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CLANS OF THE WESTERN APACHE*

By GRENVILLE GOODWIN

THE work upon which this paper is based was mainly accomplished in the years 1931 and 1932, under the auspices of the University of Arizona, on the San Carlos and Fort Apache reservations, and among those Western Apache who are now living at locations off these reservations, in the area between the towns of Globe and Miami on the south, and Clarkdale and Camp Verde on the north. This study of the clans has been made in the course of a project, the aim of which is to prepare a record of the Western Apache, that will be as complete a report on the ethnology of these people as it is possible for me to obtain.

By the term Western Apache, are included those true, similiar Apache Groups, who in the past have made their homes entirely within the present state of Arizona, and who still reside there. These similiar Apache Groups of Arizona were five in number, and I call them here the White Mountain, Cibecue, San Carlos, Southern Tonto, and Northern Tonto Groups. The five Groups mentioned are more like to each other than to any other Apache people, and as the difference between them and other Apache Divisions is apparently quite distinct, they have been designated by the name "Western Apache" to distinguish them from other Athapascan Peoples of the Southwest. As is seen, the Chiricahua Apache, who originally resided mainly within the present state of Arizona, are not here included, the reason being that they are apparently somewhat different, and at the present time do not seem to belong with the five Groups of the Western Apache. The five Groups composing the Western Apache, themselves, were quite independent of each other in former times, and each constituted a distinct unit, which went under its own Apache name. These Groups were separated enough from each other, so that

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warfare on a small scale between certain of them was not unknown. All of the five groups had their clans.

Among the five groups of the Western Apache were sixty-one distinct clans. Five of these clans had sub-divisions in them. Each Group did not have all of the sixty-one clans. It had only a part of the sixty-one; first, those clans which had migrated into the territory of the Group and settled there; second, those clans which had originated within its territory; and third, those clans which had been introduced by intermarriage with the people of other Groups. By "clans which had migrated into the territory" is meant those clans which according to tradition came into the territory of the Group already formed, and under their present clan name. By "clans which originated within the territory of the Group" is meant those clans which claim to have formed and to have acquired their present name after they had settled within the territory of the Group. By "clans which were introduced through intermarriage" is meant those clans which the Group acquired through the marriage of some of its men with women of other Groups who were members of outside clans, and the rare instances of these outside women coming to live with their husband's people (it being customary for the man to go to his wife's people) and there raising their daughters as members of the husband's Group, so that the daughters perpetuated their outside clans within the Group, as descent always was reckoned through the mother. Of these three types together, the White Mountain Group had twelve clans, the Cibecue Group twenty-two, the San Carlos Group thirty-three, the Southern Tonto Group twenty-five, and the Northern Tonto Group sixteen. Of the sixty-one clans, thirty-one were limited to their own Group. That is, each of these clans existed only in one Group. The thirty other clans existed in two or more of the Groups, being varyingly interspersed. At the present time only four of the sixty-one clans are extinct, but quite a few others are almost gone.

Each clan goes under its own name. The name of one clan is the same in any Group, except where there are slight differences in pronunciation, due to the dialectic variation of speech between Groups. These clan names almost always have to do with some location, where the nucleus of the clan first settled and became a unit. The name of the place where people such as this first settled might be "Narrow Water", "Red Willows", "White Rock", etc. If the people living at one of these places took their clan name from it, the name would be "Narrow Water People", or "Red Willows People", or "White Rock People", etc. Some of the clans had names which alluded to certain habits of their people, such as, "they-color-yellow people", given because the people of the clan always dyed their moccasins yellow. But this characteristic type of clan name is not so common. What these clans really seemed to have amounted to originally is small bands of people, each living at a certain location from which they took their name, and each forming an integral unit by itself. But they have come to mean more than that, for they are true clans and do not take the name of any new place where they may settle. The people of one clan may bear the name of the place at which their clan formed, yet when they move away from there, to other places, they still retain the name of that first location. People of a clan could be living at a place two hundred miles from the location where their clan received its name and yet retain the name of that location, even though they might have moved from there many generations ago and never have gone back. Clan names always serve as an introduction between Western Apaches, and one person can place another almost at once, upon knowing the clan to which the stranger belongs. They are like old and well known family names in a rural district.

All clans were matrilineal in descent, and a child always took the clan of its mother and never of its father. Within a clan, all members were considered as blood relatives to each other. The members of one clan, where they knew one another fairly well, always acted as blood rela-

tives, and addressed one another as such. Thus people of the same generation were brothers and sisters; people of one generation, and the generation preceeding it, bore the relation of nephews and nieces, to uncles and aunts; and people of two generations apart considered each other as grandparents and grandchildren. All this feeling of relationship made a very strong bond between members of one clan, and it was the strongest single tie that seems to have existed among these people. Because men and women of one clan were blood relatives, they could not marry each other. Marriage within a clan was not countenanced. It had to be outside the clan. Members of one clan had to stand by each other in times of need, as blood relatives should. If it was a case of avenging some wrong perpetrated upon a person, that person's clansmen would be expected to act and see that the wrong was righted, or the guilty one punished. In cases where members of one clan had been wronged by other people, if it was necessary the whole clan might be called together in concerted action. An Apache traveling among other Apaches could go to members of his clan for food and lodging, even though he might be a total stranger to them. If he stated that he belonged to the same clan as they, they would want to care for him and see that he had what he needed. The real unity and power of a clan lay within the blood relation of its members to one another. There was no clan government or law, beyond the laws governing blood relatives. There was no one head chief of all the members of the clan. Instead there might be two or three chiefs in a clan, each with equal power, and that power extending more to his immediate family and followers than to his whole clan.

Among the different clans there is a varying interrelation; that is, one clan may be related to another clan, or to several other clans. Sometimes these related clans form a set, say, of four clans, and these four clans may be related to no other clans. Again such a set of clans can bear relation to another clan or clans, which in turn, not only

bear the relation to the first set of clans, but also bear a relation to a third clan or set of clans which has no relation to the first set. The whole system is a most confusing one, and it is not unknown for one clan to be related to three sets of related clans, none of which three are related to each other. However, with a little effort, it is possible to align the interrelations so that they make sense. Members of closely related clans were supposed to observe the same obligations and customs of blood relationship with each other which existed between members of one clan and which have already been mentioned. However, between members of distantly related clans, the bond was not so close and was less in observance. Marriages between members of distantly related clans sometimes did occur and were allowed, though not always approved of.

The reasons for the interrelation of the clans is a most interesting point. The people themselves give three. These three reasons are: first, that certain clans are related to each other because, when they first entered the historical territory of the Western Apache, they were already related; second, certain clans are related because one clan has sprung from the other or the clans have originated from a common ancestor clan; and third, because one clan has resided in close proximity to another for a long period, and so much intermarriage has taken place that the two clans have become related. The interrelations of clans take us back to legendary times and the ancient myths concerning the clans and their migrations.

Clan legend is an important point in the interrelation of clans, for it seems the only possible way to account for certain relations which existed between clans. However, due to the possible vagaries of legend, this work was first tackled from the material side of the clan system, the one which has been in action within the lifetimes of old Apaches now living; and after that was done, the legendary side of the problem was fitted to it. To say the truth, though, not much fitting was necessary. The clan migration legends

are usually quite distinct and certain in their statements, and moreover these legends pair well with actually known material facts. They go back over a great length of time, and the people used to set great store by them. If for no other reason than that they are the Apache arguments for existing facts concerning clans, it is well worth while to take heed of them. The influence these legends had upon the people can be easily seen when we know that certain clans (who according to their legends were related, but who had not observed that relation for many generations because of their wide territorial separation from each other, due to migrations) again recognized these relations, upon their members being centralized at the agencies in early reservation days and coming in contact with each other once more. The reestablishment of these clan relations was due to the comparison of old clan legends, about the winter campfires.

Clan legends, even among widely separated Groups of Western Apache, are remarkably similiar in their statements. According to these legends most of the sixty-one clans have originated within the historical territory of the Western Apache. That is, they originated from those root clans which did not originate within the Western Apache territory but which were already formed and unified when they migrated into the Western Apache country. Thus, the sixty-one clans can be narrowed down to twenty-six root clans, from which all the rest claim to have split off, to form new clans. Of these twenty-six root clans, all but three claim to have come from north of the Little Colorado river, in an area between the district northeast of the San Francisco Peaks on the west and Zuñi on the east. Of the three which did not come from that area, one claims to have come from the west, in the region of the Mohave country, near the Colorado river, and the other two claim to have come from the Apache Mansos, south, in the region of Tucson. Moreover, the Western Apache claim that among the Navajo people, living just north of the Little Colorado river, there existed within historic times, six of these root

clans, which went under the same names as their Apache counterparts. Besides these, there are five more root clans of the Western Apache who claim to be the same as two existing Navajo clans; that is, they at one time were called by one of these two Navajo clan names, but many generations ago split up and acquired new names, south, in the Western Apache country. This leaves the origin of twelve root clans who claim to have come from north of the Little Colorado river, yet unaccounted for. However, it seems that with more study it will be possible to account for the legendary origin of at least some of these twelve, and maybe further to limit the number of root clans among them.

It is interesting now to turn to the relations which have existed within historic times between the Western Apache clans and the Navajo clans. There still was kept up the relation between the Western Apache clans and those Navajo clans who were identical with them, or from whom certain of them claimed to have originated. That both Apache and Navajo took advantage of these ancient clan relationships, when in contact with each other, is quite apparent from what the old people say. Moreover, any clans of the Western Apache, who bore a close relation to one of the root clans related to Navajo clans, also considered themselves as related to those Navajo clans. Thus any member of a Western Apache clan, who was related in one of these ways to a Navajo clan, treated the Navajo members of that clan as blood relatives in times of peace, and could not marry one of them.

Just when the root clans of the Western Apache moved into the land to form the Western Apache Empire, so to speak, is rather difficult to estimate, but it must have been at a period long ago. Maybe at some future time further light can be thrown upon this question, through a greater knowledge of the people concerned. In concluding I merely wish to say that this paper could be fifteen times as long as it is, and yet not take in all that could be written concerning the Western Apache.

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