

Checked against
original

cf Garpula account

mi'thla

The initiation of Julia White into the mi'thla.

Julia White, Informant. ^{toxs} hlawrns house of
niesmo'tk larhskiok, gisparhlawts. Age 65.

niesmo'tk

I was about the age of 12 yrs. as I recollect
 everything that took place. My father ^{suhala'it} suhala'it, wanted
 me to become a member of his own society, the mi'thla.
 I had already been thru the ^{tsi'k} tsi'k stage of initiation and
 was now to ascend into the heavens, called "hilarhae". ^{hila'xe} hila'xe
 I was playing outside when I heard the sound of narhnawrh
 whistles sounding at the rear of suhala'its house but I
 paid no attention to this then the wihala'it came to where
 I was and took me by the hair and led me into the house
 of my father and then he came to me and danced and sang
 he then seemed to extract something from the smoke hole of
 the house and then he came over me and made motions and then
 my father's sisters who were holding me covered me up and
 I had to all purposes dissappeared. I was hidden under a
 mat. When everyone was gone from the house I was taken to
 a partition at the rear of the house and here I was kept in
 seclusion there. I remember one morning looking out thru
 a small opening at the rear of the house and I saw a girl
 companion of mine who was passing. I called out to her, not
 knowing that it would cause any serious consequence, but this
 girl chum came running over to where I was and I started in to
 talk to her. The people in the house heard me and they came

to see with whom I was talking with. Seeing that it was another girl who had not been halait they took her at once to the house of the wihalait and he commanded that she be initiated into the mi'thla as she had now been influenced by talking to me. I heard afterwards that she was initiated. After I was kept in hiding for a period of four days, and on the early morning of the fifth day many of the mi'thla came and took me away and they took me to the big reef in front of the gisparhlawts village. This was before dawn. I was hidden on the back of what was a huge swan. I was naked all my clothes were taken from me. When it became daylight the narhnawrh whistles of the mi'thla began to sound all over and among the rocks on the reef and behind the houses of the gisparhlawts. Then the huge swan on which I was on started in to go towards shore and then it swam away again ^{niaspalas} the mithla wihalait came down with all his followers to the waters edge singing his mi'thla songs. Then the big swan disappeared from view no one saw where it went to. My father suhalait, had a giludzan niece who was my double in every sense she was of the same age and in every way we were exactly alike. This girl had been secretly hidden in the sand and known only to the wihalait of the mi'thla, who went to where the girl was hidden and took her up and led her to suhalait's house. In the meantime I had been secretly taken into suhalait's house.

and my double was placed in the chamber where I was already .
Then in a short time, the wihalait came for me to go into
all of the houses of the gisparhlawts this was termed
rhpawti^oyask: go in front of the village: There was strung
along a line which ran from one end of the gisparhlawts
village to the other end. Cloth and garments and many
blankets. There were the gifts which had been gathered to-
gether for distribution to the mi'thla. I was taken into each
of the houses of the gisparhlawts led by niespalas, the mi'thla
wihalait. Then I was taken back to my father's house, the
house of wihalait. ^[suhalait?] There I started to dance led by the wihalait,
and I went around the house four times. Then my mother and
uncles started to give the gifts. The main gifts were given to
niespalas, who was given many blankets and two hliyawn ^{tiyon} skins.
All of the mi'thla received gifts. I was then placed in the
chamber at the rear of the house and no one was allowed to touch
me or speak to me, that were not halait or belonged to the
mi'thla. Four days after the wihalait and the mi'thla came
into my father's house and I was led out by my aunts and placed
along side of the wihalait, who then took my hand and led me
around the house in the direction in which the sun goes around
in the sky. He done this four times singing always and wearing
his 'amhalait and gushalait and then I was placed alongside of
the wihalait who then took food and gave it to me. I was now
given food and was now permitted the freedom of the house, but
I could not go outside and the ring of cedar bark around my

xpawti^oyask

head (lu'i) was now removed and I could also talk with them that were in the house. When the wihalait was done he was compensated by my mother in gifts of blankets, and all others of the mi'thla were given food.

About four days after the wihalait again came into the house and he led me around again four times in the direction of the rise and fall of the sun and then he led me out and allowed me to sit outside the house and then he led me in again. I was now given the privilege of going in and out of the house but I must not talk or play or mingle with anyone. The wihalait was again compensated. Then after a long while the wihalait came to remove all the halait influences from me, he took me and led me around the house I now only had on a small cedar bark collar ring. This was the only sign left that I had gone thru the halait.

The wihalait led me alongside of the fire and then took off the collar and threw it on the fire saying, "Go away great narhnawrh, till next year." I was the last initiate. Then he took down the rear partition and the house now became an ordinary house again. Where before it was known as a halait house and there was a cedar bark ring in the door as a warning that none but those that had gone thru the halait should enter. I was now rid of all influence of the halait and the wihalait was again compensated. So that in all he received compensation four different times for his services.

[He got no song, dance, name, etc.]