

over the years concerning the legal status of these "strangers in blood" originated in the family relationships established during the fur trade period of the 18th and 19th centuries.

This book will be of interest to sociologists, anthropologists, and historians. It will also be of interest to all interested in gaining a deeper understanding of current attempts by Indian and Métis to participate in the Constitutional talks that redefine Canadian society and the social avenues opened to "strangers in blood". This is both a timely and scholarly book.

Jean-Guy GOULET
Saint Paul University

Swan People: A Study of the Dunne-za Prophet Dance. By Robin RIDDINGTON, Ottawa: National Museum of Man Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service Paper No. 38, 1978.

Here is a paper in which Riddington substantiates Leslie Spier's argument (1935) that the Prophet Dance complex found among all the tribes of the northeastern interior stems from an ancient core of belief, augments Spier's analysis of the distribution of the complex with an exploration of the meaning it has within the tradition of the Dunne-za (Beaver Indians) of northern British Columbia and documents the adaptive changes the tradition has undergone in the last two hundred years of contact with Europeans.

In the first part of his work, Riddington describes the Dunne-za prophet dance and belief in the context of a shamanistic cosmology. A key myth tells the story of the culture hero transformer, Swan, who after an experience of isolation of vision quest, takes the name of Saya and becomes the founding hero overcoming the giant animals that ate people and transforming them into their present form. This cycle of transformation completed, Saya retired from this world to the moon. It is believed he will return at the end of the world. This myth (which appears in full in the second part of the book) articulates a symbolic situation that underlies the Dunne-za directed use of dreaming for personal power and for the general good, in hunting, in curing and in dancing ceremonies. Dunne-za prophets are men who have mastered to a higher degree the control over the travel and return of the mind's shadow to heaven and back to the body. Although the prophets predict the destruction of the world, they also lead their communities into the dance, a mean to defer the moment when the life-regeneration process will come to an end. Riddington's present description of the shamanistic cosmology, compared to previous descriptions of his in earlier publication, lacks the conciseness in style and the graphical representations that helped the reader in grasping clearly the general structure of the Dunne-za universe and the movements of people therein.

Riddington's most original and valuable contribution in this paper lies with his description and analysis of the transformation of the prophet's role in the last two hundred years of European influence. The prophet tradition recognized by contemporary Dunne-za people reaches back through a series of twelve to fifteen dreamers to a man named Makenunatane who lived in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Contemporary stories of Makenunatane are synthesis of myth and history, of traditional and Christian beliefs. In his life Makenunatane is likened to Saya, the boy named

Swan, who became the great transformer. In his death, Makenunatane is likened to Jesus who showed his people the new short trail to heaven. Makenunatane effectuated the transformation of the traditional dreamer's role as hunt chief in the communal hunt into a prophet capable of articulating new relationships to new historical contexts.

Riddington's description and analysis is supported by a selection of Dunne-za texts. These appear in the second part of the paper, and they proceed from the author's collection of texts made between 1964 and 1968. The texts are the answers, mostly from old people, to questions about the creation of the world, shamanic songs, how prophets get songs, the culture hero, Swan, and Makenunatane, the first prophet of post-contact period who is credited with formulating a new synthesis of old and new symbols and who is at the origin of the contemporary Dunne-za prophet dance. The complete texts and the tapes from which they were translated as well as extensive tapes of Dunne-za prophet songs, are on file with the Ethnology Archives of the National Museum of Man in Ottawa.

Riddington's paper is of interest to all students of Athapaskan culture, and to all interested in native worldviews and their transformation and resiliency in the context of European and missionary influences.

Jean-Guy GOULET
Saint Paul University