

# Changes of Mind: Dunne-za Resistance to Empire

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## INTRODUCTION

The Dunne-za or Beaver Indians are Athapaskans of the Peace River country. They first encountered Europeans directly in the years between 1789 and 1793 when Alexander Mackenzie sent several parties out from his post on Lake Athabasca to make contact with the Peace River Indians (MacGregor, 1952:65). However, according both to native tradition as recounted in stories told to me during my field work in the 1960s, and to Mackenzie himself, European artifacts and economic influence had already made a considerable impact on the Peace River Athapaskans because of the westward expansion of Algonkian-speaking Cree people. In the last decades of the eighteenth century and the first two decades of the nineteenth, contact with Europeans caused changes in the economic base of Beaver society, which soon were reflected in changes in technology and social organization. To adapt the culture to these innovations, changes of mind (i.e., changes in traditional ways of thinking to accommodate the innovations) also were necessary. This paper examines the process by which the economic changes necessitated by the coming of the whitemen were accommodated to by changes in native thought.

## BACKGROUND: ECONOMIC CHANGE

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Dunne-za were in regular contact with Europeans at the Northwest Company's Rocky Mountain Fort, located on the south side of the Peace River just east of Rocky Mountain Portage (O'Neil, 1928).

By the time of the Hudson's Bay Company takeover of the Northwest Company in 1821, again according both to native sources collected during my own field work and to contemporary European accounts (Wallace, 1932:142), considerable conflict had developed over the impact of the fur trade on the cycle of native subsistence activities. When the Hudson's Bay Company decided to close down the post that had been established

at Ft. St. John, this conflict became violent. The so-called "Ft. St. John Massacre" was an incident in which native protest against closure of a facility on which they had become dependent, and resentment at having been pressured to hunt through the winter to feed company men, resulted in the killing of five company employees, one of whom was the factor in command of the post, Guy Hughes (Akrigg, 1975:212-14). According to the stories passed through generations to informants still alive as recently as 1976, the killings were a justified retaliation for the death of a native hunter whom they claimed had died mysteriously after telling Hughes he wished to return to the bush to hunt with his own band. Their grievances indicated a feeling that the Europeans had not observed an expected reciprocity in their relations with the Dunne-za. The Dunne-za recognized by this time that their participation in the fur trade had made them dependent on European artifacts. They were apparently willing to continue hunting and trapping for the whitemen as long as in return they were guaranteed regular supplies of manufactured goods. When this guarantee was withdrawn, they felt betrayed. They knew the closing of the post would leave them in a desperate situation; the killing was an act of desperation.

European influence profoundly disturbed traditional relations between native people and game animals. Bison, reported by Mackenzie as being abundant in 1793, were scarce by 1830 (MacGregor, 1952:206). Generally, populations of game animals declined, in part because of the large demand of Europeans for meat from the Peace River area to supply their far-flung activities, and in part because the natives, in accommodating themselves to the technical requirements of fur trapping, were unable to harvest and process game as economically as before. Meat was wasted when large game animals were shot by a few hunters moving from one trapping area to another, or from their trapping areas to the trading post. During the winter, small groups of people spread out to where the fur-bearing animals could be harvested. Traditionally, when their primary objective was procuring food, drives and surrounds (co-operative communal hunts in which many people closed in on an animal whose location was known to them) had been important harvesting techniques. Snares were used even for big game animals. Hunting strategy emphasized knowledge of animal behaviour and local conditions. Success depended on accurately placing a number of people at the right place and the right time in order to direct an animal into a situation from which it could not escape. Communal hunting techniques were well adapted to a tradi-

tional subsistence economy. People moved from place to place in bands capable of mobilizing a task-force for these subsistence techniques.

European demand for furs, reinforced by a decline in game population, forced the Dunne-za to abandon communal hunting task-force organization and deploy themselves for fur trapping. Hunting with a rifle was based on an individual's possession of an artifact of foreign manufacture and dependent on ammunition supplied and controlled by Europeans. An individual hunter armed with a rifle did not need to formulate a complex group strategy based on sophisticated control of local information. He had a fair chance of bringing down an animal alone once he had located it. The fur trade almost certainly caused a deterioration of traditional subsistence skills and related crafts. Dependence on European artifacts displaced a significant segment of Dunne-za cultural competence. The reciprocity and interdependence of life in communal hunting bands gave way to the reciprocal relationships between natives and whites of the fur trade.

These two forms of reciprocity were different, however, in that members of communal hunting bands were interdependent while trapping people were more dependent on traders than traders were on any particular group of trappers. The company could easily elect to close down a particular post they considered uneconomic — as in the case of the Ft. St. John post in 1821 — while the natives could not easily give up their dependence on European artifacts and return to a way of life based on skills that were in decline. Native trappers had become dependent on white people whose actions were determined by distant economic and political circumstances, rather than on any sense of reciprocity with the natives who had supplied them with furs. For the natives, economic activity was embedded in moral values and expectations of reciprocity; for the whites, it was a creature of impersonal marketing and organizational forces.

Even today, older Dunne-za informants interpret government benefits, such as the old-age pension, as paying them back for having worked for the whitemen during the fur trade. During the early decades of the trade, natives must have viewed the provision of European artifacts as a reciprocal obligation incurred by the whitemen because the Dunne-za had given up communal hunting in favour of a life organized around the requirements of trapping. Considering their expectations, it is easy to understand how they saw the company decision to close down the Ft. St. John post as a breach of reciprocal obligation. The whites, of course, viewed the incident as an act of insurrection and treachery. They retaliated by clos-

ing down the forts at Rocky Mountain Portage and Fort Dunvegan as well as Ft. St. John.

According to Sir George Simpson, the closure of these posts "reduced the whole population of the upper parts of the River to the utmost distress." John McLean, a trader who visited the empty post at Ft. St. John four years after the "massacre" reported that many Indians had starved to death (Akrigg, 1975:214). If these accounts are to be taken seriously, they indicate that the Dunne-za were no longer able to live self-sufficiently within their traditional territory just thirty years after the first contact with Europeans.

Trading posts were later re-established at Dunvegan and Ft. St. John and a relatively stable fur trade economy developed. This economy persisted well into the twentieth century and was really not displaced until the Alaska Highway, built in 1941, brought large-scale settlement throughout Dunne-za territory. The traditions I collected from older Dunne-za informants in the 1960s reflect a long period of fur trade adaptation, but also give some indication of pre-contact conditions.

#### CHANGES OF MIND

Within the space of thirty years the Dunne-za changed from self-sufficient communal hunters to dependent harvesters of fur. The organizational and technological changes from one way of life to the other brought about significant changes in native thought. This paper will now consider the changes of mind through which the Dunne-za dealt with the events of those three decades. This period, although far removed from living memory, is recollected in some detail through oral tradition.

Traditional Dunne-za patterns of thought were important to their overall adaptation. Their thought reflected on adaptive strategy relevant to life in small bands which, in certain seasons, joined together into larger groups, according to concentrations of fish, game and vegetable resources. Their guiding metaphors depicted an intimate relationship between human activity and the cycles of nature. Their social theory and psychology were developed in a language based upon well-established reciprocities with the animal world. Their thought was animistic in that it described human experience in terms of animal behaviour, but it was not simply a form of animal worship. Rather, it drew upon an age-old interdependence between people and animals to describe both the inner and social dimensions of human existence. Their myths reflected an appreciation that human life depended on a concerted and co-ordinated effort to transform natural resources into cultural products. This ability to transform natural

into cultural resources was the core of their technology. The essence of this technology was the possession of knowledge, not the possession of artifacts. With knowledge, they could produce whatever artifacts were necessary. To “know something” was to be in possession of transformative knowledge. People with this kind of knowledge were able to direct both their own subsistence strategies and, in some cases, those of their bands.

Specifically, Dunne-za transformative knowledge was symbolized by their concept of medicine power. Their word for this power was “mə yine,” literally his, her or its song. When the Dunne-za say that a person “knows something” they are referring to “mə yine” or medicine power. (This is similar to the concept of “InKonze” reported by D. M. Smith for the Chipewan of Fort Resolution, N.W.T. (Smith, 1973).) Among the Dunne-za, mə yine was acquired through childhood vision quest experiences. Preparation for these vision quests was very much a form of independence training. During this training, children learned to find their way around in the bush and to interpret the behaviour of animals through their tracks and other signs. Preparation for the vision quest also included learning a cycle of stories about the culture hero, Saya, who first transformed mythic giant person-eating animals into the game animals whose deaths give life to the people. The culture hero is also associated with the daily, monthly and seasonal transformations of the sun and moon, and with the seasonal flight of migratory waterbirds, particularly swans.

People with knowledge or power in traditional Dunne-za society focused their attention on the pattern woven by the moving paths of celestial bodies, game animals and humans. They sought to visualize the times and places where human trails might come together with those of game animals. The ability to visualize the anticipated behaviour of animals was essential to hunting by means of snares, surrounds and drives. By coming into possession of medicine power a person achieved some measure of control over the transformation of game animals into food, clothing, shelter and tools. Like the culture hero, who first introduced the techniques of Dunne-za adaptive strategy, the people who “knew something” were able to live self-sufficiently within their environment.

Dunne-za symbolic life was integral to their adaptive technology. The concept of medicine power reflected an understanding that technology is based upon control and mystery of technique rather than upon the mere possession of artifacts. Sophisticated traditional subsistence techniques such as snare-hunting, surrounds and drives required very simple material artifacts. Their success depended entirely on the accurate application of

complex strategic knowledge. Snare hunting, for instance, required an accurate conceptualization of game animal movements rather than the possession of any particular complex artifact. It often involved the cooperative deployment of many people whose individual understandings and competencies, symbolized by their medicine powers, complemented one another. Traditional subsistence activities required both an informed understanding of natural phenomena and a sense of collective responsibility. With the knowledge symbolized by their medicine powers, the Dunne-za maintained self-sufficiency in relation to the resource potential of their environment.

Using the cultural skills referred to in stories of the culture hero, the Dunne-za created human cultural life from the lives of plants and animals native to their environment. Because they were nomadic, it was more efficient for them to carry knowledge about how to transform nature into culture in their minds than to carry substantial cultural artifacts from place to place by hand. The essence of being human was the power to control transformations in nature and in a person's own experience. They particularly relied upon the transformative experience of dreaming as a means of processing information about the world of nature.

"Knowing something" symbolized traditional Dunne-za competence. To be human, to be Dunne-za, was to be in possession of knowledge. They chartered such knowledge in the solitary visionary experience of a child alone in the bush. Before the whitemen, they were, as a people, alone in the bush. Animals gave the Dunne-za the taste of every experience, the story of every power. They, in turn, accorded animals a taste of human life within their stories. The fact between them was solemnized by rituals of respect. Meat was not left to rot; bones were taken to water or placed in trees; game masters and special animals were recognized; there were many points of etiquette marking thin places in the membrane demarcating the affairs of people from those of animals. The animals in turn protected children questing visions, and the people did not fear to give their children over to the world of animals. Alone in the bush, the children came to know something. Even discovering the tracks of an animal superimposed upon your own could serve to activate a child's information into knowledge. Similarly, the dream of an animal sleeping on top of your body could effect the transformation. This image, this dream, this touch of a familiar story to your life stayed with a person always, a constant point of reference. In later life, guiding dreams returned to this source for their departure. All other transformations flooded from such a momentary universe.

According to the information communicated to me in stories about life before the trade for fur began, the Dunne-za recognized certain people as special dreamers, capable of directing a band truly in the communal hunt. (See Ridington, 1978, for traditional texts relevant to this tradition.) These were shamans whose dreams transported them even beyond the trail of their own lives. So released from the individuality of a single moment, they brought together the momentum of many people. Their knowledge included the trail of seasons ahead as well as behind. From the stories I am told of these people I believe that their medicines must have been Swans for they knew how to lead people together in groups to the oncoming seasons as swans fly in groups at the season's turn. My supposition as to the medicines of these dreamers of pre-contact times is reinforced by the direct multiple references to swans in the lives of the dreamers I knew in my own time among the Dunne-za. Within the extensive oratory I collected from Charlie Yahey,<sup>1</sup> this dreamer referred to dreamers as being like swans, with many in heaven but few on earth. Sacred drawings representing the pathways known to dreamers are elevated by the fluttering down of swans when, on ceremonial occasions, they are revealed to air and eye.

Dreamers must have quested on the story of the culture hero's own moment in the bush alone. Before the culture hero became Saya, "Sun and Moon in the Sky," he was a child named Swan. His empowerment came as he changed from a bird that flies north and south with the seasons to a moon-shadowed sun of the same passage. They say he is the one who brings new leaves to the trees in the flood of spring sun. They say that swans carry him through the winter. As swan people, these dreamers must have been able to envision the bands as groups of swans flying together along a trail of the seasons. From my knowledge of this and the other empowering stories of Dunne-za medicines, the swan people seem to be the only ones given the vision required to direct the communal hunt. If any of the medicines is to empower the communal hunt, it must be that of Swan. People with "swan power" could look ahead and see events beginning to materialize beyond the imagination of others. They saw in the events of one season omens of seasons to come. In this light, it is natural that the Dunne-za I knew told me that the dreamers of old had prepared their people for the coming of white people. They named the dreamers they remember from the one who first sounded the alarm. He was given the name of Makenunatane for his ability to see ahead. Liter-

<sup>1</sup> Charlie Yahey, perhaps the last of the Beaver Indian dreamers, died in 1977, at the age of approximately 85. He was my informant from 1965 to 1971.

ally, the name means "his tracks earth trail." The sense of the metaphor is that he can see the trail ahead of the horizon's barricade. More subtly, it implies that he sees beyond his own life's trail because he had experienced a shamanic death and return to life on earth. Like the swan, who flies through to heaven and returns in the same body, the dreamer flies ahead of his body's season, then returns. He is a swan chief to the Dunne-za. According to information available to the Dunne-za of my own time, Makenunatane was the dreamer who first had to discover the meaning of white people appearing asking for furs and meat. They say he addressed himself to the question in the way he knew, through dreaming. To this dreamer fell the task of restoring the world to meaning and coherence. They say he devoted his own life to the task of bringing the world back together.

The introduction of European artifacts and economic relationships had a severe impact on the Dunne-za because it challenged the very definition of their own humanity. To them, humans were self-sufficient cultural beings whose knowledge of the culture hero's techniques was as profound as their knowledge of themselves. To them, humans were sufficient unto themselves within the territory of their knowledge. European artifacts and strategies were beyond their control and knowledge. Although they could learn about them, they could not know and control them as they had their own technology. Their expectations that the Europeans would supply them faithfully in exchange for furs was not borne out by experience during the first thirty years of trading. Guns, steel knives, traps, snare wire, tobacco, cloth, beads and alcohol were artifacts that could not be generated by the direct application of traditional knowledge to the resource potential of the natural environment. During the first thirty years they learned to their sorrow that their very existence had come to depend upon contracts with foreign people whose interests were predicated upon a global mercantile economy. In becoming dependent on European artifacts for which they lacked knowledge and therefore control of production, the Dunne-za became dependent on the colonial system that did control the production and distribution of these artifacts.

Contact with the colonial system weakened traditional knowledge as an adaptive strategy. The Dunne-za suffered an alienation of knowledge from its traditional productive function. Ideas held in mind were no longer sufficient for the transformation of local materials into artifacts held in hand. Because of firearms and the requirements of a dispersed trapping economy, communal hunting under the direction of a hunt chief-dreamer declined and was replaced by individual tracking tech-



niques. Many of the elaborate strategies for bringing people and animals together were abandoned because the great distance from which a single hunter using the whiteman's rifle could strike an animal made them superfluous.

In recalling this period in their life as people, the Dunne-za say that they turned to their dreamers for understanding. Although the dreamers could not purge their world of the new artifacts and the contracts dependency on them demanded, they could and did know something about the implications of the new ways. Through dreaming, they organized the information available to them to make the most of the new world they could not change.

Makenunatane is the swan chief whom Dunne-za tradition identifies as the dreamer who first directed their thought in reaction to their new situation. In English they refer to him as "The Siganni (Sikanni) Chief." Local native tradition places his grave on the headwaters of the river known in English as the Sikanni Chief River. I had assumed this name identified him as a chief of the Sekani (sometimes spelled Sikanni) Indians, Athapaskans of the rocky mountains closely related to the Dunne-za. The Athapaskan name for rocky mountain people is tsekani (Jenness, 1937: 111), variously anglicized as Sekani, Sicaunie, Sicannie, The-kka-ne. Then I came across a reference in the Rocky Mountain Fort Journal of 1799 that suggested another interpretation. In this journal segment, the principal chief of the Indians trading into the fort is identified as "The Cigne (Cygne)" (O'Neil, 1928: 255). Because the Northwest Company trader, an anglophone, spelled what is obviously French for swan "cigne," he may also have mispronounced the name as "cig-ne," which could have come down to us as Sikanni. Whether or not this etymology of the name Sikanni Chief is correct, we know for certain that the chief of one Dunne-za group at the time of first contact was called "The Swan." It seems very likely that "The Swan" Chief of 1799 was in fact Makenunatane of Dunne-za tradition. At any rate, his name indicates that he was a dreamer and a chief.

The following excerpts of the 1799 journal indicate conditions faced by the Dunne-za of this period.

Sun 16th Dec. 1799 Beison and Maniant are set off with the letters for Mr. F. Fort with the letters and took 40lb Pemecan, 10lb Dryed Mt 1 Gunflint, 1 firesteel and 8 pr Shoes — The Cigne with 9 others arrived and paid 539 Sks Br. Crs [Skins of Beaver Credits?]. as they worked so well and they have nothing to Drink I gave them 45 Sks Crs in rum and they Drank what

provisions they — The Mt weighed 480lb and the hunter with L'homme Seul's son killed 2 Biches [elk] and 1 Buffloe

Mon 17th The Indians drank all night and traded 47Sks Br 30½ Sks Br Mt 17½ Sks Br Tails. 3 Sks Grease, 9½ Sks Castorum, 3 Orig. Sks [moose-hides], 1 Buffloe hide Dressed and 1 Green and gave 22 Sks Crs to the hunter. The Mt weighed 1080 lb gave 3 Inches Tob. to smook for nothing —

Tues 18th Gave out 210½ Skins Br and 49 Sks Mt Crs [credits] to the Indians and traded 8 Sks Br and 6 Do Mt — The Indians complains very much of the prices of the Goods here — (O'Neil, 1928:261)

Wed 1st April 1800 All the Indians arrived and paid 542 Sks Br Crs and begun to drink — Spoke to the Cigne and his parents to cloth ["to cloth" can be interpreted as "to invest as chief"] the Cigne but when I offered it to him he refused and told me to give it to L'Homme Seul for that he was the most proper in the Band but when I told them that they refused the Cigne that they should not have any Chief till next winter — gave them 5 Sks rum and I foot Tob. for nothing. (O'Neil, 1928:267-68)

These journal excerpts show clearly that traditional relationships to the environment had been altered by 1799. The natives were evidently deployed for large-scale hunting and trapping, rather than communal subsistence activity, enticed into overproduction by trade in rum, a manufactured product whose presence creates its own almost infinitely elastic demand. What they do not reveal are the changes of mind through which the Dunne-za came to terms with their altered relationship to the environment and to one another. This information is recorded in native oral tradition. The following is a synopsis of native oral history relevant to the revitalization of their symbolic life. Complete English texts of the material referred to may be found in *Swan People* (Ridington, 1978).

According to Dunne-za tradition, Makenunatane gained recognition first as a hunt chief. In his dreams he could visualize the entire complex pattern made by the intersecting trails of people, animals and primary celestial bodies. When first he began to dream, people did not understand his prophetic language but during a time of hardship they followed his direction and were rewarded by successful hunting. They likened his dreaming to the flight of a swan in its ability to pass through to the land of another season and then return. When he returned from the shamanic flight of his dreaming, he was able to instruct people in executing a perfect surround. Because of their special relationship to swans who fly with the seasons in organized groups, the swan chiefs could visualize the organized groups of people required for communal hunting. They also visualized people coming together in communal world renewal ceremonies in which they danced in a circle along a common trail that represented

the sun's trail from day to day and season to season. Both the seasonal flight of swans and the sun's daily flight across the sky and yearly flight from south to north in its points of rising and setting were underwritten by the story of the culture hero, a boy named Swan who became Saya, sun in the sky, master of seasons and all other transformations.

The stories of Makenunatane's early life follow an established pattern. They describe a person whose medicine and dreaming empower him to organize communal hunting and ceremonial activity. In his role of dreamer and hunt chief he followed closely what must have been an ancient tradition. His medicine knowledge allowed him to "dream ahead for everyone." His calling was that of a shaman with far-seeing eyes. From the distance of his dreaming he saw the interweaving of human trails, animal trails and the paths of the sun and moon. As a hunt chief and ceremonial leader, he directed people on the strength of this information. In the story of his perfect surround, Makenunatane dreamed of a moose and the precise location of every person taking part in the hunt. When all the people were in place following his vision, the moose was unable to move in any direction. One man walked right up to him and brought him down with an axe.

In his first vision Makenunatane had prophesied that he would eat meat from an animal killed with an axe. Initially, the people had been afraid because the axe is used to kill people in war, not to bring down animals in the bush, but after his accomplishment of the perfect surround they understood that his prophecy was for the common good. Then, according to the story, they believed and trusted him even though people did not always fully understand the meaning of his prophesies until they had been realized in subsequent events.

According to Dunne-za tradition, Makenunatane was already recognized as a dreamer at the time the whitemen entered their lives. Because of his ability to dream ahead along the trails of all the people, they turned to him for understanding of their new situation. Their traditions say he foresaw the appearance of Europeans in their country. They also credit him with initiating a tradition of prophetic interpretation that was still strong during the late 1960s when I came into contact with it. Translated into the language of anthropology, they credit Makenunatane with initiating a revitalization of their symbolic life in response to the dislocation the fur trade caused in their subsistence organization.

The extent of this dislocation is made explicit in the following excerpt from the story of Makenunatane's death.

At that time there was not much food. Two people couldn't afford to hunt in the same place. People had to hunt just like the lynx. That way, maybe one would be lucky and then everybody would eat. (Ridington, 1978:101)

In this story, Makenunatane, wearing a white Hudson's Bay blanket robe, is hunting in the company of his son-in-law. They are both using rifles. They split up after discovering the fresh tracks of two elk. The dreamer places his axe into the tracks to determine how fresh they are. This act evokes the earlier prophetic transformation of the axe from an instrument of human death to one that brings life to the people who participated in the perfect surround. The story says that

Makenunatane started to sing in the morning. "Just like the boss came to me," he said, "God came to me in the morning and he told me, 'You won't suffer any more. Just like God's son, he will kill you too.'"

In this way Makenunatane prophesied his own death. He said that his death would be like the death of Christ, the whiteman's culture hero, who also had predicted his own death. Soon after this prophetic dream, Makenunatane went on his last hunt. His son-in-law took a separate path from the dreamer as the men circled around to intercept the two elk. He saw the white of the Hudson's Bay blanket from a distance and fired at it with his rifle. The shot struck Makenunatane and brought him down. Before he died, the dreamer told his people that his last prophesy had been fulfilled.

Makenunatane began his life as a dreamer in the role of hunt chief. He ended it dreaming about the changes brought on by the whitemen. He began as a swan chief empowered by Saya the culture hero and ended as a trading chief empowered by the whiteman's culture hero, Jesus. His personal transformation from hunt chief to trading chief embodied a transformation experienced by the entire society. His people saw his prophecies as a means of understanding and coping with the cultural innovations brought by the whitemen while retaining their own cultural symbols; his visions demonstrated a way to integrate the new without dispensing with the old. Makenunatane and Jesus could both be prophets; trading and hunting could co-exist. Following Makenunatane, Dunne-za dreamers have become ceremonial leaders and prophets. All the songs sung in Dunne-za ceremonials are attributed to dreaming by Makenunatane and the prophets who succeeded him. Stories about the life and death of Makenunatane and his successors are recounted in conjunction with singing the songs. They are known to all the traditional Dunne-za. The personal transformation of this first prophet is now common knowledge

within a tradition that he began. Like other native leaders (Handsome Lake, Wovoka, John Slocum, Smoholla) whose personal transformations served as a catalyst for the revitalization of their cultures, after the assault of European contact, Makenunatane initiated a transformation of world view among his people.

During the first thirty years of European influence the Dunne-za lost their autonomous and self-sufficient relationship to their environment as symbolized by the cultural techniques introduced by Saya, the culture hero. They became dependent on artifacts for which they lacked knowledge in the traditional sense. Makenunatane began a tradition that served to bring the Dunne-za once again into control of their conceptual world. For a century and a half after his time (presuming that he did indeed live at the time of first contact), the Dunne-za have turned to their dreamers for guidance. Dreamers still perform the traditional role of ceremonial leader, but instead of being hunt chiefs, they dreamed ahead for the people in order to interpret the changes coming upon them from their contact with Europeans. The Cigne's refusal to accept investiture as chief by the white trader in 1800 indicates a resistance to allowing Europeans to define his role. His power was based on dreaming, not on the possession of European insignia of office. While accepting dependence on European artifacts as inevitable and irreversible, Makenunatane applied traditional dreaming as a way of knowledge to the task of understanding the post-contact world. Through personal identification with the whiteman's culture hero, he sought to understand their world.

The Dunne-za reacted to whitemen almost as if they were a new force of nature. Dreamers redirected their attention to a new quarry, the fur traders, their artifacts and their ideas. They identified with European traditions and made them their own. They brought people together for traditional world renewal ceremonies that incorporated post-contact metaphors into an older system of belief and practice. A later example is that of a dreamer named Atisklise ("birchbark" or "paper"). He was described as being "like a mailman" bringing letters from heaven to the people on earth. Other dreamers represented their shamanic experiences in the form of drawings on moosehide that imitated the "Catholic ladder," a pictorial catechism used by Oblate missionaries. The language of trading became a common metaphor of prophetic commentary. The concept of reciprocal obligation accounted for by a system of credit was applied to interpersonal relationships between Dunne-za. Christian concepts and symbols were appropriated by the dreamers in their oratory and ceremonial organization. They conducted services, dispensed holy water, and

used the Christian cross to represent both the traditional shamanic cosmology and elements of Christianity they chose to embrace. Jesus was described as a new culture hero who showed the Dunne-za a "short cut to heaven." The death of Makenunatane was taken to be a native manifestation of the death of Christ.

In the oratory I collected from Charlie Yahey, the last major prophet in the tradition begun by Makenunatane, references to contemporary conditions abounded. He directed his dreaming to consideration of such current issues as gas and oil wells (interpreted as being dangerous because they are exhumations of the grease of giant animals Saya drove beneath the earth long ago), cars and planes (they obliterate the tracks of people and because of their speed make the world too small to remain self-sufficient), drinking (it lowers your shadow into an underworld and may drive you crazy) and even the presence of an anthropologist (by living among the Dunne-za he has incurred a responsibility to sing and dance with them). The prophet tradition initiated by Makenunatane is true both to the essence of traditional Dunne-za world view and to the irreversible innovations imposed upon them by Europeans.

What I have called changes of mind among the Dunne-za might be described more conventionally as an adaptive revitalization of the traditional conceptual order. The classic description of this process is found in two works by Anthony Wallace, "Revitalization Movements" (1956) and *The Death and Rebirth of The Seneca* (1969). In cultural revitalization, a world view that no longer corresponds to social and economical conditions is transformed through the personal transformative experience of a charismatic leader. The process is a revitalization rather than a revolutionary overthrow of the old order in that it brings a familiar way of knowledge to bear upon a new body of information. It does not drastically alter nor overthrow the traditional world view of the culture, but rather expands it to accommodate new techniques and ideas. In the Dunne-za case, Makenunatane redirected his dreaming from communal hunting to trading with the whitemen. He and his followers sought to know the artifacts and artifice of the whitemen as they had traditionally known their own artifacts and the artifice through which they were produced. The Dunne-za did not come to think like the whitemen. Rather, they directed their own way of organizing information to the task of thinking about the whitemen. Their changes of mind were not changes in overall world view. They merely reflected changes in the world itself. Dunne-za resistance to empire could not realistically take the form of totally rejecting

European influence. Instead, they sought to incorporate it within a system of knowledge that was familiar to them.

It is difficult to assess whether revitalization of the traditional swan chief's role into that of prophet and cultural interpreter was effective as a form of resistance. It is clear that during the early fur trade period, Europeans ruthlessly exploited the Dunne-za and their environment by creating a demand for rum that kept the volume of furs, meat and hides traded well above levels that could have been elicited through trade in substantial artifacts alone. By all accounts, the violent confrontation of the Ft. St. John Massacre brought only additional hardship upon the Dunne-za. The prophet tradition did restore to them a sense of control through their traditional system of knowledge. The tradition remained intact for a century and a half and may still be a source of strength and identity in their contemporary accommodation to the industrial civilization that surrounds them. The Dunne-za conceptual world remains closer to that of Makenunatane than to the world of the fur traders and their successors. Perhaps this alone may be taken as a measure of their success in resisting the forces of empire.

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