



Figure 4

form and not men. The men merely serve as the instruments of the spirits as HARLEY (1941: 13) indicated:

The wearer of the mask impersonated the character of his mask, and felt that he was for the time being possessed with the spirit which dwells in the mask. The fundamental (Poro) idea is that it is the mask, not the man, which is doing the work.

Examining the Poro communication system with the fundamental Poro idea in mind, it becomes necessary to reorder the elements in the communicative process diagram.

Taking the point of view of the Poro member first calls for placing the spirit world in the capacity of the addressor. As a corollary of the spirits being the addressor, the field of experience of the spirit world is enlarged to encompass all of existence. The second portion of the change is to place the inner circle in the position of the channel. The inner circle serves as the means of transmission in that they are the men that become possessed of the spirits and place the signs on the trees or do the impersonating and as a consequence give the spirits a momentary physical essence.

Although the spirit world as a whole seems to have a field of experience that is tantamount to complete omniscience, the individual spirit is not blessed with that capability. Instead, any particular spirit has a field of experience that is limited in extent and confined to the governing of a particular activity. For example, *Te kpe ge* controls economic resources and, if necessary, he imposes restrictions on the use of fishing areas or prevents the collecting of food (HARLEY 1950: 19). The combination of all of the separate spiritual fields of experience creates the total omniscience, but in any single communicative event initiated by the spirit world there is only one limited field of experience operating. The upshot of this is that the communicative process at the moment of any single event can best be depicted as in Figure 5 rather than in Figure 4 which showed an omniscient field of experience.