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NORTH AMERICAN ORAL TRADITIONS AND SHAMANISM

For the indigenous peoples of North America, oral traditions have traditionally provided an indispensable guide for coming to know and successfully navigating their mythic landscape, as well as a means of perpetuating that landscape. The oral traditions chronicle the primordial age of transformation when powerful mythic peoples molded the world into being and brought forth all that would be necessary for the human peoples to prosper. It is this landscape, inhabited with what are often referred to as the Animal Peoples with great spiritual powers, as well as dangerous monsters of all kinds, that the shaman must be capable of negotiating with skill. This is also the landscape traveled during a rite of passage into adulthood, during a healing ritual seeking the return

of a sick relative's wandering soul, or during the final rite of passage upon a relative's death. In telling the oral traditions the shaman, as storyteller par excellence, helps educate the young and reiterates to the old the meanings and identities that are uniquely the tribe's heritage. In the characters and actions of the Animal Peoples are disseminated many of the archetypal personalities imbued in the human peoples, including the shamans themselves. And in the ritual act of telling the creation stories, the shaman speaks that landscape into existence, helping continue the meaning and vitality of all the world's inhabitants. To know and speak the oral traditions is to know and perpetuate the mythic landscape of the shaman.

The oral traditions comprise a vast body of stories, including those of the mythic beings of the primordial time of transformation before the arrival of humans, as well as those of human heroes and others of the age of humans. It is the powerful mythic beings, some of which are referred to as the Animal Peoples, who transformed a barren and foreboding landscape, and prepared it for the coming of human peoples. Among these many mythic beings are Sedna (among the Inuit of the Arctic), who from the parts of her own fingers created many of the animals and fishes of sea, as well as establishing the rules of fishing those creatures. Good and Evil Twin (Iroquois of the Woodland Northeast), in a contest to see who was the most powerful, created the Rocky Mountains; in his defeat, Evil Twin established the False Face Society for curing sickness. Salmon (Plateau tribe) established fishing techniques and the character of such animals as the rattlesnake and wolf; Raven (Northwest Coast) first brought daylight and fresh water to a dark and polluted land. Changing Woman (Southwest) created human beings and the girl's coming of age rite, Kinaaldá. In their quest to find their father, Changing Woman's twin sons, Monster Slayer and Child of the Water, with great cunning and deceptive skills destroyed many of the treacherous monsters that once roamed the land. Scare Face (Plains), having been bullied by others for his distorted face, fasted, refusing all food and water, in the mountains and gained the aid of a guardian animal spirit. As a consequence of this "sacrifice," his scare was then removed, his despair overcome, and he became a prominent man among his people.

Prominent among the mythic beings is the trickster. In his various adventures and misadventures, the trickster is seen as having molded the land from the mud brought up from the sea's bottom, and then created the animals and plants and finally humans themselves. With his skills at deception he established the proper ways of behaving toward kinsmen, as well as toward an enemy. The trickster is known by many names. Among the Tsimshian of the Northwest Coast he is called TxäsEm, Raven, while among the Blackfeet he is known as Napi, Old Man, the Crow call him Isaahkawuttee, Old Man Coyote, and the Sioux, Iktomi, Spider. And for many of the tribes (of the Plains, Southwest, and Plateau) he is known simply as Coyote.

In the collective actions of these mythic beings, the landscape is shaped into form and embedded with all the gifts human peoples will come to need to survive. Among the gifts are the various plant and animal species, the forms of the tribal and family organizations, the ceremonies upon which the human peoples would depend, the teachings and ethical lessons, and the spiritual power itself (called, for example, *baaxpee* among the Crow and *suumesh* among the Plateau Salish; commonly referred to as medicine) needed to accomplish a rite of passage, or a hunting or healing ritual.

As accomplished storytellers, it is the shaman and the other elders of the community who are the caretakers of the oral traditions, and responsible for continuing to tell the creation accounts and hero tales. Among the storytelling techniques employed to bring the stories alive are the judicious and skilled use of voice fluctuation and intonation, pauses, and hand gesturing and body language. It is not uncommon for the storyteller to continue his telling only as long as the listeners provide a verbal or visual cue of their continued involvement in the story. Should no such acknowledgments be offered, the story would cease at that moment, whether the story had come to its conclusion or not. All these techniques coalesce to help the listeners of the stories become participants in them, traveling with Coyote as he plays a trick on his younger brother or as he slays some monster threatening the other Animal Peoples. In sharing the oral traditions, the storytellers re-create for the participants the primordial time and place.

The participatory dimension of the telling is further strengthened by the performative nature of the native languages themselves. It is commonly held that what is spoken aloud has the power to bring forth that which is referred to. The "breath" is a channel to the animation of the heart. When one leaves after a visit with someone, to say in one's native language, "I'll see you later," helps to create such an outcome, but to say "Goodbye," could lead to never seeing that person again. When an Indian name is ritually conferred, the descriptive nature of that name helps nurture the child to become that name. One should never speak of a particular illness, or one runs the risk of contracting it. When the ancient words of an oral tradition are woven into the rich fabric of a story, the spoken story helps bring forth and animate the mythic landscape referred to. The oral traditions embody the creative power to help perpetuate the world and its many inhabitants.

For the members of the shaman's community it is essential that the oral traditions continue to be told. The benefits are varied yet indispensable. The oral traditions help instill an affective component in community life. In the humor and drama of the narratives the stories bring laughter as well as tears, contributing to the ethos of the community. Coyote's antics are sure to bring a smile and a laugh. The stories of tricksters and heroes thus serve as a primary means of entertainment.

The oral traditions provide an educational component to community life; they are textbooks. For the young of the community, the oral traditions provide an essential means of gaining knowledge of their culture, as well as the skills it will take to be successful within it. The stories convey the essential teaching and ethics of the mythic beings. With his competitive skills and self-serving intentions, Coyote can demonstrate just as easily how one should not behave toward a kinsmen, as how one can behave toward an enemy rival. In the example of Scare Face is established the structure of any vision quest: Someone is in need of help; he journeys far from home into the mountains to fast and pray; if his sacrifice is judged worthy, he is adopted by a guardian animal spirit and receives a medicine. The narratives instill among the youth and reaffirm among the elders a sense of their unique identity and heritage.

For the shaman in particular the oral traditions provide a map of the mythic landscape. As it abounds with monsters and dangerous paths, this is the landscape the shaman must know intimately in order to successfully travel it during a healing or hunting ritual, or some rite of passage. An Inuit *angakkoq* (shaman) must know of the numerous challenges that await his journey to the bottom of the sea and a visit to Sedna—huge rolling boulders, the snarl of a vicious dog, an abyss to be crossed, among other dangers. The narratives provide a symbolic language of cues and signs to better interpret the activities of an enemy, the buffalo, the camas roots, seasonal changes, or the dreams in which the Animal Spirits appear. Indeed, the generalized actions of the Animal Peoples of primordial age provide shamans with an archetype of their role. As the mythic beings, with their spiritual potency, transform a dangerous land, so too must shamans, acquiring the same potency and applying it in the various ritual transformations they attempt, be they rites of passage, or rites of healing, fishing, or hunting. The specific personalities of Animal Peoples can also become the model for a shaman's character. The shaman may identify himself as the self-serving, trickster Coyote, being manipulative and deceptive in the face of an enemy. Or the shaman can be self-effacing, like Scare Face, seeking to help others as a healer, or as a fishing or hunting shaman.

The oral traditions also provide an integrative component within the shaman's community, helping perpetuate the perennial landscape of the creation time. In the ritual act of giving voice to the oral traditions, the potency and meaning of the mythic age is brought into the immediate sense of time and place. Those people who listen to the stories become participants in the mythic landscape, and the animals, plants, humans, and spiritual inhabitants of that landscape are revitalized and rendered meaningful. With each of the stories anchored in the particular teachings of the Animal Peoples, to speak of the mountains and rivers of the oral traditions is to animate the landforms with the continued significance of those teachings. During the retelling of the oral tradition, a participant might run with the mischievous Coyote or travel with the an-

guished Scare Face. And after the telling, that same person might become Coyote or Scare Face as he confronts an enemy in battle or seeks his vision on a distant mountain site. Stories make the world.

Rodney Frey

See also: Animal Symbolism; Eskimo Shamanism; Iroquois Shamanism; Piman Oral Literature and Shamanism; Russian Folklore and Shamanism

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BWA SHAMANISM (NORTH AMERICA)

The Ojibwa peoples in North America have a shamanic tradition rich in a variety of healing practices and rituals, which has been preserved to the present day.

Background

The Ojibwa tribal group is one of the largest and most widespread North American indigenous groups, with communities found in the states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Montana of the United States, and in the Canadian provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. In Canada, over 130 First Nation groups contain at least some measure of Ojibwa membership, while there are 22 federally recognized Ojibwa bands in the United States.

An Algonquin speaking people, the Ojibwa share a common Woodlands cultural and linguistic heritage with such tribes as the Ottawa, Potawatomi, Menominee, and Cree. During more recent historical times, contact with the Dakota Sioux and Assiniboine led to the adoption of certain Plains cultural traits by the more westerly bands, creating a hybrid culture that diverges from the more dominant woodlands background.

Politically the Ojibwa to some extent observed the principle of hereditary chieftainship. When possible, a son would succeed his father in the position. However, if the son was deemed ineffectual or found lacking in some manner, he would certainly be passed over for a more worthy man. In most instances, however, the Ojibwa were formed into small bands that followed individual headmen who had distinguished themselves through bravery in warfare or success in hunting. Based on the will of the community, the ascendancy and influence of a particular headman could change, depending on the situation facing the group at the moment. Above all, a chief had to be a provider of the highest rank, giving freely to the needy and caring for the weak and infirm members of the Tribe.

Ojibwa society is patrilineal and based on a clan (or totem) system. There are six main totems—the crane, catfish, bear, marten, wolf, and loon—that account for probably eight-

tenths of the Ojibwa tribal group. Other less significant totems existed, but these were found only among some of the more remote bands of northern Ojibwa. Inter-marriage within totems was taboo during historic times, but this custom is rarely observed in modern times. Families tended to be large during historic times. Extended family was and continues to be important to the Ojibwa.

Although they are generally viewed as a peaceful people, warfare occupied an important place in Ojibwa society. The status of a man was usually determined by his war success. Although small skirmishes were most common, often the Ojibwa would gather into large war parties several hundred strong to wage major campaigns against their enemies. Warfare was approached with limited ceremonialism. Members of war parties often performed divinations to determine their likelihood of success, looking for certain omens that might portend luck. Ojibwa bands were active in tribal warfare throughout the mid-nineteenth century in the United States and played a minor role in the Canadian Métis rebellions of the latter part of the century.

Cosmology

Dreams play an important role in the spiritual life of the Ojibwa. In many ways dreams are seen as being more real than the waking world. Messages received in dreams often serve as omens that are interpreted for meaning by older community members with acknowledged power in dream interpretation. In historic times dreams were believed to have the power to predict such events as new ceremonies, war success, or success at hunting.

The Ojibwa cosmology is founded on the concept of a single, all-powerful deity known as Kitché Manitou. The name of this deity is commonly invoked during most prayers and divinations. Other manitou (spirits) may also be invoked. These tend to serve as more individualized spirit helpers and are often gained during fasting ceremonies.

Shamanism: Belief System and Practices

Although all individual Ojibwa are capable of obtaining some measure of spiritual power, certain individuals may obtain a more elevated

shamanic status. Of these individuals, there are four classes among the Ojibwa.

The first class includes those who perform a “sucking cure.” Practitioners of this form of shamanism tend to be mainly men, whence the use of the male pronoun below, but women may attain mastery as well. These shamans are equipped with a set of sucking tubes and small bones through which they suck and spit out the illness as part of their procedure. They also administer certain medicines that have a variety of healing properties. The sucking treatment is commonly used to cure illnesses that are deemed to come from an invading force, or that are contained in particular regions of the body. The ceremony itself is generally held after sundown. In this ceremony a small quantity of water is placed in a bowl and set near the patient. The shaman proceeds by singing and accompanying himself with a rattle, tapping the patient’s body at various places to determine the exact location of the illness. Once the place has been identified, the shaman proceeds to employ his tubes and bones to suck the intruding illness from the body of the subject. After a short while the shaman will blow the invading foreign substance from his tube into the bowl of water. Following the treatment, the patient is often given certain medicinal herbs to concoct a tea to drink for a prescribed period. This cure is often performed several times.

The members of the second group perform magical feats through the Wabanowin. The Wabanowin, “Dance of the East” is a fraternal society-based ceremony that is similar to the Midéwiwin ceremony described below in that it includes a hierarchical system of mastery ranging from varying levels of apprenticeship to full mastery. Shamanic practitioners of this ceremony construct a large, circular lodge to represent the earth and sky. This lodge has two doors facing east and west and is left open near the top to allow for the viewing of the sky. Following purification, participants enter the lodge and begin a series of petitions to the spirits to be invoked. The ceremony itself involves the direct healing of individuals and the performance of magical feats. One of the more striking subceremonies of the Wabanowin involves the carrying of hot stones or the retrieval of meat from a boiling pot using only bare hands. This meat, when consumed by a person with an illness, is seen to have healing qualities.

The third class of shamans comprises those able to prophesy through the use of the conjuring booth, again generally male. The skills of a shaman of this kind may be used to cure, but may also be employed to locate lost items or individuals. The conjuring booth, or “shake tent,” consists of a circular lodge created from several upright poles covered on the outside with an open top. To this structure, rattles or other noise-making devices are tied. To begin the ceremony, the shaman will enter the lodge to begin praying and singing. After a time the lodge will begin to shake violently. Strange lights and voices will be heard in addition to that of the performing shaman. After a time, he will exit from the lodge and will impart what he learned from the spirits he contacted during the ceremony. Variations to this ceremony sometimes include the shaman being wrapped in a blanket and bound tightly with ropes. He will then be placed in the lodge, only to exit after the ceremony completely freed of his bondage. Similar ceremonies to this may be found among other tribes, particularly the Sioux, who call it a *Yuwipi*.

Lastly, there are the members of the Midéwiwin, who acquire divinatory powers and are able to employ magical means for a variety of purposes. Open to both male and female participants, the Midéwiwin is an initiate-based society that generally focuses on the ceremonialism surrounding ritual death and rebirth as a form of shamanism.

The lodge for the ceremony is formed by bending saplings over to create a long, arched, east-west facing structure that is completely covered with brush. Within the lodge a central pole is erected and decorated. During the performance of the ceremony, singing and dancing play a central role, but the most significant act is that of the “shooting” of participants. This element involves the ritual death of the participant, brought about by being shot with a “medicine arrow” formed from a small shell called a *megis*. This *megis* is the means by which a participant is brought to death. Once brought to this shamanic state of death, the participant is ritually healed and brought back to life by the other members. The purpose of this ritual death and revival is to create a newly cleansed spirit for the participant. Other elements of the Midéwiwin include the imbibing of certain herbs and medicines, and the learning of various healing techniques.

Other shamanic ceremonies performed by the more westerly bands of Ojibwa include a variation of the Sun Dance learned from the Dakota Sioux, the Rain Dance (a Sun Dance-like ritual performed by Canadian bands), and the Cree-based Smoking Lodge ceremony. A unique shamanic society known as the Windigokanak is also found among members of the Turtle Mountain Band. This "clown mask" society wears strange masks in honor of the cannibalistic deity Windigo, and performs outlandish acts, including walking and taking backwards, doing strange or bothersome gestures, or other unconventional acts. The Windigokanak is almost exclusively linked to the Sun Dance ceremony and is similar in nature to the Heyoka of the Sioux culture.

Although these shamanic practices are less widespread in modern times, practitioners may be found among nearly all bands of the Ojibwa. Some of the shamanic practices have died out in certain bands, while others continue to flourish. Much of the loss of shamanism resulted from the marginalizing of Ojibwa bands on reservations and the systematic efforts by Indian agents to end these practices. As the Ojibwa strive to reclaim their culture in the twenty-first century, it seems certain, based on the author's observations, that these shamanic traditions will continue as a vital part of Ojibwa culture.

Kade M. Ferris

See also: American Indian Medicine Societies; Fire and Hearth

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PEYOTE RITUAL USE (CENTRAL AMERICA AND NORTH AMERICA)

Sacramental peyote use originated some 10,000 years ago. A discussion of the evidence for that early use will be found in the entry, "Archaeology of Shamanism," together with some discussion of how it was used. The entries on "Entheogens and Shamanism" and "Central and South American Shamanism" provide a larger context. The focus of this entry is on current ritual use in the United States, with some discussion, for the sake of contrast, of the ritual use of peyote among the Huichol of Mexico (covered in more depth in the entry "Huichol Shamanism").

During the past 120 years members of more than 70 tribes throughout the United States of America have learned to reverently consume peyote in all-night ceremonies (Fikes 1996a). This new intertribal religion, which now has over 250,000 followers, evolved from that sacramental peyote use that originated some 10,000 years ago. Today's contemplative and orderly meeting for worship (usually held in a tepee) evidently began among the Lipan Apache about 200 years ago. Peyote itself is credited with having made converts of other tribes by transforming intertribal enemies into friends. Peyote's remarkable power to establish peace and trust among former enemies is explained in strikingly similar stories recited by Comanche and Kiowa peyotists. Comanche and Kiowa traditions refer to an occasion when one of their respective war chiefs arrived at an Apache peyote ceremony already in progress. The Apache leading that peyote ceremony proclaimed to each war chief (Comanche and Kiowa) that peyote had predicted he would come, inviting each war chief to attend the meeting. Each of them learned how to conduct the ceremony and returned to

teach it to his respective tribe (LaBarre 1989, 25, 111).

After American Indians were confined on reservations, circa 1890, the peyote religion spread rapidly, partly because aboriginal religions were becoming impracticable and because the federal government prohibited them. Peyote was hailed as an antidote to alcoholism, a teacher of righteousness, and a divine medicine. The peyote ceremony quickly crossed tribal boundaries, indirectly aided by white-controlled boarding schools whose English-only policy allowed students from various tribes to communicate and become friends (Fikes 2001; Stewart 1987). After 1890, when the railroad reached Laredo, Texas (the only U.S. state where peyote grows), the number of peyotists increased dramatically in Oklahoma and then among American Indian tribes in other states.

The growing use of peyote soon met with opposition, but sacramental peyote use has survived centuries of persecution. In 1620, sixty years after the Catholic priest, Sahagun, observed Aztec peyote use, peyote was denounced as diabolic and forbidden. Inquisition records from colonial Mexico indicate that peyotists were tortured and executed (Fikes 1996a, 168–169), yet the practice continued. As soon as federal Indian agents and Christian missionaries discovered Indians eating peyote (which they mistakenly called mescal), they suppressed its distribution and subsequently attempted to make it illegal. Congregations of peyotists responded to this threat to their religious freedom by incorporating as churches. The first two churches, whose articles of incorporation are explicitly Christian, were established in Oklahoma in 1914 and 1918 (Fikes 2001, 76). Since 1918, when the Native American Church (NAC) was established in Oklahoma, peyote use within the United States has become restricted to members of incorporated churches, not only the Native American Church of North America. In 1965 the federal government implemented an exemption to its antidrug legislation to protect the religious freedom of peyotists. Today more than 100 peyote (NAC) congregations are legally incorporated throughout the United States. The Texas Department of Public Safety cooperates with the federal Drug Enforcement Agency to prevent illegal peyote use.

Members of all NAC congregations revere peyote as a teacher and divine medicine. Many venerate peyote as the incarnation of Christ's Holy Spirit. One Winnebago peyotist, Albert Hensley, declared that peyote "is a portion of the body of Christ. . . . Christ spoke of a Comforter who was to come. It never came to Indians until it was sent by God in the form of this Holy Medicine" (Stewart 1987, 157). American peyotists are syncretistic, combining numerous native elements (such as eagle-bone whistles, tobacco, sage, feather fans, gourd rattles, cedar incense, a fireplace, and emphasis on the four cardinal directions) with Biblical references, Christian baptism, and often recitation of the Lord's Prayer. Weston LaBarre, the first scholar to study the phenomenon (in the 1930s), believed that "peyotism is an essentially aboriginal American religion" (1989, 166, 292). Two other early researchers in the field, Omer Stewart and James Slotkin, regarded the peyote religion as an Indian version of Christianity (Fikes 2001, 76). Disagreement about this issue is likely to continue—NAC members interpret Bible passages as they see fit, without conforming to any dogma. Their morality is essentially Christian (Slotkin 1956b; Fikes 2001). Differences between the two dominant types of peyote meeting, Half Moon (which has more aboriginal elements) and Cross Fire (which has replaced tobacco with the Bible), are relatively slight (Fikes 1996a).

The way of life advocated by the NAC is called the Peyote Road; peyote meetings, which usually occur on a Saturday night, are led by a Roadman, a liturgical leader who has mastered the ceremony and who is dedicated to living a life according to the ethic of the Peyote Road (i.e., one distinguished by sobriety, good family relations, truthfulness, economic self-sufficiency, and the like). A Roadman is usually "ordained" when another Roadman is near death and feels obliged to select a successor (often his son or a close relative), or when a Roadman decides that someone has attained sufficient spiritual and ethical discernment to be appointed as a Roadman (Fikes 1996b, 136, 238). A Roadman selects four helpers to assist him in conducting each prayer meeting: a Sacred Water Woman (usually a wife or close relative), a Drum Chief, a Cedar Chief, and a Fireman (Slotkin 1956b). Typical purposes for prayer meetings include healing, baptism, birthdays,



Navaho Indians at a peyote ceremony in a hogan near Pinyon, 1 December 1954. In night-long rites peyote cactus buttons, which act as a hallucinogenic drug, are eaten and used as a sacrament. (Carl Iwasaki/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images)

weddings, funerals, name giving, success in school, and safety for those in the military. Anybody with a specific prayer request solicits the aid of a particular Roadman. That person is expected to provide gifts to the Roadman and his four helpers.

Like shamans, Roadmen only conduct ceremonies when someone with a specific need requests it. Another significant similarity between shamans and peyotists (Roadmen included) is that personal experience or revelation, based on inspiration provided by the Peyote (or Holy) Spirit, is deemed fundamental to acquiring wisdom and healing. Even among Indians professing Christianity a shamanistic core remains, as this example reveals. After Reuben Snake of the Winnebago tribe was ordained as a Roadman in 1974, he directed a meeting intended to heal a woman whom Western doctors had scheduled for a hysterectomy. While Reuben prayed that the peyote he was preparing for her would

be blessed and would heal her so that she could have more children, he suddenly heard voices praying along with him. "They were speaking in the Winnebago language and saying, 'Bless my daughter, bless my granddaughter.' . . . When we concluded our service she got up and said, 'I know that I am well.' . . . The doctor told her, 'Evidently you don't need an operation.' . . . About a year later she had another little boy" (cited in Fikes 1996b, 216).

In contrast to contemporary U.S. peyotists (whose prayer meetings bring personal benefits such as healing, safety, salvation, redemption, and revelation), a few Mexican Indian tribes still perform aboriginal peyote rituals intended to bring communal benefits (abundant subsistence and ecological adaptation). The Huichol, a Mexican tribe whose peyote rituals are regarded as the most ancient extant, make pilgrimages of nearly 400 kilometers (one way) to collect peyote, which they revere as the incarna-

tion of a divine spirit. Because the Huichol believe peyote contains the heart, spirit, and memory of Deer-Person, they must hunt him with arrows. Eating Deer-Person's heart (peyote), after complying with strict rules designed to enhance their spiritual purity (bathing, salt, and sex are prohibited during the pilgrimage), facilitates access to his wisdom. Without his divine spirit to guide them, Huichol shamans could not accurately diagnose or heal illness, nor communicate effectively with ancestral nature spirits whose good will guarantees abundant sustenance and health.

Eating Deer-Person's heart reveals to Huichol shamans how to maintain harmony (by healing and performing elaborate rituals) in the world he established. To perpetuate the world Deer-Person organized (thus insuring abundant subsistence and ecological adaptation), Huichol peyote hunters must deposit offerings that honor and sustain the Sun-Father at the mountain where he was born. They are also obliged to return with peyote and sacred water required for performing rainmaking rituals essential for the growth of maize, the mainstay of their diet (Fikes 1993). Their peyote dance ritual, done at the end of the dry season, summons the Rain-Mother whose shrine they have visited while making their peyote pilgrimage, and includes consumption of peyote, corn beer and dancing.

The Huichol conviction that peyote embodies the heart of Deer-Person, their tutelary spirit, corresponds to the meaning peyote had for their cultural cousins, the Aztecs. The Aztec word, *peyotl* (or *peyutl*) denotes the pericardium, the envelope, or covering, of the heart (Fikes 1996a, 168; LaBarre 1989; 16)

Jay C. Fikes

See also: Archaeology of Shamanism; Entheogens and Shamanism; Huichol Shamanism; Rock Art and Shamanism; Tarahumara Shamanism; Trance, Shamanic; Transformation

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PIMAN ORAL LITERATURE AND SHAMANISM

The Pima, or Pima-Papago, or O'odham, or Upper Pima (they have been called all four) have lived in southern Arizona, United States and northern Sonora, Mexico, since the Europeans first came to these areas around 1550 B.C.E. Their home is a desert land broken by isolated mountains and crossed by a few medium-sized rivers, the largest being the Salt and Gila of today's Arizona. Their original territory was nearly identical with the range of the tall, green, candelabra-like saguaro cactus, famous in postcards from Arizona. Their land is now somewhat diminished in the United States and greatly in Mexico.

Neither Spain nor its successor, Mexico, nor the United States, had much material effect on the Pima until the 1880s, because the Pima were far from the colonizers' centers of settlement, their land was barren, and the Yavapai