

22. EXORCISMS DURING A MOON ECLIPSE

When they lived (in a village), (they) never had one house only; there were usually three houses wherever they lived (in a village). Whenever they saw the moon (darkened), one man would usually see it first at night. He would just shout loud, "Do you come out (from) inside; do you come out (from) inside; the moon is now killed." And it is said that the crow usually kills the moon, and also the eagle, and likewise the chicken hawk and, moreover, the owl. In such a number all the birds habitually assemble whenever they kill the moon.

Then all the people would come out now (from their houses). (The moon) would be now looked at. Then the words of a man would be heard, "You shall all spill your water;" thus the speech of a man would sound. Now thus, verily, it would be done. Then the houses would be hit with sticks, to all the houses it would be done thus, and the chief of these people would say: "(I) wonder greatly what is going to happen to the world? The moon is never killed without any cause. Only when a person having dentalia shells is about to be killed, is the moon murdered." Now after he would finish saying this he would keep on talking, "You shall try (to bring the moon back to life with your) own (exorcisms); you shall look all around the world; you shall dance." Then the houses would be hit with sticks, and it would be attempted to look at the moon. It would not be long before (the moon) would be gone entirely; its surface would seemingly be getting dark (and darker). Then all the people would dance. Now the medicine-man would say (to the people): "(This) is nothing. Even if the moon should disappear, nevertheless he will again fix his own appearance just as it (was before)." One man would say: "(It) is nothing. The bad thing is gone; nature is well (again). You shall not (think of) anything in your minds." Then they would come together in order that the moon should be looked at. One person would keep on saying, "It is accomplished now; I am going to go back into the house." Thereupon the people would enter their houses again.