Northern Saulteaux

also known as “Ojibwa”

Data source: eHRAF
By Emily Pitek, Human Relations Area Files
*Data Source entry, prepared based on data sourced from an external project.

Entry tags: Native American (North American) Religions, Religious Group

The Ojibwa are comprised of “numerous communities ranging mainly from southern and northwestern Ontario, northern Michigan and central Manitoba and Saskatchewan (Brown and Beierle, 2000).” The term “Ojibwa” describes a larger ethnic and linguistic group that is not politically unified. Historically, Ojibwa contact with Europeans began in the 1640’s with the arrival of fur traders and French Jesuit missionaries. The 1800’s brought an end to treaties and marked the Ojibwa relocations to reservations, occurring after the War of 1812 in the United States, and after the establishment of the Dominion Government in 1867 in Canada (Hallowell, 1955:117). This entry focuses specifically on the Northern Saulteaux (around the time of 1930), an Ojibwa people who migrated to the more remote area east of Lake Winnipeg. In part, this migration helped the Northern Saulteaux to “conserve a great deal of their aboriginal culture during a period when armed conflicts with an expanding white population, the effects of the fur trade, and Christianization led to more rapid culture changes among the Ojibwa elsewhere (Hallowell, 1955:112).” This entry primarily utilizes ethnographic information obtained by Alfred Irving Hallowell (the principal ethnographic authority), who completed field work among the Northern Saulteaux from 1930-1940. At this time, the Saulteaux had had contact with Christian missionaries, but native religious beliefs were still held. These native beliefs include several supernatural beings such as ancestral spirits and other non-human beings. Ethnographers have referred to Saulteaux religious practitioners as shamans, medicine men, or conjurers. These individuals had supernatural abilities (often acquired in a religious fast/dream state) including the ability to access knowledge from and communicate with people far away, foretell the future, communicate with supernatural beings and the dead, and solve mysteries. Additionally, these shamans had the power to abduct souls, causing sickness, mental distress, and death. Due to these supernatural abilities, as well as their knowledge and skill, shamans held effective leadership roles (despite the absence of an official political office and official religious leaders). Because religion does not exist in a distinct sphere, but rather pervades all aspects of life, this entry considers the religious group to be coterminous with the society itself.

Date Range: 1910 CE - 1940 CE
Region: Northern Saulteaux
Region tags: North America, Canada
Northern Saulteaux, Berens River, Little Grand Rapids, and Pekangekum bands (Manitoba, Canada). Ca.1930

Status of Participants:
✓ Religious Specialists  ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

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Online sources for understanding this subject:

— Source 1 URL: https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=ng06-000
— Source 1 Description: Brown, and John Beierle. Culture Summary: Ojibwa. HRAF, 2000

— Source 2 URL: https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=ng06-058

— Source 3 URL: https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=ng06-021

— Source 1 URL: https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=ng06-067

— Source 2 URL: https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=ng06-076

— Source 3 URL: https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=ng06-077

Notes: Source 2 referred to as “Hallowell, 1976b”, source 3 referred to as “Hallowell, 1976c” in this entry.

**General Variables**

**Membership/Group Interactions**

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

— Yes

Notes: “Locally known as Saulteaux, in the patterns of their speech and manner of life they belong to a much larger and geographically widespread ethnic and linguistic group—the Ojibwa. But this larger whole, although readily identifiable, was never at any time unified...The Berens River Saulteaux represent a local variant of this larger unit. Furthermore, the lineal ancestors of these Indians, and of other closely related neighboring people, only a few generations ago did not occupy the area east of Lake Winnipeg—they migrated into it. It is partly due to this migration into more remote regions that
these groups of Ojibwa Indians were able to conserve a great deal of their aboriginal culture during a period when armed conflicts with an expanding white population, the effects of the fur trade, and Christianization led to more rapid culture changes among the Ojibwa elsewhere” (Hallowell, 1955:112). “In the Lake Pekangikum band, which I visited in 1932, there was not a single Christian reported before 1924” (Hallowell, 1955:112).

Is there violent conflict (within sample region):
- No
  Notes: SCCS Variable 1654 (Pacification), indicates that the Northern Saulteaux were pacified before the 25-year ethnographic present (Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):
- No
  Notes: SCCS Variable 1654 (Pacification), indicates that the Northern Saulteaux were pacified before the 25-year ethnographic present (Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:
- No
  Notes: Because the religious group is coterminous with the society at large, there is no process for assigning religious affiliation.

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:
- No
  Notes: No evidence for the recruitment of new members among the Northern Saulteaux. Further, the religious group is coterminous with the society at large.

Does the religion have official political support
- Yes
  Notes: The Northern Saulteaux do not have an official political office, however, the religious sphere of life does not exist independently; religion is coterminous with the society as a whole. Additionally, shaman/medicine men occupied a leadership role and held power as a result of skill, knowledge, and supernatural abilities. See questions below for more details.

Is religious infrastructure paid for by the polity:
- No
  Notes: The Northern Saulteaux do not have religious infrastructure.

Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:
- Yes
Is there a conception of apostasy in the religious group:

- No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of a conception of apostasy.

**Size and Structure**

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

- Estimated population, numeric: 900

Notes: "It is the nine hundred or more Indians of the Berens River among whom I did field work during the decade 1930-40 who are referred to in many of the papers collected in this volume" (Hallowell, 1955:112). The Ojibwa in their entirety: "In the United States the Ojibwa constitute one of the largest remnants of our aboriginal population, only exceeded in numbers by the Navaho and possibly the Sioux. They occupy reservations in Minnesota (10), in Wisconsin (5), in North Dakota (1), and in Montana (1); in Michigan there are to be found several thousand non-reservation Ojibwa. In all, they possibly number 30,000 persons, although all estimates are approximate and include mixed-bloods. Across the border in the Dominion of Canada, there are perhaps only 20,000 of these Indians, although the number of reservations in the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan on which they now live outnumber those in the United States five or six to one" (Hallowell, 1955:116).

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

- Yes

Notes: Men who are believed to have acquired much power from other-than-human sources occupy a special position in Ojibwa culture. Since they have both the power to cure, as well as the power to kill, people's attitudes towards them are ambivalent: they may exercise a great deal of personal influence because they are feared, and may outrank other men in power, though not in material wealth or
formal social ranking” (Hallowell, 1976c:432-433). “By the Treaty of 1875 the [native inhabitants] in almost all of the area surrounding Lake Winnipeg (100,000 sq. miles) were, for the first time, brought into formal relations with the young Canadian government. It was following this treaty that reservations were assigned to different groups, and that local bands, with chiefs and councillors, were constituted. Prior to this time there were no chiefs in the modern sense, nor any formal band or tribal organization... Effective leadership rested in the so-called ‘medicine men,’ those who were reputed to have gained the most power, through their dreams, from superhuman entities (pawáganak, dream visitors). It is significant that such individuals were frequently the first ‘chiefs’ elected to represent the newly constituted ‘bands’ in their dealings with the Dominion Government” (Hallowell, 1955:120).

Is there a hierarchy among these leaders:
— I don’t know

Are leaders believed to possess supernatural powers or qualities:
— Yes

Notes: “In addition [to the ‘chiefs’ appointed by the Canadian Government], the men who according to aboriginal beliefs had ‘power’ (but not institutionalized authority for making legislative, judicial, or penal decisions affecting their fellow men) continued to exercise it. These were the so-called medicine men, who because of esoteric experiences acquired in dreams were greatly feared, as well as revered, because they could not only cure the illness of others but sorcerize them. The social influence these medicine men could exercise was grounded in the fact that they held in their hands the power of life and death” (Hallowell and Brown, 1991:36).

Powers are acquired by individual deeds carried out in the current life:
— Yes

Notes: Hallowell and Brown, 1991:36

Powers are culturally transmitted from a supernatural being:
— Yes

Notes: Hallowell and Brown, 1991:36

Are leaders considered fallible:
— I don’t know

Are close followers or disciples of a religious leader required to obediently and unquestionably accept the leader’s pronouncements on all matters:
— I don’t know

Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:
Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

— No

Notes: While there is no evidence for the presence of scriptures in a formal sense of the definition (sacred texts, typically written, or orally accounted verbatim), the Northern Saulteaux do possess a rich history of myths. "Myths (ätísō'kanak), i.e., sacred stories, which are not only traditional and formalized; their narration is seasonally restricted and is somewhat ritualized. The significant thing about these stories is that the characters in them are regarded as living entities who have existed from time immemorial. While there is genesis through birth and temporary or permanent form-shifting through transformation, there is no outright creation. Whether human or animal in form or name, the major characters in the myths behave like people, though many of their activities are depicted in a spatiotemporal framework of cosmic, rather than mundane, dimensions. There is 'social interaction' among them and between them and ánícinábek" (Hallowell, 1976b:364).

Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

— No

Notes: According to Column 6: Large or Impressive Structures (Note: equivalent to SCCS Variable 66) of Murdock and Wilson (1972), "there are no structures in the community that are appreciably larger or more impressive than the usual residential dwellings."

Are pilgrimages present:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of pilgrimages.

Beliefs

Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

— Yes

Notes: "The human self does not die; it continues its existence in another place, after the body is buried in the grave" (Hallowell, 1976b:380).

Spirit-mind is conceived of as non-material, ontologically distinct from body:

— Yes

Notes: "...the soul is detachable from the body and may occupy a different position in space. This is true both with respect to a dead person and a person asleep" (Hallowell, 1955:175-176)
Belief in afterlife:

— Yes

Notes: The land of the dead is known as djibaiàking. See questions below for more details.

Is the spatial location of the afterlife specified or described by the religious group:

— Yes

Notes: "According to the aboriginal view, at any rate, djibaiàking was not conceived to be above the earth, or below it, but in a distant region to the south. It was in this country that Indians whose souls left their bodies went on living, presumably forever; and it was a land presumably richer in game and bird-life than the northern country, a place where no one had any trouble in making a living, although life was in other respects a duplication of this one" (Hallowell, 1955:155).

Afterlife in vaguely defined "above" space:

— No

Afterlife in vaguely defined "below" space:

— No

Afterlife in vaguely defined horizontal space:

— Yes

Notes: "The general location of djibaiàking is said to be in the south.." (Hallowell, 1955:155).

Reincarnation in this world:

— Yes

Notes: "...a belief in the possibility of reincarnation is extant; but it remains almost wholly unelaborated" (Hallowell, 1955:170).

In a human form:

— Yes

Notes: (Hallowell, 1955:170)

In animal/plant form:

— I don't know

In form of an inanimate object(s):

— I don't know
In non-individual form (i.e. some form of corporate rebirth, tribe, lineage. etc.):
  – I don’t know

Reincarnation linked to notion of life-transcending causality (e.g. karma):
  – I don’t know

Are there special treatments for adherents’ corpses:
  – Yes

  Notes: The dead are buried in cemeteries (see Hallowell, 1955:165-168 for more information).

Cremation:
  – No

  Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of cremation.

Mummification:
  – No

  Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of mummification.

Interment:
  – Yes

  Notes: The dead are buried in cemeteries (see Hallowell, 1955:165-168 for more information).

  Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):
    – I don’t know

  Corpse is extended (lying flat on front or back):
    – I don’t know

  Corpse is upright (where body is interred in standing position):
    – I don’t know

Cannibalism:
  – No

  Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of cannibalism.

Exposure to elements (e.g. air drying):
  – No
Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of exposing corpses to the elements.

Feeding to animals:
- No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of feeding corpses to animals.

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:
- No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of co-sacrifices.

Are grave goods present:
- Yes

Notes: "They were quite satisfied to be buried in their best clothes, so that they would not be ashamed of their appearance when they reached djibaïàking, and to be provided (in their graves) with a small kettle, an axe, a knife, and perhaps a gun; for it was formerly the custom to wrap the body of the deceased in a new blanket, and also to leave a little food at the grave. These articles were all, they felt, that a person required" (Hallowell, 1955:156).

Personal effects:
- Yes

Notes: (Hallowell, 1955:156)

Are formal burials present:
- Yes

Notes: See questions below for available information concerning formal burials among the Northern Saulteaux (Ojibwa).

As cenotaphs:
- I don't know

In cemetery:
- Yes

Notes: "The graves of deceased Indians were much more scattered formerly than now, since when death occurred in the autumn and winter, individuals were buried wherever their relatives happened to be. Today there are cemeteries near every summer settlement, and if the settlement includes resident missionaries, these burial grounds are under Christian control" (Hallowell, 1955:157-158).

Family tomb-crypt:
- I don't know
Are supernatural beings present:
— Yes

Notes: A variety of supernatural beings are present among the Northern Saulteaux. See questions below for more information.

A supreme high god is present:
— Field doesn't know

Notes: "...the vaguely conceived High God of the Ojibwa cosmos—the Gitchi Manitu of popular fame—is functionally so undefinable. His role is not that of a creator or even an Urheber (founder). Nevertheless, none of the evidence suggests that this High God was a direct consequence of contact with missionaries. This assertion is denied by the Ojibwa themselves, as it has been by scholars. Descriptively, the problem turns upon the conceptualization of the attributes and functions of this being, who in most respects stands apart from the beings of the other than human class already discussed. The entities of this class are frequently figures in mythology, where they are given anthropomorphic, mammalian, or avian attributes. But since the High God does not appear in the myths, or in the shaking tent, or even in dreams, any kind of concrete visual image or clue to outward appearance is completely lacking. Since specific functional attributes are likewise lacking, it is extremely difficult to discuss the role of the High God with any surety...I suspect that as a result of the efforts of the missionaries, the High God may have come to assume a more central place than it held previously in the thinking of the Ojibwa as they came under the influence of Christianity. But the roles of the many other than human persons continued to be of pragmatic importance in meeting the hazards of life and in other traditional ways" (Hallowell and Brown, 1991:72).

Previously human spirits are present:
— Yes

Notes: "Since the spirits of the dead carry on their activities during the night, it is not surprising to find them occasionally wandering near their own graves, or in the bush. Sometimes one hears a whistle after dark, and it is most certainly a djibai [ghost]" (Hallowell, 1955:158).

Human spirits can be seen:
— Yes

Notes: "Possibly the fact that when djibai [ghosts] have been seen, it has usually been in the neighborhood of a grave, accounts for the avoidance of such spots" (Hallowell, 1955:159).
— No

Notes: "The only sensory mode under which it is possible for human beings to directly perceive the presence of souls of any category, and then under certain conditions only,
is the auditory one" (Hallowell, 1955:180).

Human spirits can be physically felt:
— I don’t know

Previously human spirits have knowledge of this world:
— Yes
Notes: "...the djībaiyāk [spirits of the deceased] are conceived to be interested in human affairs and benevolently disposed towards the living, especially their kinsmen" (Hallowell, 1955:159).

Human spirits have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:
— I don’t know

Human spirits have indirect causal efficacy in the world:
— Yes
Notes: "Our grandfathers’, unlike ancestral spirits in some other cultures, do not afflict human beings with illness. By and large, they are not characterized by any punishing role. Their attitude toward ānicinābèk is one of helpfulness; they are willing to share their power with human beings, and come to their assistance when in trouble. It is true that if men do not treat game animals properly, the ‘persons’ who are their ‘masters’ will not allow these animals to be caught. But the human offenders are not afflicted with sickness on this account" (Hallowell, 1976c:411-412).

Human spirits exhibit positive emotion:
— Yes
Notes: "...the djībaiyāk [spirits of the deceased] are conceived to be interested in human affairs and benevolently disposed towards the living, especially their kinsmen" (Hallowell, 1955:159).

Human spirits communicate with the living:
— Yes

In dreams:
— Yes
Notes: "...the djībaiyāk [spirits of the deceased] occasionally appear in dreams and even function as guardian spirits, that is, confer blessings" (Hallowell, 1955:159).

Through divination processes:
— Yes
Notes. "...in the course of a conjuring performance, not only the master of the djibaiyāk may appear, but the spirits of deceased relatives of persons present may be invoked" (Hallowell, 1955:163).

Only through monarch:
— No
Notes: No monarch is present among the Northern Saulteaux.

Communicate with living through other means:
— Yes [specify]: Through Drum Dance (ceremony)
Notes: "In the Pauingessi dance, the drum has become the medium of communication between the living and the spirits of the dead" (Hallowell, 1955:165).

Non-human supernatural beings are present:
— Yes
Notes: "...the spirits of the dead, instead of being central in the ideology of the Indians, are actually peripheral to other spiritual beings who are conceptually the dynamic forces of the universe, helping men to achieve the ends for which they strive. This relationship is demonstrated by the fact that the spirits of the dead tend to coalesce, in certain instances, with the pawáganzak, conceptually and functionally. The gap is easily bridged, indeed, if for no other reason than the presence in mythology of anthropomorphic characters who themselves function as spiritual helpers; typical of such is wisakedjak. These anthropomorphic beings, while now immortal like the dead, once lived on earth like the Indians, so that they too are among the ketē ânicinábek" (Hallowell, 1955:171).

These supernatural beings can be seen:
— I don't know

These supernatural beings can be physically felt:
— I don't know

Non-human supernatural beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:
— I don't know

These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:
— Yes
Notes: "The traditional attitude of the Berens River Indians towards animal life must be distinguished from our own. Animals, like men, have a body and a soul. Each species is controlled by a spiritual boss or owner that is of the nature of a transcendent being. Guns and traps are of no avail if this spiritual boss of the species is offended and does
not wish human beings to obtain his underlings. Consequently, wild animals as a whole must be treated with respect lest their bosses be offended" (Hallowell, 1955:252).

— Yes

Notes: "The Thunder Birds belong to a somewhat different class of animate being. They are familiar to everyone because thunder is the sound of their flapping wings and lightning is the consequence of their blinking eyes. The slowly rolling thunder with only a few claps indicates the presence of old Thunder Birds, whereas the sharper claps are made by the wings of the younger ones" (Hallowell and Brown, 1991:61).

Mixed human-divine beings are present:
— I don't know

Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:
— Yes

Notes: Ancestral spirits as well as a variety of non-human spirits are present among the Northern Saulteaux. There is no clear organization for these beings.

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:
This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.
— No

Notes: "...it is believed that any departure from culturally evaluated sex behavior provokes its own penalty—disease and sometimes death. The significant thing is that the supernaturals have nothing directly to do with this. There are other obligations one owes them. The universe is simply constituted in such a way that disease automatically and inevitably follows sexual transgression. This means that ultimately no one can escape moral responsibility for his sexual conduct. He must contemplate it in that light. It is also possible that an individual may suffer illness because of the bad conduct of his parents. The latter may thus be responsible for the sickness or death of their children. When serious illness occurs and the life of the patient may even be threatened, there is only one thing to do—confess the bad conduct. The transgressions confessed are, of course, those that the individual feels most guilty about; at the same time they correspond to conduct that is culturally disapproved" (Hallowell, 1955:294).

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:
— No

Notes: No ethnographic examples or descriptions of supernatural beings meting out punishment.

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:
— No

Notes: No ethnographic examples or descriptions of supernatural beings bestowing rewards.
Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:
— No  
Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of messianic beliefs.

Is an eschatology present:
— No  
Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of an eschatology.

Norms and Moral Realism

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:
— Yes  
Notes: Certain offences are considered to be more serious violations, and considered sins. These sins cause disease and sickness. "Feelings of guilt for past moral transgressions are also the source of apprehension in a disease situation, since these Indians believe that sickness may be the result of such transgressions. Again, it is the fact that an individual does not respond to the usual drug remedies that precipitates apprehension. The transgressions that fall in the panel of traditional sins are murder, incest, deceit, and sexual practices such as masturbation, fellatio, the use of parts of animals as artificial phalli and bestiality. Confession is the necessary preliminary to cure when it is thought that sickness is connected with sin" (Hallowell, 1955:256).

Are specifically moral norms prescribed by the religious group:
— Yes

Specifically moral norms are linked to impersonal cosmic order (e.g. karma):
— Yes  
Notes: "...it is believed that any departure from culturally evaluated sex behavior provokes its own penalty—disease and sometimes death. The significant thing is that the supernaturals have nothing directly to do with this. There are other obligations one owes them. The universe is simply constituted in such a way that disease automatically and inevitably follows sexual transgression. This means that ultimately no one can escape moral responsibility for his sexual conduct. He must contemplate it in that light. It is also possible that an individual may suffer illness because of the bad conduct of his parents. The latter may thus be responsible for the sickness or death of their children. When serious illness occurs and the life of the patient may even be threatened, there is only one thing to do—confess the bad conduct. The transgressions confessed are, of course, those that the individual feels most guilty about; at the same time they correspond to conduct that is culturally disapproved" (Hallowell, 1955:294).

Practices
Does membership in this religious group require celibacy (full sexual abstinence):
— No
Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the requirement of celibacy.

Does membership in this religious group require castration:
— No
Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of required castration.

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):
— No
Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of general food taboos. However, taboos may occasionally be held for individuals. "There may be a food tabu in cases where the 'masters' of particular species of game animals share their power; e.g., one man was forbidden to kill or eat porcupine by the 'master' of the porcupines...In another case, a man was commanded to wear the kind of headgear attributed to a certain mythical character, so it was inferred that this 'person' was one of his 'guardian spirits'. Another man was forbidden to speak to, or have sexual intercourse with his wife for a defined period after marriage" (Hallowell, 1976c:416-417).

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of adults:
'Adults' here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition of a human who is 18-years-old or older and who is legally responsible for his/her actions, then please specify that difference in the Comments/Sources: box below.
— No
Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of human sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of children:
'Children' here referring to an emic or indigenous category; if that category is different from the popular Western definition, please specify that different in the Comments/Sources: box below.
— No
Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of human sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require self-sacrifice (suicide):
— No
Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of human sacrifice.

Does membership in this religious group require participation in large-scale rituals:
I.e. involving two or more households; includes large-scale "ceremonies" and "festivals."
Rituals and ceremonies are present, but it is not clear if participation is required. “For a few days in midsummer the wabmówīn—a ceremonial ‘dance’—often was to be seen or, if someone was ill, the beating of a drum resounded in one’s ear night after night. A ‘sucking’ doctor might be at work, trying to remove a material object projected by sorcery into the body of the patient. And if the patient failed to recover, the cause of the disease might be sought through conjuring. Then, after nightfall, the barrel-shaped conjuring lodge, with the medicine man inside, swayed from side to side amidst an encircling group of Indians as the moon rose and the spruces became silhouetted against the sky. All ears would be keyed to hear the voices of the spirits that the conjurer had summoned to secure hidden knowledge of the patient’s illness that no human being alone could discover. Or the conjurer might be asked to consult his spirit helpers about the health or whereabouts of some absent person, or the location of some lost object (Hallowell, 1955:124).

Society and Institutions

Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

— A band

Notes: The Northern Saulteaux have no levels of jurisdictional hierarchy beyond the local community (Murdock, 1967; Column 32: Jurisdictional Hierarchy). Tuden and Marshall, 1972 (Column 1: Political Autonomy) indicate that, “The society is theoretically subject to another society with an alien culture, e.g., to a colonial power, but is in fact essentially unadministered by the latter and thus enjoys de facto autonomy.” Additionally, Tuden and Marshall, 1972 (Column 3: Levels of Sovereignty) indicate that the Northern Saulteaux have an, “Absence of effective sovereignty at any level transcending that of the local community, i.e., a stateless society”, with effective sovereignty defined as “the highest level of indigenous political integration at which functionaries have and commonly exercise the power to enforce important decisions at subordinate levels in the political structure—namely to compel participation in warfare, to collect taxes or tribute, and/or to exact sanctions for major delicts. Unless at least one of these powers is found at a particular level, a lack of effective sovereignty is assumed for that level”. Although the Northern Saulteaux do not have a formal political office transcending the level of the immediate community, Hallowell, (1976:337) notes that the Northern Saulteaux he focused on have 32 smaller winter hunting groups that come together to form five larger fishing groups in the summer. These larger groups are bound by kin ties, and typically perform religious ceremonies and celebrations when together. “At all seasons of the year, of course, the Indians of the semi-autonomous units of population described actually were part of a larger whole. Ever since they became adherents to a treaty with the Dominion government, individuals have been identified with the various bands that were set up. But before this there was nothing comparable to the modern band organization, nor was there any tribal organization to which all the Ojibwa of the region belonged. Consequently, I have emphasized the relative functional autonomy of the localized groups as observed” (Hallowell, 1976:340). See Hallowell, 1976:337-340 for more details.

Education

Is formal education available to the group’s adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

— Yes
Notes: "So far as schools are concerned, these have been conducted primarily in connection with the missions, although a purely secular school, attended almost exclusively by Protestant children, has existed on the reservation of the Berens River Band for many years. Because of the seasonal dispersions of the Indians to their hunting grounds in winter, especially in the case of the inland people, education has been very sporadic in the case of most individuals. Consequently, very little English is spoken, even by the Indians of the Berens River Band who are the most acculturated" (Hallowell, 1955:123). "Mining operations near Red Lake, not far to the south of Lake Pekangikum, have opened up a new channel of communication with the outside world; acculturation processes have been greatly accelerated. A secular school has been built by the government, and a small Catholic church has been erected on the reservation, services being held by an itinerant priest" (Hallowell, 1955:121).

Is extra-religious education open to both males and females:
— I don't know

**Bureaucracy**

Do the group’s adherents interact with a formal bureaucracy within their group:
— No

Notes: The Northern Saulteaux do not possess a formal bureaucracy (see question on social complexity, above).

Do the group’s adherents interact with other institutional bureaucracies:
— Yes

Notes: The Ojibwa were relocated to reservations in the United States and in Canada, which implies interaction with these governments. In the United States, this relocation occurred after the war of 1812, and in Canada this relocation occurred after the establishment of the Dominion Government in 1867. (Hallowell, 1955:117).

**Public Works**

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:
— No

Notes: According to SCCS Variable 20, Food Storage, the Saulteaux do not have food storage (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:
— No

Notes: "...no highways or railroads have ever been built. In summer the only means of transportation, other than a few small passenger and freight vessels that ply Lake Winnipeg, is the canoe. In winter, travel is only possible on snowshoes or by dog train. The only alternative at either season is the airplane" (Hallowell, 1955:122).
Is transportation infrastructure provided for the group’s adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

— No

Notes: "...no highways or railroads have ever been built. In summer the only means of transportation, other than a few small passenger and freight vessels that ply Lake Winnipeg, is the canoe. In winter, travel is only possible on snowshoes or by dog train. The only alternative at either season is the airplane" (Hallowell, 1955:122).

**Taxation**

Does the religious group in question levy taxes or tithes:

— No

Notes: No ethnographic evidence for the presence of internal taxation among the Northern Saulteaux.

**Enforcement**

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

— No

Notes: According to Tuden and Marshall (1972), column 10: Police (note: equivalent to SCCS Variable 90), "police functions are not specialized or institutionalized at any level of political integration, the maintenance of law and order being left exclusively to informal mechanisms of social control, to private retaliation, or to sorcery".

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

— No

Notes: "Within Ojibwa society, macroscopic—social or public procedures—for punishment are absent. No institutionalized means exist for the public adjudication of disputes or conflicts of any kind. There is no council of elders or any forum in which judgment can be passed upon the conduct of individuals. There is no way in which publicly sanctioned punishment can be initiated in cases of incest, murder, or any other offense. Children, it is true, are disciplined by their parents, but corporal punishment is rare. But in the social world of adults there are no superordinate modes of social control, no institutionalized means of punishment" (Hallowell, 1976c:411).

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

— No

Notes: "Within Ojibwa society, macroscopic—social or public procedures—for punishment are absent. No institutionalized means exist for the public adjudication of disputes or conflicts of any kind. There is no council of elders or any forum in which judgment can be passed upon the conduct of individuals. There is no way in which publicly sanctioned punishment can be initiated in cases of incest, murder, or any other offense. Children, it is true, are disciplined by their parents, but corporal punishment is rare. But in the social world of adults there are no superordinate modes of social control, no institutionalized means of punishment" (Hallowell, 1976c:411).
Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

— Yes


Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

— Gathering

— Hunting (including marine animals)

— Fishing