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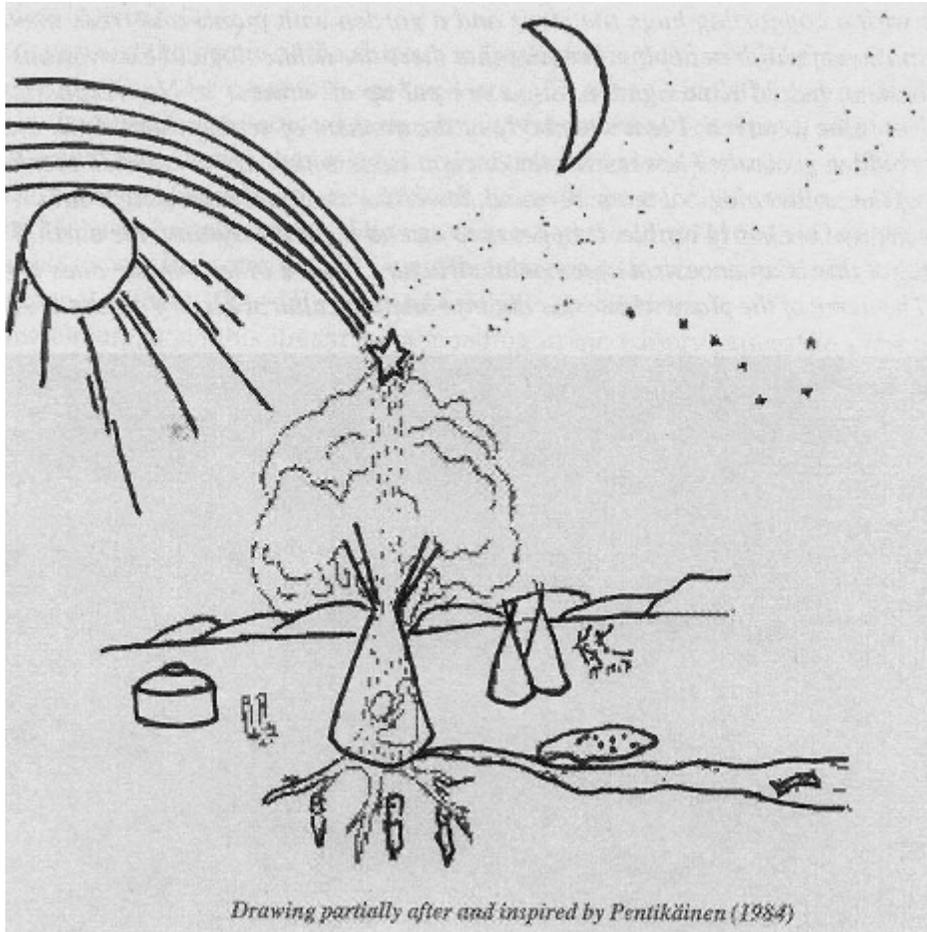
SHAMANIC INQUIRY  
AS  
RECOVERY OF INDIGENOUS MIND

**Toward an egalitarian  
exchange of knowledge**

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**[P125] Abstract**



### [P126] Dreaming

A few years ago I had a dream which pertains to the issues at hand:

*The location of the dream is Hamburg, the town where I grew up in Northern Germany. Sitting on the threshold in the doorway of a pre-war brick house beside my partner I overlook the river Elbe from on high. We are atop the ancient ice age rim of the river, the border of its once miles wide flow, thousands of years ago when reindeer roamed these latitudes. The reindeer now live much farther north, and the river moves in a much more narrow bed; yet it still spreads to considerable widths three hundred or so feet below us, where ferries criss-cross its course and ocean liners enter and leave the harbor. We are not just sitting atop an ancient river bed, but also very close to the old building where I went for Kindergarten shortly after the Second World War. At that time it was a place with a comforting huge tile stove and a garden with plants and trees inviting the imagination of children at play. I realize that there are archaeological excavations in process behind the old Kindergarten. Signs are put up all around it: No trespassing! Stay out! Not to be deterred, I leave my body at the moment of seeing these signs and enter the forbidden grounds. I hover over the ancient ruins which are uncovered thanks to the work of the archaeological team. A round, towerlike structure emerging from the depths of the ground is clearly visible. It appears to extend a good ways into the earth. I understand that this is an ancestral ceremonial structure, as are other similar ones right next to it. The name of the place where this dig into ancient cultural history occurs is*

Altona – [P127] meaning “all-too-near.” Legend has it that an orphan was blindfolded when the burghers of Hamburg wanted to expand their overpopulated city. The idea was to place the new town where the orphan would stumble and fall. But what happened was unexpected. The boy had barely left the city gates, when he stumbled and fell. The attendant burghers exclaimed in surprise that this was all too near, in the local vernacular: “All to nah!” - thence the name for this part of the city - Altona. The place where I gain access to the layers below the contemporary city and old ancestral cultural memories is all too close in this dream, right there with my childhood, and fenced in by signs forbidding entry.

I wake up bringing with me not only the memory of the dream images, but its self-interpretation at the end. This dream contained an answer to the curiosity and spiritual hunger which I had tried to satisfy since adolescence through the study of native peoples and shamanism in particular.

This dream and the image of the abstract at the beginning define my approach to shamanic inquiry. They also point to the cultural struggle of "the west." The key to shamanic inquiry in the eurocentered context is the remembrance *in itself* of what it seeks in other peoples - recovering indigenous mind. Cultural history and the prevailing definitions of scientific inquiry make such a project difficult, to say the least. Native American intellectual John Mohawk has put it thus: "I do not want people to adopt Indian rituals because I want people to own their own rituals. I want them to come to ownership out of experiences that are real to them. Then I'll come and celebrate it with them."

Let me circumlocute this dream by responding to the editors' request to present my personal interpretation of shamanism. The following statements are purposefully succinct and provocative; they are presented in no particular order or hierarchy. A theorem is the result of something seen (Greek θεωρεω), whether as mental speculation or at a spectacle or performance. I offer what I have speculated and seen of proceedings shamanic as "conversation pieces" arranged around the dream and the image initially given. This is what I have learned from my work with Native Elders, shamans, medicine people, and noaidis. As such they are my personal contribution to an ancient immanent conversation. This particular conversation disallows artificial splits between the concrete and abstract, between the personal-biographical and the impersonal-general, between transcendent and immanent, etc. It is integral in the profoundest sense of the word. I have presented arguments for my approach elsewhere, references to these publications are inserted behind technical terms or statements warranting explication. Here I am describing my perspective in a personal way. I am doing this with awareness of my maleness, and my mixed Germanic ancestry. I am also quite conscious of my current location in the U.S., and the impact Native American intellectuals and spiritual leaders have had on me. I write for Europeans and people of European descent; others engaged in a eurocentered consciousness process need to see what useful things they may or may not glean from this. I paint black and white, what truly isn't black and white at all - but all this may be a good starting point for a conversation.



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#### Conversation Piece #1

##### **Shamanism is a construct which mirrors eurocentric thinking.**

The *Ism* of shamanism is the part "made up" or constructed by the early ethnographers and anthropologists serving the abstracting and universalizing pursuit of truth as defined in the western sciences. This definition of science is inherently imperialistic, as it relinquishes its participation in the phenomena in order to grasp and control what is left to be seen after the act of dissociation (1992b). Thus, as *shamanism* attempts to grasp the desired knowledge it may reflect more of itself in the mirror, than of the native peoples it is interacting with. In this sense the *Ism* of shamanism is all made up by eurocentric thinking. At this historical juncture I feel an obligation for specific cultural healing to the Tungus *aman* whose exposure to Russian visitors in the 17th century presumably led to the terminology of shamanism (see Voigt, 1984, for a discussions of the etymology and history of the word shaman); had ethnographers written in a similar vein about the *yomtás* of the Pomo-Miwok people, or the *noaidis* of the Sámi people, or the *volvas* of the Norse people, or the *hataalis* of the Diné people, we now might have the *Ism* of *Yomtism*, *Noaidism*, *Volvism*, or *Hataalism*. My interest is in the specificity of the immanent conversation, not just in order to pay homage to cultural diversity, but to continue and affirm the specific indigenous knowledge (whether ecological, medical, astronomical, or otherwise) which can help us in our times of crisis. The most important questions to ask for any inquirer into matters shamanic is: What is the construction, what is the conversation I am participating in, if I am to inquire into what I am interested in? The *Ism* is the part where the labors of eurocentric social constructions are most visible, and where the loss of specific understanding of people, places, times, stories, and ceremonies needs to be recovered; the *aman* (or *noaidi* or *yomta*) is where the power of individual, cultural, and ecological healing rests through the specificity of the conversation.

#### Conversation Piece #2

##### **Reflection upon and awareness of one's own cultural viewpoint is a mandatory prerequisite for participation in the conversation.**

I view shamanism as a particular aspect of an ancient, immanent conversation which indigenous people all over are continuing to this day (1996b, g, 1997e). This conversation

is summarized in the graphic of the abstract. It is defined by its conscious participation in the phenomena (rather than a distancing view of the phenomena; 1992b). People of European descent or people who have entered the eurocentered process of consciousness have split themselves off from this ongoing interaction with place, ancestry, animals, plants, spirit(s), community, story, ceremony, cycles of life, and cycles of the seasons and ages. This dissociation has created a conceptualization of social evolution, in which a major shift has occurred from prehistory to history, from oral traditions to writing civilizations, from the immanent presence of spirit(s) to the transcendence of god(s). In my [P129] analysis, we engage in acts of imperialism - however subtle they may be - as long as we don't understand our own shamanic and indigenous roots. I find it only legitimate to write about shamanism if what I write is true to my own shamanic tradition (even when and especially when writing about others). We can only be proper participants in shamanic exchange and dialogue if we know who we are as indigenous people. Otherwise we should take our hands off of other cultures. (1996a, 1994a, e).

#### Conversation Piece #3

##### **The inquirer as partner in dialogue.**

So, why do inquiry - even shamanic inquiry as recovery of indigenous mind? I can only think of one good reason: To resume an ancient conversation, which has balance as a goal (rather than control and progress), in order to be able to redress the ill effects wrought by an obsession with technological progress, an increase in population, etc. For me to become a partner in dialogue I need to recover my own indigenous roots, not to recreate a past long gone, but to move into the future in a complete, holistic conversation. If this is the context for dialogical inquiry, then there is no privileged access to knowledge nor a privileged preservation of knowledge; "Truth" has become truths or "temporary resolutions" to the issues at hand. As part of such conversation and dialogue it may become apparent that there are certain things to be said, and certain things which we need to be silent about (in our own tradition or in traditions we are exchanging with). (1997e, 1996a, f, 1994d)

#### Conversation Piece #4

##### **If I don't know who I am as an indigenous person, I should not write about other indigenous people.**

Fundamentally, in my book there is no legitimate inquiry about shamanism unless I know who I am as an indigenous person. Of course, as a consequence of knowing that (or parts of that) the need for inquiry and the nature of inquiry change entirely. If I know who I am as an indigenous or cultural person (however fragmented that understanding may be), then I *may* be able to relate to other native peoples (peoples still practicing shamanism) as an equal partner in dialogue, rather than arrive as an outsider intent on finding "Truth" (the implicit assumption of the eurocentered paradigm is that this "Truth" then ultimately *should* also become the tribe's "Truth" as evolution continues, and the tribe investigated advances on the evolutionary ladder, thus presumably incorporating the "Truth" of self-defined more advanced civilizations). Of course, my guiding interests in shamanic inquiry are bound to change as I understand and remember myself as a person with indigenous roots. As long as we think writing about shamanism is about "them," we remain unconscious of shamanism in us. (1996a, 1994h)

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Conversation Piece #5

**Shamanism is just one aspect of the immanent conversation of native peoples.**

For me it is important to keep in mind that what is commonly understood as shamanism is just one aspect of a complex set of cultural practices. (It should be noted that the terms "shaman" and "shamanism" are problematic for many indigenous peoples, Native Americans in particular.) To split the indigenous conversation in such a way that healing endeavors become highlighted serves eurocentered research approaches and their knowledge construction, but distorts what is known by virtue of decontextualization. What appears as unusual, inexplicable or even bizarre through this lense may have entirely different connotations if seen as part of the holistic indigenous conversation. Thus we exaggerate the unusualness of phenomena, ultimately only trivializing it because it is denuded of what it is a natural part of. It splits individual healing from communal or cultural healing, it neglects that individual illness is situated in the context of a process of cultural balancing - history, place, story, ceremony, etc. For me this means that my shamanic inquiry requires that I participate in the entire conversation, and understand healing from that perspective. "To heal" is etymologically connected with the German *heilen*, and the indo-european root \*kailo-, referring to a state and process of wholeness ("whole" also being related to this root). But "to heal" is also connectect to "holy" (as is *heilen* to *heilig*), which gives an ancient root to the reemergent wholistic and transpersonal perspectives on healing. Lincoln (1986, 118) concludes his analysis of "healing" in the indo-european context by stating "that it is not just a damaged body that one restores to wholeness and health, but the very universe itself. ... The full extent of such knowledge is now revealed in all its grandeur: the healer must understand and be prepared to manipulate nothing less than the full structure of the cosmos." For what is stated here regarding the older layers of indo-european thinking we can find analogies in contemporary indigenous traditions, such as the Navajo chantways. (1997h, 1996a, b, g).

Conversation Piece #6

**Recovery of indigenous mind is the appropriate contemporary definition of shamanism for people of eurocentered consciousness.**

Shamanism is commonly defined as the practice of some form of "technology" (including intentional alterations of consciousness) for the benefit of individuals or a community, conducted by practitioners who have been endorsed by this community. It is my contention that the appropriate contemporary practice of shamanism for people ensconced in the eurocentered paradigm is the recovery of their indigenous roots (and this way their own "shamanic" traditions, "shamanic" being a word probably more appropriate for people of Eurasian descent than anybody else). This is the starting point from which all manners of shamanic healing may arise. This then is a healing process on behalf of the individual, family history, history, community; in short, it is the healing of the [P131] dissociative split and the recovery of participation in the phenomena. Physical and psychological healing are a particular aspects of this. Shamanic inquiry becomes recovery of indigenous mind, which becomes the resumption of the ancient, immanent conversation. Ecologist Wolfgang Sachs talks about the necessity to develop the social imagination for sustainability; it is my contention that we can develop such imagination

through the restitution of the indigenous consciousness process, where we can inquire about and understand the needs of all participants in a particular place and time. Balance may thus be regained. To presume that any such project of recovery work can arrive within one lifetime at the level of immanent conversation still practiced by contemporary native peoples (even in the face of colonization) would be hubris - recovering the indigenous consciousness process after a prolonged history of dissociation is a multigenerational project.

#### Conversation Piece #7

**We need to travel in a way which does not touch "the other" with the virus of progress.**

How then are we to travel to other places and do inquiry about shamanic traditions? Maybe we are *not* to travel there. The minute we cease and desist the "othering" of shamanic cultures we have to question deeply why we are traveling and where we are going. If we aspire to be partners in dialogue, then any conversation requires mutual consent. Additionally, it requires the consent of all participants in the conversation. This means, for example, that I cannot travel without my ancestors. It also means that I need a welcome from the ancestors of where I want to go. Thus it takes an invitation from the partners in dialogue, but it also takes permission from ones own indigenous culture. Dreams are important here. Offerings and conversation with spirit(s) are mandatory. And more. I know that as long as I don't travel within the framework of this immanent conversation I am bound to infect wherever I go with the virus of dissociation and progress. I can only travel once the other has ceased to be other for me. (See McGrane, 1989 for relevant discussions; Kremer, 1994a).

## Conversation Piece #8

### **The hunger for shamanism is the denial of the indigenous roots from which eurocentered thinking originated.**

The current interest in shamanism reflects more than just a "legitimate research field" (in the scientific view), which is finally receiving some acknowledgement (of course, the legitimacy of this interest is tautologically defined and justified by the scientific paradigm itself). With it comes a cultural hunger created by the loss of indigenous conversations in eurocentered societies. The fascination with exotic other cultures, the nostalgic yearning [P132] for something ideal in the past, or the romantic images of Native Americans riding the plains or retreating into kivas on remote mesas - all this originates from cultural starvation. Of course, there is an incredible amount we can learn from indigenous peoples in general, and shamanism specifically, which may benefit our modernist pathologies, provided this learning occurs in an appropriate context. And, of course, indigenous peoples have never lived in a perfect world, the ideal of balance is always and at best a fleeting achievement. Traditional Hopi stories describing situations where things are out of balance (*koyaanisqatsi*) are very educational in this regard; see the Hopi Ruin Legends (Lomatuway'ma et al., 1993). Our idealizations are the flip side of evolutionary thinking, and an expression of its shadow. The projection of our hunger onto other cultural traditions is not going to satisfy the emptiness in ourselves. In a sense it is junk food. Being nurtured by our own indigenous traditions and nurturing them in return is what will satisfy and stop idealizations, romanticism, and nostalgia. The research of other cultures and the incorporation of their practices without consent is only legitimate, as long as we act within a dissociative paradigm. Once we regain our own immanent conversation, inquiry and exchange of ceremonial practices need to await guidance from the conversation of all parties involved - ancestors, communities, plants, animals, stars, and all. Or, in the words of Jung: "Shall we be able to put on, like a new suit of clothes, ready-made symbols grown on foreign soil, saturated with foreign blood, spoken in a foreign tongue, nourished by a foreign culture, interwoven with foreign history, and so resemble a beggar who wraps himself in kingly raiment, a king who disguises himself as beggar? No doubt this is possible. Or is there something in ourselves that commands us to go in for no mummeries, but perhaps to sew our garment ourselves?" (1970, 49)

## Converation Piece #9

### **The cross-cultural differences between indigenous and eurocentered peoples is qualitative, rather than quantitative.**

Another way of saying this is: Cross-cultural differences between eurocentered peoples are of the same order, and cross-cultural differences between indigenous peoples are of the same order, but the differences between these two groups are of a different order or quality. I have defined the evolutionary trajectory of the so-called civilizing process as dissociative schismogenesis (1992b, c). This is a run-away pathological process, where the split from one's origin increases in an addictive dynamic governed by progress ideologies, and where the loss of awareness of one's root has tremendous power. Phenomena are seen as entirely external, and one's participation in the phenomena is unconscious. - On the other hand, the immanent conversation of native peoples is aware of its active participation in the creation of the phenomena. The (explicit or implicit) goal of the conversation is not some transcendent state or some evolutionary goal set in the future; the goal is balance within each individual, between individuals, and among *all* participants of the conversation, balance within the cycles of the different world ages, balance as hunters, [P133] horticulturalists, gatherers or pastoralists, balance as sedentary people or nomads. - This qualitative difference between these two groups of cultures leads to tremendous interactive problems, which remain largely veiled for eurocentric folk. They are the proverbial apples and oranges. The dissociative inquirer can only approach the participative conversation qua dissociative means - resulting in an imperialistic acquisition of knowledge. The participative conversation, because of its values, usually welcomes dissociative inquirers, even when their pathology is apparent (the traditional worldview usually makes such open door policy practically mandatory, and frequently disregards the significant qualitative difference in paradigm, a difference which is also politically highly relevant). The truth generated by this approach (whether in one of the sciences or as new age spiritual practice) is, in final analysis, a validation for the conversation of the dominant paradigm. The indigenous conversation has no need for research other than the ceremonial and spiritual inquiry into what is needed for balancing in a particular place at a specific time in history. To my mind that is more research than most of us can handle. Exchanges with other indigenous cultures are guided by the contents of this conversation. - Wislawa Szymborska's poem *Conversation with a stone* describes the distinction I am talking about aptly: " "You shall not enter," says the stone. // "You lack the sense of taking part. // No other sense can make up for your missing sense of taking part. // Even sight heightened to become all-seeing // will do you no good without a sense of taking part. // You shall not enter, you have only a sense of what that sense should be, // only its seed, imagination." " - These differences in paradigm can easily be illustrated in the area of physical healing, say with herbs: Within the eurocentered paradigm we pick an herb for its curative properties known to relieve a certain ailment. Herb collection is an entirely different event within an indigenous context. Here, it is a ceremonial event which involves spirit, and, especially, the spirits of the plant to be collected. It is a participatory event with the plant relations which presupposes detailed knowledge, including knowledge of their "language." It requires knowledge of cycles and preparations necessary for gathering. It means understanding plants like any other intelligent people. This is no longer the collection of an herb, but an

engagement and appointment with spirit to help heal. What heals is more than the beneficial chemical ingredient in the herb.

#### Conversation Piece #10

##### **Dialog partners have the historic task of healing the history of projective identification in relation to indigenous peoples.**

In relation to indigenous peoples colonialism is always an essential ingredient in the context of exchange, dialogue or research. The euro-centered, well-bounded ego frequently cannot see this deep structure of such encounters, which is present whether talked about or left unspoken or unconscious. It is this ego, which is likely to project from its personality make-up whatever it has dissociated from into its own past or onto indigenous peoples. In fact, projective identification may be the most apt clinical term to point to the [P134] psycho-emotional process eurocentered cultures are engaged in with contemporary indigenous peoples (this term also acknowledges that history is carried and handed down specifically in the process of socialization within each individual). Projective identification means that other people are made to feel the highly conflicted and split off material dominant cultures unconsciously injected into them - so that they feel and experience it as if it is their own. Natives feel the eurocentered dissociation from prehistory, ancestry, nature, etc. as self-hatred ("primitives") which is destructive to their cultures. Of course, self-hatred as an effect of internalized colonization warrants a much longer statement than I can offer here. Notably, in individual psychotherapy projective identification is known to be a pathological process oftentimes quite resistant to change because of its strongly self-reinforcing nature; this would seem to imply that we can assume strong resistance to the healing of the history of colonialism in the relationship between indigenous and eurocentered cultures. I would think that the retraction of these projections is the first order of business; for this we need a different metaphor than "regression in the service of the ego", which is appropriate for individual psychotherapy. I suggest that the integration of history and prehistory qua connection with indigenous roots (recovering indigenous mind) is an appropriate terminology. The reintegration of cultural shadow material presupposes the possibility of an ego - the indigenous ego in communal conversation, if you wish - which would be differently constructed than our contemporary ego can easily imagine. The revival of shamanic practices can be an aspect of the resolution of historically determined shadow material - or it may perpetrate the denial further.

#### Conversation Piece #11

##### **Psychologizing spirit(s) misses the mark.**

For Europeans and Euroamericans the easiest way - other than by anthropological means - to approach native peoples and their shamanism is probably via psychology, particularly transpersonal psychology. This seems to be the current moving force within eurocentered societies, where the influence of psychological thinking has increased steadily over the years. Joseph Campbell's approach to mythology and Jung's archetypal psychology offer attractive avenues in this regard. While these and others can be extremely helpful for people of euro-centered consciousness, they easily become problematic projections when applied to native peoples. Jung himself had actually quite a good understanding of this when he looked toward alchemy as an earlier tradition in his own background or when he

stated: "A spiritual need has produced in our time the "discovery" of psychology." While various forms of psychology may open the door to the remembrance of an indigenous mind process for people of European descent, even transpersonal psychology is hardly identical with it. It is important to be aware that an archetype is not a spirit.

Psychologizing spirit is a way of preserving and affirming eurocentered thinking. Faris (1990, 12) has summarized this succinctly in his discussion of the Jungian interpretations of Navajo traditions: " Such motions ... are still popular and [P135] continue to be attractive to both romantics and humanists who seem interested in fitting Navajo belief into some variety of universal schema - reducing its own rich logic to but variation and fodder for a truth derived from Western arrogances - even if their motivations are to elevate it." To my mind the prerequisite for writing about shamanism is that spirits are or have been present to the author. Otherwise it seems more appropriate to be silent about a universe only partly seen.

#### Conversation Piece #12

##### **Remembering indigenous roots is medicine.**

It seems so much easier to see the "medicine" in a plant, a feather or a stone people lodge (sweat) - and it is so much harder to see the medicine offered by the confrontation with history. The land I live on now is not my ancestral land - it is the ancestral land of the Ramaytush-speaking people of the San Francisco peninsula, the first people of this particular land with a name we still remember, the original keepers of this land. The beauty of the land I live on has suffered from the devastating consequences of technological progress. I live in a society where the destruction of its aboriginal cultures is scarcely acknowledged and is not mourned by the majority of people; living in this society I am in a certain way complicit in the ongoing perpetration of racism and cultural genocide. Yet, I also live in a city which seems to be among the most comfortably and richly multicultural places in the U.S., with less pollution than in many other metropolitan areas. My Germanic ancestry puts me in the gateway of the Shoah. I recall Hitler's perversions of mythology in the service of genocide; I will never forget the image of the Germanic goddess Nerthus cattle-drawn past Hitler, which I saw in the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. I recall the aberrations of the Vikings, their vicious slaughters and conquering - another guardian at the threshold. Passing these and more guardians, witnessing what they hold, is to heal old collective wounds as they have been passed down to me as an individual, passed down consciously and unconsciously. These guardians don't stand at the threshold simply to propagate guilt. The guardians are medicine for the collective shadow of the Western world. They are the medicine of remembrance with all that it entails, be it fear, pain, guilt, anger. Ancestry and stories of origins and homeland have been abused for various ideological purposes, usually right-wing and fascistic. The story of our cultural self-understanding is open-ended, necessarily. The exposure to the medicine of the guardians is mandatory in order to counter chauvinistic or nationalistic abuses. The healing power - for individual as well as collective healing - of the witnessing of history with all its perversions, twists, and contradictions, is a) a prerequisite for anybody of European descent as part of shamanic work, and b) in a profound sense more powerful than any animal bone or feather that one might want to pick up.

[P136]

### Boring Things

I am bored with the shifting fashions of shamanic inquiry and New Age appropriations - yesterday the Australian aborigines, now the Siberian tribes. I am bored with the fashions of charismatic figures and the disempowerment of seekers.

### Exciting Things

I am excited about the possibility of the disappearance of the white man ('white man' in the sense of the masculinization of the phenomena through eurocentric consciousness). I am excited about the possibility of resuming ancient forms of knowledge exchange, where we all might mirror each other through the original instructions we all received (while taking care of the teaching circles or instructions from the tree of life). I am excited about developing evolutionary thinking which gets us off the linear trajectory through the remembrance of all of our traditional stories (the cycles of history as evolution). I am excited about the possibility to see the history of our planet spoken in multivocality, which respects not only different traditions, but takes care of each place and time to the best of our ancient understandings for today. I am excited about the possibility of universal connection through specificity of knowledge trade rather than dissociation and abstraction. I am excited about the possibility that the oppositions between cultural relativism and scientism may resolve itself into the universalism of the knowledge exchange among immanent conversations.

### Shamanic Career

The outline of my "shamanic career" can be given briefly: During adolescence I developed a benign form of cancer, a bone tumor. The surgery and subsequent healing process prevented me from undertaking a journey which I had dreamed of since childhood: I had won a scholarship at my school to visit the northernmost part of Scandinavia - Sápmi - and to go to a place which lived most vividly in my imagination: Girkonjárga (which I knew then only as the Kirkenes of the Norwegian language). Many years later I had an unexpected experience which jolted me out of the life course I was on (the practice of clinical psychology), and - finally - led me to that very place in Sápmi: During an experience - commonly labelled "out of body experience" - I appeared as an agent in what seemed a healing for another person. This embarked me on an exploration of various alternate forms of healing, primarily those called 'shamanic.' I spent time with shamans and medicine people from various cultures, including Navajo, Cherokee, Pomo-Miwok, Japanese, Cambodian; I travelled incessantly to the tribes and archaeological sites of the Southwestern U.S. In addition to studying these various traditions I fasted, danced, and sweated. I also explored what various proponents of New Age shamanism had to offer – [P137] some of these people were native, some of them not so native or fake native, all of them were decontextualized in one form or another. As I listened to them and researched their claims the meaning of their decontextualization became increasingly apparent to me. After years of study with and of traditional, non-traditional, and anti-traditional people I realized that I could not be a participant in indigenous endeavors unless I knew who I was as an indigenous person. The work with my Oneida colleague, Dr. Pamela Colorado, was instrumental for this process; her conceptualization of "indigenous science" has impacted much of my work. The realization regarding my own indigenous roots led me to review my relationships with people who had taught me

and who I had researched, and resulted in a deep exploration of my Germanic ancestry. I worked through some of the shame and embarrassment which had prevented me in the past from looking at the older layers of Nordic history. I finally began taking trips not just back to Germany, but to the last remaining people in Europe living in an indigenous frame of mind, the Saami people of the far north of Scandinavia and the Kola Peninsula, the land they call Sápmi or Saami Eatnan. The meetings with the members of PRATEC from Lima, Peru - facilitated by Frederique Apffel-Marglin - were influential in my own conceptualizations of immanent conversation (particularly thanks to conversations with the late Eduardo Grillo). Out of the many Saami people who met with me during my travels the ongoing work with Biret-Máret Kallio is of particular significance for my recovery work and its conceptualizations. [...] (See 1997a, c, 1996e for extensive autobiographical material.)

### Influences

It seems customary to think about influences in terms of books and teachers. For me other storehouses, "libraries", or "universities" for ancient knowledge have been at least equally significant, namely rock art and archaeological and sacred sites. On the continent where I live the rock knowledge of the Southwestern U.S. (Horse Shoe Canyon, and innumerable other sites), and sacred places like Chaco Canyon, White House Ruin, Spider Rock, Uxmal, Chichen Itza, and others have been of tremendous importance for me. In Europe the rock knowledge of sacred sites in Bohuslän, Nämforsen, and Jiebmaluokta in particular, and places like Čeavceageadje have been of particular significance. Early on the work of Stanley Krippner and the contacts he provided were influential. Other than Colorado, Wilkinson, Kallio, and PRATEC the works by Pentekäinen, Valkeapää, Mohawk, Deloria, Churchill, McGrane, Faris deserve particular mention. The many native teachers who have generously shared their knowledge and ceremonies are gratefully acknowledged.

[...]

### [P138-140]

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