was this, 'For the baby of a person of consequence They will certainly spread out a mat on top of figured cloth. They will spread brocade on top of the mat. Not, surely not, that pile of wheat!' And just as I was thinking this, I grabbed hold of my mother tight. My mother has good sense so she said, 'The little one in my stomach does not like the idea of being born in any regular place.' So she recited a poem: 'Hey, Hey there, you in my stomach.
You are a real Lord Child of Tomorrow.
You are a real Lord Child of Tomorrow.
Safe, quiet and tranquilly
Come out of my body.
I will put an eboshi on your head and bring you up to be a young gentleman.’ she said.
‘There is nothing so great about that: being born a Lord Child of Tomorrow,’ is what I thought.
‘I will be born.’
And so with a gasagasa ganbu I was born.

Sarugo-bayashi (the Futto dengaku version)

(1) ‘A thousand years, a thousand years’
   You, Lord, living ten thousand years,
   We too serving a thousand autumns

(2) Crane and turtle rejoice.
   Fortune to your heart’s content

(3) ‘A bamboo forest is tall’
   But can it reach the sky over India

(4) Feathers of the pheasant’s tail are feathers of the pheasant’s tail
   Just like the flute and sho

(5) Spring comes, autumn goes, the swallow
   Puts up a nest over the bath-house

(6) How shall we celebrate it
   Call it the rich man’s________

(7) The drum they beat in the village above
   ‘Let the world be well’ is the sound it makes

(8) The flute they blow in the village below
   ‘Let our place prosper’ is the sound it makes

(9) If you worship the temple. This blessed one here
   The twelfth pillar is Shaka-nyorai

(10) The pillar in front is Fudō-myōō
(11) In the sky, a canopy and a holy flag
   Below, a half mat, piled up eight times

(12) In the north-west corner, seven vessels
    Small waves rise on the surface of eight jars

(13) Length of life like a lovely long handled scoop
    Take what you like, let it overflow, it never runs dry

(14) On the blessed lake before our temple
    Cranes gather to dance

(15) Iris on the pond, tararira to
    Root is white, tararira to

(16) Iris over the hut, chiriura to
    Leaves are white, chiiriura to

(17) In the wide space before the temple
    Wagons are placed up against the shingled hut

(18) Putting up flags along the south side
    Each time the ____ pulls, fortune comes in

(19) Planting rush beside the pond
    Everyone that sees says ‘good luck’

(20)

(21) Hachimantarō shoots an arrow
    The center of the rice-measure is his target

(22) He shoots in earnest
    No arrow goes astray

(23) Leaf of bamboo grass, leaf of bamboo grass
    Just like a sword blade

(24) ‘The blade of the sword is fast’
    But cannot cut the rock door
Katari for Okina in the dengaku performance at Futto

1. Everlasting things:
On the peak, a pine
On the pond, a crane
Living in the sea
The aged turtle
Always perfect
This place, this time
'This new year is ten thousand years'
So we worship.

2. (Yes, you are right.)
On the peak is the ________ Okina
On the pond, an ancient pine
One Okina is below, another above
Time passes, time passes
But the year is young again
At the South Gate of the Kiyomizu Temple
Twice pressing his mouth above and his beard below
He chirps speaking
And it can be interpreted to mean ________
What do you think my name is
Among young men in the Capital
A beguiling way of talk and

_______

Hachirō-dayu is what I can be called
Does the expression nari mean the fruit of trees
Or do you think it means the fruit of the miscanthus
Sow one koku of millet seed
And you have a full ________ harvest to put away.
This is the harvest (nari) I mean
Sow one masu of beans
Nine koku, eight tō
Is the harvest you put away.
This is the nari I mean
'Gate' is the Never-ageing Gate
'Hall' is what they built: the Long-Life Hall
______ was in the Hall of the Wind
'Autumn in just one breath of wind' is how the explanation goes
In the forest of ________ temple
The pine of ________ temple is tall
On the branch of the pine facing east
Is the bird called the Buboshu
The crane calls, 'a thousand years'
The turtle calls, 'ten thousand years'
The sound of the bird is wondrous

3. (Yes, you are right.)
On the eastern _______ hill
The brilliance of sunlight is holy
The shell of the tortoise grows warm
On the edge of the pond Ten Thousand Generations
At the base of the iris and sweet rush
The thousand-year crane
Coming up onto land
Dances the number Banshū-raku
_______at the Capital _______
_______crane _______
_______dances
The new bright, the new bright
Year rises up to begin and on that morning
Heaven is pregnant
The earth has morning sickness
From the earth grass and trees
Growing up together and then
Buds, too, on the trees________
Water, too, is young
The song of sparrows, too
Spring has passed into everything
Last year’s snow piling deep where it fell
This year’s snow melting here and there
Here and there patches left are last year’s snow
Susuki grass in the field blossoms too
Spring
Is when we worship

4. (Yes, you are right.)
Toward the south
When we worship toward the south
We worship summer
Light from the sun and moon
Is holy
Flowing rain water is warm
June’s cicadas rest their wings on small branches
All sorts and all kinds
Sing and call
Summer
Is when we worship

5. (Yes, you are right.)
Toward the west
When we worship toward the west
We worship autumn
Insects living in autumn fields
*Suzu-mushi, matsu-mushi, kutsuwa-mushi, korogi, hata-ori, kirigirisu*
And one that makes no sound at all, probably the red dragonfly
So many varieties of insects
Even the young stag longing for its mate
Making his way through autumn mists
Autumn
Is when we worship

6. (Yes, you are right.)
Toward the north
When we worship toward the north
We worship winter
On the peak falling snow piles up
Thin ice covers the small pond in the valley
Streams make no sound in the valley
Clinging to the pines
Withered grass, too
Winter
Is when we worship

7. (Yes, you are right.)
On a________ mountain peak the Buddha called Wizard stands alone
A small monkey on the peak breaks off some flowers
Bowing three times he offers them with reverence
A tiger in the valley taps his cheek rejoicing
Tendai monks of Hie worship
The Lotus Sutra and the Dara Sutra
The bulbul bird on Mount Atago
Knows the magic formulae of Kusha
Swallows in the Capital
Are called________
________ foxes
Are called________
Sparrows at Rokuhara
Alight upon________ miscanthus
Sing out austerely the law of the five prohibitions
The sound of the birds is wondrous

8. (Yes, you are right.)
I am the long-lived Okina
Seven times the lake of Ōmi became a forest of mulberry trees
Eight times bamboo became a forest
I am the ancient Okina old enough to have marvelled three times over again to see this happen
I am the ancient Okina old enough to have marvelled three times over again to see
The peach in the garden of Seiōbo
Flower into the udonge which blossoms and comes to fruit only once each three-thousand years

9. That is how old I am, the Okina before you now, and
As a sign of my arrival
Let me count for you all the
Treasures from India and
Treasures from China and
Treasures from the island countries and
Treasures from our own land
Which I have brought with a joyous sound
With a joyous sound of piling them up here before you

I do not remember how many treasures I brought from India
But treasures from China:
A Chinese merchant came with them
Handed them on to an intermediary
Who spread them throughout Japan:
A brocade canopy
__________
Rare textiles from________
A musk-scented umbilical cord and
Charcoal and eye make-up and
Eight-hundred obi
Wigs five shaku long and
Combs, pins, and fine quality paper
I leave out nothing at all
Let me count them over for you
(Okina-dono)

10. (Yes, just as you say. What splendid things.)
Treasures from the islands include
What they say devils carry
The small bag of long life and
The magic mallet of fortune and
The invisible-making rain-coat with the invisible-making rain hat
Shoes for floating, shoes for sinking
The_________ stick
The thousand years' sandals and
The ten thousand year rush-mat
In the Province of Tōtōmi
One hundred thousand koku of fine rice
I leave out nothing at all
Let me count them over for you
(Okina-dono)
11. (Yes, just as you say. They are wonderful things.)
In Kai, black horses
In Noto, small horses
In the Province of Bitchū
________ and
In Kasusa, stirrups
In the Province of Echizen
________ and
the decorations on top
Are________
The decorations below
Are________
I leave out nothing at all
Let me count them over for you
(Okina-dono)

12. (Just as you say. These are marvellous things.)
At Hakata in Tsukushi
There are boats from great states
There are boats from small states
Our Master Okina
Does not make the trip every day
So put a foot squarely to the ship’s________
Grasp hold of the hand rope, lift it high, take hold of the hawser, lift it high
Some fine hour of some fine day
Setting out with a wind
Setting out with a wind
A thousand islands tremble
Passing by the island of Hyōga
Straight ahead for the crossing at Irakosage
Bringing the boat to land
Can’t read, can’t write, but my rowing is fine
Since the trail for horses is good
We loaded them on horses
Since the trail for carts is good
We loaded them on wagons too
The men carrying them over their shoulders
Children________
The women carrying them in their hands
Bring me the key for inside
Bring the key
Open the door to the storehouse
Open the door
The way things are inside and
The way things are near the door and
The way things are deep inside
One by one
Jam in tight
Force it up straight on end with a screech
Now let's go back
(How about it, Okina?)
(Okina, where are you from?)

13. (Just as you say. It's marvellous.)
There are things to load aboard the boat for the return trip
Foul water and
Foul winds
Lung disease, pestilence
Famine and _______
Put them there smartly
In the bottom of the boat
Our Master Okina
Does not make the trip every day
So put a foot squarely to the ship's _______
He will take them down to the Southern Islands
(Won't you, Okina?)

(Yes, just as you say. Wonderful)

The River Ai, toyo, toyo. Resting a wing upon a rock lying in the rapids

14. (Oki) Flutter full flourishing and prosperous

(Isn't that true, Okina.)

15. (Yes, just as you say. It's really wonderful.)
In the world of long ago Sarugaku
Used to end with the three-beat rhythm
In the world some time ago Sarugaku
Used to end with the four-beat rhythm
But since it is a dance in our own world now
Let us dance one dance of
Manzairaku, Manzairaku
Five times, Manzairaku
Contemporary Okina performance

Notes

1. ‘Sarugo-bayashi to manzairaku,’ Honda, Yasuji in Minzoku geino, #49 (1972) pp. 10-14.

2. ‘The Shaman as Proto-poet: an anthology of Shamanic text and commentary.’ Jerome Rothenberg, Dennis Tedlock in Stones, bones and skin: Ritual and Shamanic Art (Arts Canada 1973–74, issues 184-187, pp. 172-181). See especially #4 ‘The Shaman climbs the sky.’ I have in mind a verse like the third in the ‘Evocation’: ‘A bamboo forest is tall/But can it reach the sky over India.’ A wider acquaintance with shamanic song outside Japan than I have would likely yield other significant comparative motifs similar to what we find in song in Japan of the sort translated here, what is called kami-uta (god song).

3. There is a point here which has a distinct relevance to theoretical discussion of narrative theory as well as to the special development directly from the spoken tale (katari) of certain genre of theatre in Japan: the masked narrator himself tells about his own birth, taking passages both of third person narrative and first person speech. The important implication of these two facts—a narrator (katarite) who tells about himself, using both direct speech and third person description—were partially examined in a paper of mine delivered at the Princeton Conference on East Asian Comparative Literature, March 22–23, 1976. My paper was called: ‘Who can tell the tale: narrative voice in katari and the staging of the spoken tale.’

Dango and mochi are glutinous rice products used especially at times of celebration like the New Year. They are a type of fertility magic, then.

The translation of the ‘Evocation’ (sarugo-bayashi) is that of the text given in Ennen: nihon no minzoku geino III, Honda, Yasuji. Mokujisha. 1969. p. 1205. The numbering is not in the original text. I have inserted it for convenience of reference. The meaning of parts of song #20 is unclear to me so I refrain from translating the entire song.

The translation of Okina’s katari and the portion of the katari of Sanbasō which is translated here is in Ennen, p. 1191 ff. In certain places the text is unclear to me. I have left these passages untranslated, indicating the omission by the sign . Words translated in parenthesis are what the local people shouted out to encourage Okina when he was delivering his katari. In actual performance these remarks were the natural and spontaneous outpour of interest on the part of the onlookers. In a written text there was no need, of course, to include them at all. The fact that they were recorded at Futto may indicate that at this phase in the development of the performance associated with Okina the early function of such random expressions of delight and interest was being lost sight of. Honda believes that the role of the waki, or secondary character, in one sort of classical Noh play has its prototype in these words of encouragement spoken by the local people who surrounded and pressed in upon Okina to add their words of interest, and so ‘drew out his story,’ in Honda’s words, when he appeared in their festival precinct to speak the katari.
The translation of a year's work record from the annals of the Ishikawa Clan is taken from the Japanese text Kinsei Nihon Nogyo No Kozo (Modern Japanese Agricultural Organization), edited by Koshima Binyu. Corr's own commentary on the Japanese text is included here [in brackets]. A poet and printmaker, as well as translator, Corr's first collection of writing, Brooming To Paradise, was published recently by Workingman's Press, Berkeley.

Michael Corr, translator

Shoshiki-Oboeniki of the Ishikawa Clan (Record for Remembering the Many Colors)

Translator's Introduction

Three thousand years of Chinese, then Japanese writings and records of both elite and commoners document the magnificent awareness of Far Eastern peoples for their natural environment. From the Odes and the I-Ching, from Gwa Pu, Wang Wei and Tu Fu, from later Japanese sources such as the Manyoshu all the way up to the Haiku and novels of the Edo era (see Basho, and the somewhat earthier “Shank's Mare,” and the contemporary poetry of Mao Tse Tung, Ho Chi Minh, and Kusano Shumpei), we discover ecstatic awareness rooted in perception of nature. The records of the Ishikawa Clan kept for 220 years by one family of Musashi farmers of the Kanto region (now Tokyo) are especially noteworthy because they demonstrate that as early as Japan's 18th Century written literature was no longer the prerogative of a literary elite, and through the daily scribblings of the Ishikawa farmers we may witness the most concrete details of farm life: tilling, manureing, reaping, sandal weaving and well cleaning. Their words are terse, tempting us to reason that where poetic elites may have been seeing down into nature through a philosophical mystique regarding the ever changing world, the farmers were seeing up into poetry from the demanding reality of tilling a heavy sticky soil to reap rice for their lords, and gleaning rocky hills for millet and greens to fill their bellies. Nevertheless one can see how their terse comments on the rain, snow, and wind provided the bedrock for the magnificent edifice of naturalistic Japanese literature.

Through the daily notes of the Ishikawas, the gradual changes of seasons are revealed, with their subtle relation to work routines which by utilizing every variety of weather in some way, whether it be hoeing or mat weaving, provided the basis for land productivity which simply cannot be understood by looking at the grain yield (see Corr, 1976, Kyoto Review; 1977, Truck). With seeing Noh, Kyogen, practicing stick fighting, and finding time for pilgrimages to chant sutras under waterfalls at sacred mountains, it can be seen that the farmer's seasonal life was closely interwoven with a religious and cultural practice lending credance to Dogen's thought “The Buddha Reveals Himself Through The Mountains And Streams.” With gratitude to the Tohokai for their encouragement of my study of Buddhist attitudes towards common labor (see Corr, 1976, Young East), I hope the reader will enjoy Ishikawa's concrete commentary on Japanese farm life.

The Ishikawa House daily agricultural work record, written by the head of the house, lists for every day the weather and principle work the house did on that day. It is called the Shoshiki-Oboeniki and begins in Kyoho-5 (1721) at New Years and has been kept continuously to the present providing us with a rare and hard to obtain record. Daily records have been discovered before. Koshima Binyu has introduced us to the Shinno-Koku, Ina-Gun, Ogawaharamura, Great House Management Record (Go-Kan Nokeiei Shiromu), and in his Ishin Mae No Buset (Pre-
Meiji Restoration Rice System) there is the field planting record (Tahata Shitsu-ke Cho) for Shomu-guni, Chugen, Tochisawa Mura, kept by one jinushi.

The Ishikawa House records reported in the Japanese text are for Buzo-Guni, and document the situation of one owner-farmer. Nonetheless Koshima believes this work-record to be characteristic of the period in question. In this record there are 220 volumes, from which are here presented the 13th year of Kyoho (1729), of the Shoshi-ko-Oboeniki (Record for Remembering the Many Colors). By hanging out these records together, it is hoped to facilitate inquiry into and provide a straightforward explanation of the Edo Period agricultural situation.

The translator wishes to thank Professor Inuma Jiro of the Institute for Humanistic Studies, Kyoto University, and Mr. Tokunaga Mitsutoshi of the Department of Agriculture, Kyoto University, for critical comments.

Bushu, Kamikadota Mura, Ishikawa Kihei. This year Nikko Shrine Pilgrimage. 1729 (Kyoho 13).

Shogatsu-dai: 1st Month (big)
New Years day. Rain. Going with greetings from the village to Harajuku [Meadow Lodge hamlet].
2nd Clear. Bringing greetings from the Kawahara [River Meadow] hamlet people to many places.
3rd Clear. Went to Hachioji [Eight Gems] township bringing our village peoples greetings to many friends.
5. Clear. Haircut for Mr. Kim [note follows on haircuts; see January 14]. Calling at opposite house.
8. Clear. Ishikawas made a feast [for the hamlet people].
9. Clear. Spreading manure [wooden tubs full, or perhaps 14, as they are carried two at a time suspended from a shoulder pole].
10. Cloudy. Rest because of catching the wind [a cold].
11. Clear. Received a call from the Honorable Sagozaemon [regarding my duties as his attendant.
12. Clear. Treading on the barley ['mugifumi.] Actually wheat is also a winter crop, so this might refer to wheat. The winter grain crop is planted on ridges in the field to protect it against frost, dampness and mildew. Nonetheless the mild winter frosts of the Kanto region create soil ice crystals which raise the shoots out of the earth. pers. comm. Inuma].
13. Clear. Inside crafts. [e.g., straw sandals, muck-lucks of straw, straw rope, mats, raincaps of straw, wooden pack frames, etc.]
14. Clear. Barley stamping. Haircut for Mr Sho. [Although Tokunaga Mitsutoshi assures me this is just a haircut, there is some doubt in my mind. The usual reading of 月毎 is sakayaki (haircut), but read as 'gatsu dai' it could be literally translated as 'monthly fee.' Thus shogatsu-dai (above) might be interpreted as a fee to the shoya (village headman). However in Kanto the term nanushi is used for village headman, shoya being a Kyoto term. In ancient times there were a shoen (religious manor) at this site, the term shogatsu dai could be a vestige of that period. There is also a Kingatsudai (January 5th) and so on. Since Kin is gold, this fits in with the hypothesis that gatsu dai is a charge. On 11/30 Ishikawa made the last 'payment' to the nanushi. Since no other payments are listed in the text on a regular basis, this tentatively supports the notion that (sho, kin) gatsudai is a charge. However since Sho and Kin would be auspicious names for farmers, the author will follow Tokunaga in listing gatsudai as sakayaki, e.g. haircut. Finally, Sho is a corruption of which was formally used in writing the word shoen, but since Tokunaga points out that this term is usually used in the context of paying visits to superiors, it must be a haircut. Nonetheless, the purpose of paying a visit to the superior might well be to bring some tribute or fee;
Finally this point seems unresolvable at present.)

20. Rain. Ebisu-ko. [Gathering of the kō (fraternity) for worshiping Ebisu, the Lord of Wealth. Funded by fraternity savings, they probably had a little feast, done yearly by turn, at member households. At some other time during the year the funds of the kō might be used to send a member, chosen by lots, on a pilgrimage. (Sakurai, 1962).]
22. Snow. Rest.
23. Cloudy. Head shave for Mr. Shoo. Changing waraji [Straw sandals. Waraji are braided from rice straw that has been limbered by pounding with a mallet fashioned from a section of a tree branch, e.g. with a cylindrical head. The toes of one foot and the fingers are used as a loom for stretching the straw during the braiding. The most common straw sandal is shaped like a zori, but they are also made like straw boots for use in snow, or like roman sandals with leg thongs (in this case straw thongs) for ashigaru (foot soldiers) or traveling monks.]
24. Half overcast. Spreading manure, 5. [Though Tokunaga interprets this 5 as buckets, it could also be a measure of land, such as the se (ridge or row). But at this point the Japanese Editor, Mr. Iotani, inserts the comment 'buckets'.]
25. Rain. Inside crafts. [A remarkable aspect of this journal is that it reveals a delightful flexibility in adjusting activity to the perturbations of the elements. E.g. when it rains they work inside. In the winter, they gather firewood, and in the summer they bring green manure from the mountain, while at planting and harvesting seasons they stick strictly to business. Since everything grows slowly in the winter, both weeds and crops, they visit and travel in the winter, which really means also taking care of business. Note that this is diametrically opposed to the modern industrial custom of traveling in the nice summer weather, which for the oriental farmer is the period of maximum weed growth (see Corr, 1976, Truck).]
27. A little rain. Same.
28. Clear. To Hatsukura for brush and firewood.
28. Half overcast. Bamboo crafts. [These included, depending upon the place, baskets for produce, winnowing and picking up sweepings, or for culinary use such as strainers and drainers. Also hats and umbrellas. Skilled craftsmen in a village might make brushes or tea utensils, especially scoops and spoons. Long strands of bamboo (twenty feet) are braided green into tub hoops, etc.]
29. Clear. To Hatsukura for brush and firewood.

2nd Month (small) [e.g. short, 29 days]
3rd. Clear. The Honorable (dono) Sagosaemon rewarded (me) with a tray. [Sagosaemon is Mr. Ishikawa's superior in the system of samurai. The latter serves Mr. Sagosaemon, and the tray is probably presented as a traditional gift. 'Zen,' the Buddhism of the warriors, is also a cognate for tray (zen of bon) in Japanese, and also trays are traditionally used in transferring money and other communications between individuals. In addition the Kanto area, especially the neighboring Kamakura, is famous for beautifully hand carved lacquered trays. At any rate such a gift from a superior may be regarded as a significant memento.]
4. Clear. Intertillage and manure spreading (7) for the barley. [Intertillage is for both holding water, but more importantly in damp Japan, for eliminating weeds, or rather converting them into green manure. (Inuma, 1970).]
6. Half overcast. Made a mat [probably from igusa rush].
9. Rain. Same, 1. [apparently 1 mat. The term in the text is mushiro, which could conceivably mean pulling (weeds) but in that case hiku or toru is more frequently used.]
10. Clear. Kareikidani [Dead Wood Gorge] for firewood. Roasting [the wood to make charcoal for fuel and ashes for supplementing the mineral content of the fields].


14. Clear. Same work. Entering Higan [Winter Equinox]. Note that the 1st of January of Kyoho 13 was February 10, 1921. Therefore this winter equinox is occurring at the end of March in the Western calendar. Higan translates as “that (the other) bank,” i.e. the other shore to which those who have achieved Nirvana cross over, thereon to dwell in the Pure Land. It is celebrated by many Buddhist sects with the reading of sutras, festival meals of Chinese vegetarian bean curd and fried/pickled vegetables, with portions of the rice set out for the “hungry ghosts,” with the hope that they too may “cross over.”


18. Rain. 2 mats. One inside mat to be sold at Chizu store. [following Tokunaga. I figured these mats were for the silk worms]

19. Clear. Firewood was used directly for firing rice cooking hearths and baths (ofuro). 2-3 kilograms of firewood may be enough to fire an ofuro to be used by 5-10 people, by turns (Corr and MacLeod, 1972). Also rough wood and brush was baked in a kiln to make charcoal for hibachis, foot and bed warmers, self heating teapots, etc. Ashes were used for fertilizer as explained above. The ashes sweeten (add alkalinity) a soil soured by the use of green and/or animal and human excrement, which on the other hand, is rich in nitrogen and phosphates.

20. Clear. Same place, same thing.


27. Rain. Request from the Honorable Sagosaemon.

28. Clear. Place name. Digging up satoimo [Colocasia antiquarium] at Sanda [Scattered Fields]. [This could also be read to mean fields in various places, but Tokunaga says that in this case the term katakata is used, though katakata could be read as ‘lots of people.’ At any rate it was advantageous for farmers to have fields scattered around as protection against local droughts, and to provide access to the varying soil conditions needed for a balanced schedule of varied crops to meet household and market needs. ‘Lots of people’ were often needed at critical seasons for cooperative operations. For instance see 9/25-26-27 where perhaps tillage is being done by a group, or from one field to the next.]

29. Cloudy. Culling [and storing the satoimo].
Clear. Head shave for Zenhachi.
13. Clear. Entered a waterfall. This is perhaps a purification rite of the mountain monk (Yamabushi Shugendo) sect. The aspirant stands under the waterfall with the water thundering down on his head and chants a dharanyi for Fudo Myoo, the Buddha reincarnated as a fierce slave dedicated to eliminating stupidity. People still do it in the winter, and almost every winter somebody dies of a heart attack from exposure. As the Chinese Zen monks used to say, 'When you stand outside the waterfall you hear water. When inside it, you hear nothing.'
14. Clear. Same place, chanting under the waterfall.
18. Clear. Seeing Hachioji Town. Haircut for Mr. Ki. [Who is this Mr. Ki anyway? This is the first time he appears in the text. Ki can be read (same character) as Yorokobu, rejoice, so 'kigatsudai' could be taken to mean an offering in the context of religious rejoicing, but in this case the gatsu (month, moon) would be senseless, so perhaps Mr. Tokunaga is right. Moreover a resort is a good place to get a shave since there is lots of hot water. So it could be that kinsakayaki is a money haircut, while kisakayaki is a haircut by way of celebration.]
21. Clear. Pilgrimage to Tsukigane Shrine [perhaps near Atami].
88th night [88 nights previous would be the 5th of January, e.g. this could be the end of the Japanese Spring which began at New Year, which in the Western calendar fell on February 10, 1729. 88 is also a special religious number, for instance there are 88 religious sites which must be visited in the famous Shikoku Island pilgrimage. Thus it is possible that this 88 refers to a symbolic 88 sites in the Izu area which could be visited in lieu of the Shikoku pilgrimage. Department stores in Osaka now offer proxy visitation services of the same order, e.g. pay a fee and have an amulet brought back from Konpira Shrine.]
28. Clear. Intertillage of the barley fields at Funeda [Boat Field].
29. Clear. Same.

4th Month. Big Snake.
1st. Clear. New haircut. Pilgrimage to Takao [Big Trail]. [Perhaps a Shrine or Temple since he used the pilgrimage form of the verb 'to go'.]
3rd. Half clear. Same work, serving by turns. [This term 'Shikai', literally 'serve around' is also used in the context of tilling in the 9th month, but it doesn't appear in the context of planting or harvesting or planting where one would expect YUI (labor exchange) to be operating. Since which field is not noted, it could mean working the fields one after another, but in the 9th month, it is exclusively in the context of Haragatani, suggesting that neither going from one field to another or from one man's holdings to another are appropriate interpretations.]
5. A little rain. At Juten (samas) place for construction help. [On 4/22 he goes again to help with a 'do' (hall) so this appears to be the premises of a local religious figure (Juten)]
9. Clear. Same place. Stayed at the Kawaharajuku Town until this day in order to see Kyogen. 2 loads of young shoots of wisteria for the fields of Sawafuru [Old Bog].
11. Clear. Susuhaki [sweeping away soot]. Began cutting mountain weeds for green manure. [Weed cuttings are either buried in the ditch between hills when forming new hills or pushed into the ground between standing crop vines.
25. Cloudy. Upper meadow and upper mansion [Uenohara & Uenoyashiki] reaping barley. [In this text there is a 'mansion' and an 'upper mansion'. While they might be place names left down from an old estate, Ishikawa frequently lists acts of craftsmanship at both places suggesting the existence of actual structures, though they might be huts.]

12th day.

26. Half clear. Reaping barley, sowing beans, [apparently egoma or perilla ocimoides, used for oil, but that is Tokunaga's reading. Beefsteak Plant, certainly not a bean, is in the Perilla family, so it seems dubious. Therefore it seems safer to stick with the reading 'sowing beans.' Beefsteak Plant may grow unassisted in Japan in dry fields if a few plants are left to go to seed in the summer. Though it may be planted in rows, often it is simply left during the weeding and harvested in June, for instance before the potatoes (main crop) which would be dug up in July.]

27. Cloudy. Planting early ripening hie [apparently Deccan grass e.g. large millet]. Threshed 11 [loads] of barley at Uenohara. Evening, manuring, and threshed 7 of wheat, Kessoku style [perhaps a form of YUI, gratis labor exchange].


30. Clear. Same thing, 17 [bundles], barley 8, outside naked [barley] 4. [This outside seems to mean outside of the previous measurements.]

5th Month. Little Wild Pig.

1st. Clear. Setting in of spring rainy season. [According to Tokunaga's reading. I prefer to think this is a form of the early Hie (Early ripening large Deccan millet.) Planting barley at Sanda.


4. Clear. Threshed wheat, 7, threshed barley, 3. Rolled barley, 22. [Note, this differentiates barley and wheat, winter crops, from millet, a spring crop, e.g. sowed in the spring for a fall harvest.]

5. Rain. Helping reap the South (neighbors) barley in the morning. Haircut for Mr. Kin. Annual festival. [In this case Boys Day; Silk carp kites were
flown from poles, one for each male child in a warrior family’s house. The carp, reputed to be able to swim up a waterfall, is a symbol of success in the Imperial Chinese examinations.

8. Clear. Intertillage of the potatoes. Planting large millet [Deccan].
10. Cloudy. Planting foxtail millet, threshing barley, 5. Evening, reaping wheat. [In this area, as in North China, wheat is a winter crop and the various forms of millet form an important summer crop for fields which are not convenient to the irrigation water necessary for high yield rice technology. Alternatively the winter crop may be daikon (Japanese radish) or kabura (Japanese turnip).]
13. A little rain. Toward evening went to the upper neighbor to help with the silkworm work at his request. Green manuring the taro potatoes with grass.
14. Rain. Cutting mulberry [leaves for the silkworms to eat].
15. Big rain. Cutting mulberry.
16. Clear. From noon went to the Honorable Jins house to help him with silk worm cocooning frame mounting, and also with bouchi [hinge bar] threshing. Silkworm upper group, 18 sheets.
17. Clear. From this evening went to the Honorable Saiheiei dono's to help with the reaping of the wheat at his request. From noon, cut 8 bundles of wheat.
19. Clear. Reaping wheat, threshing the same, 8. [This was done by 'bouchi,' e.g. with the hinged pole that may well be the antecedent of the hinged sticks used in offensive karate] Silkworm work; 12 sheets, working by turns [perhaps YUI].
21. Cloudy. Early ripening foxtail millet at Ueno-hara. Evening, reaping a little wheat at Kishishita [below the peak fields].
22. At Funeda, threshing wheat, 10. Planting hill field foxtail millet.
23. Partly clear. At Mineshita, cultivating the foxtail millet between the rows. Did four sheets for the silkworms.
24. Clear. Reaping long tuft wheat. Hangeshiyau, 11th day after the solstice, last day for sowing.
25. Evening, reaping wheat. Hangingaiyau, last day for sowing.
26. Threshing wheat, 10. The crop is cut at about 11 feet, a great deal of labor is needed to carry it.
27. At Funeda, reaping wheat, 10. Cutting mulberry [leaves for the silkworms to eat].

6th Month. Large Dragon.
2nd. Partly clear. 2nd intertillage of potato sprouts.
3rd. Clear. Threshing foxtail millet at Sanda. [It is early fall by the modern calendar.]
7. Big rain. Irrigating the cotton and pulling small stalks [cotton] Inside crafts.
8. Clear. 34th day since coming back from Nikko Shrine. [Nikko was patronized by the Great Heian Shingon priest Kukai, and later became the mausoleum for Ieyasu Tokugawa. Perhaps due to the shadowy presence of the latter's notoriety, there is a saying 'After you see Nikko, you die.' Of course that can be said of any mausoleum, since every visitor eventually dies, be they mortal.]
9. Clear. At various places, first intertillage of the foxtail millet.
12. Cloudy. Cutting green manure and putting it out [for instance in a nightsoil well, benjo (latrine) or field dung well]. Transplanting tobacco [Kaisaku, literally digging, sinking]. Went to help Mr Jingoro Yaheiji at his request.
Midsummer Dragon: 4th notch entry.
13. Clear. Observing the Emperor's festival [most likely the Emperor's Birthday].
observance. Went to Saireicho Township. Mr. Sho got a haircut.

16. Cloudy. 3rd foxtail millent intertillage at Mineshita and Sanda.


20. Rain. Entering midsummer. Making big bamboo hats. Although we are in Doyo, it hasn't been clear; it has been persistently rainy, so blights and pests have afflicted the millet. [Note: in the present calendar they were at the end of the Monsoon season.]


24. Cloudy. Preparing daikon manure [this means preparing manure for the daikon radishes, since it is too late in the season to be composting daikon refuse]. Mr. Sho got a haircut.


26. Clear. 3 days, stop everything for pleasures.


28. Cloudy. Sake, visiting with the western neighbor who came to visit. Mr. Sho got a haircut.


7th Month. Small Dog.
The 5th 7th month for the youngest child.
1st. Small rain. Holiday.
4. Clear. 3rd intertillage for the taro crop [the root tubers are boiled in soups such as oden and miso, and the stems of the lotus like leaves are boiled and served as oshitashi (with sauce and sesame) side dishes to be eaten with rice].


7. Clear. 7th evening of Midsummer. [In this evening, the weaver woman Vega may meet her lover in the sky. Tanabata Festival features decoration of the entry of the house with fronds of fresh green bamboo decorated with amulets of luck, with other things resembling Christmas tree decorations.]


10. [No weather entry.] Cultivating the field.


16. Rain. Festival day.

17. Cloudy. Planting turnips. [Dai kon are boiled, grated for eating raw as a garnish with raw fish, or pickled in rice bran, and salt and beer (modern) and rice hulls for a garnish beside rice. The tops are coarse, but in hard times they are chopped and mixed with boiled millet.]


20. Clear. Mr. Ishikawa went to help the Honorable Yaseemon with construction. [This could well also be YUI, as construction requires a large burst of labor like planting, and can be repaid later since the need for a new house occurs at intervals of many years. For instance even roof thatching may last for a generation.]


22. Almost clear. Called over by the upper neighbor.


24. Clear. Same place, same work. Evening, doing manuring for the wheat.

25. Clear. From this day cut off for 3 days pleasures. Pulling the soybeans. [Soybeans are boiled in the pods with a little salt to be eaten while drinking, or alternatively, they are made into miso paste which is used as a soup stock base, or for marinating fish and vegetables.]


27. Almost clear. Stop for pleasures.


29. Clear. Buckwheat intertillage. Drying some tobacco [or perhaps cutting it selectively].

8th Month. Small Rabbit.

1st. Clear. This day, Mr. Hyosaemon went to the Shrine town. Mr. Saizo taught Mr. Hyosaemon stick fighting in Omiya Cho.


3rd. Small rain. Putting in manure. [Literally Koe iri means putting in love, but the Japanese scholars
assure me this means manuring.)

4. Big disturbance [Storm]. Stayed inside.
7. Cloudy. On this day Kin got a haircut and for my duties as a military arts teacher, I went to Zen hachijo for stick fighting practice. Cut off for 3 days pleasures.
9. Cloudy. 2nd buckwheat intertillage.
12. Cloudy. Mountain weeds cut 21 times in total. River weeds cut 59 times in total, making 80 times. Mr. Jingoro's part was 88, and within that 8 were river cuttings. This altogether totals up to 168 cuttings. On this day Kabura daikon intertillage.
13. Great rain. Mr. Dengo got a haircut. [This den is transmit. So this could be read as 'transmitting the monthly charge.]
16. Partly clear. Reaping a little foxtail millet and threshing it with a hinge bar.
22. Thin clouds. At Haragatani, cutting, threshing perhaps Tokunaga is correct in interpreting this foxtail millet. a disposal of old rope, which would be in bundles.
23. Clear. At Sanda, cutting foxtail millet by turns. [Perhaps YUI?]
24. Cloudy. Various places [people?] , digging up roots. [It seems here that the stubble and roots after the harvest are being removed.]
28. Clear. Went to a lodge [perhaps Harajuku hamlet].
29. Cloudy. Derooting the dry fields at Haragatani.
27. Almost clear. 2nd tobacco cutting. Afterwards tilling where the tobacco was cut. Same place, same work.

28. Almost clear. Same place, tilling the tobacco remains [ato]. Evening, making rice cakes at Uenoyashiki. [Note that the entries for 9/21 and 9/28 seem to show that there is an actual establishment at Uenoyashiki, perhaps even a separate residence. Making mochi requires cooking and thus perhaps a separate hearth, which is more or less synonymous with a 'bunke' (branch household).]

29. Clear. Summer festival; haircut for Mr. Kin.

10th Month. Small Tiger.

1st. Almost clear. Using the Honorable Sagosaemon's horse for stud services. [Mr. Tokunaga reads this as using Mr. Sagosaemon-dono's horse to pack dung, but when spreading dung there is usually a number of loads noted.]

2nd. Cloudy. Various places [or many people] sowing barley.


10th Month, Flower-board, 3rd notch, entering.


5. Clear. Haragatani; dry field, pulling ridges.

6. Clear. Getting stud services from the Honorable Sosaimon's horse. [This is a little hard to interpret, but this time would be just about right to provide for the Spring foaling.]

7. Almost clear. Kitaharagatani. 13 pack horses put out at the mounds. [On second thought, Mr. Tokunaga seems correct. 6. should read 'Using the Honorable Sosaimon's horse to pack manure.' Then 7. would read 'To provide for planting at the North Mounds of Haragatani, put out 13 loads (of manure). Since studding was perhaps an unmentionable 'iwanai', one can't be certain in such a case.]


12. Rain. Haircut for Mr. Kin.


15. Cloudy. Inside work.


21. Clear. 3 days stopping for pleasures. Mr. Dengo got a haircut. Spreading manure, 5.

22. Clear. On request, 8 people came to help with reaping and threshing soba. [Mr. Tokunaga points out that here 'oidenasare'—'they came to help' is used.]

23. Cloudy. Planting kabura-turnips. Then heaping up the north side of each ridge for protection against dampness and frost.


27. Clear. Same place, same thing.

28. Clear. Same place, same thing.


11th Month. Big Sheep.

1st. Clear. Sent out a laborer to Takeo.


11th Month Flower-dragon. Entering the 5th notch.

6. Clear. Same place same work. Evening, at Sanda, winterizing the ridges.

7. Clear. Same place, same thing.

8. Almost clear. Occasionally went to see the Honorable Mr. Gosaemon to help.

9. Clear. At Kareikidani moya [brush and firewood].

10. Clear. Same place, same work. At Mineshita, winterizing ridges.


13. Clear. Kareikidani, brush and firewood. Evening, pulling ridges where the kabura turnips were.


15. Thinly clear. Haircut for Mr. Dengo.

16. Clear. Cutting [green manure] beneath the
grove. Spreading manure, 3.
22. Clear. Same place, same thing.
24. Small rain. Cutting bush cotton. On this day, The Honorable Mr. Goasaemon's 1st year memorial service was performed.
25. Clear. Went out for kuneyui [fence cooperation].
   [Apparently the master (Ishikawa) went out to help with the YUI work of tending to the black and white funeral fence (kune) etc., or more likely some such work connected with the previously mentioned memorial service. Note that on 12/4 (10 days later) he went out again for "kuneyui" which tends to confirm that this YUI is related to the memorial service of 11/24.]
26. Rain. Brought the last of the yearly money to the nanushi [e.g. to the village headman]. [Note the implication that there were previous payments.]
30. Rain. Went to South [neighbor]. Yearly rent calculation. [In many Edo period villages, the tax was levied on the entire village as a unit, and therefore was subject to negotiations regarding apportionment amongst the village members.]

12th Month. Little Cow.
1st. Cloudy. Mr. Kitchi got a haircut. This evening, South yearly money calculation. West yearly money calculation.
2nd. Almost clear. At Mokukoumoku, fuelwood. This evening, settlement of West yearly rent.
3rd. Rain. Straw sandals for four feet.

Small Cow[?]. Entering the West 7th notch.
7. Clear. Went back to the same place.
10. Clear. Same place, same thing, 2.
11. Clear. Same place, same thing, 2.
   [Making new rice paddy was encouraged by exemptions from taxes for 3 years on new fields and by a productivity (Kokudaka) assessment system which lagged behind improvements in the land and in the farming technology (Iinuma, 1975).]
15. Cloudy. At Hatsuzawa, fuelwood.
16. Clear. At Sansho [Box Mountain], removing stumps.
17. Cloudy. On this day, went to the nanushi at Harashuku to receive money for serving as clerk.
   [In this case Mr. Tokunaga figures that the clerk is some minor samurai other than Mr. Ishikawa who is employed for money errands, etc.]
18. Clear. Lifting up the tatami [Cleaning and purification in preparation for the new years].
Daikan: The coldest season.
27. Cloudy. Mr. Dengo got a haircut. Making mochi [At New Year, simple foods such as rice cakes, tangerines, root vegetables, shoyu, sake, etc., are offered to the Kamisama (spirits). For the New Year meal, zoni (a miso soup with melted rice cake in it, and perhaps some herbs) is prepared. The holidays are busy with visiting, so as the rice cakes harden, they are prepared by barbecuing them over a charcoal hibachi. Browning like muffins, they puff up as the dampness deep in the dense cakes is released, and then they may be eaten with miso or shoyu, or perhaps wrapped in nori (laver) and taken with tea.]
1000 Falls; 10,000 Banzai.
Declared Estimation, prepared on the 28th day of the 12th month:
Doing the rice money first:
   3 to, from 3 to 4 sho.
Mochi:
   3 to, 2 or 3 sho.
Foxtail millet:
   5 to, and up to 5 sho.
Barley:
   6 to, 5 sho up to 7 to.
Buckwheat:
   5 to, plus up to 5 sho.
Soybeans:
   4 to, 2 to 5 sho.
Exchange rate:
   1 bu of gold brings 1 kan plus from 250 momme to 260 momme of silver.
Recollecting and Estimating the Entire Grain Yields:
Barley: Have 4 koku 2 to. This yield from 11 cho, sowed with 3 to 7 sho 8 go seed. Within the above, the 4 cho of the Uenoyashiki yielded 2 koku.
Wheat: Have 1 koku 3 to 5 sho. This yield from 10 cho sowed with 1 to 7 sho 3 go seed. Within this early wheat from Haragatani; 4 sho seed yielded 4 to 3 sho. Naked Rye: 2 to 2 sho from 2 sho 2 go seed.
Summer Soybeans: Have 6 to 4 sho. This yield from 2½ cho and 2 sho seed. Met with 3 big winds.
Foxtail millet: Have 2 koku 7 to 4 sho from 8 cho. Within this, the 4 cho of Haragatani yielded 1 koku 6 to.

Large (Deccan) Millet; Have 2 koku 1 to from a little more than 4 cho. Within this early Deccan, 1 cho produced 7 to.
Dry Hill Rice: Have 1 to 2 sho from 1 cho.
Buckwheat: 4 to 2 sho from 3 cho at the upper Yashiki.
Fall Soybeans: 7 sho. From all the fields 2 sho 6 go seed yielded 21 bundles.
Azuki (small red beans): Have 1 to 6 sho, from all the fields. Within this, 3 sho were pulled in the 6th month.
Corn: Have 5 sho from the Yashiki.
Beans: Altogether pulled 12 koku 1 to 9 sho from various places.
Other Crops: Altogether there are 4 se of scattered fields.
There are 3 tsuka of scattered fields and ½ tsuka at the Yashiki.
Potatoes: 3½ cho yielded 3 horse loads.
   The Funeda (19 se) and the Uenohara (11 se) yielded 3 loads of turnips, 18 bundles of dry leaves.
Lotus: 16 bundles.
Upper Meadow had 39 se under cultivation
   Kabura turnip, 4 horseloads.
   Lotus, 29.
   Dry leaves, 26 bundles.
   Cotton 190 me [character for eye, moku]
Tobacco: Upper Meadow Mansion, 16 se.
   Ichibako: Original leaves 26 ren [bundles], 26 catty [1 and ½ lbs per catty]. 2nd leaves, 15 ren.

References


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Sergei Kan has recently come to the United States from the Soviet Union. He is presently doing graduate work in Anthropology at the University of Chicago. The reproduction of the shaman's drawings, as reproduced in Sovetskaya Ethnographia, is courtesy of the Tozzer Library, Harvard University.

L. Karunovskaya
Sergei Kan, translator

The Universe As Conceived By An Altai Shaman

Translator's Introduction
The following was collected in the 1920's by the Soviet ethnographer L. Karunovskaya. By that time the new Soviet regime was already carrying on a very active campaign against religion in general and shamanism in particular. Most of the former shamans were killed or had to give up their practices. Thus the information, collected by Karunovskaya, is of great importance and value. Her work is an example of an honest ethnographer's presentation without any of the ideological and political remarks which later became so common in the studies of the native religions. What she did was to ask the former shaman Merej Tanas to draw pictures of the universe and to tell her all about the spirits of this universe as well as about the shaman's role in it. He was also asked to sing songs of the shaman.

Because of the ethnographer's non-prejudiced approach as well as her knowledge of the Altaic language, I suggest that we can trust the data presented in the article.

The article was published in the journal Sovetskaya Ethnographia in 1935, nn. 4-5. My translation is only a small part of it.
The following drawing represents the three parts of the Universe — the sky, the earth, and the underworld — and also describes in detail the shaman's journey to the kingdom of Temir-Khan, who was one of the sons of the powerful ruler of the underworld by the name of Erlik. The drawing was made in 1929 by former shaman Merej Tanas, age 42. He had been a very powerful shaman, as had many of his ancestors. The drawing gives a good idea of the cosmological views of the Altai people.

I. The Middle Part of the Universe — “The Real Earth”

The drawing shows the place where man dwells: rivers, valleys, mountains, yurts, etc. On this land, pu ger, on the mountain tops, in the rivers and lakes, and even near the people live all kinds of spirits who influence, positively and negatively, the everyday life of the Altai people.

In the center of this land there is a high mountain, Ak toson altaj sen (1), the residence of the hunters' ancestors; on top of this mountain there is a lake of milk, syt kol, where the soul of the shaman who goes to the upper world washes itself. In the center of the mountain there rises the navel of the earth and the sky, Cer tengere kindigi (2). Out of this navel comes a beautiful tree with golden branches and big leaves, Altan byrly baj terek (3). The top of this tree already belongs to the upper world. From this tree the shaman gets to the sky, during the tribal sacrifices, to the supreme spirit Ulgen or to the major creator of the souls of the people and of their cattle, Kogo Monko. According to the arrangement of the branches of this tree the shaman foretells the weather, the future of the person who invited him, the health of his family, success in his daily activities, etc. The mountain Ak toson altaj sen is the first stop the shaman makes while travelling to the upper land. It also becomes the end of the journey for weak shamans. On the top of this mountain the spirits, masters of the various regions of Altai, get together. On the flat top of this mountain (4), which is used as a table, they play cards, draughts, dice, etc. The prize is the soul of an unborn game animal or a domestic one. Thus if there is a lack of game animals in some part of the country, people say that the spirit-master of this particular area lost the game and gave the souls of the animals to a spirit of another area.

Here also dwells the most important spirit of the earth, Ceri-su, who rules over all the earth spirits and who is aware of the wins and losses of the local spirits. When the shaman arrives here during the performance in order to get the kut (embryo) of cattle or jula (same as kut) of children, he addresses Ceri-su and the spirit tells him which one of the spirits has won and should be approached with sacrifices and prayers. The dwelling place of Ceri-su is invisible.

(It is clear that the above described mountain attracts the aspirations and hopes of the Altai people. It is the place where they find the souls/embryos of the game animals, of their cattle, and of their babies.)

On the left of the mountain there is a picture of the rich man's yurt where the shaman's performance takes place (5). The line that starts from the smoke hole of the tent and goes to the mountain shows the shaman's way during the seance. Below the tent there are rivers; on the left is a faraway dry land where there is
almost no rain at all (6). Above this land there is another dry land (7) which is already located above the lower level of the sky. A bow-shaped line (8), connecting the dry land on the left with the mountain on the right, is the dome of heaven. On the right of the navel of the earth there are two tents of the poor people. The shaman's way is shown from their smoke holes too. There is a lake in front of the tents which is surrounded by mountains (10). The three upper mountains are in the land of rains (9).

II. The Sky

In the center of the sky there is a red mountain filled by the sunshine, the residence of the supreme spirit, Kogo Monko Adaz, who is the creator of the earth and the sky as well as the master of all the good spirits. He is able to kill with lightning or with the rays of the sun. His palace looks like the large yurt of a very rich Altai man. Rising from the top of this yurt is a tree with a golden ribbon. A winding line which connects the top of the tree growing on the navel of the earth and the rich yurt of Kogo Monko Adaz (13) shows the way followed by the shaman during a special ceremony arranged by the whole clan once every three years. A grey horse and a white ram (pure white without any spots) are sacrificed. The meat is cut off, but the bones and the hide are burnt on the altar, which is never done for any other spirits.

On the left in the empty space (14) live his sons, spirits or ulgens, for example, to the left of (14) is the domain of Bay Ulgen, Kogo Monko's favorite son (15). All these mountains are located in the upper layer of the sky. Above them is the sun. The sky itself is located to the right of Kogo Monko's mountain (16). (17) is the fiery celestial mountain of Kogo Monko's daughter. She is the creator of the female souls, both human and animal. More to the right is the celestial mountain Bulut toozi bu ra kan (18), which belongs to the second son of Kogo Monko. He is creating souls of the people living in some far away region. The empty spaces between all these mountains are different parts of the sky. To the right, above the mountains, is the moon.

III. The Underworld

In this lower part of the drawing we can see the shaman's way to the underworld, to the kingdom of Temir-Khan, the second son of Erlik. Because of fear, the Altais usually refused to speak about this part of the universe. But when they did, the information was always given with a great deal of restraint and reluctance. They especially tried to avoid mentioning any names of those spirits and creatures who lived in the underworld. Thus any information obtained about this particular domain is of great importance.

On the left there is a yurt which is used for the shaman's performance in case one of the family members is sick. Such a family would invite a shaman to perform this important ceremony. The shaman makes all the preparations for his journey to the underworld: he tells the audience that at their request he is going there, feeds the spirit who is master of the shaman's drum by sprinkling the drum with water, and also feeds the spirit of the threshold. He asks the drum's spirit if the
sickness might have been sent by a benevolent spirit. Having received a negative answer, he addresses the spirit of the threshold, asking him which one of the dark malevolent spirits is responsible for this particular illness. Being the guardian of the door, the spirit sees all the other spirits coming in and out of the yurt. He tells the shaman which spirit to go to. On rare occasions he refuses the shaman permission to travel and the latter stops the seance. Having received all the information and the permission, the shaman starts beating the drum, inviting his helping spirits to enter the instrument and to help him during the trip. He makes three circles around his own head with the drum, staggering, as if he is going to faint. It is at this moment that his body separates from the soul and from now on all the acts of the shaman are his soul's acts. The latter flies out of the smoke hole of the yurt and goes to the top of the mountain (2) which is still located on the earth. The audience learns about these flights by watching the shaman turning around fast. On the top of this mountain (2) the shaman's soul addresses the light spirits, asking them to protect him and the house.

Then he descends to the crack in the earth (3), which is the door to the underworld. The shaman's soul climbs through the crack bowing to the spirit-keeper of the Temir-Khan's doors. From now on the shaman's soul is in the underworld where there is neither sun nor moon. The soul ascends the top of the mountain (4) where he meets Erlik's daughters, sisters of Temir-Khan. They want to possess the shaman's soul. They invite the shaman's soul to join their game and try to seduce him. A strong shaman manages to get rid of them and continues his journey. But the weak shamans become victims of these girls and lose their souls. Such shamans die during the seance.

Further on the right of the mountain there is a straight line, a flat spot without any vegetation (5). Having finished this long and tiresome journey, the shaman comes to a big swamp. Further on at point (7) there are five goats blocking his way, also trying to appropriate his soul, together with the gift-offerings he is carrying to Temir-Khan. The audience can hear the conversation between the goats and the shaman, because he imitates their voices during the seance. Having escaped from this danger, he soon reaches the lake of human tears (8), shed by the people of the "real earth" over the deceased. The shaman makes low bows here and flies to the red lake (9) made of the blood of people who have been murdered and of suicides. Here he is able to foresee future murders. He makes bows and asks that these murders will not take place in his village.

Behind this lake his soul ascends a pillar (10). This is the place where souls of the deceased make a stop. Arrows symbolize the souls of the deceased males, and thimbles those of females. Here the shaman learns about the future of the family he is performing for. Later on he approaches a stone with a hole in it (11), climbs through this hole, and flies further to a forest (12), then moves on more slowly. He reaches a very deep lake called bottomless, which is all covered with mud (13). There is only a thin hair of a horse stretched across the lake. The shaman has to cross it. Only a good shaman can do that; a weak one falls into the lake, which results in his death during the seance. (According to the shaman who made this drawing such things did sometimes happen.) Further on there are a couple of high mountains called Temir tajgalar, which belong to Temir-Khan (14). The shaman
passes them without stopping and reaches the region where the souls of the deceased ancestors dwell (15). They live here in yurts and own cattle, those cattle which were sacrificed or died of natural causes. The ancestors greet the shaman. Without entering their domain the shaman explains to them the reasons that make him descend to the underworld. “Your children have misfortune; evil kor­moses from this underworld visit us all the time. Please, do not let them visit us, keep them where they belong. Ask Temir-Khan not to send them to us.” At this moment in the performance the owner of the yurt where it is taking place splashes up some araka, a special ritual drink. Together with his wife he also throws some tobacco out of the yurt's smoke hole. It is the same hole through which the shaman's soul has flown; the idea being that araka and tobacco will follow the soul and will reach the ancestors to whom the shaman has to talk. It is a kind of gift-offering. Having passed by the land of the ancestors, the shaman follows a dirty road (16), which takes him to the last obstacle (17). He already knows about the dangers of this place from the ancestors. After this one there is another danger: nine daughters of Temir-Khan who act exactly like the daughters of Erlik (18). They too want to seduce the shaman. Finally having escaped from them, the shaman reaches Temir-Khan's horse lines (19). Having left his drum outside the lines, the shaman enters the yurt of Temir-Khan (20). He approaches the powerful spirit and by speaking in a very careful, servile manner manages to persuade him to accept the gifts (araka and a piece of cloth, which is the ribbon tied to the drum in the beginning of the ceremony.) Temir-Khan pretends at first that he cannot see the shaman and does not want to take the gift, but later he accepts it and becomes more friendly.

The shaman then continues his speech more bravely. “Tos jerim, creator of the earth and of the waters! Such and such man is sick. I have learned that you have sent the sickness. I do not know why you did that, why you became angry with us. How can we settle this thing?” Temir-Khan usually responds that he expected a sacrifice, a cow or a bull, but did not receive it. On departing the shaman asks him not to send epidemics to the cattle and serious illnesses to the people.

Having finished his mission, he leaves the yurt, turns around counter-clockwise, and quickly flies up directly to point (3). This time his drum is perceived not as a horse but as a flying hawk. After flying over point (2), which is already on the earth, he prays to the sun and moon (of the earth) and addresses loudly the jalik and the ot-ene, the spirits that are in the yurt. He wants them to meet him and help him not to fall into the fire when he enters the smoke hole. At this moment six old men hold three poles above the fire inside the yurt. Sometimes the shaman breaks these poles. The shaman acts like a person who has just awakened after a long dream. He throws his drum-stick at the owner of the yurt and his wife. If it falls with its ring up, it is a good sign and the owners of the yurt make three circles with it around their heads and gives it back to the shaman. But if the stick falls with its ring down, it is a bad sign. It is then shaken off three times and given back to the shaman. The latter tells the audience about the details of his trip, about the kind of offering Temir-Khan wants to receive, about the measures that should be taken in order to stop the loss of cattle or to make the sick person well, etc.
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**Steve McCaffery**

**Drum Language And The Sky Text**

I

The Shamanic drum is verb and as vehicular form it carries the shaman to the world centre or axis mundi, enables aerial flight and message (aerogrammic cable!) and oratorically summons the world of spirits. Drum connects, as a vehicular form, with the Axis Mundi along which vertical construct the shaman rises into his planar break-through. This is the basis, the grammatical topology of the drum and as such defines its usage as a lateral vehicle of transport to a vertical earth-sky axis.

Saussure’s formulaic representation of the linguistic sign reads: S/s or Signifier over signified, which in application to the shamanic drum produces a modified angular formula of acoustic sound (D) over Cosmic Axis (X) thus:

\[
\begin{align*}
X & \quad \downarrow \\
X-D & \quad \leftarrow \longleftarrow \\
\end{align*}
\]

in which the drum relates to the axis by way of a schematic 90° angle. This function of the drum as a horizontally positioned sound device connecting with a vertical axiality is tied closely to the metonymic nature of the drum. According to shamanic sources the drum itself is made from a branch fallen from the Cosmic Axis Tree, it is thus, at its source metonymic. To strike the drum is to declare this metonym and to formulate, as the shaman’s own journey, the shift from part (drum) to whole (axis). Returning by way of reference to the diagram above, the 90° angle formed at the intersection of drum sound and world axis graphs the pathway of the metonym. Striking the drum has the effect of reuniting part with whole, drum with axis, whilst the mantic context of its operation adds a further complication to this movement, for as linguistic instrument the drum speaks its own metonymic connection with the Whole and the speaker of the sign (the shaman drummer) is not detached from the sign. This constitutes a significant variant upon the Saussurian schema for in drum language the speaker travels with his words as semiotic accompaniment along a metonymic journey. The drum-word is the vehicle not of the speaker’s ideations or general “message” but of his very being and seen as such the shaman enters, psychically and physically, the very process of the linguistic sign in action.

Unlike the conventional linguistic sign whose voco-visual form is arbitrary (the phonetic-visual complex “tree” for instance has no intrinsic relation with the corresponding object in the real world) the drum’s physical form and its signifying function are intimately united. Choice of wood for the drum shell is determined entirely by a spiritual or transhuman will. There is the legend, for instance, of the Ostyak-Samoyed who enters a forest blind with axe in hand to tap the different trees’ trunks at random until the choice of wood passes through him. The Altaian shaman sits apart from the forest with his eyes closed in preparation to receive the spiritual information as to which tree shall be cut down to form his drum. In both cases, the drum is not chosen but rather the drum itself chooses its user. As such the traditional relationship of the linguistic sign and its enunciator is conspic-
lectronically reversed, for it is not the drummer who speaks through his drumming but rather the drumming itself that speaks through the drummer. This necessary bond between the drum's significant form—its sound, shape and material composition—and what is signified (the journey through metonymic frame to axis and planar breakthrough) serves to cast the drum as a kind of mantic onomatopoeia.

Drum animation itself mobilizes the linguistic potentials of the shaman's instrument. Animation, which precedes linguistic function proper, takes the form of a metaphoric conversion of the drum into a self-narrative. The power of narration is central here, for it is the possibility of the drum to speak its own story that releases its subsequent metonymic action. As the shaman initiates the drum so the drum comes to life to narrate its own past. Drum, at this point of pre-usage, is strictly autobiographical device, a linguistic sign converted into its own narrative voice by which the drum speaks its own story. The drumskin speaks itself through the shaman's lips telling of its birth and life down to the moment of its death as animal and its embodiment in drum concluding with a promise to serve as a faithful drum-vehicle its shaman owner. Drum as sign is also sign expanding into narrative, which as story line formulates the base of its mantic power as vehicle. It is the power of narrative, embedded in the sign itself, that makes possible the signification by that sign.

In action proper the Shaman Drum becomes the vehicle of the shaman's journey to the Centre of the World. Shamanism veils in topography the state of ecstasy and gives the psychic condition a linear and narrative projection. The state of ecstasy is described as a "journey" and the agent of inducement as the vehicular form making possible the journey. The re-animated drumskin, whose narrative speaks through the shaman, fuses animal and man in a state of theriomorphic ancestry. As the skin itself, stretched over the drum-frame, is a mantically charged metonym whose animation of part (skin) brings back the whole animal to a speaking life (a precise parallel with the drum's total function of axial ascendance), so the emergent narrative of the animal-source reverses this metonymic flow at the same time as it validates it. In the narrative it is the whole that speaks both through and into the part—a double movement that serves to bind animal and shaman with the drum—effectively abolishing the discretions of time and space. For as it is the reunion of the whole with the part that provides life to the shaman's vehicle (his drum becoming the animal whose skin comprises the drum allowing the journey to the world axis), so it also reunites the speech of man with the primordial discourse of the animal. There is a strong totemic stress in this act of animation that suggests a realized transcendence of space and time and an achieved connection of the shaman with his theriomorphic ancestors. This totemic link acts as a resonance heard each time the drum is struck and the multiple voice and multiple context declares itself. What we have here, is the union in sound of human and animal discourse that fascinated the Dada poets, the subsequent French "bruitists," Artaud in his sound-poems and appears as a more recent concern in the poetry of Michael McClure and the Cryrythmes of Francois Dufresne.

The drum's power to communicate is thus intimately connected with the drum's physical form and the contained energies of its material constituents. Drum, however, is also page, context and support surface for a further sign system manifest in the drum's illustrations. There is a drum among the Tungus that bears numerous symbols painted on its skin and frame—animals, anthropomorphs, geographical glyphs of land and sea—whilst the centre of the drum skin is left blank. In the case of the Tungus the drumskin has assumed the additional function of page supporting a complex iconography with the paginating skin acting as the silent voice of the drum. This superimposed complex of symbol contributes to the compound nature of the drum sound, for, on one level at least, to strike the drum is to animate the skin-page with the stick itself a syntactic spark-plug igniting the inherent signification. Horizontal wires at the back of the drum extend this compound forming a physiogrammatical support for numerous images and noise-makers: metal fragments, rattles, bells etc. which make up a magic noise ensemble in action around the central drum sound; it is a second level of syntax that places the drum (the vehicle to the axis mundi) as an acoustic axis itself forming a sympathetic rhyme with its function as verb. The drum of the Lapp Shamans carries images on both faces of the skin; the drum as page becoming a threshold between earth and sky. Lapp pictography turns drumskin into macrocosmic object with a profoundly mantic bond formed between visual and acoustic image.

As both instrument and text, as illustrative page and iconic context, the drum depicts a triple zone microcosm of sky, earth and underworld; with this
means itself and the very means of transcending that self; understood as sign it is the signifier becoming the means of passing through the signified. Semiotically viewed the shaman drum is a profound contradiction.

At the Shaman’s initiatory seance the drum acts self-creatively, its sound carrying a distinctly centrifugal value drawing into itself the environmental spirits around it, destroying context by drawing context into its own constitutional elements, becoming by absorbing the energetic forces around it. In this state drum is self-generating sign with the capacity of drawing powers into itself and shutting them in. In several areas the drum is called the Shaman’s Horse and carries a pictorial representation of that animal on its drumskin. The Buryat Shaman drum is actually made of horse hide; the Soyot drum is called “khamu-at” (shaman’s horse) with the drumstick termed the shaman’s whip. The salient analogy here is to the modern combustion engine that draws fuel into itself to combust into its measurable horse powers. Language at this point is kinetic and vehicular.

In a later development drum assumes the apoptuic character of speech, initiating the “magic of noise” — a protodadaistic grasp of the acoustic image detached from all signification. As a noise event the drum emits the vocal energies of the spirits and initiates an agonistic dialogue among the good and bad spirits.

Behind all Shamanistic drum use is the sense of drum as instrumental in connecting with a universal centre, a term which should not be taken topographically but emotionally as denoting a sacred space. The universal centre being the sacred space that ecstasy inhabits. The Shamanic Centre is, in fact, a highly charged gap or metope between signs in a cosmic syntax; to reach a centre is to enter that space as an ecstatic vortex. At the base of all shaman drum language is the belief in the possibility of a direct communication between earth and sky, that through the drum’s connection with the axis mundi sky becomes verbally as well as visibly accessible. This belief is represented in the tri-planar cosmology linked by the central axis that occurs repeatedly in many areas of the world (it is the great sky-nail, yggdrasil, irminsul, the Salymic seven-divided pure silver holy pillar, the Roumanian Coloana Ceriului and many other forms.) The vehicular agency of the drum assists in the ecstatic breakthrough of plane by establishing a lateral, vibratory sound axis which connects with the vertical axis of the world centre. Drum, in fact, is a major device of translation, translating cosmic ideogram (the three plane world picture) into an ecstatic itinerary (the shaman’s journey through this form). Drum language, in its translative capacity, renders ideogram plot, a synchronic, stabilized world-picture deschematicized into the diachronic workings of a praxis. It is the drumskin functioning as page, as we have seen, that holds the ideogram, whilst it is the combined functioning of drumskin and drumshell that constitutes the translative act. We might speak of drum as metalanguage, as a commentary upon the inert representativeness of the visual sign and as a principle of the sign’s convertibility. To drum, in this sense, is to free up an utterance from a two dimensional visual sign system and to instigate it as an action within a time scheme. Drum structure relates to drum use in the way langue relates to parole, but with the significant difference that in the drum’s sounding the realized utterance is an intersemiotic breakthrough. Drum strike and drum picture exist on two different semiotic levels, so what the drum achieves cosmologically (the shaman’s planar breakthrough) is achieved also on the level of its own linguistic constitution. There is a moment in the drum’s own utterance when a replacement is effected and a static scene is animated, which is no less than planar breakthrough on the level of semiosis. The shaman drum, then, can be seen to be a self-contained sign and system which, when activated, expands metalinguistically through self-engagement into its own context of linguistic action.

In terms of geomantic axes occupied the shaman drum falls midway between the ancient Lilissu drum, whose vibratory axis is established immediately as a vertical and sonic link up of earth & sky that parallels the cosmic tree, and the present day talking drum, current among the Yoruba and in various other parts of Africa which maintains an extendible, horizontal and telegraphic axis that parallels a speech pattern along the earth surface. Shamanic drums set up horizontal axes that connect, through the numerous mantic translations and transformations outlined above, with the vertical axis of the world centre; in this way the drum enters a sacred space as a lateral and vertical interface. Diagrammatically we could show these different vibratory axes:
Talking Drum

Shaman Drum

Lilissu Drum

To strike the drum is not merely to activate a vibratory surface but also to translate a cosmic ideogram into a cosmic program, to render a text accessible as a course of action.

II

Drum to the shaman is his most powerful instrument, seeming to derive from the old bronze Lilissu drum used by the Kalu priest of Mesopotamia in the service of the great god Enki-Ea, the cover of which came from the skin of the black bull and representing the zodiacal sign of Taurus, as a consequence of which the striking of the drum brought contact with heaven at its most significant point. This point during the Tauric Age (ca. 4,000–2,000 B.C.) was the Point of Anu — God of Heaven, recorded in cuneiform as a single wedge signifying that way both the numeral One and in the sexagesimal system Sixty. To strike the Lilissu drum in this context was to connect directly with the fundamental time and place of heaven.

Among the Mandes of Africa is the famed twin drum fashioned after the hero Faro's skull, which formed the rain drum covered with the sacrificial skins of the first twins of mixed sex, that represented time in its shape as hour-glass and which signified a specific geography. For the drum's shape depicted the Niger river at its narrow middle separating the two geographical regions of the Kaba and Akka and coming, that way, to represent the journey of Faro himself down the river. So here, again in the Mandes drum we find the pressure to intrinsic narrative within the physical components of the drum-sign.

In China there is K'uei who alone held the power of harmony and whose drumming, tactile in its purpose, touched the musical stone that caused a hundred animals to dance and regulated rivers maintaining nature's syntax. It was the rhythm of the drum that made K'uei not only master of the dance (celestial syntax) but master of the forge as well (the creative power of nomination). His drum beat was the voice of celestial time, rhythm and motion and as the musician to the great Yü brought about the step of Yü within the sky: a micromegegal translation from local earth to vast sky into the pattern of the Dipper, Charles' Wain. As the rhythm of the drum is both a uranic-vibratory graph and a rhythm of the forge, that is both motion and creation alike, so it is the essential motion of the Smith or Kos-Mo-Krater bringing into the ranks of the drummer the great cosmic arche-tektoms: Deus Faber, Hephaistos and Blake's Los (inverse image of Sol the sun or sky-drum) also Kosher-wa-Husis of Ras Shamra and the Norse Ilmarinen whose drum-forge hammered out the roof of the sky as macrocosmic drumskin. It is only with the Greeks and the cult of Orpheus that these powerful drum qualities and functions decline under the weight of the great Orphic thrust where drum is largely discarded as celestial, vibratory connection to be replaced by the harp which parallels the polyphonic harmony of the multi-sphere and growing chordal concept of the heavens. Orphism signals a radical shift in interpretation from the sky as text to the sky as organon, the collapse of the sky-roof-skin image and the commencement of the sphere-nerve-chord polyphony.

III

All this above in II to suggest that Drum, in its origins and shamanic application, is a textual counterpart to the great UR Sky-Text. That, structurally, drum is both metaphor and metonym which in its functions serves to reconnect the two textual zones of earth and sky by a pillar of syntax: the drum rhythm.

The word cosmetic derives from the Greek word kosmeo, its current meaning "to adorn" obfuscating its original sense of "to set in order" (usually by align-
ment). Cosmetics thus has the same root as cosmos: the perceived order of the heavens, the graphic alignment of the sky with its etymological link with our “cosmetics” — to adorn that resonates with its ur-sense of bringing to order. Cosmetics is the art of bringing the face to order, producing a text from facial hyle. Like the drumskin which we have seen connects iconically and sonically with its celestial sky-skin counterpart, the face too possesses a skin-sky link as that which beholds and is beholden of: the face of the sky seen by the face on the earth. It is, I believe, from this voyeuristic circle, this relation of a microface to a macroface, of a mutual and interdependent observation, that astrology takes its origin. For as astronomy is essentially the microfacial observation of the macroface, so astrology is the observed judgements upon the microface by the syntactic implications of macroface. It is here too that the profound connection between drumstick and human visage can be seen, for in both instances there is a kind of participation mystique established that supports a notion of all cognition as taking the form of an outward and upward movement from the facial cosmos (the human head, the drumskin etc.) to its celestial counterpart.

When the intense sky-consciousness of the archaic mind is grasped and the profound concern for celestial events acknowledged, then we can understand how it is that reading constitutes the primary relationship to the sky as an UR-TEXT; it might serve to modify our sense of the primacy of orality in language and to support an argument for the primacy of text — that, in fact, man's mind was first confronted with a linguistic system exegetically revealed as man become aware of the syntactic structure of the night sky through its annual permutations. I would argue for the following vector: that TEXT preceded reading, that reading itself preceded writing which in itself arose as a method of recording a celestial reading. It was the heavens, that open book of the sky, which gave man his first experience of syntax and configuration, with the later experience of rhyme, of cosmic similitude, convenience and sympathy (the regular syntax of the seasons rhyming the recurrent positions of the celestial text) with the repetitive sequence of night and day forming a chronologic frame analogous to page. In this precedence of a tradition of literacy over a tradition of orality, drum assumes a significant role as a compound instrument of text and orality connecting terrestrial rituals to this earliest textuality, for it is primarily the language of the drum that sets up the vibratory syntax which connects an earth bound orality with the sky-text. In later times comes the shift in textual identity, as in the renaissance conception both sky and earth merge to form the Text of Nature or God's Word as revealed in the signatures of God's works, with concomitant stress upon Nature as a concrete vocabulary and the incorporation of the sky-text into the terrestrial evidence for God's presence as Author. Text at this point becoming evidence beyond itself of an ontologic presence and reading transforming into a penetrating hermeneutic.

The stars and planets, then, were the first syntax, experienced as a fluxion of power, an agonistic kinesis, with the absolute regal power of the fixed stars (essentially nouns) and the executive, volatile and active power of the moving planets (essentially verbs). To see the star-words as Gods was to see syntax as a power or pattern of force inherent in an absolute rule of text. It was the shaman's task, by means of his vehicle drum, to achieve a planar breakthrough and to gain access to the kinetic properties of this text (ecstatic space).

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God

the suggestion here being to treat “word” as planet rather than logos and to open the etymological connection of “myth” with “math”: the stellar churn or celestial syntax of the Ur-Text:

In the beginning were the stars and planets and the stars and planets were with God and the stars and planets were God

The Zodiac derives from a visual, pictorial response to the sky-text, involving an extension of point into image. At the same time, however, it is possible to read the sky-text in a verbal manner by extending point into word and letter rather than image. This particular reading method derives from kabbalistic practice of calligraphic projection onto the night sky; it involves not simply a reading of a pre-existing text, but rather a writing superimposed upon a former reading making of the sky a huge palimpsest rather than a unisurface text.

Reading entails a spatial distance between the
reader and the text; to read is to experience text, in part at least, as a physically distanced kinematic process of moving signifiers which are themselves composed of relatively stable particles that constellate as compound signs. As words constellate in texts, so stars verbalize with the movement of the heavens providing a paginating quality to text in a cycle of alternation and recurrence. Through this circularity, predictable and sure, syntax becomes its own content: a microperception of the celestial vortex. Which gets us back to the sense of "myth" as being not what Olson claims through Harrison i.e. deriving from mythologos: myth as "mouth" and hence an utterance or speech which links myth less with a reading of text than with a projective orality, but rather "myth" as deriving from an alternative source in MATH which Macdonnell's Sanskrit Dictionary defines as "to whirl around, churn..." Myth here then as the graph or cosmic swirl of a perceived text, the churn of the word, the prose rounds of the mega-uranic syntax.

To summarize. What I'm suggesting is a primacy of text to the archaic mind and of the drum's linguistic and magical relationship to text along metonymic grounds as part to whole, along in fact the lines of sympathetic magic that reads a text by rules of drawn similitudes. That is, by imitation you rhyme and by rhyming the desired result you actually produce it. Drum is anchored in this power of rhyme and metonym; it is both its form and its language; it strikes the vibratory sympathy of part to whole, hitting the rhyme of telluric sound with the text that is sky. To treat reality as text, the dance of the sky, earth's change through seasons in predictable and sympathetic rhyme as syntax, cosmos and syntax as order alike, then any world change must become an activity of text and life a dwelling in that reading. It is this dwelling that orality appears, embodied in ritual it takes the form of a celebration of that text, an honour by assembling to perpetuate. There is implicit here a quality of text that's finally being explored in branches of modern poetics: the dependence of text upon an active reader, a reader in the role more of producer than consumer, equipped with his sensitivity and in the task assigned him to function both as hermeneutist and as celebrator. Ritual I take as a reading with prophylactic intention, a reading to preserve text as text is the source of all interpretable order. Without such a reading a text self-destructs as sensitive oecologists have realized; the cosmos reverting from order to chaos, that state of textless indifferetiation.

vague

infinite    hiss.
These workings have previously been published as part of a larger teacher’s handbook entitled *Riddle and Poetry Handbook*, developed by Richard Dauenhauer as a project of the Alaska Native Education Board, Anchorage, Alaska. He presently teaches at Alaska Methodist University in Anchorage.

Workings by Richard Dauenhauer after Fr. Julius Jetté, S.J.

**Koyukon Riddle-Poems**

In 1913, Father Julius Jetté, S.J. published a two-part article on the riddles of the Koyukon Indians, an Athapaskan group living on the Yukon and Koyukuk Rivers in the interior of western Alaska. [Jetté, “Riddles of the Ten'a Indians,” *Anthropos* 8 (1913) 181-201; 630-651.] The Jetté article contains 110 riddles, each presented in the original Koyukon accompanied by a literal interlinear translation, a free translation, explanation, and commentary. The workings here are based on the Jetté collection, to which the serious student of riddles is directed.

According to Jetté’s introduction, the genre was associated with the return of light, and riddling was done only after the winter solstice. But even at the turn of the century, when Jetté was in the field, the riddle genre was on its way out as a viable medium of entertainment and verbal art. Today riddling is almost extinct in Koyukon, although it is still practiced by some tradition bearers, and has been experienced in context by some fieldworkers. [David Henry, Summer Institute of Linguistics, personal communication.]

The riddles in Jetté are a fine example of the highly developed verbal art of a tradition of poetic imagination which has declined and has in general been lost in the last 70 years—a period characterized by two generations of suppression of Native language and culture and by disruption of the language and intellectual community by the educational establishment and other government agencies, some of which continue to advocate and enforce total English replacement of Native languages rather than competence, comfort, and pride in both Native language and English. I hope these workings suggest that their Koyukon originals are hardly the creations of a conceptually and verbally impoverished people in need of intellectual transfusions from a paternalistic benefactor.

The riddles in Jetté exemplify the poetic use of everyday language and the imaginative juxtaposition of everyday images, of seeing something in terms of something else, and verbalizing that picture through manipulation of the wonderful and indefinite potential of language. With suppression and eradication of Native Alaskan intellectual traditions, and with the diminished possibilities for transmitting oral tradition because of language loss among the younger generations, a situation has developed in which even the average fluent speaker of Koyukon—though no fault of his or her own—is no longer familiar with riddles and riddle style.

For example, each riddle in the Jetté collection begins with the formula “tla-dzor-kara'ana” (“riddle me.”) None of the younger speakers of whom I have inquired were familiar with the formula, even though they are fluent in Koyukon. Also, younger speakers (30-60 age group) find much of the grammar bewildering. For example, a verbal prefix indicating a tree-like object would logically never occur with a first person subject pronoun—unless, as in the riddle style, the speaker is a tree, and the grammatical manipulation is a clue. Such grammatical combinations seem to have delighted the old time riddle composers, but strike the younger speakers as totally non-sensical and incorrect. Because of such problems, any attempt to transliterate and update Jetté’s transcription into the modern writing system used for teaching the language in Koyukon area schools and at the University level has been postponed. (For a children’s book of 24 of the easier riddles in English translation see R. Dauenhauer,
Koyukon Riddles, Alaska Native Education Board, 4510 International Airport Road, Anchorage, Alaska 99502. Eighteen of the riddles are included here, in different format, as described below.)

Of the 110 riddles published by Jetté, I have included 44 here, in the same order as in Jetté, and with the Jetté number following. I have made one major change: I have treated the riddles as imagist poems, and have changed the riddle format to that of a poem, giving the clues in the first part of the poem, and the answer in the second. In only two riddles (Jetté #30 and 49, here #19 and 27) did I put the original answer as the first image. Other changes are minor, as in Jetté #28, here #18, where I introduce a stronger verb than any of the synonyms I could think of for Jetté.

My reason for treating the riddles as poems is to focus on the act of imagination contained in the riddle, rather than to obscure it. Because so many of the comparisons are culture-specific, they would not be “fair” put in riddle form in translation; but the images are striking and can easily be appreciated in poem format. Moreover, I consider these riddles poems, and the change in format simply discloses the poem that is underlyingly there. If more than one of the workings sounds like Pound’s “In a Station of the Metro,” I contend that the similarity derives not as much from my ear and style as translator as from the common underlying structure — the use of analogy in juxtaposition of images. It wouldn’t be hard at all to make the Pound poem into a Koyukon riddle. . . . However, I should restate that the originals are riddles, and these workings are poems based on, designed to reflect, but not translate, riddles. These workings are in a different genre than the original. I should also clarify that for present purposes I have chosen to treat the riddle genre as literature, although some folklorists have demonstrated that for other purposes riddles may or should be considered games. Also it has been shown how for many traditions the answer is not to be guessed, but transmitted catechism-like with the riddle. Jetté considered this the case in Koyukon, though riddles are guessed in other contemporary Alaskan Athapaskan traditions.

The differences between these workings and the Jetté versions are mainly organization (poem format rather than riddle), rhythm, and choice of synonym. I have tried to retain the images and comparisons of the original, as well as the comparative devices: i.e. metaphor and simile are retained as in the original. In all cases I have dropped the opening formula “riddle me.”

I chose to omit some riddles for two reasons: either they were not very imaginative, or at least did not appear so in the poem format (Jetté #55: I make chips; an axe.) or they were so technical as to end up too cumbersome in translation. This latter category is truly magnificent, and I urge all interested readers to consult Jetté for such riddles as I could not attempt to do justice to! Several of these deal with internal organs of game animals as disclosed in the butchering process. In Jetté #90, for example, the fat particles on the stomach and intestinal membrane encountered at a specific stage of skinning an otter are compared to a particular formation of mare’s tail cirrus clouds!

Adding to the complexity of the translation problem is the poetic and descriptive term for the cloud formation in Koyukon, compared to the English metaphor that would introduce horse hair into the otter skinning. With all this as background, I submit my working in progress of Jetté #90:

The sun drives them through the sky;
light clouds:
fat globs on the gut.

At least one riddle is a verbal droodle. Jetté #83 is a beautiful comparison of a particular type of snare to a person bending over — the snare loop being the head, the tie-downs the arms, the balancing pivot-post the legs to the knees, and the heavy counterweight pole being the back, upper legs, and buttocks sticking out.

Another riddle contains metapoetry: singing an old song when a new composition is called for is compared to a lazy hunter who comes across last year’s arrow and uses it again, rather than taking pride in his work. Such is the world of the Koyukon riddle imagination. I find it impressive, and I hope these workings in an alien genre do justice to the riddles themselves and to the creative genius that composed and transmitted them.
Like a spruce tree
lying on the ground:
the back-hand
of (the) bear.

We whistle
by the cliffs and gulches:
(the) bear, breathing
or the wind
on a brittle piece of
birch bark,
or wind
blowing on a small, dry spruce.

I drag my shovel
on the trail:
a beaver.

Water dripping
from an ice-spear tip:
water dripping
from the beaver’s nose.

Like bones
piled up in the stream bed:
sticks
the beaver gnaws.

Flying upward,
ringing bells in silence:
the butterfly.

Muddy-light
dark-fresh
like two streams merging:
eagle feet.

At the tip it’s
dipping in ashes:
ermine tail.

Far away, a
fire flaring up:
red fox tail.

Small dots
on the skyline:
when the birds return.

As if the stream bed
were hacked up with a knife:
footprints of the swans
and geese.
Someone's throwing sparks in the air: plucking the reddish feathers of the grouse.

It scatters little wood crumbs from the trees, a roosting grouse, eating.

It looks like a flint: the louse.

Round and shiny at the end of my spruce bough: Lynx feet or the great gray owl.

It really snowed hard in opposite directions on my head: a mountain sheep.

At the water hole the ice-spear trembles in the current: a swimming otter's tail.

Like forest branches fluffing in the wind: the great gray owl ears.

Ptarmigan bills: tiny bits of charcoal scattered on the snow.

We come upstream in red canoes: the salmon.

Like a water plant: floating salmon guts.

Smoke-like it spreads out in the water: butchered salmon blood.

The hilltop trail running close beside me: a thing on which the wolf has peed.
It sounds like when we shake a quiver:
  hanging birchbark, flapping in the wind.

Like fine hair on the penis of a squirrel:
  veins in birchwood.

Broom-like, I'm sweeping with my body:
  the tops of grass in winter.

A salmon berry:
  Cache-like leaning to the side.

I tap my forehead through the air:
  a blunt arrow.

I spin my tooth:
  drilling holes in snowshoes.

Like water bursting through a beaver dam:
  flames from the fire drill.

Behind the woodpile we lie in sheepskin blankets:
  last year's excrement.

Like a herd trailing up the hill:
  the graveyard, tombstones carved with animal designs.

I brace it with my back:
  a ridgepole.

I stick my head in fire:
  a log, burning on the end.
I reach beyond the mountains: the sun or moon.

We go singing in the water: paddle whirls.

Grease-like, like I found my sun on water, streaking in opposite directions: sled runner tracks on snow.

I found my last year's arrow: using the same song of mourning twice.

Here I broke my bow I end my track: shooting at a caribou: snow the northern lights.

I broke my bow shooting at a caribou: the northern lights.

Like a herd bedded down on snow: bare ground at break-up where the snow is gone.

On the beach, mirage-like: a fish trap, being rolled by wind.
Carl Cary was told this story in the early fifties, while doing field work in Washington state. “It was given to me by ‘someone’ at the Conrads’, south side of the Skagit across from the Sauk Store and a burial ground.”

Carl Cary

The Story of the Big Box

Many people lived in a small village and in the middle of the village lived the head of the people. The head of the people had a daughter. A young man wanted to marry the daughter but because he was poor, the chief said no. The young people got together and married in spite of the head of the village’s protests. The girl’s father was angry and thought with his people how they could get rid of the husband.

A big cedar box was built and the young man was forcefully put into this box and set adrift in the early spring, about April. The box drifted under water for one month and all of this time the boy’s parents and relatives looked for him. At the end of one month the box came to the salt water and soon reached the shore of a beautiful little island.

An old woman lived on the island with three younger women, a housekeeper, a cook and a dishwasher. On this particularly fine day the old woman said that they would leave their work and go for a walk to the beach. Pretty rocks and flowers. They came to the beach and saw this large box on the shore.

“Oh, a pretty box lying there,” said the old woman. She looked at it and sent the girls back to the house for a hammer and ax. “We’ll take the top off to see what’s inside.”

They were surprised to find a man in the box. They asked him what he was doing, and he told them his story. The women took the young man to their house where he lived and worked and helped.

The women had been on the island since the beginning of time. They were very wise and when the month of July came they told the young man that he must get ready to go home to see his mother and father. They instructed him carefully. The women got ready with him but before he left the house they gave him small nuts, four of them, two in left pocket and two in his right pocket. The old woman told him not to show the nuts to his people until four days had passed. And then they disappeared.

When he came to the place the women had told him to beach the boat, he did as they had told him. He walked for a long time and finally arrived at his village. His mother and father were in their house. They were old and tired and had given up looking for their son. When the son came to the door the old people knew that someone was at the door, but the sun was so bright now they couldn’t see. It was
like looking at the bright sun. When the old parents could look at the young man they asked who he was.

"That's me come home." And he told what had happened. The old people knew he was their son. The old man went into the village and told all the villagers that his son had come home. Immediately everyone came to see.

The head of the village came. Yes, it was the young man he had put in the box but he was different. He was bright. The head of the village immediately asked him to come back to his daughter but the young man said no. Many other men in the village wanted the young man to marry their daughter but the young man said always no. For three days the head of the village argued with the young man to marry his daughter but the man still refused.

Finally toward the end of the third day the young man took a peanut from his left pocket and rolled it over the floor of the house. The nut became a beautiful woman so bright that she blinded everyone for a minute. Still the head of the village argued for the young man to marry his daughter. The young man grabbed another nut from his pocket and rolled it over the floor. It became another beautiful woman, even more pretty than the first. But still the head argued that his daughter should marry the young man, but still the young man refused. Out of his right pocket he took another peanut and it became a still more beautiful woman.

The old father wondered why the head of the village wanted his son to marry his daughter when he already had three lovely wives. The son took the last nut out of his pocket and rolled it and it became a beautiful, beautiful woman. It was the old woman. She got up, looked at the three beautiful girls and then began to scold the young man.

"I gave you four days. Then you were to show the nuts to your people. You have not obeyed me." The four beautiful women disappeared.

Now that the four wives were gone the young man began to feel badly. His people felt badly. The young man said not to worry. He would try to find his wives. He walked and walked towards the east until he came to a very pretty mountain. Up near the top of the mountain sat an old, old man who had been sitting there since the world first began. This old man had a great long stone pipe.

The young man asked, "Why do you sit here? Where is your home?"

The old man answered, "I've been sitting here since the first of the world smoking my pipe." The old man began smoking his pipe and out of the bowl of the pipe came billowing fog and great clouds.

The young man walked on for a long time. He came to an old house and an old lady.

"Are you all alone," asked the young man.

"No," answered the old lady, "I have a grandson who's out having a good time."

She asked the young man to wait until the boy came home and she would have something to eat. She took the thimble off her finger which she was using to sew and sat it on the fire. She put a little water in the thimble and then put in three beans.

The young man thought to himself how the beans were going to cook in the small thimble and how there could possibly be enough for three people. The old
lady knew what the man was thinking but she said nothing.

When the boy got home the old lady grabbed the beans and put them on the table. While they were eating the boy told the man he was in a horse race with lots of horses. His horse was a small one. They raced and jumped over a fire.

As the boy talked everyone ate their bean but the beans never became any smaller. They always remained the same size.

The young man told the boy and his grandmother his story, the big box and the nuts that became beautiful women. The boy told the man to keep going the way he was going.

The young man walked until he came to three boys on top of a mountain who were quarreling. The boys had been quarreling since the beginning of time. Their oldest brother had died and they were quarreling over who should own his magic suit. The suit made the wearer invisible.

“I want the suit,” cried the oldest.
“No, it is mine,” demanded the middle boy.
“I want the pretty suit,” insisted the youngest.
“What are you doing?” asked the young man.
“Our eldest brother died and this suit belonged to him. We are trying to decide to whom this suit belongs.”
“You must earn this suit,” said the young man.
The boys agreed that they would be willing to earn the suit if the man had some method for them to earn the suit.

“I’ll tell you what to do,” said the man. “I’ll take this ball way up on the mountain, now you be ready for it as it rolls down. The one who can touch the ball on its way down the mountain can have the suit.”

The ball rolled down the mountain and the boys chased after it but no one touched it.

“No one touched it,” said the young man.
The boys brought the ball back up the mountain, quarreling as they came.
“I’m the one to touch it.”
“No, no, I’ll touch that ball.”
“I’ll touch that ball and have the suit.”
Again the ball was rolled down the mountain and again no one touched it.
The third time the ball was rolled down the mountain no one could touch it.
“You didn’t touch it. Bring back the ball,” said the man.
While the ball was hurling down the mountain the fourth time and the boys were trying to touch it, the young man walked over to the suit and put it on. Immediately he was invisible. He could not be seen.
The boys were still arguing when they came up the mountain with the ball. The man stood beside them and listened to them. The boys soon realised the man wasn’t standing on top of the mountain.

“Where’s the man,” the boys asked each other. While the boys were looking and calling the young man walked away. He walked and walked, stopping only once to take off the magic suit.

He came to an old lady in a big large house. She was cold and shivering a little.
“Are you by yourself?” the young man asked the old lady.
“No, I’ve got four grandsons, but they are all out.”
“What do you do?” asked the young man.
“Oh, just sit here. You wait. One of my grandsons will be home in a while. My boys are great boys. You will freeze when they come home. Hide in the corner there and I’ll cover you with skins to keep you warm.”

The old lady began to shiver and the young man shivered too. The old lady leaned over and whispered to the young man that the oldest grandson was coming home.

The grandson, December, came to the door. “Grandma, it smells like a person here.”
“Nobody came. Just by myself.”
“Oh, Grandma,” said the grandson, “I came from the north and when I came the ground froze and the people got cold and their fingers dropped off and their ears dropped off and they froze. And the trees twisted and bent and broke, and the water became ice and the snows came.”

When the grandson had finished telling his story he went way back in the south of the house and stood:
“Just awhile and my grandson January be coming home,” whispered the old lady to the young man.

The old lady began shivering and the young man trembled with cold. “He’s coming now,” whispered the old lady.
“It smells like a person here grandma,” said January.
“No one’s been here.”
“I twisted the trees and bent them and broke them. And I froze the people and the ground and the water. I covered the ground with deep snow.” After he had told his story he too went to the back of the great house and stood with his brother.

Soon the old lady and the young man started to shiver. The old lady whispered to her young man, “Another son will be home soon. He’s great, too.”

February came to the door. His hair was mussed and he looked very wild and cruel.
“It smells like a person here.”
“No one. Just my self.”
“I made great freezing rains come to the people. Mountains slid into the rivers. Great forests fell before me.”
He went to the back of the great house and stood with his two brothers.
“My youngest grandson be home soon. He is not dangerous.”
When March approached the house the old lady didn’t shiver. She felt a little warmer.
“It smells like a person, grandma.”
“No. I’m all by myself.”
“I have traveled a long way behind my brothers. They have been killing people, but I have been healing the trees and the people with warmth. I have thawed the ground and caused new things to grow.”

When the young man began to feel warmer, he threw off the skins.
March asked the young man what he was doing, if he was going someplace or looking for something. The young man told of his trouble and his search for his lost wives.

March told the young man that a woman was preparing to be married, and that there was to be a dance and a dinner. "If you hurry you can get there." The youngest grandson pointed the way to the man.

The man walked and walked and before he arrived at the village he put on his magic suit. He approached the door of a big house and saw many women working around a large table. There was his old woman wife from the island sitting there with her husband. She was pretty. She and her husband were talking and eating, and many people were at the table eating with them. The young man went behind his wife's chair and stood close by her. He reached over her shoulder and drank her liquid.

"You didn't give me any coffee," she said to the cook when she reached for her cup.

"Yes, I will," replied the cook.

By the time this happened the fourth time the woman was afraid. Her heart pounded. "Maybe that's my first husband," she thought. He was smart.

She went into her sleeping room and came out with a very powerful tube which she put up to her eyes. She looked around but couldn't see anything. She did this a second time with another tube but she couldn't see anything that resembled her first husband. The third time she was able to see her husband and she dropped the powerful tube and went over and hugged him. They went back to his people and lived happily ever after. He found his wife in the month of April.
Jarold Ramsey is presently a professor of English at the University of Rochester in New York.

Gilbert Minthorn as told to Morris Swadesh
Jarold Ramsey, editor

Fish-Hawk’s Raid Against The Sioux

Editor’s Introduction

As epic in its way as the Night Raid against the Trojans by Odysseus and Diomedes in Book Ten of The Iliad, the Cayuse story of Fish-hawk’s crazy, splendid raid on a Sioux encampment was told to Morris Swadesh in 1930 by Gilbert Minthorn, on the Umatilla Reservation in northeastern Oregon. In the course of research for my forthcoming anthology of Indian literature from the Oregon Country, Coyote Was Going There (University of Washington Press), I found it in longhand in Swadesh’s field-notebooks, labelled Cayuse Interlinear Texts, in the Boas Collection of the Library of the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia; the Society’s permission to publish this version of the text is gratefully acknowledged.

What is of special importance about the narrative is that its hero, the Cayuse warrior Fish-hawk, is a certifiable historical figure, a leader who flourished in the last three decades of the nineteenth century, and whose photograph — taken in later years when he was a sub-chief on the Umatilla Reservation — is given above. So his story, as narrated to Swadesh only three generations or so after the event of the raid (Minthorn claimed to have heard it from Fish-hawk himself as well as from others), presents an intriguing instance of the growth of a tale into a geste, one with genuine literary merit. (The whole subject of Indian hero-stories merits closer study — do they represent a neglected step between oral history, and myth? Of special interest: the extent to which such stories in a given tribe or group conform to the conventions and “rules” of its myth-repertory.)

Swadesh’s interlinear translation follows his Cayuse transcription phrase-by-phrase and in some passages word-by-word. Without departing extensively from his choice of words I have tried to bring the lines into some readable conformity with English syntax. For example, here is the beginning of the third paragraph, in his wording: “... they discovered them and they yelled Sioux and he told them brothers good think go slow lo they are going to take us and now horses they swept along Sioux and they took not far little ways they drove along horses and there they turned now...” Even in the original non-syntactical form, the rush and sweep of the story-telling is striking, and the graceful use of what appear to be epic formulae and epithets for the purpose of magnifying Fish-hawk, “the pipe-leader,” “the thinker in travels.”

Dennis Tedlock has argued cogently that most native American myths and tales would be best rendered into English as poetry, and his verse translations of Zuni narratives in Finding the Center bear him out. So here, too — the conception of the story is insistently poetic, I think, as in the epithets and other repetitions and the odd looping effect of the lines. But, being unable to re-transcribe it for metrical analysis, I have reluctantly chosen to give the revised text as prose.

Placing the events is sheerly guesswork, but probably Fish-hawk and his comrades were living in eastern Washington or in the Idaho Panhandle; and for the Sioux camp to be in “buffalo-country,” it would have to be on the far slopes of the Rockies, or even further east — probably in Montana or northern Wyoming. At any rate, a heroic journey, even under the best of conditions: the raid itself, as suggested by a dream, is a rare Northwest instance of the young man’s foray for power and status as practiced widely on the Plains. The Sioux would have understood Fish-hawk’s motives! And in fact there is evidence of a long-standing rivalry between the Cayuse, first horse-breeders
in the Northwest, and the Sioux, with each group riding far afield to steal horses and glory from each other. (See Ruby and Brown, *The Cayuse Indians: Imperial Tribesmen of Old Oregon*, Norman, Oklahoma, 1972).

So far as I know, this is the first Cayuse narrative ever printed, a sad commentary on our neglect of native literatures. Notorious in Western history for their part in the Whitman Massacre in 1847 and for trying in the 1850's to organize a pan-Indian rebellion in the Northwest, the Cayuse appear in a different light in this story, and others in the *Intercalary Texts* — as a people capable of celebrating heroism (including that of their enemies), ingenuity, comradeship, hardihood, and the pride of the tribe. The bitter irony of it all is that by the end of the nineteenth century, the people were dispersed and assimilated into other tribes, and the distinctive Cayuse language in which Fish-hawk's deeds were to be remembered ("Thus they told the story") was dead. When Gilbert Minthorn told the story to Swadesh, he gave it in Umatilla Sahaptin.

**How Fish-hawk Raided the Sioux**

A long time ago, when many Nez Perce and Cayuse lived to the east, they used to go buffalo hunting. Once a man dreamed of the Sioux, he saw them in his sleep, and he told the young men, "Now I am going on the war-path day after tomorrow, and I shall travel to the Sioux." He was a tough man; many times he had fought and come out all right. His name was Fish-hawk. Four Cayuse men and two Nez Perce men were going, the one named Fish-hawk and one named Come-with-the-dawn and one named All-alighted-on-the-ground and one named Charging Coyote, and two Nez Perce men. Fish-hawk took the lead, he held the pipe, he was the thinker in travels.

They all had red jackets, they were on the warpath, all six of them. They traveled and it snowed, it snowed like winter on the prairie. They traveled on horseback and they came upon the prairie, and went down into a canyon. Many Sioux lived close by there. Fish-hawk stopped and he turned around towards his friends — "We've come right into camp, see, here are the tents, and they don't know we're here." Tents were all around, maybe two hundred or more, they saw the tents.

Then the Sioux discovered them, and yelled in Sioux! Fish-hawk said, "Brothers, think good, and take it easy — they are going to try and take us." And now they swept the Sioux horses along with them, they drove them along a little way, and then they all turned. "They are catching up with us," he told the others, the pipe-leader told them. "Younger brothers, move on from here, don't shoot yet, for now they will try and take us. Look, there is brushy ground ahead, there we will dismount, and soon they will try and get us. We shall not desert each other: look to your guns," and the Sioux chased them along.

Fish-hawk, the people's chief in battle, turned his horse and he waved at the Sioux, he told them: "I am Cayuse, we all are; come on, you are three hundred or more. You are Sioux and you are just like old women, you never will kill us, we are Cayuse!"

So they yelled at the Sioux during the chase, and shot at them, they killed them as they went, and he told his brothers, the pipe-leader, "Now turn your
horses loose,” and they got off and they took off the bridles and took off their jackets and left it all behind and took only their guns and bullets into the brush, among the cottonwoods. He told them, the pipe-leader, he told them, “Younger brothers, look: we can dig trenches and fight well from there.” They dug out the ground and crossed cotton-woods over the trenches and got under it all. They yelled at the Sioux, the Sioux yelled back at them and hurled insults, they yelled back again. They were killing Sioux.

Now one of the Sioux used up his bullets and he came up to them, one Sioux, a tough man, dog-disguised, he came towards them, he came up singing. Fish-hawk said, the tough one, “Little brothers, now he comes, take good aim”—and they hit him close by the trench. He came on, and now he shot at Fish-hawk with a bow and arrows. Fish-hawk cried, “Little brothers, he shot me!” He got mad, the one named Fish-hawk. He told them, “Friends, now watch your leader, now! He shot one of us, now know me, now I am going after him and I am going to drag him right into the trench”—and he stood up suddenly and threw himself out of the trench and they yelled, the Sioux, they shot at him, and he hopped, he grabbed the Sioux warrior by the legs and dragged him along, he threw him into the trench and he hit him. They took his bullets and gun, and scalped him.

Fish-hawk told them, “Little brothers, maybe I am dying, now pull out the arrow”—and they pulled it out, and the pipe-leader, chief in war, breathed good again, but he was bleeding and getting weak, and they tied up the wound. He started shooting again, he told them, “Little brothers, think carefully; look, they are trying to get us, try to shoot straighter,” and they yelled.

He saw now that there was fire all around them, below and up above, and he told them, “Now, look, it’s burning, they are trying to kill us by burning. Dig deeper now, we are going to be burned, they’re scared and that’s why they are trying to burn us to death. But we will never die of fire, we are younger brothers, tough ones with guns, they can’t get us killed, and they will never kill us with fire.”

So he told them, and when night came he gathered them in the middle of the thicket, he told them: “We killed many Sioux, now we’re going, we’re going out. We’re in the midst of them but with my knowledge, soon we will get through anyway.” And he told them, “A little wind will come up presently, now get ready, little brothers, let’s travel!” And it came, the whirlwind, and they got out of the trench. When the fire flared up, they went down, they passed the Sioux all huddled up in a ditch, they passed by unseen, they traveled on.

Dawn came. The Sioux said, “Now, look, they’re all burned up,” and they went to the trench. When they got there they found nobody. The Sioux were surprised. “Where are they? How could they live? On which side of us did they pass?” They were greatly surprised, and as they went home, they cried on their way, they took many bodies home.

The Cayuse got out from the trench all right and from there they traveled without pants, shirt-less, pants-less, shoe-less—all they had were guns, and he told them, the chief, the pipe-leader, he told them, “Younger brothers, now we have traveled far, and one of us is getting cold and can travel no further.” It was
Charging Coyote; he told them, “Friends, now leave me, I will be too much bother, I’ll stay right here. My forefathers died too, I’ll just rest.” Then the others told him, “No, friend, it’s the same with all of us, without shoes, without pants, without shirts, somehow we will all get back.”

Then they came upon a buffalo bull, and Fish-hawk told them, “We have traveled far without eating, now kill it.” And they killed two buffalo; from them they made shoes and pants and shirts, and they ate buffalo meat. But they had no tents, they got black from freezing and were awful to look at: thus they came back to their own tents.

This is all of the story about the raid on the Sioux: now they told it at the big war-dance at celebration-time, how this man, Fish-hawk, the pipe-leader, went on the war-path, he was the man! “Only six of us, and you couldn’t get us killed, only six, and maybe you were three hundred and maybe more. . . .” Thus they told the story, and now all the people know it. This is a true story, now there, we have made it, and it will always be the same story.
J. Ivaloo Volborth is Apache/Comanche, and presently lives in Southern California.

J. Ivaloo Volborth

Three Songs

Lakota Group Sound Chant
(open with tremelo)

peta, peta, peta, peta,
luta, luta, luta,
luta-peta, luta-peta,
luta, luta, luta,
luta-peta, luta-peta.

wambli, wambli, wambli, wambli,
luta, luta, luta,
luta-wambli, luta-wambli,
luta, luta, luta,
luta-wambli, luta-wambli.

kola, kola, kola, kola,
luta, luta, luta,
luta-kola, luta-kola,
luta, luta, luta,
luta-kola, luta-kola.

nagi, nagi, nagi, nagi,
luta, luta, luta,
luta-nagi, luta-nagi,
luta, luta, luta,
luta-nagi, luta-nagi.

Tunkashila,
Tunkashila,
Tunkashila,
Tunkashila.
Pausetremelo
Hetchetu Aloha!
Apache Death Song

Ah-HEeee!
Skee-kizzen Chawn-chissy, KO-MA-KO-MA, Skee-kizzen Chi-ca-say,
AH-CHA Ko-MA-KO-MA,
Skee-kizzen Muerte, KO-KO-MA, Skee-kizzen Chi-ca-say,
AH-CHA KO-KO-MA,
AH-CHA KO-MA-KO-MA,
AH-CHA KO-KO-MA,
Hi-dicho, Enju!

Apache Winter Horse Song

HeeAahee,
HeeAahee.

Terte, Mie.

Chawn-chissy Grullo,
Chawn-chissy Chelee,
Ciye',
Cima-Silkq ugashi.

Ya-lan ciye',
Ya-lan bronco.

Terte, Mie,
Hi-dicho, Enju.

AH-Hee-Aa-hee,
AH-Hee-Aa-hee.
the fallon paiute-shoshoni reservation is located about 60 miles east of reno, nevada. as part of a government irrigation project it is criss-crossed by a network of irrigation ditches and canals — and it is in these that the waterbabies are believed to dwell. stories or tales of encounters with waterbabies are common among 4 generations of people who have lived on the reservation. my notes were made listening to nila northsun & vicki steve relating & discussing various of these encounters.” (K.R.) robertson is the co-editor (with nila northsun) of the poetry journal, scree, in fallon, nevada.

Kirk Robertson

notes on encounters with waterbabies

1.

i don't know how long ago this was
but my grandmother told my mother
that a group of people went out
to gather roots tules & reeds for baskets.
one woman brought her young child
in a cradleboard.
she left her child against a tree
so that she might gather the tules.
she moved further & further away
in gathering them & soon
she could no longer see her child.

a waterbaby came from the stream
came up to the child
opened its mouth real big
& swallowed the child.
the waterbaby began to cry
using the cry of the child.

the mother returned & began
to nurse the waterbaby
thinking it was her own child.
now the waterbaby began
to swallow the mother &
she cried out for help.
the people heard her cries
& came quickly but even so
by the time they reached her
the waterbaby had swallowed her tits.

RITUAL: To Remove A Waterbaby
A Friend Strikes The Waterbaby
On The Big Toe With A Rock.

the waterbaby vomited the tits
back onto the mother & jumped
back into the water.
the child was never seen again.
2.
this was seven years ago
on a summer night.
it was hot.
my aunt’s children were sleeping
on the grass
in front of the house.

in the middle of the night they heard
a crying sound down by the creek
not like a cat but like a baby.
they got scared cuz they knew
there were no houses there.
the cry swam up from the creek
& stopped across the road
from where the children slept.

the children ran into the house
& told my aunt what had happened.

“That was a waterbaby.”

3.
this happened last summer
near the town of Fallon
about five miles from the reservation.
my aunt took some of the kids
into town & left some behind
to play at the ranch.
the older ones soon tired of playing
with the younger ones
& went inside
leaving the younger ones outside.
they played outside for a long time
& didn’t come into the house
until after my aunt returned from town.

“Where’ve you been?”
“Outside playing.”
“With who?”

with a stick with a net on the end
& with a frog that had long hair
who would swim in & out
of the net.
we played tug-of-war with him.

“Don’t ever play with a frog
with long hair.
That’s a waterbaby.”

4.
i asked my mother to tell me
more stories
& she said i’d have to
ask my grandmother.

“Grandmother tell us a story.”
“She shook the bed.”
“What, Grandmother, tell us more!”
“She shook the bed. That’s all.”
This is the second part of an ongoing series by Mark Hedden, the first of which, “Dispositions On The American Neolithic: An Introduction,” appeared in Alcheringa Volume One #2. Hedden's work is being done independent of any university or foundation support, and he welcomes any comment/reaction to his writing here. He can be reached by writing c/o Alcheringa, or directly at Box 33, Vienna, ME 04360.

Mark Hedden

Dispositions On The American Neolithic, II

Oral texts provide one access into ways nonliterate expression differs from literate consciousness. Art provides another. The visual orientation of the nonliterate develops along lines essentially alien to literate art traditions. The point of separation, as pointed out earlier in contrasting literate and oral traditions (See Dispositions I, Alcheringa Volume I #2, p. 55), can be traced to the development of a distinct sense of self — of self-consciousness — in literate art. This new sense of self loosens ties of family, friends and associates. While freed from the closed cycles of birth, marriage and death and the set social roles that mark nonliterate societies, the literate consciousness has to deal with other entanglements — a feeling for time as relentlessly progressive, of given or hard-earned uniqueness dissolving into nothingness. This psychic vulnerability may underlie the preference for the particular, as thing and person, in literate art and tend to limit acceptable works to representations that bear a verisimilitude to observed experience. Not all artists in literate societies have felt so constrained but where they have departed the pivot on which they turn has been a personal or idiosyncratic version of reality — obverse and reverse faces of the same coin.1 By contrast, in nonliterate art, roles are emphasized with all the insignia of rank, of power, but the individual never emerges as an idiosyncratic being. Being essentially unseparated from place, from persona in its original sense of mask or role, the nonliterate artist takes all things that happen as aspects of eternal verities. The lack of self-consciousness enables him to mesh a fantastic geography of things or forces unseen with representational forms.

Designs carved or painted on natural rock surfaces by American Indians, of which a few examples from the Columbia River valley in Washington State are illustrated here, offer cases in support. Several distinctive features appear among these petroglyphs which are shared with most other examples of rock art, painted or carved, wherever found in the world. These can be summarized as follows:

1) **A lack of a single fixed point of view.** The designs may appear helter-skelter over a rock surface even where stylistic features and patination indicate that the designs were contemporay. Scenes are present, usually hunting scenes, but no attempt is made to relate the images to a common horizon line or perspective. Each design is integral to itself even where it forms part of a group or constitutes an element in a composition (See, for example, Pe 28).

2) **Economy in formal development.** Each design consists of a basic silhouette or outline with identifying elements. For example, quadrupeds may be marked by a conventionalized body form, legs and head with species distinguished only by horns (sheep), antlers (deer) or a curled tail (dogs) (See Pe 28).
3) A *continuum of inner and outer space*. The petroglyph maker may depict what he cannot see but knows or imagines to exist, such as the interior bone structure of an animal or the form of the cosmos (Pe 34C, Br 23, and large wapiti, upper left, Pe 28).

4) A *mixing of abstract or geometric forms with representational elements* — such as eyes, ears, horns and hands connected to circles, meanders and geometric shapes — in a manner which conveys a symbolic load to apparently “decorative” patterns (Br 23).

5) *No individuality, no portraiture*. A face may be any face. A human subject may be distinguished by sex, by insignia — such as headdress or weapons, certain gross features may be set off — such as a big nose, buttocks or feet but these are probably generic rather than specific — referring to stories of mythological beings or identifying members of a group (e.g. Nez Percé, Blackfeet) (See Pe 28, upper right, figure of hunter; Br 23; Br 63).

These features can also be found in the paintings, rock carvings and sand drawings of Australian aborigines, in the rock art of Spain and North Africa, in most of the pre-Contact art traditions of North and South America, in Oceanic art, in the art of surviving tribal cultures of the Asian hinterland, in European folk art, in Pennsylvania Dutch hex signs and in the drawings of children of modern Western societies who have not yet entered school or been otherwise introduced to literacy.

However, they are not characteristic of art associated with higher (i.e. literate) civilizations, such as Chinese art after the Han Dynasty, art of the classic Mayan cities or temple complexes in Mesoamerica, Greek art after 500 B.C., western European art from the end of the Medieval period or the drawings of school children who have learned to read and write. In short, the formal tendencies listed above are particularly associated with the visual expression of nonliterate peoples.

To the degree that these aspects are held in common among nonliterate traditions, they should be distinguished from elements of style. By style I mean certain conventions of form, subject and technique which can be fixed in time and place in any art tradition. Such stylistic conventions among the petroglyphs of the Columbia Valley in Washington, for instance, include the body shapes of game animal representations (varying from oval or rectangular outlines to bathtub or birdbodied silhouettes to simple linear depictions with each variation marking off a stylistic period), the forms of masklike heads and demonic figures (which appear to reflect Northwest Coast influence) or the frequency of certain geometric forms such as wheels, meanders, triangles, etc. These variations constitute fashions which can be definitely located in time and space and, where shared by different art traditions, may indicate historic relationships.

These changing or diachronic aspects must be distinguished from the given or synchronic aspects which seem to mark significant psychological or conceptual differences between literate and nonliterate traditions.

For the sake of emphasis, I want to restate the original list as a series of contrasts between the art of literate and nonliterate cultural traditions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nonliterate</th>
<th>Literate</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Lines move through space in the most economical manner that will express a form, subject and/or relationship between forms. Thus arbitrary lines may connect one object to another or the indications of relationship may be developed by contraction or conglomeration — i.e. combining the attributes of several different subjects into a single composite draw-</td>
<td>The subjects are expressed as parts of a scene seen from a single point of view with a consistent sense of gravity, of inside and outside, of a single horizon line present or implied. In effect, the relationship of things is depicted as they appear to an outside observer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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ing. Such drawings may be multi-dimensional, depicting what is normally visible with the invisible, such as the skeletal structure of living animals or the assumed configuration of the cosmos as an extension of the human form with human attributes.

The illustrations of Columbia River petroglyphs Br 23, Br 63 and Pe 34C show these multi-dimensional aspects in a number of ways. Br 23 is built on a basic equilateral cross which suggests both the widespread concept of the 4 directions and the human form. The vertical axis connects a heart-shaped head to a wheel-like earth sign ending with a three pronged root. The lateral axis connects breastlike protrusions at either side. Displaced bent arms spread outward from the cheeks in the gift-giving sign found on a number of 19th Century Kwakiutl masks (Cf. Boas 1895, Mask illustrations).

On Br 63, legs and winglike zigzag extensions form an X at the core of a striding human figure with a birdhead. An ambiguous device between the legs may represent a fishtail or smaller human figure with raised arms — both ideas have been recorded elsewhere in the vicinity. The zigzag “arms/wings” with vertical extensions from the angles, the central exaggerated human shape with smaller subordinate ‘human’ (?) and animal subjects associated may represent a complex of motifs that initially appears in Texas and Utah early in the 1st Millennium A.D. as elaborate polychrome murals (Cf. Newcomb 1967 and Schaafsma 1971).

On Pe 34C the core image of doubled arcs concentric to center dots that are reversed and joined at the apexes would have been recognized 5000 years ago in the Near East as a sign for the heavens and the deeps with the center square and lateral extensions representing earth and the horizon line. The cloud pattern above and the 3 pronged rootlike extensions below the perimeter of the core image suggest that the maker of this petroglyph, one of the oldest at the site, was well aware of the Near Eastern connotations of the symbol.
2) Designs tend to express total conceptions—the earth, animals, imaginary demons—with sufficient detail to identify but usually no more. Other details may reinforce the original image with decorative impact, e.g., repeating patterns such as zigzags, concentric rings, etc.

3) Designs tend to exaggerate proportions or details to express significant qualities—e.g., exaggerated eyes on certain masklike images, elaborated antlers on wapiti representations, etc.

4) The ego or "I" is not differentiated from the subjects represented. People, where depicted, tend to be anonymous—made distinct, if at all, by role insignia, weapons or sexual attributes.

Scenes tend to represent one part of an implied continuum—understood as endless—like a section of a partially unrolled Chinese scroll. Details tend towards the meticulous. They are included if present on the subject whether or not they enhance the meaning or purpose of the design. The best art, however, engages the parts into a working whole, all details charged or illuminated in relation to the total effect.

Subject proportions are maintained at approximate parity to the original, or at least maintain the illusion thereof—except in caricature.

The ego or "I" or the artist/viewer is always distinguished from the scene or subject. People usually distinguished by personal idiosyncrasies, as in portraiture or caricature.
Scenes with horizon lines first appear after the broadly based (though highly selective) educational system of Han Dynasty China established a literate class of civil servants (ca. 100 B.C.). Portraiture begins in Sumeria and Egypt after the development of cuneiform and hieroglyphic systems of writing with leading scribes and priest/rulers as their subjects. The classic phase of Greek art, the emergence of the naturalistic nude from the stylized forms of the Archaic Period, takes place in a period of near universal literacy among those privileged to be citizens of Athens and other Greek cities.

The realm of nonliterate art may extend back 100,000 years. Art associated with literacy goes back perhaps 5000 years. Up to about 10,000 years ago game animal representations were the main subject, associated with abstract signs and markings, bulbulous figurines of women and rare representations of masked or anonymous men. Careful observation of the seasons and astronomical phenomena seems indicated by tallies cut on small pieces of bone which correspond to the phases of the moon. (Cf. Marshack, 1972). The known borders of these paleolithic traditions extend from Siberia to Europe and south to North Africa and may have survived as late as the 19th Century in Bushmen paintings of South Africa.

With the inauguration of more permanent village societies based on intensive local utilization of marine resources, horticulture and/or domestication of animals a more fixed sense of place, of permanent orderings, of manipulatable surplus to be hoarded against famine or exchanged in trade develops — what is generally encompassed by the term Neolithic. This shift in consciousness finds expression in a strong tendency towards conventionalized motifs, vertically and horizontally aligned to order space, to exert a kind of graphic control over finite things, subjects and forces.

The shift is slow, barely perceptible over thousands of years, but the end result stands in sharp contrast to the character of paleolithic paintings which for all their possible symbolic cosmic overtones still reveal the world as found, on the run, the chance contours of a rock surface heightened with color to bring out a startled prey. The conventionalized designs that mark the last phase before literacy in the Near East (ca. 3500 B.C.) delineate the cosmos in the posture of a man, his upper quarters the heavens, lower quarters the deeps and the line of the navel — the earth's surface. The motif appears in endless variations as a human figure, as an abstract sign in the form of an X, as a face marking with eyes flanking the intersection of upper and lower planes, as two triangles point to point where lines of force from below meet lines of force from above at the earth's surface, that surface a mirror revealing, as water surface, the sky below.

The ability to express holistic concepts in straight-forward forms sets off the Neolithic traditions. From this point of view, the great western art traditions from the Renaissance on exist as decorative adjuncts to the all absorbing analytical schema of the literate canon. But the big difference, the apple which Eve handed Adam around 1000 B.C. (being the point around which Near Eastern village and tribal traditions generally became written canons) lies in the sense of individual uniqueness and vulnerability, the Greek hubris, the pride and the fall, the attendant sense of guilt . . . and here are buried the roots of, the psychological necessity for religions embodying a principle of forgiveness and mechanisms for absolving and expiating guilt from individuals.

Such self-consciousness is not overt in nonliterate art. An individual rises or falls with family, with peers, with his group. In the event of misfortune, an individual may serve as scapegoat to expunge evil or guilt from the group, but the role he plays has no necessary relationship to his personal complicity or guilt.

The sense of loss as the bonds of kinship dissolve may have seeded the original garden, the paradise lost of biblical tradition.2 This, as I indicated in Dispositions I, seems to be a dromenom of literacy. Much of what we associate with western art traditions dwells upon
ideal representations of man and the garden, on the one hand, and guilt or alienation, on
the other, the ideal corrupted (taking special form as social realism).

Nonliterate traditions emphasize stasis — the eternal present — with notions of the
present varying among different traditions. The particular histories of each group limit the
forms and content. The hunter/gatherer and pastoralist walked on conceptions of earth, of
place, that differed from those of the villagers who hoed their crops, though during the
Neolithic the two poles of character were more often mixed than not, the various
economies coexisting. The degree of contact is another factor. Art of more isolated groups
diminish in force and variety while more cosmopolitan situations cross-pollinate and
stimulate the vigor of growth. Ultimately, each tradition is oriented to a particular group
or locus, bounded by the bias of the village as well as the purposes of the art. Elements of
each tradition constitute marks of identity. With the dissolution of a sense of commonality,
the spirit investing the art disintegrates, forms retained, perhaps, as decorative motifs,
relics for the tourist trade.

Notes:

1) Picasso, Klee and Miró, for example, show the influence of
nonliterate art forms in their works. The angular distortions
of African masks gave vent to Picasso's feelings towards his
wives and mistresses. Klee's repeating rhythms of geometric
forms and conventionalized human figures moved from sus-
tained musical abstractions to dramatic representations
verging on paranoia. Miró exploded with Priapic exuberance
and color. Certain forms and rhythms of nonliterate art have
been absorbed into the repertoire of modern art but the con-
ceptual and functional bases remain distinct. What is of par-
ticular interest here is the timing of this expansion. I would
suspect that the adoption of universal education in western
European countries by the 1870's eventually made the
resources of nonliterate art accessible to the literate artist by
removing the class stigma along with gratuitous assumptions
of superstition, ignorance and ineptness that had previously
been attached to works by the illiterate.

2) The concept of a garden as a walled sanctuary, an oasis of
delights open only to a select few is not limited to literate
groups but where it appears elsewhere the concept seems to
be particularly associated with warrior groups or specialized
murder gangs, such as the Assassins, who absorbed or
employed dislocated individuals of heterogenous origins for
their own nefarious purposes. The spread of the idea among
nonliterate warrior groups of the Asian hinterland along with
a number of Pontic or Near Eastern design motifs and per-
haps the class social structure (warrior/commoner/slave)
associated with the warrior groups may be a spin-off of the
original mounted hordes, the Cimmerians, who in the period
around 1000 B.C. ransacked most of the Middle Eastern
cities and swept eastward as far as the western gateway to
China and westward into Europe destroying on their way
hundreds of nameless neolithic farming and stock raising
communities who had been pursuing their lifeways for mil-
lennia more or less undisturbed. The Cimmerians them-
selves, as did their successors, probably recruited their
numbers from captured survivors of their maraudings and,
consequently, had to build loyalty on the different basis than
kinship (Cf. Heine-Geldern 1951; Samolin 1972:190ff and
Hedden 1967).

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Future Primitive

+ Humanity is an implicit and beneficial element of nature. Cultural history of the genus reveals a two million year span of successful adaptation during which people collected their food and materials from naturally productive geo-biotic regions and locales. A cultivation of the wild. + The term primitive refers to this long and stable phase of human culture—so persistent it survives today on the most marginal lands. + The replacement of this very successful adaptive culture with an exploitative/industrial culture occurred only very recently in the North Pacific Range. + Human presence in the New World dates back at least twenty thousand years. From Mid to Late Wisconsin glaciation, populations began to grow and spread until encountering the continental margins. + Through a process of biocultural evolution the journey over earth became a union with her body. ++ A simple shift in mode, in perception, in culture... the sheath of worldculture could drop away... revealing an endless & radiant landscape of the imagination. Human culture rising out of natural succession... its best aspiration harmonious interaction with the larger community, the ecosystem... a simple rearrangement of hierarchies... nothing to be afraid of, total security at both ends. Teaching history as an arm of biology for a generation would do it. Or do I have to lay down in front of that damned bulldozer again? + I'm walking across the field toward Fishtown. The light is very clean & soft, an early spring day. The plants & trees are radiant from within and I am alert enough to see the radiance. Fishtown is built on pilings over the river, old gillnetters' shacks now occupied by artists & contemplatives. It lies about a mile from the paved road. Half the walk is over cultivated field, half through the woods, straight up over the hill & then the river. As I walk over the hill I'm paying attention to the trees and the ground. The river comes into view and suddenly I'm stunned by the realization that I am not the same person who started the walk! I am transformed by a ceremony residing in the land itself. The place dictates the mandate for human activities there and that mandate can be perceived directly through a ceremony that lives in the woods like an almost tangible creature. I am transformed, transfixed; I am hung on the line to dry like a flapping raggedy flannel shirt. ++ We have been awakened to the richness and complexity of the primitive mind which merges sanctity, food, life and death—where culture is integrated with nature at the level of the particular ecosystem and employs for its cognition a body of metaphor drawn from and structured in relation to that ecosystem. + We have found therein a mode of thinking parallel to modern science but operating at the entirely different level of sensible intuition; a tradition that prepared the ground for the neolithic revolution; a science of the concrete, where nature is the model for culture because the mind has been nourished and weaned on nature; a logic that recognizes soil fertility, the magic of animals, the continuum of mind between species. + Successful culture is a semi-permeable membrane between man and nature. + We are witnessing North America's postindustrial phase right now, during which human society strives to remain predominant over nature. + No mere extrapolation from present to future seems possible. + We are in transition from one condition of symbiotic balance—the primitive—to another which we will call the future primitive... a condition having the attributes of a mature ecosystem: stable, diverse, in symbiotic balance again. ++ Now I'm half crazed with it; I'm carrying a cockle shell in my palm as I walk & hitch around the countryside. It cuts into my hand just enough to keep me
alert. I want to perceive those natural ceremonies & processions wherever I go. Maybe I'll go mad but I'm gaining a language. I can talk to almost anyone now & it's not stiff or weird. + Hitching to the dentist this morning along Chuckanut Drive, a narrow two-lane blacktop clinging to the cliffs running up the east side of Northern Puget Sound, fine vistas of the San Juan Islands, very little traffic this time of year. A cheerful middle-aged fisherman picks me up after a while. I pocket my cockle. He fishes on the Radio, dragging for hake which are sold to the fish-meal plant & ground up into pellets which are fed to hatchery salmon. I know another guy on the Radio & I tell him that I have to smell that fish-meal process, the damned plant's in La Conner, where I live. We feel friendly toward each other. + He asks what do I do in La Conner, just foolin away my unemployment, hah? + I tell him what's in the North Pacific Rim, how it's strung together by salmon, fir, cedar, bear, the Japanese Current, the weather; how 99% of human habitation there has been successful; how there's a real economy which everyone shares that has nothing to do with American or Russian or Japanese bucks. He digs it at once, doesn't even care about Japs ripping off "American" fish. + He asks Are you religious? + I say Well, ah, I think the planet's alive, yes I suppose I'm religious, but it's not out there, it's all over the place, it's in here. + He says Yeah, well I'm not very religious either. But that economy, I can understand that, I've always thought I could get very close with a Japanese woman —now I could tell her, look, we're all in the same boat, whad'ya wanna do next? + I give him his next line —yeah, eat another piece of this salmon. + We laugh and drive on through Bellingham. He drops me right at the dentist's door & we part friends. I deliver to the dentist a copy of a poster we have managed to produce for the Drum concerning the rate of trade between the Japanese & the Ainu in 1792. White Rice. He's very happy to get it. Says Wow, the Hudson Bay Company was doing the same thing at the same time on this side with white flour! + + The science of ecology provides us with a logic of integration: individuals join to form species/populations; populations join to form community/ecosystems; ecosystems join to form the biosphere. If we wish to integrate our cultures with nature we do so at the level of the ecosystem which everywhere has a common structure and progression but everywhere varies specifically in composition and function according to time and place. + Compare this with the post-industrial ideal of stewardship whereby a single species assumes management of the biosphere in order to turn to its advantage all biological and physical processes. A single species dead-end. ++ Technology on the North Pacific Rim is boat technology. You can't walk around the Rim without a bulldozer in front of you to clear the trees. Bigfoot is a 22 year old ex-logger, tractor driver, peaviner, a friend of mine. Maybe a month ago he decided that the only reasonable way to live around here was to get into a boat that would row & sail, which would open up for him a 500-mile radius in which he could forage & cultivate the wild. Live that way, forget about logging hernias. He found a 26 foot Columbia River bowpicker hull which was sinking, raised it, put a foredeck & new gunwales on it, intends to step a mast soon. It's a big boat with a lot of beam, but so well-shaped that one person can row it standing up with 14 foot sweeps. + Last week he & Peter & I took it out. We rowed it up the channel a couple of miles against the current and then through the fish hole in the jetty, a tricky business. It was one of those typical days on the Rim —water above, water below, the definition of the horizon obscured into a dozen tones of pearl gray. A person in a boat on such a day floats in the center of a dimensionless cosmos; up, down, here, there, all obscured. A person in a boat is in the center of It. + We worked our way along the jetty until we saw a cedar log big enough to cut shake bolts out of it. Drift-wood. We took a chainsaw, bucked it up, loaded it in the boat. Then found a big alder, perfectly seasoned, bucked it up for firewood & loaded it. As the tide goes out the fish hole dries up, so we hurried back out into the channel so as not to be stranded on the wrong side of the jetty. We rowed back on the channel, trying out various rowing styles: facing backwards, facing forwards, two men rowing together, etc. We got back before noon, not tired, but laughing, with more than half a cord of mixed shake-bolts & fire wood. + Anxiety about survival has always been beside the point. The air was moist and tasty that morning and we felt good for the rest of the day. ++ A narrow climatic zone adjacent to the temperate North Pacific. Sea level to coast-mountain divide. Within this range there is a procession manifest in its life process. + With the retreat of glaciers came the first communities—the lichens, mosses and grasses—forming a living cover over raw glacial till; reducing soil erosion and evaporation; building up organic matter. + Next, willow and cottonwood seedlings, prostrate
on the nitrogen-impoverished soil. Then, the alders: hosts to nitrogen-fixing bacteria. Nitrogen compounds leak from roots to soil. Leaves form a nitrogen-rich detritus. Organic matter accumulates. Community succession continues. As the alder thicket matures hemlock and red cedar surge upward and shade out the alder. The new stands thicken. More organic matter is added to the soil. Conditions continue to change. Succession slows as energy is increasingly relegated from production to maintenance and protection. Growth slows. Life cycles elaborate webs of association working toward symbiotic balance, more complex food chains, nutrient conservation and stability. In two hundred years the alder's gone. Incorporated into the forest soil. This past month we ate nettles, many oysters, dandelion greens, salmon, cat-tail shoots, smelt, lambs quarter, clams, mussels, and a lot of stuff from the grocery store. Less dependence on the grocery store than last year. The last of last summer's frozen strawberries for breakfast this morning. Five pound Dolly Varden trout in the channel, but I haven't learned to catch them yet. Garden still half an inch under water but the leeks & garlic holding tough. Milk from local cow-farmers. It's very early spring. Rain forest. Hemlock-wapiti-deer-red cedar-sitka spruce biome. Duff and organic soil is deep. Wapiti browse, deer browse. Trails through the forest. Beds where they sleep. The challenge is to fit ourselves to this range in a way appropriate to the strategy and particulars of its regional succession, so that our cultures are once again a ceremony of interaction between species and ecosystem, matching the regional diversity. Events related to landmarks; a mythology of place; a landscape of events. The locale one context containing the indigenous culture, appropriate to its time and place, ritualizing connections between species and habitat. Continuous with biology. A community of beings joined by rim and basin, air and watershed, food chains—ceremonies. Inhabiting river basin, estuary, mountainside and island, we proceed as part of the ceremony of this evolution. There is no independent existence. Whispers from Suwa-no-se Island, in the Japanese Archipelago, poetry in the Micronesian Senate, Tlingit newspapers 300 miles in the back country. Neighbors & allies. My feet are here and my head's everywhere. Various locales are speaking through various people, communes, peoples. Wallace Stevens said, "There are men of a valley/Who are that valley... the soul... is composed of the external world." Geobiologically, there is no sense in centralized national governments. Biologically, the industrial state is a travesty. Economics has been misunderstood for two thousand years. Growth economics and bio-engineering are thrusting us into an encapsulated toilet of a future. There will be corresponding committees, regional caucuses, continental congresses to deal with these considerations. We will strive for indigeneity and regional self-sufficiency. We will be informed by earthworms & plankton. We will study that authority which resides in place and act out our lives accordingly. There is no separate existence.

Future Primitive is spoken here as two voices with images. In reality, these voices represent the best cullings from readings in dozens of authors and scholars and from months of discussions with many people up and down the west coast of North America. It is an ongoing collaboration which has hardly begun....

JG & LH
Lew Welch, long-time friend of fellow poet Gary Snyder, disappeared in the Sierra Nevada of Northern California in 1971. Two collections of his writing have appeared posthumously from Four Seasons Foundation: *Ring Of Bone* (poems) and *How I Work As A Poet* (talks, essays, and plays).

Gary Snyder

"Lew Welch just turned up one day"

Lew Welch just turned up one day, live as you and me. "Damn, Lew" I said, "you didn't shoot yourself after all." "Yes I did" he said, and even then I felt the tingling down my back. "Yes you did too" I said — "I can feel it now." "Yeah" he said. "There's a basic fear between your world and mine. I don't know why. What I came to say was, teach the children about the cycles. The life cycles. All the other cycles. That's what it's all about, and it's all forgot."
Peter Berg is an editor of *Planet/Drum* and member of the Frisco Bay Mussel Group.

**Borne-Native In The San Francisco Bay Region**

We who live around the San Francisco Bay-Sacramento River Estuary, all species of us ranging this watershed on the North Pacific Rim, feel a common resonance behind the quick beats of our separate lives; long-pulse rhythms of the region pronouncing itself through Winter-wet & Summer-dry, Something-flowering-anytime, Cool Fog, Tremor & Slide.

The region proclaims itself clearly. It declares the space for holding our own distinct celebrations: Whale Migration & Salmon Run, Acorn Fall, Blackberry & Manzanita Fruit, Fawn Drop, Red Tide. Processions and feasts which invite many other species, upon which other species depend. The bay-river watershed carries these outpourings easily. They are borne, native. Their occurrence and the full life of the region are inseparable.

Human beings have lived here a long time. For thousands of years, the region held their celebrations easily. They ate enormous quantities of shellfish, acorns, salmon, berries, deer, buckeyes, grass seeds, and duck eggs. They cut hundreds of acres of tule reeds for mats, boats and baskets, burned over thousands of acres of dead grass, made trails everywhere, cleared land and packed down soil with villages. They netted fish from boats, strung fish traps across creeks, and rivers, and dug up tidelands looking for clams and oysters. The region probably never held a species that had a greater effect upon it, but for thousands of years human beings were part of its continuous life. They lived directly in it, native.

A few hundred years ago some new people moved in and began to impose a non-native way of life over the entire watershed. Instead of living directly in it, they began living off of it. Dams, canals and pipelines were built to shift “surplus” water away from life-systems in rivers, creeks, lakes, and marshes which had always required it. Oysters and clams were stripped from the bayshore in a few years and their beds filled in with garbage and crushed hillsides to create waterfront real estate. Within a short time, redwood and fir forests became houses and San Francisco Bay turned into a huge toilet for sewage and factory wastes. Generations who were born here called themselves “native” but they kept pushing the watershed’s life to exhaustion. Nearly all habitats for native species were destroyed. Attempts by many species to maintain themselves were stopped through outright slaughter or intolerable despoilation. Some of the largest are lost to the region now; tule, elk, grizzly bear and condor.

It was extremely profitable for a few of the new people to live here this way. Anything could be seen as unused surplus by a non-native eye and it was easy to find markets elsewhere for much of it. But profits began slipping as native life-forms vanished. The place withered quickly and became increasingly less liveable to all of the people in it.

When forests are transformed into housing developments, there is an illusion of prosperity which masks the hollowness felt by people who live in them. Landscapes full of buildings become depressing. Jobs that require annihilating living things or manufacturing monotonous garbage breed self-contempt. Constant exposure to other people or television without an opening into the naturally-evolved graces of the planet is oppressive and demeaning. There is a feeling that one’s life is being used. Used up. Connections with the perpetuating sources of all life are lost and replaced with an all-pervasive doubt whether society can control its ultimately destructive course.

Non-native culture, live-in colonialism, becomes its own worst threat. Rejection of natural life-systems requires mammoth amounts of labor and energy to build, rebuild, and keep up artificial ones. By reducing the diversity of life in the region, non-native culture constantly narrows opportunities for social and personal self-preservation. There’s a steady movement through extinction of native life towards
self-extinction.
Winter-wet & Summer-dry, Something-flowering-anytime, Cool Fog, Tremor & Slide will remain. The region's unique resonance will continue to sound behind whatever celebrations are carried by it, and proclaim itself more clearly than any declarations made about it. Reinhabitants of the place, people who want to maintain a full life for themselves and for the watershed, are shaping human celebrations which respond to that resonance. Celebrations which depend on but can be shared by other native species. Lives which can be part of the region proclaiming itself.

FOR THE SERPENTINE ROCK FOOTING
beneath the sewers and cables
beneath the basements of these buildings

SHOVED UP FROM AROUND SAN LUIS OBISPO AN INCH AN YEAR
for the last 60 million years

CHINKING COASTAL FAULTS

BROUGHT THROUGH THE HUGE GENEROUS PRESSURE OF NORTH AMERICA
sliding downhill over the Rocky Mountains

PUSHING A FINGER OF LAND TO GRADUALLY ENCLOSE
part of the Pacific Ocean

TO MAKE A WARM BAY WHICH SUCKS CLEAN WHITE FOG
off Asian Kuro Siwo, the Japanese Current

SWEEPING EVENINGS AND MORNINGS HERE IN SAN FRANCISCO
with grey hooded intimacy

A CLOAK FOR EXPECTANT GEOPSYCHICS POISED BESIDE A QUAKE
of the North Pacific Rim

"FOR THE SERPENTINE ROCK FOOTING . . . ."
chanted from the sidewalk to housedwellers in the Mission district Winter Solstice morning 1974. Conjuror's gratitude to Robert Curry.
Dennis Tedlock

Breathings: West To South

I

Andrew
Ondelace
our uncle, our nephew
Old Man
whose real names are not written
and hardly ever said
last spring
you had a fever
your eldest daughter
and the doctors and nurses all say
you cussed them out
called them wicked
tried to push them away
you say
the dead people were trying to cover you up
trying to smother you with blankets
Andrew
Straight Stick
long-time Chairman
of the Agricultural Advisory Committee
your family always wanted you out of politics
they called you full-of-words
your eldest daughter called you loudmouth
four years ago
the man who always took the word around
to call your committee together
let his cows stray into your cornfield
you haven't spoken since
there's no way to call a meeting now
and you say
I'm not anything now
Andrew
one-time heavy equipment operator
builder of dams with an elevating grader
life-long farmer
the doctor says stay off the tractor
no
you shouldn't even herd sheep
your wife gets lonely on the farm
your eldest daughter calls it Place-of-Ghosts
your partner was found in the field with his team
his body tangled in the traces
but you say
when you've worked hard all your life
it's hard
just to sit around the house
Andrew
last spring you got up
on the tractor
it shook something inside you
you had a fever
now you say
I'm not physical anymore
Andrew
for years you traded turquoise for land
now you've divided all those fields among your daughters
in hopes
their husbands will plant them
your eldest son wants the house at the farm, says
he'll have to build his own
as long as you're still living
Andrew
on the day of this full moon
your prayers were ready to plant, your eldest son
promised to take you down to the field
he showed up after dark, you said
What will I say?
will I talk to the Sun in the dark?
Andrew
with the voice of a real man
singer
for the Society of the Path of Fulfillment
for years you told them to get a recorder
so the strings of songs would not be lost
last year you put those strings on tape
leaving out only
the songs of initiation
last year they rehearsed with your tapes, but
you joined in on the night itself
and the six hundred songs
shook something inside you
Andrew
between two strings of songs
the women asked for your word
you started the story of famine
the priest who discovered his wife with her lover
who cut off all rain for four years
then found his son
starving
he roasted some corn for him
and wanted to teach him a song —
the door opened
it was the officers
of the Society of Masked Dancers
looking for year-long promises
everyone was quiet
until they left, then
your chorus wanted to sing so the women would dance
four songs and not one dancer
the women wanted the rest of your story
you said it was too bad they didn’t dance
and when they asked you again
you showed them the song on a page in our book
Andrew
you say while you sing you can almost see
the next song coming
but after that
it’s all black
Andrew
you stand by the stove in the morning
your story is medicine
you never spoke to us this way before
a change in you in us:

Sometimes when a person is sick
in our way
you have to turn it back five or ten years
it might be something scared you
maybe you didn’t think you were scared at the time
but it goes into you
you take it into yourself
maybe you went outside and someone
jumped up
maybe you were digging a grave
maybe you dug down half as deep as this room
you came across something
something that didn’t rot, silk
the fringe of a shawl
the silk hem from a blanket
or maybe it was
that smell
or you went to a dance
and the Cannibal Granduncle scared you
just as we saw it last night
and all these years later you get sick
you get depressed
now we have to go back
it was that scare
what you have to do is
cut off a little of your own hair
burn it and
breathe that smoke
that smell
this is the cure called
*put-it-around-yourself*
when my eldest daughter already had a couple of kids
she was pregnant again, but this time
her belly really got
swollen up
it was something we did once
my wife and I
we butchered a sheep
but we didn’t get the air out of the gut
now we had to go and buy another sheep
butcher it again
my wife took the stomach and
put it on top of our daughter’s belly
she pressed the air out of it
and after that the swelling went right down.
In the same way
my third son had a hernia
it was bleeding
coming out
looking back
when we castrated the lambs
I cut one too high, if you cut one too high
his guts might start to come out
so now I had to get another lamb
I castrated this one very carefully
cut those little balls off low enough
then I took that
and put it on my son’s
then I made motions with the knife
as if to cut again
correctly
and after that
his hernia healed.

Andrew
this morning
we almost had a head-on crash
in the flat there
between the reservation line and the Y
where the pavement is broken
a pick-up came out from behind a trailer-truck
I slammed on the brakes
swerved halfway off on the shoulder
he got back in his lane just in time
our hearts
tried to jump right out.

That’s what I was talking about:
it could make you sick
five or ten years from now
the cure
is to put it around yourselves
it happened in a car
so take a piece of paper
this napkin will do
scrape off a little grease
from under your car somewhere
now
take some coals from the stove
with the shovel, here
these will do
put the grease on the coals
take this shawl
cover yourselves so you’ll get all that smoke
breathe it
that smell
you were the driver
put your hands in the smoke
that’s enough now
here’s a glass of water
drop the coals in
now take them out again
and both of you
wet your first two fingers like this
rub them over your foreheads
wet them again
reach in underneath your clothes
rub them over your chests
that's right
now
I'll throw the water outside
it's good you did this today
five or ten years from now
it might've been too late.

Andrew
after all these years
we're on our way somewhere else
in the story of the Beginning
the people were divided
those who were to come here
to the Middle Place
chose the egg that was spotted with blue
the Zunis always do like something pretty
and those who went south, toward the coral
chose the dull egg
the people were divided, and
the spotted egg
hatched the crow, the dull egg
hatched the macaw
and we will see the people who took the macaw
in Meheku, yes, but also beyond it
in a place called Many-Trees
like you, they found a lake in their path
they crossed it going east
their word for fish is still the same as yours
the mountain of all their elders
is in the west
the mountain of seers is east
the town
stands
in the Middle
the meat they burn is hard resin
the broth is water
the feathers are flowers
the breath is breath
and they look for the Good Road
Andrew
you don’t know the name
of the man down there
he calls the days
not to see them but
they move in his blood
like sheet lightning
his name
Andrés.

II

Andrew
we didn’t notice
you didn’t finish your food
when we left
your stomach hurt
you sat up by the stove all night
eating our peanuts and drinking your son’s beer
I woke up far away thinking you needed a coat
couldn’t get it out of my mind
Andrew
you were gone when we came back
your family took you to Black Rock Hospital
your fever hit a hundred and six
an ambulance took you to Gallup
we found you there in the surgery ward
you had a tube taped to your nose
with a drainage pump on the floor
you had a tube taped to your right wrist
with a bottle of dextrose hanging over you
but your body
was radiant, we both saw it
Andrew
you woke for a moment
you saw us
you said, Oh
hello there
in my face I said, Don’t dare die
you went right back to sleep
Andrew
in the afternoon
we stood in the yard of your second daughter
you looked at the southwestern hill
the Seat of Whiteness
behind a rock there
the stone seats of the speakers of winter and summer
in the rooms of a ruin there
the seats of the six couriers
and apart
the seat of the carrier of fire
a month ago they dressed themselves there, then
came into town
in two years
your daughter will build a house for them
perhaps
you got cold while we stood there
Andrew
the doctor now says you had stones
in your gall bladder
a massive infection around it, he took out
your gall bladder
when they put you back in your room your arms moved
your eldest daughter held you down on one side
your second daughter on the other, and she
began to feel sick
she gave her place to your youngest daughter, then
your eldest daughter began to feel sick, and
she gave her place to your youngest son
and they in turn got sick
your eldest son has come to see you only once
now he paints the masks for the first winter night
the dancers-trade-places
your second son needed cash
gave you a bolo tie for a hundred
a masked dancer, profile
inlaid in silver
your third son lives in Oklahoma
your fourth son is here
and he looks exactly like you.

Andrew
when they wheeled you out
your kidneys failed
with your kidneys back
in the night
your heart
stopped

your daughters heard the announcement in the hall
cardiac arrest
cardiac arrest
for three hours
they kept your daughters out of the room, then
they forced their way in, found
all the windows open
your wind —

your arms and legs cold
your fingernails white
the wife of the brother of your wife
blew wind back in
through the top of your skull
your daughters massaged your limbs
moved
the blood to your hands your feet till the nails were pink

Andrew
ten years ago
your horses ran away with the wagon
you tried to stop them
they dragged you
they almost tore your ear off
you almost bled to death
but the doctors gave you a new life
and you told them so
and you gave up your team for a tractor
Andrew
when you were a young man
your heart was wearing out
the Mystic Animals gave you a new one
they painted your breast
red
they placed the kernel of yellow corn on your heart
it disappeared inside
now you say you will show us something
it is
the breath they gave you
the long macaw tail feathers
one of them very old, the fringes gone off the barbs
another one missing
gone to make the breath of your eldest son
the short parrot feathers
downy eagle breast feathers
bluejay feathers with black stripes
the basket at the base
woven by your fourth son, the basket
that holds the buckskin that covers
the cottonwood disc on which
your breath stands
we feel the perfect ear of corn through the basket
through the feathers
we heft it, we know
the hollow in the stem
only from your words
and you only tell us what is sealed there
Andrew
here on the necklace of your breath
the long finger of coral that marked it as yours
broke
so you shaped a piece of shell
strung it on with the spotted side out
Andrew
after all this time we tell you
how we watched these things stand on the altar
we thought
we saw them breathe, you say this one
breathes all right
and the one whose breath it is
can call the mountain lion
the bear
not to see them but
they whisper in your ear
Andrew
we saw you doctor your grandson's wife
she was screaming
paralyzed
your youngest son and the son from Oklahoma told us
someone should take her to the hospital, we're afraid
she might die
Andrew
what
happened to her?

She got that sickness on the job she had
there's nothing wrong with her now
a month ago
my youngest son fell down playing basketball
he hurt his left elbow
and his left ankle
I pressed the spots where it hurt with my hand
it's the prayers you say that do it
not out loud but
you say it in here
no
I'm not a lightning-struck doctor
but being with the Mystic Animals all these years
I might be expected to know something
my father was struck by lightning
lightning tears you up
cuts you in half
you die for a little while, but
when nobody sees you and the rain falls
it puts you back together again
when you come alive you don’t know what happened
the doctor keeps you indoors for four days
you eat nothing but cornmeal, and each day
one stinkbug
in bread, they say it has a hot taste
he teaches you everything about lightning:
to watch for burning snags after storms
to go there and gather the ashes
to keep them to rub over breaks and sprains
my father had splints from lightning-struck pines
four of them
one for each side of a broken limb.

Andrew
a priest in black comes into your room
takes one look at the tag at the foot of your bed
and goes right back out
there, under your name and date of admission
and next to your age and address
is a space for religion, filled in
N.S.
the nurse says that means non-sectarian
she guesses that’s for people who don’t have any
and you say
What!
and we all laugh
Andrew
for two days
even with your breath blown back in
you could not speak
they brought the Mystic Animal
he saw something in your throat
took out the stain
of the blood of the deer
took out the fur of the deer
and now you can talk again, but
only a word or two
you who are full-of-words
you who talk till your wife yawns
whose eldest daughter called you loudmouth
your belly is swollen
I describe it with my hand, your wife says you are full
of thoughts
the worries the words
that don't come out
the doctor says you are still in danger
your family watches you every hour of the day and night
at the black paint mine
deep in the canyon
you were the one who descended the notched log
backwards
to the narrow ledge on the cliff
and with the sleeves of car springs
you dug out the paint
from a narrow vertical vein
the others only hauled it up
they were scared, they told you not to fall, but
you told them
There's no reason for me to fall
I've just got myself
you wouldn't fall unless
you wanted to suicide yourself
Andrew
your heart beats you breathe and you speak a word or two
in two languages
Andrew
for the fourth time
you have been given a new life
we don't know how long it will be
when they dragged you away to school
they decided on 1904 as the year of your birth
it is now 1976
you have never been an old man
the question is
do you want to be?

Andrew
you snore loudly
your wife sits facing you
your eldest daughter and her husband offer us
your bed at home
too near
no
we head east out of town
a yellow star falls long and slow
across the highway toward the north
burns out before it hits the ground
tomorrow we head south
here is the Moon of Broken Branches, but there
tomorrow is the day Eleven Death
to ask for the bundle
to ask for the office of
motherfather
burner of resin of pine
we cross the border
on the day Twelve Deer
the day the motherfather do their work.

III

South
of the Middle Place, and west
of the Heart of the Earth
in the Place of Copper
where the mountains are broken
in the house of a stranger
where the table is set in the doorway
I tear off a bit of tortilla
in the earthly way
with this I take a bit of meat
in the earthly way
I throw it in the ashes
on the old earth place:

Great-Grandparents, eat!

I mean what I do with my hand.
I don't know how long it will wait
for the fire.

IV

Don Andrés:
this morning
on our way from Under Ten Deer
to the Canyon, the Hollow
a bird passed over the car
we saw the turd arc down
pong! it hit the car
then, on a sharp turn
we met a bus coming fast
just got by
on another turn
we met another bus
and just below here
a truck was stalled on the bridge
we had to come a different way
Don Andrés
could you divine for us?

Which way did the bird fly?

No, Don Andrés
I mean
we both had dreams last night
dreams of a man who was sick when we left him
his name is Andrew, or
Andrés.

The lightning moves toward my elbow
it seems
his condition is worse now
no, he's not dead
but he's in agony
ready to die.

But we dreamed
she dreamed that she read his obituary, but
it said he was 87
not 72
I dreamed he was explaining a text to me
saying these two lines
were two ways of saying the same thing
I awoke
thinking I'd been with a man who was already dead.

Already
yesterday or the day before
he died.
At first I said he was in agony
but the lightning at my elbow
tells me he's dead.

Don Andrés
could you ask the days
just to be sure?
The day he entered the hospital was January
22nd.

That would be the day Two Thought
and his name is Andrés.

Greetings, Two Thought, Two Thought
what evil has entered Andrés?

Two Thought, Three Trouble, Four Deed, Five Hunter, Six Madness,
Seven Wind, Eight Dawn, Nine Burden, Ten Snake, Eleven Death,
Twelve Deer

Twelve Deer, Thirteen Harvest, One Worry, Two Dog, Three Prayer,
Four Road, Five House, Six Jaguar, Seven Bird, Eight Sin, Nine
Thought, Ten Trouble, Eleven Deed, Twelve Hunter, Thirteen Madness,
One Wind, Two Dawn, Three Burden, Four Snake, Five Death, Six
Five Death

Five Death
Five Death

Five Death

Five Death

Yes
after he came to the hospital
he was a little better
but then his condition
became more grave
the lightning moves across my shin
what happened was not a simple sickness
nor was it sent from the Heart of Sky
it was
the deed of a man.
We envy
what another possesses
some neighbor or friend was his enemy.

Don Andrés, we know who that was!
a man who tried to poison him
who tried to kill his herd of rams
a man whose name means brother
but —

The lightning moves in my armpit
the one who envied him is imprisoned
he does not walk on this earth
he died even before Andrés did
but his deed remained.
Don Andrés
what about the bird that flew over us?

Was it black? Was it a
vulture?

No, smaller than that, and gray.

And which way did it fly?

To the right.

Then
this is good
something good coming
the same good as yesterday
the lightning
in the center of my thigh.
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The performance translated here was given in Yucatec Mayan, June 16, 1972, in Ticul, Yucatan. Side Two of the sound-sheet in this issue is the original performance in Mayan, beginning mid-way through the story (see note facing the sound-sheet). For a note on Mayan deer hunting in this region, and on the notation used by Burns in his translation, see his introduction to "The Man Who Was Such A Hunter" in *Alcheringa Volume One #1*, p.99.

Alonzo Gonzales Mó, performer
Allan Burns, translator

**The Deer Secret**

The other one?    (The other one)

• • • • • • • • • •

Well, it would be completed, a person;

• • •

one of the fields.    (ahah)
This one of the fields,

•

has to hunt

• • •

each time he goes to the fields,

• • • •

whenever he goes to look, he is sure to hunt.

• • • •

The field where he is
is a very LARGE FIELD.
Well, every time like that, that he goes, he *hunts.*
Well, one of those DAYS like that,

he finished off a DEER like that, a large deer.

Well,

As he begins to skin the that he shot,

As he begins to remove the deer shit there from the belly,

when he squeezes it,

when it falls,

there is a little stone.

He says like this: (higher) "Jesus," he just says.

"A little thing fell here;

I guess I'll take it."
He grabs the little stone, he sees that there is an image of a small deer there on the stone.  (hmmm)
Not large.

Well, he grabbed it.
He didn't tell anyone like that.  
(quieter) "Well, what's it for?"

Well,  

(quieter) it is left like that. He . . . well he makes an earth oven.

He digs out the oven.
He finds the WOOD, he finds the stones — hard stones. He buries it BY HIMSELF, because nobody came with him like that.  (ahah)

Well,

After the deer was cooked like that, well, he returns to his town.
(quieter) He goes like that.

Well, he arrives at his house like that, he . . . about . . . about DUSK.

He arrives at his house
his wife says to him:
"You've returned, 'big man?' " — (higher) "I've returned."
"I shot a deer."
"WHAT DID YOU SAY TO ME?" — (higher) "It's true, (quieter) there it is in the basket."

Those baskets are for carrying deer.
"It's there in that basket.

The thing is, let's prepare to eat a little STEW.

(quieter) We'll eat a little stew like this," like that.
Well,

since he had
that little deer stone like that, well, when he went,
(higher) he was sure to hunt.  (ahah)
As soon as he's on the road he hunts like that, because he has the stone like that.
When he goes into his fields,

a deer appears.  (ahah)

He doesn't go to look for it,  (no)
He just goes to his field
to see how his field is, how . . . where the corn is,
a deer just appears.

"BAM!" he shoots a deer.  (ahah)
What did it? — the deer stone did it.  (like that)
Well, because that person

was such a hunter, which means to say

such a person so

a person... so... *addicted*

to DEER, (ahah).

he didn’t stop with ONE,

he hunts *every week*. (ahah)

As it’s seen that he has balls, whenever one appears, HE SHOOTS IT.

*Well, con...* every day, every day of the week, (*higher*) how many deer will he shoot? (a lot)

*A lot of deer.* (ahah)

Well, he *really abused* the (ahah) that... that... that which was given, the

st... deer stone. *OVER-USED.*

Hmmm. Over-used what he should have.
He didn't MEASURE it. (no)
Well then,

• • • • •

he's... he hunts deer during the DAY;

•

not satisfied.
He goes looking in the night. (ahah)

• • • • •

Well,

• • •

one of those days then like that, he says,

•

(quieter) "I've already shot a deer, there is a deer,

•

but I want to shoot another!"
Because the deer... if you sell deer every day, HOW MUCH WILL A DEER GET YOU? (ahah)
One deer will get you about eight dollars.
Every day.
Well, how much does he get? A lot. (a lot)
Besides, he has his fields. (hmmm)
Well then, he goes to LOOK, he shoots another deer.
Then,

• • • • •

he is approached by
that important one of the deer, an Important PERSON then. (ahah)

• •
Well, the
Important Person like that, says that he quit it.  (hmmm)

•  •  

Well, he GOES AGAIN.
He ties a place to look from in a tree there

•  •  •  

(quieter) in the field like that.  (ahah)

•  •  

(higher) Well, he climbs to the thing, around

•  

seven at night. He climbs up the tree to LOOK.
(quieter) Well, he stays there
to look.

•  •  •  •  

Well, he was
WARNED  (ahah)

•  

by the Important People.  (ahah)

•  •  •  

WARNED, I'm telling you,
because at every CORNER of the field,

•  •  

they WHISTLED,
At every corner the Important People WHISTLED. It's that they WHISTLED
the Important People, so he’d LEAVE, (ahah)
because the Evil

•

was coming behind; (ahah)
because the thing . . . because the deer
because the Animals. (ahah)

•

It’s that he was STU—BBORN;

• •

he didn’t go. “You, what . . .” He finds and kills another DEER. (hmmm)

• •

A little later, the Important People whistled, a little later, they whistled.

•

WARNED by the Important People that he LEAVE (ahah)
because Frightening Things (animals)
were coming behind. (ahah)

•

(higher) But he didn’t go!
Well, the Important People got tired like that. He was given . . . he was told to leave like
that. (ahah)
They even hit trees there, “BAM! BAM!” They hit the trees there in the FOREST. They went to the
CORNERS of the field there in the forest and hit the (ahah)

•

trees there, so that he’d go; but he DIDN’T GO. (didn’t go)

•

He was STU-BBORN, he didn’t go. (the man)
(ahah)
Well then, he just heard that the deer are coming. Then they come: “Heeyin... HEEYIN... (louder) HEEYIN!” come the deer. They come there, they come over there, they come there... well,

... they are coming all around. (ahah)

Well, he begins to say,

(higher) “I guess I'll shoot these deer.” (ahah)

“BAM!” He shoots one there. “POW!” he shoots one there. “BOW!” he shoots one.

BUT NOT ONE OF THEM DIES. HE REALLY SHOOTS, but not one DIES. (ahah)

He finishes off his bullets; well, he stays there then. (hmmm)

He finds a tree there, a STOUT tree. (stout tree)

like that.

He zooms up it like that. (ahah)

Then high up there he TIES his little hammock then; (ahah)

(quieter) he looks there.

... Well, he's finished off

... his bullets on the deer. He's certainly shot them

He sees that NOT ONE IS DEAD.

Not one of the deer are dead. Not ONE. (ahah)
He sees that the deer have gathered around the tree trunk. There they are DIGGING WITH THEIR FEET.  (ahah)
They’re DIGGING, they “bah, BAH, BAH.” They . . . well, they’re digging like that.  (ahah)

Then, there at the tree trunk, they BUTT the tree trunk, they BUTT IT.  (hmmm)
Look how they BUTT the tree trunk. The man up there is SWINGING.  (Hmmm!)

The deer begin to EAT, to MUNCH on the tree trunk. They MUNCH on it. Well, the MAN says,

he’s SHIVERING there high in the tree,  (true)

LOOK how many deer! Not . . . not fifty, not even twenty-five, ONE HUNDRED AND TWELVE. A LOT.

so many . . .
he says, (quieter) “My True God, I’ll be eaten,
  (ahah)
what will I do?

Hmm. What will I do? The tree is being eaten! The trunk is getting narrow. When the tree is felled,
I’ll be eaten by the Animals.  (ahah)

What will I do?”
Well,

•

this

•

was said to him:

•

"GIVE UP THE . . .

•

THE STONE, you'll be free."

•

But he wasn't able to say if the deer SPOKE. He just heard (words)
the WORDS, just heard the WORDS "Give me

•

the stone, or give the stone to the deer (the deer)

•

YOU'LL BE (free)

• •

Free.
Well, he heard the words.

•

He had FORGOTTEN
that he had the deer stone, (hmm, forgotten)
FORGOTTEN
Then he remembered what he was told:

•

(quieter) "Sacred Mary!"
the man says like that, "I guess I'll take the stone with the image from the tote-sack."
    He grabbed it, he THREW IT to the deer. (hmm)
When he THREW IT, he saw that it was PICKED UP like that.
the deer WENT AWAY. (ahah)
The deer WENT AWAY.

•

(quickly) Well, the poor man came down from the tree, from the look-out. Around midnight
    or ONE A.M. he CAME DOWN. (ahah)
THE MAN WAS HALF DEAD. (ahah)

•

He was trembling, he was SHIVERING as he came down.
    (ahah)
He looked at the tree trunk, but it,

•

the tree had ALMOST FALLEN. (ahah)
"Ahah, THEN LET'S GO, BODY."
Ah, the man really went to his . . .
to his FIELD. (ahah)
To the HUT.

•

He stayed there.
A friend came there to the hut then. He told him what had happened like that. (ahah)

• • •

(quieter) Well, when dawn came like that, (ahah)

• • • •

(quieter) they went.
(quieter) He didn't even stay in the field. (no)

Then, it came to that, the Important man never went back to shoot DEER. (no)

•

Never.
*There it is finished.* (ahah)

---

Notes

As I write this, it is the day 1 *tijax* on the Quiché Maya calendar, the day of the stone knife, a day for making divisions. Yesterday, April 6, was 13 *no’j*, the day of thought, a day when things appear in the mind. Tomorrow will be 2 *cauwuk*, the day of the rain, a day when the table is set, everything is ready. Since March 3, we have been in the year borne by the day 4 *ik’* (see the Lowland Maya glyph for this, above), a day of wind, a day of anger, a day for giving drinks to stones. It will be a more eventful year than the previous one, 3 *no’j*; it will be a startling year.

With this issue, Robert Kelly, Allan F. Burns and Everett Fox join *Alcheringa* as Contributing Editors. Kelly is a poet teaching at Bard College. Burns, in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Florida, is a Mayanist. Fox, in the Department of Religion at Boston University, is a translator of Judaic literature.

At last we have news of Kofi Awoonor: he was given a suspended sentence. He is now teaching at the Department of English Literature, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. We look forward to his continued participation as a Contributing Editor of *Alcheringa*.

Jerome Rothenberg participated in the gathering of some of the materials in the present issue, but the “symposium” issue, which he edited with Michel Benamou, marked the end of his full editorial involvement.

Lake Mary, the home of blues singer and storyteller
Scott Dunbar (see Volume Two, Number One, p. 41), is not in the Delta region of Mississippi. Our apologies to William Ferris, Jr. for mis-titling his collection.

Jarold Ramsey's *Coyote Was Going There: Indian Literature from the Oregon Country*, is now available from the University of Washington Press.


**Forthcoming in Alcheringa:**

More insert disc recordings (the continuation of this feature is strongly desired by our readers).

Translations from Native American languages by Howard Norman (Swampy Cree), Tom Lowenstein (Alaskan Eskimo), Allan Burns (Yucatec Maya), Tim Knab (Nahuatl, Sierra Norte de Puebla), Mauricio Mixco (Baja California).

New translations of sections of the *Popol Vuh* and a presentation of the Maya divinatory calendar for fall and winter (1977-78), by Dennis and Barbara Tedlock.

New translations of Clackamas Chinook stories by Dell Hymes, with facing-page texts in a new Native American font now being designed by Charles A. Bigelow and Kris Holmes; calligraphic interpretations of Clackamas jokes and short remarks, by Bigelow and Holmes.

Tibetan translations by Steven Goodman; poems from Sarawak translated by Carol Rubenstein.

A Somali story by Abdi Sheik-Abdi; a gypsy poem translated by Anselm Hollo.

Ancient Coptic texts translated by Charles Doria.

The story of Shimson (Sampson) in a new translation by Everett Fox, with a discussion of the oral character of the Hebrew Testament.

Sayings of the Lord Jacob Frank (an 18th-century Jewish messiah), translated by Harris Lenowitz and Dan Chopyk.

A transcription of the conversion experience and a sermon of a Virginia preacher, by Jeff Titon and Ken George.

Poems by Robert Kelly, Sarah Appleton, Ted Enslin, George Quasha; a dialogue among Ted Enslin, George Quasha, and Charles Stein.

A reply to Fredric Jameson, by Stanley Diamond.

Comments from readers (herewith invited).

**Back Issues Available**

Old Series Number 3 (South American section, Ewe Abuse Poems, Ojibwa Song-Pictures, interview with Seneca Songman . . . ), Number 4 (S. Carolina "Easter Sunrise Sermon" transcription and recording, Jackson Mac Low selection and recording, South Pacific section by Ulli Beier, Snyder/Tarn interview . . . ) and Number 5 (Euro-Mediterranean issue: Zukofsky, Olson, Pound, Crosby, plus work from Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Latin, Swedish, Yiddish, Celtic, and recordings of Schwerner's *Tablets* and Andrew Peynetsa's Zuni narrative . . . ) at $2.50 each.

New Series Volume Two, Number One (emphasis on African and Afro-American poetry and song, Son House interview/recording, Nigerian Ritual License Song recording, Tristan Tzara section) and Number Two (papers and talks of the International Symposium on Ethnopoetics, April 1975) at $4.95 each.

Write our Subscription Department for further information.

**Note on Hotoke-Oroshi**

These two items were originally recorded by N. H. K. and released in 1976 by Japan Victor. The album in which they are found, *katarimono, bugaku, ennen*, is the ninth of thirteen albums of three records each representing, as the title of the series implies, the varieties of the "Folk Music of Japan" (*nihon no minzoku ongaku*, SJL-2190-92). The series as a whole was edited by Honda, Yasuji, who also wrote the explanatory comments for each album. The following is based on Professor Honda's explanation of the two items included on this sound-sheet.
These two selections, parts of a longer rite of manifestation of the spirits of a dead person, were recorded in 1953 at Aomori Prefecture, Kita-tsugarugun, Kanagi-chō, Kawakura. The annual festival of Jizō at Kawakura is held on the 23rd and the 24th of the older (lunar) sixth month, when there is a large-scale manifestation of spirits of the dead (hotoke-oroshi). The performers are a group of priestesses who perform hotoke-oroshi at the request of participants who come from the surrounding farm villages. At the festival in 1953, a total of sixty priestesses were present. The number of participants exceeded 10,000. About one-tenth of this number, primarily older people, asked the priestesses to manifest spirits of relatives by speaking in their voice.

Before the event about seven or eight small temporary sheds are erected. Within these, the priestesses take their places on mats. The participants sit around the priestess of their choice. The individual seances are performed one after another. The time of each is about ten minutes. After each is over the person who has requested it withdraws, often in tears, allowing room for others to move forward and hear their own dead speak to them in turn.

A single priestess working from the morning of the 23rd to noon the next day may invoke as many as one hundred or more spirits. In the middle of the night one hears the droning of the sound of increasingly hoarse voices at prayer and sees the faces of the performers, which seem to bob from side to side in the faint flickering light given off by fires round about. Older women surrounding the priestesses weep. The sound of younger participants is heard as they sing songs to accompany dances which are the means by which the spirits are dispatched afterwards. As night deepens the general ecstasy of the event grows ever more fervent.

Countryside priestesses who perform hotoke-oroshi professionally are called itako in the district of Tsugaru. Most itako are blind women. Among them, however, can be found sighted priestesses as well. Recently men have begun to practice. Most of the itako are being trained under professional masters. The itako need learn only the death day and the relation of the spirit involved from the person who is making the request, in order to be able to invoke it.

The performance is divided into three parts:
(1) The invocation. About one minute.
(2) The words of the dead. Six to seven minutes.
(3) Words to dispatch the spirit. About thirty seconds.

The itako makes the manifestation by intoning an invocation. If the spirit comes immediately this takes about thirty seconds. If the spirit is reluctant and lingers, then the itako recites for about two minutes. The formula of invocation is a closely guarded secret of each itako and she will not teach it to anyone else. The words of this "call" differ from itako to itako. The itako use bow, drum or rosary to accompany their recitation, though only the first two are represented on this recording. The bow has a string which the priestess strikes with a thin bamboo stick as she recites.

When the spirit has appeared, the itako recites the words of the dead (hotoke no kotoba). As performed at this particular festival no use is made of the spirit's own voice quality. The itako is in a state of self-induced hypnosis and speaks, or tells, the words of the spirit adding phrases which give a heavy Buddhist quality to the performance. (Note an ambiguity where hotoke means both Buddha and the dead person.) The content of the speech of the spirit covers roughly the following points in this order.
(1) Words expressing his joy at being called to this place between the land of the living and the dead (sai no kawara) where his voice can be heard by parent, brother, sister or other relative.
(2) Account of the circumstances of his death.
(3) Words expressive of some regret or longing contracted while still alive.
(4) A long discussion of various items which still concern him even though he is in the after-life: the family's assets or its various problems.
(5) Description of the after-life.
(6) Words expressive of his gratitude at being called to this present meeting point between the world of the living and the dead. He says that he accepts the offerings made by the relative and will return to the world beyond. Finally the nenbutsu power is recited as a way of sending the spirit away.

Frank Hoff

Note on The Deer Secret

This is part of the performance of "The Deer Secret" by Alonzo Gonzales Mó, recorded by Allan Burns in June of 1972. The recording starts mid-way through the story, and continues to the end. To follow the Mayan language in Burns' translation, begin with the line "Well, con . . . every day, every day of the week, (higher) how many deer will he shoot? (a lot)" on page 138 above in this issue.
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