

peyote meetings talk very softly--almost to themselves. Their primary object is not to communicate to everyone present, but to express their religious feelings. Therefore the quality of the talking and singing on these tapes varies, depending on a number of factors: the position of the microphone with relation to the speaker, the volume and timbre of a speaker's voice, the amount of background noise, etc. Probably the most objectionable features are the noises produced when I had to shift my own position with resulting movement of the microphone. Fortunately, these moments were few.

This description is based on my careful listening to the tapes of the whole session and includes partial transcription of the verbal portions of the meetings. Since I was present at the meeting I felt I could understand portions of the tape which other persons could not, and I could add some descriptive details of what went on from memory. I did not feel if necessary to make absolutely verbatim transcriptions of what was said, but I did put down the essence of the talks, prayers, and comments, often in near verbatim form. Certain talks that I felt were especially significant or charged with emotional intensity are noted down in fairly complete form. I have attempted to describe the actions people engaged in, and the order of the service insofar as I can reconstruct these from memory and clues furnished me from sounds on the tape. However I realize I do not include everything that happened and may have omitted a few key actions of the ceremony if these were performed silently. For example at the beginning of the meeting, the leader, Abraham Spotted Elk, takes out his ceremonial equipment--the gourd, staff, sage wand, etc.--and places the fetish peyote on the altar. However this kind of activity is not obvious on the tapes. Thus when peyote is passed around or cedar is put in the fire, this also is not audible, and is not mentioned every time it occurs.

I would say this meeting is fairly representative of the regular peyote meetings held in western Oklahoma, with persons from several different tribes represented, with one exception: The woman who was supposed to bring in the morning water did not come to the meeting, and after midnight John Pedro asked me to perform this duty. I interpreted this request as an honor and also as his move to present me in a favorable light with the other participants at the meeting. I quickly accepted. Thus I played an active part in the meeting, which I had certainly never anticipated, and later found myself taking notes on what I had said. How many other white women have ever brought in water at a peyote meeting I do not know, but feel this is the only unusual feature of this meeting. I have attended several Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache peyote meetings before, and what I said and the way I prayed as "Water Woman" was modelled upon what I had seen in other meetings.

The Meeting

I got to the Pedro's house about 9:00 p.m. June 14. John Pedro was in his kitchen cleaning some very large green peyotes that someone had brought him from Texas. He teased me, telling me I would have to eat four of these at one time.

The meeting was sponsored by John Pedro and was in honor of Abraham Spotted Elk, a young northern Cheyenne visiting in Oklahoma. It was for the purpose of allowing Abraham to conduct a meeting here in Oklahoma, fulfilling a promise John had made in Wyoming. Abraham is one of the ceremonial leaders of the Northern Cheyennes, and I think was here in Oklahoma to arrange the Arrow Renewal ceremony for the Oklahoma Cheyennes. He learned his peyote way from a Northern Arapaho, Freddie Fox, who is his father-in-law. Abraham is originally from Montana, but is married to a northern Arapaho girl and now lives in Ethete, Wyoming, on the Arapaho-Shoshone Reservation. John Pedro got acquainted with Abraham in Wyoming where he