

Ritual 3

Indian Te

Presented by Roger Weir

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Transcript:

This is *Ritual 3*. And that was a photograph of Black Elk taken at the end of World War Two in Denver, Colorado, in 1945 by Manley Hall. It's original sepia tone photograph, which he gave to me a number of years ago. We were doing some Indian research. Black Elk was born in 1863. So, if you add up, he was in his early 80's.

It's a curious thing about spiritual persons in their worldly ritual comportment, in their worldly mind, they are like all of us. They become decrepit. They age. They have runny noses. They're cranky. But one of the tests of a spiritual person is that when called upon they can transcend. They can transform. Both the ritual body and the ideational mind. And present themselves in such a way as to obviate the infirmities of existence.

If our machines are following. They hate to record this point.

There is a curious complementation. Not a polarity. Not a duality. But a complementation between existence and presence. Existence is established by ritual action. By the doing not only of life, but by the doing of what we call material physical reality. If electrons didn't collect in energy shells around the nucleus, there wouldn't be atoms. If triads of quarks didn't dance together in stable kinds of triplicate do-si-dos, there wouldn't be protons. So that existence is established by ritual action. But to the extent that spiritual presence is not manifested, but as presence existence gives way to it. The objectivity of existence gives way to the objectivity of presence. And so, the spiritual person can occur brightly in place of a decrepit body.

This is unknowable in terms of integration. The mind no matter how brilliant it is, as long as it is ritually rooted. That is to say, as long as its perception is physically based, the mind will never know this. Cannot know this. Not because it's ignorant, but because this is a differential form. And differential forms are not apparent to the integral mind. But the integral mind can shift its stance from integration to differentiation. And in doing so can learn to see differentially and can behold the spiritual form. And so, persons of the spirit are invisible to the world in general. They are not perceptible. And that's why a spiritual person, in seeking to do something in the world very often comports with the intelligence of operating under a disguise. Not to deceive, but to play a role in a ritual drama because it is the ritual performance that is the only objective beginning by which the mind can integrate meaning. And that meaning integrated by a symbol, be transformed into vision. And it's only out of that cloud of vision that the spiritual person can emerge as a differential form. Not as a thing, but as a whole spectrum of possibility.

So that spiritual form is possibility in a recalibrated, unending continuity. So that in actual fact, in the cosmos, spiritual persons are free, and it is the only condition under which they occur. And the cosmos itself, as a differential spectrum of possibility, is also a form in that way. So, persons and cosmos are infinite forms, differential forms, and participate in consciousness in that way. And are related.

The mystery of nature is that nature occurs in a such a deep complementarity to that conscious cosmos, that the English word that I have taken to using the last 10 or 15 years, is a translation of one of the words from Karl Jaspers in his writing on trying to understand the philosophy of history. The word translates as encompassing. So that the mystery of nature is encompassing in a way which primordial peoples in establishing their existence. They get it. And so, they seek to participate in the mystery of nature. For if they participate in the mystery of nature, there is an exchange that happens. There is a reciprocity that occurs. And what occurs is that their actions gain vitality, the vitality of keeping existence reoccurring. Not that existence is established once and for all, and thus is static, but that it can reoccur accurately and gain a dynamic stability thereby. So that primordial men and women were exceedingly wise and repeated their rituals not out of some kind of clubby or habitual stupidity, but out of a deep respect for the mystery of

nature and the continuing vitality of living form. And so, we must put aside the old cultural idea that primitives do rituals because they don't know any better. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

And so, by *Ritual 3* we come to try to appreciate why it is that there is an intelligibility to ritual action which so underflows the meaning of language that our minds which integrate meaning out of language, out of the feeling toned experience, of the mythic flow. Our minds mistake the characteristic of language for the mystery of nature. And well, it should, because they're in a parallel relationship. Language and nature are parallel. But the mind only has a connective contact with language, not with the mystery of nature.

The mind qua brain is abstracted from nature and doesn't know better. It has to be reminded and to learn. And the number one foundation of reminding is in the mythic. The mythic horizon in experience. And so, the integral mind must keep rechecking experience to determine its coordinates. Its objectivity. Its position. It's always checking. Whereas the body exists accurately because it doesn't have to keep checking because it doesn't stop doing. It is sown into the ritual fabric of repeated reciprocity, the participation with the mystery of nature. And as long as that is continuous, one is all right. One is fine.

And not just for an individual. In fact, it's rarely for an individual on the ritual level. It's usually by the group. By the tribe. By that population of people known, world renowned in so many languages as the people. As long as the people are participating with the mystery of nature, and the proof is that their lives reoccur every day, every night, every moon, every sun cycle, every generation, they live. The proof is that they live. They continue to live.

That quality of existence, of ritual existence has its encompassing complement in a spiritual presence, which generally in the world the world of integral comportment, of action, of integral mind meaning. The body and the mind in their integral do not see the invisible. And that's why there's an invisible realm. The invisible realm of the spirit. Not an unconscious realm. Psychology has mislabeled it severely. There is no such thing as an unconscious. But there is a hidden aspect. And the hidden aspect comes de facto because of a structure of reality. And for

some peculiar reason on this planet, in this star system, we only have access to a square of attention. We only have access to a frame of the big picture. And as our attention moves to another aspect, to a fifth aspect, the first aspect goes into invisibility as the fifth aspect becomes visible. So that to the extent that a man or a woman becomes aware to the extent that their ability to interiorize meaning achieves a condensation of symbols so that the symbol is able to transform into vision, into differential consciousness. To that extent, differential consciousness becomes the fourth part of the frame of the square of attention. And nature itself goes into the invisible. Which is entirely commensurate with vision, because what occurs more and more is that nature was never a there was always a mystery. And so, the fact that nature disappears as vision occurs is completely quote natural, though it's as supernatural as anything could happen. And you can prove this to yourself any time that you want to take a chance in having an accident. You don't have to take my word for it. You can go ahead and incur all kinds of injuries.

If you're driving along on the freeway and you start to think and imagine someplace else good enough, you will not see the road. And you have to remind yourself to come back to the awareness of your body and the road. And you wonder, where were you that you missed, that you were in vision at the beginnings of vision.

So, what we're talking about here has a peculiar practicality. It is only by differentiating enough, as we will see next year, differentiating enough to get to a differential form of the person. And this is why it's called an art. The art of person making. Virginia Satir once had a book by that title, and it was extremely accurate. *The Art of Person Making* [*Peoplemaking* or *The New Peoplemaking*]. Transformation is an art. It's a big magic.

To the extent that someone is able to do that the displacement of nature by vision is carried a step further. To the extent that art occurs, ritual becomes invisible. So that the square of attention that was once nature, ritual, myth and symbol. Transform to starting with ritual and then could include vision. Ritual, myth, symbol, vision. And when you start to achieve a transform strong enough so that you have art, ritual joins nature in the invisible. That is the unapparent.

And so, the beginning of the square of attention of art is myth, not nature and not ritual. Which produces a huge problem for humankind because our cultures, our societies are largely integral. They're largely integral forms based on bodies. Body count. Based upon minds. People thinking and alert and need to be taken into contention. And so, the whole politic, the whole economic, is founded on the integral cycle. And the artists, the spiritual persons are the first objective forms outside of that entire comportment. And they're out of place because they do not found themselves on either nature or ritual, but on myth. And so, artists, art, is very much mistakenly opposed to ritual. Whereas in fact ritual is a very deep foundation that must be allowed to subside into the outside of the square of attention. So that the attentiveness can then extend to art. The artist can be a master of ritual such that they do not have to attend to it.

And one of the proofs of this is that in the beginnings, in the very foundations before all of this is in play. And we're in our education trying to take it stage by stage so you can build an acquaintance with how does all this come about? Because we need to have that acquaintance before we talk about how does it work. Why is all of this? Why is an aesthetic a acid solution to politics? Why, why, why do political economies fear artists so much? Because they will dissolve their forms.

But there's a much more powerful acid and that is history. And we'll see there's a much more powerful form and it's called the cosmos. The real reality of all those billions and billions of light year galaxies seemingly without end constitute a real objective differential form. And we'll see that by the time we get to history myth becomes the seeming polarity. And by the time we get to science, where the cosmos becomes objective, symbols seem to be the opposition. And that's the territory of the mind. And curiously enough, the mind in its integral, egotistical objectiveness does not want to have the cosmos become real. Because it means that it must give itself over to being outside of the square of attention. And while you can, with moderate discipline, teach the body to let that tenacity go, the mind almost never cooperates with letting it go. Its position of power, it will not let go. And so many ingenious techniques have been developed to convince the mind that it's not really going to perish, but that it really isn't necessary for this recipe. And that is a very difficult thing to do and depends a great deal upon facility of using history, which is why history is the most difficult of all sciences. All is complicated, but not that difficult. History

is not very complicated, but extraordinarily difficult. And in our educational development, you'll see that the third quarter of the second year is the most difficult of all.

Right now, we're at *Ritual 3* we're building and we're trying to understand that even though language is used in ritual frequently the meaningfulness of words is secondary to the ritual comportment. That the ritual action establishes its objective efficacy despite not having complete comprehension of language. Without words being known completely. Or even used with any kind of meaningfulness. And this is very difficult to approach.

So, I have brought together a couple of references. This is a this is a book written by a man named William K. Powers. It's called *Sacred Language: The Nature of Supernatural Discourse in Lakota*. Lakota is the language of the of the Sioux. Black Elk's language. And the name for the territories North and South Dakota are forms of Lakota. It means the place of the Lakota. And it's very curious land. In North Dakota, the place where Sitting Bull is buried is less than 20 miles from where Lawrence Welk was born. So, there are such peculiarities that you could hardly believe. And while Europe has a more refined nature the United States is still a carnival. And a complete paradox, and the weirdest place on Earth. That you could hardly believe that these kinds of things really happen and are there.

I remember once driving south out of Montana into Northern Wyoming and coming to the Custer National Battlefield [Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument] and getting out of the car and going up on the little knoll where there's a cemetery. And standing there and you could see out to the Bighorn Mountains in the far distance. And you could see 70 miles in every direction, and you would think to yourself there's no way that you could hide a body of warriors large enough to take out Custer's command. And in fact, the, the little ravine, the [inaudible] where the Sioux were hiding is almost an invisible blip in the landscape from there. And no wonder they were convinced that there was nobody within maybe two days ride of them. They were completely outclassed by the surprise, the sudden surprise. And I remember taking that in, appreciating it and feeling the loneliness of the North Wyoming plains. And suddenly my attention was drawn to the fact that you could see the road, the modern highway. And right across the highway to the direct west where the setting sun direction would be was a rug factory,

right across the street, right across the highway, from the Custer battlefield. The sworn enemies of the Sioux, the Crows. And they had a rug factory. Now that they handmade rugs, it was just a factory that turned them out. It was like their arch enemies, the Crows, had this industrial plant right across the street from the place where the hoop of the nation of the Sioux people was broken. And it was like someone still rubbing salt in a wound.

And I remember walking across the highway feeling that kind of peculiar, forlorn American hobo wisdom that you get when you're out on the road for years on end. And going through the doorway into the place where the executives of the factory were. And I stepped through the doorway, and I looked around a little bit flashing eyes and a little bit miffed about this and starting to build some energy when suddenly I realized that all of the Crow Indian men were a little more than boys. I mean, they were grown men, but they were boys. They were malformed. They weren't, there was no spirit there at all. And I thought, this is more of a cemetery than across the street where the men died but were real. And I got in the car headed south.

It's an odd quality. And one of the first writers to notice this was a woman. And her name was Frances Densmore. And this is a little monograph published by the Museum of the American Indian in New York City. The [inaudible] Foundation, 1968. *Frances Densmore And American Indian Music A Memorial Volume*. Because she was born in 1868. And she. I have about 15 or 20 of her books. She, all her books are on American Indian music. She did the music of all these different tribes. And before the First World War she was busy alone out there with the tribes. And she went out, not as an ethnographer looking for the myths or the symbols or to do anthropological work in the classic sense. But she went out to learn their music because she had an insight it's in the music that the deepest comportment of the people is registered. And even here in the *Southwest Museum Papers* here in Los Angeles, *Cheyenne and Arapaho Music* [*Cheyenne and Arapaho Music: Southwest Museum Papers No. Ten*].

But her first book published in Washington, D.C., The Bureau of American Indian Ethnology. Her first book is 1910 on *Chippewa Music*. And she's the first person who wasn't a native Indian who got something really deep because Frances Densmore was really refined. Really refined lady.

Chippewas belonged to the Algonquin Nation, and they are cousins to the, the Sioux. Their central ritual comportment is all around the Midewiwin. And we'll talk about that in another week or so.

She writes, Frances Densmore writes in 1910,

The songs of the Midi represent the musical expression of religious ideas. The melody and the idea are essential parts of a Midi song. The words being forced into conformation with the melody. To accomplish this, it is customary to add meaningless syllables, either between the parts of a word or between the words. Accents are misplaced, and a word is sometimes accented differently in various parts of a song. The vowels are also given different sounds or changed entirely. Any of these alterations are permissible in addition to the meaningless syllables used to fill out the measures we find the ejaculations he hai hai hai used in the songs associated with the shooting of Spirit Power.

So that when she was taking down these songs they always made sure that this ending coda of four syllables was added even to the point of truncating the entire meaningful songs that were going on, so they could conclude with that. The shooting power refers, of course, to the nice little shell that the Algonquin people took to be a spirit gun to shoot the power collective to a resonant shell. And that the cowrie shell, especially a large one like this, was a sacred implement to inoculate the worldly with visionary power so that they could see in a visionary way in here in a visionary way. So that they would be prepared to emerge as spirits. And not to misidentify themselves with things.

In the Midewiwin, as in the Oakan or any ceremony, any comprehensive ritual cycle. All that is important is that you be initiated into the ceremony. Initiated into the society. Because men and women without number, generations without end, have all this while prepared to make those societies, those ceremonies, participating in the mystery of nature and they never dropped out. So, if you're initiated into the society or the ceremony, you are de facto initiated into the mystery of nature. So that the initiation threshold is to include you into the society or to include you into the ceremony. Because the society and ceremony are ready for uncounted thousands of years.

Already participating in the mystery of nature. And that the visionary tone of anyone becomes raised instantly. That the liminality of the initiation is affected.

Now, to mistake this as being a card-carrying member of, of a medicine circle is to misunderstand it grossly on every level. It has nothing to do with paying dues. Or having a number.

And so, the ritual quality is there. And as Frances Dinsmore points out the songs are ritually effective even though the singers do not always know what all the words mean. Because some of the songs go back so far that the language has had time to change, to morph, and they don't use in ordinary speech those words or those forms anymore. They go back to hundreds or sometimes thousand years before. Much like if you were to hear someone read *Beowulf* in Old English accurately you would feel the encompassing flow of the narrative drive of the epic. And you wouldn't even know 5% of the words, but you would still feel it.

Or like we did last week, I played a little bit of someone chanting from the *Rigveda* from 3500 years ago. And you don't have to know any Sanskrit to feel the flow, the vibratory, the oscillation of the energy form. The energy coming from an existential form into a mental form. That the mind and the body are bridged, are linked, are synced together by that energy flow of the sound of the experience. And you don't have to know the vocabulary or the technical syntax.

And in fact, children learn languages faster if they just participate in the usage of it than if they try to learn the grammar first and then fit vocabulary into the little categories of the grammar. It's difficult to learn Chinese unless you're a Chinese baby, in which case by the time you're one and a half you're speaking very well. And they never read Lao Tzu or Wang Yangming or any of them. So that the facility of learning has a comportment on the ritual level that occurs without the mind participating at all. And one of the things that cripples us is that we keep deferring to the mind to lead us in understanding when the mind very frequently is the last part of the integration that should be consulted. Which is why there's so much ill health at the beginning of the 21st century. It is bodies that need the health and not kibitzing from the mind to be accurate.

And this is later on reflected in Powers in his book on *Sacred Language of the Nature of Supernatural Discourse in Lakota*, quotes Lucien Lévy-Bruhl. Who by 1928 had independently confirmed what Francis Densmore had found out in her researching of music in *The Origins of Primitive Mentality*, which was the title of his book in 1928. Powers here quotes Lévy-Bruhl. Bruhl at that time wrote in translation,

That which proves finally the mystic words. And power in words as words is the widespread custom in magic ceremony, and even in ritual and religious ceremonies, of using songs and formulas which are unintelligible to those that hear them, and frequently unintelligible to some of those that utter them.

That the efficacy is there, despite the sporadic-ness of the intelligibility of the meaning. Now it's true for the mind to participate fully it must understand the meaning. It must understand the words. But we're talking on the ritual comportment the body doesn't have to understand the language because the body is more primordial. Ritual is more primordial than myth.

The body, in order to understand, must generate its awareness by participation, by doing. And when the body commences doing, its awareness field begins to generate, and we will see that it is the intensity of the field of awareness generated by the body that flames into language in the first place. Languages is a fire of the intensity of ritual action achieving the glow of awareness. And one begins to utter symbols and syllables not to make meaning, but to create sound. To create vibratory participation with the rhythm of ritual action. Hey hai hai hai hey.

In Oglala Sioux almost every prayer is initiated after the clearing of one's vocal sound capacity by uttering four pairs of hey hey. Hey hey hey hey hey hey. So that those eight syllables clear the octave of [inaudible] clearing of the ritual throat so that whatever one says then comes through. So that the flaming of language in mythic experience that then generates feeling toned intelligence, which is very high indeed, comes out of the dedication of the intensity of the body's comportment in ritual. So that ritual is extraordinarily the letter A in the whole alphabet of meaning.

And what we do do we will find actually and really occurs in that it invites. It not only invokes and evokes but has an invitational synergy with its invisible complement that's already flowing there in the mystery of nature. And that invisible complement is that there is something of the spiritual person already invisibly present though not yet known in the efficacy of the ritual syllables.

It's not so strange because in a way the other Indians, the India Indians, closed every deep ritual language prayer with also a quaternary of vowels. Om shanti shanti shanti. Peace, peace, peace. That beginning with om, that closing with om and the three utterances of peace extraordinarily accurate. Someone once asked the great Yogi Vinoba Bhave when demonstrators against his, his spiritual land reform in India and they were shouting [inaudible], which is a revolution down with the. And he admonished them. He said, you only have to say that once. That's quite powerful. And just once. Whereas Shanti repeated three times out of respect to the vibratory oscillation of the energy current that makes it real, and that's why ritual is done that way.

We'll come back after a break.

This is an original Inuit print. Most of the Eskimo artists are women. And this is called *Vision at Nowata*. And I think you were able to appreciate or at least begin to get the feeling that the animal world has spirit. The Sioux word for spirit is the same as the word for mysterious *Wakan*. *Wakan*. If one says *Wakan Tonka*, it's a great spirit. The word in the North Plains for buffalo, *Tatanka* is a cognate of great. So, the buffalo has a great spirit, a mystery of nature importance and affinity. And in all of the dance, the ritual, the chanting, the cultural life in the North Plains, the buffalo is extremely important. The Sioux who migrated into the North Plains from the Northeast come a little later to that cultural ecology. But they were there long enough to have adapted to it, and especially because of their mastery of the horse.

And we will see in a moment when we come to Black Elk that the, the horse becomes for them a part of the acceleration of the energy of nature, the deepening intensity. The horse brought an intensity to the capacity for the culture to, on an ordinary level, to hunt the buffalo very quickly. The Blackfoot people, to whom I am related, were able with the mastery of the horse to complete

their hunting of just a month or so into the summer season. So that it was characteristic of the Blackfoot young men to have 2 or 3 months during the summer, which they could devote to traveling. And they used to visit their Navajo cousins some 2000 miles south because the horse allowed them that kind of mobility.

The Blackfoot tribe controlled an area larger than France with never more than 3000 men of fighting age. So that you can see that the capability of administration was very high, enormously capable.

The Sioux people, of whom there are several bands, 4 or 5 major bands. The Oglala band to which Black Elk belonged.

If our machines are still operating. They're not, are they? They are. Good. And are we continuing to go and do I need to repeat? The exigencies of Los Angeles.

The horse figured prominently with Black Elks people. And perhaps the most mystic warrior of the Great Plains was named Crazy Horse. And Black Elk and Crazy Horse shared a great grandfather in common so that they were distant cousins of one another. And as he relates in *Black Elk Speaks*, that Crazy Horse was always in the front of every line of battle and he was never wounded once. He was *Wakan*. He was protected not from something that would defer the bullets from him, but he was sacred. He was holy. He was mysterious because of being so participant with the mystery of nature that bullets could not find him.

And when it came to doing *The History Of The Teton Sioux Music* [Teton Sioux Music and Culture] Francis Dinsmore's 1918 publication, about 600 pages. A great deal of it is filled with photographs of people from the Sioux Nation who would have been contemporaries with Black Elk. And one of the noticeable qualities is the deep personal physique and physiognomy of the people. They were not anonymous neuters. They were not cloned primitives of, just interchangeable by mechanical manipulation. They were not that kind of human beings at all. They were highly individual and usually lived to a great age. Living into the 90's was very characteristic of High Plains life.

We're trying to understand how ritual is fundamental. And that an education that does not begin with ritual before you broach ideas is a defective education. It suffers from an abstract skew from which one never recovers. The quality that is there in something sacred, something mysterious, something spiritual, *Wakan*, has its anchor in the body, in the action, in the ritual, and not in the mind. Not in the symbols. And if you lead with the symbols you overlook and mistake much.

Part of the emergent efficacy of the existential, which allows it to be in a full complementarity to spiritual presence. Physical existence can exchange places with spiritual presence. This is why the divine can become embodied and why the body can literally become divine. Because there is a paired-ness. There is a spiritedness. And that paired-ness occurs because existence in its most fundamental registry is a unity. We're using here the Chinese term Tao. Tao and Tae pair and complement and become a binary expressiveness because they have an exchangeable center of unity.

The physical unity, the existential unity, of Tae is probably best appreciated in the early 21st century with the idea of a Bose-Einstein condensation. The Bose Einstein condensate is when you take a material, and you cool it so that it goes down to within one millionth of a degree of absolute zero cold. The defining liminality of the protons in the neutrons dissolves, and you get a quark stew. And that quark stew is a Bose-Einstein condensation. And it has a physical opaqueness as if it were like a dense material. Yet you can shine a laser light through it at certain registries. And a great deal, this is a late 20th century book. It shows that on the atomic and molecular level there is a condition of unity where the very quark structure of protons and neutrons and all other atomic registry, all other molecular registry, literally and physically is unified so that there's no differentiation. There is only a mysterious integral that obtains in the act of emergence.

So that in terms of what we've been developing here, Tae emerges whole from Tao. Existence emerges whole. So that the reality of existence is that it is one. The ancient call in the Jewish tradition hero Israel, the Lord thy God is one is an actual registry of that most arcane subatomic actuality that any existentiality occurs without differentiation. For that unity is so unified that it is also at one with the zero.

Alan Watts used to make a great deal in the 1950's of the word atonement, hyphenated as at-one-ment. That there is a state of at-one-ment where one not only belongs to everything, but everything is everything. And not tautologically so but in a singularity. And the fact that singularities exist in astrophysics is another registry of this deep Bose-Einstein condensation quark soup that existence is whole. So that the participation that we have goes down to the subatomic level. It is not an artifact of sociological hope. It's not there de facto because of hocus pocus on a primitive cross your eyes and fingers willfulness at all. It occurs because it only occurs in that way. And so, the confidence of primordial men and women in ritual is that the efficacy of what we do will be there if we can give ourselves over to participate in that flow. If we can be at one with that flow.

And so, the traditional liminality was so important that it was not left for individuals to carry that, but it was a part of the sacredness of societies, the sacredness of ceremonies, to continue to maintain that. And the performance of the ceremonies, the activation of the societies, within a periodicity was simply offering a chance for newcomers or for those who had fallen out of participation to recalibrate and to come back in. To initiate for the first time or re-initiate to come out, as it were, the vulgarities that develop in the confusion of a life to which we are all subject and experience continuously. The resistances are there. And not just demonic. They occur from myriads of fractal deferments. So that the repetition is a repetition in periodicity.

And as those who are reading in *Black Elk Speaks*, you recognize that it's the full moons. It is the lunar events that give the deepest periodicity to the year. He dates constantly events will happen within such and such a moon. The moon of the darkening of cherries. Or the moon of the popping trees.

And when we come to *Black Elk Speaks*, and this is a first edition of it, one of the earliest things that happens in the book before he even begins is like a prelude of the offering of the pipe. The Algonquin word for the sacred pipe, the calumet. It's a, it's a curiosity that one of the most ugly freeways in the United States is called the Calumet Skyway in Chicago. It comes out from the South, and it goes over the industrial wastelands that if you drive it at night it used to look like a [inaudible] surrealistic hell. Fogs of evil looking vapor of disgusting colors would hover over

factories without end. And the glow of the fires. It looked exactly like a Hieronymus Bosch painting. And this was the sacred pipe Skyway coming into the great city of Chicago. And it always used to amaze me that the very first oasis that you would find in those days as you dropped into Chicago, there would be the University of Chicago. Where all the eggheads in town were camped out at the first exit off the Sacred Pipe Skyway. Very, very peculiar.

Those of us at the University of Wisconsin in the 50's used to tell them, don't drive South civilizations to the North of you.

So, the beginning of *Black Elk Speaks* before he begins to speak, he offers the calumet the sacred pipe. And that offering brought the translator, John Neihardt in *Black Elk Speaks* was like already a dozen books after he had begun. He was a scholar independently. He never had a chair at a university. He was a poet. He wrote a great epic poem of the civilization of the Plains. It was an amazing figure. And his name was Flaming Rainbow. Because of the rainbow being the spectrum. And in vision, very often the rainbow is the first spectrum that one becomes aware of the rainbow, which occurs through the simplest diffraction of light through any crystal structure whatsoever.

In *Genesis*, the very first the very first sign of God to man that a covenant had been established is God sets his bow in the sky to Noah. And so, this rainbow which flames. And if you look at *The Illuminated Books of William Blake*, you will see flaming rainbows in many of his high vision contexts. And when he goes into when Blake goes into the initial vision of Paradise, where his guide can no longer take him, Virgil cannot take Dante into Paradise. He has to have a new guide. He has to have Beatrice as his guide. Virgil cannot go into Paradise. And so, the wheels of the chariot of Beatrice in Paradise that Dante sees are curled rainbows with many eyes in it.

So that the Flaming Rainbow is his name, John Neihardt. And he is sat in a circle in a teepee with Standing Bear, Luther Standing Bear and Fire Thunder and Black Elk, and a number of old warriors who at this time *Black Elk Speaks*, comes out in the early 30's. This I believe it's 1932. *Black Elk Speaks* was issued during the time when Franklin Roosevelt was elected president at the nadir of the American depression. And so *Black Elk Speaks* was a voice from primordial

America to an America that was broken. That the political economic scene had ended up in a very parallel and similar condition to the to the native Indian saint. And it was on a downward spiral. A devolution that actually would have continued into barbarity had it not been checked.

And so *Black Elk Speaks* appeared at a time in this country where it was very much a crisis and one of the most crucial moments in American history. The most crucial moment since the Battle of Gettysburg. And it was a moment where only a personal shouldering of a great vision could have reversed the historical devolution that had reached a downward mythic spiral into a dead-end rituals. The depression was a strategic poverty that had ratcheted itself in beyond anyone's control. And Franklin Roosevelt, indeed one of the great shamans of history. To have reversed that within less than a generation is unbelievable. A very, very great shaman.

So *Black Elk Speaks*, when it came out, came out with this kind of a context and was being done the research being done in 1930-31. And here Neihardt was offered the sacred pipe. And as he was Black Elk explained to him, showed him, that what we are doing here has a, has a quality to it. It has a structure. That the ritual implement, the sacred pipe, has this capacity where the bark of the red willow shaved very finely put into the pipe. And the pipe having four ribbons that drape down from it, and a single eagle's feather. The eagle's feather is the symbol of the transform. The four ribbons of the four directions so that there is an ordinate in integral space time. But the eagle's feather being a transformative fifth, a thumb, a quality of grasping a transform.

Would you please take a seat? Thank you. We don't want to steal energy from the moment.

The grasping capacity is the capacity to transform. Here, you can just hang on. Here you can change it so that. So that eagle's feather, that fifth element in theater, the fifth business, was always the mysterious aspect of the show that gave the elan to the event. So that it wasn't just a performance, it was a delivering originally of the drama as it really was. And a great actor will always know that tonight's very special. This is the night. Or this is the day. This is the audience. This is the time when it isn't just putting on the play, but it's delivering the drama originally. This

happens now. And so good ritual is always like that. It's a great performance. It is a chance for the people.

We talked earlier this morning about how world renowned any native language referring to the self-inclusive group means we the people. At the end of John Ford's great film on the Great Depression, *The Grapes of Wrath*, the mother, Jane Darwell says to the remaining members of the family that are in the old model T truck, they're going on to pick in some other field. She said, well, we will survive, and we will make it no matter what happens. We have to because we are the people.

And the point being, again, ritual is about existence confirming its right to continue. That without that a devolution indeed, a regression indeed, sets in. So that at each integral in the cycle of existence as one moves from mineral to plant to animal to man. At each threshold, at each stage, is a more complex integral and a deeper responsibility. And at that liminality where man occurs, man's existence, we have the privilege and the responsibility to continue that energy of life on that level. And should we fail, it falls back. If it breaks, it falls back. And if it falls back from man, it falls back then on the shoulders of the animals. Who, while they can sustain life in a ritual way and even provide a strong image base for the mythic comportment as it's developing, the animals cannot sustain the powerful integral that man has introduced into existence. The animals will fail. And as they fail and that responsibility goes further back deeper, the plants will fail. As we see our planet now. Not a beautiful planet anymore at all. Because man has failed and the animals have failed, and the plants have failed. And now the devolution is onto the minerals. And the minerals are unable to sustain that powerful landslide regression. And they will fail.

So that there is a deep responsibility for those who inhabit the existential robustness of the various developments to maintain that. To do their part, to put it in a colloquial way. And only man can do man's part. Only men and women can't affect that. The animals cannot do that for us. They can't carry us. We can't ride them. The plants can't do that themselves. There aren't enough herbs in any wise usage to do that. The minerals can't do that.

And so, there is a quality here. And Black Elk is trying to sensitize his hearer, the man who's going to write this down, John G. Neihardt. Trying to sensitize him that this is a very special situation. And the beginning is to pass the pipe.

And of course, later, towards the end of his life, Black Elk committed the seven rites of the sacred pipe that Joseph [inaudible] Brown put out. And I used to use this for years and years in San Francisco and in many other places. In the center of the seven rites, they had blessed the [inaudible] the cry for a vision. And so, in a way, *Black Elk Speaks* begins with the passing of the peace pipe and the sensitizing to Neihardt that what you are coming into this terrain of ritual overlaid by amplitudes of vision, you have to come into a symbol beginning. But you must suspend your symbolic capacity to unfold and enfold meaning, and let your body begin the registry. Which means you have to let your ear go underneath the vocabulary and grammar and syntax of the language and just hear the cadence of the delivery.

And I've said this about these lectures. I use a very developed language. It's 1300 years since *Beowulf*, and English has come a long way. I'm as far from *Beowulf* as Plotinus was from Homer. This language that I'm using is an English that has enough convolutions to challenge the entire brain. Not that I'm doing this. I stand on the shoulders of a long tradition, and many geniuses far beyond my capacities have transformed this so that it came as a living tradition. I just simply inherit that and others too.

But it's as we talked about earlier before the break. Francis Dinsmore in 1910 doing the ethnographic research and Chippewa music realized they put in extra vowels. Words without meaning. They change the emphasis of the language so that the meaning of the words is crimped and different in order to keep the ritual cadence in its periodicity so that the energy frequency is accurate. And not just the beat of the drum. She notices in her monograph on Chippewa music and a few later years later on the second volume of Chippewa music, that when they're folded into the language coming into its ritual presentation, it frequently goes off kilter from the drum beat. It isn't that the drum beat carries the primordial rhythm, it's that the human voice on the ritual level of syllable utterance carries the rhythm. It is the hey hey hey hey hey that carries the rhythm, and the drum is an accompaniment. The gourd rattle is an accompaniment. It is the voice

in its primordiality before a language has formed into a vocabulary with syntactical structure that carries the efficacy of ritual. It is only that the body be real in that existentiality, and participate in that periodicity, that the efficacy occurs. For the mind to think this way, it runs into a regression that colloquially is known as black magic. That somehow if you just get the abracadabra right it will compel nature to behave and do what you want. This is a stupidity beyond belief. Because the Bose-Einstein condensation never asks anybody what you want. At least it's not on record yet.

The efficacy of the ritual has this deep mysteriousness of nature that emerges whole into the body, so that the body keeping metronomic timing with that energy of existence is the gauge, and not the drumbeat which accompanies the dance movements of the feet is a very interesting thing. So, it's the entirety of the body as a unity that registers rather than the feet in the movement. The movement with the feet is an accompaniment and must fold itself like a secondary energy wave into the first. The first is the carrier wave. And so that the ritual has always the deepest attentiveness to the carrier wave. The action that actually is happening, and the periodicity of that.

Perhaps one of the most sophisticated presentations of how this works was 2500 years ago by the historical Buddha. *The Satipatthana Sutta*, the Mindfulness Sutra, at which we'll take a look at as one of our texts later on. When we get to that, we'll will couple the, we'll use *The Satipatthana Sutta* with the second interval. We'll use that like we use *The Tao Te Ching* at the end of nature. That there is a poignancy to put the mind in a neutral gear, to let language occur in its spontaneous stew, its soup, of whatever emphasis is going to happen. It's gibberish. It's in apocalyptic literature. It's called glossolalia, the speaking in tongues. To let that phenomenon occur.

There is a, there's a marvelous use of that in Lawrence Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet*. In the, the second volume, Balthazar where the harelippped man of property, Naruse, is going on one of the side streets of Alexandria during one of these great festival things, and there are fireworks off in the distance, and it's night. And he comes across this beggar who's gibbering at him and is just a mess, a total human mess. And with Rouge's disdain, he wants to push this critter, this creature,

out of his way. And all of a sudden the gibbering beggar stabs the air with a finger and begins telling him prophetically what is going to happen to him in his life because of this disdain for reality. And after delivering this, he lapses back into the gibbering beggar and Rouge is absolutely stunned. He doesn't know how to comport because he's been stabbed by the mysterious real in a way in which he almost never recovers.

And it's this kind of equality where language has to be allowed to lapse into its incomprehensibility of an endless patois. And it's the endlessness of it that has the efficacy. Because that is absorbed by the body if the body is in its periodicity, its action. That sound comes back and settles into the efficacious form of the syllables that sustain.

There was a Swiss metaphysical scientist named Hans Jenny in the 40's and 50's, and he used to take sand on a thin membrane like a tambourine. And he used to subject the sand to various sounds, various vibrations. And they would make characteristic patterns of the sand. Always the same. It's like how the Hopi Indians in their divination read the prophecy of the future in the way in which the ripples of the sand were the San Juan River runs into the Colorado. Because they know the vibratory carrier wave of the land, and they can read it. It's the same way as being able to read birds. The activities, the actions of birds, and one can learn to see this. Or read weather and understand this is this is what is happening. Because one sees exactly what is occurring in the periodicity, the energy frequently, that it existentially discloses. And if you are a part of that, the disclosure is instantaneous. You don't have to figure anything out. It's instantaneous. So that man knows instantaneously in his ritual, through the mystery of nature, what the cosmos really is doing.

So, when Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, got a little tired of being an international superstar in all these mythic languages. Icelandic and so forth. And he went back to the American Indian languages, and he realized what a treasure was there. And then he wrote *Hiawatha*, the great epic of a European man going back and understanding what Indian wisdom was all about before there was any kind of European ideation whatsoever. And Hiawatha learns to speak the language of plants and of animals and of trees. And he can address them with a kind of a vibratory synergy and ask what they are for, and they will tell him.

And it's this kind of a quality that's there finally James Fenimore Cooper, when his *Leatherstocking Saga* stopped being this romantic fiction in competition with the bestsellers of Sir Walter Scott. And he realized that there was a visionary capacity, which he had because he could see the land in its ritual existential unity. And he writes at the beginning of *The Pathfinder* [*The Pathfinder, or The Inland Sea*], the one who finds the path through the wilderness, that the effect of events falling on the mind produces the illusion of human time. And then in the great, vast, unbroken forest of the world the pathfinder navigates not by trails, but by going in vectors that are in consonance with the harmony of that world.

In a collection of essays, a collected by his daughter Susan after her father died, a great huge volume. I have a copy of it. She said that she was driving her old father along above the lake there, just North of Cooperstown. Cooperstown is named for his family. Where the Baseball Hall of Fame is. And he was staring in a trance at the lake, which he called in his *Leatherstocking Tales* Glimmerglass. And she waited and thought maybe he's lost in reverie. And finally, he looked at her and she said his eyes were full of clear fire, and he said, I have one more novel I need to write. And that's when he went back and he filled in what had been missing in the *Leatherstocking Saga*, *The Deerslayer*. The beginnings of Natty Bumppo. The beginnings of Hawkeye when he was young. When he was first understanding what the virgin forest of a continent was all about. And right away, at the beginning of *Deerslayer*, you see the 16-17-year-old young Deerslayer, young Hawkeye running through the woods with the old, older trapper who's very much showing him the lay of the land. And they are running through the woods. They're not walking but running. If you've ever learned how to run full bore through the wilderness, you know what this means.

I remember when I was first learning to do that, I was astounded. It was like skiing among a jungle of moguls and you wouldn't hit a thing. And later on, you would wonder how you could have done that to run full blast through a forest.

And all the time Deerslayer is running, he is laughing from the sheer ambulence and joy of doing it. But not laughing out loud because he was learning to be in a very dangerous wilderness. He was laughing silently. And Cooper says he learned to laugh heartily in silence at himself running

all the while in the virgin forest. He was a white Indian for the first time. The first one. The first one to get it. That you can be tuned to the land in such a way that you belong there. That you have entered into the tens of thousands of years of existentiality you would become not only a member of the tribe, you have become a member of the existential reality of the land. And that the land has this quality.

A great American historian of the western frontier named Nash wrote a book called *Virgin Land*, and he said, there will come a generation of Americans who learn to live with the land again. And they will laugh in a joyous silence with each other.

There's much more, and we'll catch it up next week.

END OF RECORDING