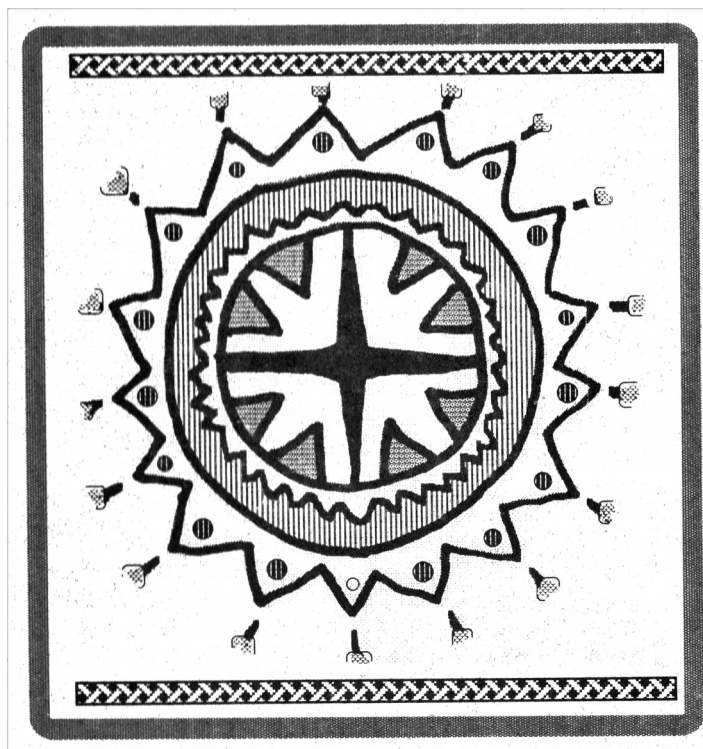


A Chumash Christmas

A Chumash Christmas

The Life Adventures of a Wondrous Child
Born On Christmas Day

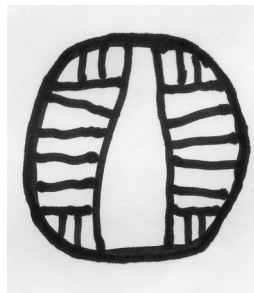
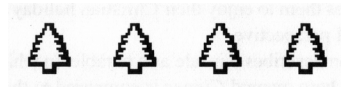
John M. Anderson



Christmas in Southern Californian

A Chumash Christmas

John M. Anderson has published numerous books on Native American mythology from the western United States. In this text he explores the winter solstice traditions of the Chumash people of southern California and compares them to the Christmas traditions of other residents of this region.



Edited by Valle Novak

Cover and illustrations inspired by Chumash rock art

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First Edition 1995

A Parable For The Christmas Season

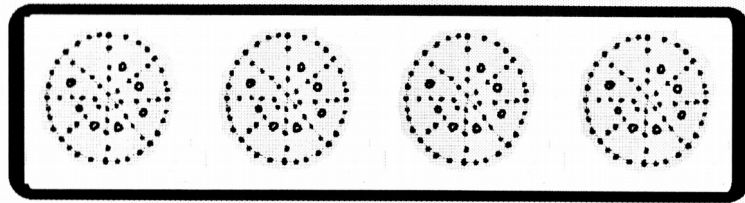
In the pages which follow, a Chumash folk tale about the virgin birth of a miraculous child is presented, with commentary by the author. For readers familiar with European Christmas folkways, this text invites them to enjoy their Christian holiday traditions from a multicultural perspective.

Anderson describes this tale as a parable, in which the behavior of the cultural hero named Ciqneq is compared to the movements of the solar deity. The beginning and ending of the tale take place, he concludes, during the winter holiday called Christmas by contemporary Christians.

The writings of Joseph Campbell, probably America's best known mythologist, are cited to enrich the reader's appreciation of the universal appeal of the cultural hero's adventures. Campbell champions a psychological interpretation of mythology, finding a single archetype out of the thousands of faces of the cultural hero which appear in world mythology.

* *The Chumash Indians were the largest cultural group in California, prior to the Spanish invasion of that region. Their prosperous seaports were located on the islands and along the coast north of Los Angeles.*





Introduction

This book follows the adventures of the Chumash religious leader named Ciqneq, who was born of a virgin during the Christmas holiday season. It is based on the traditional teachings of the Chumash Indians of Southern California.

The narrative is deliberately worded in obscure terms so that listeners have to pay close attention before solving the puzzle presented in the story. Such parables were recited for thousands of years in California, to entertain audiences during the cold (and often rainy) winter months.

I imagine the narrator, F. L. Kitsepawit, explaining how he first heard the story from a respected grandmother, while she entertained a large gathering including her own family members. To the delight of her listeners, she improvised on a traditional plot line, perhaps by reversing its meanings through word-play or mirror imaging. The audience is left uncertain, and welcomes the humorous give-and-take as various persons rise to offer an interpretation.

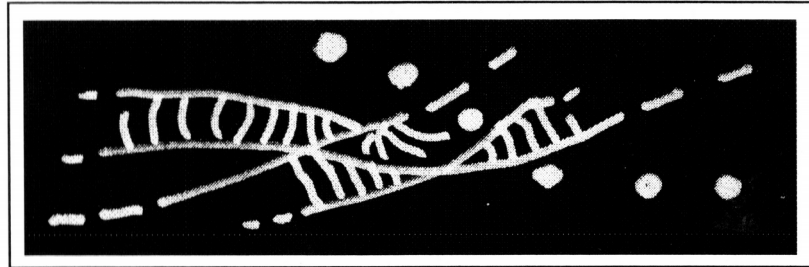
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The opening scene in Kitsepawit's version celebrates the virgin birth of a supernatural child. This newborn is named Ciqneq, and he grows up to perform miracles and overcome the devil. The parallels between the wondrous achievements of Ciqneq and the Christian persona of Jesus are obvious throughout the story. Like Jesus, Ciqneq is tested in his youth and found to be an extraordinary person. While only a child, Ciqneq began using his supernatural powers to cast out devils and cleanse the world. Later he is tested by the devil, who cannot confuse him. By the end of the story he completes his journey and finds peace again.

Some critics might explain this tale as a 'mission' era allegory, in which a Christian narrator has simply substituted the name Ciqneq for Jesus. My guess, however, is that this narrative is much more complicated. I identify Ciqneq as a traditional cultural hero and propose an astronomical solution to Kitsepawit's riddle. The narrative is organized in such a way, according to this solution, that Ciqneq's adventures parallel the annual movements of the sun in the sky. Like most good riddles, however, more than one interpretation is possible.

*John Anderson
November, 1995*

Chapter 1



Ciqneq's Miraculous Birth

*Part One: A parable told by the Chumash F. Kitsepawit,
circa 1914 and edited by J. Anderson 1995.*

Once there was a village where only a few families dwelt. Here, a young man and woman fell in love and married when they came of age.¹ After their wedding, they began to have children, and their first twelve children were boys.² The last, however, the thirteenth, was a girl.³

The father, although having married quite young, was respected by everyone.⁴ His children all grew up without mishap, until one day the father's routine was disturbed when he learned that his only daughter was pregnant. Seeing that she was getting bigger every day, it set him to thinking. He concluded that no outsider would have wronged her, for the people all had great respect for him.

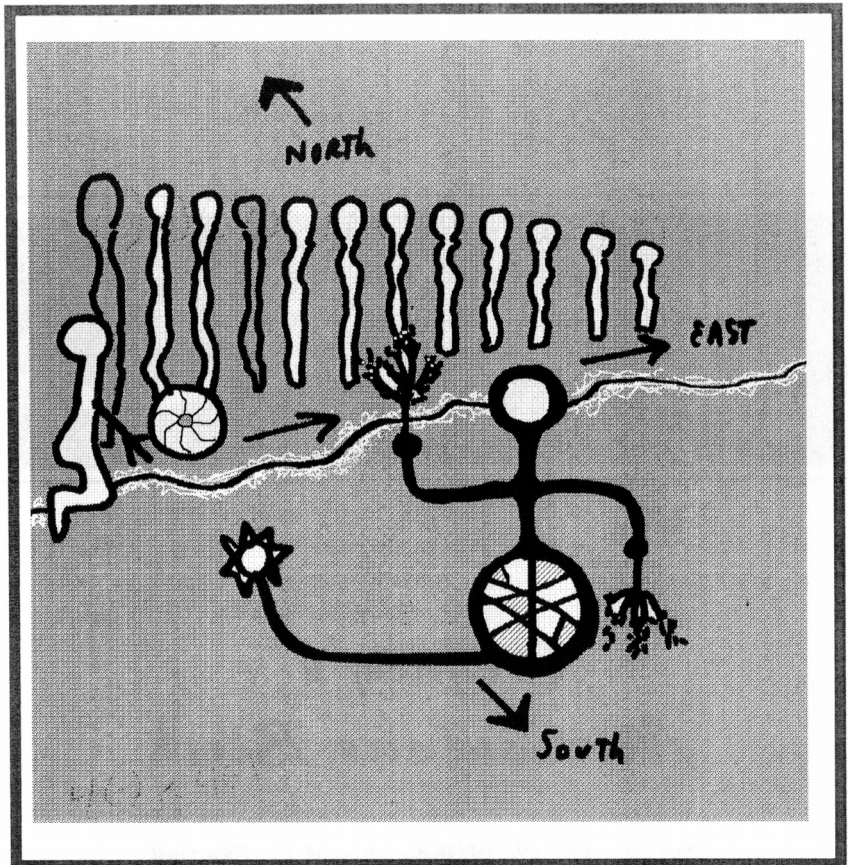
The troubled father decided to test his sons. He constructed a hoop, a ring of junco cord such as is used by the Chumash for playing games.⁵ He finished it, and the next day the father stood his twelve sons in a line. Then he carefully stretched his 'testing' cord from east to west, between two stakes in front of him.⁶ He solemnly asked his pregnant daughter to stand to the south, allowing her to hold magic wands in each hand which were decorated with feathers.⁷ The father said nothing to his unsuspecting sons, but his idea was to discover if one of them was the guilty person.⁸

When everything was arranged, the father stood to the west and began to roll the ceremonial hoop with the idea that if it stopped and fell at the feet of one of his sons, that sibling would be guilty.⁹ The father started singing a song of divination, and cast the hoop. To his surprise, it rolled clear to the end of the line and did not fall before any of his sons.¹⁰



The hoop failed to fall

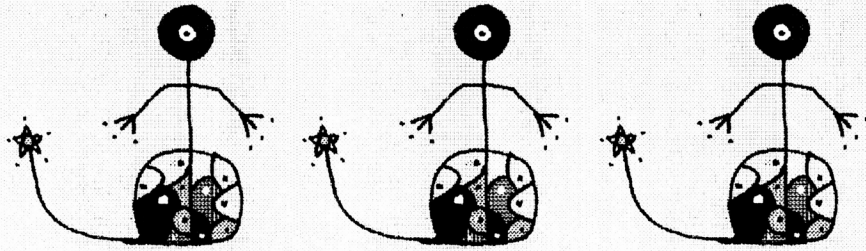
Puzzled, the worried father renewed his song and rolled the hoop, but again it failed to stop.¹¹ While the father's divination songs were being sung, his daughter held the wand in her right hand straight down to her side and the other wand pointed high over her head.



The Grand Test

The father set up two stakes, at the east and west. He stretched a sacred cord between them and lined up his twelve sons along the north side of the string. By rolling a hoop along this string, he hoped to discover if one of his sons was guilty of incest.

Possible Interpretation : This appears to be a solar test, asking the sun to intervene by stopping the hoop at the foot of any guilty brother. The two stakes probably represent the sun's rising and setting points, and the cord represents the sun's daily path across the sky. The hoop represents the sun, whose all-knowing eye sees everything that happens on earth. The expectant mother held up two magic wands called *Isoxsinas*, painted elderberry sticks with feathers tied at the top. She pointed one at the heavens (Ciqneq's paternal home, the heavens) and one at the earth (the child's maternal home, the earth), signifying his dual nature.



Virgin Mothers & Their Heroic Sons

Possible Solution: Ciqneq's mother, from a cosmological point of view, represents the primordial fecundity of the planet. As Mother Earth, she brings forth new life each spring, after the long dormancy of plant life in the winter. Her most important birthing involves the newborn sun after its dormancy during the winter solstice.

She is a variant of the Navajo's Changing Woman, who conceived two miraculous children (one is called the Sun Child) after being exposed to sun rays. Like Ciqneq, her sons grow up and undergo great adventures during which they cleansed the world of demons, including the Big Giant who lives at the Mountain of the South.

The father cast the hoop a third time, but once again it did not fall. So finally the father was convinced that none of his twelve sons was guilty.¹² By this time the daughter surmised what her father was doing, and she started singing a song intimating that if her father believed that one of her brothers sired her child, they would never see her again.

As soon as she began to sing, the father knew everything. When she finished he sang a song expressing his belief in her innocence and his feeling of shame for not having divined this before. He felt much relieved, but at the same time very ashamed for his suspicions.

^ ^ ^ ^ ^

When the virgin's child was born everyone realized it was a phenomenon, but still the father's sense of shame for his lack of trust in his daughter was so great that he finally left singing: "I'm going away - Don't look at me."¹³ He went away, and his thirteen children stayed at home.¹⁴

Ritual Directions

The virgin stood on the south side of the sacred (solar) string. In many Native American cultures, the south is ritually linked with the female forces of creativity and physical growth ruled by Sirius (the south star).

Her brothers stood on the north side of the solar string, associating themselves with the male forces of the universe, ruled by the pole star.

The virgin held feathers in her left hand over her head and the feathers in her right hand down to her side. Since she was facing north, her left hand symbolized the west and her right hand the east.

Isoy means 'ritual feather plumes' in Chumash.

The brothers quickly called the '*Alaxlaps*, the priest responsible for naming the newborn.¹³ The priest asked who the child's father was. One brother advised him to ask the child's mother, who acknowledged that her baby was a sowing of the clouds.

*Ciqneq's future was propitious for he came from the clouds.*¹⁶

When the spiritual leader heard this explanation, he said to her: "Ah, girl you were born to be happy. For it is your lot to give birth to this child of the clouds. Name him Ciqneq."¹⁷

^ ^ ^ ^ ^

Editor's Commentary

This tale is very interesting so far, and doesn't it sound suspiciously like a weakly disguised Christian story about Jesus? My guess is that it does not have Christian roots, however, but rather is a cultural hero story with thousand year old roots in Native American

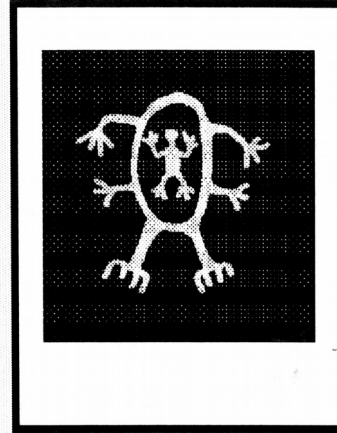
mythology.

Joseph Campbell, one of America's best known mythologists, discusses this 'cultural hero' tradition in *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*.¹⁸ This is an excellent source, focusing on psychological interpretations of hero myths (like the Ciqneq story) from around the world. Campbell's assessment is excellent, but his readers should recognize its limitations. Mythology, he argues, is "psychology misread as bibliography, history, and cosmology."²¹ This is an extreme view, which I reject in my later assessments of the Ciqneq story.

Before further discussion of the symbolism in our story, let us examine the second part of Kitsepawit's narrative for more clues.



Terms: Takulsoxsinas means 'a string with down feathers woven into it'. Such strings were used routinely by Chumash in divination. A cord used by a Saxlapus, a diviner, was called a Coyote string.²⁰



Riddling Among the Chumash

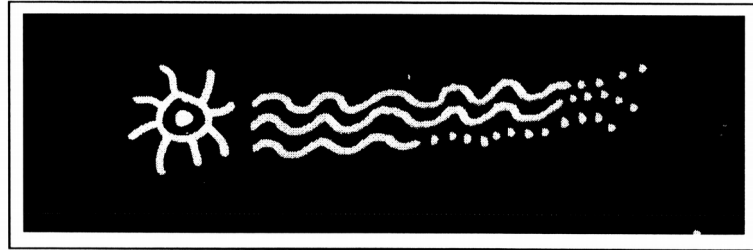
The Chumash were fond of riddles, puzzles, games, and poetry and tales of enigmatic wording. Quick-witted persons who could guess the answer to a puzzle were widely admired for their cleverness.

The Chumash official, called the Ksen, served as a ceremonial messenger. His name referred to a waterfowl called a coot (also known as a Mudhen), and he wore face paint of white over black to replicate the coot's markings.

We do not know for certain why this title was adopted by the Chumash, but perhaps the tradition had similar roots as the title Foolshen among the Athabascans far to the north. The Athabascans gave this honorary title to any person who answered a riddle correctly during the winter solstice festivals.

If the audience proved clever in solving most of the riddles presented in this period, the people were pleased for it foretold a short winter and early spring¹⁹

Chapter 2




Ciqneq's Adventures As He Grew Up

When Ciqneq grew out of childhood and began to be sent on errands, there was an elder in the village who was his grandmother's sister. Ciqneq knew that she was very much inclined to be a sorceress.²²

One day one of his uncles asked the boy to take this woman over to a camp on a beach, where his family was clamming. The uncle was concerned for her, because she was quite old and blind.²³ Ciqneq led the sorceress to the camp, which was close to a precipice. Noticing this, the boy left her at the camp fire and looked over the cliff. He saw there was a cave at the foot of the precipice that would be covered by water at high tide, but which was now dry, and that there were many large rocks scattered around the entrance.



Ciqneq went back to the witch and challenged her by suggesting: "Let's go a little further."²⁴ He handed her a cane and led her down the edge of the cliff and into the cave.²⁵ He told her: "While you're here, I'm going over to the house but I will soon return." Then he left quietly. Once outside the cave, Ciqneq began to pile up stones until the entrance was completely blocked. Sometime later, his uncle noticed that it was high tide and thought to ask Ciqneq how this relative was. "No animal will harm her," said Ciqneq.²⁷ "Is she away from the reach of the tide?" asked the uncle. "Yes," said the boy.²⁸

	<p>Neutralizing with water</p> <p>Ciqneq, like Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, neutralized the "black magic" of a witch by covering her with water.</p> <p>Chumash mythology is filled with similar stories of neutralizing by water. The evil comes from an imbalance of <i>Atishwin</i>, which is 'heated' with supernatural power. Too much heat leads to destructive flames. As water puts out a flame in a house fire, so it also was used to 'put out' black magic.²⁶</p>
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Later, a kindly neighbor called the Old Woman became concerned and told Ciqneq's uncle: "You had better go and see what Ciqneq has done with his grandmother's sister."¹ The uncle went, and not finding her anywhere returned and said: "She is not there." Then the Old Woman inquired of Ciqneq: "What did you do with her?" The boy answered: "I put her in the cave."

"Why did you put her in there?" "She fooled the world too much by means of her black magic."²⁹ Then the Old Woman exclaimed: "You really are a child of the clouds, and only the clouds can punish you. But we must be patient with you, because if the clouds punish you by means of a deluge of water, the punishment will fall on us also."³⁰

Ciqneq Travels To the Land of the Dead In the West

Everything was peaceful for a while after that. But then one day Ciqneq disappeared suddenly, and was gone for several days.³¹ When he returned, he acted strangely and no one would talk to him. They were all afraid of him. When they continued to be silent toward him, Ciqneq sang this song:

*"I have just arrived, I have come from far away,
I am very hungry. I am the son of the dead.
And therefore I am hungry."*

Finally one of his uncles relented and gave him some food, but it wasn't enough to satisfy Ciqneq, for he had not eaten since he left.³² After

1 Kitsepawit's depiction of a great aunt as a witch is consistent with traditional fears of family members as witches. Many elder women served as herbalists and were susceptible to charges of poisoning, etc.

devouring his meal, Ciqneq renewed his singing.

"There goes one, two, three, four, five.

"Those who went to the West." ³³

The inquisitive Old Woman, the neighbor of the witch, came and asked him: "Who went to the West?" And Ciqneq answered: "Those five that my grandmother's sister killed."

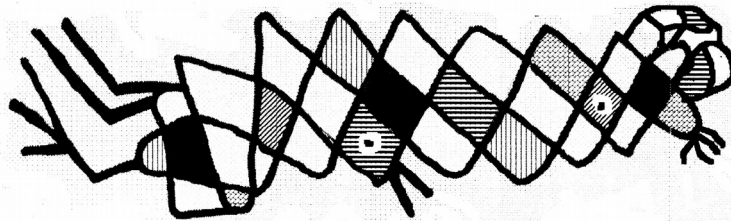
Ciqneq's uncles refused to talk to him after that; only the Old Woman was not afraid to speak to him.³⁴ Ciqneq remained alone there at the house until finally one day he said to himself, "What am I going to do here? It would be best for me to leave." So he sang a song of farewell to the people of the village, and when he finished the song he was gone.³⁵



Editor's Commentary

Ciqneq is typical of dramatic characters appearing in Native American myths found throughout the continent. Like other cultural heroes, he was divinely conceived and his (misunderstood) mother suffered from charges of improper behavior.³⁶

The concept of a virgin birth predates Christianity, for it is



Hunger

Hunger is a persistent topic of interest in Native American folk tales involving a shamanistic journey into the supernatural realm. Thus the magically conceived young hero becomes a great hunter of food while only a baby. His preoccupation is like that of newborn babies, who devour huge amounts of milk as if they were famished.

The Chumash believed that newborn 'incubated' in the Land of the Dead, without earthly food, for a long time before reincarnation. Thus the Ciqneq story takes a dramatic turn, when the superchild decides to enter the realm of the gods. Here, human visitors must refuse to eat any food offered them or else they will not be able to return to the earth. During their celestial adventures they either fast or take only tobacco for strength. They literally starve their bodies, becoming like flies- ritualistically consuming (their own) physical body. Thus when they return from their vision journey, they are famished.

worldwide in distribution. Ciqneq's birth takes place at the winter solstice, which begins on December twenty-one and ends on December twenty-five.³⁷ His virgin mother thus represents the sacred thirteenth 'month' of the ancient calendar, which takes place during the four days of the solstice when the sun stops moving on the horizon. She personifies mythic time, which replaces mundane time at the solstice.

The solution of the Native American riddles involving the virgin birth is that the sun replaces himself each winter solstice through reincarnation. Like the multiple god-head of the Christian deity, the ancient solar god is both the father and son! Thus Ciqneq's father may be the old year, who grows increasingly weaker until he withdraws completely to make room for his son Ciqneq (the new year). Like Father Time (of popular American lore) the father withdraws so the new year, the baby, can take his place.

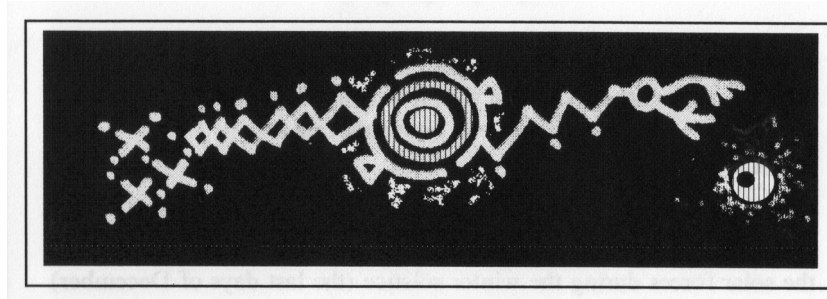
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An examination of stories from other Native American tribes shows that one of the hero's roles is to cleanse the world of demons. "The culture hero grows up rapidly," Erdoes assures us, "and even at age six or seven he may be a match for any monster or giant. Daring and inquisitive, he quickly demonstrates that he will not be controlled by his parents."³⁸ And so the rebellious Ciqneq surprised his community by using his dissentious powers to conquer the witch, who has killed many people.

Hopi stories also explore this theme, of witchcraft being alive within one's own family. Like the events celebrated in the Hopi Soyal ceremony (which is celebrated during the winter solstice), Chumash cultural hero tales thus honor the reestablishment of their 'pattern of life' in the middle world. And, most significantly, Ciqneq's birth on the morning of December 25, symbolized the rebirth of the New Year.³⁹



Chapter 3



Ciqneq Is Tested By a Devil

As he was traveling along one day, Ciqneq met the *Lewelew* (the demon who challenges people to wrestling matches).⁴⁰ The demon said to him, "Where are you going?" "Just walking along," he replied. "But you are very young," said the devil. "Why are you walking around like this without the protection of your relatives? You'd better get into my carrying-net and I will take you along with me."⁴¹

But Ciqneq would not get immediately into the net. He knew that the *Lewelew* wanted to deceive him, and he began to sing:

*Now I am beginning,
A beginning to make my defense.
I have just put my plant in this soil.*⁴²

*I don't know the end. I barely put my foot on land,
I come from a great distance (the clouds).⁴³
I am the son of all the dead, and that is why I'm hungry.*⁴⁴

The devil said to himself, "Where did this creature come from? What am I going to do with this little boy? Where did he come from?" And the devil said to Ciqneq: "Do you know that you are under this sun, and that you are seen by means of its light?"

The boy thought: "This fellow is trying to get me all mixed up, but I am going to make him cry."⁴⁶ So Ciqneq said to the devil, "Do you know that we all see by the light in which we are?"⁴⁷



The Devil & The Summer Solstice

A possible solution? This part of Kitsepawit's story may relate to the summer solstice, when the increasing heat of the sun needs to be moderated. The devil might therefore represent the star Sirius, ruler of the southern sky and the heat of summer. Does Ciqneq become "mixed up" because the devil tempts him with material wealth, success and fame? The summer solstice sun has to overcome greed, and return back on his path toward the colder months which bring moderation.

Axunpes means fly in Chumash, with the root *Alulpe*, meaning to rove around, to intrude.⁴⁵ Ciqneq agrees to have the devil carry him to the realm of the Fly. It lies among the stars of the southern sky, which like flies intrude into human affairs (these stars drop below the horizon, as they rotate in the night sky).

"What are you trying to teach me?" asked the devil. The boy answered him defiantly, saying: "Just pay attention." Then he began to sing: "What time of day do we have to cry?" As he finished his song, Ciqneq thought to himself, "We shall see what this devil wants with me. He wants me to go with him." He decided to take up the demon's challenge and rousingly announced that he would accompany him.

To the horror of Kitsepawit's audience, the narrator described Ciqneq voluntarily climbing into the basket on the devil's back, and how they started off on what would prove a long journey. After they had traveled for a while Ciqneq asked, "Where are you taking me?" "I am going to take you to the realm of the fly," answered the devil.⁴⁸ "All right", agreed Ciqneq dauntlessly.

The devil took Ciqneq to the realm of the Fly

When they got to the terrain of the fly, the devil grew more confident and began to test Ciqneq by questioning him. "What is the name of this place, and of what is the realm of the fly composed?" And Ciqneq answered, *Xunpes P'cuwa* (referring to the food of the Fly).⁴⁹

The *Lewelew* said nothing, so Ciqneq understood that the demon wanted to get him all mixed up.⁵⁰ He began to tell the devil all about what the fly was good for.⁵¹

The devil then said to the boy: "Wake up!" Ciqneq was not startled by this sudden challenge and replied, "Yes, I am awake."⁵² Listen! All the people who have no homes are like the flies, all the flies and you" (meaning that they try to dispossess people and take over their possessions).⁵³

Φ Φ Φ Φ

In a final test, the devil challenged Ciqneq, "Where shall we look?" The boy responded confidently to the demon's query with the enigmatic lyrics of an island song:

*Here we are going to begin
where you come from.*

*Look to the south. We are seeing
the island of Santa Rosa.⁵⁴
We begin, and see this island
where it began;*

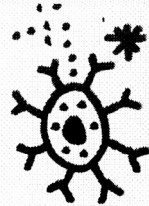
*Always it will
continue.⁵⁵*

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Editor's Commentary

While on his apprentice journey into the supernatural realm, Ciqneq is tempted by the devil, but overcame all challenges.⁵⁶ The *Lewelew* demon serves as what Campbell describes as a "threshold guardian", one who awaits the cultural hero at the entrance into a new zone of magnified power.⁵⁷

Ciqneq faces great dangers in these passages, for he has placed himself (as a cultural hero) outside of his community's protection. "The adventure is always and everywhere a passage beyond the veil of the known into the unknown: the powers that watch at the boundary are dangerous; to deal with them is risky; yet for anyone with courage the dangers fade."⁶¹ Beyond is the region of the unknown, the realm of the Fly, where Ciqneq is to be tested by the devil's riddle. Death is the issue (and the price to be paid) should the hero fail.



No Houses

A possible solution:
The *Lewelew* devil,
and the Fly (which is
a subordinate of the
devil) have no homes
because they dwell in
the southern sky.

Only the pole star,
and to a lesser extent,
the stars rotating
close to it have a
celestial "house."

Only they have a
definitive place to be,
while the rest of the
stars rotate far away
in relative disorder
(like flies?).

Δ Δ Δ

The movements of
the planets were also
watched very
carefully by Chumash
astronomers. These
celestial bodies were
considered even more
"homeless" than the
fixed stars, because
they appeared to
wander widely across
the heavens.

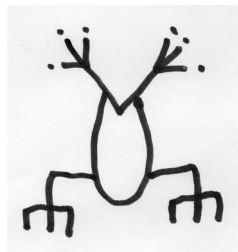
Ciqneq's Triumph

Born on Christmas morning, the first day in which the newborn sun renews its apparent movement on the horizon, Ciqneq begins his life adventures.⁵⁸ Like Jesus of Christian lore, Ciqneq's fame grew from his extraordinarily precocious childhood, and his subsequent conquest of the devil.⁵⁹

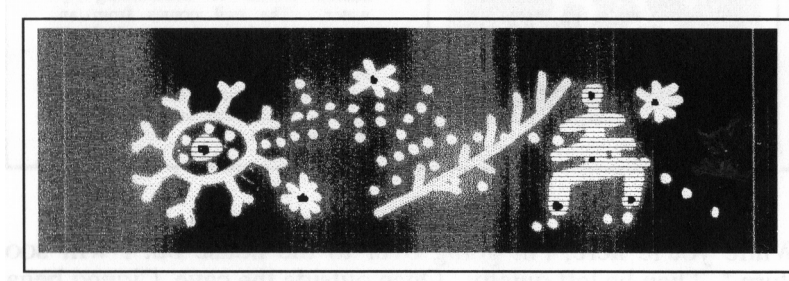
After his triumph over the demonic powers of the "south", Ciqneq underwent a psychological conversion and retraced his steps back to his place of origin.⁶⁰

Ciqneq saved himself because he recognized that the confusion and immorality described by the devil in their conversation was a part of the permanent order of things under the sun (concerning life on the middle earth).⁶² The plot appears to be arranged so that Ciqneq reenacts the cosmic drama which takes place when the sun enters the summer solstice period, i.e. when the world is threatened with drought. Ciqneq thus must avoid the temptation to grow stronger in personal power (overheated like the summer sun), overcome his confusion (being dazed by the heat), and instead turn back and dedicate himself toward lofty social aims.

When the hero turns back, he is guided by the north star and has rejected the south, which is the direction of the devil ("where you come from. Look to the south."). The devil in this passage is thus probably Sirius, the ruling star of the southern sky. Thus it is at this time of the summer solstice that Ciqneq is the ultimate cultural hero, the antithesis of the *Nunasis* demons. Ciqneq repudiates greed and personal vanity, by which the devil of the south tempts him, and returns 'home' to peace of mind (fall-winter).



Chapter 4



Ciqneq As A Man of Peace

*Ciqneq returns home and brings peace:
A Christmas theme*

Astonished at Ciqneq's cleverness, the devil went away. He had lost hope of getting Ciqneq all mixed up. Then the boy got to thinking about his homeland and started back home.⁶³ When he arrived home Ciqneq found everyone whom he had left still living. He saluted them with a song:

*Now I am rested,
For people are coming,
Those that came out of hell (on earth).
Long live the world!⁶⁴*

When he came among his family and neighbors Ciqneq was well received by everyone.⁶⁵ They asked him what he had seen, and Ciqneq answered that the most important thing that had happened to him (and the worst) was that he had had an interview with the devil.



« « « » » »

Ciqneq recounted his experiences, and finally the old woman threw up her arms and said, "That's enough!"⁷⁸ You have conquered the devil, let us make peace." And so they lived in peace from then on.⁷⁹

Peace On Earth



**After a year of adventures, Ciqneq returned "home"
and announced that now that his journey
was complete, he would rest.⁶⁶**

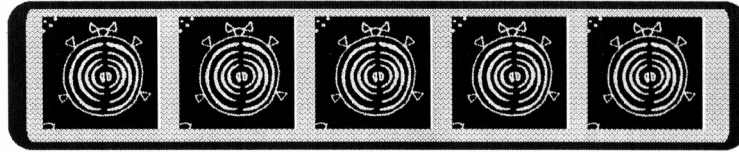
The story now comes full cycle, and Ciqneq's peace brings us back to the Christmas season. Ciqneq once again becomes a child symbol for the solar forces during the winter solstice (the last days of December). Kitsepawit taught that the Chumash's ritual name for the newborn sun was *Kaqunup'mawa* which means "the radiance of the child born on the twenty-fourth of December."⁶⁷ On the next day, December 25, the newborn sun begins to crawl across the horizon as a new solar year begins. Mundane time replaces mythic time, under the light of the newly arisen sun.⁶⁸

Readers from other religions should find such references to light familiar, such as Christian holy texts describing the Creator as a god of "eternal light."⁶⁹ The western rite for commendation of the dead includes the plea to "let perpetual light shine upon him."⁷⁰ Compare these passages to a traditional Persian birthday prayer which includes the plea: "May the heavenly sun light my way for many a year to come."⁷¹ At death, their ancestors' souls went to "the deathless world of rest where light fails not and happiness fades not."⁷²

Liyikshup: In a number of related Chumash stories the magically growing child visits *Liyikshup*.⁷³ *Liyikshup* is the sacred center of the Chumash world, the place of peace and reincarnation. *Liyik* means center, and *Shup* means the earth (a material realm).⁷⁴

See Peace in the glossary for further discussion.

Chapter 5



Concluding Remarks

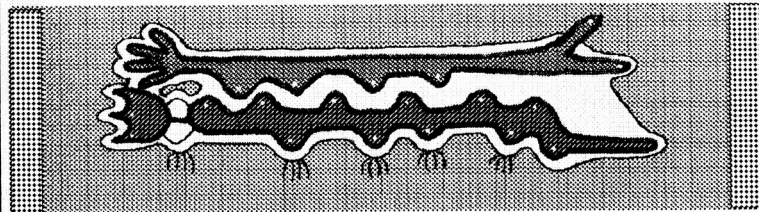
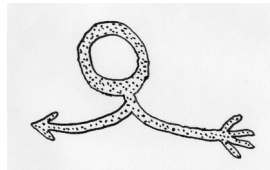
*The Ciqneq story has come full circle,
back to the winter solstice theme.*

These closing passages complete the solar parable. As the representative of the solar deity, Ciqneq is not tempted by his victory over the devil of the south. He repudiates the physical body and suddenly turns back on his path. If he is indeed reenacting the annual solar journey, then he is moving like the sun toward the cold of the fall months and his own death. Ciqneq would be at peace, however, because he would recognize that (though he faces death) he will be reincarnated. He also understands that he will be tempted again and again, in each new life just as the solar deity is tempted each year at the summer solstice. Some years he will hesitate too long, and drought and death will result. Other years, he will behave impeccably and good times come to humanity.

The Chumash traditionalist believed that the sun's triumph over death showed us that we too will experience rebirth, after the death of our physical body.⁸⁰ Chumash converts to Christianity found solace in similar beliefs about a miracle child named Jesus who turned back from the desert (summer heat) where he was tempted by the devil. Jesus repudiated physical power, i.e. kingship over the Jews, and returned from the desert to face his death. He was not afraid of death, but saw it as an inevitable part of his duty. He was a devout spiritual leader, exemplary in his behavior. Hanging on the cross, he was at the crossroads at the sacred center of time/space (the winter solstice). He reentered the womb of Mother Earth (the tomb) and, like the dead sun, was resurrected to become a symbol of hope for his followers.



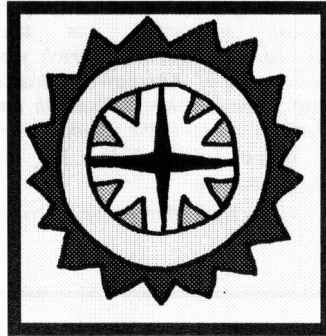
So the reader is returned again to the Christmas holiday, of peace on earth.⁸¹ For the Chumash traditionalist, this peace is ruled by the north star who holds ultimate mental peace and serves as our guide.⁸²



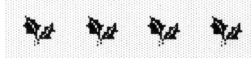
Comparable Holidays

The Hopi Soyal ceremonial is similar to that described in the ending of the Chumash Ciqneq and other cultural hero tales. Frank Water's *Book of the Hopi* is a popular review of the Soyal celebration. In ancient times, Waters states, "a young Virgin" was linked to the *Soyal* ceremony.⁷⁵ "It is one of the most important of all ceremonies... Even its Kiva rituals are climaxed by silence, fasting, and periods of prolonged concentration."⁷⁶

Compare the *Soyal* and Ciqneq's bringing of order to the English *Epiphany* holiday. A spiritual for the Epiphany, for example, praises the virgin: "Star, angel, shepherds, and wise sages, thou virgin glory of all ages, restored the frame of heaven and earth..."⁷⁷



Postscript



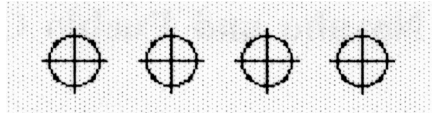
The full significance of Kitsepawit's story remains tantalizingly just beyond our conscious understanding. Ciqneq's birth clearly takes place during the winter solstice, but the events of the middle and latter parts of the tale remain enigmatic. It is as if we visited a Christian church and heard "Oh, Holy Night" sung before studying Christian theology. If the lyrics to this one song remained our only information about the Christian Christmas season, we would be indeed limited in our understanding.

Fortunately, a rich legacy of Chumash spirituality has been preserved. To help you enrich your understanding of Kitsepawit's parable, I have featured related Chumash and Mohave narratives in the second book in this series called *Tales For the Christmas Season*.

As you read other native American stories about the Christmas season, you will encounter a number of reoccurring topics. You may find these repetitions to be very helpful in interpreting the stories for yourself. Look especially at passages about death and rebirth, which signal the stopping of the Sun during the five days of the solstice. And keep in mind that wisdom is gained at great expense to visionaries like Kitsepawit, who seek to embrace the supernatural. Their goal is not to hide their message, but to bring that gift back from the other realm and share it with their communities.⁸³

The effort to unravel puzzles is welcomed by a Chumash audience who appreciates that the enigmatic teachings hidden within a folk tale are a burden to the narrator, awaiting release through comprehension.

*John Anderson
December 1995*



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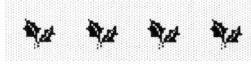
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Endnotes

1 Ciqneq was born in a "village" a small town, like Jesus who was born in the village of Bethlehem. Their obscure births, far from the seats of governmental power, indicate 'shamanic' careers, as outsiders to the established order.

2 The first twelve children represent the 12 months of the year (twelve moons of mundane time). Twelve represents a unit of time for the Chumash, as reflected in their belief that their souls waited in the Land of the Dead for 12 years before being reincarnated (Kitsepawit, December, 97).

Other tribes use a six month calender. The Coos people of the Oregon coast, for example, describe a virgin conception based on a six month model. In one of their mermaid stories, a sister with five brothers, becomes mysteriously pregnant after swimming in a little creek which flows into the ocean. She is a variant of Ciqneq's mother, with the exception that she may be associated with a six month count between the summer and winter solstices.

3 The daughter represents the thirteenth month (of the Chumash ritual calendar). This sacred 'month' is female, because only in this period can the sun be reborn ('birthed'). Prior to her sunlight impregnation, this young woman enjoyed the virginal status which Pueblo people called "non-sunlight-struck" (Waters, Masked, 245).

The death of the sun takes place on December 21, when the rising sun first appears to stop changing its position on the horizon (sometimes perceived as happening on the 22nd). Mundane time stops when the sun stops. Thus begins the critical period of mythic time, when the sun's dying soul separates from its dead body and seeks the Land of the Dead so it can be reincarnated on December 25.

Virgins like Ciqneq's mother reigned during the four to five days of the winter solstice, i.e. roughly from December 21 to December 25. Popular Christian culture mirrors this ancient folk lore tradition, for example, with Mary as the virgin and Jesus as the miracle child (new sun), born on December 25.

Readers familiar with classical Greek and Roman mythology will recognize many parallels between Ciqneq's 'blessed' mother and supernatural virgins of Euro-Mediterranean folk lore. *Pallas Athena* the Greek goddess of wisdom, for example, was conceived of a virgin birth. She, who sprang from Zeus' forehead, gave her name to Athens, Greece. Homer described her as "Zeus' virgin child.

Her Roman counterpart was *Minerva*, the virgin offspring of Jupiter and also a goddess of wisdom. Like Athena, her guardian animal spirit was

the owl. Minerva probably had an Etruscan origin, as their goddess of wisdom, invention, and industry. In each case the virginity symbolized a supernatural conception, disassociated from the physical bodies of humanity living in the corrupt middle world.

Homer identified *Pallas Athena* as the protector of the Greek hero Odysseus (Odysseus, 461). *Pallas* has the same root as *Parthenos*, meaning a 'virgin'. Athena was magically conceived out of the head of Jupiter, without a mother. Thus, like Ciqneq, Odysseus began his great odyssey under the protection of a virgin.

Hercules is another interesting Greek cultural hero with awesome physical strength, who was also protected by the virgin Athene. Hercules' mother miraculously conceived him, by the god Zeus. His great achievements (called the "labors of Hercules") were twelve in number, representing the twelve months of the calendar (compare Ciqneq's twelve uncles).

For further discussion, see Campbell's chapter on the virgin birth of cultural heroes in world mythology (Thousand, 297).

4 Ciqneq's father is never directly identified in this riddle. His absence (as an active player in the birth scene) strongly suggests a solar identification as the Old Sun (thus the old year, now gone).

Like Father Time in contemporary American myth, the Old Year fades away so the New Year (the baby Ciqneq) can emerge. For discussion of the psychological dimensions see Joseph Campbell's chapters on atonement with the father and the hero as world redeemer (Thousand, 126).

Ciqneq's grandfather ("respected by everyone") behaved very much like the Chumash Eagle figure called Slo'w. As the celestial Eagle he is withdrawn from the mundane affairs of humans and is associated with the dim North Star.

5 See the text in the box called "The Grand Test," in chapter one.

6 This string with down feathers woven into it was a *Takulsoxsinas* (Blackburn, December, 108). *Sox* is a root term, meaning 'down feathers'.

The Chumash *Isoxsinas* is a variant of the Hopi *Paho*, a prayer-feather stick which represents "the loftiness of the spirit" (Waters, Hopi, 162; they can "deliver your prayers") The feathers in these objects symbolize the flight of the prayer upward into the heavens.

7 The original text read "a Bouquet of feather" (Blackburn, December, 236). Compare Magic: Wand in the glossary.

8 He wanted to know the biological father of the child.

9 The enchanted hoop rolled west/east, against the Path of the Sun which moves in the opposite direction from east to west. The hoop thus reinstated mythic (magical) time as it rolled.

10 Ritually, this first test took place on December 21, when the sun entered the sacred thirteenth month of year.

11 Ritually, this second test took place on December 22, the second day of the solstice.

The father was acting as a Chumash *Saxlapus*, an 'enchanter'. Like a medieval monk chanting in church, he hoped to win divine favor through his song (*Cantus* is the Roman root, meaning 'song'). Such songs are called *Axlapis*, by the Chumash. See Prophet in the glossary.

12 Ritually, this third test took place on December 23, the third day of the solstice.

None of the twelve male months (the brothers, representing mundane

time) can impregnate the mythical virgin (sacred time); thus they cannot 'father' the newborn sun (the New Year). This can only be done when the sun 'stands still' during the winter solstice (the only time of the year when the Sun shares the non-moving perfection of the North Star).

13 This passage identifies Ciqneq's father as withdrawn persona ("I'm going away, don't look at me."). See Grandfather in the glossary for further discussion.

14 The sun (Old Year) dies and is replaced with a new sun (New Year), and thus the 13 month cyclical calendar is renewed.

15 See Prophet in the glossary for more information.

16 The clouds represent the lower region of the celestial world (an area of the heavens which is dominated by the solar deity).

Christian spirituals, for example, frequently associate the divine powers of heaven with such clouds. A traditional English tune, for example, proclaims: "Our Lord, Our God, he watered us, with his heavenly dew so sweet." (Carols, 92).

The Chumash probably believed, like the Hopi, that each child was a mixture of his earthly (Mother Earth) and heavenly (Father Sun, who is the deity "who gave life to all the universe" (Waters, Hopi, 11).

17 See Ciqneq in the glossary for more information.

18 Joseph Campbell is one of America's most influential mythologists. Anderson (the editor) praises Campbell's psychoanalytical assessments as brilliant but not complete (especially in Campbell's lack of attention to ethnoastronomy). See footnote 21 for further discussion.

19 See Riddle in the glossary, for more information.

20 Coyote kept a *Takulsoxsinas*, a Coyote String in his belt to ward off demons (Qiliqutayiwit, December, 276).

A *Takulsoxsinas* made of red milkweed cord aided a *Sipis* (wizard) in locating a lost child (Blackburn, December, 283, Qiliqutayiwit). Also see (Blackburn, December, 108) and the Mohave feather string citation (in the third chapter of the next book in this series, *Tales for the Christmas Season*).

21 (Campbell, Thousand, 256). In many of the footnotes the commentary in this text breaks from Campbell's psychological model of myth and proposes cosmological interpretations of the characters in Kitsepawit's Ciqneq tale.

Anderson argues that Ciqneq, like the cultural heroes Gilgamesh and Odysseus of Mediterranean mythology, reenacts the drama of the Sun's annual movements. Ciqneq's birth takes place, according to Anderson's chronology, on the New Year (birth of the sun on December 25). Ciqneq's conflict with the *Yewelew* demon, therefore, is interpreted as a reenactment of the sun's summer solstice crisis.

22 Sorcery among the Chumash often occurred within one's own family. Kitsepawit's "sorceress" (witch) plays the role which Campbell calls the "herald", triggering the adventures of the cultural hero and initiating the rest of the plot. Ciqneq's killing of the witch, therefore, is what Campbell calls "the awakening of the self to newfound powers.

Campbell described the typical herald "(the announcer of the adventure)" as dark, loathsome, or terrifying. Like Ciqneq's grandmother's sister, such heralds are judged evil by the world (Thousand, 53). See Witch in glossary for further discussion.

23 As a blind witch, Ciqneq's relative was affiliated with the dark,

night, the Land of the Dead, and "black magic". Such persons were blinded by the 'rational' light of the sun. Lacking balance, crazed by their encounters with the supernatural, they avoid the sun and are limited to the light of the higher stars and the planets and moon which is also out at night.

See the Sixxusus and Simiwowo tales in *A Chumash Christmas* (book two in this series) and the Tewa tales in *A Miraculous Child* (book three in this series) for other examples of a blind "witch-woman" in native American winter solstice lore.

24 In Chumash lore, caves are associated with darkness and thus the supernatural. They are places where a witch would be comfortable even though normal people would prefer to be in the light of the sun. Note that in this narrative, the witch is permanently sent into darkness and kept from being reincarnated, for drowning placed her in the grasp of the Swordfish from which she could not escape to harm again.

25 Kitsepawit's original text read "old woman" for which the editor substituted 'witch' to distinguish this individual from the Old Lady who dominates the last part of the tale. This female elder is the kindly grandmother named *Momoy* (datura).

26 "The Great Famine" is a Chumash story by M. S. Qiliqutayiwit, a Samala traditionalist. Qiliqutayiwit tells how a Tongva "wizard" from the Los Angeles area caused a terrible famine in the years before the Spanish invasion. Only after the tablet used by this witch was immersed in water, was the evil neutralized (Blackburn, December's Child, 276). See Witch in the glossary for related commentary.

27 The witch was not killed by "an animal" but by drowning. In traditional Chumash mythology, this witch thus fell under the sway of the *Elye'wun*, the Swordfish demons (*Nunashish*) who rule the ocean. See historical accounts of the New England witch trials, for an example of American Christian drowning of witches practices.

The Swordfish demons were "fantastic eaters" (Nutu, "Coyote Rescues Xelex", December, 179). Like other demons, they "seized" (187) the bodies of drowned people and held them for 3-4 days (summer solstice theme) so they cannot be reincarnated (180). These drowned souls therefore entered a state of sleep, from which they never awaken (189).

Many characteristics of the Swordfish suggest links to the Ciqneq (son of the clouds, mist) personality. Before the Swordfish enter a room, for example, their presence is forewarned by a black mist (Justice, December, 178; the cloud came and then "everything was dark"; compare Nutu's version of the Swordfish entering as "a mist or fog" (190). See *The Swordfish Race* (Anderson 1997) for related discussion of Chumash drowning and Swordfish lore.

28 Ciqneq apparently lies to his uncle, an authority figure representing civil law. Ciqneq thus acts as an outlaw, a shaman outside of normal social behavior.

29 The old woman is associated with "black magic" and presumably night and moonlight. It is thus fitting that she is killed by the ocean tides which are controlled by the moon. See *Enememe's Friends* (Anderson, 8) for another example of black magic ("black mystery") in Chumash folk lore

30 This passage links Ciqneq with rain and thunder, just as his name means "a child of the clouds." See Ciqneq in glossary for a discussion of

cloud associations in his name

Ciqneq's supernatural origins are similar to those of Sixusus (Little Thunder) and Sumiwowo (Little Fog, which is a type of low lying clouds; see chapter one of the next book in this series, *A Chumash Christmas*, for their story).

31 Cultural heroes among western tribes were often the son of the sun and are associated with the planet Venus. Ciqneq had a habit of disappearing suddenly, being gone for several days and unexpectedly returning. This strongly suggests an association with Venus. During superior conjunction, Venus as the Evening Star vanishes from view about eight weeks before appearing again as the Evening Star.

In some Chumash myths, the Morning Star was a benevolent supernatural being, sympathetic to the needs of humans. In *The Chumash House of Fate* (Anderson) he was identified as one of the four primary deities determining the fate of humanity. Coyote was his ally. See Hudson/Underhay (Crystals, 82) and Erdoes/Ortiz (Myths, 179) for further commentary.

32 During a vision quest a person refrains from eating earthly food. They instead consume celestial foods (foods of the gods) such as tobacco and datura which enhance visions. Thus when a vision quest is over, as in the Ciqneq situation, the visionary is ravishingly hungry.

See "The Death of Sepakay" (December, 269) for an example of a visionary refraining from consuming earthly food.

33 The identity of these five, killed by Ciqneq's grandmother's sister, is not made explicit. Perhaps they are calendral in symbolism and represent the five drought months of the Chumash summer, explaining why Ciqneq ("the child of the clouds", thus water) used water to overcome her?

The Mohave narrative in *Tales For the Christmas Season* (the second book in this series) suggests another interpretation of the five. In this tale, Tsiyere Kavasuk, describes how the five (key) women of the Mohave story are transformed into the Pleiades. The Chumash recognized seven Pleiades stars (as in their name for the constellation, *Iyitaku*, meaning 'seven people' (Hudson/Underhay, Crystals, 109). Kitsepawit identified at least some of them as females, as was also the custom among most of the Chumash's Uto-Aztec neighbors (110).

An alternative interpretation would identify the five killed people in the Ciqneq story as symbolizing the five layers of the cosmos, as described in Samala Chumash cosmology (Nutu, December, 210). Did Chumash witches travel extensively, through all layers of the cosmos? See West in the glossary for further discussion.

34 Ciqneq's uncle represented secular authority (conforming to existing laws). They rejected Ciqneq who represented the inspired visionary (the shaman; an outlaw, an outsider to convention).

35 Ciqneq "remained alone." Like Jesus, a Native American cultural hero was often celibate. His interest was in celestial affairs, not the world of flesh. Compare Ciqneq to Hopi Badger Clan 'healers' who are celibate.

36 Compare to the virginal birth of the Christian Jesus.

37 Jesus is the Christian "child of wonder" (Oxford, Carols, 166).

38 (Erdoes/Ortiz, Myth, 179)

39 Old English spirituals encourage their Christian followers to "make him the pattern of you life" (Dearman, Carols, 40).

40 (Campbell, Thousand, 77).

41 Ciqneq was an outcast traveling outside the protection of his extended family, specifically his uncles and other male relatives.

42 One of the unsolved mysteries of the Ciqneq myth is the identity of Ciqneq's favorite plant ("my plant"). It is almost certainly the tobacco plant (as in the Mohave myth featured in *Tales For A Christmas Season* the second book in this series); but other possibilities include datura, and other psychotropic plants associated with Chumash vision quests.

In a related Chumash folk tale about a miraculous child (called the Tupnekc) tobacco was the favorite food of the young hero, though he also drank huge amounts of datura (Blackburn, December, 141). Taking large amounts of such psychotropics is an important way for a normal human to be able to enter the realm of the gods and not become dizzy (disoriented, crazed).

43 Ciqneq, like each of the Chumash cultural heroes, was only a child. He was newly reincarnated and barely having put his "foot on the land" (had contact between his new body and mother earth)

44 See the Tupnekc narrative in chapter one of *Tales for the Christmas Season* (book two in this series) and the Achumawi tale in chapter four of *A Miraculous Child* (book three in this series) for related materials. They include examples of a newly resurrected cultural hero being ravenously hungry.

45 For further discussion, see Fly in the glossary.

46 The Chumash call a crying demon a *Mamismis*. See Demon in the glossary for further discussion.

47 This line suggests the dualism of Chumash mysticism, between sunlight and moonlight (day and night), ordinary and supernatural reality. Ciqneq appears to be taunting the demon in this passage, pointing out that the *Lewew* (a creature of the night) cannot perceive the reality of humans who dwell in the light of the sun.

Native Americans used the adjectives soft and hard to describe humans exposed to lesser and greater sunlight. Biologically, this pattern can be seen in the shade-loving mushrooms and fungi which are soft and the sun-loving trees which are hard. In animals, it can be seen in the soft bones of baby mammals as compared to the hard bones of adults

European mythology reflects similar beliefs, as can be seen in songs about the early spring sun: "Now Welcome summer, with thy sun-ne soft." (Oxford, Carols, 264; the leaves of early spring have not yet hardened).

48 Blackburn's text reads "Kingdom of the fly" (December, 240). A more literal translation of *Xunpes P'cuwa* would be 'the Fly's food' (the realm of dead meat). *Axunpes* means 'the fly'. *P'cuwa* probably means 'a source of food', as in '*Uw* meaning 'to eat' (Tsmuwich, 36); as in '*Ichuw* meaning 'bait'. The Pomo *Gilik's* home, associated with the House of the Rising Sun in the winter, lies in the Southeast (Barrett, Pomo, 240; it is located "toward the east, very far indeed", 149). As in Mohave myths, this Pomo celestial house is a place where visitors are enslaved, 149).

49 See Fly in glossary for discussion.

50 Becoming dizzy ("all mixed up") upon entering the rotating heavens (visiting the rotating, spinning, stars) is a universal religious theme.

Human souls, in many myths, begin their heavenly journey among the rapidly rotating southern stars (like Ciqneq's "south"), they quickly become disoriented and too sickly to remain in the heavenly realm.

Compare the Jewish prayer (from the Berakoth), where the supplicant asks to be kept from "confusion" (Appleton, Prayers, 272). See Crazy in the glossary for further discussion.

51 Kitsepawit's original text included the following additional lines of Ciqneq's Fly speech: "As soon as a fly sees a dead body he sits down and eats. In the afternoon he gets full, and lies down near the dead one. In the morning he awakens and again eats. He finishes eating, and enters the center of the corpse and defecates. Little flies come out. Now you know what the fly is."

The devil answered, "No, I don't understand. Continue your story." So the boy said, "Wait and listen! *What the fly defecates are maggots, and soon* they are converted into flies. As soon as they are grown the body is full of flies. They have no houses, just like the old one" (referring obscurely to the devil lest he understand it), "nothing more than the wind. All the sons of the fly are the same as you. All the flies are in their homes - and you! They kill us and take our homes"(Blackburn, December, 240).

I edited out these fifteen lines from this publication, because I found they distracted many Christian readers from the main theme of the December reincarnation (Christmas rebirth) story. Christians are not used to references to explicit consumption of blood and flesh in their Christmas sermons. The leaders of various Christian sects, typically reassigned such blood and flesh passages to the spring equinox (Easter) season, where temptations by the devil, suffering, and death are fully expounded. They are also popularly celebrated in American Halloween holiday rituals (which will be featured in the author's book called *When Demons Rule California* which features Chumash demonic lore for the Halloween season).

Other Chumash stories feature the fly as a cleanser of filth from the world. In "Momoy's Grandson No. 2", for example, the cultural hero turned into a fly and visited the Home of the Sun (Blackburn, December, 131). The cultural hero was offered blood and pus to drink, and as the Fly, he willingly drank these liquids.

To the uninitiated the fly is an unclean being, but the educated Chumash recognize that it plays an important role in cleansing the earth of corrupt physical matter. It is not surprising, therefore, that the fly appears in a number of Chumash cultural hero narratives, involving a miraculously conceived child (with supernatural powers) born in the Christmas season. In a story about Datura and her grandson, for example, a Chumash miracle child begins killing flies while at a very young age. In a related story, this same (rapidly growing) baby began crawling around after flies, killing them (the hunter of meat theme) with a little stick. His grandmother made him a tiny bow, and he learned to kill flies with it before graduating to larger animals.

The Pomo, northern California native peoples with close mythological traditions, also featured the fly in their folk tales. In one narrative, for example, the supernatural *Kilikis* (Pomo Sun beings) kept the Bottle-fly a prisoner, to assist them in eating dead humans (Barrett, Pomo, 225). In a closely related narrative, the Fly is described as an "unwilling inmate" of the *Gilak's* house. The flies betrayed the Gilaks to save the newly arriving hero twins (the Hummingbird brothers; Barrett, Pomo, 185).

52 The *Yewelew* may be trying to kill Ciqneq in this passage, by

awakening him suddenly.

The Chumash believed, like most Native Americans, that a person whose soul has separated from the (sleeping) body will die (remain separated) if awakened suddenly. See Wilbert (Tobacco, 63) for further discussion.

Joseph Campbell would propose a psychological interpretation of this passage. He might explain that Ciqneq had to make a conscious choice (be awake) of his destiny at his critical junction in the story. The cultural hero needs to keep "his eyes open in the adventurous realm." He descends consciously ("Awake") into the kingdom of the unconscious (deep sleep) but can bring back insight which can help him in the active world.

Ciqneq in this context is similar to the Asian spiritual leader Buddha, who is referred to in prayers as the "awakened" one (Appleton, Prayers, 299). His teachings lead "from darkness to light" (300).

53 This scene reinforces Ciqneq's status outside his extended family's protection. Like all shamans (outlaws, outside of worldly concerns) Ciqneq's is threatened with forced adoption by a demon (Barrett, Pomo I, 178).

In this Pomo tale the *Kilikis* keep the Bottle-fly a prisoner, to assist them in eating dead humans (225). In a third story, Fly is described as an "unwilling" inmate of the *Gilaks'* house, betraying the *Gilaks* to save the newly arriving hero twins (the hummingbird brothers, 185). Coyote was another (probably the preeminent) Chumash character who (like the fly) was without a house.

In the myths of the Yuman (neighbors of the Chumash who live on the Colorado) Coyote stole the heart of the Creator deity when the Creator's body was being burnt on a funeral pyre. As punishment, the resurrected Creator later condemned Coyote to be "Without a house to live in.." "You will live by stealing, and for your thefts the people will kill you" (Erdoes/Ortiz, Myth, 80). Apparently, this is an explanation of why the Yuman Coyote (constellation?) was forced to dwell in the southern sky, farthest away from the North Star.

J. Nelson told a Mohave story in 1903, where Foolish Coyote is punished for his misdeeds by being "abandoned, homeless" (Kroeber, Mohave, 53; "He will not know his own home; he will want to run around the desert and do what is bad...")

54 In this Chumash passage Ciqneq identifies the "south" and specifically the island of Santa Rosa as the place where demonic forces began ("you" presumably refers to such forces, since Ciqneq is addressing the *Lewelew* in this passage). Compare Blackburn's narrative called "Momoy's Grandson, No. 2" where the islands off the southern Chumash coast are again identified as the home of a great demon (December, 113). The stars of the southern sky have no 'homes' (there is no south pivot star, as in the north). They are wanderers, like flies.

55 Ciqneq's enigmatic "it" in this text apparently refers to the material world, ruled by mundane time and greed. The stars of the southern sky, plus the 'wandering' planets, dominate the affairs of this material world (inhabited by humans). For further discussion, see *Enememe's Friends* (Anderson, 18).

56 Ciqneq is a variant of the Northwest Coast Stone-ribs, a magically growing child who kills animals with a tiny bow and becomes a great hunter who helps his people avoid starvation (summer sun theme). Later, this

Northwest hero took the name Crystal-ribs, demonstrating his shamanic status after a successful vision quest (his body became crystal).

57 (Campbell, Thousand, 77).

58 The Chumash celebration of Ciqneq's birth cannot be isolated from his later life's work, just as the birth of the Christian Jesus on December 25 cannot be understood apart from his later adventures (as presented in the Christian *New Testament*).

59 Ciqneq's defeat of the devil mirrors the 'testing' of Jesus by the devil in the deserts of Israel (symbolizing the heat of summer solstice?).

60 Like Jesus, who triumphed over the devil in the deserts of Israel, Ciqneq (mirroring the behavior of cultural heroes throughout the world) turned back to his familial and social roots. At first he was rejected as an outcast, but eventually his triumph over the devil led to his acceptance among his people

61 See Campbell (Thousand, 82) for a discussion of the cultural hero type.

62 For another example of the theme of immorality ruling the human world see Nutu (Blackburn, December, 309; "Well, it's like this: a good dead is repaid with evil").

This theme of greed ruling the middle world (where humans live) is heavily emphasized in Hopi cosmology where each world cycle ends with the destruction of the human world due to "corruption" (Waters, Hopi, 23; and as a consequence "The Fourth World, the present one, is the full expression of man's ruthless materialism and imperialistic will", 33).

63 Like the Hopi clans in their wanderings and the Mohave Ahta-hane hero (in the second book in this series, *Tales for a Chumash Christmas Season*) Ciqneq roamed the middle world in his adventures. All ended their wandering, by returning to their culture's spiritual centers (see Waters, Hopi, 149).

64 Who are these people who "are coming"? Ciqneq only tells us, in this speech, that "they came out of hell (on earth).

Kitsepawit's other folk lore 'teachings' may be of help here. He explained, for example, that the traditional Chumash believed in reincarnation. It would be reasonable to assume that Ciqneq's song refers to the reborn souls, which come back from the Land of the Dead ("...the dead go westward and are born again in this world, in a cosmic circle of life"; "It is all a circle"; December, 97)

Perhaps the returning dead in this story are the souls who failed to find their way to the Land of the Dead, and could not be normally reincarnated? A number of Chumash references describe these failed souls as residing in fish and other animal bodies, along the path of the dead. A less extreme explanation would be that they are the souls who died that year (12 month cycle), awaiting release from the lower world with the completion of winter solstice rituals (or even 4-5 year cycle of the Mourning ceremony)?

In another tale called "Dog Tears", Kitsepawit presents a similar scene in which a little boy warns: "They are coming, They are coming!" No one ever learned who "they" were, however, because this little boy "died in three days and never regained consciousness enough to tell what he had seen."

As the conquering hero (he "conquered the devil") Ciqneq uses knowledge (gained from tobacco and datura visions?) rather than force to

achieve his goals. See Blackburn's "Momoy's Grandson, No. 2" for another example of a hero returning from his adventures with general acceptance among his kinsmen (December, 140).

65 Conventional society rejects the idiosyncrasy of the cultural hero unless it is proven, beyond a doubt, to be of use to the group. Thus it is only after his triumph that the hero is accepted by his community.

66 Ciqneq, at this point in the story, ends his wandering among the *Nunishish* devils.

Chumash songs and prayers celebrating Ciqneq's completed cycle (return to his village at the end of the story) are similar in intent to better known Hopi *Mongko* songs and prayers. "The supreme symbol of spiritual power and authority is the *Mongko*. It gives evidence that each society and the clans comprising it had completed their centuries-long migration. It is the Hopi "law of laws" (Waters, Hopi, 171).

Readers from other faiths should find such references to heavenly light familiar. Passages linking the Christian heavenly beings (angels) with (celestial) light, for example, are found through their holy scriptures. "High above, the Kingly Sun laughs, once more his course to run, shines in all his splendor" (Oxford Book, Carols, 211).

The Christian Creator is described in prayer as a god of "eternal light" (Appleton, 247). The stars are called 'angels', believed by the ancient Hebrews and their neighbors to be supernatural beings of both good and bad temperament. The bad stars fell away from the heavenly center (celestial axis) into the southern sky. Here they became demons, responsible for the evil (e.g. disease, starvation, war) that befell humanity. The Orthodox church describes its greatest angel as "shining with heavenly brightness" (251).

Compare such references to the Jewish New Year liturgy which praises the Creator deity for "Thy splendor" (281). An early Hasidic song describes how "the light of my heavenly Father shines upon me" (273). Muslims pray: "god is the light of the heavens and the earth" (338). When lighting candles during church service, the Buddhist prays : "To Him who is the Light, we offer light" (300).

67 (Kitsepawit, December, 97).

68 The Chumash newborn sun (new Year) sparkled, like the stars. See *Enememe's Friends* (Anderson 1997) for related text about "the sparkling of the sun" (Anderson, 16). In this tale, the stars are pointed out as examples of the sparkling heavenly light

69 This is an ancient Semitic concept.

70 (Appleton, Prayers, 248).

71 (Appleton, Prayers, 323).

72 (Appleton, Prayers, 324).

73 Liyikshup is the sacred center of the Chumash world (the middle the surface of the earth, where humans lived).

74 To be reincarnated, the Chumash soul had to be given a new material body (*Xutash*, or Mother Earth theme).

75 (Waters, Hopi, 197).

76 (Waters, Hopi, 188).

77 (Oxford, Carols, 247).

78 This old woman is probably the cultural hero's grandmother named Momoy (as in the Momoy's Grandson tales featured in the second book in

this series, *Tales For the Christmas Season*, Anderson, 1996). Blackburn's text describes her as an "old lady" (December, 241).

79 Campbell would describe this passage as an "atonement scene" (Thousand, 129) in which Ciqneq achieves a state of grace, a reconciliation with his own fate (to die). Ciqneq is consistent with the Campbell hero persona. He finds a final peace with his community and the missing father (December, 301).

80 The reincarnated sun triumphs over death (the end of mundane time) when it rises on December 25.

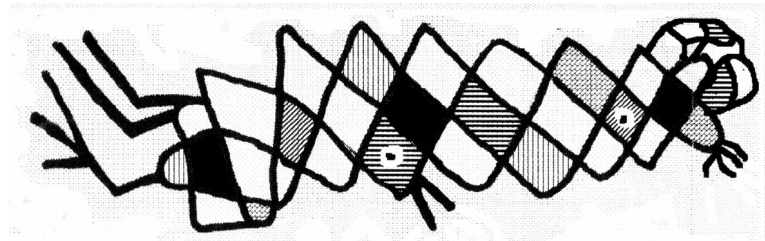
81 The Chumash literally lived in peace during the winter solstice (Christmas) period. They stayed at home and remained quiet during the sacred thirteenth month, December 21 to December 24.

Blackburn speculates that the sun is "angry" during this period. This implies that the Sun's soul is disoriented, confused, and thus angry during the normal winter solstice holy days. But it is more likely that the motive of the Chumash was not to disturb the Sun as his soul walked the Path of the Dead, in preparation for its reincarnation on December 25.

See *Kuta Teaching* (Anderson 1998) for a discussion of recapitulation and angry (confused) souls. Given the reverence shown by the Chumash for the Sun, it is highly unlikely that they would depict it as confused and angry after its death on December 21. To the contrary, it is the supremely confident soul whose heavenly travels after death serve as the ultimate source of knowledge about the Path of the Dead and the all-important location of the Land of the dead (the constellation called *Aquilla* by Europeans)

82 Slow, the celestial ruler, was the Chumash North Star deity. "Slow is the wise and powerful chief, but he seldom figures in the narratives as anything but an important offstage presence" (Blackburn, December, 35)

83 The traditional Chumash storyteller ends their story with the phrase *Sutiwayan Ul'atuc*, meaning 'I now hang up the carrying net and relieve myself of the burden of this tale'. *Wayan* means 'to hang' (Tsmuwich, 65) and *Atuc* means 'a closely woven carrying net'. The Samala dictionary described it as "a fine-mesh carrying net with wooden hoop at mouth" (82).



Glossary



CHILD OF THE CLOUDS Also see Virgin.

- The mother of Ciqneqs was described as a virgin, and his father is not discernable other than being a powerful supernatural of the upper world (clouds).

- Ciqneqs was proclaimed a child of the clouds by the Old Woman (Momoy, Datura), and "only the clouds can punish him."

- Ciqneq is associated symbolically with the fall and winter rains which helped drown the overheated sun of summer.

- Heavy winter rains can make the people suffer if in excess. An example is found in *Ixmey* (Anderson) where a great flood hits the Santa Barbara area. Note that Ciqneq's killing of the witch ensured that she could not harm future generations of his family.

CHRISTMAS The Christian name for the first day of the Chumash New Year (December 25), when the newborn sun (Christ, Ciqneq) first begins to move again on the horizon. Compare Solstice: winter, Grandfather.

CHUMASH A southern California peoples who spoke Chumashan languages. They lived along the coast from Malibu, north through Ventura, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and northern counties.

CIQNEQ The personal name of the hero in the Chumash tale, who is described as a "phenomenon", a "child of the clouds." He is also represented as the "son of all the dead." Like Jesus in the manger, Ciqneq was born in a remote village without high social status. Both lived outside the secular law. Compare Dwarf. See chapter three in *Tales For a Christmas Season* for a Mohave variant.

Terms: *Ciqneq* is an Anglicizing of *Ciq'ne q's* (the full Chumash name).

Discussion of terms: The translation of Ciqneqs is not determined. One possible root is *Iqc'i* meaning 'to be cloudy' (Tsmuwich, 57). *Iqc'i* may have the same root as *Q'inc'i*, meaning 'to drown' (25), as in Ciqneq drowning of the witch and the threat of drowning at the end of the tale. An alternative root might be *Ichti* meaning 'child' (Tsmuwich, *Ich'ich* means 'a younger sibling', 10; thus *Ch'ich'i* means 'child', 56).

CLOUDS See Child of the Clouds.

CRAZY The devil was trying to get Ciqneq "all mixed up." This is a reference to the disorientation of the human soul when it encounters the supernatural. In the Ciqneq story, the cultural hero has to overcome dizziness as it enters the revolving heaven.

Terms: The *Lewelew* demon threatened Ciqneq with a form of disorientation caused by whirling, which the Chumash call *Oxyoyon*. It means 'for a person to be crazy' with the suffix *-Yoyon* meaning 'to whirl'. As in *Stipoyoxon*, a whirlwind (Tsmuwich, 27), and *Susoloyoxon*, 'to agitate', 'to shake up'. *Wolowol* means 'to be drunk' (59); with the root

Wol meaning 'to spin', as in *Wotolk'oy* meaning 'to wind around' (88).

Other terms imply being overwhelmed with the supernatural, as *Luyu'l* which means 'to be crazed' (Justice, December, 220; "burnt by the sun's rays") and has the connotation of being sun crazed (Tsmuwich, 16, 'sunburned'). The Chumash officials called Rays of the Sun (associated with the *Antap*) may be crazed in this sense, infused with pragmatic teachings gained from observations of worldly events (under the sun, as opposed to the wisdom gained by entering the heavens, i.e. the spinning upper world?).

Not all Chumash terms for being crazy have a spinning connotation. *Momoyich*, for example, means 'to be under the (perceptionally overwhelming?) influence of a psychotropic drug such as datura (*Momoy*)'. *Momoyich* probably has the same root as *Smomoy* (Samala, 313 'fog. Was Ciqneq, the child of the clouds (e.g. fog), easily able to overcome grogginess in the supernatural realm?).

Coyote is also known as a crazy person among the Chumash northern neighbors, the Pomo (Barrett, Pomo, 505; "because of his crazy actions at times"; *Gunula* is one name for the Pomo Coyote).

DATURA In Chumash pharmacology, datura is the most elevated source of visionary insight. See *Old Woman* for possible identification of the grandmotherly Datura in Kitsepawit's tale. Compare *Tobacco*.

Terms: *Mo'moy* means 'datura' (Tsmuwich, 18; *Mo'moyich* means 'to be drunk'). *Momoy* (Samala, 226; *Momoyic* means 'to be crazy' but not from datura visions).

Hypothesis: Datura was the source of visionary insight which Ciqneq called "my plant" (December, 239; Kitsepawit).

DEMON A supernatural being from the lower world, which threatens humans in the earthly realm where humanity lives. Compare *Crazy*.

Terms: *Nunashish* means 'a devil' (Tsmuwich, 58). *Nunasis* (Samala, 253, 'demon', 'supernatural being', 'beast' 'snake').

Related terms: *Siwon* *Nunasis* means 'to thunder' (Samala, 253, literally means 'the demon sounds').

Discussion of terms: *Shish*, meaning 'a burrow', may be one root (suggesting that the Chumash *Nunashish* demons came from underground).

- Ciqneq was tempted by a *Lewelew* demon. The *Lewelew* spread debilitating infections (caused by both wounds and disease), as shown by his skin which was covered with pus and his loose facial skin (Blackburn, December, 93). He was a wrestling demon, who throws his human victims to the ground (the lower world; and by implication dragging his victims away from the north star and down to the stars of the lower, southern, sky?). The root is probably *Elew*, meaning 'to go down', 'to descend' (Tsmuwich, 8), as in *Supilelew*, 'to throw down' (85).

Note that Ciqneq overcame the pustulent *Lewelew* demon (childhood disease?) and threatened to turn the *Lewelew* into a crying demon. These demons are called *Maxulaw* (Blackburn, December, 94; *Qiliqutayiwit*). *Maxulaw* means 'crybaby' as in the Samala term *'Alxu'la* (50; the root term *Xu'la* means 'to cry a lot').

- Like the Hopi "scare" Kachinas ("monsters", Waters, Hopi, 228), the Chumash *Nunashish* probably represent the stars of the southern sky, which spin wildly within the Abyss of the south. Abandoned by the orderly pull of the north star, these supernatural beings (crazed stars of the southern sky) dip nightly below the earth's horizon. Their nocturnal

'visitations' are watched by humans, who feared they will seize their human souls and drag them into the oblivion of the southern Abyss.

DEATH See Demon and Demon With A Pack for a discussion of the Yewelew demon which threatened to kill Ciqneq. Compare Witch, Black Magic.

DWARF Both midgets and dwarfs were sometimes trained as Native American spiritual leaders.

Terms: 'U'can means 'a dwarf' (Samala, 387).

- The Ciqneq personality featured in Kitsepawit's text may have been associated with dwarfism. But Kitsepawit's primary symbolism for the Ciqneq child is not a dwarf but the newborn sun which overcomes the darkness of winter. See Sun.

FLY An insect persona, frequently appearing in Native American cultural hero tales.

Terms: *Axulpesh* means 'fly' in Chumash (Tsmuwich, 6; thus *Axunpesic*, meaning 'to be fly-ridden'). The Samala variant is 'Axunpes' ('fly', 97; *Axulpe* is a root, meaning 'to intrude', 'to rove around'). Another related term may be *Xulpep*, 'to pick up unwanted things'(41).

Tsamal means 'fly' in Pomo (Barrett, 541; and is closely related to the *Tsam*, 'the mosquito' which is another eater of human blood).

- Ciqneq's triumph over the devil resulted from his solving of the Fly Enigma. See Riddle for related commentary.

- The Fly, in California mythology (e.g. the Chumash, Pomo, and Mohave) is frequently an active cleanser of filth in the House of the Sun. The realm of the Fly probably represents all of the physical world, which is subject to decay. In Kitsepawit's tale, therefore, the demon took Ciqneq down from his celestial origins to the surface of the earth which is the realm of the fly.

- The fly, especially in its 'maggot' pupae stage eats rotten meat and pus, and is associated in the Ciqneq story with the *Lewelew* and its pustulent skin.

Hypothesis: The rapidly rotating stars of the southern sky symbolize celestial flies, roving about the sky with little order (compared to the stars nearer the north star) and coming into contact with the corrupt middle world (frequently dropping below the earth's horizon). Compare Star.

GRANDFATHER Ciqneq's grandfather withdrew from an active role in the later part of Kitsepawit's story. This withdrawn grandfather is probably associated with the Chumash Creator deity, and thus with the Chumash Eagle who guards his realm.

LEWELEW See Demon.

LIYIKSHUP The Chumash name for the sacred center of the human world. It is a place of peace.

MAGIC: BLACK Ciqneq fought against "black magic." It is associated with moonlight, night, ill health and misfortune. Compare Witch, Magic: White.

Terms: Neither the Tsmuwich nor Samala dictionary lists *Black Magic*.

Related terms: 'Atishwicchish' means 'poison'(Tsmuwich, 5) having the implication of inappropriate use of *Atishwin* (supernatural power).

Saqtasumus means 'to exorcise evil' (Samala, 508) with the possible root *Axsumu* which means 'to suffer'(Samala, 92).

MAGIC: WHITE Appropriate use of supernatural power is white magic in Chumash folk lore it is associated with sunlight, daytime, good health and

fortune. Compare Magic: Wand, Magic: Black.

Terms: Neither the Tsmuwich nor Samala dictionary lists *White Magic*.

Related terms: *Atishwin* means 'supernatural power' (Tsmuwich, 5, also means 'power', 'a charm').

Sipis means 'to be wise' (Samala, 340); thus the name *Sipisiwas* means 'he who was wise but lost his wisdom'; it is a title for Foolish Coyote, the benefactor of humanity [which too often is foolish like Coyote].

Discussion of terms: Blackburn mistranslated *Sipis* as a 'diviner' (December, 343).

MAGIC: WAND A magical wand or rod is used to focus supernatural power.

Terms: A *Takulsoxsinas* was a magic string, used for divination (one root is *Takul*, meaning 'something held in the hand'; another root is *Sox*, meaning 'feather' as in *Isoxsinas*, meaning 'a down covered object').

- Ciqneq's virgin mother held two magical prayer wands (decorated with feathers and called *Isoxsinas*) to protect her from slander in the first part of the narrative.

NEW YEAR Magically conceived Chumash cultural heroes are associated with the rebirth of the sun on December 25. This is the Chumash new year.

Terms: *Kaqunupimawa* is the ritual name for the Chumash New Year. This name refers to the radiance of the sun, the child born on December 24th (Kitsepawit, December, 97). Compare Sun, Solstice: Winter.

OLD WOMAN This is the name used in the text for the character described by Kitsepawit as the "old woman". She befriended Ciqneq, in spite of the opinions of the other villagers who shied away from him. See Riddle for related commentary.

- This nurturing Old Woman is probably *Momoy* (datura), a familiar grandmother figure in many Chumash myths. Anderson (the editor) thus added capitals to "old woman" in order to distinguish this female elder from the narrator's other old woman (who was an old witch and a practitioner of "black magic").

PEACE Ciqneq brought peace to his village, after he returned from his adventures. Greed rules the earth during normal times, but during the winter solstice period (the four day 'month' of the solstice) peace rules the world. This is the holiday Christians call Christmas.

POMO The Pomo are a native American cultural group located far north of the Chumash. These two cultures share fascinating mythological similarities not yet fully explored by American scholars.

- The Pomo hero twins stories are very similar to the Chumash narratives. The Pomo twins, called the Hummingbird Brothers (Barrett, Pomo, 148) grew rapidly (150). They killed a grizzly bear with their magic (153), and then they killed the Sun-man, after an eating contest (157).

PRAYER Ciqneq's virgin mother held two prayer wands during her trial. One pointed to the heavens and the other to mother earth, to indicate the dual roots of Ciqneq's powers.

Terms: '*Alaxutiwilas'in* means 'to pray' (Samala, 41, 'to commune with spirits'; the root *Axuti-wil* means 'to speak'). *Xutiwalyik* means 'to be acquainted with', 'to be familiar with' (Tsmuwich, 41).

PROPHET A Chumash prophet (one who sees into the future with divine insight) foretold good fortune for the Ciqneq cultural hero.

Terms: An '*Alaxlaps* is a 'diviner' (Kitsepawit, December, 237; one

skilled in anatomy, physiognomy, and astrology). *Saxlapus* is a variant (Qiliqutayiwit, December, 276). The root is 'Axlapus, meaning 'to enchant' ('to cast a spell'; Axlapis mean 'a spell'; *Saxlapus* means 'an enchanter' (Blackburn, December, 343).

- Most Chumash prophets were women (Qiliqutayiwit, December, 27).

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONVERSION Ciqneq underwent a psychological conversion after he defeated the devil, returning back to his home community as a benevolent persona.

Hypothesis: Ciqneq as a cultural hero mirrors the behavior of the sun during the summer solstice. He turns from physical power and retraces his path back to his place of origin.

REALM OF THE FLY See Fly.

RIDDLES The devil tried to get Ciqneq confused with riddles, but Ciqneq responded with guessing games of his own. See Fly and Old Woman for related commentary.

Terms: Aqlaqwa'y means 'to guess' (Samala, 90; literally means 'to hit right on it').

- The highest diplomatic official of the Chumash governments was the *Ksen*. As a specialist in cultural affairs, these officials (popularly known, by ritual inversion, as the Fools Hen) would have surely been an expert in solving riddles.

SOLSTICE: WINTER EAGLE The celestial Eagle is the withdrawn Thunderbird of Chumash and other native Californian mythology.

- The Eagle descends to the earth to seize the sun in his mighty claws during the sacred 13th month, when the sun stops moving (December 21 through the 24th). The withdrawal of the celestial Eagles' grip' on the sun brings the sacred month to a close, permitting the birth of the baby Ciqneq (the New Year) on December 25 (the day celebrated as Christmas, among Christians).

Hypothesis: Ciqneq's grandfather is the Chumash Creator god who is protected by his guardian bird, the celestial Eagle (North Star).

SOUTH The cardinal direction south is associated with Sirius and the *Nunashish* demons in Chumash cosmology. See Stars: Southern Sky, Demons and Flies for further discussion.

STARS: SOUTHERN SKY The Chumash, like other Native Americans, believed that the stars of the southern sky were inferior to the stars of the northern sky.

- Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, rules this area of the heavens and is the dominant Chumash supernatural of the southern sky. Sirius is associated with the chaos of this celestial realm as is the *Haphap* (a swallowing monster) represents a waterspout. See Flies and Nunashish (under Demons,) for a discussion of possible folk lore symbolism for these southern stars.

STARS: NORTHERN SKY Chumash astronomers believed the stars of the northern sky to be superior to those of the southern sky. Also see Solstice: Winter Eagle.

- Polaris, the dim pole star around which all the stars of the highest Heaven rotate, is the dominant supernatural of the northern sky.

SUN The main theme of Kitsepawit's story appears to be the overcoming of death, specifically at the winter solstice.

Terms: 'Alishaw means 'sun' in Tsmuwich (83; and *Ishaw* means 'hot', 66). *Qsi* means 'sun' in Samala (294).

The Pomo term *La* means 'the sun' (Barrett, 523).

- Anderson (the editor) proposes that Kitsepawit's tale is a parable, in which the cultural hero Ciqneq represents the sun on its annual journey across the heavens. Compare Riddle.

- The Pomo *Giliks* were man-eating supernaturals (Barrett, Pomo I, 171). They are similar to the Chumash guardians of the Sun deity and are a rich source of comparative lore for anyone wanting to better understand the Ciqneq persona and his solar associations.

- The Chumash consider the Sun a stern "uncle" (Qiliqutayiwit, December, 92), who eats the bodies of dead humans (93).

TOBACCO Ciqneq, like other younger Chumash cultural heroes, consumed huge amounts of native tobacco, but datura was his favorite plant.

Terms: *Show* means 'tobacco' (Tsmuwich, 30). *Sow* (Samala, 342).

- Ciqneq was probably a great shaman, specifically a type called an *Alsuqlas* by the Chumash who used tobacco to perform his magic. The souls of the heroes rose up on the smoke to enter the clouds of the upper world.

- The early editions of *A Chumash Christmas* (Anderson) identified tobacco as the favored stimulant described by Ciqneq in the text as "my plant." See Datura for the proper plant identification.

VIRGIN Ciqneq's mother, like the virgin in Christian myth, conceived a cultural hero by a supernatural father. See Child of the Clouds for related commentary.

WAND See Magic: Wand.

WEST Ciqneq went "far away" in the west, presumably visiting the Land of the Dead which lies in the west. Like all souls traveling through the heavens in Chumash myth he came back "hungry."

- An alternative destination might have been the house of the setting Sun, where he could have been visiting his father, the Sun. Compare Grandfather.

WITCH The Chumash, like many of their neighbors, believed in witchcraft which often occurred within one's own family. Compare Magic: White and Magic: Black, and see Datura (Momoy) for the beneficial Old Woman who aids Ciqneq.

Terms: *Axlap* means 'to bewitch' (Samala, 89, 'to cast a [sorcerous] spell on'; '*Axlapis* means 'a magical spell', 'a sorcerous spell').

Related terms: *Atishwin* means 'supernatural power' (means 'power', also 'a charm', Tsmuwich, 5).

Discussion of terms: The term *Witch* originally meant 'a wise woman' in old English, but under the influence of Christianity the term came to have demonic connotations among European immigrants to America. Christians considered the followers of older European religions as being in complicity with demons, just as Chumash witches were often believed to be in contact with the *Nunashish* demons.

- A witch is a person overcome by supernatural power and practicing black magic. Many have been overwhelmed, for example, by psychotropic drugs (such as tobacco and datura). The witch in the Ciqneq story was his great aunt, an old and blind woman who practiced "black magic." She represents the darkness of the winter months when humanity experiences much suffering.

Other books by the author:

- Tales For the Christmas Season** The dying winter sun as depicted in mythology of California, features Chumash and Mohave winter solstice tales, 40 pages, second edition, 1999.
- A Miraculous Child Born In December** Hopi, Tewa, Achumawi, and Chumash winter solstice tales, 2002, 44 pages.
- The Fox Jumps** Chumash summer solstice tales from California; compared to Kalispel & Yakima tales from the Northwest, fourth edition 1999, 40 pages, 1994.
- Chumash Autumn Equinox** Equinox ceremonialism, when the days and night are equal. 64 pages, 2002.
- When Demons Rule California** A glossary on Chumash demons, spirits, and black magic - with commentary, Halloween, 56 pages, third edition, 2001.
- A Circle Within The Abyss** Chumash Indian religion, metaphysics, 40 pages, fourth edition 2000.
- Kuta Teachings** Reincarnation theology of the Chumash Indians, death and rebirth, recapitulations, ascent into the heavens, 56 pages, 1999.
- The Chumash House of Fate** Chumash gambling, the roles of chance and fate in Chumash cosmology, 44 pages, third edition 2001.
- Enememe's Friends** Chumash theology, a very complex folk tale includes cosmology and reincarnation themes, seventh edition 2002, 44 pages, 1997.
- The Swordfish Race** Chumash & Pomo racing tales, rescuing drowned souls from the rulers of the ocean, 40 pages, 1997.
- When Frog Stole the Waters** Frog symbolism & cornucopia tales; Chumash, Karok, Kootenai, Pomo, Yakima, Kalapuya, Micmac & Passamaquoddy, 40 pages, 1996.
- The Fast Thinker** Kootenai racing tale from the American Northwest; compared to Yakima, Tupi (S. America), Bantu (Africa), and French racing tales, 44 pages, 1994.
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