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ETHNOLOGY OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN NATIONAL PARK

The Ute and Arapaho

by

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1936

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FOREWORD

This paper is one of several prepared for the Field Division of Education of the National Park Service by a group of research workers employed during the CWA period of 1933-34. Its purpose was to provide an outline of the pertinent facts relating to the ethnology of the region about Rocky Mountain National Park for use in planning and preparing displays for Moraine Park Museum.

The form and content of the paper naturally reflect the purpose for which it was intended. It makes no claim to being an important piece of original research nor a complete analysis of the ethnology of the region. It emphasizes heavily those aspects of the cultures involved which will lend themselves best to museum displays. It is in fact merely a compilation from published sources arranged in a form which will be useful for museum men. Nevertheless, as a short summary of the ethnography of the Ute and Arapaho, it should serve a wider purpose than that for which it was originally intended.

It is owing to the demand for certain of the research papers prepared for the Field Division of Education that this paper is here presented in mimeographed form. The wider distribution made possible it is believed that it will extend its usefulness beyond its original purpose.

To save time and expense in mimeographing certain departures from customary scholarly form have been made. References have been included in the body of the text in parentheses.

Credit is due the Works Progress Administration for supplying the workers which have made the mimeographing of this paper possible

INTRODUCTION

The region about Rocky Mountain National Park is more or less the dividing line and battleground of two tribes well known to history, the Ute and the Arapaho. Not far away are the Shoshoni, or Snakes, as they are more commonly referred to in early literature. They do not appear to have been more than sporadic visitors to the Rocky Mountain region, however, and so will not be considered in this account.

Unfortunately, relatively little material exists on either Ute or Arapaho. The Ute in particular have been little studied professionally by ethnologists, partially because of their consistent hostility toward whites; and their general incommunicativeness, a trait which they share with many other tribes of the Great Basin region. There exist several good studies of special features of Arapaho culture, notably their ceremonies and design symbolism, but no complete account has ever been written. For this reason it has been necessary to rely on the accounts of their allies and neighbors, the Cheyenne, for certain features of material culture.

The Arapaho are a typical Plains Indian tribe; horsemen, buffalo hunters, warriors. They have not always been so, however, as there is evidence that they once lived somewhere to the northeast, perhaps in the region of the Red River and the Saskatchewan. There they were apparently agricultural and makers of pottery. Drifting southwest, apparently in company with the Cheyenne who originally lived to the southeast of them, they came in contact with the so-called village Indians of the Missouri, the Mandan and Hidatsa. From them they are believed to have obtained many characteristic features of their ceremonial and social organization, particularly the graded military societies.

Just what date may be attributed to this connection is uncertain. It probably antedates considerably their first crossing of the Missouri, and may have occurred while still in their original habitat. After crossing the Missouri they continued their drift in historical times. About 1800, or shortly after, the division into northern and southern bands began to appear, but the tribe regarded itself as one for a long time. In 1806 Arapaho were still camped east of the Black Hills in South Dakota. (Scott, 549; 560).

Throughout the historic period the Arapaho were friendly with the Cheyenne, and it is stated that they shared their ranges. (Grinnell, 1906, 15.) Nevertheless, the Arapaho were usually west of the Cheyenne. The joint territory was the eastern half of Colorado and the southeastern portion of Wyoming. (Kroeber, 1902, 1; Mooney, 1896, 954.) Their habitat is to be characterized as the high plains of this region and the eastern portion of the Rocky Mountains, probably including the open sections or so-called "Parks" in Colorado, in the midst of the mountains. (For a more general historical discussion see Grinnell, 1923, Chap. 1, and Scott.)

The Arapaho originally consisted of five tribes with dialectic differences. Only two of these remain, the Gros Ventre, who were associated with the Blackfoot, and the Arapaho proper. The other three tribes seem to have been absorbed in the Arapaho proper. Kroeber in about 1900 found old people who still could speak two of the dialects. These band divisions had nothing to do with the present division into Northern and Southern Arapaho. (Kroeber, 1902, 4-7; Mooney, 1896, 954-5).

Linguistically, the Arapaho are Algonkins, as are the Cheyenne. Their languages are very diverse, however, being about equally related to Ojibwa, which appears to be the parent stock. (Kroeber, 1902; 4-7; 1916).

The Ute are apparently long-standing inhabitants of their area. The range has never been clearly defined. It appears to have comprised western Colorado and eastern Utah south of the Uintah mountains, including the Salt Lake Valley. It may have extended part way into New Mexico and Arizona. They are usually divided into Northern and Southern Ute, but it is not believed that these divisions have any more than a geographical significance. (Handbook, 2; 874).

The Ute were evidently typical Great Basin people in their original culture, having in relatively recent times received an increment of Plains culture. Much of this may have been received within historic times, but data are inadequate for a conclusion. Their spectacular and typically Plains ceremony, the Sun Dance, probably was not received until as late as 1890.

Linguistically the Ute are a Shoshonean speaking people, belonging to the same stock as those tribes occupying all the

Great Basin area and much of southern California. More distantly they are related to the large group of tribes to the south belonging to the Ute-Aztecan stock, including Pima, Papago, Tarhaumare, and Aztec, to mention only better known tribes. This family had a remarkable distribution, extending in broken areas from Idaho to Panama. (Lewis, 1924a, 193-194; Kroeber, 1909).

The Ute environment was a combination of mountains interspersed with valleys, and desert country, in parts highly eroded. They were on the western fringe of the buffalo range, although the animals in their area were not sufficient in number to be their main sustenance as was the case in the plains.

Population figures are not very good for either tribe. The Ute seem to be of the Basin Shoshonean type, intermingled with physical types resembling the Plains. (For pictures see Handbook: 1:72; 2:875).

MATERIAL CULTURE

Food Supply

(Arapaho)

The Arapaho are known to be a typical Plains tribe and closely similar to the Cheyenne. In the absence of detailed accounts of the material culture of the Arapaho, the Cheyenne may safely be followed to fill in the deficiency. This is particularly true in the case of the food supply, as no account of the Arapaho use of the buffalo exists.

Buffalo: Like all Plains tribes the Arapaho depended to an enormous extent on the buffalo. Anciently, before migrating to their present location, the Arapaho may have been partially agricultural. One of their sacred objects is a stone resembling an ear of corn, and their traditions speak of agricultural pursuits. (Mooney, 1896, 959). However, in the historical period, the Arapaho depended almost entirely on the buffalo.

A summary of Cheyenne methods of utilizing the buffalo has already been prepared for the historical museum at Scotts Bluff. Consequently it will not be reported here, as the material is already available. (See suggestions for museum case on the buffalo,

Scotts Bluff Historical Museum.) The plant foods of the Cheyenne, which must have been similar to those of the Arapaho, included acorns. They were roasted in the shell, shelled, and the kernels pounded to a meal. This was boiled as a mush with a little buffalo fat. The pods of the knife-scabbard tree (*Gymnocladus*) were eaten. Sap from the box-elder tree was boiled to make a sort of sugar. Chokeberries, sarvis berries, plums, sand cherries, bull berries, and currants were eaten fresh or dried. They were pounded up and dried in flat cakes of rectangular form, 2 by 2½ inches, stored in rawhide sacks. (illus. Grinnell, 1923, opp. p. 304). The pomme blanche was gathered in the spring and cooked fresh or dried for winter use. The roots and bulbs of several other plants are eaten. Grinnell gives a list of plants used for foods and medicines.

The methods of hunting seem to have been typical Plains methods, although in hunting buffalo the Cheyenne seem to have used a lance in preference to a bow and arrow when hunting on horseback. Buffalo and elk were driven over cliffs. Elk are mentioned specifically as being killed in this way by the Arapaho. Antelope were also driven into enclosures, or into pits, or over cliffs. Mountain sheep were shot with the bow and arrow. Buffalo were hunted in winter on snowshoes by the Arapaho. Smaller animals were little used. Eagles were caught from pits to secure their feathers.

Turtles and fish were eaten by the Cheyenne, and presumably by the Arapaho, in distinction to many of the Plains tribes who would not eat fish. Fish weirs were usually used. (Grinnell, 1923, 1:247-311; Kroeber, 1902, 22-23).

The usual method of storing food was to dry it and store it, often pounded fine, in bags placed in parbleches and kept in the tipi. These were usually placed behind the mattresses or beds in the lodge. (Grinnell, 1923, 245-6).

Food was usually cooked by boiling in rawhide containers. Hot stones were dropped into these containers. (Kroeber, 1902; 25).

The principal animal foods of the Ute were buffalo, elk, deer, and rabbits. The buffalo were chased on horses. The small part that buffalo played in the diet is attested by the fact that when a buffalo was killed, the meat was divided in small pieces among all the band. There was no buffalo drive, apparently, such as was common in the Plains. Instead, this technique was used on deer. The deer were driven into deep pits between the wings of a sage brush enclosure.

Rabbits played a considerable part in the economy of the Ute. They were hunted communally. The Uintah band had rabbit nets made from bark fiber, but the White River band are said not to have had them. Sometimes jackrabbits were hunted on horseback. This illustrates the intermediate type of Ute culture. The rabbit net and communal rabbit hunt are typical Great Basin traits. The more western tribes often had a special chief of the rabbit hunt who served for a number of years and whose position was one of great honor in the community. On the other hand, chasing game on horseback is a typical Plains trait. Another way of getting rabbits was to set fire to the brush in a circle and kill the animals as they ran out. Probably dogs were used in hunting. At least, most of the other Basin Shoshoneans hunted with dogs.

Eagles were caught by the Uintah for ceremonial usage. The hunter hid in a pit. This is a typical Plains trait. (Lowie, 1924a, 199; 215-216).

Fish weirs were made by the Ute, of willow. The fish were caught in the hands as they became entangled in the weir. Fish were also caught by the Uintah Ute by shooting them with barbed arrows from a raft made of grass. This was not done by the White River Utes. Fish were eaten fresh, or cut up and boiled in earthen vessels, or they were split open by the women, boned, dried on a frame, and stored for fall and winter food in caches. (Lowie, 1924a, 200).

Berries, grass seeds, sun flower seeds, and various roots were gathered in burden baskets supported by a burden strap. Berries were dried and placed in baskets, which were then stored in pits dug in the ground, the whole being covered with earth. Presumably seeds and other vegetable products were similarly

stored in baskets, but there are no data. Chokeberries were mashed with the pits and dried into round lumps which were placed in bags for storage. Sunflower seeds were ground, boiled, and then dried for storage in caches. Tule seeds were used for food. An unidentified root, wici, was pounded up for food and the seeds of the same plant used as a soap for washing. (Lowie, 1924a, 200-203; Chamberlin, 1909; Palmer, 1870; 1878).

The Utes seem to have used the metate and muller, a Basin rather than Plains trait. They had both flat and rimmed, or trough-like, metates. At least this is true of the Utah bands; there are no data on the Colorado bands, who naturally would be more Plains-like. (Lowie, 1924a, 204).

There are practically no data on cooking, but, as the Ute all had pottery, it is likely that this was used for cooking purposes generally. When on the march, where pottery would be inconvenient, presumably they were sufficiently Plains-like to use stone boiling in skin vessels, or sufficiently Basin-like to use baskets in the same way.

Housing and Furnishings

The Arapaho were typical Plains tipi dwellers. Their tipis must have been very similar to those of the Cheyenne. In the ceremonies connected with a new lodge, if a properly qualified Cheyenne were not available to dedicate the lodge, an Arapaho might do it, and vice versa, an indication, incidentally, of the close relations between the two tribes. Grinnell gives a lengthy description of the Cheyenne lodge and the making and ceremonies connected therewith, together with some Arapaho data. The Arapaho evidently sometimes built windbreaks beside the tipi. (Grinnell, 1923, 224-235; Mooney, 1896, 957. Illus. of tipi and windbreak.)

The most important items of tipi furniture among the Arapaho, as among other Plains tribes, were the beds or back-rests. These were made of slender willows strung on cords running through holes at either end. The Arapaho form was similar to the general Plains type, with the backrests tapering toward the top and fastened to a tripod of poles. Their use, however, was sometimes different, for Mooney illustrates them as being sometimes on a framework of

poles raised from the ground on forked posts instead of resting on the ground or on a straw or grass mattress. Back of the beds were stored the various possessions of the family, usually in rawhide cases or bags. This included the surplus food.

Pottery was formerly made by the Arapaho, but it has been abandoned for many years. It appears to have been most crudely made. The rawhide cooking vessels were placed in holes dug in the ground, not supported on sticks. Plates were made of rawhide also. Bowls were hollowed out of spherical cottonwood knots. Spoons and cups were made of horns of mountain sheep. Formerly basketry cups were made, as well as basketry trays. At present small trays of coiled basketry are made for throwing dice. Stone mauls, wooden root diggers, combs or porcupine tail or buffalo tongue, formed part of the household equipment. (Kroeber, 1902, 25; Grinnell, 1923, 209-246; Mooney, 1896, 964; illus. opp. 962).

(Ute)
Ute dwellings recall the fact that their nickname among neighboring tribes was "bad lodges." They used a form of the Plains tipi, but it appears to have been smaller, less carefully made, and, although sometimes painted, was without pictures. Their tipi was always erected on a four-pole foundation and usually had a total of eleven poles with two additional poles for regulating the smoke hole. Poles measured seem to be about 17 feet long, which is shorter than is common on the plains. Among the Uintah, and perhaps others, twelve rather than eleven poles are common. About ten elkskins or buffalo hides were used to make the cover.

The Ute of Ignacio, Colorado, remembered a brush or bark-covered structure as preceding their use of the plains tipi. At Ouray, the Ute, as late as 1912, were using a structure which differed from the tipi in having a brush cover and which was said to be the old style. The tipi was abandoned and often burned, at death.

In summer a shade is used, simply a frame work roofed with brush. (Lowie, 1924a, 219-220; shade and tipi illustration, Lowie, 1924a, 209; Powell, 43; tipi illustration, opp. 43).

A special temporary structure made of poles and brush is used for a variety of purposes. Chiefly it is intended for the sequestration of women during the menstrual period. (Lowie, 1924a, 273).

The Ute used a sweat lodge, but no detailed description of its appearance or construction exists.

No specific data exist on the household equipment and furnishings of the Ute. Pottery, baskets, the metate and muller are known to have been used, and so, of course, formed part of the household furniture.

Dress and Ornament

(Arapaho)

The dress of Arapaho men consisted of a shirt, leggings reaching from the ankles to the hips, breech-cloth, moccasins, and a blanket of buffalo skin. The hair was braided or tied together in front of the ears, or tied in masses over the ears with a scalp lock in the middle of the back of the head. Very old men did not comb their hair but kept it gathered in a bunch over the forehead.

Women wore an open-sleeved dress not reaching the ankles, moccasins to which leggings were attached reaching to the knee, and a blanket. The skin blankets of both men and women were either painted or embroidered. The women in old days wore the hair loose with paint upon it. Old women wore their hair loose and generally tangled. The face was customarily painted. Both men and women painted in connection with any religious or ceremonial action except in the case of mourning, when the face was never painted.

(Kroeber, 1902, 27-28; for Cheyenne dress see Grinnell, 1923, 217-224, which gives much more complete details).

The most important decoration was that undertaken by women in embroidering buffalo robes with porcupine quills. Women who did this had accomplished an act almost on a par with the warrior who counted coup. Such robes were always given away, usually to some relative. Among the Cheyenne, women who had quilled a robe by themselves became members of a special woman's society.

with ceremonies and regalia. (Kroeber, 1902, 29, et seq.;
Trinnell, 1923, 159, et seq.)

(Ute)

The man's dress among the Ute in fairly early times is described as elkhide moccasins, deer-skin leggings, a cloth g-string, a shirt, and Navaho blankets. The last is probably historic in its dating. Rabbitskin, elk, and deerskin blankets were worn. They were made by the women. They also had painted elkskin robes (illustration by Hrdlicka), but whether these were worn or used for ceremonial purposes is not stated. Presumably buffalo robes were also used, since the animals were hunted. There is no data on women's dress, but it seems that fringed buckskin garments were common for both men and women. The collection of Paiute photographs in the possession of Dellenbaugh shows both men and women dressed in such garments, which were brought by Powell from the Ute country and used to dress the Paiute subjects before photographing them.

Ute women formerly wore the hair parted in the middle but not braided. Men only braided the hair, apparently, in two braids hanging behind the ears. Plucking of the eyebrows was practiced by at least some of the Ute, particularly by the men, although some women did this.

The Ute moccasin was hard-soled type such as was worn on the Plains.

(Lowie, 1924a, 216-218; Hrdlicka, plate 28, Reed, 1897, 40; Dellenbaugh photograph collection.)

Weapons and Warfare

(Arapaho)

Bows were always sinew backed. Those of cedar had sinew on both sides. Though not specifically mentioned, the Arapaho probably made bows of horn, also, as did the Cheyenne. The bow string was probably of sinew.

Arrows: The Cheyenne made arrows of shoots of the cherry or currant. Some used "red-willow". Each arrow-maker cut these shoots to a length which he carefully measured but which varied.

from one arrow-maker to another. After drying, they were straightened through straighteners made by drilling holes in bones or horns. The shaft was rubbed down with grooved sandstone slabs. Another bone implement with a hole in it and a slight projection was used to make a groove in the shaft after it was straightened. Sometimes a notched flint with a projection in the notch was employed. The shaft was then pushed back and forth in a "standardizer," a bone implement with a hole which rubbed the shafts down to uniform size. The shaft was then feathered with three feathers which had been split in half, and carefully trimmed to the standard size. It was glued and wrapped at the ends with sinew. A notch was cut to receive the point of stone, bone, horn, or of the sole of a buffalo hoof, which was fastened on with sinew. At the opposite end was cut a notch for the string, and a slight groove was cut around the arrow below this, and the space to the end roughened to give a firm grip on the arrow. Some arrows had detachable foreshafts. Arrows were painted with ownership marks.

Knives were made of stone or bone, particularly the bosse rib or dorsal spines of the buffalo. Stone axes were sometimes used, and war clubs were made of stones encased in skin and had long flexible handles.

Lances were much used. The ordinary type was a wooden shaft six to seven feet in length with a chipped stone point, often leaf-shaped. It was bound to the shaft with rawhide or sinew. There were also various forms of ceremonial lances.

Shields were of great importance in the armament, not so much because of their actual protection but because they had magical and ceremonial significance of great importance. The shield was made of a circular piece of dried and toughened bull hide. Certain ceremonies were connected with the making of them, and not everyone could carry one.

(Kroeber, 1902, 24-25; Grinnell, 1923, 172-202).

So much has been said about Plains Indian warfare that it need not be described in detail. War was the way of achieving social distinction. With few exceptions, a man who had not accomplished certain prescribed actions in war could have no social rank of importance. The actions were stereotyped so that they made war into something of a game in which the mere killing of an enemy was the least important aspect. Touching an enemy, alive or dead, was more meritorious than killing him, and stealing a horse from a camp, taking away an enemy's gun or, earlier, his bow and arrow, were far more important deeds than slaying a warrior.

(Ute)

Practically no data are given on Ute weapons. They had bows of cedar, pine, or other woods. They, in all probability, were armed, and practiced the same war customs as the Plains tribes. The Shoshoni to the north evidently did, in any case. Reed gives some indication that Plains customs were followed, but Lowie's characterization of his volume as "frivolous" should be considered, when utilizing any of the material. (Lowie, 1924a, 245; Reed, 1928, 79, 83).

The Ute are known to have been a war-like people. According to Lowie's material they fought the Nagaho, Kiowa, Apache, Comanche, and Shoshoni. They must also have fought the Arapaho, although that was not mentioned by Lowie. The Arapaho told Kroeber they preferred to fight the Ute because they were the bravest of all their enemies. (Lowie, 1924a, 194; Kroeber, 1902, 8).

Miscellaneous

(Arapaho)

Of minor elements of material culture, we have no specific Arapaho data. Musical instruments of the Cheyenne are given by Grinnell, and include drums, rattles, whistles, and flageolets. See Grinnell, also, for horse equipage and pipes. Culin and Kroeber also have data on games. Kroeber notes in connection with horse equipage that the Arapaho formerly used the horse-travois and earlier the dog travois. The Arapaho had light willow cages in which children were transported on the travois, (Grinnell, 1923, 202-209: 312:335; Kroeber, 1902, 23-24; Culin; Kroeber, 1907, 368-397; Mooney, 1896, 364).

Leather work played an important part in plains economy. Skins were used for clothing, lodge covers, etc., and tanning was a much used art. The method was to remove the blood, fat, and flesh from the inside with a scraper which was made of slate or quartzite and had an edge. The flesher, commonly a chisel-shaped instrument made from the buffalo leg-bone, was then used to thin the hide. The hide was then roughened or abraded with the rough part of the proximal humerus of the buffalo, cut off just below the articulation. Sometimes the hair was taken off with a bone implement something like a spoke-shave. A mixture

made of pounded soaproot, brains, liver, and grease, was rubbed into both sides of the hide and it was wrapped up over night. Then it was dried and softened by pulling back and forth over a rope or through a hole in a buffalo shoulder blade.

Leather was used for clothing, and commonly was sewed with sinew thread taken from the back sinew of the buffalo. Leather or raw hide was used for such purposes as making shields, saddles, ropes, moccasins, and the various bags and containers, particularly the parfleche, a rawhide "trunk," more or less like an envelope, which was used as a container for almost everything. It was in the decoration of these parfleches that some of the most typical and best studied decoration of the Plain's people occurred. (Kroeber, 1902, 26-7; 46 et seq.; Grinnell, 1923, 187-219).

Cradles were of no specialized Plains type; they were skin-covered, and elaborately and symbolically decorated. (Kroeber, 1902, 66-69).

(Ute)

Basketry is remarkable in that it has very few twined types. Biconical or pear-shaped bottles and a crude openwork gathering basket are the only twined examples. The rest of the basketry is coiled. The burden baskets also are coiled and apparently the distinctive conical shape of the Basin people is lacking. The berrying or burden baskets are flattish or rounded at the bottom and are of a peculiar two rod coiling which is the one peculiarly Ute type of basket (Lowie, 1924a, figs. 27 a, 28 a, c).

No data on materials or techniques exist. Shapes and designs seem to suggest Apache affinities. Bowls, plaques, and possibly basketry hats comprise the list of Ute baskets, all in coiled technique. The distinctive Basin Shoshonean twined seed beaters and trays are lacking.

(Lowie, 1924a, 241. For illust. see same, pp. 255, fig. 27; 259, figs. 28 and 30; 263, fig. 31. Mason also has some basketry illustrations but his proveniences are uncertain. The same are true of those shown by Powell).

Weaving: There is no mention of any weaving among the Ute. The rabbit skin blanket was probably made as it was used (see Clothing) and was characteristic of the Basin.

Pottery: The Ute formerly made pottery, but the art has long been forgotten. It seems to have been crude and undecorated ware. There are no data on shapes or techniques. Basket boiling with hot stones seems to have been at least as common as boiling in earthenware pots, probably more so. Only a few women are said to have known the technique, trading the pots to others.

Miscellaneous manufactures: The Ute tanned hides, first removing the flesh with a serrate flesher, then scraping the hair off with a beaming tool made of deer shin-bone. The hide was then wetted, stretched, and dried. Wet deer brains were rubbed into the dry hide, or the hide was soaked in them. It was then sewn together, hung over a tripod, and staked to the ground, a smouldering fire of willow inside the tipi-like structure smoking the hide. It was reversed when smoked, and the opposite side smoked. Sometimes the smoking was omitted and the hide smoothed and softened by rubbing with a stone. (Lowie, 1924a, 227).

Porcupine quill embroidery was made by the Utes, a non-Basin trait. String was made of deer sinew or from sage brush bark. The latter string was three-ply, a somewhat unusual feature, as most primitive string is two-ply. (Lowie, 1924a, 228-229).

The Uintah Ute made a raft of grass to use for fishing. These rafts would hold from two to five men, who shot fish from them with the bow and arrow. When not in use, they were inverted and allowed to dry. These were evidently somewhat similar to the tule balsas of other regions. (Lowie, 1924a, 249).

The Ute employ two types of cradle. One is sometimes called the California type, which is used with minor modifications among all the Basin Shoshoneans, and is made of basketry. The other type is a distinctively Plains cradle and is made of buckskin stretched over a wooden frame, with a sort of awning over the head. The shape is rounded at the top, tapering toward the bottom. (Lowie, 1924a, 251-2; 267, fig. 33 for illustrations).

Lowie describes the handgame as played by the Ute. Culin has additional data on Ute games. (Lowie, 1924a, 257-8; Culin).

and the rest of the tribes of the West. The most important
feature of the social organization of the Arapaho is the series of
age-graded societies. Social Organization (Arapaho)

An important feature of Arapaho social organization, which likewise had significant ceremonial and religious associations, was the series of age-graded societies. These were so important and had so much distinctive paraphernalia that they must be considered.

There were six men's societies among the Arapaho. As they grew older, men progressed from one society to another in a group. That is, all the men belonging to the lowest society would simultaneously become members of the next society by performing the ceremony of the next highest society. Two societies of young men may be included, bringing the number to eight, but they had less distinctive dances and are sometimes not included in the scheme by native informants. Within each society are distinctive grades awarded for such qualities as bravery in war, etc. Some of the societies had further functions, such as policing the camp on certain occasions. The details of this system are too elaborate to include in this paper but are admirably summarized by Kroeber, who also gives illustrations and descriptions of the regalia worn. (Kroeber, 1904, 153-229; see Ibid. 227-229, for tables summarizing organization and an index of illustrations; also Mooney, 1895, 987).

(Except a few incidental references in Kroeber, 1902-7,) there are no specific Arapaho data on social organization other than that referring to societies. Grinnell, 1923, has material on the Cheyenne, but in this category of culture, Cheyenne analogies may be used with less safety.

(Ute)

Only a few features of general interest can be touched upon. The navel cord of a newborn child is buried in an ant hill or tied to the cradle in buckskin wrapping. If it is lost, the child will grow up a "foolish" person. The couvade in modified form is practiced, in that the father of the child has to observe restrictions in conduct. He cannot eat meat or drink cold water for four days (a month in the case of the mother). He must run around in the hills all day but cannot hunt. Neither parent may rub his eyes or scratch himself with his fingers, but use a stick instead.

Names are given early in life by the Ute and usually have some meaning. Nicknames are readily acquired through some unusual action and may be better known or even completely supersede the original name. (Lowie, 1924a, 265; 270-1).

The Ute always buried their dead, usually some distance from the camping place. Tipis and property of the deceased were burned, and dogs and horses belonging to the dead were killed as well. (Lowie, 1924a, 279. For further details and other social customs, see Ibid., 272; 275; 282).

Political Organization

(Arapaho)

The Arapaho political organization was simple. There were no clans or sub-organizations. The tribe was divided into four bands which were subdivisions of one surviving sub-tribe of the group, i.e., the Arapaho proper. The Arapaho had four head chiefs (the Cheyenne five), which seem to have represented the four bands. There was no recognized head chief of the whole tribe, the four apparently acting more or less in concert in tribal matters. Only when all four bands were camped together did they form the camp-circle. New chiefs may have been elected but not all informants, apparently, agree that there was anything so formal as an election. (Kroeber, 1902, 7-9; for elaborate description of Cheyenne, see Grinnell, 1923, 336 et seq).

(Ute)

The southern Ute formerly had three chiefs and one or more heralds. The chief exercised some authority over the buffalo hunt, but there does not seem to have been any sort of police society or authority such as was common in the Plains on this occasion. The Uintah Ute claim that at one time there was a single chief over all the Ute. After his death, the Ute split up into various bands. At the present time the Ute are split into a large number of small bands.

Religion and Ceremonies of the Arapaho

The great ceremony of the Arapaho, as of most Plains tribes, was the Sun Dance. This is a great tribal ceremony at which all the tribe is supposed to come together. It was usually held annually; but it was held as the result of a vow by some individual. Sometimes it was given twice in the same year if more than one person had made a vow; sometimes it might not be given at all for a year. It involved a number of various ceremonies with elaborate regalia, special paintings of the performers, etc., which lent themselves to spectacular display. Abundant illustrations and detailed descriptions are given by Kroeber for the northern Arapaho and by Dorsey for the southern Arapaho. (Kroeber, 1907, 279-308; Dorsey, 1903).

The various other ceremonies which are well-known are fairly modern, such as the Ghost Dance, Peyote Cult, etc., and probably have no place in any display, although some of the Ghost Dance paraphernalia is worthy of exhibit. Practically all the available material on the Peyote and Ghost Dance cults is in Kroeber, 1907, 319, et seq.

Aside from the elaborate ceremonies mentioned, the main feature of Arapaho religion, as is the case with most Plains people, is its individuality. This cannot well be brought out in any museum treatment. Certain articles of paraphernalia may appear in exhibits, however, particularly such objects as amulets, medicine bags, and cupping instruments. (Kroeber, 1907, 410 et seq. Illus).

Ute ceremonies in the main were extremely simple. Ute religion, like that of the Plains, was primarily a personal affair, but the form taken was very different. One secured supernatural power through dreams, rather than visions, and these supernatural powers were very largely obtained in order to become shamans, or doctors, whereas the supernatural power sought by the Plains peoples was primarily to further personal desires, greatness in war, wealth, etc. Even the full routine of the Ute Sun Dance was undergone primarily that one might become a shaman, or doctor.

The Ute Sun Dance, as mentioned already, was borrowed rather recently. The only ceremony which appears to be indigenous to the Ute was the Bear Dance. This has been widely borrowed by Basin Shoshoneans but has not spread into the Plains. The Bear Dance is supposed to be mimetic of actions performed by the bears in the mountains at the same time, i. e., when bears come out of hibernation in the spring. It has now largely degenerated into a social dance, and it is difficult to determine exactly what its original motivation and form was. One of its interesting features in contrast with most Plains dances is that men and women dance together in the ceremony. (Lowie, 1924a, 291 et seq. For the Bear Dance see especially Reed, 1896, Reagan, 1930, and Steward, the latter having by far the most full account).

Museum Display Suggestions

The Rocky Mountain National Park Museum has an excellent opportunity to bring a sharp contrast into its displays of ethnological material, in having at hand a typical Plains tribe, the Arapaho, and a modified Basin Shoshonean tribe, the Ute. While it may not be feasible with the space and materials at present available, it would seem that the main story to be ultimately depicted in the museum is the contrast between these two peoples and, in a larger sense, between the two culture areas involved; the one representing a highly specialized and complex culture, the other, one of the most primitive and simple cultures in the Americas. This contrast can be depicted to a large extent without serious departure from the ordinary forms of museum display and can be built up gradually as materials and information are accumulated.

The method which suggests itself is that of pointing out throughout the display, those items which are typically Plains, by reference to lists of tribes in which similar customs or artifacts are characteristic; on the other hand, items of Ute culture which are Basin and not Plains may be similarly indicated by lists of tribes. Eventually, this should be made graphic by means of small distribution maps accompanying each item, while one or more master maps and tables would make clear what is being aimed at in the smaller distribution maps or lists. Such a master table might list Ute cultural items which are of Basin and not Plains distribution; and also Ute and Arapaho

items which are Plains but not Basin. Master maps should show the relation between the Plains cultures and the buffalo, and the forest distributions of the area. A suggestion for one of these maps is appended.

The food quest of the Arapaho is essentially the story of the buffalo; and something similar to that suggested for the Scott's Bluff historical museum, from the Choyenne, would emphasize this story compactly. On the Ute side, the greater diversity of hunting methods and sustenance can be brought out by showing the communal deer hunts and rabbit hunts, as well as the variety of vegetable food and the special techniques of gathering and preparing.

Dress and ornamentation should justly receive considerable display because of their picturesqueness. The Arapaho, in particular, are one of the few tribes among which genuine symbolism occurs. Kroeber, 1902, 36-150; 1900, and 1901, has dealt with this at length, and almost any degree of elaboration may be used in developing the story of Arapaho symbolism in connection with articles of dress, bags, pouches, tent ornaments, shields, etc. In contrast, of course, this is almost completely lacking among the Ute and Basin Shoshoneans.

Weapons and warfare will afford an opportunity of showing Ute acculturation to Plains patterns. They are rated a war-like people, while the majority of the Shoshoneans are not. In general, their manufactures and artifacts will display Basin affinities, however, while those of the Arapaho will be Plains-like. Basketry will hold a place in Ute displays, while leather working will take its place for the Arapaho.

Arapaho societies are worthy of attention, not only because of their intrinsic interest, but to give significance to the large amount of specialised paraphernalia. A master label should explain the societies briefly, giving ages, grades within the societies, and the functions of the different societies. A series of interesting illustrations can be made showing costumes of the different dances connected with the societies and explaining the no-flight and other military obligations assumed by special groups. This is, of course, specifically Arapaho, and nothing of the sort could be done for the Ute. Relations with the Plains tribes can be shown for the Arapaho material, however.

The Sun dance can also be given effective display, by a model or drawing of the Sun dance of the Arapaho such as is used at the American Museum of Natural History (illustrated by Wissler, 115), together with explanations of the purpose and distribution of the Sun dance as the most characteristic Plains Indian ceremony. Elaboration of almost unlimited extent may be made by including specimens of customs, regalia, sketches of various body paints used, altars, etc. Dorsey's work on the Arapaho Sun Dance is profusely illustrated.

In contrast, the Uto Sun Dance, being a recent acquisition, can be treated more briefly. Little material exists and it can be summarized with a few sketches such as a reproduction of the original of the appended sketch of the Uto Sun dance lodge.

In most cases it is not practical to give much display in museums to phases of culture which deal with religion and social organization. Yet in the case of the Plains tribes, the paraphernalia and costumes of the various society dances and the Sun Dance form such an extensive, varied, and striking portion of the material culture objects that it seems some special effort at display is called for.

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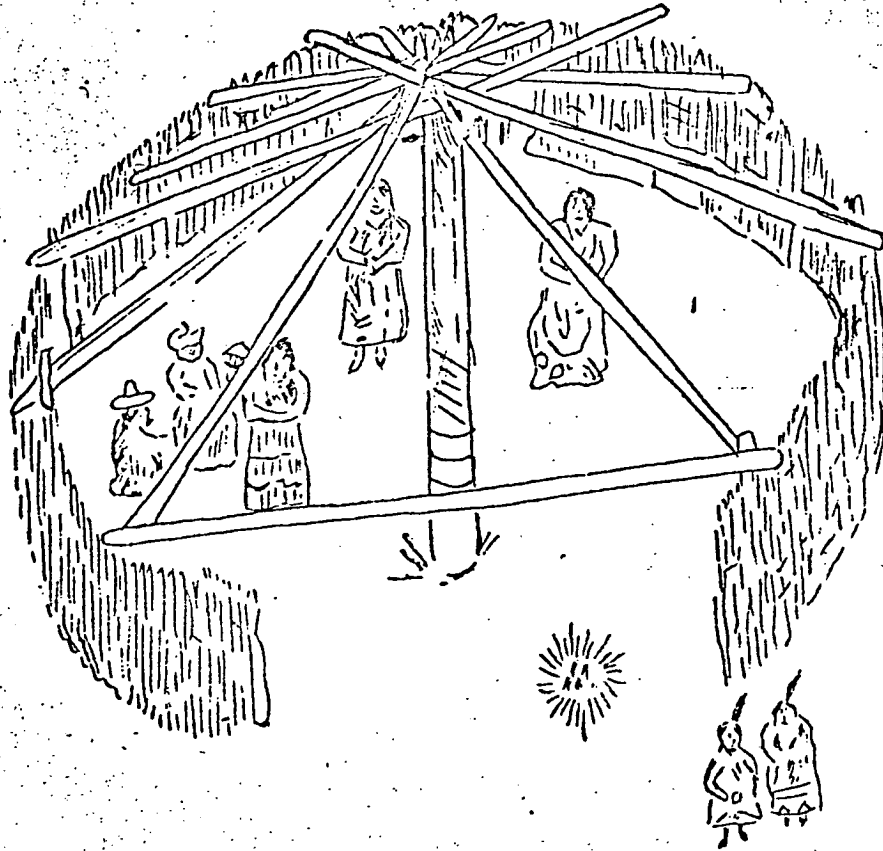
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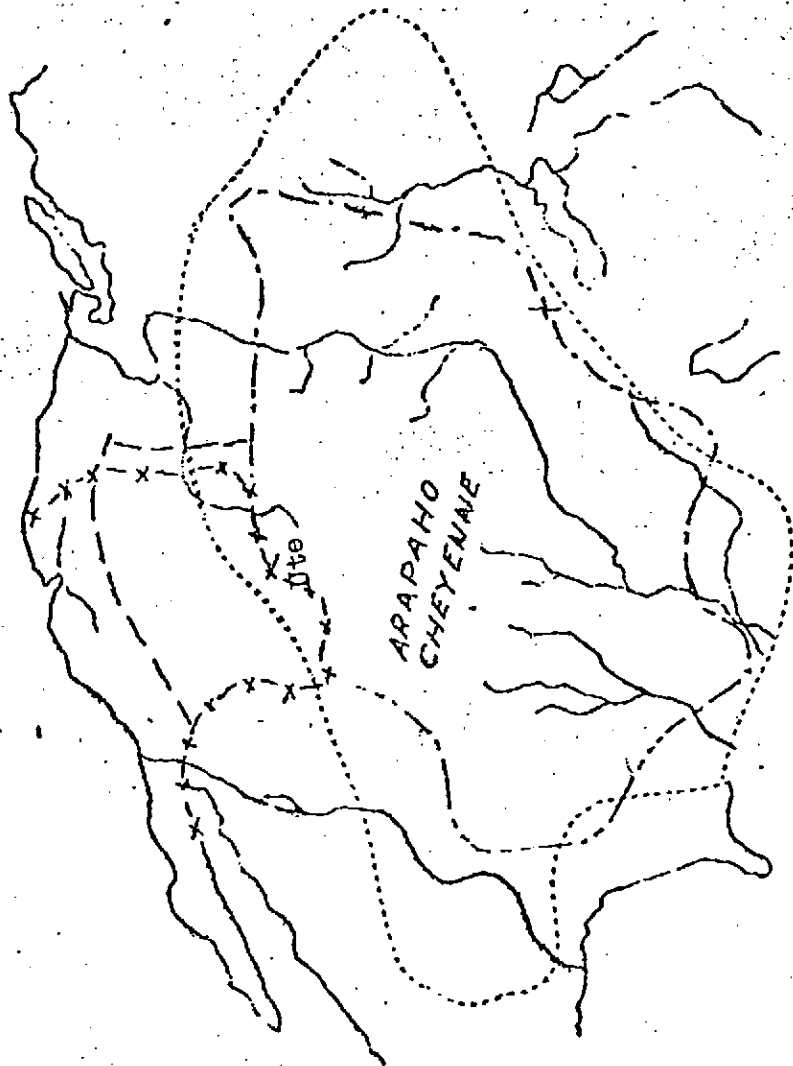
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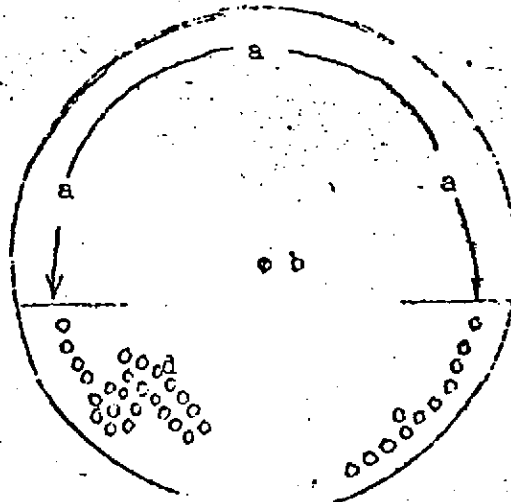


Ute Sun Dance Lodge
After drawing by native schoolgirl
Lewie, 1919, 406.



-Range of buffalo about 1800
- Limit of Plains Culture
- Limit of Basin Culture
- X = Probable Ancient Home of Arapaho
- X-X-Seed gathering area

(After Wissler, with modifications and additions)



a-dancers
 b-fire
 c-male spectators
 d-female spectators
 e-drummers

Ute Sun Dance - Schematic Representation
 (After Lowie, 1924)

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