

The Psychodynamics of the Navajo Coyoteway Ceremonial

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The traditional hunting ritualism of the Navajo Indians, as reconstructed from ethnological literature, uses symbolic lycanthropy to produce catharsis of the horror and guilt of the hunt. When the psychohygienic function of the ritualism fails, hunting neurosis develops, taking a form described in myth as a transformation into Coyote. Religious lycanthropy inspires the symbolism of repetition-compulsions. The Coyoteway ceremonial addresses the neurosis by re-inducing lycanthropy before exorcising the possessing god, Coyote. This enactment of an ecstatic rite of initiation into hunting ritualism provides insights into the origin and artificial nature of the neurosis, channels guilt outward by exteriorizing Coyote (a symbol for guilt), and provides a format for working through these matters. The native psychotherapy of the Navajo Chanter provides a cure, rather than a remission of symptoms alone.

The standard ethnopsychiatric impression of shamanic healing is that the shaman enters a trance, conducts one or another ritual procedure, perhaps administers a native medicine, and then expects the patient to be cured by magic. If any psychodynamics are involved, they are induced by the shaman on him/herself. Such cures as do result are then explained in terms of the shaman's inculcation of a sense of awe in the patient that renders the latter open to suggestion (Prince, 1964). The ethnology on which such impressions are based, however, is suspect. In a previous study of Navajo ceremonials, Kaplan and Johnson concluded that "in the sense of verbal interaction between patient and therapist, with the goal of changing behaviour through increased insight and self-awareness, [Navajo] psychotherapy hardly exists at all" (1964, p. 226). Sandner, by contrast, writing more recently from a Jungian standpoint, perhaps over-generously concluded that "the Navaho healing process at times goes beyond the symbolic work we are able to achieve in modern psychotherapy" (1979, p. 271). There is a conflict here not only of theoretic stance but more importantly of ethnological understanding.

The Navajo, together with the various Apache tribes, form the Southern Athapascan linguistic group. Resident in the American Southwest for less than a millennium, the Navajo tribe has only in the

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last three centuries adopted pastoralism and agriculture from neighbouring Pueblo tribes. In the process, Pueblo-derived agricultural religion has been added to the shamanic base of Navajo hunter religion. Archaic hunter ceremonials have all gained aspects adapted from Pueblo rites. Conversely, the many borrowed rituals have all been reworked to conform with archaic shamanic concepts as to how a ceremonial ought to function. These processes of syncretism have explicit discussion in Navajo myth (Wyman, 1975).

The Navajo *hataali* or "Chanter" is, from a comparative viewpoint (Hultkrantz, 1973), an institutionalized shaman.¹ Because the Navajo have no rites that are not shamanic, the systematization of Navajo ceremonials on Pueblo models has transformed shamanic rites into occasions of social religion. In one survey, Kluckhohn (1938) ascertained that adult men devote 25% to 33% of their waking hours to ceremonials, while adult women devote 15% to 20%, in both cases either as patients or as spectators. At the same time, the Navajo Chanter retains remarkably close affinities with the practises of shamans among Northern Athapascan hunter-gatherers, such as the Carrier of the British Columbia interior (Jenness, 1941). His primary activity is as a healer, always of a single patient at a time. His major procedure is, in Navajo idiom, to "chant," that is, to sing to the accompaniment of a rattle. The Chanter's psychological state is unremarked, while the patient undergoes profound psychological reaction by way of cure.

In Navajo thought, a Holy Person afflicts illness or causes mishap in response to a human breach of taboo: not to punish but to inform that a breach of taboo has given offense. The sufferer then consults with relatives who in turn summon a diagnostic diviner, to discover the identities of the broken taboo and the offended Holy Person. The relatives next summon a Chanter to perform the appropriate ceremonial. The Navajo have over forty illness-specific ceremonials, each with its own specialized Chanters. Holyway ceremonials, to which class Coyoteway belongs, are commonly designed to reconcile the patient with an offended supernatural. Once reconciliation occurs, the Holy Person is mollified and has no further motive to continue signalling offense by means of affliction. Cure then results. Should a ceremonial prove ineffectual, it is assumed that the illness had been diagnosed improperly and the wrong Holy Person's ceremonial employed (Kluckhohn & Leighton, 1974; Reichard, 1970). The frequent conclusion that the Navajo believe their ceremonials to have automatic magical efficacy is not, however, correct.

¹With the exception of some few Chanters who sing at Kinaalda, the girl's puberty ceremonial, all Navajo Chanters are men.

Coyoteway is a nine-night ceremonial to cure illnesses believed to be caused by the Holy Person, Coyote. Taboos surrounding Coyote are various and chiefly pertain to real animals of his species. Coyotes must not be hurt or killed. Coyote flesh may never be eaten. In hunting, the viscera of game animals must be left for coyotes to scavenge, as the share of game owed to the Holy Person, Coyote, who is man's companion in the hunt. Coyotes may not be watched as they die, lest their twitches enter the onlooker and produce disease. Dead coyote carcasses may not be touched. Symptoms diagnosed as Coyote illness appear to include nervous malfunctions, mania, sex frenzy, and rabies (Luckert, 1979). As will presently become clear, aside from rabies, Coyote illness proves a content-specific neurosis with attendant somatizations.

Hunter Ritualism

Because it is axiomatic in ethnopsychiatry that normalcy and disorder presuppose cultural norms, it is necessary to enter more deeply into the Navajo worldview in order to comprehend how Coyoteway works. Coyote's relation to the ritual hunt is the appropriate place to begin. According to Luckert, the Navajo conceive of the ritual hunt in terms of a "dualism of two distinct spheres, the realm of procreation and growth over against the reality of killing and death" (1975, p. 136). To my understanding, the herbivorous game animals, deer, antelope, and in myth, the now-scarce mountain sheep and buffalo are classified with human female plant-gatherers. The carnivorous predatory species of wolf, bobcat, mountain lion, snake, and in myth, bear and coyote are classified with human male hunters. The human sex act has symbolization as a predation by man on woman, his game. In the hunt, the human male leaves the powerful home base in the female or "game" sphere of the family village and journeys out into the "hunter" sphere of the wilderness.

Esoteric rites, of which we are all but ignorant, are conducted in the sweat house on the evening prior to departure for the hunt. In the course of these rites, which are led by the Chanter who is to lead the hunting party, each hunter in the party is ritually transformed into an animal predator (Luckert, 1975). There then follows, in Hill's words, a "complete reversal of the psychology" of the hunters (1938a, p. 88). Speaking of death, blood, and killing ceases to be taboo, as does use of hunting songs. Dreams of death, blood, and killing cease to be ill omens and become good ones. The hunters emulate predators: walking, running, and even sleeping in canine or feline crouch; communicating in animals' growls; referring to each other not as men but as "wolves" or as "predators"; meditating constantly on killing and death; and suppressing

natural humour and levity in order to maintain an attitude of ferocity (Hill, 1938a). Claus Chee Sonny, a Navajo Chanter, explained:

The hunters feel very lightfooted; they become fast runners. Their eyes become very sharp in spotting deer...There is always a "spirit of knowing" concerning the whereabouts of deer—received either through positive thinking or while dreaming about deer during the night. (Luckert, 1975, p. 63)

At the end of the hunt, the hunters once more engage in esoteric rites in the sweat house, apparently to reverse the effects of the rites of commencement. Everything pertinent to the hunt is put out of mind and normalcy is reattained. Only then may a man return to his wife and family (Hill, 1938a; Luckert, 1978).

Ritual lycanthropy during the hunt might bear diagnosis as a hysterical pathology were the conventional ethnopsychiatric preoccupation with symbolism to be endorsed. As Freud (1918) noted, religious rituals and neurotic rituals cannot simply be equated. Attention must be paid not to the symbols but to the functions that they serve. Navajo hunting ritualism segregates the hunt as the thing apart from normal familial life. Further symptoms of guilt over killing manifest elsewhere in the religious sphere. There are a host of taboos conservationist of the game (Hill, 1938a; Luckert, 1975; Luckert, 1978). The hunt is an esoteric affair, ostensibly because exposure to it is dangerous for women and children (Luckert, 1975), but implicitly due to its unconsciously perceived shameful and guilt. Moreover, the Navajo have a profound dread of the ghosts of both animals and men (Wyman, Hill & Osanai, 1942) and symbols borrowed from hunting ritualism have a prominent role in witchcraft (Morgan, 1936; Kluckhohn, 1967). Implicitly, there is a conscious valuation of the hunt as necessary, and an emotional sense that killing is evil and an occasion for guilt.

Conflict of this order might readily generate neurosis. The ritual hunt isolates the basic cultural ambivalence toward killing and raises the conflict to a religious level that both sanctions and defines the hunt as an evil domain of predation. The release of instinctual aggression, forbidden in the familial sphere but necessary to successful hunting, becomes permissible in the hunt through the suspension of normal morality and the establishment of a "hunt superego" in the image of the predator god. This reliance on a surrogate moral authority (Fenichel, 1945) is, however, not possible without a sense of guilt for the abdication of personal moral responsibility. The two guilts, the one toward killing and the other for suppressing the first, are then sublimated through the hunter's ritual action as a predator, which channels the guilt, or introverted aggression, in the socially encouraged direction of aggression against game animals. In other words, although hunting creates guilt feelings, the exteriorization of guilt that is required by the religious rituals produces a

cathartic discharge of the guilt and transforms the work of hunting into a kind of play. The catharsis serves to prevent the formation of neuroses that would arise were the guilt instead allowed to accumulate without discharge. In sum, Navajo hunting ritualism is psychohygienic in function, not despite, but in fact due to the pathological character of its symbolism.

The Coyote Transformation Myth

Need for healing arises when the psychohygienic function of hunter ritualism fails and emotional disorders develop. The Navajo theory of Coyote illness and its cure are set forward in the origin myth of the Coyoteway rite. In all, there are extant three origin myths for Coyoteway (Luckert, 1979) but displacement of the original version of the myth seems to have occurred. In Navajo mythology there are two concepts of Coyote (Wyman, 1975). Coyote is today primarily the companion of the agricultural god, First Man. In the older conception still remembered in occasional myths and folktales, Coyote was a trickster god. The extant Coyoteway myths largely pertain to the agricultural figure; but the recently extinct ceremonial Excessway, which the Navajo classify as part of Coyoteway (Wyman & Kluckhohn, 1938), had as part of its origin myth a passage pertinent to Coyote as trickster. This passage, known academically as "the Coyote transformation myth," bears striking resemblance to the symbolism of the extant Coyoteway ceremonial and similarly descends from the archaic hunter past.

The Coyote transformation myth runs as follows. A successful antelope hunter sang both Gameway and Excessway chants as he hunted. In one of the latter he named himself, among other things, as Jimson-Weed Young Man. One day he was employing a Stalkingway ritual of hunting, camouflaging himself as an antelope, when Changing Coyote crept up on him unnoticed. Changing Coyote took off his coyote-skin and blew it onto the hunter. The hunter's clothes fell off him, and in these Changing Coyote dressed. Masquerading as the hunter, Changing Coyote went to the hunter's home, successfully deceived the hunter's two wives as to his identity, and spent the whole night going from one to the other. Come morning, one wife suspected that he was not her husband. The other remained deceived. Appearing as the hunter, Changing Coyote went out to hunt. Although he often pointed his bow, he failed to loose his arrow and so killed no game. Thus several days passed.

Meantime, the hunter who wore Changing Coyote's skin was dying of hunger. He crept under a cedar, ate its berries, and there slept the night. On successive days, he subsisted on a wild cherry bush, Gray Willow catkins, and the fruit of wild roses. The extant text of the myth does not

state, but its plot presupposes, that the suspicious wife asked people to search for her missing husband. The myth simply continues with people noticing that this Coyote was not acting as Changing Coyote behaved. They wondered what had happened. When they asked him if he were the hunter for whom they were searching, he could reply only with a coyote bark. Deciding nonetheless that this Coyote was indeed the missing hunter, they took him home, made hoops of wood, and passed him through the hoops in order to tear away the Coyote skin. The hunter thereby regained human form. After thinking of destroying the Coyote skin, they decided instead to strike Changing Coyote with it, since he was still in the hunter's form. The hunter took the skin, crept up on Changing Coyote, and struck him with it. At once the skin stuck to Changing Coyote, returning him to his own form. After these incidents, the hunter received various items of ritual instruction from different Holy People, teaching him to do cures of like kind in future (Haile, 1978).

Treating the lycanthropy of the ritual hunt as cultural normalcy, the abnormalcy symbolized in the Coyote transformation myth becomes transparent. A successful hunter finds himself uncontrollably possessed by a coyote-skin. His wives find not a man but a sexually overactive Coyote in their beds. In the hunt, he is impotent to discharge an arrow from his bow. In his lamentable condition, the hunter is discovered and cured. The possessing agency is not, however, destroyed. Rather, it is returned to the trickster god to whom it belongs.

Implicitly, we have here a hunter, ritually transformed into a coyote during hunting rites, who has found himself unable upon his return from the hunt to end the transformation. In Navajo idiom, he is still "out there" in the predator sphere of the hunt and not "brought to the hogan" of the game sphere of the family life (Luckert, 1978, p.48).

An important motif here is the hunter's initial song referring to himself as Jimson-Weed Young Man. In Navajo hunter myth, consumption of potent hallucinogens, contained in jimsonweed (*Datura innoxia*), locoweed, and other plants, accounts for both the paranoid timidity of game animals and the paranoid murderousness of predators. The latter absorbed the toxins through eating the flesh of the former in a primordial era. Among the mythic effects of the narcotics is sexual wantonness, which accounts for animal violations of incest and adultery taboos (Luckert, 1978). The Navajo do nonetheless employ jimsonweed ritually in order to divine the whereabouts of stolen or lost property (Hill, 1938b). Importantly, the origin myth of the Navajo ritual hunt, which nowhere refers to jimsonweed except perhaps through esoteric symbolism, styles every hunter's every act of hunting as a recovery of stolen game (Luckert, 1975). Jimsonweed is also known to be used to relieve pain in Lifeway ceremonials, but not apparently in Holyway rites such as

Coyoteway (Kaplan & Johnson, 1964). Significantly, the sweat lodge where Claus Chee Sonny conducted his esoteric hunting rites was built beside a stand of hallucinogenic plants (Luckert, 1978). Whether or not hallucinogens were customarily employed in the esoteric sweat lodge rites of which we are largely ignorant, the Coyote transformation myth describes one Navajo hunter who did become Jimson-Weed Young Man during a ritual hunt. Drug-induced priapism accounts for his sexual activity, and the impotence sometimes attending priapism explains that the disguised Changing Coyote's inability to loose an arrow from his bow was a consciously intended phallic symbolism.

On the religio-mythic level, the Coyote transformation myth pertains to an exorcism of jimsonweed-induced possession by Coyote that occasions nervous disorders of various sorts. In ethnopsychiatric terms, the myth discusses a culturally congenial therapy of both the mental derangement and nervous disorders produced by jimsonweed abuse. Remembering that a myth always serves as the exemplary or archetypal instance of a larger range of applications than are explicitly mentioned, Coyote transformation may be said to occur to a hunter for whom the psychohygienic function of hunter ritualism has failed. For him the hunt has become so very abhorrent that he can no longer bear his guilt over being a hunter. In result, he flees from normal familial life and the moral responsibility that it entails, into the domain of predation where he ceases to bear responsibility for his actions, since he is now possessed by Coyote. He cannot now employ ordinary religious rituals to end his lycanthropy, because he is no longer acting religiously. Rather, he has developed real neuroses, and his unconscious is employing symbols of religious origin in generating neurotic behaviour.

In clinical terms, Coyote transformation bears description as an ethnopsychiatric example of traumatic neurosis (Fenichel, 1945). Whether a single traumatic event or the strain of protracted stress has exhausted the ego's defenses, the hunt has become traumatic. Trauma is, by definition, an experience impossible either to master or to discharge, which therefore remains fixated. The fantasy of playing at being a predator while hunting has, due to trauma, lost its quality as fantasy. The fantasy had allowed the ego to suppress its guilt feelings, to attribute responsibility to the "hunt superego" of Coyote, and finally to discharge the guilt in sublimated form through hunting ritualism. Trauma instead forces the burden of guilt directly onto the ego. Coyote, who alone is responsible for guilt in hunting, is consequently forced onto the ego as the ego's own identity. A reaction-formation is instituted as well. Once identified with Coyote, the ego becomes excessively aggressive in defense against the moral implications of familial values, which can no longer be tolerated consciously and instead become subject to automatic, un-

conscious repression.

Various classic symptoms of traumatic neurosis can be recognized in the Navajo description of Coyote transformation. The repetition of the traumatic event, in the form of fantasies, thoughts, and feelings, is symbolized in the myth by Changing Coyote in the hunter's form. The hunter, ostensibly returned from the hunt, is psychologically still reliving the hunt. Sleeplessness or, at best, troubled sleep, caused by preoccupation with the trauma, is indicated in the disguised Coyote's implicit inability to sleep during his night-long sexual activities. His impotence, when hunting the next day, to discharge an arrow from his bow bears interpretation in the Navajo context where every act of coitus is a predation by man on woman, his game animal. The motif symbolizes sexual impotence, a further symptom of traumatic neurosis. The misery of the hunter, who is unable to put off the Coyote skin, involves a hunger so severe as to present a danger of starvation despite the passage of a matter of mere hours. Regression to an "oral-receptive way of mastering the outer world" (Fenichel, 1945, p. 125) seems indicated. Not mentioned in the myth, but plainly dealt with in the Coyoteway ceremonial is the further expectable symptom of spells of uncontrollable rage. The rage might be expected to be directed principally against Coyote for reason of his failure to protect the hunter from trauma, but the impiety of such anger accounts for its suppression in the myth. Changing Coyote is characterized as a trickster but not as evil. The suppression of the anger presumably involves its return in the form of anxiety and guilt, further expectable symptoms. The transformed hunter is anxious about his condition in a depressively forlorn, miserable manner. To the initial guilt over killing, that continues to be felt but is now without a channel for external discharge, are added further guilt feelings over the breach of taboo, which won Coyote sickness as its consequence, and over the impiety of rage felt against Coyote. These several layers of guilt, many of them unconscious, work to heighten the specifically religio-moral character of the traumatic neurosis.

Coyote transformation differs from a typical traumatic neurosis in one important respect. The reliving of the trauma takes the form of ritual behavior as well as of fantasies, thoughts, and feelings. Although with no more than partial effectiveness, the psychohygienic function of the religious ritualism apparently continues to operate. Because the traumatic neurosis presupposes the healthy religious ritualism, the onset of the neurosis commences at a stage of partial therapy. The religious ritual provides both some cognitive distance from the full impact of the trauma and a behavioral mode for belated discharge, the twin aims of therapy (Fenichel, 1945). In result, the onset of Coyote transformation is already at a stage of resistance—to Coyote, rather than to the

therapist—and the consequent behavior is a variety of repetition-compulsion that is readily permissive of treatment. The repetition-compulsions are, moreover, sociologically functional. Because they are obvious to on-lookers, they are unlikely to go untreated for very long.

Coyoteway

With a precise understanding of the psychological implications of the cultural context presupposed by the Coyoteway ceremonial, we may now examine the rite itself. In 1974, Luckert recorded a nine-night ceremonial of Coyoteway, a Holyway which had previously been regarded as extinct as early as 1910. As with all nine-night Navajo ceremonials, Coyoteway is esoteric, is held in a sweat lodge consecrated for the purpose, and consists of a four-night "misfortune part," a four-night "blessing part," and a summation or conclusion on the ninth night for which the Navajo have no particular term.

The major thrust of the "misfortune part" consists of a ritual sweat bath on each of the first four days. Various plant substances are compounded into a medicine called *iilkooh*. The Chanter rubs some onto the patient's skin. The remainder is brewed into a tea that is drunk by all persons attending the rite. Although called emetics, neither *iilkooh* nor the corresponding medicines in other Navajo rites produce vomiting (Luckert, 1979; Reichard, 1970). Luckert (1979) did report having a mystical experience during the ceremonial, but he said nothing of the medicine having been hallucinogenic. A further medicine, named *ketloh*, is sprinkled on the patient, or "one sung over." Both medicines are termed Coyote's water. The ritually consecrated fire produces heat and smoke that fill the sweat lodge. Over the seated patient the Chanter sings chants recited verbatim from memory. Most describe mythic actions by Coyote. All are given in fixed, traditional sequence. The chants functionally provide a text for the patient to contemplate during his sweat bath each day, guiding him step by step in mystical experience to envision Coyote enacting his mythic behavior.

On the fourth day, as the climax of the "misfortune part," the chants abruptly change character. Each chant contains some twenty to forty lines, each of which either commences or concludes with a refrain. The progression of the chants on the fourth day moves from the third person refrains, "Now he is moving" and "Now he is walking," to the first person "It is I walking!" and "It is I made strong" (Luckert, 1979, p. 94). Luckert observed that the patient "experienced the presence of Coyote mystically, after the manner of shamanic possession by some greater-than-human divine being" (1979, p. 123). In other words, the "misfortune part" induces an ecstatic identification by the patient with Coyote.

Various subsidiary ceremonies and rites are performed. Unravellings of medicine bundles, fire consecrations, washing rites, and other ceremonies aim by means either of their symbolism or their ritual awesomeness during ecstasy to reinforce the ecstatic transformation of the patient into Coyote. The term "misfortune part" presumably refers to the deliberate, ecstatic induction of the very complaint that the patient suffers.

The second four nights and days of Coyoteway, comprising the "blessing part," involve basket-drum ceremonies in the evenings and sandpainting ceremonies in the mornings. The basket-drum ceremonies consist of chants accompanied by a rattle and by drumming on an inverted ceremonial basket. The sandpainting rites consist of the patient seated on a sandpainting which is erased during the course of the rite. As well, dancers dressed and masked to impersonate deities perform mimes during the sandpainting rites.

On each of the fifth through seventh mornings, a dancer in mask and kilt representing Coyote enters the lodge. He administers two medicines to the patient, alternately touches cedar twigs to figures in the sandpainting and to bodily parts of the patient, moves about the lodge and howls in taking possession of the sacred place, howls next at close range into the patient's ears, and leaves the lodge. Luckert noted that "for some hours after this ceremony the patient remains silent. He seems visibly shaken" (1979, p. 149).

On the eighth morning, the Coyote dancer is a different man, who now carries in his arm a stuffed blue fox, symbolic of Coyote. With him are male dancers impersonating Talking-God and Female-God. The masks of Blue Coyote Carrier and Female-God are identical. The patient greets their approach outside the lodge to receive their blessing. Talking-God dances near, gives his call, and sprinkles pollen on him. Coyote Carrier approaches, raises the stuffed blue fox, and gives his howl. Both dancers next repeat the same actions toward Female-God. This whole process is repeated from each cardinal direction. Once inside the lodge, Coyote Carrier lays the stuffed fox on a blanket, its function having been completed. Talking-God sprinkles pollen, cornmeal, and medicine on the figures of the sandpainting; after which Coyote Carrier administers the medicines as in the previous days' mimes (Luckert, 1979).

To summarize, the first mimes have Coyote take possession of the sweat lodge and possess the patient. In the final mime, Coyote is exteriorized as the "coyote skin" of the stuffed fox. In Navajo religious anthropology, all supernaturals, personified natural phenomena, plants and animals have an "inner form" that is anthropomorphic. In Haile's (1943) view, the inner form is the indestructible life essence, whereas the physical form is a cover or attire, rather than a necessary place of

residence. Hence, for example, the "sun," meaning the solar orb, has as its inner form the "day carrier," the anthropomorphic supernatural who carries the sun disc. In similar fashion, Blue Coyote Carrier would signify the true life essence of the god. His coyote-skin coat is no more than the animal form that he animates or carries. Because the patient is possessed by the coat rather than by Blue Coyote Carrier, the patient's reconciliation with the god, who has himself exteriorized his coat, has as its necessary implication the symbolic exorcism of the patient's state of possession.

In the three-dancer mime, Talking-God's presence presupposes his role in the tribal initiation ceremonial of Nightway, with its night vigil symbolic of death and rebirth (Matthews, 1902; Sander, 1979). Female-God, if she is to be identified with White Shell Woman and Changing Woman, would invoke the parallel motifs in the girl's puberty initiation, the Kinaalda (Frisbie, 1967). In any event, Female-God alludes to the domain of familial life. Although present and blessed by the two masculine deities, she herself remains inactive and identifiable with the patient, who is now himself entering the domain of familial life.

Like the idea of sandpainting, the designs of the Coyoteway sandpaintings and the chants sung over them are of agricultural and Pueblo inspiration. In these syncretising chants, reference is made to the different concept of Coyote in agricultural myths, where he figures as a companion to First Man. The assimilation of agricultural sandpainting ceremonies to the older, shamanic ceremonial nonetheless displays psychological consistency, not in the minutiae of the sandpaintings' symbolism, but in their general structures as rites. Each morning, a sandpainting is completed by the Chanter and his assistants before the patient first enters the lodge. Once the patient sits on the sandpainting, cedar twigs are touched alternately to its figures and to the patient's body. Lastly, the patient goes outside and the sandpainting is erased (Luckert, 1979). The Navajo explain the removal of the sandpainting as a removal of the illness (Kluckhohn & Leighton, 1974). Once again, a symbolism of exorcism can be recognized.

The chants sung in the basket drum ceremony each evening follow their own progression. The climactic series of chants on the eighth evening have the following sequence of refrains:

With my Mind I walk...
I am looking for my Mind...
I have found my Mind...
I am bringing back my Mind...
I am reviving my Mind...
Now my Mind is walking with me...

Now my Mind is remade for me...
 Now my Mind returns with me...
 Now I am sitting with my Mind...
 ...everything is made Happiness.
 ...they are singing for me.
 ...it is raining for me.
 ...the blessing is given. (Luckert, 1979, pp. 112-117)

These refrains, each of which is repeated forty or so times, functionally provide a text leading the patient through meditations. The chants assume the patient possessed by Coyote and imagining himself seeking, finding, and reabsorbing his own normal ego. The return of the patient's persona on the eighth evening accounts for the already-completed exteriorization of the blue fox at the commencement of the three-dancer mime the next morning.

The summation ceremony of the ninth night involves basket-drum chanting and a ceremony in which yucca leaves are burnt to ashes and suspended in water that the patient is given to drink (Luckert, 1979). The symbolism associates the consecrated fires of the sweat baths of the "misfortune part" with yucca, alluding probably to the cactus' association with Talking-God (Sapir & Hoijer, 1942) and thus to Talking-God's role as exorcist in the final mime of the "blessing part."

As should be clear, the "misfortune part" of Coyoteway re-induces both ritual and ecstatic transformation of the patient into Coyote. The "blessing part" then reverses these effects. Coyoteway implicitly presupposes that ordinary sweat lodge rites on the hunter's return from the hunt have failed because error was made in the initial rites at the hunt's beginning. Ritual control of ecstatic possession must therefore be recommenced at its beginning, when control was first lost. The reconciliation with Coyote that Coyoteway accomplishes involves no more than a re-education, a rite of renewed initiation, into the proper ritual devotion that Coyote requires.

From a psychiatric point of view, the patient is guided by means of symbolic rituals, sweat baths, continence, various dietary abstinences, perhaps psychoactive medicines, and meditations on chants to experience religious ecstasy of extremely detailed content. There is shrewd psychodynamic manipulation here, by which the Chanter aids the "one sung over" to attain specific insights. The "misfortune part" provides the insight that Coyote transformation was ritually and hence artificially induced, while the "blessing part" shows it to be entirely temporary in significance. Simultaneous to these insights into the origin of the affliction, the exorcism of Coyote through the chants of the "blessing part" provides a channel for exteriorizing the neurosis-causing guilt, by direc-

ting the aggression outward at Coyote. Coyote, and not the patient, is asserted to be responsible for killing. Because Coyote is divine, the patient undergoes immediate catharsis and forgives himself a guilt that is not properly his. In the final three-dancer mime, the patient is taken the necessary step farther. His aggression against Coyote is an impiety that has been encouraged temporarily in order to relieve the symptoms of Coyote transformation. The underlying conflict of aggression and piety in the patient's attitude to Coyote is now attacked directly with a crucial insight. Coyote is revealed as a composite figure, consisting of the coyote-skin coat (ritually, the stuffed blue fox) and Blue Coyote Carrier. Aggression toward the coat is not impiety toward the god. The presence of Talking-God and Female-God during the mime serves to integrate these insights into the patient's general consciousness of moral responsibility in the familial sphere of activity. Meditations during and after the ceremonial provide a format for working through the various insights. Assumption that Coyoteway produces a remission of symptoms, rather than genuine adjustment and cure, would not be warranted.

Conclusion

The ritual hunt, the Coyoteway ceremonial, and the Coyote transformation myth of Excessway, a part of Coyoteway, are all either extinct or on the verge of extinction. Traditional Navajo hunting ritualism, as here reconstructed (in the ethnographic present), proves sensitive to the emotional and moral conflicts faced by the hunter. Distaste for the bloodshed of the kill, fears for danger during the hunt, and moral concerns for the propriety of the slaughter of game are commonly resolved through the symbolic projection of a god of the hunt—technically, an “animal guardian” rather than a “master of animals” (Paulson, 1964). Because Coyote is an exemplary predator, *imitateo dei* provides the basis for a series of ritual beliefs and behaviors whose moral validity has supernatural sanction. The extensive religious fantasy surrounding the hunt lends it a cathartic function, nearer that of play than work. Catharsis through fantasy makes the ritual or symbolic actions of the hunt a psychohygienic defense against the inevitable emotional stresses of stalking, ambushing, and slaying.

Coyote transformation, the exemplar of Coyote illness, might well be termed a “hunting neurosis.” Whether gradually or suddenly the trauma of hunting strips the symbolic actions of their quality as fantasy. Cathartic discharge of the stress proves unattainable. With the religious ritualism traumatically fixated, increasingly emphatic efforts are made in the vain drive to achieve cathartic discharge by repeating the symbolic actions. Neurotic affectivity and compulsiveness transform the religious

ritualism into a neurotic ritualism, as pathological defense mechanisms replace psychohygienic ones.

The Coyoteway ceremonial, which might well be termed a "singing therapy," aims to alleviate the hunting neurosis while leaving the religious ritualism intact. To this end, it brings the patient to recognize his lack of guilt for his condition, by causing him to direct his anger at Coyote. Once the patient's aggression has been sufficiently exteriorized to permit an alleviation of the symptoms of Coyote transformation, Coyote is revealed as bipartite. His coyote-skin coat is retained as the channel of the patient's aggression, while Coyote's essence as Blue Coyote Carrier is made the object of the patient's continued religious veneration. These insights permit the patient to resolve his conflicts in a manner not wholly different from Western psychiatric work.

While the standard occupational neurosis of the Navajo hunter accommodates an equally standardized cure, there are no provisions in Coyoteway for secondary complications of the traumatic neurosis by latent neuroses of other, chiefly psychosexual, kinds. Further research will be needed, however, before a final judgment may be made on Navajo psychotherapy as a whole. Equally standardized "singing therapies" exist whose contents are directed toward psychosexual concerns. The Kinaalda, or girl's puberty rite, is or was traditionally undergone twice by every Navajo girl. The tribal initiation rite of Nightway was undergone four times by every Navajo pubescent, and Blessingway remains the single most frequently performed and attended Navajo ceremonial. At this time of writing, the cumulative effect of the Kinaalda, Nightway, and Blessingway ceremonials both as preventatives and as cures, should not be prejudged in the negative.

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