

Shamanism

Recent to Rupert
woman resists

becoming a shaman

An Account of a Woman about to become a haláit and how she resisted it.

Informant: Mrs. John Ross, ganháde, gitsis. Name: 161 Age on decease 72 years.

The informant 161 was a very religious woman, and this is her account of how she fought against and overcame the influences that were trying to make her a haláit.

When 161 was fifty years old she became very ill and had visions in which her dead ancestors came to tell her that she should now assume her haláit powers, which the ancestors were ready to place on her.

She tried to resist, and her religious training countered the dream influences. In the visions she had as she lay ill she saw various animals, especially a white land otter that urged her to take on this power and promised that he would be her main aide. So doing, she would have the power to cure and foretell events.

But always the woman resorted to prayer, and was thus able to overcome the attempts to make her a haláit.

Beynon's note: I remember when this woman was brought in to the

Port Simpson hospital, where Dr. R. W. Large diagnosed her case as a form of religious insanity. She complained continually of being molested by devils. She was in this condition for some time, and up to the time of her death she claimed to have psychic powers of foretelling events and that this was hereditary.

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