

cross have any--?)

OLD TIME KIOWA RELIGION: VISION QUEST OR SEARCH FOR SUPERNATURAL POWER

They got that idea after the Indians were given the reservation when the missionaries came--Catholic missionaries gave every Indian a cross--child. I wore one. Everybody. Every man, woman and child wore a cross. The Catholic missionaries, they just gave the crosses out. And they said that's the crucifixion emblem for blessing. And they just thought the world of them. That's where they got the idea that the god is on the cross. They mix that Bible story with their own Sun God story, together. Combine it. And then there were other powers or gifts, or magic powers they worship. They call them "medicine." They possessed powers and get (to be) medicine man. They get their gifts from nature. Go out in the mountains and pray four days and four nights, without eating, and drink water and pray. And some spirit talks to them and offer them--and they had many gifts at different times--animals. Animals and natures and birds. That's where you see this peyote medicine man. You see lot of Indians that got feathers in their heads. They claim to have contact with that bird or animal. And they got their gifts. That's the reason they carry that emblem--to show that they belong to that bird's gift. For instance, you see a man wear a bunch of woodpecker feathers--yellow hammers. He'll have one in his hat, or he has one tied to his hair. That's to show that he possesses the yellowhammer's power--gift. Now what kind of gift does the yellowhammer give him? Well, the yellowhammer talks to them in a spirit (form) and told him how to take this gift, and they said this man, he had a gift from this yellowhammer--when certain people in the old days go to war and get wounded and infection set in and sometimes the hot (fever) and even not doctor enough cause worms to come in--flies or something--lay worms--maggots. And this medicine man, he has a yellowhammer--skinned yellowhammer--just the skin. It got the head on and all of it-- Says, when he doctors, he takes this yellowhammer bird