Twentieth Century Ethnographies of Coast Salish Ceremonialism: Contextualization and Critique

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ABSTRACT

The mid and late-twentieth century periods each constituted distinct socio-cultural epochs with respect to the Native North American socio-historical context. This paper critically examines ethnographic accounts of Coast Salish ceremonialism from those periods arguing that they each reflected the respective epochs in which they were written. This paper then goes on to examine those ethnographies in the light of contemporary emphasis on self-reflexivity and issues around authorial voice and representation. The paper concludes that the ethnographic accounts of Coast Salish ceremonialism lags contemporary standards of ethnographic research.

Key Words: Indigenous ethnographies; critical anthropology; Coast Salish; ceremonialism

Coast Salish is a broad term that refers to indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest (Northwest United States and Southwest Canada). By drawing on ethnographic sources from the mid twentieth century (Barnett, 1938, Barnett, 1955; Duff, 1955; Jenness, 1955) and late twentieth century (Jilek, 1981), I describe the key elements of the centerpiece of Coast Salish ceremonialism, the winter spirit dance or ceremonial. The terms spirit dance, spirit initiation, winter ceremonial, and so forth, will be used interchangeably in this paper because for all intents and purposes, those terms are synonymous. I will pay attention to three issues: The first is the relationship between empathy, consciousness, and ritual in the context of spirit dance ceremonialism. Where it illuminates the issue in question, I will draw on cross-cultural sources on shamanic ritual and ceremony. Second, I aim to examine the socio-cultural context within which each of the ethnographies was produced—inquiring into the way those contexts may have influenced the respective ethnographic accounts of Coast Salish ceremonialism. Third, I intend to situate those ethnographies within the evolving critical ethnographic scholarship. That is to say that I will be asking if they measure up to the self-reflexive epistemologies that contemporary ethnography prizes. Given that the extant ethnographies of the Coast Salish spirit dance are written exclusively by non-indigenous scholars, the question that arises is: can those ethnographies be expected—realistically— to deliver anything other than an outsider's perspective?

With respect to future directions, it will be argued—in keeping with some major trends within postcolonial scholarship—that considerations of authorship and representation cannot justifiably be ignored and

that there is a need for representation of indigenous voices in the literature on Coast Salish ceremonialism. Failing that, the next best thing would be for ethnographers to make some sort of statement about their own positionality and its inherent biases.

Epochs within Twentieth Century North American Aboriginal History

In North America, the early and mid-twentieth century periods were characterized by highly de-humanizing government policies with respect to Indigenous or Native subjects. One example from Canadian history that stands out, from the 1930s, was the trial of the BCG vaccine for tuberculosis on native children on the Qu'Appelle reserve in southern Saskatchewan, without the consent of the children or their parents (Lux, 1998). A further dark moment in Canadian Indigenous history was when, during the summers of 1953 and 1955, several Inuit families were removed from their homes in Fort Harrison and Port Inlet and relocated to new communities in the High Arctic. Morrison (1993) relates how the Canadian Inuit (still referred to as Eskimos at the time) were treated as "childlike wards of the paternal state" (p. 181). The decision to affect this relocation, or piece of "social engineering" as Morrison (p. 181) calls it, was made at the first so-called Eskimo Affairs Conference, in Ottawa, in 1952, where no single Inuit had been invited to participate. The situation for Indigenous people south of the border, in the US, at that time, was also very difficult. The mid-1940s to the mid-60s came to be known as the time of "Indian termination" (Metcalfe, 2002) since it was a period when policies and legislation reflected an urgent desire on the part of government to effect assimilation of Indian people into mainstream American culture by encouraging them to live in towns and cities. The intention and outcome of the new policies was to terminate many tribes through cutting federal funding and through ceasing formal acknowledgement of their legitimacy. The incident on the Q'Appelle reserve in the 1930, the relocation of Inuit to the High Arctic in the 1950s, and the decades-long Indian termination policies in the US, are all examples that point to a climate of heavy governmental subjugation of Indigenous people that existed in the early and mid-twentieth century, both in Canada and the US. While ethnographers of that time period were unlikely to have consciously colluded with the governmental and administrative tyranny against indigenous people, one cannot help but notice that they showed very little or no interest in documenting first person narratives of indigenous people. The voices of indigenous people do not appear anywhere in the ethnographic writings of Barnett (1938, 1955) or Duff (1955). What the eye of history discloses then, in relation to those ethnographers, is that they replicated the colonial dynamic of othering—doing so by always talking and writing about their subjects, thereby denying them any authorial voice or mechanism for self-expression.

That said, the oppressive climate of the early and mid-twentieth century may well have furnished the very conditions that were necessary for the winds of change to gather momentum and take hold. As early as 1956, Fred Voget, in an essay in American Anthroplogist, wrote about "the beginning of a great awakening" (p. 259) in the context of an essay on Indian reform movements. However, it was not until the 1970s and early 1980s that the climate was to change significantly. It was only then, for example, that there started to be seen a renewed

determination on the part of indigenous peoples to embrace their identity and engage in ceremonial practice (Jilek, 1978). The so-called potlach ban in Canada had been lifted in 1951, but fear of reprisals from the authorities was so deeply entrenched in the minds of indigenous peoples in British Columbia's Fraser Valley that they continued to hold back from openly engaging in their traditional ceremonial practices for several decades after the ban was lifted (Benning et al., 2017). Some commentators considered this period of renewed confidence to have been part of a more widespread pan-continental Native American Renaissance (Lincoln, 1985), one that was characterized by increased literary output by indigenous writers and scholars. The nature of various social and political phenomena of the time also lends support to the claim that the 1970s and 1980s was represented an epoch of resurgence of indigenous identity and increased "native assertiveness" (Morrison, 1993, p. 181) across the North American continent. The pre-eminent (although certainly by no means the only) example of that was the so-called red power movement that gained momentum following the 1969 occupation of Alcatraz Island in San Francisco by "Indians of all tribes" (as cited in Johnson, Nagel, & Champagne, 1997, p. 27). As Nagel wrote, the red power movement itself stood alongside such movements as the civil rights, black power, anti-Vietnam war, and so forth. All those movements taken together constituted a wave of social activism that was sweeping across the North American continent at the time.

From a North American Westerner's perspective, the 1970s were also a time when there was increasing interest among North Americans in engaging with and exploring non-Western spiritual traditions—including indigenous traditions. The works of Carlos Castaneda are often considered (e.g., Walsh, 2007; Znamenski, 2007) to have had a major influence on the way in which Westerners imagined indigeneity. A phenomenon that was seen in this social milieu was the founding of such institutions as the Foundation for Shamanic Studies, the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, the California Institute of Integral Studies (all in California) and Naropa University (in Boulder, Colorado), and so forth.

Against such a socio-cultural backdrop, something started to be seen with respect to health service delivery in the 1970s and early 1980s that arguably has not been seen since, which is a great enthusiasm for exploring the possibility of collaborative partnerships between mental health clinicians and indigenous healers. Several publications from the period speak to that interest in collaborative/integrative approaches to health service delivery—especially in mental health. They include Attneave's (1974) Medicine men and psychiatrists in the Indian Health service, Beiser and Degroat's (1974) Body and Spirit Medicine, Jilek and Todd's (1974) Witchdoctors succeed where doctors fail, Fuller-Torrey's (1972) Mind game: Witchdoctors and psychiatrists, Ruiz and Langrod's (1976) The role of folk healers in community mental health services and so forth. This was the milieu in which Jilek's (1981) ethno-psychiatric study Indian Healing was written.

Basic Morphology of the Winter Spirit Ceremonial

Upon entering the smokehouse or longhouse the would-be initiate or novice is subject to a "surprise attack" (Barnett, 1938, p. 137) from one or more relatives. Herein begins the initiation phase of the process from which the novice will eventually emerge (usually within 4 days) as a dancer. Barnett (1938)

observed how "the novice was beaten, smothered, and choked until he was unconscious—'dead' they say" (p. 137). The initiate is then taken to a corner of the longhouse and placed behind a screen where he is watched over by attendants. It is understood that the initiate will be bestowed by the power from a Guardian spirit during this unconscious phase of the initiation, or in the context of a dream. One of the functions of those who are closely attending to the initiate during those 4 days is to do what they can to "bring out" the initiate's "song" (p. 137). Every spirit, according to Barnett (1955), "bestowed a song as a token of the help it promised to give its seeker" (p. 145). According to Barnett (1955), when the song is brought out, the initiate will spring into action, a state that Barnett observed to be an "uncontrollable ecstatic trance" (p. 137).

Ethnographic Accounts of the Winter Spirit Dance Ceremonial

Eliade (1989) identified the ritualistic enactment of death followed by rebirth, or renaissance as an important and ubiquitous initiation motif in many of the worlds' shamanic traditions. That motif is integral to the Coast Salish winter ceremonial, too. Upon entering the long house or smokehouse the prospective initiate is subject to a ritualistic "clubbing to death" (Jilek, 1981, p. 68) by the ritualist's gentle wielding of a ceremonial staff. The novice or aspirant then enters what Jilek refers to as the incubation phase in which she is deprived of drink and food for up to 4 days. That phase is characterized by seclusion, restricted mobility, sensory, as well as sleep deprivation. Jilek (p. 47) notes that in some of the Coast Salish groups of Puget Sound, the incubation —or death— phase may last up to 8 days. Also of interest to students of comparative shamanism is the fact that in the shamanic initiation rite of the Yurak-Samoyed of Northern Siberia, the future shaman "lies unconscious for 7 days and 7 nights while the spirits dismember and initiate him" (Eliade, 1989, p. 278). In the Coast Salish ceremonialism, the guardian spirit will often appear (in a dream or vision) to the initiate as a human "tutelary" (Duff, 1955, p. 103) and once a spirit song has been bestowed, the tutelary morphs back into its original or "true form of animal, bird, fish, etc." (p. 103) before disappearing. The initiate emerges from ritual death then having acquired a spirit song and power from her guardian spirit. In a trance state she then leaps ecstatically into the main hall of the longhouse dancing, with abandon, to the sound of rhythmic drumming and clapping and cheering crowd. The new initiate or baby dancer is adorned with a headdress and various other regalia. The headdress will have undergone a purification rite by having been passed through fire 4 times by senior dancers. Since the newly initiated "baby" (p. 134) is understood to not possess full control of the power with which she has been invested, it is required that she be closely watched by "babysitters" (p. 134) as she dances. One manifestation of the shift that the ceremony occasions in an initiated individual's state of consciousness is the emergence of an empathic connection between her and her surroundings. This is to say that there is a heightened potentiality of some sort of energy transfer being occasioned between that which is inside and that, which is outside the new initiate. Describing such a phenomenon, Jilek (1981) wrote "indeed the effects of the rhythmic drumming may contribute to the 'contagiousness' of a spirit power which often seizes uninitiated persons present at ceremonials" (p. 75). This empathic connection can be dangerous. Jilek wrote about the

fact that the new initiate is advised not to physically touch anyone because doing so might occasion him or her harm. Because of the same concerns, of harming others energetically, pointing her finger towards others is strictly forbidden. Unborn children are understood to be particularly vulnerable to the transmission of such untamed power and so pregnant women are asked to avoid contact with the initiates.

One of the functions achieved by the ceremonial is something that is arguably of importance to all shamanic ceremonialism, which is the reinforced sense of connectedness, for the healer, the healed, as well as the audience. Sandner (1991), in the context of a discussion about healing rituals among the Navaho, wrote that healing is entailed by, "Bringing the patient into a strong, symbolic relationship with his social, cultural, and natural environment" (p. 25).

Barnett (1955) and Jilek (1981) addressed the interesting question of the way in which Coast Salish ceremonialism differs between ordinary seekers and prospective shamans. Barnett, for example, noted that the guardian spirit of the mythical serpent bestows its power only to shamans even though "a shaman might also have any number of the lesser spirits …" (Barnett, 1955, p. 147). Noting that most shamans are men, Barnett wrote about the unique ability of the shaman to transfer his power to others without the assistance of guardian spirits:

> Shamans everywhere tried to impart some of their supernatural strength to sons by singing and working over their prostrate forms. Spirit power manifested itself as a rod-like thing wellbeing up in the throat and chest. After the shaman had worked himself into the proper state, he clutched his power and made motions of thrusting it into his son; then he blew on the boy's chest and smoothed the power down with his hands (Barnett, 1955, p.149).

Duff (1955) related having been told by some of his informants that in some vaguely defined way, the shaman's relationship to his guardian spirit animal had an especially intimate quality to it. He also discussed the nature of the abilities and powers that may be acquired and possessed by shamans: "Some shamans had the powers of far-sightedness and prophecy; they could see what was going on in distant places and could foretell future events" (p. 100).

The Reflexive Turn in Contemporary Ethnography

The so-called reflexive or interpretive turn in ethnography is often traced to developments that occurred in academic circles in relation to anthropological theory and practice in the 1970s and 1980s. The anthropologist Clifford Geertz (Geertz, 2000; Inglis, 2000) is often credited with having been a major exponent of a new approach to ethnography that sought to distance itself from positivist assumptions that had been all too pervasive in traditional ethnography which understated the influence of the ethnographer in the research process, assuming she was and could be a neutral observer of the phenomena and processes under study. Under those conditions, the experience—a far and detached stance of the researcher, one that could not really appreciate the research subject's experience from an insider's perspective— was rarely acknowledged. Reflexive methodologies, by contrast, acknowledge the researcher's subjectivity and participation in the research process. As Davies (2008) put it, reflexiv-

ity means a "turning back on oneself, a process of self-reference" (p.4) and the practice of not declaring the role of the agentic and intentional "I" on the part of the researcher that was all too acceptable and expected in traditional ethnography gets inverted following the reflexive turn. That is to say that it now becomes desirous, in any ethnographic account, to write from a first-person perspective because doing so acknowledges the ethnographer's dual role as both observer and participant. There are innumerable examples of reflexive ethnographies. Examples of ethnographies that have as their subject shamanism and that that bring a reflexive methodology to that study include William Sax' (2009) God of Justice and Larry Peters' (2007) Tamang shamans: An ethnopsychiatric study of ecstasy and healing in Nepal.

Ethnographies of the Coast Salish in the Light of the Reflexive Turn: Do they Measure Up?

If the defining attribute of reflexive ethnography is an acknowledgement of the subjectivity (we may alternatively use the word positionality) of the researcher/author, then all the ethnographies we have drawn on: Barnett (1938; 1955), Duff (1955), Jenness (1955), and Jilek (1981) fail to measure up. I want to go on to discuss—albeit briefly—an area that Western academics have always had an uneasy relationship with, the purportedly supernatural aspects of shamanic ritual (Turner, 1993). The secular worldview (Harner, 1980), by which many a Western academic has remained hamstrung, has resulted in often approaching those not-easily explained or explainable aspects of shamanism with an attitude that can be best described as a hermeneutic of suspicion. That sort of attitude was typified in the following excerpt from Jenness (1955, p. 47) in his attempt to explain the apparently supernatural phenomenon of spirit song: "In many cases, he probably developed a half-conscious predilection for a certain song and dance long before his initiation, and this predilection found utterance under the hypnotic strain to which he was subjected by the priests and old dancers" (p. 47). Interestingly though, I did not find that sort of skepticism among all the ethnographers of the period. Barnett (1955) and Duff (1955) were cases-in-point, referring, throughout their respective works, The Coast Salish of British Columbia and The Upper Stalo Indians of the Fraser Valley, British Columbia, in a matter-of-fact sort of way to the supernatural beliefs of the Coast Salish without conveying an obvious attitude of skepticism.

Alice Kehoe's (2000) Shamans and religion: An anthropological exploration in critical thinking has come to be a much-cited critique of the widespread use of the term shamanism. Kehoe's repudiation of the legitimacy of the term shamanism is firmly consistent with the self-reflexive turn in ethnography, one that is critically attuned to Western academia's all too un-reflexive inclination to apply Western constructs to non-Western cultures. Incidentally, this sort of criticism overlaps with Jonathan Smith's (1982) and Tomoko Masuzawa's (2005) argument that the major religious categories (such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and so forth) say more about the hegemony within religious discourse of Western constructs than they do about the reality of religious experience. Of note is the fact that Barnett (1955), Duff (1955), and Jilek (1981) used the term shaman quite liberally in their writings without any critical discussion of the term. In Table 1 (below) I

Table 1: Comparison of five ethnographic studies across five dimensions

	Barnett 1938	Barnett 1955	Duff 1955	Jenness 1955	Jilek 1981
Self-reflexive declaration of author or researcher's positionality	No	No	No	No	No
Use of word *shaman*	Yes	Yes	Yes	"Medicine Man"	Yes
Excerpts of first person indigenous narrative	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Materialistic explanation of supernatural events	No	No	No	Yes	No
Consideration of shamanism within biopsychosocial perspective	No	No	No	No	Yes

have represented my analysis of the ethnographies across five dimensions.

It is easy to be critical of ethnographers from earlier generations but it is also worth recalling that at around the time that the likes of Barnett, Duff and Jenness were carrying out their fieldwork and writing it up, other academics, such as Kroeber (1952), were busy trashing shamanism, arguing that shamans were psychiatrically sick individuals. When we recall the fact that that was the default position of many academics of the time, the attitude of the likes of Barnett, Duff and Jenness emerges as decidedly progressive! As such, Jenness (1955) is to be credited for including first person narratives in his ethnographic study, The Faith of a Coast Salish Indian. In the same vein I want to credit Jilek (1981). The fact that he drew on several paradigms or levels of explanation in his 1981 study of Coast Salish Ceremonialism Indian Healing is laudable. Jilek drew on the subjective narratives of indigenous people while explicating Coast Salish ceremonialism with appropriate references to Western psychological theory and neurophysiological concepts, including those that have sought to map altered states of consciousness to neuronal wave patterns as demonstrated on electroencephalograms. Jilek was committed to trying to understand how concepts from Western psychotherapy may inform our understanding of the mechanism by which healing is occasioned among the Coast Salish. I will mention here just a couple of the concepts from which he draws by way of illustrating the general point. He draws on

Eriksonian theories of personality development to speculate that one reason that the spirit dance initiation is therapeutic for adolescent initiates is that it facilitates the teenager in her developmental task of forging peer-group identification and avoiding role-confusion. One of the most salient therapeutic effects of the ceremonial, according to Jilek, stems from the fact that social bonds are consolidated. To reinforce that point, Jilek drew on the principles of group therapy as described by Frank and Powdermaker (1959) who suggested that support, protection, acceptance, and stimulation are the fundamental therapeutic factors of groups. For Jilek, all those factors contribute significantly to the healing that takes place in the winter ceremonial: "Perhaps the most relevant group-therapeutic aspect of the winter dance ceremonial is that the participant is turned from egocentric preoccupations to collective concerns and the pursuit of collective goals" (Jilek, 1981, p. 88).

Jilek's approach was a multi-perspectival one and the quality of his analysis was enormously enriched by such an approach. It is certainly one that I have found beneficial, as I have attempted to grasp the essentials of Coast Salish ceremonialism. The late 1970s and early 1980s were significant moments the in conceptual development of Western psychiatry since the so-called biopsychosocial model (Engel, 1977, 1980) was very much in the ascendant at the time. That model reflected what was a growing commitment among medical and psychiatric clinicians at the time to view illness and its treatment from different perspectives (the biological, psychological, and the social) and Jilek's approach reflected that multi-perspectival ethos.

Writing about neuro-electrophysiological changes in shamanic altered states of consciousness or drawing on theoretical constructs from Western psychology are necessarily academic crimes as long as those sorts of findings are not interpreted in reductionist terms that hold them to be the only or the highest levels of explanation. Jilek was writing not primarily as an anthropologist, but as a psychiatrist. One the one hand, Jilek and other Western scholars of shamanism and indigeneity could be criticized for being excessively interested in altered states of consciousness, a tendency among Western scholars arguably reflecting the legacy of Castaneda's works. However, as Atkinson (1992) wrote, it was multidisciplinary engagement with the subject of states of consciousness and healing that helped to revitalize the academic study of shamanism. For me, Jilek's (1981) work represented precisely that sort of multidisciplinary engagement.

We find a contemporary example of a multidisciplinary, biopsychosocial approach to the study of shamanism in Winkleman's (2010), one that does justice to the various levels of explanation without taking a reductionist approach. Having said that, I am not convinced that Jilek's theorizing completely accounts for some of the phenomena about which he himself wrote, namely those that suggest a powerful empathic attunement between the initiate and those in her environment. Ultimately, a greater understanding of empathy may prove to be the key that opens the door to a greater understanding of the mechanism which shamanic and other spiritual healing is occasioned, although it is striking that neither Jilek nor any of the other ethnographers I have discussed in this paper have addressed it.

In the contemporary anthropological and cross-cultural psychiatric literature there are few more penetrating analyses of the concept of empathy in relation to spiritual healing process than

those that are found in the works of Joan Koss-Chioino (2006a, 2006b). Based on her three-decade long study of spiritual healing process in the context of the Puerto-Rican Spiritist tradition, Koss-Chioino identifies three core features of spiritual healing: spiritual transformation, relation, and radical empathy. She echoes and articulates very well the conclusion that I have drawn based on my own overview of the literature on Coast Salish Ceremonialism, as follows: "Explanations in the anthropological literature simply did not fully account for the healers' work, the spirits' diagnosis and predictions, or the effects on healers and supplicants" (2006b, p. 46). With a comparative approach not entirely dissimilar from that taken by Jilek in Indian Healing, Koss-Chioino contextualizes her discussion of the role of empathy in the spiritual healing process by reviewing the concept of empathy as it has been elaborated by a host of Western thinkers. Martin Buber (Koss-Chioino, 2006a) and his much-cited I-Thou concept is presented, as are the ideas of such luminaries in the Western psychological canon as Heinz Kohut, pioneer of self-psychology, and Carl Rogers, pioneer of client-centered therapy (2006b). However, Koss-Chioino maintains that none of those thinkers' formulations of empathy adequately capture the meaning of the word in the spiritual healing context because all those theories are couched within a modern ego-centric view of the ideal person, one which "subscribes to the ideal of the autonomous, integrated individual as normal and (preferable)" (2006b, p.52). An altogether new understanding of the nature and possibilities of empathy (at least in the Western literature) needs to be formulated as far as Koss-Chioino is concerned, if all the phenomena on record are going to be adequately accounted for.

At this point Koss-Chioino introduces the concept of "radical empathy" (2006a, p. 652; 2006b, p. 45), the defining and distinctive attribute of which is "the idea not only of experiencing what another person feels but also of participating in that experience" (2006b, p.56). On the one hand, radical empathy has similarities to the concept of empathy as understood in analytical psychology, a point on which Koss-Chioino elaborates by drawing on the concept of "embodied transference" (p. 57) as articulated by Jungian scholar Andrew Samuels. Such concepts do suggest a somewhat expanded view of empathy since they posit a transcendence of self/other boundaries that the likes of Rogers and Kohut fail to achieve. But even this transcendent psychoanalytic conceptualization falls short of Koss-Chioino's concept of radical empathy. This is because the psychoanalytical relationship, ultimately, remains a dyadic one (between analyst and patient). In contrast, spiritual healing entails a "three-party relationship" (p. 57): between the healer, the sufferer and the spirits. My reading of Koss-Chioino is that this idea is fundamental to her notion of radical empathy. How exactly radical empathy is learned is quite another issue and is probably one that cannot be done justice to within the present space constraints, but my provisional understanding from reading Koss-Chioino is that it is likely a multi-step process; the healer experiences spirits during an illness or initiatory crisis. I gather that that intervention, in a sense, engenders in the future healer (through whatever mechanism) an enhanced empathic capacity. A strong empathic connection with the sufferer (within the context of consciousness altering ritualistic practice) then somehow facilitates further involvement of spirits whose presence

effects healing. As Koss-Chioino writes, the healer acts as the sufferer's "conduit to the spirit world" (p. 57). This is to say that the work of healing is done not by the healer, but by the spirits. Furthermore, spirits are accorded an ontological reality that one would rarely find in the Western literature (Turner, 1993); as Koss-Chioino puts it: "for those who are involved and experience them, spirits exist" (p. 57). In reflecting on the possible mechanisms that subserve spiritual healing (including shamanic healing) I have come to suspect—in large part because of my encounter with the analysis of the likes of Koss-Chioino—that the empathic connection between the healer and the beneficiary is of central importance to the healing process, regardless of cultural context. A valuable contribution to the understanding of the relevance of empathy to spiritual healing comes from the Indian psychoanalyst Sudhir Kakar. In his paper, Psychoanalysis and Eastern Spiritual Healing Traditions, Kakar (2003) brought attention to some potentially important processes that are thought to mediate the relationship between healing and empathy in the Guru-Disciple relationship that is ubiquitous in the Eastern spiritual traditions. Kakar explained how the culturally mandated interaction (one in which the disciple is subservient) between Guru and Disciple in Eastern cultures is meant to "loosen the seeker's self-boundaries" (p. 665). In elaborating on this point, Kakar found correspondences with the Sufi concept of "annihilation of oneself in the master" (p. 664). This merger, between the Disciple and Guru (or master), is thought to engender within the seeker a sense of self that is not centered at the ego, and that process of merger is facilitated by what, in psychoanalytical jargon, Karkar described as the "idealizing transference" (p. 665). Meditative practices have the same effect, in that they "weaken" what Kakar, citing Brickman (1998), refers to as the "encapsulation of the self" (p. 671). That weakening of the ego-encapsulated leads, if a spiritual discipline is followed, to "an empathic responsiveness to the surround, that can extend to the point of a high degree of identification with another person" (p. 671). The parallels between the concept of ego-annihilation as discussed by Kakar and the concept of ritualistic death as seen in many indigenous initiation rituals, and the concept of "life-threatening illness" (Koss-Chioino, 2006b, p. 49) are clearly very striking. As the works of the likes of Koss-Chioino and Kakar illustrate, the literature on spiritual healing has started to explore the question of the role of empathy in spiritual healing in novel ways, and with increasing depth and penetration. The absence of any such discussion in the extant ethnographic literature on Coast Salish ceremonialism is noteworthy and constitutes a major limitation.

Future Directions

After centuries of having been the passive and silent subjects of the ethnographic research endeavor, there is an increasing appreciation within academia, thanks in large part to the influence of such key texts as Shawn Wilson's (2008) Research is Ceremony, and Linda Tuhiwai-Smith's (2012) Decolonizing methodologies, of the importance of indigenous people being involved in all stages of the research process. For too long, indigenous peoples around the world were not afforded the opportunity, because they did not have the authorial power, to represent themselves. As such the academic literature was made up exclusively of non-indigenous people's

representations of and talk about indigenous people. A great recent example of a work that has sought to re-claim an indigenous-centered perspective is the book Jung and the Sioux Traditions by Vine Deloria, Jr. in which the author brings attention to the fact that Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung's understanding of the Taos Pueblo of New Mexico (based on his isolated visit in 1925), though presented with customary authoritativeness, was partial and incomplete: "… there is inferential evidence that Jung left Taos believing that he had acquired knowledge of the essential elements of the American Indian psyche sufficient to use in the practice of comparative scholarship" (2009, p. 21).

Works such as Kopenawa and Albert's (2013) The falling sky contribute to an emerging new wave of indigenous literature which, in its first-person voice, redress the imbalance of more than a century. Future ethnographic studies of Coast Salish ceremonialism, then, would benefit from the sort of insider's perspective that can only really be provided if the study were to be conducted by indigenous people, and the results analyzed within indigenous frameworks of understanding. I am not by any means asserting that future ethnographic studies of Coast Salish ceremonialism conducted by non-indigenous people would not have any value. I believe that they would have much value, but those studies would need to be conducted within a methodology, epistemological, and ethical framework that is in line with contemporary standards of ethnographic writing and researching. It is no longer tenable to perpetuate the positivistic assumption that the author is an impartial detached observer operating from an assumed position of neutrality and objectivity. As well, if further ethnographic studies are to be conducted, researchers could do a lot worse than approaching their area of study, especially when it comes to altered states of consciousness, armed with phenomenological (Rock & Krippner, 2011) and participatory (Ferrer & Sherman, 2009) methodologies that are increasingly recognized as being necessary if research is going to stand any chance of capturing the lived reality of people and societies experiencing altered states of consciousness.

In this paper, by drawing on ethnographic studies from the mid and late twentieth centuries, I have outlined the major morphological features of the Coast Salish winter spirit ceremonialism. A particular focus has been, first, on the interplay of empathy, consciousness, and ritual. Second, it has been argued that a deeper understanding of each of those ethnographies can be gained when they are contextualized within the wider socio-cultural epoch or milieu in which they were produced. Third, I have argued that, for the most part, the ethnographic literature that I have studied fails to meet contemporary standards of self-reflexivity. Some aspects of that literature (more than others) are characterized by outsider-orientated hermeneutics of suspicion and an uncritical use of terms such as shaman. In addition, the ethnographic literature that I have examined has not achieved an understanding of the role played by empathy in the healing process, something that contemporary scholarship suggests is an important key to understanding spiritual and shamanic healing.

That said, I have advocated for a balanced critique that complements criticism of those ethnographies with an appreciation of them because, in many respects, they were quite progressive for their time, especially when one considers the sort of rampant denigration and pathologization of shamanism that other scholars of the period were engaged in. Many

of those ethnographies include first person narratives of indigenous people. That said, there remains a need for more insiders' perspective and indigenous authorial voice. That can only be occasioned by more indigenous ownership of future ethnographic studies of Coast Salish ceremonialism. If further ethnographies are to be undertaken by non-indigenous people, they will need to catch up with and conform to the standards of self-reflexivity that are prized (with good reason) in contemporary ethnography. And they could do a lot worse than approach their subject matter with a hermeneutic of faith rather than one of suspicion.

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Dr. Benning immigrated to Canada 10 years ago from the UK. For the last 7 years he has had the privilege of being involved in multidisciplinary efforts to provide psychiatric outreach services to First Nations communities in British Columbia's Fraser Valley. The ongoing aim in those endeavors is to design and implement collaborative models of mental health service delivery that honor diverse explanatory models of illness as well as indigenous worldviews, indigenous ways of knowing and indigenous perspectives on history.