

their captors. The captors simulate capturing the would-be sun dancers. The captors then pretend to consult with one another as to what shall be the fate of the captives. They decide to submit the captives to "torture".

While the captors pierce the captives with the skewers, "the maidens" stand by and encourage the captives, bidding them endure the torture bravely, "and to smile and sing a song of defiance". The captives sing their war songs.

The captives then try to break the skewers through their flesh and thus escape. Friends assist them if need be to tear the skewers through. When all have thus escaped; or, in any case, when dawn comes, the rite is ended.

Before the escape or coming of dawn, however, the captives stand before the sacred pole, gazing and whistling ⁴.

Comparative Note on the Oglala rite: We have drawn enough from our outstanding informant on the Oglala rite to show that the rite is esoterically considered a ritual sacrifice to the sun of captives of war.

It is noteworthy that, contrary to the Kwakiutl data, there is no suggestion of any ritual cannibalism in connection with it.

My abundant other data at hand (not to be presented here) make it plain that the Oglala "sacrifice" of captives is esoterically related to the actual sacrifice of captives as found in southeastern and northeastern North America and that the captive is being sacrificed to the sun as god of war.

But here I shall have space only to make some observations of very immediate bearing on hookswinging:

The Cheyenne considered hookswinging to be a "self-sacrifice" to the sun ⁵.

As for the Blackfoot, we read: "It is said that all who take this ceremony die in a few years, because it is equivalent to giving oneself to the Sun. Hence, the Sun takes them for its own." The devotee "gives himself to the Sun". Many perform the rite because "the Sun demanded it of them". With the Blackfoot, when the skewers tear through the flesh, some of the ragged ends of the torn flesh is cut off and made as an offering to the Sun ⁶. Of the formal sacrifice of bits of skin by warriors of the Blackfoot, we read that this is called "Feeding the Sun with one's own body". Similar conception of the meaning of this same practice exists among the Dakota, Cheyenne, and Arapahs ⁷.

Among the Cheyenne, skewering is the vision quest of adults (this is not a quest for a guardian spirit but only for a vision as in the so-called Sun Dance and in the hookswinging in that dance of the Crow and Hidatsa), if the suppliant's flesh tears through, the pieces of the torn skin are cut off, held toward the Sun, then toward the Sky, and then to each of the four cardinal

⁴ On the Oglala, see WALKER, pp. 111-112; also DELORIA. Other Oglala sources of minor value are noted in our bibliography.

⁵ BELOW, The Sisseton Dakota refer to the rite as a sacrifice (SKINNER: Sisseton, in Sun Dance, p. 385).

⁶ WISSLER: Blackfoot, in Sun Dance, pp. 263-265.

⁷ Ibid; for discussion of this rite in connection with skewering see MACLEOD: Mortuary Anthropophagy.