- The entire document deals with the Cree spirits known as atayokhan.

Long ago not many people used to die, just one or two every year. When we would pitch camp near a grave, one of the relatives of the dead person would go and fix the grave. After it is done, he comes back and cooks a lot of food and invites people to the feast. It has been that way for a long time. Fixing the grave is (the feast) called mahimakewin, "Fixing a Tipi in Proper Order." There is no special way of fixing a grave. You just clean it up and pile dirt on top where the grave has caved in.

Since reserve times our graves are together, not scattered all over. So once a year we clean the graves together, whenever we have time. If the weather is bad we put it off for another day. We have a feed -- its meaning is that we are having a meal with the spirits.
Note: I witnessed this ceremony on September 9th. When I arrived, the graves had already been cleaned and the feast was going on. Sam Swimmer, the chief and several other men sat inside a tent -- to their left outside the tent sat the women, to the right sat the men. Fox and one other man served the food. Two yearlings had been slaughtered and the chief made a speech explaining that his wife had been unable to come and thanking the women who had prepared the food. Pemmican was passed around and the announcement made that there was much left over to be taken home.

Manito the Creator made all these things. I don't name him very often when I start to talk but his right name is kice-manito. Since a long time ago he has a place up there, a home. He is among every child and every woman and every man. Even in our hearts. That is the way I know him.

The atayokhanuk are all the spirits: the pawa-guu is your own dream spirit, your personal dream guardian.

When I offer a pipe before I go to sleep, I sleep and somebody comes to invite me someplace. My body is still there but my ahtca-hk goes. This lives not in the body but right along the back of the neck and head. When you are scared or something is going to happen you feel him telling you to watch out.

My pawa-guu leads me into a big tipi around which many atayokhanuk are sitting. Some of them give me songs, some tell me how to make a Sundance, how to point the pipe. These are my pawa-guauk.

That which you come to ask for today, there are not many that know it. There are many that know a little that there is manito but not many know it right from the start. These things you ask about today, we should have talked about when we first began because these matters always should come first before all else. That is why I smoked a pipe when we began to talk.

The first person the Creator made was askiwiyiu "Earth Person," the first woman was ota-watas "Carrier." He told them that he was going to stay with them for a long, long time. He made the man and woman after he had made everything else. He stayed with them a long long time. They raised a big family. When there got to be a lot of people the next thing he gave to the Indians was the Sundance. He said that it was to be done in two days. But he then saw that there would be too much to do for two days so he split it up into other dances. They are pihtwaewikamik -- Smoking Tipi; manipanikamuwikamik -- Night Singing Tipi or also called wasakamecimuwikamik -- Round Dancing or nayahtcigau. Wihtigokhanikamik -- Cannibal Tipi; muskwacimu-ikamik -- Bear Dance Tipi. Next comes the Bundle Ceremony just as we had it, kami-tchkwiskwe-pita-guu, "Giving a Bundle."

The Creator showed these things and they are worth a lot. When he showed them he called up the atayokhan so that the people would
know which ones to talk to and which would talk hard to the 
manito for them.

The Creator made the atayokhan and told the people that they 
would appear to the old men, and would tell them what names to 
give to the children.

Then He said, "Where I go now you will never see me, but I will 
always be with you. You will see the atayokhan only at night, 
not during the day. Young children will see them often -- 
while they are clean -- and to them the atayokhan will give 
power. I give you everything you need to live -- berries, etc. 
I put all those things handy for you. But I also leave 
something for you to be afraid of. Some things whereby you will 
be hurt. It will be thus forever."

Until this day it is that way. We don't know when we will get 
into an accident. That is how people get experience for 
both ways (i.e. good and evil). So that they may have brains 
to think. Just like when I froze my fingers. After that I was 
careful. If it hadn't hurt me I would have frozen them many 
times.

He also said, "The Sundance -- the one that will be honest and 
do it correctly will deserve a part of my name and will be 
called kiceimu, 'Eternal.' When you are afraid of your life 
ending, you can promise one of the things I showed you and I 
will be right there listening. But you must first name that 
which you are promising. You will see these atayokhan from the 
time you are small -- night after night. Once in a great while 
a person will meet one in the daytime when he is all alone."

Then he turned around to the whole bunch of atayokhan and told 
them, "There will be an extra tipi made for you when somebody 
wants to know something. And when you are called, you must all 
go."

The name of that tipi is kotac-tcitsikiwikamik, "Trying to 
Shake Tipi" or kesa-pahtcigau, "Looking Around." I can make 
this tipi and do it. But my mother stopped me from doing it 
because some Indians believe that the one who goes in and 
"looks around" is trying to kill somebody. There is a fellow 
at Thunderchild that can do it and another young fellow that 
just left for Hobbema.

When manito doesn't want the Indians to know anything, he will 
take away the atayokhan. But as long as they are there we will 
always have them.

In my kindness to manito I am telling you this. It is no 
mistake or sin that we are doing this last. But when you make 
any history of this, please, it would be best to put it first.

No man now knows all the atayokhan. But in the beginning they 
were all shown. Manito himself never comes to a man in a 
dream. But the atayokhan are his servants and it is He who
tells the atayokhan which children to visit.

When something is wrong with you, you hold pipe up to manito, then you point the pipe to the atayokhan. You can peel short sticks and color them -- 100 if possible -- and leave them for the atayokhan.

The atayokhan have many names. When the booth is put up and they come, they announce themselves saying, "Who do you think I am? I am that one." Once I heard them speak. One named himself, "My Name is Never Sees the Daylight." Nobody knew who it could be. Another was okusa-kiyin. We didn't know who it was or what kind of word that was. (It might be this -- if you are single and are after another man's wife he will call you nikusak. But the word sounds like a lizard who likes to play with the genitalia of man and women). Some of the atayokhan names are Snake, Thunder, Wind -- Cimatuhteumustus -- "Buffalo Walking on His Hind Legs." He is not a buffalo but only has a name like that.

I thought I saw the one called piseu -- Thunderer -- with my own eyes. It was white and it flew around. I saw it where it lightened. He never moved his wings. The lightning started ahead of it. As I looked it came down to the ground and that is when the earth shook. My partners would not look. They were frightened. I could not say for sure that it was the atayokhan Thunder, "piseu." But I am sure that the lightning came somewhere out of his head. This happened during the day, about noon, in the Duck Moulting Moon (July). We had been hunting duck in the water and had run out under a willow and covered ourselves with a blanket.

This is a very lucky story, when I tell it. I told it twice when we were out for horses and we brought back white and spotted horses.

There is an atayokhan called Snake, but that may only be his name and he may not be Snake at all. I don't know if all the snakes are connected with him.

Once I was playing with little (young) snakes and fell asleep. I was awakened by them crawling all over me. If they had been atayokhan I should have dreamt about it, but I didn't dream anything.

A man tries not to kill the animal of his paw[?]. But if he does so there is nothing he can do about it.

I knew one man who beat out an atayokhan. It was my grandfather's cousin whose name was pihpahgwut, "Bulging Belly." When he was young he was afraid of nothing and he used to laugh at everything. He was worth a lot in his dreams but nobody knew it for he would never tell anyone.

When the frost was on in the fall, an old man got into a Shaking Tipi. A lot of people were there to listen and
pihpahgwut was also there. One atayokhan came and the rattle on the tipi shook to announce his presence. "You know who I am. I am ukimau egusisan, "Chief's Son." That is the name for Bear.

Then pihpahgwut called out, "The one that's afraid of you calls you Chief's Son. But I call you kispa-tukiticisk, "Shaggy Rump."

The atayokhan answered, "I know you very well. You are pihpahgwut. When the berries are ripe, I will watch for you and change you." The atayokhan got mad and quit shaking the tipi and went on saying, "You are too young to know of all the people whom I have twisted and whose looks I have changed." Pihpahgwut answered, "Yes, but I am not a bit afraid of you. I will change your prescription (make-up?)."

When pihpahgwut got home his father gave him the dickers but he was laughing all the same it was so funny.

The next year pihpahgwut bought a good gun and cut the barrel down to 1 inches and cut the stock just long enough to hold. He bought a knife of the kind called "Flatknife," that is, sharpened at both sides. Now when the boys go out hunting they see the berries ripening one at a time. It is close to the time when they meet each other. Pihpahgwut greased his little gun. The Criers went around telling the people to move to where there are more berries. Pihpahgwut loaded his gun with two bullets and sharpened his knife. His time was getting close. He went where there weren't many people. He started picking berries and before he had a handful the bear was out. He came out of a bush.

Pihpahgwut had his gun ready. As the bear jumped he aimed and fired -- but the gun didn't go off, the cap missed fire. The bear hit the gun out of his hand. Pihpahgwut grabbed his knife and at the same time stuck his hand down the bear's throat and held him fast there. The bear kicked the knife out of his hand but he couldn't bite. They wrestled. Pihpahgwut tried to drag the bear over to where the knife was lying, saying, "Come on, we are going to fix each other." The bear gasped, "Let me go." Pihpahgwut said, "I am going to cut the hide from around your eyes and your ears." The bear was scared and tried to settle with pihpahgwut. "If you let me go, I will be there when you want to save a person from dying." Pihpahgwut answered, "No, you'll fool me. If I let you go you'll forget everything. I am going to take you to where my knife is." "If you let me go, pihpahgwut, I will give you power in battle. As many hairs as I have in me -- so many shots will miss you." "No, we've got to fix each other." "Pihpahgwut, you have got me. I'll give you my nails so that you can even cure those who have consumption." "No, I'll fix you when we get to my knife." "You've beaten me, pihpahgwut, I promise to listen to you all the time. Wherever you are, I will be there also under the ground. I will give you power to save all the people that get
they to save them because I'll always be with you." "You promise a lot. They believe in you and then you fix them up and change their prescription." "You have beaten me and I promise you and I will give you all I promise. But there are two things you must not do. Never point at me with a gun or knife and never taste of me. But I will give you something to save yourself with if you do eat of me." "If you promise me I will let you go." "I do." He let him go. The bear walked back into the bush, his mouth full of blood.

The last thing that the bear told to pihpahgwut was that there was a young fellow who had been hurt in the back and had T.B. there. "They will try to get you to cure him and when I help you do it that is how you will be sure that I am keeping my promise." The bear gave his middle claw to pihpahgwut with which to get the sickness out. Pretty soon a man came up to pihpahgwut leading a good horse and carrying a gun. Sure enough he wanted him to cure the young boy. Pihpahgwut sang a bear song and put his finger on the fellow's back and drew the matter out. The first time he did it with his own fingers.

Before he started he told his story. "If he is here -- listening under the ground -- he will cure this boy." He did.

My grandfather who was nisim to pihpahgwut went along to help pihpahgwut sing. He told me this story many times. Pihpahgwut used the bear claw many times. But he would always suck the last of the matter out with his mouth. That is one who beat out an atayokhan.

Bear is called:

Chief's Son -- (his Cree name)
Neukatcuayisiyiu -- Four Legged Person
Nagayos -- Round Backed Animal
Maskwa -- Bear
Kakispicit -- Rough Feet
Ayapisiskisigos -- Little Eyes

Manito himself doesn't smoke but he told Earth Man always to show the pipe stem first when he wanted to say something to manito. That is why we point straight up first.

The atayokhan always smoke and you point to them secondly. I know that the atayokhan smoke because once my uncle was put in a booth and a lighted pipe was placed on top of the booth. I saw smoke coming out of it as though someone were puffing at it.

The bundle that was given to you will be spiritually powerful always and its strength will never die, because the animals and the atayokhan will always be alive.

A cloth may be given to the bundle without smoking. Just hold up the cloth and say to manito, "I believe in this Indian way that the manito taught. I am going to wrap the cloth in the bundle." Then you hold the cloth a little lower down and say, "Greatest of the Bears, I am going to give this cloth." Tell
him all about what you are going to do. Then hold it toward where the South Saskatchewan and Red Deer River come together where Big Bear dreamt and was given the bundle. This third time it is for ukimau oguisian - Chief's Son. This is the child of No. 2, the "Greatest of the Bears." Then you point the cloth on the ground four times clockwise.

The full names of No. 2 is konigihikunawit ukimau oguisisan, "(Greatest) Sitting Parent of Chief's Son." He is never seen. His young servants are the bears (I am not certain this is the meaning). The full speech made to him is, "This is what I had promised for you. I asked you for good luck and I have been having it. And from now on while I am keeping you here I want you to help me all the time. Our creator gave you power and when we ask you something you have to do it. That is why I ask you to help me out in a good way. I want you to help me do so and so."

For No. 2 you say, "This is what I promised you." Then you name the place where the rivers fork, Kayikitawihtigcipiya, "The Joining of the Rivers." That is where the one that gave this power is all the time. Whatever you say keep repeating "Chief's Son," all the time, over and over again.

When you point the cloth or the pipe four ways on the ground you call on the parent of Chief's Son. The four times are just like the four legs of the bear. That is how Big Bear was told to do it by the parent of Chief's Son because he is listening from the earth.

The one that taught Big Bear has his home where the rivers fork but he still can listen wherever you talk. (?)

When the people were shown the atayokhan, some were (?) of the others. They are never seen. Those that are now on earth are called oguisisimawuk, "Sons."

The atayokhan have a raven to call them together when they invite someone. We had them too. Our ravens were the Shouters. Only men who had the power could be Shouters. The atayokhan have homes. One lived right along this cut bank here and made a drumming noise. That is why we call the creek Drumming Creek. The parent atayokhan stay in their places all the time but their sons go around and it is those that we see on earth. When a soul is invited, it is the parent atayokhan that are there. Then they look like people. Since I was a little child I have been invited and have seen them. They look like people and yet you know that they are not people.

The bundle you have now is called ukimau oguisisu atcihtoi, "Chief's Son's Hand." No women may be present when it is opened.

Big Bear wore it only in fighting - I know he put it on at the last fight at Loon Lake during the rebellion. He always was in front and was shot at many times but was never wounded. He also used it against the ayah, when he was getting to be a
chief. He never told just how he got it, whether or not he fasted. He made it himself.

The pipe should not be lit before it is pointed up to manito. Then light the pipe and point it to the other places. The second and fourth pointings are to the very same atayokhan. Number three is the son who is travelling around all the time. It was the son who came to call Big Bear. There are always real bears there. These real bears (sons) bring you home.

Here I asked Fine Day about handling the bundle. He said: When we were ready to start I gave my pipe to Joe Pimi and told him to get the bundle out of his democrat. Before he took it, he touched it with the pipe. He brought it in, gave it to me and I laid it down.

After you light the pipe you can take a few puffs. Hold it up and rotate it once before you point it somewhere else. If the pipe does not go out then the atayokhan are smoking it. If old man smokes it it must go across the bundle. If not, it can go to the door (as it did and Johnnie took it) (?)

Here Fine Day interpolated this remark. Last night I was singing a bear song (as he often sings at night) and you could hear a bear snorting.

After the pipe goes around break some sweetgrass and put it on the fire. Then say a few words and empty the pipe. Then I told the parent that I was going to untie it and I said, "The power that you got from the manitou and gave to the people, I am going to untie you now. We ask for good luck both ways. The man that is going to get it and us. That is why I am going to untie you."

Then pass hands over sweetgrass and then bundle over same. When you point the pipe to the parent you mention the cloth you are going to give. You do not mention it when you point to manito.

Before the bundle is unwrapped, after the pipe is pointed four times, lay the pipe down with the stem towards you. Hold berries up four times. Then pass the pipe to the door and the berries to the left so that the smoking and eating goes on at the same time. After this unwrap the bundle. Pass your hands and then the bundle through the smoke. As you untie it think about the wish and as you untie the bundle so you untie the wish. Then raise the paw up and put the new cloth underneath it. You do not have to hold the cloth up.

Before Big Bear would put it on, he would dig a hole in the ground about a foot deep. Out of this hole he would take some mud and plaster it over his eyes and then scratch it so that there were streaks. Then he would sing the bear song. "My teeth are my knives; my nails are my knives," and then put it on and go out and fight.
Big Bear's father was the one who gave him his name. The father was not an ukimau; his name was mahkateu, "pregnant."

All the bundles are like that. You have to put a new cloth in every time you untie them. But if a cloth is not handy you can promise to put one in some time in the future when you can get it.

After you are through wearing it you say, "I have finished using it and I am giving a new cloth." You smoke once and point the pipe the same way. Big Bear must have been very young when he got it.

Wihtigo -- The Bush people give them that name. They are guests and the Bush people tell how they eat around their lips -- so hungry do they get. There are people who get that way. We never had them in the old days.

Wihtigokau is one of the atayokhan. A man can dream about this one and that is the one who makes the dance. These dancers do everything backward except boil (?) food (dance). There must be two to dream about it. The last one is humped.

The North Wind is the strongest atayokhan. Ki-wetin, also Ch-tin, "Wind." He is looking after us every day and that is the one we breathe. You drive with the wind every day -- he is in your tires.

Pecu -- Thunder. If this atayokhan and the Wind get together, nothing can get away from them. The old men used to say that there are many different kinds of thunder birds who are the parents of the birds that fly around here.

This goes along with the Earth Child story. Manito told the people that a person would be getting old and he would get young again. Thus they always would grow old and get young once more. That is the meaning of the springtime and when a man gets old he is young in his children. Just like myself. My son is young and his children are younger still and that is where I am young myself.

When the manito told the people this he told them that they were powerful. When we tell this to the young people they say that they are not. But it is easy to see that they are powerful in their bodies. They get hungry, they know when they have to urinate or defecate. How would they know how to get strength or to make themselves comfortable if they were not powerful.

The next most powerful atayokhan is Picim, "(?)", and Nipi, water. On earth here it is Aski -- the earth.

I have seen some little birds who could remain in the air without moving (humming birds). They are called amuipiecis, "Bee Birds." They are very powerful atayokhan.
Another very powerful bird is one with a little black head which winters here. They are called Pitcigimkicisuk.

Asini "Stone," is powerful. It is not those rocks we see. It is an atayokhan who lives in the Rocky Mts.

Mustus, "Buffalo," is another atayokhan. It is not a buffalo, only has that name. Another is cicipaskwatwahatik, "Maple Tree."

Bear is next powerful. He is powerful in the bush and amongst the Indians. They used to raise bear cubs and a little one could throw a man.

Crow, hawk, eagle have just so much power, not as much as the foregoing.

The frog has least power and he is not so weak at that. If he had no power he could not come alive again in the Frog Moon after being frozen. Each frog has power and the atayokhan is the parent of all the frogs.

The manito when he made the (first) dance for the people to show them how to do things, told a buffalo to stand right behind where we make the hole (altar) and not to move until the (Sun) dance was over. After two days he went clean out the door. He gave the people an old buffalo bull skull to put where manito made the buffalo stand. We take the skull now for a live buffalo.

The atayokhan never told us how to hang the cloth. So some just tie it to a tree and some hang it on crossed sticks. Cloth may be hung any time but when you do it you must say, "I have given this to you and have done my part. If anyone touches or takes it, do no harm to him."

Nobody will touch cloth offerings. They are very much afraid. I'll tell you a story which explains why this is.

A halfbreed heard that there was going to be a Sundance at Saddle Lake. He went there with his family -- two boys and two girls. When the dance was over and all the people moved away, the halfbreed did too. But he came back and took all the cloth from the poles. That evening a big thunder storm came up and on the way home all the family were killed with the exception of one girl. Once I made a Sundance at Sliding Hill. That girl came to me crying. She gave me some cloth to hang saying that she had promised it when her parents were killed.

That is why we are afraid to touch the cloth. Anyone who takes it will surely have trouble with it.

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