

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: COMING DAY #1
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: SWEET GRASS RESERVE
SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW LOCATION: SWEET GRASS RESERVE
SASKATCHEWAN
TRIBE/NATION: CREE
LANGUAGE: ENGLISH
DATE OF INTERVIEW: JULY 17, 1935
INTERVIEWER: DR. D.G. MANDELBAUM
INTERPRETER: POOYAK
TRANSCRIBER: HEATHER YAWORSKI
SOURCE: DR. D.G. MANDELBAUM
DEPT. OF ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
BERKELEY
TAPE NUMBER: IH-DM.77
DISK: TRANSCRIPT DISC #142
PAGES: 9
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- A creation myth.
- Healing practices of medicine men.

For the first hour I spent with this old man he denied knowing much -- wanting to find out how much I would pay him. When I explained all to him he loosened up. He is not a particularly good informant since he insists on relating drawn out irrelevant stories.

I don't know much about the medicine used for I never took much interest in it when I could see. I have often seen a person take roots from his medicine bag -- grind them up, sometimes as many as 12 roots and put them in water for the sick one to drink. But they never tell what kind of roots they are. They used to have medicines but now it is dying out. They hide their knowledge unless one wants to know it and gives them a horse or clothes...

These are two stories I thought of. I saw two persons about to die. They didn't use medicine of theirs -- they used something else. There is one medicine that saved a man who was shot. I have it now.

There was a Blackfoot, of about the age of Fox here, who was thrown from his horse. That was the start of his sickness. He was sick for 3 years until there was nothing left of him but skin and bones. I saw him myself when there was a big camp of Cree and Blackfeet, peace having been made quite a while before. There was one Blackfoot who was supposed to be the best doctor of all -- he was an expert nagatcihtat. But the sick man could not travel to find him.

Then he came to the camp. They took the sick man and put him under a shade. Then took 5 horses, among them the one that threw the sick man, a pipe, and led the horses to the doctor, crying as they went along. They tied the horses close to his tipi and went in crying and gave him the pipe. They ask him to pity them and do something for the sick man, for he is unable to move now.

The expert had 2 young men. He sent them to a close by room to hunt snakes. The name of the expert was kinepigwakanowat "Snake Eater", he was a Blackfoot. He went to the sick man calling all the old men to come and have a smoke with him. They come in and sit around. The sick man had many friends and the women cooked a lot of food to feed that had been invited. An old man called for the Cree to come and have a smoke. There is quite a crowd there (note: This account is abbreviated by me.)

The tobacco is cut -- all smoke. They watch for the 2 young men. "At last they are coming now." The two drive along singing. They carry between them a blanket folded and tied at each end. An old man takes it by the two ends and puts it right in front of the doctor who is stripped to his napkin. He sits up and ties his hair behind him. They burn sweetgrass. He unties the blanket, there is a little snake there. He catches it by the neck -- holds it up and strokes it 4 times. "Keep quiet now. They are asking you to pity the sick man -- They are asking for your help to try and do something." The snake becomes quiet -- does not stick out its tongue. He holds it by tail and head. They take 2 drums -- he sings -- passes snake over sweetgrass smoke -- sings and shakes -- you can see sweat running from his body.

The old men sitting near the sick man kept telling him to watch

the doctor but he would do so only for a little while and then turn away closing his eyes. The whole crowd begins telling him to watch the doctor. Suddenly the doctor faces the sick man he opens his mouth -- a snake head comes out -- he stretches forth his fingers -- a snake head between every one. The sick man is so scared he turns right over. Then the doctor sits down and the snakes disappear. All say "hai hai." The reason why they thanked the doctor was because the sick man rolled over. He couldn't even move his arms before that. They all knew he was going to get better.

All smoke -- food passed around. Sick man asks for soup. The next morning we see him come out of the tipi by himself.

The names for doctor are:

onipickew -- Curer
ehmanitowit -- Manito One
emamahtaocit -- Wonder Doer

They all mean the same.

He dreamed of the snake who told him how to act -- he said then, "Have pity on me now -- you told me to do this when I need your help."

okiciguwik -- is the Blackfoot word for atayohkan.

In the beginning katiepihtciget "The Lord" made all creeping things one earth, even man. He made:

piecu -- thunder
wagayos -- bear
mustus -- buffalo
yo tin -- wind
mahihgan -- wolf
kihiwikuk -- eagle

kahkakiwuk -- raven
piciwuk -- lynx
mosohk -- moon

(This is the list of "powerful" Things Coming Day thought of at the moment.)

He made all flying and creeping things. They were all human beings at first. They were scattered all over and roamed freely. They all had nothing to eat and started to gamble (compete). Thus the bear and buffalo gambled -- I don't know what kind of a game they played -- but the winner was the one that could do the most wonderful things. The ones that were beaten were eaten by the winners. I tell you the story to explain what okaciguwik means.

Manito didn't like to see them eating each other. "Because you did this I will work in a different way. There will be something else." Then he made what we are now. Two of them. "You

who eat each other will be called beasts and birds."

We have been told there is Manito and Matchimanito -- that's the way those act who ate each other. (Opposite of good and evil? or simply the contest between two forces?) Yes -- thunder must have some feeling of Matchimanito for he can smash anything. Thunder too was a human being at first.

To those who ate each other the Lord spoke. "I will raise a part of each of you on high. The people I am going to make will never see you but you will help them. Part of each of you I will leave on earth." Those are the animals we see. Let me explain better -- see I have this twig. That is like the animals were before. Then after they ate each other the Lord broke them in two -- just as I break the twig. The part went up and the other stayed in the shape of animals, so that men would have what to eat and would not eat each other. Those sent up were put there to help men in many different ways -- just like the story about the snake.

We call all the spirits manitowuk or atayohkanuk. So we call angels we see in pictures and the face in the moon.

I never heard tell of how the ahtcak was created. I don't understand the difference between ahtcak and atayohkan. We know that kicemanito lives forever. The ahtcak goes and lives with kicemanito. When you are about to be born kicemanito gives you an ahtcak in the womb. When you are born the ahtcak is with you right along. But nobody knows where it is. The ahtcak directs our minds. When it is weak and doesn't help a person enough -- that is what we call a crazy man. When ahtcak

leaves you -- you are dead. Every creeping thing has an ahtcak. Where it goes after it leaves a man or beast I don't know.

Thunder is piecu -- he was a bird. We call birds piecis k. I don't know what kind of a bird he was. But first he was a human then he was put into a bird.

My father used to tell me this. There were a big bunch of them out on a war party. They were hungry. They came to a lake and saw moulting ducks on it. Some waded in to drive the ducks in to the shore. A Stony shot an arrow at one. It glanced off the wing and hit a Cree just below the ribs. The Cree waded ashore and fell. They carried him up. His skin and eyes turned yellow for his gall was hit. He was a kihtcockinigiw.

The Stony who shot the Cree sat next to him. "If the Cree get mad at me if this man dies, I am willing to be killed." There were quite a number of Stonies in that bunch, one of whom was emanitowit "Manito One". He was a man but used to dress like a woman. The Cree didn't know he was a doctor and some gave him their medicines to drink but they couldn't help. The Stony said, "There is one here who calls himself man and woman ayehkwew "Man and Woman, let him try" -- and indeed sometimes they would have both male and female organs.

The ay. came up and asked if a tipi could be put up. They stacked their bows and covered them with their robes -- making a small tipi. The sick man and a few went in. My father went in -- he was a half-brother to the wounded man. They didn't have many things with them but they gave what they could and promised two horses when they got back -- one from the wounded man and one from my father.

The ay. asked for water. They bring it in. He searches around his side and pulls out a little piece of medicine tied in leather, and a wee cup made of birch bark. He put water in cup -- untied medicine -- took small tick for spoon -- slowly put medicine in water 4 times -- put medicine back. He calls in two Stonies. He talks, "In my sleep I dream I see someone coming to me. I feel as though I am awake. I am going to tell you something -- that's why I come. Do you know me? 'No' He threw himself down. I see a buffalo. He gets up. Where he laid I see some leaves. 'You see those leaves, take them. They will be useful to you in the future. You will save your friends. You are too poor and you'll get things with them.' I woke up. I was four when I had this dream and every once in a while I see the leaves and know them. When I was middle-aged I was asked to doctor. A second time he came to me -- he told me to take it -- it will be useful to me -- mostly for a wounded person."

He took a little of the medicine and showed it to the men around. Then he called the buffalo, "I want you to help me. They call on us to cure that person." He sings -- I don't know the song. When he finished he uncovered the cup. All say "aik-aik." He shows this cup around. My father said he saw a little buffalo in there. All saw it. He lifts the wounded man and pours it into his mouth. He left a drop of it. He covered the cup again, takes a pipe and smokes. The wounded man utters a strangled noise and yellow water runs out of his wound. He vomits yellow water. He vomits 3 times as though he were full of it. Then his skin color is normal again.

When they finish smoking the ay. says, "He is not very well, his ahtcak is weak." A(?) and two men follow him. "Now buffalo you gave me that gift and I am thankful for it. Help me save this man." He says -- puts his hand on the wounded man's forehead -- closes his fist as though taking something off. When he opens his hand, "Now you Cree do you know what this is?" It was a wee baby -- perfectly formed. "That is what you Cree call ahtcak." When he took it out the sick man did not breathe. He uncovered medicine -- touched water and rubbed it on baby. He sings again and rubs it in forehead of sick man. Wounded man opens his eyes -- breathes again. He gave him the rest of the medicine to drink. Then he was well again.

Yes I have heard of memegweciwuk. There is a thing made by them that I used to see. It is of stone and in the shape of an arrowhead. They were found in the sand hills. No, I never heard of anyone dreaming of m mc. (The following is abbreviated.)

About 20 years ago he died who told this story. South of Unity there is a lake called "Where they saw Children". South of the lake about a mile is a pointed sand hill. That is where he saw them. (Sp: I passed by that lake once.)

They were camping near there at "Little Round Valley." It was fall and they had a little snow. "Well Dressed Man" took his gun and went to hunt buffalo. He saw a wolf and shot it. It was almost white. He remembered that he dreamt to wear a white wolf skin in war so no bullet would go through him. He skinned it -- claws and all. "You told me to wear you blanket. I hope you didn't tell a lie." He tied a (?) to the nose and dragged it to wash the blood off in the snow.

As he went by the sand hills he heard something -- he saw a little man standing a short distance off. It smiled at him. The sand hill is like a house and the little man is standing at the door. The door opens and another comes out and leans

against the doorpost. He looked so hard at the little men, he didn't look inside. They are dressed like white children, wearing boots and dark clothes -- a hat with a visor -- visor -- curly hair. Their eyes were hollow and their mouths came out like snouts.

One came up and looked at this wolf skin. "Give it to me." "No I can't." "You had better." "No, I can't. I am taking it to use the way I want to." "Well, we'll wrestle for it." "Oh no I never wrestle." He asked 4 times -- at last he consented to wrestle. He put his gun down. In the old days we used to have coats called "3 year old coats" (which came to the knees.) Those were coats we got from the H.B. He took his coat off. He tightened his belt. The little fellow took his cap off. He had a good look at him. They wrestled. The little man had short arms so he couldn't grab Well Dressed around but he squeezed and his arm felt like bands of iron.

I lift him up thinking to throw him. I swing him but he stands up again. Sometimes he grabs me to throw me but I always landed straight. He couldn't throw me. I began to sweat. The little man at the door laughs. I was just about all in when I trip him and put him to the ground. The other laughed. "It serves you right. You got beaten." The little one said, "I stumbled over your leg -- that's why you beat me." After they got their wind they try again. This little man yelled at him, "Stay right with him -- you are going to be beaten again." I feel his arms again. Just as I am about all in I trip him. The one at the door post has a good laugh:

"I guess that's enough. You beat me twice but only because I stumbled over your leg." He looked in his pockets and took something out. He handed it to me -- it was an arrow-shaped stone. "Keep it as long as you live. It will never be rotten (?) because you beat me. In case your friends get sick you will be able to cure them with this. If there is any war I will take care of you. That which I give you will make your

body as hard as it is. You will never be killed. That's all I have to tell you." He took his cap and went back. Before he got in he turned and said, "Whenever there is sickness think of me. I'll be with you right along. Think of the place where I am." He saw the door close and at the next look there was nothing there but sand. He never saw them again after that.

He was a brave man and never got wounded. He is the only man I ever knew who saw them. The thing he got is called pekpekaha (no meaning.) I saw it twice. He would show it before he told that story. He kept it in a bag around his neck. Yes, mem. These men are only seen in sandy places, also at the edge of a lake where there is a steep bank. They used to be seen on a

sandy island in that lake. That is why it is called awasisuk kawa pamiktcik "Where the Children were Seen". It is southeast of Manito Lake.

The grandfather of the man who just made a (?) at Moosomin -- I want to tell you his story. Northeast of Fo's(?) there is a big bend in the Butte River. He had a basket there and was camping there. He tracked beaver. There is an open place with steep banks. He sat there on a moonlit night watching the beaver.

There was a big sand bar across the river. He saw something come toward him from the water -- he thinks it is a person. He bends down to hide and peers through an opening in the grass. He sees one rowing, another sitting behind. They look like children. When they come close the boat sounds like metal. One spoke -- I didn't understand what he said. As soon as he spoke, the boat swung around and went to the other side. They pull the boat up. They look like boys. It was too dark to see where they went. I didn't see them any more. That's all I saw.

No, we never see any wihtiko in the prairie. These people up north, they knew about wihtiko. We call a glutton by that name.

No, I don't know anything about matci manito. I heard the old people say there is one. He must have tried to equal km. Km. didn't like that and put him off to one side. No one ever told of where he stays.

When km. made the people, mm. split off to one side. He made himself. Mm. tried to see the people that were made. When km. wants to make something he just thinks of it and it is done. So it is with mm. whom we also call matcaya. When km. thinks of something, it is good, but mm. thinks only bad. Thus mm. thought, "Let there be berries." Then horn berries came into being. If one eats too many of those he is liable to die.

Mm. told the people, "Why did not km. let you eat all the berries (including the horn berries)? All are good to eat." The persons ate them. Km. knew, came down and asked them why they did that. "Now mm. will be boss of you." He said to mm.

"I am not going to destroy you but you will pay for what you have done." He pulled his limbs off. "You will walk on your belly all your days." That's the snake. "You tried to destroy my people and you have done it already(?). We'll compete. You'll think of me not to move -- I'll do the same. Whoever cannot move will be beaten. The one that's able to move will be boss. I'll give you the first chance." Both wear

manitowuk. (powerful?) I have never heard whether they stood or sat. Km. walked around for a little while and came back. "Well, did you try?" "Yes I tried hard." "Now it's my turn." The other manito tried to move but was unable to do so. "You can't move." "No." "Now I'll be boss. You made yourself great. You came down and spoiled my people. I made my people to be good. I'll make you black and with horns on your head so my good people will know who you are."

Sickness is mm.'s work. He made the animals we are afraid of, those that kill people, called matcipiciskiwik. If the Lord were to rule the world there would be no death. (Note: I am puzzled by the confused tone of all this.) Mm. beats a person's ahtcak and he is ill-tempered -- liable to kill anyone.

A person might dream of a bad animal mistahkeciwuk "Big Bad One" (Lion) micipiciwuk "Big Lynx" kinepiguk -- snake they are all mm.'s outfit. When they appear they say, "When you doctor your friends you will cure them but you must give me your first wife or your first child. If you do this you will live long, have everything, want nothing." When the wife or child dies it is just as though the animal ate it. That is called ehmatcipawamit "Having Bad Dreams". All animals that destroy humans are called matcaya. When a person dreams of other animals it is for his own good.

Let me explain km's way. If I ask you for something and you don't have it on hand, you go and get it from somebody that has it and then bring it to me. That's km's way. (?)

Another way now. Suppose your father is close by here. If I ask you for something and you don't have it -- you go and ask your father for it. He gives it to you and you bring it back to me. Like yourself, if your friend were sick. You come and give me something to look after your sick friend. If I have dreamt of something good, I will pray to the atayak to help me cure your friend. He will go to the km. and ask him to help the person. If he pities me he will do it. Sometimes he doesn't. If your friend has a bad sickness, that is mm's work. It is as though km's servant (atay) and mm.'s servant are fighting, one wants the man to be cured, the other wants him to die.

I take my rattle and blow and sing. If okicigo beats mm. I can rush the bad thing out of him.

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