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Author
Paredes, J. Anthony

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of bird-tree-snake is a universal motif. It has appeared in many cultures across time and place, including the Greeks, in Egypt, and India, and is always embedded within esoteric schools of contemplative practice. Thompson explicates the significance of contemplative practice not only for the individual, but also as the basis for harnessing the energies of the practitioners for the development of high civilization. As he points out, the religion of Quetzalcoatl provided a transcendent ideal, a pattern for civilization to win out over savagery.

Unfortunately for the peoples of Mesoamerica, Quetzalcoatl or civilization failed to win out over Huitzilopochtli or savagery. The attempt, nonetheless, Thompson insists, is important for us to understand because we too live in an age when savagery and civilization are locked in mortal battle. Hence *Blue Jade From The Morning Sun* was also written in part to make the myth of Quetzalcoatl accessible to Americans; the author believes that the feathered serpent is important to comprehending the problems and possibilities of our age. To do so, Thompson turned to poetry as well as to the essay. The second part of the book consists of two sets of poems. The first set follow closely the stories contained in the major primary sources on Quetzalcoatl. The second set are attempts by Thompson to contribute his own vision to the literature on the plumed serpent. Thompson justifies this approach by reminding us that ''A scientific history can give us recorded facts, but only poetry can reveal the meaning of history in the universal truth of events. Poetry is the place where *myth* and history meet, the place where the collective narrative is given individual expression. In a myth the ancient prehistory of the soul is recast into the imagery and situations of more recent events'' (28). Thompson gives us much to think about.

Luis Leobardo Arroyo
Humboldt State University

The Shaman: Patterns of Siberian and Ojibway Healing. By John A. Grim. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983. 272 pp. $19.95 Cloth.

First, the good things about this book: On page 28, Grim poses the interesting but arrogantly worded hypothesis that a shamanic tradition prepares a community for acceptance of ''the higher

religions founded on a sacred personality.'' On page 40, in an uncharacteristic flourish of straightforward writing, Grim neatly summarizes the relationship between tribal tradition and individual creativity in the shaman role, and, in a similar vein, the author writes felicitously (p. 43) of the ''paradoxical relationship of intimacy and distance'' between shaman and tribe. In one of the few examples of attempting to fulfill the promise of the title of his book, on page 61 Grim notes a concrete similarity between Siberian and ''Paleo-Ojibway'' shamanism, namely, artistic representations of the ''horned shaman.'' On pages 88 and 90, Grim does a particularly nice job of summarizing Ojibwa ambivalence toward shamanic powers in general, and the Mide Society in particular. Having written blithely of early historic Ojibwa ''village,'' finally, on page 94, Grim reassures his ethnohistorically critical readers that he knows better (well, sort of at least) when he writes, ''early historical records describe their separate village groups as gatherings of hunting and fishing people.'' (Nevertheless, Grim seems never to grasp fully the significance of the long-standing debate over social ''atomism'' amongst the Ojibwa, and other northern Algonquians, nor the role of European fur trade in all of this.) Again, in a brief chapter on ''Stages in the Formation of the Shaman'' (pp. 168–79), Grim attempts to make direct comparisons between Siberian and Ojibway shamans, with sometimes direct and pithy phrasings of insights on shamanic personalities, even though the discussion is organized around some rather banal, but romanticized, analytical categories—''call from the spirits,'' ''sickness or withdrawal from previous activities,'' and ''emergence of the formed shaman'' (p. 169). Finally, on page 185 Grim does a rather nice job of drawing out the distinctions between the shaman and the prophet as ''religious types.''

Now for the bad part. The potential reader should be forewarned that this book is mislabeled. Grim's chapter on Siberian shamanism is only twenty-two pages long; conversely, seven chapters, totalling 111 pages, are devoted almost exclusively to Ojibway shamanism. There are, however, some additional substantive discussions of the ethnographic data on Siberian shamanism in the introduction and the two concluding chapters. Given the location of both the Siberian tribes and the Ojibway in the circumpolar culture area, Grim's title sets up the reader to expect a systematic, close comparison of shamanic culture traits in the style of the so-called ''American Historical School''

genre of ethnology, complementing earlier distributional studies of this area of the world in a variety of trait complexes from footwear to bear ceremonialism. Instead, the author derives from the Siberian material a quadripartite set of rather simple-minded analytical categories—''mythical world view,'' ''tribal sanction,'' ''ritual reenactment,'' and ''trance encounter,'' which Grim sees as paralleling cosmological, sociological, anthropological, and psychological ''perspectives,'' respectively. These are Grim's ''patterns.'' Most of the remainder of the book is devoted to recasting basic ethnographic data on the Ojibwa into the four compartments Grim derives from the Siberian material.

Sometimes, serving up old wine in new bottles is mildly instructive. In this case such an exercise is annoying at best and befuddling at worst. To his credit, Grim appears to have done a prodigious amount of reading of both older and newer sources on the Ojibway and various Siberian tribes, though some useful sources are neglected, e.g., Harold Hickerson (''The Chippewa of the Upper Great Lakes: A Study in Sociopolitical Change,'' in *North American Indians in Historical Perspective*, edited by Eleanor B. Leacock and Nancy O. Lurie, New York: Random House); M. Inez Hilger (1951, *Chippewa Childlife and Its Cultural Background*, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 146); Timothy G. Roufs (1974, ''Myth in Method: More on Ojibwa Culture,'' *Current Anthropology* 15: 307–9); and Roufs (1975, *The Anishinabe of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe*, Phoenix: Indian Tribal Series). But, by the nature of what passes as his analysis, Grim rations out the results of his reading in disjointed bits and pieces rather than in orderly portions of distinct complexes of religious belief and practice, producing the effect of an ethnographic smorgasbord of leftovers rather than a well orchestrated banquet of new food for thought. Apparently, Grim seems to think that his principal contribution here is to show that his ''patterns'' of Siberian shamanism are found in Ojibway shamanism as well. But, those patterns are so broad they constitute little more than slight rephrasing of abstractions by which anthropologists construct ''the shaman'' as a generic type in the first place. And, here we have the key to the fundamental shortcoming of Grim's work: trying to do an anthropologist's job without, apparently, the training of an anthropologist.

It is one thing to be able to read the ethnographic and historical literature on tribal peoples. It is quite another to comprehend that literature in the context of a full awareness of the pitfalls of

translating the customs and beliefs of any people into a neutral language of science for comparison of cultures. Short of that, Grim seems almost oblivious to the problem of evaluating the validity and reliability of ethnographic sources or to the limits of the generalizability of statements by individual informants or of social practices observed at particular times and places. Thus, the reader is left with the uncomfortable feeling that Grim always accepts uncritically, and sometimes muddies together, all of his sources. Moreover, the reader is subjected to interpretive discussions where it is often difficult to discern whether Grim is trying to represent a native point of view in some abstract language of religious scholarship, is speaking for himself with a particular analytical point of view, or both. Indeed, the reader is left with no sense of intellectual mooring. How does Grim know what he tells us? How are we to judge the validity of such statements as, ''The shaman is a sacrificial personality who experiences an intimate relationship with cosmic power that he or she is able to mediate through a trance state'' (p. 202), presuming, of course, we can make denotative sense of such sentences in the first place.

Grim writes in the language of a religion scholar, especially one following the ''hermeneutical'' style of Mircea Eliade. Thus, presumably, we must contend with such mind-benders as ''. . . the shaman's symbol system does not arise in a highly traditional context. Instead, the shaman experiences a numinous revelation primarily in the natural world'' (p. 184). To make matters worse, Grim casually introduces such seemingly straightforward but actually problematic distinctions as that between a ''family shaman'' and a ''tribal shaman,'' begging the question of what is meant by ''tribe'' or ''family'' and not giving us a clue of what he has in mind. The reader also must endure a kind of studiedly sensitive, non-sexist writer's ''voice'' (as the current catch-word has it) evident in such embarrassing usages as always being careful to say ''his or her.'' We are led in the end to a kind of hippie retread, neo-mysticism in Grim's attempt to make his ''understanding'' of shamanism relevant to the modern world by writing such schlock as ''the shamanic consciousness of abiding earth energies can apparently be nurtured even within the contemporary technological milieu'' (p. 207).

Apart from Grim's ''hermeneutical'' treatise on Ojibway, and, to a lesser extent, Siberian shamanism, his stated larger objective is to distinguish the shaman as a ''religious type'' from the

prophet, the priest, the yogi, and the sage. His concluding chapter is devoted to this endeavor. Other than an exceptionally heavy dose of material from the so-called Great Religions of Old World civilizations, much of what Grim presumably sees as his major theoretical contribution reads much like standard material on ''Types of Religious Specialists'' as presented in any run-of-the-mill ''Introduction to Cultural Anthropology'' course.

Grim's book is yet another entry in a recent genre of works on North American Indian religions done by ''religion scholars'' who presume to improve upon what anthropologists have done. *Sacred Words* (1981, Greenwood Press), a study of Navajo religion and prayer by Sam Gill (another Eliade aficionado), comes most immediately to mind as another example which, though considerably more systematic than Grim's book and based to a limited extent on original data, shares, nonetheless, a disregard for ordinary canons of evidence and a penchant for a metaphysical rhetoric that befuddles and infuriates rather than enlightens. These guys should stay on their own turf. In a sense, by attempting to interpret Native American religions from the point of view of academic religionists, authors such as Grim produce the ultimate ethnocentric travesty. Much of Grim's book reads like scriptural commentary, but in his case the text is not some book of the Bible but a body of ethnographic and historical literature produced largely by anthropologists. Such commentaries can scarcely avoid the trap of projecting onto the enthnographic data the preconceived notions and unfulfilled mystical longings of Western religious thought, while at the same time relegating tribal religions to a position below ''higher religions.'' Ironically, I suspect that some native people themselves find works such as Grim's attractive because wrapping bald ethnographic data in the trappings of Western religious scholarship appears to imbue the tribal religions with elitist academic respectability and dignity. In the end, though, such an exercise violates the fundamental tenet of cultural relativity whereby each culture is to be understood in its own terms rather than by the imposition of concepts and standards drawn from the analyst's own culture. Thus, there is the perennial anthropological drive to probe presumably objective, neutral scientific concepts for any traces of culture-specific biases. Apparently, Grim is immune to such epistemological tortures.

The concluding section of Grim's introductory chapter is entitled, ''Beyond Ethnology.'' For the most part the rest of the

book is ample evidence that we should not venture so far, at least not with Grim as our ''Indian guide'' (putting aside the fact that Grim's ''beyond ethnology'' section evidences a misunderstanding of the word ''ethnology''). The reader would be much better served by going back to the original sources, especially such as Ruth Landes' *Ojibwa Religion and the Midewiwin* (1968, University of Wisconsin Press), a work that when it first appeared I privately criticized for ''reading like fieldnotes,'' but in light of Grim's book must now add, ''Thank God!'' (This is not to deny, however, that nowadays anthropology has in its own house its own brand of frustrated, would-be priests and rabbis who have abandoned the ''struggle for a science of culture'' in favor of hermeneutics, ''ethnography as text'' and similar sophomoric foolishness.) In fairness, I must direct readers to De Mallie's review of Grim's book (*American Anthropologist*, 1986, Vol. 88, No. 1, p. 196) which finds many of the same faults with the book as I but does concede, ''nonspecialists may profitably read the book as an introduction to shamanism as a religious system.''

If one must go beyond the bald facts of mere ethnology for some deeper religious interpretation of ''Ojibway healing,'' I prefer the blunt, unadorned commentary of some of my own Ojibwa acquaintances in the 1960s (Paredes, *Anishinabe: Six Studies of Modern Chippewa*, 1980, University Presses of Florida: 382): ''Those old Indians probably knew things which we don't understand today.''

J. Anthony Paredes
Florida State University

Minority Report: What's Happened to Blacks, Hispanics, American Indians and Other Minorities in the Eighties. By Leslie W. Dunbar, editor. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984. 236 pp. $8.95 Paper.

These essays, Dunbar states in his Foreword, explore ''how well or how poorly American society affords realistic opportunities for its racial minorities to participate in—to give their consent to—the decisions that determine their place within it. . . . '' By exploring both the consequences of and the factors that contribute to group differentials in structural access and opportunities, the book's authors help identify what Dunbar terms ''the nature and