THE RITUAL AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WINNEBAGO MEDICINE DANCE

BY PAUL RADIN

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To the memory of

EVELYN R. BRESLER

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CONTENTS

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE RITUAL OF THE WINNEBAGO MEDICINE DANCE[2]

THE Medicine Dance is a society, admission into which is gained by purchase. The Winnebago suppose it to be a repetition of a ceremony originally instituted by the Rabbit, when he initiated the first man into its secrets. The society consists of five bands, which, during the ceremony, are known respectively as the Ancestor-Host's,

[2] The description of the ritual is based on material collected by me, and now in the possession of the Bureau of American Ethnology. The full description will appear as a memoir of the Bureau.

the East, North, West, and South Bands. These five bands are also known by the names of their leaders. Any band may act as host, and the position of the others in the lodge is dependent on the order in which they are invited by the band acting as host. It thus follows that each band must know the entire ceremony of the society.

I. Organization of the Bands. — For purposes of description it will be best to divide each band into three parts, — the leader, his two assistants, and the rest of the band. Leadership depends upon a thorough knowledge of the ceremony and its complete esoteric significance, which is in the possession of only one individual in each band. This knowledge can be obtained solely by purchase and religious qualifications. These religious qualifications, to which might be added moral as well, play little part at the present day, but there can be no doubt that they were essential in the past. The leader likewise often possessed other characteristics, such as those of warrior and shaman, but they were not essential for his position.

The two assistants were generally men who had purchased sufficient information and privileges to entitle them to help the leader in certain details of the ceremony. The drummers, rattle-holders, dancers, etc., were always recruited from their ranks. Eventually they became the leaders. Those who were neither leaders nor assistants possessed a knowledge varying from that of elementary information, required for admission, to such as would entitle them to the position of assistant.

There is a priority of position in the lodge depending on priority of invitation. The band invited first, occupies the east position; that invited second, the north; that invited third, the west; and that invited fourth, the south. The east is the position of highest honor; the south, that of the lowest. Between the bands, there exists an order of invitation based on tradition, the exact nature of which is unknown. According to one informant, if one band invited another, the latter in turn would be obliged to give it the position of honor; but as there are five bands, this can apply only to special cases. Whatever may be the order, it is certain that each band has ample occasion to occupy all five positions.

There are two ways in which a man can join the Medicine Dance. He may simply apply for admission to any of the five leaders, or he may take the place of a deceased relative. In the former case, if his payment is satisfactory, and he has the other qualifications, he is accepted. In the other case, he or his relatives decide to have him take the place of a deceased relative. This latter form of candidacy is by far the commoner. At the present day, initiation requires the payment of about three hundred or four hundred dollars, in the form of goods and tobacco. Of this, a portion is given to the leader of the Ancestor-Host's Band during the Four Nights' Preparation, and the rest to the leaders of the other four bands during the ceremony proper.

Exactly how much information an individual obtains on entering, cannot be determined. This would depend on the amount of the payment. The minimum of knowledge would be an acquaintance with the bare externals of the ceremony, its general significance, and such knowledge of the legendary origin of the Lodge as a single recital could give. The new member is not initiated into the symbolism of the ritualistic myths, and consequently a large portion of the same must be unintelligible to him. What he obtains is practically only the right to hold the otter-skin bag and to use it in a certain way. He cannot take part in any of the forms of dancing or singing, nor can he even shoot at will. He very rarely remains in this condition long, but takes the first opportunity to purchase additional knowledge and privileges.

There are three kinds of members, — mature men, women, and children. The privileges of women differ from those of the men, in that the women do not have to partake of the sweat-bath, may never become assistants, and are privileged to dance in a certain way. In other respects they have equal privileges with men. In practice, there are certain privileges that women never have, but this is due to the fact that either they do not care or they are not in a position to buy them. Children belong to a quite different category. Although they possess an otter-skin, they have not even the power of making it effective, and, in order to do so, must have it guided by some older member. There does not seem to be any evidence indicating that women were ever excluded from membership.

II. Prescribed Duties of the Bands. — The duties of the host, who is known as x'okera,[1] and whose band is called Minañk'arak'oñañgire'ra,[2] are as follows:

1. To rehearse the songs and rituals with his band four nights previous to the ceremony proper. At this rehearsal the candidate (ha"birok'aragu'-inera, literally "the one for whom they seek life") is always present, and instructed in the ceremony.

2. To send out invitation-sticks and tobacco to the leaders of the other four bands. The messengers are always his sisters' sons.

3. To begin the Four Nights' Ceremony preceding the ceremony proper.

4. To receive the leaders and assistants of the other four bands before the sweat-lodge ritual, and to begin the same.

5. To begin the ceremony proper.

[1] X'okê' means literally "root" or "ancestor." "Ancestor-host" will be used as its equivalent.

[2] This word means literally "he who puts himself in the place to benefit his relatives." The reference is to the Rabbit, who, at the first performance of the ceremony, acted as host and initiated his relatives; i. e., the human beings.

6. To take part in the following portion of the ceremony proper.

(*a*) To welcome the four bands.

(*b*) To lead the candidate to the secret brush and instruct him in certain precepts.

(*c*) To act as preceptor of the candidate before he is shot with the sacred shell.

(*d*) To turn the candidate over to the charge of the leaders of the East and North Bands.

(*e*) To relate certain of the myths.

(*f*) To deliver certain speeches and to perform certain actions that constitute the basic ritual of the ceremony proper. This will be discussed later.

The East Band is known as Tconi mina'ñgera (Those-who-sit-first), Ha^{n}p'ogu homina'ñgere (Where-the-day-comes-from), Wiaγephu-regi (Where-the-sun-rises). All these terms are used frequently. The duties of the leader are —

1. To assist the ancestor-host in passing upon the eligibility of a candidate.

2. To take part in the following portions of the ceremony proper.

(*a*) Accompanied by his two assistants, to take part in the brush ritual.

(*b*) To take charge of the candidate after he has been handed over to him by the ancestor-host.

(*c*) To shoot the sacred shell into the candidate's body.

(*d*) To relate certain of the myths.

(*e*) To perform the basic ritual.

The North Band is known as Siniwagu mina'ñgera (Where-the-cold-comes-from). The leader has the same duties as those of the East leader. The myths recited are of course different.

The West Band is known as Wioi'rê mina'ñgera (Where-the-sun-goes-down). The leader has the duty of reciting certain myths and performing the basic ritual.

The South Band is known as Nañgŭojedja^{n} minañgera (He-who-sits-at-the-end-of-the-road) or Horotcû'ñdjeregi (Where-the-sun-straightens). The duties of the leader are the same as those of the leader of the West Band, except that the myths he recites are different.

The distribution of the gifts to the different bands is the following:

The leader of the East Band receives one-half of the number of blankets, the upper half of the new suit worn by the candidate, and one-quarter of the food.

The leader of the North Band receives one-half of the blankets, the lower half of the suit, the moccasins, and one-quarter of the food.

The leaders of the West and South Bands receive each three yards and a half of calico and a fourth of the food.

The ancestor-host receives various gifts of food and tobacco from the leaders of the other bands. He receives his payment from the candidate before the ceremony proper.

The candidate is present at the Four Nights' Ceremony of the ancestor-host's band preliminary to the ceremony proper. At the latter ceremony he sits to the right of the ancestor-host's band. He is not dressed in his new suit until after the secret ceremonies in the brush.

There are facial decorations distinctive of the different bands. The host's band and the candidate paint a blue circle on each cheek, but its significance is unknown to me.

The regalia used are simple and few. They consist of eagle, hawk, squirrel, weasel, beaver, and otter skin bags, a drum, gourd rattles, and invitation-sticks. The otter-skin bags are always beaded and contain the sacred shell and various medicines. A few red feathers are always inserted in the mouth of the otter-skin bag. The gourds contain buck-shot at the present day. They are painted with blue finger-marks.

III. Division of the Ceremony. — The Medicine Dance is divided into five well-marked parts. The first part (I) consists of the Two Nights' Preparation preceding the sending-out of the invitation-sticks. This takes place at the home of the ancestor-host (x'okera), in the presence of the members of his band and the candidate. The second part (II) consists of the Four Nights' Preparation preceding the sweat-lodge ritual. Each band has its own Four Nights' Preparation, although that of the ancestor-host begins before the others. The third part (III) consists of the rites held in a sweat-lodge specially constructed for this purpose near the medicine-lodge, on the morning after the Four Nights' Preparation. The participants are the ancestor-host; the leader of the East, North, West, and South Bands, each with his two assistants; and the candidate. The fourth part (IV) consists of the ceremony proper, which in turn must be divided into the night ceremony (*a*) and the day ceremony (*b*). The fifth part (V) consists of the rites held in the brush, at which the secrets of the society are imparted to the candidate. Special guards are placed on all sides of the brush to prevent the intrusion of outsiders. The participants are, beside the candidate, the ancestor-host, the leaders of the East and North Bands, each with his two assistants, and all other individuals who have bought the privilege of attending. These ceremonies take place at the dawn preceding the day ceremony.

Two feasts and one intermission interrupt the main ceremony. The feasts always take place at the end of the ritual of the East Band; i. e., generally at noon and at midnight. The intermission generally lasts from the dawn preceding the day ceremony until 7 or 8 A. M. The

intermission begins as soon as the drum and gourds have been returned to the ancestor-host, and ends as soon as the people return from the brush ritual.

The first and second parts are concerned entirely with a recital of certain ritualistic myths, and a rehearsal of the songs and the specific ritual of each band, used during the remaining parts.

IV. Types of Component Elements of the Ceremony. — For purposes of greater clarity, the speeches, songs, and types of action, will be carefully differentiated, and referred to by some designation characterizing their essential traits. These speeches, songs, and types of action, together form complexes which can be regarded as units, and I will therefore also refer to these by some designation characteristic of their function.

1. *Types of Speeches.* (1) *Salutations.* — No formal salutation is used during Parts I and II, the individuals being addressed by their relationship terms. In Parts III, IV, and V the salutations are invariably the same. The ancestor-host and his band are addressed as follows: "The-one-occupying-the-seat-of-a-relative (deceased) (some relationship terms) -and-you-who-sit-with-him, I salute you!" The East is addressed, "You-who-represent-the-place-where-the-sun-rises;" the North, "You-who-represent-the-place-where-the-cold-comes-from;" the West, "You-who-represent-the-place-where-the-sun-sets;" and the South, "You-who-represent-the-place-where-the-sun-straightens" or (preferably) "You-who-represent-the-end-of-the-road."

The appellations of the bands, as before stated, refer to the creation myth and the four guardian spirits whom the Rabbit visited for the purpose of inquiring into the necessity and meaning of death. He was compelled to travel around the earth, which is conceived of as an island, and received no answer until he came to the spirit at the end of the road. In the dramatic performance of the medicine dance the lodge typifies the earth, and the four bands and their leaders typify the four spirits. The ancestor-host's band typifies the ancestor of the Winnebago, their leader being known as x'okera (literally "root," metaphorically "ancestor").

(2) *Speeches.* — Under this head will be treated (*a*) speeches of welcome; (*b*) speeches of acceptation; (*c*) speeches of presentation; (*d*) speeches explanatory of the significance of the ritual; and (*e*) speeches of admonition, addressed exclusively to the candidate. This does not exhaust all the speeches. There are many others, generally short, that can hardly be classified. It must be understood that in their content, as well as in the order of their succession, the speeches must follow a traditionally determined sequence. In practice this is certainly not always true, but to the mind of the Winnebago these speeches appear as old as the ceremony. It is their firm belief that

any departure from the accepted norm will interfere with the efficacy of the ceremony.

(*a*) Speeches of Welcome. — When the leader of the East Band enters after the ancestor-host has begun the main ceremony (IV, *b*), he addresses him as follows: "It was good of you that you condescended to invite me to this dance. I am a poor pitiable man, and you believed me to be a medicine-man. But I know that you will show me the true manner of living, which I thought I possessed, but which I did not." In this strain he continues, weaving into his speech references to the ritual connected with his band, and giving words of thanks for the beautiful weather (should it be a clear day). In concluding, he thanks all again, and informs them that he will sing a song. With slight alterations, the leaders of the other bands address the ancestor-host similarly. The ancestor-host's answer of welcome is as follows: "Whatever I desired, you have done for me. All night have you stayed with me, and by your presence helped me in the proper performance of this ceremony. I am ready with a dancing-song; and when I have finished it, and sit down, I shall pass unto you tobacco and the other means of blessing (the gourds and the drum). You all, who are present, do I greet."

(*b*) Speeches of Acceptation. — After the ancestor-host has been presented with food, he thanks the donors as follows: "You have had pity on me. You have been good to me, and have given me to the full whatever I might have desired. You have made my heart full of the blessing of thankfulness. In return I give you a blessing. Here is some food for you. It is not anything special, nor is it as much as it ought to be, and I know you will remain hungry. It was prepared for the spirits of the four quarters (whom you represent), but it is lacking in all those qualities which would have made it acceptable to them. Such as it is, however, may its presentation be a means of blessing to you!"

(*c*) Speech of Presentation. — East presents the food to the ancestor-host with the following words: "I have not very much to tell you, because I am too poor, but our ancestors told us to give food to you. This little that I give you is all that I can do, being a person of so little importance."

(*d*) Explanatory Speeches. — These are of so specific a nature that no single one can be considered typical.

(*e*) Speeches of Admonition. — "Nephew, now I shall tell you the path you must walk, the life you must lead. This is the life the Rabbit obtained for us. This is the only kind of life, this that our ancestors followed. Listen to me. If you will always help yourself, then you will attain to the right life. Never do anything wrong. Never steal, never tell an untruth, and never fight. If you meet a woman on the

left side of the road, turn to the right. Never accost her, nor speak familiarly with a person whom you are not permitted thus to address. If you do all these things, then you will be acting correctly. This is what I desire of you."

2. *Types of Songs.* — The songs may be divided into two groups: (1) those that are sung in connection with myths and after the speeches of a more general nature, and (2) those that are sung to accompany definite and specific actions. These latter can therefore be most conveniently divided into (*a*) minor dance songs, (*b*) major dance songs, (*c*) initial songs, (*d*) terminal songs, (*e*) loading songs, and (*f*) shooting songs. The medicine-men distinguish only between four kinds of songs, — major and minor dance songs, terminal and shooting songs. Each has a different rhythm and music. For purposes of description, however, the above division is more convenient.

3. *Types of Action.* (1) *Blessing.* — Either hand is held outstretched, palm downward, and moved horizontally through the air. It is always used when entering and leaving the lodge, and on any occasion where an individual has to pass from one part of the lodge to another. It is always rendered as "blessing" by the Indians; and they particularly insisted upon the fact that the "blessing" was not conveyed by any words used in connection with the action, but by the action itself. Each person who is thus passed answered with a long-drawn-out "ho-o-o," and with an obeisance of the head.

A modification of the above is the na^{n}sura niñkuruhintce (or "blessing of the head"), which consists of a simple laying of the hand upon the head; both the giver and recipient keeping their eyes fixed on the ground, and the recipient slightly bending his head. A few mumbled words accompany this action.

(2) *Direction of Walking in the Lodge.* — One must always pass contrary to the hands of the clock. A person in the East Band must make the entire circuit of the lodge in order to pass out. In only exceptional cases can this rule of passing be broken; and that is when an old and specially privileged member crosses from his seat to that directly opposite him, during the shooting ceremony. I was given to understand that this was an extremely expensive privilege.

4. *Types of Ritual.* — Parts III, IV, and V can be so analyzed that they fall into a fairly well-defined number of complexes, consisting of speeches, songs, and movements. These are nine in number. Artificial distinctions have been avoided in this division, as far as possible. The complexes are (1) entrance ritual; (2) exit ritual; (3) fire ritual; (4) presentation-of-food ritual; (5) shooting ritual; (6) initiation ritual; (7) sweat-lodge ritual; (8) smoking ritual; (9) basic ritual.

Of these, (3), (5), (7), (8), and (9) are found in Part III; all, except (7) and (6), in Part IV (*a*); and all except (7) in Part IV (*b*); (5)

does not actually occur in Part III, but is described in detail in the myth related there. The order in which we will discuss these ceremonial complexes is not the order in which they follow one another in the ritual. Some of them are likewise interwoven with one another. Both these factors will, however, be considered in the description of the entire ritual, following the description of each ceremonial complex.

(1) *Entrance Ritual.* — The band enters the tent, makes one complete circuit, and stops. The leader now delivers a short speech, followed by a song. They then continue to the west end, where another speech is delivered and another song sung. After this, they continue again, and stop at the east end, where the leader talks and sings. Now all sit down. After a short pause, the leader again rises, and, walking over to the ancestor-host, talks to him, and gives him some tobacco. He then returns to his seat. Each band entering repeats the same ritual. This applies, however, only to Part IV (*a*) and (*b*).

(2) *Exit Ritual* (Part IV, *a* and *b*). — The East leader rises and speaks, followed by North, West, and South. They then speak again, and, singing, walk towards the entrance in such a way that the South, North, and West Bands make complete circuits of the lodge, thus enabling the East Band to precede them. Near the entrance all stop singing, and say "wahi-hi-hi" four times, and pass out. This exit ceremony differs slightly in the two divisions of IV.

(3) *Fire Ritual* (Part III). — The ancestor-host rises and goes to the leaders of the four other bands individually; and after he has blessed them, they respond; and all rise, make four circuits of the lodge, and then sit down again. Now the leader of the East Band rises, holding in his hands the invitation-sticks and some tobacco, delivers a speech, and, going to the fireplace, kindles a new fire.

(8) *Smoking Ritual.* — The leader of the East Band pours tobacco into the fire, first at the east, and then at the north, west, and south corners. Then he lights his pipe, puffs first towards the east, then towards the north, west, and south. That over, he passes his pipe to the leader of the North Band, who takes a few whiffs, and in turn passes it around to the next member of the lodge. When the pipe has made the complete circuit, it is placed in front of the fireplace. In the mean time the ancestor-host has returned to his seat, and after a short pause, rises, speaks, and sings again. This smoking ceremony occurs after each entrance ceremony of IV (*a*) and (*b*), and before both feasts of IV (*a*) and (*b*).

(4) *Presentation-of-Food Ritual* (Part IV, *a* and *b*). — The leader of the East Band rises, and brings meat, berries, wild potatoes, etc., to the ancestor-host, delivering a minor speech at the same time. Each of the other leaders repeats the same ceremony. When all have finished, the ancestor-host rises and thanks them.

(5) *General Shooting Ritual* (Part IV, *a* and *b*). — The leaders of the East, North, West, and South Bands, holding their otter-skins in their hands, rise, and, taking three men with them, make a complete circuit of the lodge. They first speak in undertones to these three men, giving them directions. At each end the leader of the East Band speaks, and then, singing, walks toward the west end, saying "yoho-o-oya-a" three times, and ending with a long-drawn-out "yo-ho." At the west end both he and the leader of the South Band speak. Then chanting "yo-ho" again, they all walk towards the east end. Here the leader of the East Band speaks twice. Now all place their otter-skins on the ground in front of them. East then speaks again. At the conclusion of his speech, all kneel in front of the otter-skins and cough, at which the sacred shell drops from their mouths upon the otter-skins. They thereupon pick it up, and holding the shell in one hand, and the otter-skin in the other, make a circuit of the lodge four times, increasing their speed with each circuit, and singing. All this time the shell is held in full view of the spectators, on the outstretched palm of their right hand. As they near the east end of the lodge, toward the end of the fourth circuit, standing in front of the Ancestor-Host's Band, they supposedly swallow the shell, and fall down instantaneously, head foremost, as if dead. Finally they come to, and, coughing the shell up, they put it into their otter-skin bag, and, making the circuit of the tent, shoot four members of the Ancestor-Host's Band, four of the East, four of the North, two of the West, and two of the South Band. Each person, as he is shot, falls prostrate on the ground, but, recovering after a few moments, joins those making the circuit of the tent. Each leader now takes his drum and gourds to the fireplace. Then the general shooting commences. Every person possessing the right, shoots one individual, until all the members have been shot. As each person is shot, he falls to the ground, feigns unconsciousness, and then slowly recovers. The slowness or speed of his recovery depends exclusively upon the privileges he possesses, and the number of years he has belonged to the society. As soon as the person shot recovers, he falls in line immediately after the last one shot. While all are thus walking around, the half-dozen people at the fireplace sing shooting-songs to the accompaniment of drum and gourds. The amount of noise at this point is quite considerable.

(6) *Initiation Ritual* (Part IV, *b*). — All the members of the Ancestor-Host's Band, and the candidate, make one circuit of the lodge, taking their otter-skins along with them. As they pass around, they gently touch the heads of the members with the mouth of the otter-skin, saying, "yoho'-o-o," to which the members respond with "ho-o-o." After the circuit, all return to their seats with the exception of the

candidate, who remains at the east end, in front of the fireplace. After a pause, the ancestor-host joins him again, and delivers a speech of the admonition type. The candidate first faces the south, and then the north. During his speech, the ancestor-host touches him on his head and on his chest, and makes him face first south, and then north. When the speech is over, the ancestor-host sings, and takes the candidate to the west end of the tent.

The tent is now prepared for the initiation proper. Two long strips of calico are stretched from the west to the east end of the lodge. They are about a foot and a half wide, and are separated from each other by the fireplace. At the west end a much shorter strip of the same material is stretched along the width of the lodge, across the two long strips. Upon this the candidate is placed. When these preparations are completed, the ancestor-host rises, and, going to each of the four leaders, speaks to them in an undertone. He then returns to his seat. The leaders of the East and North Bands now rise and make the complete circuit of the lodge. The former now speaks, then the latter. He, in turn, is followed by the former, who speaks twice. Then the leader of the North Band delivers another speech, and, together with his partner, walks to the west end of the lodge, where the candidate is kneeling. The two leaders here speak again. Both now take their sacred shells, swallow them, and walk to the east end. Here they speak again. Now they hold their otter-skins in readiness for the shooting, but first jerk them forward twice towards the four cardinal points, saying "dje-ha-hi, dje-ha-hi," and concluding with "e-hohoho." Standing upon the two long calico strips in a slightly bent position, and holding their otter-skins tightly in their hands, both run rapidly toward the reclining form of the candidate, making loud, threatening sounds in a quavering voice, and strike his body twice with the mouth of the otter-skin, ejaculating, as they do this, two short sounds, as of an animal who has succeeded in capturing his prey. The candidate falls prostrate to the ground instantaneously, He is immediately covered with a blanket, upon which are placed the otter-skins of the two leaders. A number of people specially privileged now gather around the covered figure, dance, sing, and shout to the accompaniment of the shouts of the other members of the society, all of whom seem to be in a frenzy of excitement. When the noise has somewhat abated, the blanket is removed, and the figure of the candidate is shown, still apparently unconscious. He comes to slowly, but finally succeeds in raising himself and sitting up. He then coughs violently, and the shell, which has apparently been shot into his body, falls out of his mouth. After this, his recovery is rapid. He is then undressed; and all the finery, as well as the new buckskin suit, moccasins, etc., are distributed to those to whom it is customary

to give them. He now returns to his seat to the right of the Ancestor-Host's Band, where some female relative, generally his mother, dresses him in an ordinary suit.

(7) *Sweat-Lodge Ritual* (Part III). — The East leader rises, and with his two assistants makes the circuit of the sweat-lodge, during which time the North, West, and South leaders, each with his two assistants, join him. At the east end the leader makes four steps with his right foot, each time saying "wahi-hi-hi." He then makes the circuit of the lodge four times. After the third circuit, he goes directly to the heating-stone, "in defiance of the rule," as he himself says, but with the hope that through this defiance he will gain additional strength. After he has made the fourth circuit, he seizes the two entrance-lodge poles, and, shaking them gently, shouts "e-ho-ho-ho." All now sit down. Now the ancestor-host takes four sticks and smears them with a special kind of greenish clay, and hands them to the leader of the East Band. The latter seizes them and holds them tightly with both hands. By this action he is supposed to obtain strength. The sticks are then passed in rotation to the leaders of the North, West, and South Bands, all of whom repeat the same ceremony.

(9) *Basic Ritual* (Part IV, *a* and *b*). — This ritual is that upon which the ritual of the ceremony proper (Part IV, *a* and *b*) is built. In a certain sense it may be justifiable to consider all the above ritualistic complexes, with the exception of the entrance and exit rituals, as parts of this basic ritual. The important religious function of the Medicine Dance is the "passing of the blessing," consisting of speeches, songs, and the blessings which each individual passes from one band to the other for the greater benefit of both the host and his guests. These blessings are symbolized by the drum, the gourds, the songs, the speeches, and the specific actions in which each band participates. The ceremony begins when the ancestor-host delivers his first speech, and ends when drum and gourds are returned to him. All that takes place between the ancestor-host's first speech, up to the time that the drum and gourds are placed before the members of the East Band, constitutes the unit that I have called the "basic ritual." Into it are thrust, as intrusive elements, other rituals; so that it is at times extremely difficult to discern the basic ritual itself. But it is there, and remains intact; for as soon as an intrusive ritual is finished, the thread of the basic ritual is taken up, and continued to the end. Such a ritual as the general shooting or initiation, or such myths as the origin myth, require hours; and yet as soon as they are over, the basic ceremony is continued from the point where it had been interrupted.

The East leader rises and speaks, then sits down, and together with the other members of his band, sings a song (initial song). When this song is finished, he rises and speaks again, and then sits down and

commences a song known as the "minor dancing-song." While he and a few others are singing, drumming, and using the gourd rattles, other members of his band, as well as members of the other bands, who care to, and who have bought the privilege, come to his seat and join in the dancing. When this is over, he and a few others either from his own or from some other band, who have bought the privilege, go to the fireplace, where the leader delivers a speech and begins the major dancing-songs, in which the privileged members participate. When this is over, the drum is tied to one of the members thus privileged, generally the one who has been drumming, and the circuit of the lodge is twice made, the leader and his two assistants at the head, followed by the other members of his band. Two stops are made at the west, and two at the east, end of the lodge, where songs known as "completion songs" are sung. Then the lodge circuit is made four times, all chanting "wahi-hi-hi," slowly at first, but then faster, the speed of the walking corresponding to that of the chanting. Then, with a final strong "e-ho-ho," drum and gourds are deposited in front of the next band. All now return to their seats, where, before sitting down, the leader delivers a short speech.

This basic ritual is repeated by each band in the manner described. As it is so often broken up by the intrusion of other rituals, it will be best to divide it into four parts. These parts are never broken up. Whenever intrusive elements occur, they either precede or follow.

The first part consists of all that takes place between the first speech of the leader and the completion of the initial song. The speech referred to is the one that follows the smoking ritual, which may, on the whole, be reckoned as belonging to the introductory ritual, such as the entrance ritual. The second part consists of all that transpires between the second speech and the completion of the minor dancing-song. The third part consists of all that transpires between the speech at the fireplace and the completion of the major dancing-songs. The fourth part consists of all that transpires between the completion of the major dancing-songs, and the last speech the leader makes after he has passed the drum and gourds to the next band.

The most bewildering intrusion is that which follows the second part. Before the leader and his assistants go to the fireplace, the elaborate general shooting ritual takes place. After the specially designated men of each band have been shot, those specially privileged proceed to the fireplace. Here they sing the shooting-songs until the shooting ritual is over. The first set of drummers and gourd-rattle holders are often relieved by a second set. It is only when the shooting-songs have been completed, that the leader and his assistants proceed to the fireplace to begin the third part of the basic ritual.

V. Ceremony as a Whole. — As stated before, there are certain

speeches and types of action that cannot be fitted into the above description. This is especially true of myths; and these, with the exception of the content of the myth, will now be considered in connection with the description of the entire ritual as related to me by Blowsnake, and based on the above divisions. The ceremony begins with an account of the manner in which Blowsnake was induced to join the society. Upon his acceptance, and payment of the required amount of material, the ceremony began.

The first two nights consisted of an informal salutation, two explanatory speeches and four myths, the latter in no way connected with any part of the Medicine Dance. The last three myths deal with the legendary account of the origin of the Winnebago Medicine Dance, and its dissemination among the tribe.

At sunset the leader of the band to which the candidate has applied for admission, gathers together the members of his band, and all retire to a little lodge near his home, in order to begin the Four Nights' Preparation. It is only after the leader has finished the first song that the other four bands who are holding corresponding preparations are allowed to begin. What actually takes place during these four nights is not positively known, but there is little doubt that they are used as a general rehearsal of songs, speeches, and other elements of the ceremony.[1] In all probability, the candidate who is present in the lodge of his future ancestor-host is likewise instructed in as many things as an uninitiated member is allowed to know. This instruction consists in the teaching of certain myths and types of action.

On the morning after the last of the four nights, the candidate is given some sacrificial tobacco, and told to go in search of a stone for the sweat-bath. He selects a stone that he can carry on his back easily. Before picking it up, he pours tobacco on it. As soon as the stone is brought to the lodge of the host, it is heated. The candidate is now despatched for some oak-branches, four pieces of oak-wood about two feet and a half in length, and some grass. The grass is used for improvised seats. The oak-wood is used for the four construction poles of the sweat-lodge. They are placed in the east, north, west, and south points respectively. It is not permitted to trim the tops of the oak-wood. When all the bands have gathered near the medicine-lodge, and retired to their improvised lodges, the ancestor-host and the candidate go to the lodge of the East leader (that is, to the lodge of the band first invited), and greet him by touching his head with their hand.

[1] The speeches are not actually rehearsals of speeches to be delivered during the ceremony proper, but they refer to the purpose of the Medicine Dance much in the same way as do some of the speeches in the ceremony proper. A large number of miscellaneous myths are likewise related.

He answers with "ho-o-o." The leader of the first band rises, and, accompanied by his two assistants, goes to the sweat-lodge. The ancestor-host goes to the lodges of the other bands and greets the leaders in a similar manner. After the leader and assistants of the band last invited have entered the sweat-lodge, the ancestor-host, the candidate, and his assistants enter, and the ceremonies begin.

After the ceremonial salutation and an introductory speech, the ancestor-host, as the leader of the band giving the Medicine Dance may now be called, rises, and, taking his invitation-stick and some tobacco, approaches the leader of each band, and, blessing him, thanks him for coming, and assures him at the same time to how great a degree his presence will contribute toward the success of the performance of the ritual. He then returns to his seat. The leaders thank him in turn. Now follow the fire and smoking rituals, which in turn are followed by twelve speeches of a general and of an explanatory character. Then comes the "strengthening" ritual; and immediately after come two exceedingly long myths describing the initiation of the first man into the secrets of the lodge, as well as the symbolic meaning of the shooting ritual. All now undress and take a sweat-bath. Female candidates are excluded. A number of short speeches follow, and the whole concludes with the exit ritual.

The drum and gourds are used to accompany the song. The basic ritual is perhaps present, to a certain extent. However, it was impossible to witness the ritual, and for this reason the procedure seems somewhat hazy to the writer.

When the ritual in the sweat-bath is over, there is a slight pause. The candidate, the ancestor-host and his band, enter the medicine-lodge, and, after taking their seats, sing a few songs. When the last song is concluded, the other bands enter in the order of their invitation. Now comes the entrance ritual followed by the smoking ritual. Thereupon the ancestor-host rises and delivers the opening speech of the basic ritual. The ancestor-host does not go through the entire basic ritual at this time, because he is not permitted to begin the shooting ritual. Soon after the beginning of the basic ritual by the ancestor-host, generally after the second speech, gourds and drum are passed to the leader of the East Band. This one rises and begins the basic ritual, which he interrupts at the end of the second part, in order to begin the general shooting ritual. When that is finished, he continues with the third and fourth parts of the basic ritual. Then drum and gourds are passed to the North Band. Its leader now in turn begins his basic ritual, but stops after the second part, where the presentation-of-food ritual and the smoking ritual intervene. It is now about midnight, and a feast is partaken of. As soon as the feast is finished, and the lodge has been cleared of

food and eating-utensils, the leader of the North Band continues with the third and fourth parts of the basic ritual. The leaders of the West and South Bands perform the basic ritual without any interruptions, except, of course, that of the general shooting ritual between the second and third parts. The drum and gourds have now reached the ancestor-host, who goes through the third and fourth parts of the basic ritual. There is, however, some doubt as to whether this is always done. Then follows the exit ritual, and all pass out to rest for a few hours.

A short time preceding dawn, the candidate, the leaders of the East and North Bands, and the ancestor-host, each with two assistants, and all other members who are privileged to do so, leave the lodge and walk to the brush, where the candidate is to be initiated into the mysteries of the sacred shell and the shooting. Each band must have one or more of its members present at this ritual.[1] When they are near the place set aside for the secret ritual, the order of marching, which up to this time had been of no consequence, changes into that of single file, the leader of the East Band leading. When they have arrived at the place, all stop. The East leader now informs those present that he is going to make a road for the candidate, symbolical of the path of life, which forms the basis of the sweat-bath and Medicine Dance. Singing, he circles the spot four times. At the end of the fourth circuit he stops, and all turn around and face east. The leader of the North Band has also the right to go through this ritual, but he does not always do it. Repeating the ceremony is in all probability connected with extra expense. All now sit down, and the specific rites of the brush ritual begin.

The ancestor-host rises, and, taking the candidate with him, goes to the leader of the East Band and speaks to him. Then he and the candidate return to their seats. The East leader now relates to the candidate a portion of the story of the creation of the earth and of the first man. The North leader then tells the story of the journey to the land of the spirits, to the lodge of the earth-maker. When this is finished, the two leaders teach the candidate how to go through the actions incidental to the shooting, the swallowing of the shell, and the recovery from its effects. When they think that he is sufficiently adept in all these actions, they dress him in his new suit, put on a new pair of moccasins, decorate him with finery, and return to the medicine-lodge.

These rites generally last until about eight in the morning; so that when those who have participated in the brush ritual are returning, the other members of the Medicine Dance are also about ready to

[1] This has been contradicted by some of my informants, who claim that only the East and North Bands have representatives at the brush ceremony.

begin the day ceremony, the principal one of the entire Medicine Dance. The ancestor-host again precedes the other leaders in entering the lodge. Then follows the entrance ritual. During this ritual the drum is struck four times at stated intervals. The smoking ritual now follows. When it is concluded, the ancestor-host rises to begin the basic ritual, which is interrupted at the end of the second part. Gourds and drum are passed to the East Band, whose basic ritual is also interrupted at the end of the second part. Now follows, first the initiation of the candidate into the Medicine Dance, and then the general shooting ritual. When the East leader has concluded, drum and gourds are passed to the North Band, whose basic ritual is not interrupted, as upon the preceding day. At the conclusion of the basic ritual of the North Band, the food-presentation ritual follows, then that of the smoking ritual, and finally the feast. After the feast, the leader of the West Band narrates the origin myth of the Medicine Dance, which is continued by the leader of the South Band. The presents are then distributed. After this, the basic ritual is continued by the leader of the West Band, followed by that of the South Band, and finally drum and gourds are passed to the ancestor-host. He either finishes the third and fourth parts of the basic ritual, or takes drum and gourds to the fireplace. The exit ritual now begins, and at about sunset the entire ceremony of the Medicine Dance is over. On the whole, it must be said, that the main difference between (*a*) and (*b*) of Part IV setting aside the initiation, lies simply in the number of myths told and the greater length of the speeches.

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE OJIBWA MIDEWIWIN

As I shall have occasion to refer frequently to the Midewiwin of the Ojibwa and Menominee, a short summary of these two ceremonies will be inserted here.

The Ojibwa Midewiwin is a society of shamans of both sexes. It is graded into four degrees, special initiation being required for each degree. The ritual of all the degrees seems to be the property of five shamans, — the four so-called "mide-priests" and the preceptor. In the lodge the preceptor occupies a position to the side of the candidate and the mide-priests sitting near the western entrance.[1]

There are two methods of admission. A man may apply because in his fasting some manito connected with the Midewiwin has appeared to him, or he may take the place of an individual who has died while preparing for initiation. As soon as the candidate's application has been accepted, a preceptor is selected, whose duty it is to instruct the new pupil in the mide teachings, and explain to him the meaning and origin of the regalia, the songs, and the origin of the Midewiwin itself,

[1] *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, vol. vii, p. 188, diagram.

by means of birch-bark records. The time required for this instruction varies, depending upon the preceptor and the amount of payment. The knowledge required for each degree is definitely determined, and is imparted almost entirely during this preparatory instruction. When the candidate has acquired the specified information, and the required payments have been made, a four-nights' preparation takes place, during which he takes four sweat-baths. At dawn of the day of initiation he repairs to the sweat-lodge, clad in his best clothes, to await the arrival of his preceptor and the four officiating priests.

The initiation ceremonies which follow are the same for the second, third, and fourth degrees in almost all details, except that those for the fourth are more elaborate. The first degree is like the others in its possession of a shooting ceremony and general speeches, but differs in elaboration and symbolism of the ritual.

The shooting is performed by the four officiating mide; but it is only the leader of these four who succeeds in rendering the candidate unconscious. A candidate for the first degree is shot in the breast; one for the second, in the joints; and one for the third and fourth, in the joints and forehead. After he has been initiated, the candidate tries his power on all the members present. Indiscriminate shooting, as described among the Winnebago, only occurs at the initiation into the fourth degree.

To the Ojibwa the Midewiwin is the dramatization of the struggle of the bear-spirit with the evil spirit, bear, serpent, panther, etc. The candidate impersonates the good bear-spirit, and some mide sometimes take upon themselves the impersonation of the evil spirits.[1] In the ritual of the fourth degree, representing the complete initiation, the dramatization and its symbolistic interpretation are best shown. He who succeeds becomes correspondingly powerful in his profession. Hunters, warriors, and lovers have occasion to call upon him, and charms to counteract the evil effects of an enemy's work are sometimes sought.[2]

The Ojibwa interpretation of the Midewiwin is seen in all its details in the birch-bark records.[3] A mide of the second degree can look into futurity; can hear what is transpiring at a distance; can touch, for good or for evil, friends and enemies at a distance, however remote; and has the ability to traverse all space in the accomplishment of his desires or duties.[4] A bad mide of this degree has the power of assuming the form of any animal. In this guise he may destroy the life of his victim immediately, and then resume his human form and appear innocent of the crime. A "fourth-degree mide" is presumed to be

[1] *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, vol. vii, pp. 245, 255–274.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 257.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 167–181.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 168.

in a position to accomplish the greatest feats in necromancy and magic. He is not only endowed with the power of reading the thoughts and intentions of others, but also of calling forth the shadow (soul) and of retaining it within his grasp at pleasure.

From the above it will be seen that the Midewiwin covered practically all the religious and the shamanistic ideas of the Ojibwa.

C. DESCRIPTION OF THE MENOMINEE MIDEWIWIN

Among the Menominee, initiation generally takes place as a substitution of one individual for one who has died, although any person who gives proof of eligibility is accepted. The former is by far the more common method. Generally a person makes the promise of procuring a substitute for some deceased member, and a favorite relative or dear friend of the deceased may be elected. There are four mide-priests who determine upon the candidacy and appoint an instructor. The instruction the candidate receives is confined to the knowledge of the remedies known to the instructor.[1] Each remedy must be paid for separately. The four mide-priests select two sets of assistants and two ushers, who all play a prominent part in the ceremonies proper.[2]

When a candidate is taking the place of a deceased member, the ceremonies begin at the grave of the latter,[3] and, after a service which lasts from dusk of one day to dawn of the next, all proceed to the Midewiwin lodge. But only the four highest officiating medicine-men enter. After a ritual which consists of chants and speeches of welcome, and the passing of the drum from the first to the other three mide, the other members who are to take an active part enter. A short ritual then takes place, after which the second set of mide enter and another ritual follows. Then the ordinary and visiting mide enter, the former taking seats according to the phratries to which they belong; and the candidate, his nearest relations, and he who had promised to give the feast, enter with them and take seats near the mide of the first group. Finally the third set of mide enter. The seating in the lodge is, candidate, friends, etc., near the eastern end; first four mide, next to them; second set, on northern side near western entrance; and third set of mide, at the middle of the southern side.

The ceremonies begin by calling the candidate forward to stand before the mide of the first group. His family and friends stand around him in a semicircle, dancing in time to the chanting and drumming. One of the mide begins a chant, at the end of which a pause occurs, and the candidate and friends resume their seats. The

[1] *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology*, vol. xiv, p. 69.

[2] Compare diagram, *ibid.*, p. 75.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 75.

drum is passed in rotation to the second, third, and fourth mide. As they chant, the candidate, etc., stands before them. The last of the four then chants the origin myth of the Midewiwin. The drum is now passed to the mide who had chanted first. He continues the narration of the ritualistic myths. Drum and gourds are then passed from one mide to the other, and from the first set of mide to the third, until the circuit has been made.

These ceremonies are continued through the night, although only the three sets of mide remain in the lodge all that time. Shortly after sunrise, almost all leave the lodge. When they return, preparations are made for the initiation. The shooting of the candidate is performed by the second set of mide. The candidate, after recovering, makes the circuit of the lodge, shooting whomsoever he desires. The characteristics of this shooting ceremony are practically identical with those of the Winnebago.

D. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RITUAL

I. The Common Elements. — The common elements in the foregoing ritualistic complexes are both general and specific in nature. We have, as general, an initiation ritual; and as specific, a shooting ritual. There are in addition, in the Central Algonkin and Winnebago group, other resemblances, such as similarities in the ethical teaching, in the details of the shooting ritual itself, and in the presence of the secret brush ritual. To the above must be added the fact that the songs of the Winnebago ceremonies are to a large extent in some Central Algonkin dialect.

The meaning of these general similarities will be touched upon later. What I wish to insist upon here is, that if the ritualistic complexes are at all to be regarded as identical, this is so by reason of the presence in each of a shooting ritual. This identity is strengthened in each case by the association of this specific shooting ritual with the more general feature of initiation. The most dramatic phase in the main ceremony is this initiation and shooting complex; and it seems, therefore, quite intelligible why the number of similar details thus associated together should have been interpreted as the historically primary and basic elements.

To postulate an historical identity, however, on the basis of a number of common elements, in the face of numerous and important differences, implies a specific attitude toward the nature and significance of the common elements in these ceremonies. We know, indeed, that almost all theoreticians place greater insistence upon the similarities than upon the differences in cultural phenomena. There is perhaps a natural tendency to do so. But quite apart from this tendency, there must likewise be certain definite reasons for such an

interpretation. It is essential, consequently, to understand at the very outset the theoretical justification of this position.

II. The Interpretation of the Common Elements — Schurtz's Theory. — This question has been taken up *in extenso* by Schurtz,[1] in his work on "Age Classes and Men's Societies." Here, as well as in previous theoretical discussions, the presence of a number of similarities has been considered sufficient for establishing the identity of a group of ceremonies that admittedly possess a large number of specific peculiarities. But Schurtz gives us a detailed psychological exposition (and in this lies perhaps his superiority over others who have discussed the same subject) of the reasons which have prompted him to take a certain attitude toward these "similarities." If Schurtz's work is therefore selected in preference to that of others, it is because of the fact that, in addition to practically taking the same position as most of the other theoreticians, he has most clearly defined some of the assumptions underlying their position.

Schurtz's line of argument seems to have been the following. An investigation of civilized as well as of primitive organizations has disclosed a number of similarities. Their historical development is unknown; but the enormous distance separating them geographically, precludes the possibility that these similarities have been due either to borrowing or to dissemination from some one original centre. They must consequently be explained by assuming that they have developed independently, as external manifestations of the unity of the human mind. We are thus led to the assumption accepted by most ethnologists to-day, that the human mind tends to express itself in similar modes of thought and action the world over. The variation in these modes is to be ascribed either to the differences in the nature of the geographical and social surroundings or to the emotional and intellectual individuality of different groups of people, or to both. We are, however, concerned here not so much with the variations as with the common modes of thought and action. It is consequently of prime importance to determine first the nature of these modes, their sequence, and the extent to which this sequence has been conditioned by the modes themselves.

We start at the very outset with an implied assumption; for by "sequence," Schurtz distinctly understood an ordered sequence. His work is primarily an attempt to determine what this ordered sequence has been, and how it has been determined. The norm of organization in which the human race expressed itself primarily, is, according to him, the age-group. Owing to the historical development of various cultural areas, it is no longer possible to detect this "primary element;" and he consequently finds it necessary to demonstrate its existence from another point of view, which is essentially psychological.

[1] Heinrich Schurtz, *Altersklassen und Männerbunde*, 1902; cf. especially pp. 1–82.

The development of the age-group has followed a very definite sequence—definite, because it has been determined by certain inherent tendencies of the human mind. These tendencies are "the instinct for association"[1] (*Geselligkeitstrieb*) and "the sexual instinct" (*Geschlechtstrieb*). Granting the existence of these two tendencies, we have then to inquire how they have conditioned the essential similarities in the evolution of our social life, and the forms in which that social life has expressed itself.

There are two possible assumptions. We may assume that at a certain stage of cultural development groups of people possessed no social individuality sufficiently strong to determine their own development, and that the *Geselligkeitstrieb* and *Geschlechtstrieb* alone, or reinforced by other factors, were sufficiently strong to condition development along certain lines; or we may, on the other hand, assume that the primary modes in which people have expressed themselves are necessarily of so simple and generalized a type, that they always were the same. Schurtz has practically assumed a stage in human development when the individuality of the component units of a social group was at a minimum; when there was, so to say, a "group mind," whose initial development is most easily explained by the influence of inherent tendencies. It must be said, in fairness to Schurtz, that the other alternative mentioned above was probably also in his mind. However, he seems to have elaborated his theory with the first alternative constantly before his eyes.

This unexpressed assumption is of the greatest possible moment in Schurtz's interpretation, because it immediately establishes a certain fixity for his primary norm; and excluding as it does the possibility of variation, because the two tendencies, as constants, are acting upon social groups whose component members have a minimum of individuality, brings it about that the same primary norm must be simple and generalized in its nature.

Schurtz has thus given us a psychological *milieu*, and we must now proceed to investigate what are the specific norms of development, the method by which these norms have been determined, the nature of their sequence, and how this sequence has been absolutely conditioned. The first two of these points become clearer if we attack the question of sequence first.

It is apparent from Schurtz's work that to him the necessity for an ordered sequence was self-evident. This acceptance of an ordered sequence as axiomatic was conditioned primarily by the fact that he implied at the very outset that the ordered sequence present in the evolution of biological phenomena was to be found in an essentially

[1] Wherever the phrase "instinct for association" is used, it is an attempt to render the German *Geselligkeitstrieb*.

comparable manner in the development of civilization. In the same way Schurtz's use of the terms "highest" and "lowest" and of "intermediate stages" is only inadequately explained when regarded as derived from the study of history. Neither can we assume that these terms were merely a reflection of the conclusion he had drawn from a comparison of the palpable differences between Europeans and "primitive" people. His whole treatment of "intermediate stages," and of the factors he calls to his aid in explaining them, — such as divergences due to variations from a type, vestiges, functional changes, — these are all strictly biological not merely in their terminology, but likewise in their general connotation.

The justification for equating the processes which have played a large part in historical and biological evolution seemed, indeed, apparent. In the cultural history of any people, we find elements splitting up and giving rise to innumerable variations. In this divergence we meet again and again with two phenomena, — first, that of the general decay of cultural elements, of their total disappearance in some cases and of their persistence as vestigial remains in others; and, secondly, that of the incessant change, of the re-adjustment and re-interpretation of cultural phenomena, so that elements often take upon themselves functions which they originally did not possess, while these original functions are either partially or totally obscured. Numerous other points, more specific in nature, could be adduced to demonstrate more fully the essential similarity of cultural and biological phenomena.

The comparability of the data of civilization and biology brought in its train, however, the natural corollary that the general course of their development was the same. Such an assumption fitted in admirably with the psychological presuppositions of Schurtz, and with the inferences he felt justified in drawing from the historical data. Neither Schurtz, nor, for that matter, any theoretician of his time, ever made any attempt to prove that the method of biological evolution was the same as that of the historical. It was commonly assumed to have been the same; but, quite apart from this acceptance of a fact that seemed to need no proof, the similarity in the evolution of biological and historical phenomena was by implication conditioned by his psychological assumptions. The number of norms are necessarily reduced to a minimum when inherent tendencies are acting on a "group mind," for it would be tacitly admitting a large range for personal individuality, to assume the existence of many norms; but if there are only a few norms, or, as Schurtz concludes, one norm, — that of the age-group, — variations can only have arisen as differentiations of this norm, due to influences either from within or from without.

We are consequently reduced to a condition exactly parallel to that which we find, according to the theory of evolution, in biology.

Variations are the result of a differentiation of some unit. It is the object, in the classification of biological data, to demonstrate, by means of a series of ascending forms, the evolution of the most highly differentiated from the least differentiated. In thus arranging the data, it followed that the least-differentiated forms contained the simple general manifestations of life, and that at the same time the most highly-differentiated forms likewise contained all these simple general manifestations, although they were here, as a rule, so changed as to be entirely obscured, if not unrecognizable.

In a manner almost exactly parallel to the above, Schurtz sought to classify the phenomena of social organization. The highest must contain within itself the simple and general phenomena of the lowest form. Having thus demonstrated to his satisfaction the existence and the necessity of an ordered sequence, he turned his attention to demonstrating that this sequence was psychologically as well as historically conditioned. His line of argument here can best be shown by analyzing the first few chapters of his book.

At the basis of all social organizations lie two elementary forces,—the "instinct for association" and the "sexual instinct." The sexual instinct is primary, because it is obviously an essential condition of life. The instinct for association is secondary in so far as its expression in outward form is concerned. It is as old as the sexual instinct; but, since at the initial stage of human development the sexual instinct is so strong a force, the instinct of association had no observable influence on the actions of men.

The forms of social organization which the sexual instinct conditions are those based upon certain kinds of blood relationship. These forms are primary. To establish the priority of the forms thus imposed by blood relationship, we have but to remember that, as the relationship of individuals to one another preceded everything else, so the social forms based upon blood relationship must have preceded all other social forms. We are therefore to regard as the earliest stage of social organization that of groups bound together by blood relationship. But what has been the force differentiating these groups? Obviously not the same sexual instinct that has caused the formation of these primary groups. To explain the factors that have caused this differentiation we must call to our aid two phenomena,—first, that of sexual solidarity; and, secondly, that of the instinct for association.

Sexual solidarity has its roots in the nature of man and woman, and is possessed by them in equal intensity. The instinct for association is, however, a specifically masculine trait. It is found among women only in a minimal degree. An important corollary follows from this fact: If women societies are found anywhere, they are to be considered merely as imitations of men's societies. If women are

found as members in a society, this is to be regarded as secondary and purely adventitious. These, and some more specific points to be enumerated later, must be borne in mind continually, as Schurtz makes a far-reaching use of them.

The instinct for association, he goes on to say, expresses itself, however, between those of like interests; that is, between those who would most likely be of the same age. It is not likely, for instance, to occur between married and unmarried men. We have here two apparently organically determined classes. In the earliest stages of social development, however, when the norms of social expression conditioned by the sexual instinct were still of paramount importance, insistence was most naturally placed upon the most important stage of man's physiological development, — the age of puberty. The strong line of demarcation between the period preceding and following sexual maturity was so ever-present a fact to the mind of primitive man, that it found expression in the multitude of initiatory rites. In these initiatory rites we have another of the specific "symptoms" with which we shall have to deal afterward.

When the instinct for association developed more strongly, the differences due to age, plus the physiological factor, conditioned the natural formation of two classes, — one of men before puberty, and one of men after puberty. This natural twofold division was also strengthened by another factor; for until the age of puberty, boys were under the influence of women, and were therefore to be reckoned as one with them.

The three groups — men before puberty, unmarried men after puberty, and married men — are thus built upon the basis of age distinction and common interest. They are the norms of primitive social organization, and, as we have seen, their origin is due to inherited instincts. By implication Schurtz has here also assumed the existence of a definite sequence; for the division into pre- and post-puberty groups is a consequence of the sexual instinct, and is therefore primary. Differentiation into the groups of married and unmarried men thereupon followed; but the initiation, which is synchronous with the age of sexual maturity, has introduced another factor, that of promiscuous sexual intercourse; and the regulation that this has demanded is found outwardly expressed in the "men's house." The common interests that drew men together into groups have thus far been those conditioned largely by age. In the development of society, however, interests became more and more diversified, and resulted, first, in the disappearance of the age factor as the essential element for associations, and, secondly, in the necessity for more closely organized units with specific characteristics. To obtain this close organization, one of the essential elements was secrecy, and thus developed out of the "men's

house" those innumerable clubs and secret societies which we find so common to-day.

In such manner we have constructed an ascending evolutionary series. It must not be forgotten that in such a series the highest stage is but a differentiated lower stage. It must likewise be remembered that there is a tendency for intermediate stages to leave vestigial remains wherever they developed into higher stages. We may consequently expect to find traces of "age groups" and "men's houses" all over the world. In addition, we must remember that a number of "symptoms" — such as "the exclusion of women" from a society, the presence of "an initiation," of "degrees," and of "secrecy" — have always been associated with certain stages of growth. They may serve us for criteria of this growth and of the stages thereof, and they constitute proofs of historical identity. They will often appear unassociated with the definite stage assigned to them; but that is immaterial, for their almost universal presence is a sufficient guaranty of their significance. It is not necessary to inquire into their individual significance among definite societies, because a negative answer would prove nothing, as differences from the general scheme outlined can be interpreted most easily in terms of some functional change.

It must of course be remembered that the various points of view from which Schurtz approached his problem were so inextricably interwoven, that it is unwarranted to assume that every position he took was as distinctly analyzed as I have attempted to show.

From two points of view, a psychological and a biological one, Schurtz obtained similar conclusions. It is now only necessary, after we have seen how he established his psychological *milieu* and his sequence of norms, to investigate the manner in which he approached the ethnological data themselves.

Schurtz claims to have reached his interpretation from an inductive study of the available data. We have seen that there is good reason to suppose that he approached the data with certain preconceptions, the most important of which was the necessity of "ascending stages" in the evolution of society. He had to determine, before everything else, the initial stage of social evolution, and to look for it or for as close an approximation to it as might still be found to-day. However, as soon as we accept what Schurtz thought were the necessary consequences of the two tendencies, — of the instinct for association and of the sexual instinct, — obviously, then, that organization which conforms closest to the conditions there imposed would be the most primitive.

He thereupon found himself confronted with the relatively easy task of finding such an organization. He found it in Australia, and selected it as the starting-point of his series. In justice to Schurtz and other theoreticians, it should, however, be said that the Australian

cultures impressed many then, and continue to impress many now, as cultures that either had been stunted in their growth, or had developed only as far as the most primitive stages. From that point on, the construction of a series was a simple task.

Such, in brief, is the position of Schurtz.

He wished to convey the impression that his theory was based entirely upon an inductive study of the data; but we have seen that, by means of two powerful tendencies, he in reality based his interpretation upon a deductive study. He does, it is true, claim that the existence of these tendencies was established inductively; but even if we were to grant this, it is apparent that he subsequently disassociated the tendencies from the data, and used them as new entities from which to re-interpret the facts.

It has been pointed out before that Schurtz did not believe that the absence of any or all of the "symptoms" constituted an argument against his theory. In the same way, any evidences of convergent evolution, of the appearance of "symptoms" of higher stages associated with those of a lower stage, would not militate against his position. Such phenomena were to be regarded as purely adventitious. Dissemination of cultures, he held, was possible; but, although similarities due to such an agency might obscure the normal development, this normal development could hardly be fundamentally disarranged thereby.

The theory of Schurtz might be examined from two points of view. One might critically examine the validity of the assumptions *per se*, and the justifiability of his inferences; or one might temporarily lay aside the theory entirely, and examine the data individually. It is the latter method of approach that I shall here adopt.

With this purpose in view, I have selected for examination and interpretation the data furnished by the Ojibwa-Menominee Midewiwin, the Winnebago Medicine Dance, and the Omaha Shell and Pebble Societies. The investigation of specific data will, however, not have any general validity, unless it can be shown that their specific content is the result of certain very general psychological tendencies.

The common elements in the ceremonial complexes have led to the predication of their identity, and it will be best therefore to begin our study with an analysis of them.

III. The Shooting Ritual. — It might perhaps be expedient, before discussing the phenomena of "shooting" in general, to analyze what is supposed to be its precise nature among the various tribes possessing it in one form or another. Generally speaking, the essential idea lies in the simulation of being shot by a missile, and re-acting by

simulating muscular contractions until the individual falls prone upon the ground. The general theory of the Ojibwa-Menominee and of the Winnebago is, that death must thereupon normally result, but that certain conditions may change this fatal effect into one of temporary unconsciousness. Among the Omaha, the simulated death is interpreted as the dramatic representation of the death of certain persons known in the ceremony of the Shell Society as "children." Among the Santee Dakota, it seems to have had no very definite meaning.[1]

The Ojibwa,[2] Menominee,[3] Winnebago, and Dakota are at one in interpreting the effects of the shooting as the result of the magical powers inherent in the missile used. Efficiency in shooting, however, depends not merely upon the missile, but also upon the shaman using it. According to the esoteric interpretation of the Winnebago, the specific results could only be obtained by being a member of the Medicine Dance. There are indications that this specific efficacy was associated with the general magical power of shamans, — a power that had been obtained through personal visions, not in any way connected with this society. For the Ojibwa-Menominee, this latter seems to have been by far the more important source for efficacy. For example, the otter-skin bag could be used with the same effect quite apart from the performances of the Midewiwin. In the Omaha ceremonies it is not quite clear exactly what renders the shooting efficacious, and whether the result is inherent in the magical power of the missile.

In all the ritualistic complexes there are variations both as to the manner in which the shooting is done, and as to the portion of the body aimed at. Excluding the Omaha societies, these variations in all cases depend upon the status of membership. The Ojibwa-Menominee shooting is in nature and in interpretation quite similar to that of the Winnebago; while the Omaha presents a number of variations from the type.

In the Ojibwa-Menominee ceremonies the shooting ritual is always associated with the admission of a new member. This includes, of course, also the initiation of individuals into higher degrees, wherever such exist. The shooting is done principally by the newly initiated individual, because he is supposed to be trying his powers. There occurs, besides this, a general shooting, in which all members indulge, and which is supposed to increase their shooting powers. The strengthening of their power is supposed to resist the effects of the shot. Among the Omaha this general shooting is unassociated with initiation, while among the Winnebago it is found associated both with initiation and with the basic ceremony. It is therefore of considerable

[1] S. R. Riggs, Dakota Grammar and Texts.

[2] Hoffman, in *Annual Report of Bureau of American Ethnology*, vol. vii.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. xiv.

importance to understand what relation this general shooting ritual bears to the specific shooting associated with initiation. Shooting is either an element primarily associated with initiation, and afterwards separated, or it is some general element that has become associated with any of a large number of other cultural elements. In order to determine this, we have next to examine with what elements shooting becomes associated.

Among the Kwakiutl[1] there is a dance in which an individual (mā'maq'a) throws disease into the people. This disease is represented by some object, either a stick or a harpoon-head. The shooting has precisely the same effect as in the Medicine Dance. No association of shooting of any kind occurs with initiation into a society.

The Kwakiutl example brings up the real question involved in the shooting. To what extent is the shooting ritual of the Medicine Dance of the Winnebago merely one of the forms of disease-throwing which is so common a practice of sympathetic magic? The Central Algonkin Midewiwin are really loose associations of men and women, whose powers are obtained more from individual revelations obtained outside of the Midewiwin than from the benefits of membership in that society. Shamanistic practices appear to form an integral part of this society. But apart from this, the shooting of disease, or of any malignant power, at an enemy, is an extremely common feature among the Central Algonkin as it is among all other American shamans. The question that presents itself is, whether the shooting, as found in the Ojibwa-Menominee and Winnebago Medicine Societies, is not one aspect of this same general shamanistic practice.

To judge from the speeches and the songs of these societies, the main religious function is to obtain the power to resist the influence of the shot. The muscular contortions and the various movements the individual shot at goes through, are intended to be symbolical of this resistance. What the members expect to obtain are powers sufficiently strong to resist any malignant influences that they might meet in the general course of a lifetime; that is, we are dealing with a very general manifestation of shamanism, and we ought therefore not to be surprised to find it wherever shamanism occurs, either entirely unassociated, or associated with a large number of different elements. We find it unassociated in a large number of places scattered over North America. Among the Kwakiutl it is associated with a certain dance; among the Central Algonkin and Winnebago, with initiation. If it can now be shown that among the Omaha, and among the Winnebago also, we find it again in a different association, then the association of shooting with an initiation ritual will have to be regarded as one

[1] Boas, The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians (*Annual Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895*, p. 485).

of a number of complexes into which shooting has entered. Whether, in a specific case, shooting, or the initiation-shooting complex, is historically related to a similar ritual among other tribes, is a question that only direct historical evidence or a strong historical probability can determine. The presence of shooting in a number of different ceremonies, however, will not in itself demonstrate any relationship between these ceremonies.

We will now examine the nature of the complex with which shooting is associated in the night division of the general ceremony of the Winnebago Medicine Dance and in the Omaha Pebble and Shell Society.

A large number of the societies among the Winnebago and Omaha are based on the common possession of revelations from the same animal. We may have a society "of those who have had communication with the Thunders," or with the Nights, or with the Grizzly Bear, or what not. The bond of such a society is generally expressed outwardly, by the possession of some "gift" which is intimately connected with the animal, be it a head-dress, a tail, facial decorations, or the right to the use of a certain drum, etc. The only society among the Winnebago where no revelation is required for admission is the Medicine Dance. There are, however, a number of elements which connect the Medicine Dance with the other type of society so common among the Winnebago. For instance, there is an outward mark of membership; namely, the otter-skin and the "migis."[1] On the warpath the Winnebago wraps the otter-skin around his shoulder to signify that, as a member of the Medicine Dance, he is protected from the attacks of his enemies. In the shooting ritual of the night division of the general ceremony of the Medicine Dance, and in the Medicine Feast, there are a number of features similar to those of the Winnebago Buffalo, Grizzly Bear, Night, etc., Societies. From the point of view of organization, the only difference would seem to be, that, instead of a common bond lying in a supernatural communication, it lies here in the mutual shooting. If we wished to describe the Medicine Dance in terms of Winnebago society norms, we might call it a "society of those who shoot one another." The shooting forms an integral part of the ritualistic complex, much in the same way as do the set songs and the set speeches. In the basic ritual of the day ceremony, the shooting occurs in two combinations, — on the one hand, as an initiation-shooting-complex, set off more or less from the general ceremony; and, on the other hand, in a complex that is a repetition of one which occurs at night, and which forms unquestionably the basic portion of the

[1] Migis is the Ojibwa term for the shell used in the Midewiwin. It is employed here as a convenient term to designate the objects used by the Winnebago and Omaha in shooting.

entire Medicine Dance. We will return to a discussion of this subsequently.

Shooting in the Omaha Pebble and Shell Societies is associated precisely in the same manner as in the basic ritual of the Medicine Dance. In the Pebble Society we have, as a matter of fact, exactly the condition which we assumed might perhaps be the correct interpretation of the Medicine Dance. The society is named "Those who shoot the Pebble." In the Shell Society the bond of union is similarly the shooting, the society being called "Those who shoot with a Shell."

It therefore seems quite probable, taking into account the fact that three Siouan (one Winnebago and two Omaha) societies present a shooting feature in their basic rituals, that this ritualistic complex is a general characteristic of this area. To sum up, a shooting ritual has entered into a complex quite different from that existing among the Kwakiutl, Central Algonkin Midewiwin, and in one part of the day ceremony of the Winnebago Medicine Dance. We must therefore conclude that the association of shooting with initiation is merely one of many possible associations, and that the shooting found in the basic complex must be regarded as historically different from the shooting found in the initiation complex.

Returning to the question of shooting as associated with an initiation ritual, it must be granted that it is somewhat improbable that this particular association should have arisen independently among two tribes living in closely contiguous geographical areas. We may therefore assume that the Winnebago either borrowed from the Central Algonkin, or *vice versa*. All indications point to the former as having been the case.

The shooting, then, as found in the societies discussed, is merely one phase of sympathetic magic. A cultural element common to a very large area has become associated with a special significance and with special ceremonies. For the cultural areas discussed, this association seems to have developed into two types of complexes, — the shooting-initiation complex of the Central Algonkin, and the basic complex of the Omaha and Winnebago.

IV. The Initiation Ritual. — The elements common to the Central Algonkin Midewiwin and to the Winnebago Medicine Dance consist of two parts, — an initiation and a shooting. Of these, the shooting was shown to have been a more or less free element, capable among other tribes of entering into an indefinite number of associations; that, indeed, in the Medicine Dance itself, it had become associated with two different ritualistic complexes. We have already examined the shooting ritual; and we will therefore proceed to examine the initiation

ritual, in order to understand its precise significance and its position in the general ceremony and in the complete ceremonial complex of the Medicine Dance.

1. *Ojibwa-Menominee.*—The simplicity of the organization of the Ojibwa-Menominee Midewiwin impresses one at a glance. Only a small number of individuals take active part. It is similarly impossible to discern any elaborate ritual. A few ritualistic myths are told, some songs sung, speeches delivered, and then preparations are made for the shooting of the novice. The ceremony practically ends as soon as the shooting terminates. In this semi-public performance there is practically only one ritualistic complex, that of the shooting-initiation. The only purpose of this complex seems likewise to be the initiation of an individual into the Midewiwin.

This initiation ritual, we know, is only the terminal element in a long course of instruction which the novice must go through. It is during this instruction that the specific teachings and practices of the Midewiwin are elucidated, and it is then that the symbolism used in the bark records is explained.

These teachings and practices, apart from some ethical teachings of the most general nature, vary with each mide. In each case the novice is taught the mide's individual songs, his particular tricks and practices, his specific herbs, and the uses to which he puts them. The bond connecting the teaching of the mides is of the loosest nature.

When the instruction is over (and it is over as soon as the novice has exhausted the wealth he expects to spend in each particular case), the novice is ready for initiation. But into what is he really being initiated? It would seem purely into the powers purchased from a certain mide. If this particular mide did not chance to be a member of the Midewiwin, the same or an extremely similar method of transference of personal powers would be gone through. In other words, the novice is being initiated into the status of a mide. If one may speak of any formal initiation here, it consists in giving to the new mide some object which is generally regarded as a symbol of the preceptor's power. It may be a medicine-pouch, or herbs, or anything, in fact. But is this not precisely what takes place at the initiation into the Midewiwin? There, a person is presented with the "migis" and otter-skin bag, which is symbolical of the powers of a certain type of shaman, the mide.

The Midewiwin, from this point of view, is hardly a society at all. It does, nevertheless, possess some of the essential characteristics of a society: a number of individuals form a rather definite unit, owing to their possessing in common a number of ritualistic myths, a symbol and common status, in the eyes of outsiders.

As a society, the Midewiwin presents no such unit as does the

definite organization of the Winnebago Medicine Dance or the Omaha Shell and Pebble Societies. The bond of unity in the Midewiwin lies in the fact that all members are mide. An individual is a mide, however, not by reason of membership in the Midewiwin. The powers that make him a mide have nothing to do with the Midewiwin at all. They are purely personal. The Midewiwin is primarily, then, an association of mide; not of individuals who have become mide because they belong to that society. It is because of this fact that the individuality of the members is so potent a factor, and it is because of this fact that no strong ceremonial unit exists. It is for the same reason that initiation into the society presents, in all its essentials, the picture of a normal transference of individual mide power.

Historically I do not doubt that it really is such a transference. As the idea of the Midewiwin as a ceremonial unit developed more definitely, the individual transference of the individual mide power may have become associated with initiation into the Midewiwin itself. It is perfectly natural, when all the mide became members of the Midewiwin, that the transference of power should not have been thought of apart from the society to which the mide belonged. It thus followed that obtaining knowledge from a mide would be synonymous with joining the Midewiwin.

As the Midewiwin grew in popularity, and as all the mide and a majority of the other members of the tribe joined it, there came to be associated with it certain specific benefits, that had in themselves nothing at all to do with the mide, but which were generally characteristic of Central Algonkin culture. The association of these specific benefits played necessarily an important part in the history of the society, because it meant that an individual, in joining the society, obtained much more than certain mide powers. He obtained, in fact, all the mide powers, plus those specific benefits which membership in the Midewiwin now brought with it. Through the transference of the objects symbolical of the mide's power, — "the migis" and the otter-skin bag, — shooting now initiated him not only into the status of a mide, but also into that of a member of a society with an esoteric ritual. The shooting itself no longer bore the impress of a general shamanistic practice, but stood as a symbol of initiation into a society. At the transference of individual shamanistic power, shooting did not occur. It must consequently have become associated with initiation when the loose union of the mide developed into a more or less definite society.

Summing up briefly, we may be justified in saying that the initiation ritual of the Ojibwa-Menominee Midewiwin is a transference of individual power as found among the individual mide, modified by the addition of another element, the shooting-incident. The initiation

can in no way be regarded as necessarily associated with shooting, but this association will have to be regarded as simply a characteristic of the Central Algonkin Midewiwin. In other words, just as "shooting" may enter into an indefinite number of associations, conditioned by the cultural individuality of an area, so initiation may similarly enter into an indefinite number of combinations.

2. *Shell Society.* — In the Shell Society of the Omaha there is no specific initiation ceremony. According to the origin legend, an animal appears to a family consisting of father, mother, and four children, and helps them to obtain food. They, in order to show their gratitude, offer him their children. The children are subsequently shot and killed. As they lie on the shore of a lake, four tremendous waves sweep them away. They afterwards emerge from the midst of the lake, and assure their parents that, although they are dead, they are quite content, and they would advise them to put off their mourning, return to their own tribe, and form a society. They could obtain new members by selling to other people the powers they had obtained. The shooting that occurs in the ceremony proper, and which is interpreted by the Omaha as a dramatic representation of the shooting of the four children, has nothing to do with initiation into the society. Initiation consists entirely in the transference of certain knowledge and symbols by one of the owners of the society to any individual who is considered eligible, and who has paid the requisite price.

As a matter of fact, only members are shot. The shooting, whatever may have been its original significance, is here but one element in an intricate ritualistic complex similar to the basic ritual of the Winnebago Medicine Dance. Its purpose seems to be exclusively that of "strengthening" the powers of the members.

Anything approaching the dramatic initiation into the Midewiwin does not exist. Admission into the society is in no way connected with the shooting ritual, although the shooting ritual is actually found in the society.

3. *Pebble Society.* — The nature of initiation into the Pebble Society is not definitely known. As membership, however, depends upon supernatural communications from the same animal, it probably is the same as that found among other Omaha societies of the same kind. Initiation would thus consist in the obtaining of the supernatural communication itself. Every person who has had a supernatural communication with a spirit — in this particular case, the water spirit — is eligible for membership into the society. Shooting is found, but it is in no way connected with admission or initiation into the society. It has, it would seem, practically the same significance as in the Shell Society.

4. *Medicine Dance.* — In the Winnebago Medicine Dance, membership does not depend upon supernatural communication of any kind, but must be purchased from the leader of one of the five bands. A long preparation is necessary, lasting in olden times as long as four years. The individual is then initiated into certain of the teachings of the society. It makes no difference into which of the five bands he is initiated. The knowledge he obtains will, to all intents and purposes, be the same, excluding certain songs. This does not mean, of course, that there may not be information belonging to the member as an individual, which is taught to the novice; but it is understood that any powers belonging specifically to an individual, and which the novice wishes to purchase, have primarily no connection with the society. As every leader is likely to be a prominent shaman as well as a member of the Medicine Dance, it would be quite impossible to draw a hard and fast line between what belongs specifically to him as a shaman, and what belongs to him as a member of the Medicine Dance. However, it is generally understood that a leader is initiating an individual into those powers that are the special property of the society.

As among the Ojibwa-Menominee, initiation is accompanied by a formal transfer of a "shell" and of an otter-skin bag. Externally the general ceremony of the Medicine Dance might consequently be regarded as similar to the semi-public ceremony of the Midewiwin. There are two features, however, which stand out prominently in the general ceremony of the former, which must be explained before we can accept this external similarity as real. They are, first, the peculiar position of the initiation ritual of the general ceremony; and, secondly, the presence of another ritual, the basic ritual, and the importance it assumes.

Precisely the same ritual that we found among the Ojibwa-Menominee — the initiation-shooting complex; that is, initiation associated with shooting, the transference of the otter-skin bag and of a shell, plus a number of incidental elements — occurs in the general ceremony. This complex intervenes between the performance of the basic ritual by the North and West Bands. There is absolutely nothing in the basic ritual preceding or following the initiation that could possibly be interpreted as a preparation for the latter. As it is found there, the initiation seems quite out of place, and conveys forcibly the impression of being intrusive. The general ceremony is by no means terminated when initiation is over; but the West Band continues with its performance of the basic ritual as though there had been no interruption, even though the interval between North's and West's performance of the basic ritual generally lasts a number of hours. The initiation ritual is, on the whole, treated as an incidental feature. It can certainly

not be the main or most important ritual of the general ceremony. As a matter of fact, it occurs only in the day ritual of that ceremony. In the night ritual it is absent. A ritual of which shooting is one of the essential features occurs in the latter, but, as we shall see later, this has nothing to do with the initiation.

That the shell and the shooting are unquestionably considered necessary and essential for initiation, is borne out conclusively by the numerous references in the speeches. We must therefore not permit the position of the initiation ritual in the general ceremony to interfere with its interpretation as a real initiation into the society. However, this position may have been due to secondary causes. It is quite impossible to determine them definitely now; but it is possible, by studying the significance and nature of the basic ritual, to explain to a very large extent the reason for the position of the initiation ritual.

The basic ritual is a definite ceremonial complex, which constitutes the most conspicuous unit of the Medicine Dance. Both in the night and the day ritual of the general ceremony, each individual band repeats it, and in both cases the ceremony terminates as soon as the last band has finished it. A number of other rituals separate the various performances of the basic ritual, and even intervene between the separate constituent elements of the ritual itself. In each case, nevertheless, the basic ritual is continued as soon as the disturbing ritual has been removed. It is for these reasons that it seems to me unquestionable that we are dealing here with the essential ritualistic unit of the general ceremony. What strengthens this impression is the fact that a ritualistic complex similar in its general nature, although not in the component elements of which it is made up, is found in almost all the other societies of the Winnebago. In the Buffalo, Grizzly Bear, Ghost, and Night Societies, there is a basic ritual of essentially the same functions and significance. In all these societies, likewise, objects of specific value to the members are passed from one individual to another; and this "passing" is accompanied by songs, speeches, and ritualistic details. Although the complex differs for each society, it nevertheless presents a definite ritualistic unit, which must be repeated by each person, or each band belonging to the society, as the case may be.

To judge from the general tenor of the speeches, the purpose of the ritual in every one of these societies is the "strengthening" of powers obtained in a vision. Now, the tenor of the speeches in the basic ritual of the Medicine Dance is precisely of the same nature; and as we have there, in addition, the characteristic passing of the "blessing,"— that is, the passing of the drum, the gourds, and the associate actions, speeches, songs, and dances; in other words, the means of assuring the continuance and the strengthening of the specific powers,

— there can be little doubt that the basic ritual is essentially the same for all these societies.

Of course, the demonstration that the basic ritual is at present the main and most important ritual in the Medicine Dance, does not prove that it is historically primary. There are, however, a number of facts that speak in favor of this assumption. In the first place, it is undoubtedly the characteristic ceremonial complex of all Winnebago societies, and likewise of a large number of societies among other Siouan tribes; and, secondly, it is associated with an organization that is typical of other Winnebago societies. It differs from these primarily in the fact that membership is purchased, and not obtained through supernatural communication from some animal. Even the absence of the customary manner of admission might perhaps be hypothetically accounted for, for we have an interesting instance of the disappearance of the "vision" qualification in the Night Dance. The Night Dance, now known as the Sore-Eye Dance, previously required for admission a vision from the night spirits. This qualification has now disappeared, and its place has been taken by purchase, pure and simple, as in the case of the Medicine Dance. Now, it is possible that the same development may have taken place for the Medicine Dance. In the absence of any such positive evidence, however, as has been adduced for the Night Dance, this assumption can only be regarded as a possible explanation.

If the basic ritual is to be regarded as the principal and characteristic feature of the Medicine Dance and as historically primary, then the intrusive character of the initiation ritual may be explained by regarding it as secondarily associated. We are of course in no position to say in what way this association occurred, and we are therefore not in a position to tell whether the initiation ritual was associated from the very beginning in such a way as to perform the functions of a normal initiation into a society, or whether it was at first a purely adventitious addition with no special significance.

If it was regarded from the very beginning as an initiation, there seems no reason why it should have been given the position in the general ceremony that it now possesses. It consequently seems better to regard its position as older than the references made in the speeches to its functions as an initiation into this specific Winnebago society.

There can be little doubt that the initiation-complex of the Medicine Dance was borrowed from the Central Algonkin Midewiwin. We may consequently conclude that, notwithstanding the present interpretation of the initiation as an initiation into the Medicine Dance, it is historically really an initiation ritual of one ceremony that has become secondarily associated with another. In support of this, it can be pointed out that no initiation bearing the slightest resemblance

to this one, occurs in any other of the numerous Winnebago societies, and that the Medicine Dance really possesses two initiations, — the one being the purchase of membership; and the other, that mentioned above. It might also be added that non-members never speak of the shooting as an initiation. To them the shooting always appears as a shamanistic practice associated with the "strengthening" of power. The esoteric interpretation, however, regards this "secondary" initiation as primary.

Summing up briefly the results of the analysis of the three initiations discussed, we must emphasize again the fact that we are dealing with initiations essentially different in nature. In the Ojibwa-Menominee it is evidently a formal transfer of shamanistic powers from one individual to another, which has subsequently become synonymous with admission into the social status of a mide and then with admission into a society. In the Shell Society the transfer of powers is analogous to the purchase of specific powers by one individual from another; and as these have become associated with a society, the individual buying them purchased at the same time admission into the society. In the Pebble Society, initiation is synonymous with the acquisition of power through supernatural communication from some animal. There is no transfer at all, except in so far as the spirit animal transfers something to the person fasting. Initiation is connected simply with the individual. No initiation into the society exists. In the Winnebago Medicine Dance, whatever may have been the primary method of initiation, we have to-day a definite initiation like that found in the Midewiwin. This, however, has been borrowed from another ceremony, and secondarily associated. Even now it is not in its proper organic position in the general ceremony, despite the fact that an esoteric re-interpretation has transformed it into a specific initiation into the Medicine Dance.

Initiation is thus seen to be both a concept and a ritualistic complex, varying considerably in different tribes. As a ritualistic complex, it has entered freely into innumerable associations, which can only be determined by a study of each specific ceremony. The same holds true with regard to the concept of initiation. It is also apparent that the concept has a marked influence in determining the nature of the ritualistic complex connected with it, and *vice versa*. In both cases, then, we have to examine not merely the nature of these two phenomena in a given area, but likewise whether they represent historically primary concepts and complexes, before we can make any attempt to investigate what are the concepts that underlie all initiations.

V. The General Ceremony. — In the foregoing remarks we have dealt with the nature and significance of those specific rituals that go

to make the larger complex we have called the "general ceremony." We will now proceed to examine the nature and significance of this general ceremony itself.

1. *Ojibwa-Menominee.* — The general ceremony of the Ojibwa-Menominee Midewiwin is to all intents and purposes the initiation ritual itself. There is really no other ritualistic complex with which it is associated; nor is there any feature which interrupts in any way the dramatic progress of events from the beginning, to the actual initiation of the new member. In reality this general ceremony must be looked upon solely as the completion of a long course of preparatory instruction. Nothing, indeed, accentuates the minor part which the actual "society" aspect of the Midewiwin plays than this slight development of the general ceremony. The long course of preparatory instruction, in which the shaman, as an individual, plays the major part, seems practically to be the main feature.

2. *Shell Society.* — In the Shell Society the general ceremony consists of a large number of ritualistic complexes. The basic ritual runs like a red line through the whole, and with this are associated the following rituals: the passing of the invitation-sticks, the opening of the pack by the keepers, the circling of the fire "by the four children," the filling of the wooden bowl with water, and finally the shooting. Both the secret and the public ceremonies consist almost exclusively of the shooting, and of the "passing" of the drum and the ritualistic details associated with it. The meeting terminates as soon as the last of the five ceremonial bands has finished this basic ritual.

3. *Pebble Society.* — In the Pebble Society the characteristic passing of the drum likewise occurs, and with it occur the details connected with it, as well as the preparation for shooting and the actual shooting. The number of ritualistic complexes is much smaller than in the Shell Society. However, this may be due to the meagreness of our information. As contrasted with the marked unity of action displayed in the Shell Society, we find here a marked tendency for individual development, that is perhaps to be expected, considering that the bond of union (namely, the powers obtained through common visions) is a rather vague one from the point of view of organization.

4. *Medicine Dance.* — In the Medicine Dance the general ceremony includes, in addition to the basic and initiation rituals, a secret ceremony that takes place outside of the lodge itself. As in the Shell and Pebble Societies, there are here also two sessions, but both seem to be secret.

The significance of the general ceremony mentioned is the performance of a ritual for a variety of purposes, the principal of which are, first, purely the perpetuation of the ritual; and, secondly, the "strengthening" and renewal of certain special powers. These two

seem to be pre-eminently the functions of those Omaha and Winnebago societies that are based upon common visions. In the former the element of initiation plays no part at all. The meetings of the society take place at almost any convenient time of the year. For the Winnebago the element of initiation is more pronounced. The meetings are called for two reasons, — either for the purpose of initiating a member, or for the purpose of acquiring additional powers.

In each case the general complexes are different, and in each case they depend upon associations that are both historically and psychologically determined by the specific cultural characteristics of the area in question.

VI. The Complete Ceremonial Complexes. — The general ceremony is only one element in an extremely elaborate complex. Its position in this complex has been touched upon before. We have now, however, to examine this complex itself, and to see what are the ritualistic elements that form it. And in this final complex we have again to see whether there is a tendency for certain elements to be associated in a definite manner; and, if this proves to be the case, how this definite association is to be interpreted.

1. *Ojibwa.* — The Ojibwa Midewiwin consists of a long course of preparation, and a formal public initiation into a society containing four degrees. We have seen that the preparation is entirely shamanistic in character, and that the general public ceremony is to all intents and purposes as much an initiation into the status of a mide as it is into a society. This interpretation is again strengthened by the marked association of the general ceremony with shamanistic tricks. Among the Cree it appears that this function of the Midewiwin is of prime importance.[1] In the "degrees" we have another confirmation of its shamanistic character. The four degrees are merely the four instalments in which an old shaman sells his knowledge and power. The number 4 has no especial significance, except in so far as it is the sacred number of the tribe. Miss Densmore[2] found eight degrees among another division of the Ojibwa; and the number will doubtless be found to vary from division to division. The requirements for admission into the second, third, and fourth degrees, are greater payments, and greater evidences of religious fitness. The possessors of the various degrees do not form distinct classes. Those of the first degree alone, possess one degree only. There is no passing from one to another degree, but simply an addition of degrees, so that an individual with the fourth degree possesses all the other degrees; in other words,

[1] Alanson Skinner (MS.).

[2] Frances Densmore, "Chippewa Music" (*Bureau of American Ethnology*, Bulletin 45). Washington, Government, 1910.

degrees are merely marks of increased power. It is for this reason that an initiation practically the same as that for the first degree is necessary for the other degrees. The fact that a new initiation into the society is necessary for each degree, and that the distinctions represented by the degrees are merely transferences of increased shamanistic powers, differing accordingly as they have been obtained from one or another shaman, emphasizes strongly the specific shamanistic nature of the Midewiwin.

As we have said before, the Midewiwin is a society, not so much because it is an association of mide, but because there have come to be associated with it certain functions of a religious and social nature, setting it off as a unit. The fact that the members are mide will, of course, have an enormous influence on some of the functions that the society is supposed to possess.

The powers of the individual mide are those connected with the healing of wounds, the curing of disease, the ability to transform one's self into any animal or object at will, the performance of seemingly impossible tricks, and lastly the practice of evil magic. In the teachings of the individual mide in his rôle as a member of the Midewiwin, all these elements are present; but there are, in addition, two other powers which are specifically Midewiwin functions, — namely, the power to prolong life, and the power to assure a successful passage to the future world. The power of prolonging life is not supposed to be an effect of the shooting. The belief is, that membership in the society, and the proper observance of the ritual and precepts, will enable an individual to surmount successfully the crises of life and the evil designs of his enemies. Just as the proper observance of ritual and precepts prolongs life, so it will likewise insure the safe passage of a soul from this to a future world. According to William Jones, "it was believed that the soul followed a path to go to the spirit world, and that the path was beset with dangers to oppose the passage of the soul; but that it was possible to overcome the obstacles by the use of the formulas which could be learned only in the Midewiwin."[1]

To assert dogmatically that these two powers do not come within the scope of the individual mide, may perhaps be unwarranted; but at present the evidence among the Ojibwa is certainly negative. However, the Midewiwin is considered to be intimately associated with these specific functions. They are not associated with the specific powers of the mide. In reality, they are the general religio-magical possessions of the tribe, that have been secondarily associated with the Midewiwin.

2. *Menominee.* — Practically all that has been said of the Ojibwa applies in equal degree to the Menominee Midewiwin. But two impor-

[1] *Annual Archæological Report, 1905* (Report of Minister of Education, Ontario), p. 146.

tant differences are noticeable, — first, a member is always succeeded by a near relative; and, secondly, not only is the Midewiwin connected with the function of insuring the safe passage to the future world, but the ceremony itself begins at the grave of the deceased member as soon as the mortuary rites are over. They may even be regarded as a continuation of the same.

3. *Shell Society.* — In the Shell Society the organization, in contradistinction to the Ojibwa-Menominee Midewiwin, is not based on individuals as such, but on definite ceremonial group units. There are five to-day, but there seem to have been more formerly.

We find a fourfold designation for the lodges. They are known to-day as those of the eldest son or sun, second son or stars, daughter or moon, and youngest son or earth. Sometimes, however, these same are known in order as Black-Bear, Elk, Buffalo, and Deer Lodge. The first "old man's lodge" (*uju*) is also known as that of the Eagle.

The general ceremony has been described before, and we will therefore proceed to discuss what appears to be the purpose of the society, what powers its members possessed, and with what functions it was associated.

The definite purpose of the society seems to be the performance of a certain ritual. That in addition there is likewise the desire to increase or at least strengthen the powers received at purchase, is extremely probable, but this cannot be definitely stated. What can be definitely stated, however, is the fact that an absolutely essential condition for efficacy of the powers obtained is the performance of the ritual; and in this it is radically distinct from the Midewiwin, for there the powers obtained from the shaman have no relation to the ritual. The efficacy then, of the powers, remains always what it was when taught to the new member.

In discussing what the powers of the members are, it is again essential to distinguish what they possess by virtue of membership, and what they possess as individuals. We should most naturally expect that certain conceptions, certain cultural possessions, belong to a large body of Omaha. If, then, we find them in a certain society, it is most natural to assume that they have not been obtained by reason of membership therein, but that this society will reflect general Omaha ideas. This or that society may emphasize certain ideas, and may develop them along certain lines, but it certainly does not originate them. They have no relation of cause and effect to any particular society. This has sometimes been assumed to be the case, and such a view comes out clearly in Miss Fletcher's [1] statement that all secret societies among the Omaha dealt more or less with magic as well as with healing by means of herbs and roots. It is palpably not because

[1] *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (1905–06), vol. xxvii.

they are secret societies that their members have developed any such tendencies, but because, as secret societies, they reflected Omaha customs and modes of thought. For the same reason Miss Fletcher's conclusion, that because in both the Shell and Pebble Societies shamanistic tricks are performed, they may possibly be historically connected, is unwarranted. The observance of shamanistic tricks is so general a phenomenon, that all that can be said, when two societies are found emphasizing them, is that two societies emphasized or developed one or many Omaha customs. There is no need of assuming any historical connection unless this has been shown to be the case.

Let us now return to what is distinctive in the powers of a member of the Shell Society.

The name of the society is "Those-who-have-the-Shell." It is the possession of the shell that separates them from other societies. In the ideas clustering around the powers of this object we are most likely to find one of the important specific advantages of membership. As far as can be gathered from Miss Fletcher's account, the shell is connected with certain magical qualities. It is difficult to say what specific magical qualities are meant. However, to judge from the nature of the general ceremony and the songs, we are really dealing with magic in its most general sense, but connected in this case with a specific object, a shell; that is, we might imagine hypothetically that the society originated in connection with the vision of an individual, in which the magical power was associated with a shell. The same power might, in the case of another individual, be associated with a drum, a flute, a gourd, a stone, or what not. Apart from difference in ritualistic detail, and in the nature of some of the elements that go to make up the general ritualistic complex, it is this association of magical powers with one object in one case, and with another in another case, that constitutes the difference between the various Omaha societies.

To illustrate how general is the magical power of the shell in the Shell Society, and how essential is the specific object possessing the magic, we will give the following instances. In the origin myth, shooting is supposed to kill the "children;" in the general ceremony it probably serves to strengthen powers already acquired; in the ceremony for punishing offenders, of which we shall speak later, it is merely an example of sympathetic magic.

Together with the magic specifically associated with the shell, the members exercised individual magic; as, for example, killing a horse because its owner had offended him, or killing another member by magically having a snake hidden near the place where the other was accustomed to work. These instances of the exercise of magic must not, however, be considered as specific of the society.

In addition to the association of the Shell Society with magic in its more general aspect, and also in its application to some specific object, we find it associated with general shamanistic practices, with conceptions relating to life after death, and with a magical ceremony for punishing offenders. The shamanistic practices have been dwelt on before. All that can be said about the connection of the society with ceremonies performed upon the death of a member is, that the deceased is carried to a tent in which the regular ceremonial is gone through.[1] Whether this ceremony has any definite connection with ideas relating to the journey of the soul to the future world, is not known.

By far the most interesting ceremony associated with the Shell Society is that for punishing offenders.[2] The main purpose seems to be the punishment of an individual "in order to keep the people in order and check crime, such as molesting wives or daughters and destroying property and so causing mischief in the tribe." This was effected through a sacred figure supposed to represent the society. . . . "The arms contained poisons for punishment, and the leg the magic shells which made it possible to administer this punishment. . . . When a man committed an offence that seemed to demand punishment, the society met at night, and if it had determined to punish the man, then this figure was brought out."[3] Now, it must be borne in mind that there is here no suggestion of any legal procedure, but merely, as we shall see, an application of the magical powers of the society to a very specific social purpose. Punishment consisted in causing the offender to become sick through the application of poison to a figure supposed to symbolize him, which is drawn on the earth. This figure was subsequently shot at. When the ceremony was over, the leaders waited until they had been informed that the offender had become sick, when they assembled in a tent and sang until the man died.

In this ceremony we have again a shamanistic practice which was probably exercised by many members of the tribe, associated in one of the societies with a definite and specific function. But this specific function, plus the other traits that have been enumerated as characteristic of the society, go to make up a complex that is looked upon as a definite unit.

4. *Pebble Society.* — The remarks made on the purpose of the Shell Society are, generally speaking, applicable to the Pebble Society. Instead of being attached to a shell, the magical powers are here attached to a translucent pebble. The possibility for a greater variability in the nature of the powers obtained was given by the fact that all

[1] *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (1905–06), vol. xxvii.

[2] In the Cheyenne Medicine Arrow Society a similar association occurs.

[3] Miss Fletcher, in *Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, vol. xxvii.

those who had had a vision of water, or its representative, the pebble or the water-spirit, could become members. The water-spirit was always associated with the granting of knowledge relating to medicinal herbs and the power of healing sickness generally; and we find in the society, consequently, a large preponderance of individuals with such powers. The association between these powers and some definite object, in this case the pebble, is not as intimate as that found to exist between corresponding powers and a similar object in the Shell Society; in other words, the shaman, as an individual, is more prominent.

The most important association of the society is that connected with the curing of disease. It would be erroneous to consider this function as a secondary association, as it is conditioned by the fact that the visions from the water-spirit would necessarily be connected with "the powers" relating to medicinal herbs and their healing virtues.

5. *Medicine Dance.*—The Medicine Dance, looked upon in its entirety, is composed of a long course of preparation (now discontinued), the Four Nights' Preparation, the sweat-bath ceremony, the night and the day divisions of the general ceremony, and the secret brush ceremony. These ceremonies have all become amalgamated into a more or less firm unit, whose individual characteristics we have touched upon before.

The society is known in Winnebago as *Mañka^{n}'ni*, the word *mañka^{n}'*, meaning "medicine" in its medicinal aspect, as opposed to *wasê'*, meaning "medicine" in its magical aspect. As far as can be seen from a detailed study of the rituals, no prominence seems, however, to be given to the therapeutic or herbalist aspect. There are, it is true, medicines for general therapeutic practice and for hunting, fishing, love, and especially for "bad" purposes. But in the ceremony as given to-day, and as described by those well versed in the ritual of the society, these medicines find no place.

There is, however, a very persistent exoteric interpretation of the Medicine Dance, according to which the members are regarded primarily as powerful shamans concerned preferably with the practice of "bad" magic. In this practice they are greatly aided by the fact that their membership in the society increases their magical powers, especially that connected with the ability to transform themselves into all kinds of animate and inanimate objects for the furtherance of their evil designs. The most feared shamans — those who are distinguished from all others by the possession of the iron moccasins (*ma^{n}zua'gudjè*) — belonged to this society. This exoteric interpretation does not, however, seem to tally with the designation *manka^{n}'ni*. Personally I think this term is a popular one, and has no real significance as a

characterization of the functions of the society, at least to-day. This exoteric interpretation is in all probability true to a certain extent. It would, however, be essential to determine whether these shamanistic powers are characteristic of members as individuals, and only secondarily connected with them as members of the society, before we can properly understand their significance. That membership was connected in any way with an increase of shamanistic powers, is certainly improbable. These powers are unquestionably identical with the general shamanistic and magical practices mentioned previously in the Shell and Pebble Societies.

In other words, the general shamanistic and magical beliefs of the tribe are found present in this society, as they are found in other societies.

What would tend to minimize our considering these features as in any way significant of the Medicine Dance, is the fact that there has been no tendency to develop or emphasize any specific aspect of magic, and that shamanistic practices are absent and appear entirely disassociated from the society.

The purpose of the Medicine Dance is in part the desire to attain a long life, a safe journey to the next world, and the possibility of a return to this life again, preferably in human shape. All these benefits may be obtained by taking an active part in the ceremony, and by performing to the best of one's ability all the duties of a member. Although it is essential to participate in the entire ritual in order to obtain these benefits to the fullest extent, nevertheless the phenomena of shooting and being shot at play an especially important rôle in this connection.

Long life means essentially the life consisting of a normal length of years, with all the possessions of wealth, social and intellectual distinction, that would naturally be included. Among the Winnebago, this concept of years is very definite, because they believe that to each individual has been assigned a life containing a certain number of years, a certain amount of wealth, a certain number of enemies killed on the warpath, etc. If a man, therefore, dies before he has reached the end of his "predestined" life, the residue, it is hoped, will be distributed among his relatives.

When in the Medicine Dance they pray for long life, what they mean is the ability to surmount the crises of life. Whatever may be the nature of these crises, — whether they relate to family disasters, sickness, old age, etc., — it is expected that they will be overcome by membership and active participation in the society. There seems to be no suggestion that this is attained through the influence of magic. It is mere membership and obedience to the society's teachings, ambition to raise one's status by purchasing more and more privileges, that accom-

plish the desired end in view. The safe journey to the future world and the belief in transmigration may be obtained in a similar way. If one performs his duties and rises to the highest distinction, he will have no difficulty in attaining his object and in successfully overcoming all the obstacles to his passage.

The prayer for long life is specifically addressed to the Rabbit, the mythical founder of the society, and indirectly addressed to Earth-Maker (*ma^{n}"una*), the spirit who sent him to clear the earth of the obstacles to man's progress. It is the only prayer ever addressed to him. No supernatural communication is possible. As a matter of fact, it is only in this and in the Winter Feast that Earth-Maker is associated with this specific power of granting long life.

It would be quite erroneous to imagine that the prayer for long life, passage to the next world, and transmigration, are ideas specifically connected with the Medicine Dance. As a matter of fact, they constitute the characteristic cultural traits of the Winnebago, and crop out everywhere in the folk-lore and in the general rituals. The question of the safe passage to the next world is perhaps even more specifically associated with the Four Nights' Wake. The purpose of the wake is to enable the deceased to successfully overcome the four great obstacles on the road to the spirit home of his clan. This is accomplished, first, by the performance of a definite ritual; and, secondly, by some warrior relating one of his exploits on the war-path and putting at the disposal of the deceased the spirit of the man he had killed, to act as a servant to him. The close relation between the ethical worth of the deceased and of the one who relates the exploit, on the one hand, and the safe journey to the spirit world, on the other, comes out as strongly here as it does in the Medicine Dance; but it seems unnecessary, for that reason, to predicate any historical connection between the two. They both reflect the cultural background around them.

Similarly the various elements that make up the life which the members of the Medicine Dance pray for, — the food-supply, the power of healing, success on the warpath, a normal quota of years, — these are all definitely associated with spirits and ceremonials. Success in war is associated, not with one society, but with a number of societies. It would, however, be manifestly erroneous and unnecessary to claim that it belongs essentially more to the one than to the other society, unless direct historical proof for such a statement were forthcoming.

6. *Summary.* — We are now in a better position to see in what the nature of the complete ceremonial complex consists. The unit it consists of is loose in the Ojibwa-Menominee, and strong in the Shell and Pebble Societies and in the Medicine Dance. The specific com-

ponent elements are to a large extent different in each. It is utterly impossible now to discover the origin of the differences in the individual component elements; but it is quite clear that the forces tending to develop the larger ceremonial complexes have been, not those of a dissociation, but distinctly those of an association, of elements.

These associations may be of the most diverse kind. Certain features may always have been associated with certain other elements, such as medicinal herbs and medicines with the water-spirit, as in the case of the Omaha and Winnebago. This, then, is for all practical purposes an ultimate unit. If, consequently, we find an intimate connection between a vision from the water-spirit and the practice of medicinal herbs, we must not consider this as a secondary association that has come about through the influence of a ceremony.

In the same way, the connection of the buffalo with the magical renewal of the food-supply will probably have to be looked upon as such an ultimate unit.

Our first object, therefore, when we find certain elements associated, is to determine whether there is any reason for believing that we are dealing with some such ultimate complex or unit.

On the other hand, when we find a magical ceremony for punishing offenders (viewed from its social aspect) associated with the Shell Society, or mortuary ceremonies associated with the Menominee Midewiwin, these associations cannot be considered as being ultimately connected with any particular aspect of the society's function, as the complexes which they form exhibit an extreme variability. Their presence in various societies must be interpreted as secondary associations of some kind. As secondary associations, however, they may have been conditioned either by their specific nature or by the specific development of the society. As such we might, for instance, view either certain aspects of the shamanistic practices of the Ojibwa Midewiwin, or the mortuary ceremonies connected with the Menominee Midewiwin, or the punishment of offenders in the Shell Society.

When, however, we find cultural phenomena, which are generally possessed by a tribe, associated in varying degrees with this or that ceremonial, this association must be looked upon as due to the influence of the cultural environment. This influence may be conceived as setting in at any time during the historical development of the ceremony, while the ceremony itself remains passive; as, for instance, if the journey to the spirit land is connected with the Medicine Dance, or with the wake, with the telling of truth, or with membership in a clan. Here it is obviously the cultural environment that has been active. If, however, the mide, united in an organization, develop certain

phases of this general cultural environment, such as magic and shamanistic practices, in a specific way, we have a right to credit this development as due to the activity of the society, and we have consequently a real secondary association of definite practices with an historically older organization. Of course, a good deal in this particular case would be caused by the fact that the members are mide; but after this historically preliminary stage, the Midewiwin became an active unit as a society; and in this sense, if it then specifically utilizes certain beliefs in a special manner, it can be said to be secondarily associating them.

It is thus seen that the mechanism of the association is both psychologically and historically highly complex. One thing, however, seems to be quite demonstrable; namely, that there is always one constant element, — the specific cultural background or type of each tribe.

Bearing this in mind, the similarities in the association of the Midewiwin of the Ojibwa-Menominee, the Medicine Dance of the Winnebago, and the Shell and Pebble Societies of the Omaha, do not necessarily indicate an historical relationship, but would most likely tend to show that a number of ideas and customs were common to a large cultural area. This does not of course interfere in the least with the possibility of an historical connection, but this historical connection must in each case be demonstrated. However, even if it were proved, an historical connection alone cannot possibly explain the entire phenomenon; for the cultural environment, if it is the same, will condition general similarities and resemblances in ceremonies that historically are quite unrelated, so that the convergent evolution thus resulting will completely obscure at times the individual history of a ceremony. It is, for instance, possible that historically the journey to the spirit land was connected with the wake among the Winnebago. The general prevalence of the same idea among so many social and ceremonial groups to-day, however, makes it unjustifiable to assume such a connection in the absence of any direct historical data; so that, although there is to my mind little doubt that these associations are all historically different, owing to the influence of certain general cultural ideas, they present to-day the same picture.

It is quite safe to assume that, just as we have shown that the shooting ceremony in the Medicine Dance is the borrowed initiation ritual of the Midewiwin, so it would be possible to demonstrate, were we in the possession of fuller historical data, that other elements have been borrowed. However, when we have demonstrated the borrowing of a certain element, we have only partially, and often only inadequately, explained it. Its further explanation is possible only in terms of the

specific type of ceremony, and of the general cultural environment with which it has been associated. Both of these may change. It does not follow that because, among the Winnebago to-day, all the societies are practically associations of individuals who have obtained supernatural communication from this or that spirit, this was therefore always the basis of the societies. To-day the Medicine Dance and the Night Spirit or Sore-Eye Dance have a different type of organization. Originally the latter had the former type, and the Medicine Dance may have had it. It is, for instance, barely possible that we may in this case be dealing with the beginning of a change of type of organization, and that, similarly, types of organization preceded that, whose essence to-day lies in the possession of common visions.

We have now finished the examination of a number of definite ceremonies. Our object in analyzing them was to determine in what the significance of the common elements lay, and what general historical and psychological tendencies were operative in their growth. We may now examine the results of our study in the light of Schurtz's theory, and examine the data upon which Schurtz based his theory in the light of the leading points of view emphasized above.

VII. Résumé and Conclusion.—The main thesis Schurtz sought to establish was the demonstration of the parallel historical development of society as determined by certain psychological tendencies of the race. It is of prime importance to remember that he claimed to have found certain survivals by means of which he was able to reconstruct the stages in the history of society. Initiation degrees, the exclusion of women, etc., he considered "symptomatic" of these stages. His main object was to prove the existence of these symptoms. Wherever he found them, he was satisfied that he was dealing with vestiges of the stages through which society had passed. All these symptoms, according to Schurtz, had definite and specific connotations, and were associated with definite and specific stages in the development of society.

We have seen, in the analysis of the ceremonies of a limited area, that the common elements which were supposed to be symptomatic of historical relationship had no such value, and that they entered into a number of cultural complexes historically distinct one from another. In the same way we will now examine the more fundamental symptoms — initiation, degrees, and the exclusion of women — to see whether any specific significance attaches to them, and whether they, too, have not become associated with a number of cultural complexes historically distinct. If they have thus become associated, then their value as criteria for definite stages of social evolution is *nil*.

1. *Initiation.* — It was our main purpose, in analyzing the above ceremonies, to examine them quite apart from any theoretical presuppositions. In so proceeding, we obtained as a resultant the fact that initiation connoted psychologically and historically a number of different things, and that this difference seemed dependent upon the historical and psychological individuality of each tribe. To Schurtz, however, initiation meant primarily an initiation into puberty, and into that social status with which puberty has been so long and closely associated, — an association that seemed, historically speaking, almost an ultimate complex; namely, initiation into the tribe. He assumes that if it is found to mean anything else, then this new meaning is either a secondary association, or, preferably, an historical development from the first conception. Carried out logically, we should therefore have to consider initiation into a masonic order or into a college fraternity as a transformation of an original tribal initiation. To this, I think, Schurtz would have taken serious exception, on the ground that we are here dealing with a purely rational and artificial social group. But are we not to a certain extent dealing with the same phenomenon in the primitive societies discussed?

In examining a phenomenon such as initiation, we must not forget that it is, in a general way, absolutely conditioned by the specific individuality of one man as opposed to that of another. The desire of one man for participation in the possessions of another, or in those of some differentiated group, is an ultimate fact for which we need give no explanation. What is essential for our discussion is the realization that the methods of this participation are infinite, depending entirely upon the influence of cultural factors in the development of specific areas, and of institutions within them. Thus initiation into the Midewiwin is the transfer of certain mide powers; into the Pebble and other Omaha Societies, a common vision; into the Medicine Dance, the transfer of certain knowledge. This transfer or initiation is in no way different from that which takes place between two individuals, except that in the former case we are dealing with phenomena between an individual on the one hand, and a group of individuals on the other. This conception of initiation has become associated everywhere with social and ceremonial groups. One may, for instance, be initiated into a clan, into a name, into a family, etc.

To Schurtz, however, the concept of initiation is primarily associated with puberty. His argument is that puberty is a physiological stage through which every one must pass. The change to sexual maturity is so important a fact, that it cannot possibly have escaped any tribe. It follows that this physiological change must have been correlated with a change in the position of the individual in the tribe. He will, for instance, among other things, be less subjected to the influence of his mother, and more to that of his father, etc.

All these general propositions are true; and it is also unquestionably true that there has been a marked tendency for ceremonies to cluster around that period of physiological change which we call puberty. Similarly, in some cultural areas there has been a secondary, or, if you wish, a constant association of puberty rites with a formal adoption into the tribe. In Australia, for instance, the individual does not become of active social importance until he has passed through certain rites at the age of puberty.

The essential point, however, is whether he does not always become of active social importance at about that age. He unquestionably does. We cannot, therefore, assume offhand that it is the fact of puberty that is being emphasized by the initiatory rites. This would be the case only if we could prove that puberty is invariably associated with some form of initiation. If it is not, then we must regard the clustering of the concept of initiation around the age of puberty, among the Australians and other tribes, as a cultural peculiarity of these peoples.[1]

In other words, the beginning of the social importance of an individual may be associated with puberty initiation rites. Initiation may, however, be associated with any period of development. For instance, among the Christians and Semites, it is found associated with birth in the forms of baptism and circumcision; and just as with any age, so it may become associated with any social or ceremonial unit. It can thus become associated with entrance into a society; and we may consequently say that a society is only one of the numerous cultural elements with which initiation has become associated.

It is, however, a truism to state that initiation is essential for group differentiation; excluding, of course, the case where membership in a group is not synonymous with birth. When Schurtz, therefore, reconstructs the evolution of initiation, and connects the initiation into a society with that at puberty, he must have been guided by some more fundamental facts than that of the presence of initiation. The postulation of a genetic relationship between the two initiations lay

[1] Van Gennep, in a very interesting chapter on "Initiatory Rites" (Chapter VI of his *Les Rites de Passage*), has divided puberty into two divisions, — *puberté physique* and *puberté sociale*, — and has shown that the age variations of both are considerable. He insists that many writers have considerably obscured the points at issue by confusing the two. Van Gennep believes that the *puberté physique* and *puberté sociale* rarely fall together. It seems to me that this is not entirely borne out by the facts of the case; for it must be remembered that, accompanying the physiological changes at puberty, there are mental changes which in many cases permit an individual to become of active social importance; and while I think that it is this social activity that is emphasized by the initiatory rites, nevertheless the fact must not be overlooked that this social activity often coincides with the physiological puberty. We must, of course, not identify physiological puberty with any too definite a time, but allow for considerable fluctuations.

really in the fact that he detected in the form of initiation into the society certain "symptoms" which he regarded as being primarily associated with puberty initiation. These symptoms were the presence of "tests" as essential for admission into a society; and group-initiation or the initiation of a number of youths at the same time. That he was thinking of tests in the most general way, can be seen by the following statement. "Das Austeilen von Schlägen . . . im Duk-Duk hängt wohl mit den Mutproben der Knabenweihe zusammen."[1] It is hardly necessary to insist that the test concept used in this generalized manner is found associated with the ordinary forms of eligibility; so that, wherever the idea of eligibility is associated with a social or ceremonial group, there it will be natural to find tests. There is no need of giving any examples: they must occur to every one. The test feature must consequently be considered so general a cultural possession that its association with diverse cultural phenomena is quite natural, and its significance will in each case depend upon specific conditions. We cannot, therefore, predicate any general significance for the association of the test feature in specific cultural complexes.

Schurtz's second symptom comes out strongly in his discussion of the Ruk-Ruk Society of Northern Bougainville.[2] We have here, he says, a remarkable connecting link between simple men's associations (*Männerbünde*), firmly established by puberty rites and secret societies. He arrives at this conclusion, because he finds it customary there to have a group of youths initiated into the society at the same time. Here both the youth of the novices and the group initiation are emphasized as being symptomatic of a development from former men's associations (*Männerbünde*).

It must, however, be remembered, as we have said before, that a man becomes socially active at about the age of puberty, and that his social activity will naturally take those channels customary in a given tribe. The fact that a youth enters a society like the Ruk-Ruk, to which most members of the tribe belong, should not excite wonder. As a matter of fact, we should find it necessary to explain why he did not join. His failure to become a member would most certainly be associated, in such a case, with a low social status. What is to be emphasized here is not the youth of the novices, but the intellectual development occurring at that age. This comes out clearly in the case of the Duk-Duk, where the parents generally purchase membership for their children immediately after birth. Young children behave like regularly initiated members, but they only become active members at the age of sixteen. Similarly in the Winnebago Medicine Dance individuals may be initiated in early childhood, but it is at a

[1] Schurtz, Altersklassen und Männerbünde, p. 376.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 379.

much later period that they possess the powers of adult members. As a matter of fact, admission depends upon so large a number of factors in different societies, that it would be possible to draw up a table that would include all ages from birth to old age.

In the same way the initiation of a group of individuals at one time depends upon too large a number of factors to permit any single interpretation. The burden of proof rests with Schurtz to show that the presence of a specific test connects the Ruk-Ruk Society with puberty rites, and that the presence of a group initiation in the Duk-Duk connects that society with the men's associations.

Perhaps a few examples might bring out more clearly the different kinds of initiation.

In the Ruk-Ruk Society the novices retire to the woods, work for their sponsors, lay out their plantations, etc. They are also supposed to converse with spirits.[1] Similar conditions are found in the Matambala Society of the Island of Florida.[2] This retirement to the woods and to a holy precinct, and consequent re-appearance, are characteristic of a large number of initiations. The work the novice performs for his sponsor must also be regarded as a characteristic of this area. The tests of the novice have been spoken of before. They are, as might be expected, of the most diverse kind. In Fiji, for instance, a ceremonial attack upon the novices occurs, which is said to symbolize their death.[3]

In Africa we find many of the characteristics noted above. In the Purrah the novices retire to a holy precinct, and are said to endure extreme hardship. Only warriors thirty years of age can be initiated.[4] In the Mumbo-Djumbo only youths older than sixteen are admitted.[5] The other conditions are similar to those of the Purrah. In the Simo organization novices were circumcized and lived seven years in the woods.[6] In the Mwetyi Society, in addition to probations, the youths adopt a taboo of certain foods or drinks, to which they remain faithful ever after.[7] In the Ndembo Society novices are shot by a rattle, and fall down as if dead. They are then carried away to some holy precinct, where often as many as from twenty to fifty individuals remain at the same time. At this place they stay sometimes as long as three years. Their bodies are supposed to disintegrate during this time. When they are supposed to return, the shaman gathers their bones and restores them to life. On the return to their villages, they behave like unknown children, fail to recognize their relatives, to understand their own language, etc.[8] In the Nkimba similar conditions are found.[9]

[1] Schurtz, Altersklassen und Männerbünde, pp. 378 ff.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 379.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 386 ff.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 410–413.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 413–415.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 415.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 430 ff.
[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 433–435.
[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 435–437.

The variability of the method and concept of initiation is thus seen to be enormous. It might be interesting in this connection to point out how certain ideas will cluster around initiation in one large geographical area, and how the same ideas will cluster around a different cultural complex in another large geographical area. For instance, in the South Seas and in Africa, initiation is found generally associated with tests or probations; whereas in North America tests are not associated with initiation into the society, but with the obtaining of visions at the age of puberty.

2. *Degrees.* — To Schurtz, degrees are symptomatic of age classes. Wherever he finds them in societies, and wherever they seem to be correlated with certain ages, he concludes that they are vestiges of former age groups. However, he seems to have overlooked one fact, — that the same social and individual forces that would tend toward the formation of societies would necessarily tend toward the development of distinctions within them. It will depend entirely upon the nature of the people and the individual history of the organization, in what manner these distinctions will be emphasized. One of the possible methods of emphasizing them is marking off those with common possessions in some definite manner. Here, again, much will depend upon the kind of group into which the individual is initiated. If, when he enters the society, he is initiated into all that pertains to it, gradations will not be likely to arise. Generally, however, there is certainly a marked tendency for some sort of gradation, be it due to length of membership, insistence upon separate payments, unwillingness of the older members to impart all to a new member who may withal be quite young, a desire to impart piecemeal in order to enhance the value of the teachings, etc. Whether these possible lines of cleavage will associate themselves with definite markings or rites, is a question of individual cultural development. They may or they may not. In Melanesia, for instance, they did not.

In the Ruku-Ruku[1] of the Fiji Islanders we find three gradations, — those of uninitiated youths, grown-up men, and old men. In the Purrah[2] there were two gradations, consisting respectively of those over thirty and of those over fifty years. In the Egbo[3] Society there are eleven degrees, into which membership may be purchased one after the other in an ascending scale. In Old Calabar[4] there are five classes.

In the Purrah we are dealing with an exceedingly intricate complex, in which military and judicial functions are quite prominent. The age factor seems secondary and artificial. In the Egbo there is no age factor at all. In the Ruku-Ruku an age factor exists. Owing

[1] Schurtz, Altersklassen und Männerbünde, p. 386.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 410.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 420.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 422.

to the social value of the Ruku-Ruku, all individuals seem to be potential members at birth. At the same time, the oldest members always have specific functions to perform. In this way two groups are formed. Those who do not belong to these two groups belong to the third group. All that can be said here is, that a society has utilized a rough age factor for specific purposes. That in reality the entire tribe is divided into three divisions, is due to the fact that all the members of the tribe are members of the society. This is therefore not a phenomenon that has any general significance in the evolution of society, but is purely and simply a phenomenon of certain secret societies. The threefold division is not due to a persistence of a former threefold division of the tribe, but grew out of the needs of a specific society. The same remarks hold for the twofold division of members in the Purrah. Similarly the four and eight degrees found among the Ojibwa Midewiwin are due to a development within the society. To-day practically all the members of the tribe belong to the Midewiwin, and the tribe may be said to be divided into four divisions. (However, in this case the main element, that of the association of a certain age with a certain degree, does not exist, because there is no fixed age at which a man buys admission into the higher degrees.)

It will consequently be necessary to determine the significance of degrees in each particular case before any general significance can be attached to them.

3. *Exclusion of Women.* — The admission of women into a society is, according to Schurtz, a secondary feature. This followed directly from his negative position with regard to women's *Geselligkeitstrieb*, and from his assumption that societies were merely transformed men's associations, which in turn were transformed age groups. The question of the *Geselligkeitstrieb* of women hardly lends itself to any accurate discussion, as, generally speaking, women have not been surrounded by those conditions which played an important part in developing that trait among men. In our own civilization, where men and women are to a certain extent subjected to the same conditions, a large number of women societies has developed, and large numbers of women have been admitted into men's societies. Among us, this admission of women is due to the fact that they are now in the same industries that men are. However, there are manifold factors which can and do bring about the admission of women into men's societies or their exclusion therefrom. The nature of some societies may exclude men, just as it may exclude women. A soldiers' society will exclude women, because women are not soldiers. Similarly a sewing society will probably exclude men. The exclusion of women will therefore depend upon the specific functions of a society; but the right of

women to participate in certain activities will again depend upon the manner in which each specific culture area separated the spheres of action of men and women.

The possibility of infinite variation must force upon us the conclusion that we can only begin to investigate the reasons for the exclusion or admittance of women when we have a clear understanding of the ideas each tribe possesses with regard to the specific functions of the men and women. This determination is in a large number of cases utterly impossible, because we are in no position to know whether the reasons now given are historically the true ones. If, for instance, in a men's college fraternity women are debarred on the ground that the fraternity is interested in fencing, card-playing, etc., which are occupations of men, historically this is not the true reason. Originally fraternities were merely social gatherings of individuals who attended a college. There were no women students to admit. Today, when women attend the colleges, wherever new fraternities arise, women are admitted. It is thus apparent, that, in the absence of historical evidence, we must be extremely careful in interpreting the reason for this exclusion.

In Melanesia, for example, women are entirely excluded from the societies. However, in Melanesia, societies are associated with a multitude of religious and social functions in which women are not permitted to participate. In other words, the Melanesians draw the line of demarcation between the activities of men and women along these lines. If, for instance, in the New Hebrides, women have nothing to do with the funeral and mortuary rites, and a secret society is intimately connected with such rites, then we ought not to be surprised that women are not admitted into the society. It seems to me, therefore, that we should make much better progress in our study of this phenomenon in Melanesia and in Polynesia, if we were first to examine whether either the conceptions of the tribe, or the nature of the specific society, or the cultural elements with which it was associated, debarred women from membership.

A few examples from Africa will emphasize this point even more forcibly, and at the same time indicate along what lines the respective spheres of men's and women's actions are drawn there. In the Purrah Society, women are excluded. The society has general war and judicial functions which do not come within the domain of women, according to the ideas of the tribe. In the Attonga Society [1] of Senegambia, only women are admitted, and the society is associated with mortuary rites. In the Dschengu we have another women society connected here with the cult of some water deity.[2] In the region around the

[1] Schurtz, Altersklassen und Männerbünde, p. 416.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 426.

mouth of the Ogowe there are a number of powerful women societies associated with various elements.[1]

If we now proceed to Schurtz's contention, that women societies are merely imitations of men's societies, we shall see that, as a general statement, this is as unjustified as is his interpretation that the admission of women into societies is a secondary feature. That it is true in a number of cases, is unquestioned. However, when, as in Africa, we see a very strong tendency for the formation of societies, and see at the same time a very large number of women societies, it seems far more justifiable to assume that the women societies are formed in response to the same tendencies as those of men. To judge from parallels in other parts of the world, it is extremely likely that women will form societies wherever men show a strong tendency to do so. A number of factors may, however, interfere with a development of such societies. For instance, it is quite plausible that where, as among the Melanesians, a strong society-forming tendency existed, and women did not participate in it, some strong reason existed which might perhaps be ascribed to the fact that women do not there participate in those rites that are almost universally associated with societies.

In North America there are numerous examples of women belonging to men's societies. A cursory examination will bring out what were the possible factors at work there. In the Objibwa-Menominee Midewiwin, women are admitted. Now, in the Ojibwa-Menominee culture, women may become shamans as well as men, and the society based on shamans will naturally include both sexes. If there are fewer women than men, this is because fewer women become shamans. In the Winnebago Medicine Dance, wealth and certain requirements possessed by both men and women are the only essentials for admission; and both sexes can accordingly become members. In the present Sore-Eye Dance, women are admitted. Formerly the same society, known as the Night Dance, excluded women. The reason is very simple. Formerly, supernatural communication with the night spirits was essential for membership, and owing to the specific associations attached to these night spirits, women never obtained visions from them. When subsequently it was no more essential to have had a vision, and membership could be purchased by any one, women were admitted. Among the Blackfoot, women are part members of the religious society, because, according to Blackfoot ideas of property, the former have a part in the medicine-bundle of the man. The possession of the medicine-bundle is necessary for admission into the society.[2] It is thus apparent that the explanation for the exclusion of women from a society must lie in a large number of

[1] Schurtz, Altersklassen und Männerbünde, p. 429.

[2] Oral communication of Dr. Wissler.

factors, not the least important of which is the nature of the specific ideas of property and the respective spheres of activity of men and women.

4. *Functions of the Society.* — Our analysis of the five ceremonies has clearly established the differences in the functions of the societies. To Schurtz these differences were due to developments from one historically primary function. His line of argument is a direct consequence of his assumption that secret societies have developed from the men's associations.

If we glance at the West African, the Melanesian, the Polynesian, North American, and our own societies, we see that their functions are legion. Now, it can be demonstrated that where the whole or a large part of the tribe is included in a society, that society will possess many of the functions of the tribe, because individuals are primarily carriers of their culture, and secondarily members of a society; or, it might be better said that these two functions of an individual are so inextricably connected that they cannot be thought of apart. It can also be demonstrated that specific societies have associated with them a variety of functions. In each case we are dealing with the same phenomenon. The number of possible combinations is practically infinite. It is, however, a suggestive fact that certain functions of a society are distributed over large areas. In Melanesia, for instance, the most constant functions of societies seem to be those connected with mortuary rites and ancestor worship. In Africa, again, they are primarily judicial and administrative. In the case of our five North American ceremonies, they are religious and magical. For the latter our explanation lay in assuming that we were dealing there with a common cultural background. The same explanation holds true for Melanesia and Africa. In other words, societies, like all other social units in which an individual takes part, must necessarily associate themselves with the cultural background in which they are set.

5. *Conclusion.* — The study we have undertaken can only indirectly be considered an examination of Schurtz's theories. What we have attempted is the analysis of a number of ceremonies, in order to discover what tendencies were operative in their growth. These examples, combined with others taken from the South Seas and Africa, have demonstrated clearly that there exist in the world certain general ideas that may associate themselves with any type of social and ceremonial organization. Ceremonies in origin historically distinct may thus come to possess general and often specific resemblances. It is consequently of extreme importance, in any scheme of social reconstruction, to determine first whether the common elements in the ethnological data compared are not due to such a convergent evolution.