

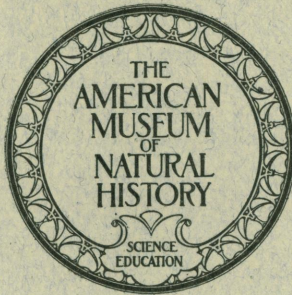
ANTHROPOLOGICAL PAPERS
OF
THE AMERICAN MUSEUM
OF NATURAL HISTORY

VOL. XVI, PART V

SUN DANCE OF THE SHOSHONI, UTE, AND HIDATSA

BY

ROBERT H. LOWIE



NEW YORK
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1919

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

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THE SUN DANCE OF THE WIND RIVER SHOSHONI AND UTE

By ROBERT H. LOWIE

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WIND RIVER SHOSHONI SUN DANCE

A number of independent accounts of the sun dance (*tāgu wōnō*, thirsting to stand) were recorded at Wind River, where Andy Bresil is master of ceremonies. He had conducted the ritual about fifteen times among the Shoshoni (1912) and twice for the Ute, though hardly ever in two successive years. Accordingly it seems best to begin with his own description.

All the participants expect to get good luck and increase their prospects of long life by the ceremony. Some have merely this general object, others go in for the specific purpose of being cured of sickness. Andy himself has never felt better than since he began taking part in the dance. However, he does not start a ceremony from his own initiative. "I generally have a dream that I should give the sun dance. Failing that, I ought to let others start it. I dreamt of it frequently, and when I do so about the proper time then I give it. I tell my friends and they announce it to the whole tribe. Then I set some time before July Fourth, between June twentieth and twenty-seventh."

After the announcement the people move to form a circle round the site, none camping closer than a hundred yards according to my interpreter's estimate. Three or four poles are stuck into the ground near the site with their tops slightly converging and a canvas cover is placed over them. A fire is built to one side of this shelter, and it is there that the preparatory singing (*tō'nōkuñgan*) takes place. Women help in singing and the manager of the ceremony always dances there at night, generally with a few companions. This is kept up for three nights.

On the following morning two expeditions set out. One goes to the mountains, taking wagons to transport pines for rafters. Long ago women would accompany the men, but latterly they hardly ever do so. At the same time another crew proceeds to the flat country to cut down the center pole and wall posts. Andy is with this second company and prays over the center pole before it is chopped down, whereupon it is trimmed. The pine-cutters in the meanwhile bring their trees to the foot of the mountains. The next morning all the people who so wish betake themselves to this spot, Andy going somewhat later than the others. The pines are loaded on wagons, and Andy takes the lead, hauling the center pole, which is called *umbámbi*, his-head. All the trees are taken to the site in preparation for a mock-battle. The center pole lies by itself, all the other logs being placed in a row to the east of it. The Shoshoni say that the center log must be killed before it can be moved.

The people now divide into two or three bodies. All wear war dress. They shoot into the air and touch one another with long sticks. Even some women are riding about on horseback and some of the men capture them. Thus they circle about camp in several groups. Andy himself takes part in this sham battle. Whenever they get a chance, they touch one of the poles, but the center pole must be touched first. The riders shoot at the logs and pretend to be afraid of them, dodging as they approach them. When all the poles have been touched or "killed," they haul all the poles to the site, a distance of two hundred yards.

There follows the erection of the lodge. The holé for the center pole, which is three or four feet deep, is dug first. There is one man for each of the holes for the wall-posts and all get through digging about the same time. A bunch of willows is put into the fork of the center pole and four black rings about eight inches wide are made round it near the bottom. In former times brave warriors were expected to paint these rings. Next comes the raising of the pole. All near-by sing and clap hands, some holding sticks in their hands and tapping them together. For lifting the pole two other poles are joined by a rope.¹ The poles are struck together. At the end of each song the center pole is lifted as high as possible, only to be lowered again, until the fourth time it is raised up to vertical position and secured by piling up earth round the hole. The wall posts are set up without any ceremony. The rafters are put into place by the aid of the same coupled-pole device and tied at the fork of the center pole. Willows are hauled in for the wall and put up as fast as they are brought. At about four or five o'clock the lodge is completed and ready for the ceremonial entrance.

Some of the prospective dancers may not yet be ready but the majority are by this time and assemble in Andy's lodge. All paint one another with white clay. They proceed to the west of the lodge, at a distance of about seventy-five yards, where two rows are formed, with Andy heading one of them. These two files set out for the dance lodge. When they get to the back of it, the two lines separate, pass each other, go twice round it, then walk into the lodge. Each dancer may take what position he prefers; Andy usually goes to the south side, but it makes no difference. Women never dance. The performers sit around singing religious songs three times and blowing their whistles at the close of each. Their friends and relatives bring in bedding. Now the drummers enter

¹Lowie, this volume, 37.

with a big drum. They start a song without words, then the dancing begins. Women come in to help the singers. Andy dances like the rest, but more confidence is placed in his prayer. The dance continues all night. Just before sunrise they cease and stand in two rows, with Andy at the south end of the first. All face the entrance, holding up both hands and moving their feet in position. When they see the sun rise they all blow their whistles; when he is in full view singers and dancers cease and all sit round the fire in a circle. The dancers sing religious songs and at the close of each they blow their whistles. Then they get ready to put yellow paint on themselves; in the evening some put on white clay. Spectators and drummers go off for breakfast while the dancers lie down to rest until the musicians return.

The dancers decorate themselves with fine designs and spot themselves. This adornment depends on dreams. Some have a lightning line running down the face. On the morning following the first complete day of the dance peeled cottonwoods are put up in the arc of a circle and the dancers who are tired out are expected to grasp the forks and derive strength therefrom. The dancers are continually trotting back and forth on the way to the center tree, several coming together there. Those who are suffering from extreme thirst go up to hug the tree, which gives relief, making them feel as if they had had water. Not very many get into this condition and Andy has never been dry enough to resort to this device.

The dance continues for three nights and two and a half days. If the ceremonial entrance occurs on Monday night, they cease Thursday about noon. When the closing time comes, every performer gives a horse or money to some outsider to make him pray over him in the lodge. These prayers are for the dancer's good luck, health, and long life. The money is tied to a willow stick. Now water is brought in and each dancer in turn receives one cup, whereupon they go to a creek, wash completely, and take a swim. If they drank a great deal, they would vomit. The spectators have a feast on the last day.

If a sick man was there, another man possessing power would take him to the tree and pray over him, holding up his hands and praying to the Sun. Andy himself has never prayed on such occasions.

From personal observation I am able to add merely a few points as to the style of the sun dance lodge seen standing in August, 1912. As illustrated in the photograph (Fig. 1), the structure is of the Arapaho-Blackfoot type,—different from that of the Dakota and also that of the Crow. The diameter was about 70 feet and the width of the entrance

about 24 feet. The wall-posts, of which there were a dozen, were about 11 feet high, the center pole (including the fork) approximately 20 feet. Details as to the adjustment of rafters and crossbeams are apparent from the picture. About five feet from the wall there extended an arc of willows. The framework of rafters was not covered in any way, even during the performance, as is clear from a photograph kindly furnished by a Mr. Cass, but the brush walling extended clear around except for the entrance, though naturally little was still in place at the time of my visit.

I will now cite the supplementary data derived from various native authorities.

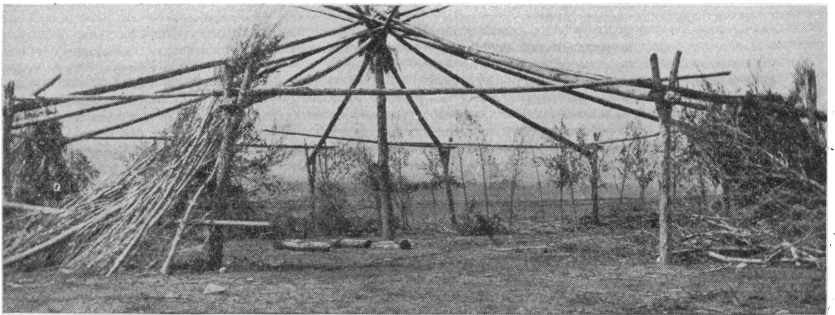


Fig. 1. Sun Dance Structure, Wind River Shoshoni, 1912.

According to Wawanabidi the sun dance is the oldest and foremost of Shoshoni ceremonies. It was first performed by Andy's great-grandfather before there were any white men in the country. He found a picture of a white man, looked at it and kept it, putting it away. He began to dream of the picture, which bade him have a sun dance and described the ceremony to him. His son kept the picture but since his death it is not known what happened to it. It is a mystery how a white person's picture came here in those times. Washakie, the old Shoshoni chief, told Wawanabidi the foregoing facts. The founder omitted the dance the second summer, but the picture insisted on his celebrating it every year as a sacred ceremony. At times it changed from a darker to a lighter shade. At first the owner could not understand it, but he concluded that it was supernatural and that if he obeyed it he should live well and happy while otherwise he should not live long. Whenever an Indian wanted to see it, several would sit round with sun dance whistles and blow them, then the owner would take it out from its wrap-

pings. In the old days the dance was held "when the high water went down." The founder himself conducted the ceremony every year, but after him they took turns. Anyone who wishes may now conduct it; the older men gather and deliberate on the matter and one man who offers to conduct it does so. The Shoshoni did not practise torture at the dance.

When I was younger I went into the sun dance ten times in order to enjoy a long life. During the celebration there was never any quarrel or misbehavior; it was not like the Fourth of July with its drunkenness and disorder. When I first participated, I was only a boy. A good many people danced. Pácap (Dried-up) was master of ceremonies. He had been sickly and when the proper season came he said, "I'll see whether there is truth in what the founder said, that it is good for sick people." He went into it and got well.

Jimmy Wagner said that in the early days the sun dance was not held every year, as in more recent times, but only when someone had had a dream. The person so favored would announce his dream and all the people moved to the site. They began to hunt buffalo and get all the tongues they could. The tongues were coupled so that each member of a pair could hang over one side of a stick and several men would carry one end of a stick thus laden with tongues all round the camp till they got back to the pledger and piled up the tongues there. If it took them two days to get the tongues there would be two nights of preparatory singing in a big buffalo tipi of ordinary style,—not like the lean-to described by Andy.

On the following day they were ready to get the poles. All put on war dress. Four men were detailed to get the buffalo head, for it was not permissible to use the head of any of the buffalo killed in connection with the tongue-quest. Before killing the buffalo they prayed over it. These men were generally war chiefs. One company of men went to locate the trees to be cut down, leaning poles against them for identification. Some stayed by these trees and sat round playing the hand-game and pretending to be enemies of the Shoshoni. The remainder went back to the distance of about half a mile. Two men were detailed to scout for the enemy. They went off and came back hallooing and singing. The people said, "Those scouts have seen something." They gathered piles of buffalo chips, making a big heap. All formed a circle round the chips, getting close together and leaving only a narrow gap for the entrance. The scouts entered the ring and moved all the way round, then the circle was closed. The chief shouted at them to announce quickly what they had discovered. "The enemy is at such and such a place," they would say. Then the people got horses and rushed over

there. When they got near, the enemy tried to get away through the timber. Then there was shooting and hallooing as in a real fight. The Shoshoni rushed in and struck each of the marked trees. Three brave warriors were to cut the center pole. After all the trees had been struck, another party came from behind to chop the trees down. When a tree fell, the Shoshoni rushed in and broke off the limbs. Since there were no wagons in those days, the felled trees were dragged by a group of horse-men on either side of the logs, ropes being tied to these at one end, and the other end to the saddle or held in the hand. While the poles were dragged along they were shooting and yelling but when they got down to the site there was no more of the sham battle, though nowadays it is held there. The center pole had four black charcoal rings painted round it, each marker being a brave who had killed some enemy and told of his deeds before painting the pole. The holes for the poles were dug on the same day, and willow brush was dragged there on horseback for the walls. Into the fork of the center pole were put willows with the buffalo head on top. The head was painted yellow round the eyes and always faced west towards the dancers. A tail was made to hang down stiffened. The head was supposed to give powers to the dancers so they would not get too thirsty, and the center pole had the same power. The method of raising the pole was the same as now; formerly women helped on each side. The willow brush enclosure was erected in a short time since there were numerous helpers.

All the performers then went to the pledger's lodge and got painted. When ready they approached the west side of the lodge in two single files and marched round twice before entering. The drummers came in, then some warrior was detailed to build a fire, telling what he had done against the enemy. Formerly the dancers remained in their places on the first night, but on the following day they would dance up to the pole.

The period of feasting depended on the number of available tongues. Ordinarily it was limited to the last day but if the supply of tongues sufficed, there was also a feast on the preceding day. A square hole was dug a little ways from the lodge and a fire built there. While the sun dancers were dancing, five or six old men and women were ordered to get four forked sticks and some long poles and approached the pit, singing war songs. One forked stick was set into the ground in each corner of the oblong and connecting cross-beams were put into place. The kettles were suspended from the framework. At one time this fireplace was close to the entrance of the lodge, but later it was moved

farther away. Those who got the forked sticks had their faces decorated with charcoal. The cooks were old Shoshoni women who had been captured by the enemy; their hands from the wrist down were painted with charcoal. The men who helped in the stirring of the boiling tongues were renowned for their martial deeds. The tongues were issued to all the spectators, but primarily to the musicians. The drummers told the dancers they were going to eat, then the dancers would rest, while the drummers sang and themselves danced in their places before partaking of the food. During the feast some people (according to another version, one of the two soldier societies)¹ would imitate magpies and rush up to a pile of meat making the noise of crows or magpies, greedily snatching away what food they could, and falling all over themselves in their eagerness.

In the old days the ceremony ended not at noon but late in the evening. After the close the performers would give away some property. Some would remain and sleep in the lodge after the formal conclusion. The next morning all moved away from the site. Old clothing was attached to the pole then as now, prayers being addressed for freedom from disease. The sick people went into the dance then as now.

Bivo confirmed the statement that the Shoshoni never tortured themselves by suspension from the center post, though they saw the Arapaho doing it. He said the prayers were addressed to the Sun and Äpö (the Father), the latter being Coyote's elder brother.² A man would dream of the sun dance and if he failed to perform it as described in his dream he would die; accordingly he told the chief, who gave his permission.

Both men and women seated themselves round the place of the trees marked to be cut down; they would play the hand-game and other games. Another company charged these "enemies," the men resisting and the women fleeing to hide. The mock-fight, the cutting of the trees and the erection of the lodge, as well as the entrance, used to take place on a single day and evening, but now this occupies two days.

According to this informant, only a few persons dance to get cured, the majority in order to insure happiness. Bivo was of the former number:—

I was bloated up and had no appetite. I went into the sun dance. My fellow-dancers pressed down on my stomach and I felt as if I were to have a movement of my bowels. My excrements looked bloody and I was terrified, but I felt well thereafter and think the fasting burns out the disease.

¹This series, Vol. 11, 813, 816.

²Cf. Lowie, this series, vol. 2, 233.

Bivo did not believe physical disfigurement could be thus cured.

An anonymous informant said that the length of the dance is set by the pledger, but is almost always three nights. The sham battle formerly took place on foot; every pole had to be touched with a gun or other weapon. Cottonwoods were formerly used instead of pines. The hole for the center pole was dug first, then the holes for the other posts, each by one man. The pole was raised as already explained, the men praying and shouting, and lifting it three times only to lower it again. Before finally raising it to the position they tied rags to the pole, the cloth being an offering to the tree. Formerly a buffalo head with a narrow strip of hide and the tail was put into the fork, now only willows. Then the wall-posts and the rafters were put into place, those of the latter that did not hold at the lower end being tied. Finally came the crossbeams and the willow brush, usually roped to prevent the wind from blowing it down. The dancers wore no moccasins, only breechclouts, and held whistles in their mouths. Someone brought bedding for them. They sang a song without words four times, whistling at the close of each song. Then the drum was beaten and they were ready to dance. The pledger led one of the single files to the lodge but had no fixed place within during the ceremony. They began to dance toward the center pole. Little peeled willows were put in two days after the entrance and blankets or shawls were sometimes tied between two of them as a curtain, so that the dancers could make an adjustment of their clouts. If a man was seriously sick, he would go in there and fast without dancing. When the sun rises, the performers say, "You see us and are looking at us. We want you to look on us, and wish for a long life and that the sick shall be well." These words were repeated every morning. Then they went to the fire and sang a song without words but representing a prayer. They sang it four times, blowing their whistles at the end of each song. During the night some of them were always dancing, one shift relieving another. At the end they got a man to pray over them and gave him presents. Formerly the presents were omitted. My informant ascribed this feature to the Rev. John Roberts. The pledger had the most effective prayer. Finally, a bucket of water was passed round, the performers rinsed their mouths and went to the creek to wash off the paint.

Barney ascribed the origin of the ceremony to a Shoshoni who dreamt about it and was ordered to arrange it so as to attain happiness and longevity. The reason for participating was sometimes the desire to get well but otherwise it was purely religious. Barney himself has taken part three times, twice when he was well and once when sick;

on the latter occasion he felt well when he got out of the lodge. He knew of two men who had been nearly dead when entering the dance but recovered afterwards. In some years there were thirty-five to forty or even fifty dancers, but in the last two or three years (1912) fewer men have gone in. (However, my interpreter established by actual count that in the last year's ceremony there were thirty-nine dancers.) A man may join until midnight after the ceremonial entrance, but no later.

According to Barney, *two* men are supposed to have a dream urging them to hold the ceremony and they tell the other people, setting a date. At the proper time they go to the mountains to get timber for the lodge, shoot at the center tree and pray before cutting it: "After getting down the tree we shall have the sun dance in order to be well." On this day the trees were brought only to the foot of the mountains.

On the second day the logs were brought to the site of the dance. The people dress up as if in war and have a mock battle. The poles are all put in a circle and holes are dug for them. The center pole is the first to be put up; it is either of pine or cottonwood, while the rafters are all of pine wood. The people pray and pretend to raise the pole but lower it again while the bystanders sing and clap their hands. This is done four times. The pole lies in the center between two rows of Indians. After the fourth time it is simply raised into position. The wall-posts and rafters are put up without ceremony, then willows are hauled and the enclosure is completed with them. This is at about three or four o'clock. Then all who are to dance agree to paint up that evening and enter. They decorate themselves with white clay in a lodge. At about six or seven o'clock they start out stripped so as to show they have not secreted any water. That is, they wear only a breechclout, with an apron in front of it, or a shawl completely hiding the legs. They start in single file, the two leaders ahead, and all holding eagle-bone whistles in their mouths. When they get to the door in the east, they divide into two sections, one company going in one direction, the other in the opposite direction, and thus walk round the outside twice, whereupon they pass in in two files and sit down in a circle. Their relatives and friends bring in bedding for them to lie on while inside. Then the performers sing and blow their whistles at the close of every song. This is done in sitting position. Then they are ready for a dance song to start, and when it begins all dance. They blow their whistles while dancing and look at the fork of the center tree, where a bunch of willows is tied. In the old days the whole of a buffalo head was stuck up there,

with the whole of the buffalo hide hanging down. In dancing toward the tree they hop, then move backward. When exhausted they hug the tree and blow their whistles, pretending to suck water out of the center pole. Any participant or an old spectator may pray in behalf of the whole tribe. One crew of musicians sing for several hours, beating a *large* drum, then they are relieved by a new company.

In the night they have a big fire. Some are always dancing, groups alternately dancing and resting. Just before sunrise all stand up in several rows, raising their hands, palms down, and pray to the sun. Then they sit down round the fire and there they have religious songs, blowing their whistles at the close of each. The people outside have prepared a yellow paint, which they bring in for the dancers, who paint one another with this and spot one another with paint of other colors.

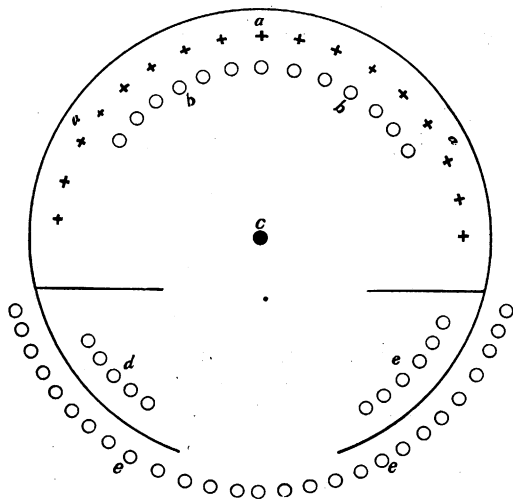


Fig. 2. Wind River Shoshoni Sun Dance Lodge. *a*, willows; *b*, dancers; *c*, fire; *d*, drummers; *e*, spectators.

The mode of painting varies according to the dreams of those to be decorated. For about one hour in the morning—while drummers and spectators are breakfasting—the participants do not dance but sleep till the musicians return.

On the third night of the ceremony (counting the time of erecting the lodge) willows are planted in the ground between which the dancers stand. They are supposed to be a sort of support and are bent over and attached to the outer wall. In the diagram the willows are repre-

sented by crosses. Spectators are only allowed in the space outside of the two poles indicated in the figure, where the position of the drummers is likewise shown. These poles usually slant down from the wall to the ground. The women sometimes help in the singing.

The last time the dancers entered on Monday night and left Thursday noon.

After a while some get out of their head and wander about acting as if crazy. The crazier one gets, the harder the musicians sing for him to get him down. Suddenly he falls in a faint and is laid aside. When he comes to, he seems rested and feels fresher. On the last day the headman tells them when to cease and bids them bring in the horses to be given away. Each performer has one man outside to pray for him, this man being entitled to receive a horse or \$5 as his fee. Before leaving everyone takes a drink from a bucket of water that is brought in, then the performers go to a creek, drink a little and wash off their paint. All the Indians who so wish take their old clothes and tie them to the center pole, because this is believed to bring good luck.

The headman may be the same in successive ceremonies but usually differs every year (?).

Regarding the decoration of the performers I am able to add data based on sketches made by Mr. H. H. St. Clair and showing two dancers in both front and back view. One man had a large picture of a buffalo painted below his breasts, and there were two roughly triangular areas of paint extending from the upper level of the eye downward; a patch decorated each shoulder; and there were two parallel slanting lines on the thigh and extending down the back of the leg. These lines represented two people slain. On each shoulderblade there was the figure of a human hand; it represented a tussle with the enemy and the enemy's pushing the dancer with his hands. The second performer also had the triangular areas on his face but with two transverse parallel white lines on each cheek representing two people killed. There were patches on the shoulders and a crescent-shaped design, points down, on the breast to symbolize the moon. Seven parallel lines on each lower arm stood for people killed. Each thigh was decorated with the three sides of an oblong open at the bottom, these figures designating horse tracks. Bells were hung from the knees and the ankles were wrapped with otterskin. Corresponding to the single thigh designs in front, each leg had a pair of horsetracks in the back, and each shoulderblade had a more realistic representation of a horseshoe.

From Mr. St. Clair's notes the following may be quoted in amplification and corroboration of my own informants' accounts:—

Fastened to the fork of the center pole is a buffalo head, painted with white clay and decorated with eagle tail feathers. The dancers form a semicircle, with the sun dance leader in the center, on the side opposite the entrance. The singers and drummers are seated within, just to one side of the door. The dancing consists of hopping up to the center pole and back, and each dancer is provided with an eagle bone whistle with a feather attached, which he blows continually. Each morning at dawn prayer is made to the sun. On the last morning, gifts are distributed among visiting Indians, and horses painted up and with their tails decorated are given away to the old men and visitors. At the conclusion, the dancers proceed to a nearby stream to bathe, and then go home and gradually break their fast. They believe they are cured of whatever sickness they may have had. A dancer often faints from exhaustion during the dance, and dreams he has acquired some "medicine," such as the buffalo, the bear, the wolf, etc. Whatever "medicine" is given him, he believes comes to him through the center pole from the buffalo head.

UTE SUN DANCE

At Navaho Springs, Colorado, I learned nothing at all concerning the sun dance. Practically all my information, meager as it is, is derived from Panayús of Ignacio, Colorado, though I saw a dance site on the Uintah Reservation and obtained there a few sentences on the subject of the ceremony. Panayús's account suggested to me that the sun dance might not have been practised by the Southern Ute at all except when visiting their Northern congeners in Utah; but one of Mrs. Molineux's photographs is marked as coming from Ignacio. According to Panayús, the ceremony was originated by a Kiowa named Paru+asút, who was soon after this killed by the Ute. From the Kiowa the dance traveled northward, reaching the Bannock and Ft. Hall (?) Shoshoni. The latter were visited by the Northern Ute during a sun dance performance and one of the visitors joined, subsequently introducing it among his people. This happened about twenty-two years ago (1912).

Panayús gave the native name of the ceremony as *taṛún'kàpì*, "dance without drinking"; on the Uintah Reservation the equivalent term *taṛúni'qàpì* was rendered "harvest dance."

My Uintah informant, Jim Duncan, differed somewhat from Panayús in his exposition of the aims of the performers. He said their object is to promote the growth of all the garden plants, and after the close of the dance the participants scatter, going to their farms. Duncan added, however, that people with stomach trouble enter the ceremony and at its close vomit what is inside. The dancing takes place in the daytime, and the dancers abstain from eating and drinking for three days and nights. A headman announced the ceremony, which took place only once a year, about the Fourth of July. It is a recent dance not antedating farming among the Ute.

According to Panayús, the primary object of the participants is to become medicinemen, though of the forty or so who dance only a few succeed in acquiring supernatural power. Some men have to go through the ceremony five or six times before attaining their goal. Sometimes a sick man is brought into the lodge, but he merely lies down to fast and thirst without dancing. From time to time the leaders of the ceremony speak to such people and pray on their behalf; sometimes they are cured. It is interesting that Duncan and Panayús should differ as to the principal purpose of the ceremony, yet be in accord as to a subordinate feature.

On August 31, 1912 I visited the sun dance site at Whiterocks, Uintah Reservation. The lodge used that year was found to have a

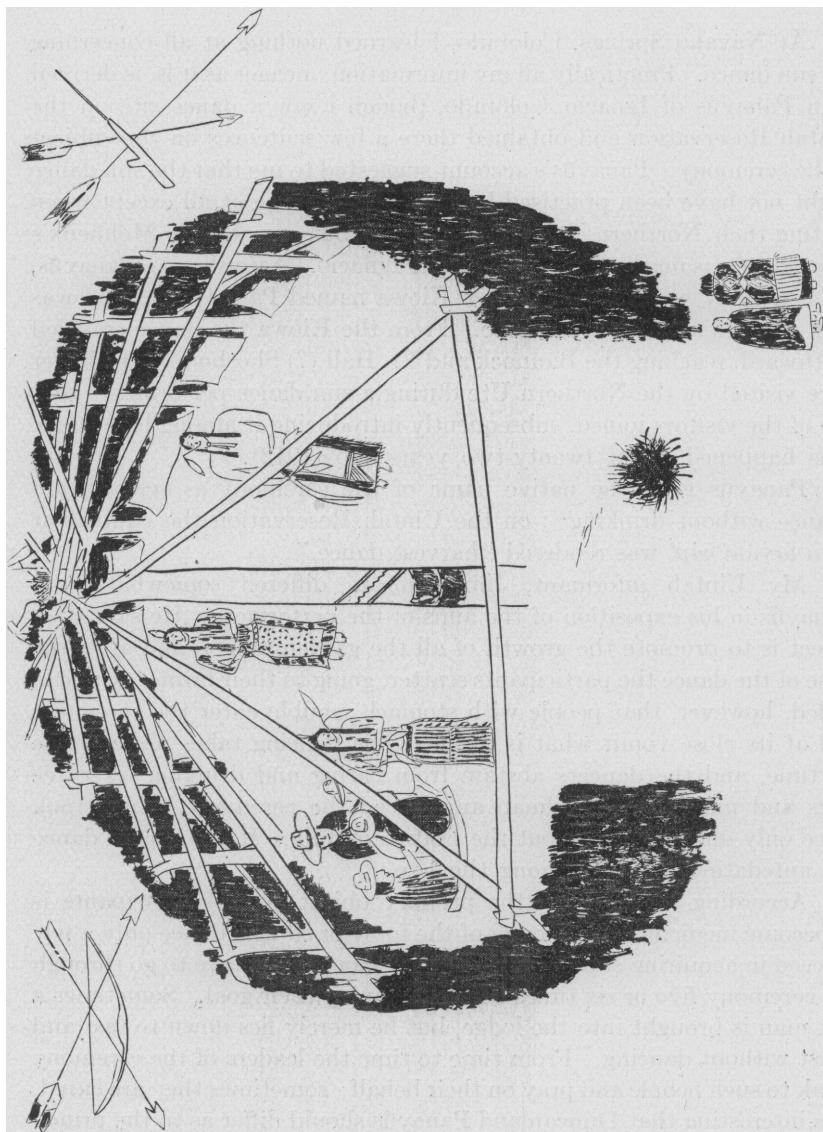


Fig. 3. Drawing of a Ute Sun Dance Lodge by a Ute School Child.

diameter of about 60 feet, and I estimated the height of the forked center pole at 20 feet. The entrance was towards the east; on the west side trees were set in the arc of a circle some distance from the rear periphery of the lodge. My interpreter said that no rafters had been used that season, though they were employed in the construction of previous lodges, which is confirmed by Mrs. Molineux's photographs and a native drawing (Fig. 3). There was no "nest" visible, but according to the same informant nests had been used with other center trees. A large drum is used at Whiterocks.

The following description is based on Panayüt's statements.

The first part of the preparation, after the selection of the site and the encampment of the people near there, is for two parties to set out in search of poles. One group look for nice straight cottonwoods, including one with a forked top; the other company go to the mountains for pine trees, which are hauled on wagons. These men return in the evening, leaving the trees in a pile, and report that night. The men who go for trees are called "Comanche" (or "Cheyenne" or by the name of some other hostile tribe). Then the chief announces, "Someone has found Comanche near the camp, we'll attack them tomorrow morning." This is heralded through the camp in the night.

The next morning the chief paints himself, puts on his war-bonnet and says, "Hurry, get ready, we'll have a sham battle with those people." All paint up for war and a big parade is started, half of the men joining the tree-gatherers. The rest of the people start out towards the "enemy," accompanied by some women, till they get near the tree pile. Each of the tree-gatherers has a willow shade for himself to sleep in. The Ute attack them, shouting. "That is the Comanche camp." Both sides discharge firearms into the air and have a mock-battle. The Ute have mounted helpers in hiding. The enemy run short of ammunition and retreat to the brush. The Ute take booty and run to the pile. Then they select the oldest warrior who has killed an enemy and ask him where he has accomplished the deed. "You must shoot this cottonwood, he was chief to these people." The old man then shoots it while all the men and women yell, saying, "We have killed their chief." They then select another old warrior, go to the pine trees and bid him shoot the chief of such and such a tribe. They yell as before, then go back to the camp and hide. The tree-gatherers now come out of their retreat, pack the trees on wagons, and set out for the dance site. When they pass the Ute, the latter cry, "The Comanche are coming," whereupon another sham battle takes place near the site, around which as a center the tipis are pitched. This is the last of the sham fights.

They call for the oldest Ute woman who has ever been captured by other tribes and returned to her own people. She halloos and receives a horse. Everyone goes to the wagon and the center tree is very slowly and carefully lifted and laid on the ground. This is the day to put up the lodge. Holes have already been dug for the posts. The forked pole is for the middle hole; when it is put into position many assist. First it is raised a very short distance; the second time a little higher, about two feet, the third time again a little higher; the fourth time to its full height and then dropped into the hole. Then the other poles and the rafters are put into place and brush is put up between the wall-posts so that people cannot look in. The entrance faces east.

The dancers wear only a gee-string or breechclout. Their bodies are all painted and their faces are decorated with different kinds of paint. They look irrecoznizable. Each of them has a plume fastened by a little string to either little finger. They move towards the forked

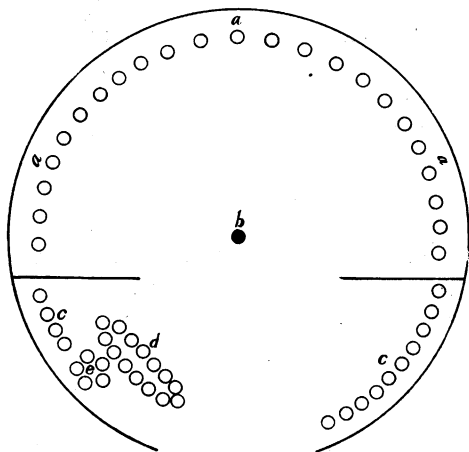


Fig. 4. Ute Sun Dance Lodge. *a*, dancers; *b*, fire; *c*, male spectators; *d*, female spectators; *e*, drummers.

tree, then back again to their position, always facing the tree. They dance for two nights and two days, after that very few continue to dance. The musicians beat a drum made from a hollowed section of a log; they take turns because the singing has to be kept up continually (Fig. 4).

Each dancer blows a whistle made from an eagle's collar bone. They always look at the fork of the center tree. When some are exhausted and take a rest an old man rises and thus admonishes them, "Why are

you lying down to sleep? How are you going to get what you desire (a shaman's powers) if you lie down to sleep? If you try hard and dance, then you will get it." After two days of dancing some run fast toward the tree, catch it, hold it and with their mouths pretend to lap water from it. When the sun comes up all the spectators go home but the dancers line up in single file. The leader, a medicineman, says, "Sun, I want you to give me water," holding out his right hand. He may also ask for shamanistic power. Every dancer similarly prays to the sun as he rises. This ceremony is repeated every morning of the dance. Afterwards the musicians return. When the moon rises the dancers sometimes ask her for similar favors as are mentioned in the sun prayer.

The ceremony continues for four days and nights. All get thin from fasting. On the third day some get crazy and drop. Then the leader helps them and puts their heads toward the tree; in a few minutes the exhausted ones get up again, well enough to go on. Sometimes those who have fainted are placed on a bed and covered with a blanket. They fall asleep for a while, dreaming about food, or the sun may talk to them announcing that they are to be shamans. After a while they wake up and feel well. No one among the spectators knows who has obtained powers.

On the fourth day they cease at about three or four o'clock. Before the conclusion, each dancer must give away his horse with leggings, shawls, or blankets. All their female relatives bring offerings of presents. The property is heaped up in a big pile inside, while the horses are kept outside. Each dancer calls for a man to whom he wishes to give a horse. Panayús was called first once and a horse was brought to him inside the enclosure. The dancer gave it to him, then he and Panayús embraced and shook hands. Panayús said, "I am a good man and have never done anything wrong, I wish you to be a good man like me. The sun will give you long life. You will stay here in good health till you get old." Each man similarly prays in return for the gift received. The dancer listens to the speech. Buckskin Charlie got eight horses on this occasion, Panayús two.

Mrs. John H. Molineux was good enough to let me have a series of photographs taken mostly among the Northern Ute of Whiterocks, Utah. The accompanying comments furnish some additional data, which are here reproduced. It seems that just before the sun dance proper some of the Indians performed a buffalo dance, the character of which unfortunately remains quite obscure. I suspect that this may be an intrusive feature not at all vitally connected with the ceremony. One

of the Dakota begging-dances was named after the buffalo, and when among the Crow I witnessed a "buffalo dance" the main function of which was to requisition food for the prospective Hot dance feast.¹ The Crow derived this performance from the Dakota and that of the Ute may have the same origin and a similar purpose.

In the sham battle procession Mrs. Molineux observed that some of the paraders indulged in whoops and yells. A noteworthy feature in the procession was the leading of mounted women by a chief; two of the women had tall wands. After the mock-fight at Ignacio one old woman dashed in among the soldiers, stripped them of everything she could and turned over her booty to the chiefs.

¹Lowie, this series, vol. 11, 205; Figgs, Stephen R., "Dakota Grammar, Texts and Ethnography" (*Contributions to North American Ethnology*, vol. 9, Washington, 1894), 224.

THE HIDATSA SUN DANCE.

By ROBERT H. LOWIE

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HIDATSA SUN DANCE

The Hidatsa sun dance is called *naxpiké*, which is said to mean something like 'hide covering.' According to Wolf-chief there is an older name, *á'uxikaričta*, 'small antelope,' possibly derived from an antelope apron worn by one of the performers. Clark and Matthews refer to the ceremony as an annual one, but the latter (in 1877), wrote that in recent times it had been celebrated only every second or third year. My informant estimated the last performance to have taken place in about 1880 and was able to recall seven sun dances. The Mandan and Hidatsa were equally vehement in denying any connection between the Mandan Okipa and the Hidatsa sun dance, and in the absence of specific resemblances apart from the torture feature I think we must accept Matthews's criticism that Maximilian's identification of the two festivals rests on inaccurate information.

Wolf-chief's account, the only one I succeeded in procuring, is that of an intelligent participant versed in the general ceremonial lore of his people but ignorant of the esoteric aspects of this particular performance. For the sun dance of the Hidatsa differed from that of the Crow in being associated with a group of bundle owners who alone possessed the relevant knowledge and alone held the right of pledging the dance, other participants playing theoretically only a quite subordinate part, however important it might be in adding to the spectacle offered to the community.

In order to render the matter clearer it may be well to premise a necessarily brief introductory statement on the subject of Hidatsa ceremonialism, which is still involved in much obscurity. It is not possible to work very long among the three tribes of the Ft. Berthold Reservation without stumbling on the profound distinction drawn by the Indians between the performances of the military or age-societies¹ and the rites connected with the sacred bundles. Though the former have some ceremonial features, the most conservative individual feels not the slightest hesitation in discussing them. On the other hand, there is great difficulty in getting any Pagan Indian to say anything about the bundles and an attempt to see the contents is met by the demand for an exorbitant fee, as already happened in the Prince of Wied's day. In a certain sense the women's age-societies are intermediate, since they share features of both series. In short, religious ceremonialism, as among the Blackfoot, centers and attains its high-

¹See vol. 11 of this series.

water mark in the observances associated with the bundles. Whether the groups of bundle owners can be regarded as societies, remains an open question. For convenience they will be referred to as 'fraternities.'

The number of these fraternities is considerable, though some of the bundle rituals have long ago become obsolete. Sometimes a bundle is connected with several distinct ritualistic performances. Among the more important ceremonies are the following: Bird ceremony (*tsakā-kati+aké*); Old Woman ceremony (*kāratī+aké*)¹; Above-women ceremony; Packing-a-wolf-skin-with-the-tail-touching-the-ground (*irutseruhé*); Missouri River ceremony (*awātiti+aké*); Black Bear ceremony (*hacirā-ati+aké*); Creek ceremony (*ācatī+aké*); Earth-naming ceremony (*awarācatī+aké*); Buffalo-imitation (*mité kē+i'ké*); Corn ceremony (*kōxatī+ati+aké*). The origin of the bundles is ascribed to certain experiences with supernatural powers, and their recital is not lightly undertaken. From the native point of view it seems that full knowledge is restricted to the fraternity and any one else retailing what data he has picked up not only necessarily falls into error but stands revealed as a poacher encroaching on alien property rights. Mainly through Wolf-chief, who had renounced the aboriginal religious views of which his father fortunately had been an ardent follower, I succeeded in gaining a certain amount of trustworthy information, which agrees well with accounts independently obtained from Packs-wolf. The origin stories recorded exhibit a well-marked tendency—quite lacking among the Crow, but shared by the Blackfoot—to associate the rituals with the heroes of folk-tales, the plot leading ultimately to the incident through which the ritual is acquired. In this fashion, e.g., the Missouri River ceremony is linked with the youth transformed into a serpent; the Bird ceremony with the tale of the Thunderbirds aided by a hunter in conquering a water-monster; the *irutseruhé* with Camp-boy. All these plots appear in almost identical form among the Crow² but are quite devoid of ceremonial significance.

The question arises in what manner membership in a fraternity is established. Here we encounter the interesting phenomenon that purchase is combined with a definite hereditary principle, which moreover, in spite of the matronymic sib organization, is strictly patrilineal. That is to say, brothers and sisters join to buy their own father's bundle, of which one of the brothers becomes the keeper. The father surrenders

¹The correlated bundle is described in Pepper, George H. and Wilson, Gilbert L., "An Hidatsa Shrine and their Beliefs respecting It" (*Memoirs, American Anthropological Association*, vol. 2, pp. 275-328, 1908).

²Lowie, this series, vol. 25, 133, 144, 214.

the bundle but retains the right of joining the fraternity, singing its songs, and offering prayers during any of its performances. An outsider is able to buy an imitation of some of the constituents of the bundle, may make an offering and buy the prerogative of performing some particular rite, but that is as far as he can go. Bound up with each bundle are an indefinite number of specific privileges, e.g., of using a particular method of painting some object in the bundle. These, it seems, are purchased on the same occasion but have to be paid for separately. A privilege of this sort may be sold four times by the owner, whereupon he loses all his title to it, as among the Crow in corresponding cases. I do not know whether all the purchasers have an equal share in the bundle. My impression is that the keeper is owner in a preëminent sense. Packs-wolf's information on the Okipa bundle is to the effect that when three brothers bought it the eldest would be the one to perform in the ceremony. Bundle keepers were called 'village-keepers' (*awatiakuké*), for apart from the individual benefits accruing to them for their ceremonial possessions they prayed on behalf of the entire village. As a token of respect no one passed on their left side. The status of women with reference to bundles is not quite clear to me. They seem to be barred from the ownership of certain rituals and at all events I do not recall ever hearing of a woman passing on a bundle to her son. However, Wolf-chief said that there were women who kept bundles like men and were in the fullest sense owners.

In the transfer of a bundle the buyer's wife plays an interesting part. It is normally through her that the bundle is delivered to her husband, but only if she has never been married before and is of irreproachable chastity. In this case she presses it to her naked breast and hereafter takes care of the medicine, prays to it and may receive benefits and even visions from it.

To acquire a father's bundle is evidently to be understood in a spiritual rather than a literal sense. Usually the buyer does not get the identical objective constituents of his father's medicine but seeks to *duplicate* them through the services of a father's clansman. If, however, the latter fails to procure some of the requisites, they are supplied by the father. It was the immaterial proprietary rights to a bundle and its ritual that were established by the transfer ceremony, which transformed a potential into an actual prerogative.

It is clear that at least generally a particular type of bundle was not confined to a single family, but that it existed in at least several specimens owned by a number of families. This again recalls the Blackfoot,

but these lack the strong hereditary principle of the Hidatsa. How in spite of that principle multiple copies of the same bundle could have arisen, may be explained by assuming that originally purchase was not restricted by it, that in other words the hereditary transmission is a feature superimposed at a later stage.

The best accounts obtained suggest that the several rituals connected with some bundles were graded, and that a man would normally pass from one to the others in the course of his life before acquiring complete possession. Thus, in acquiring the Above-Woman bundle Wolf-chief first made pole-offerings, later a small sweatlodge, and ultimately a big sweatlodge. But he explained that a person affording it might omit the lesser ceremonials. I gather, however, that this was rather a theoretical privilege.

People were eager to purchase the bundles because the owners were blessed with visions by the spirits connected with the bundles. E.g., Small-ankle, after getting the Above-Woman bundle, cried for a vision and had two songs communicated to him by the spirit called Above-Woman. He used these in war and easily secured horses from the enemy. When his son Wolf-chief went to war, Small-ankle painted his son's face, prayed to the bundle, put a sacred feather on Wolf-chief's head, and prayed thus: "Arrows or bullets, do not touch him." Though Wolf-chief went very close to the enemy's lines, he escaped unscathed. Hence the other people thought he had no body and he himself came to believe in the power of the bundle.

It is important to note that a person normally sought visions only from the spirits of his own bundle, no matter what ceremony he was participating in. Wolf-chief specifically said that while he took part in the sun dance he was not praying to the sun but to his father's bundles, which he was carrying during the performance; only sun-worshippers, i.e., owners of the *naxpiké* bundle would receive visions from the sun. It was also a vision that usually prompted potential members of a fraternity to consummate the purchase. If an outsider received a similar vision, he would not act upon it independently but would communicate his experience to a member, who advised him to make a minor sweatlodge offering to the spirit in question. Should the outsider have seen a big sweatlodge, the member said, "No, you can't do that, but you may bring something to cover up the bundle." Then the visionary would bring an offering of food and a robe for the bundle. People formerly performed ceremonies on the initiative of visions but they were found to die soon after, accordingly the Hidatsa came to be afraid to perform ceremonies except under the superintendence of duly qualified bundle owners.

In the bundle ceremonials three officials appear as prominent actors,— the Singer (*akawāpahi*), the Crier (*pāatēki*), and the impersonator of the mythical trickster-hero, Itsi 'kawāhīric.

The Singer was usually the master of ceremonies, although the latter is sometimes designated by another term and in one case recorded the Crier assumed his part (but see below). But generally it is the Singer that conducts the proceedings as an officiating priest, directs the transfer of a bundle, sings some of the sacred songs, and formally purges participants of the holy character they have acquired during the rites. Ordinarily there seems to have been only one Singer for a ceremony. As noted above, some of the women's age-societies were of a more sacred character than the corresponding male organizations, and at least two of them, the Goose women and the River women, had a Singer. As for the fraternity Singers, it was a prerequisite that they should have gone through the entire set of rituals correlated with the bundle involved. If so qualified, a man might buy the prerogative from his predecessor. Such a man might buy the office from a dying Singer, probably his own father, who would gladly transmit the functions of the position. Even if the seller recovered, the buyer would thereafter officiate in his place. Tearless-eyes, Hairy-coat's father, was Singer of the Above-Woman ceremony; later Hairy-coat bought the office from Tearless-eyes.

The Crier, who served only in a ceremonial capacity, was hired to summon the members of a fraternity. His office was elective and involved no payment on his part. Unlike the Singer, he functioned for the entire village. When Missouri, a one-time incumbent died, the Hidatsa leaders gathered together to choose a successor and selected Crow-paunch, a member of the Sun fraternity. But the office was hedged about with a series of rules—e.g., a Crier must always use red paint, never mourning-paint, must not gamble nor bathe in the Missouri—and one of these was transgressed by Crow-paunch. Accordingly, an Hidatsa council deposed him and appointed Poor-wolf as his successor. In the Above-woman ceremony, of which a full account was obtained, the Crier clearly acted under the Singer's orders, inviting villagers at his behest, seeking from him an explanation of antiquated words, and lighting the pipe on his request. On the other hand, a description of the Giving-woman ceremony makes the conduct of the whole affair devolve on the Crier's shoulders, while the impersonator of Itsi' kawāhīric acts as his servant. But Poor-wolf may have acted as director not because he was Crier but as Singer of another closely

affiliated ceremony. One of the Crier's chief functions, at least in the last-mentioned ritual, was to sit on the left side of the door (for one entering) and to tend a fire built in front of him, for if it were extinguished this would be a foreboding of evil.

Whether Itsi'kawāhiric appears in many of the ceremonies or only in one or two, remains doubtful. He also sits by the door and tends a fire, but figures rather in the light of a ceremonial attendant, though as Dr. Gilbert L. Wilson rightly remarks¹ this does not necessarily involve inferiority in an absolute sense.

The ceremonies connected with different bundles not only conformed to a tribal pattern, but were evidently linked in a definite though not, in the present stage of my knowledge, easily definable way. For example, the Above-Woman and the Old-Women fraternities were clearly connected and we find Wolf-chief buying medicines from the Old-Women when he is acquiring the Above-Woman bundle; and in addition to Hairy-coat, the Above-Woman Singer, Cherry-necklace, the Singer of the Old-Women, also plays a part. Generally, it seems that when one fraternity went through a rite shared by another, the members of the second had a right to participate, e.g., if both groups had sacred buffalo skulls.

A detail of comparative interest is worth mentioning. In one of the ceremonies the 'leader,' who received no specific title from my informant, had all the members of his age-society take part.

When a bundle was purchased, one person figured very prominently without necessarily being a member of the fraternity involved and without holding a distinct ceremonial office. As has been pointed out in a previous publication,² an altogether peculiar bond linked the Hidatsa with his father's clan mates. They were the people preëminently entitled to gifts on festive occasions; they conducted a person's funeral; and nicknames were assigned on the basis of *their* rather than one's own activities. It is not surprising, then, that this relation also left an impression on the ceremonial life of the Hidatsa. Accordingly, we find that an Hidatsa regularly purchased membership in the age-societies from a father's clan-mate; and in obtaining the articles necessary for a medicine bundle he likewise requisitioned and liberally paid for the services of a clan father. In consenting to serve in this capacity the father's clansmen assumed a heavy responsibility, for it is his duty to ward off misfortune from his clan son by prayer until the time of the

¹Pepper and Wilson, 320.

²Lowie, this series, vol. 21, 40 seq.

ceremony. If he failed, the ceremony would not take place and people would blame him, saying, "So-and-so's father is not powerful, so his son has got into trouble." It is therefore intelligible that the clan father received a large portion of the property amassed by the novice. According to one account, he received a large pile, the Singer one half of all the goods, while the members of the fraternity divided among themselves the residual and decidedly smallest third. From another statement it would even appear that the clan father's share exceeded the Singer's.

After these introductory remarks it will be possible to follow Wolf-chief's narrative concerning the Sun dance, which I give very nearly as I find it in my notes.

WOLF-CHIEF'S NARRATIVE.

I do not consider this my own or my father's ceremony, but as you ask me about it, I will tell you what I have heard or seen.

A man wanting to make the ceremony would say, "I want to raise your house, Sun. I want you to help me to conquer the enemy and to let me have plenty of food and get along well." The sacred objects needed for the dance included a buffalo skull, an enemy's left hand, a scalp, and one whole rabbitskin to be used for a crown. The man undertaking the ceremony went to one of his father's clansmen and thus addressed him: "Father, I want you to get me my medicine objects, I want to make a Sun dance." His 'father' then knew that he required the objects named, and all the people would know about it. That year there would be plenty of rain and a fine crop.

This ceremony was performed by both Crow and Hidatsa prior to their separation. After the departure of the Crow for the West, an Hidatsa dreamt, that the lodge had a cover of leaves instead of the hides first used (see above). In making an offering to the Sun the people painted a red circle on the robe given to him and hung it on a chokecherry tree; Moon offerings were similarly treated but painted with a red crescent. Once, over a hundred years ago, a young man went out crying in the hope of seeing the Sun man. He suffered for a long time, cutting off one finger and a strip of his skin as offerings. For three years he continued thus torturing himself. Once he went out fasting for four days. At length he said, "Some people say the Sun is human and I used to believe it; but I am beginning not to believe it." About sunrise on the fourth day he looked eastward, saw a man coming from the Sun, and began to sing victory songs. This time he cut his flesh in a curve from the middle of the forehead and down on each side; then he had a vision. The Sun was riding a white pony. The visionary went home, dreamt at night, and saw the Sun dance lodge with the people looking happy outside and their faces painted black and plenty of horses about. He awoke and said, "Now I believe it and will make the ceremony." He dreamt again and saw the sweatlodge with seven pipes before it. He thought this bore some relation to the Sun, called together all the people who worshipped the Sun, and they said that was a sweatlodge. He collected robes and many other valuable things, which he distributed among the Sun fraternity, and they prayed on his behalf. He became a war captain, overcame some enemies, brought home an abun-

dance of horses, and made plenty of sacred things for the young men. He grew to be very old. He called the Sun his father and said, "I want to dress in the manner my father showed me." He undressed, painted all his body red, and made a cap of rabbitskin. The head and legs of a jackrabbit were sacred to the Sun worshippers. He tied a bunch of straight sage to his walking cane and ran round the village with it. When he got to be very old and was ready to die, he said, "I'll go back to my father. When I die, paint my face red, put my rabbitskin cap on my head, and cover my body but not my face with a robe. Then place me toward the sunrise, but don't look at me till next year. Then I'll look just as I do now, without having rotted in the least. Then you may bury me. You must not give up this Sun god, make it (?) big on this earth and things will go well with you: you will kill enemies and hunt buffalo." He died forthwith without being sick; he was then over a hundred years of age. Since then we have had the sun dance. His family kept the sacred objects and kept up the ceremony.

When I was a boy I saw a ceremony in a big leaf-covered lodge; there were many boys sitting or lying around in hope of a vision. I remember seven men undertaking a performance. When I was about twenty years old, I understood things better. Hunts-the-enemy then made a sun dance and I saw it. He made it to keep up his father's bundle ritual, to become a great warrior and to help the village. There was a big forked pole in the center, and from the fork they hung a buffalo head with the horns. We cut young cottonwood trees with the leaves and carried them down from the woods, and someone placed them against the forked tree. They began to build the lodge about noon and completed it by evening. The old people said, "You young men must cry and try to get a vision from the sun." I thought I might go also. So I went about sunset and found the lodge full of young men. I too found room to lie down near a rear post. I saw one man in the place of honor opposite the door,—the maker of the ceremony, Hunts-the-enemy. Over his head there was a hoop, and round it were tied birds and rabbit legs. It got dark. Old and middle-aged men entered, sat down in a circle on the left side of the door for one entering, put a dry hide in the middle of their space, and got their drumsticks. One of the singers said, "You young men here want to see some visions, overcome your enemies and get some honor marks. This is the sun dance lodge you are in. When we sing, you must whistle and look up at the sun and perhaps he will help you, giving you what you desire. Instead of dancing, some of you may cry." There was no fire in the lodge, though it was dark. The musicians were beating their drum. We all rose, danced and looked up without changing our position. For two hours we continued, then we ceased. Everyone was crying then. Each prayed to the spirits (*maxupācāre*) as follows: "Oh, Spirits, I am poor, I want you to give me some of my enemies so that they may be easily killed;" or, "Spirits, I am poor, poor men always have hard times, help me out of my trouble." The musicians then all went home, while we young men slept in the lodge, some of us crying throughout the night.

The next morning a man named Porcupine-pemmican came from the village. He was the only sun dance painter and spoke to Hunts-the-enemy, who addressed the young men expecting a vision, of whom two thereupon went out. After a while they returned, bringing sand from the Missouri in their blankets. Porcupine-pemmican pointed out a space for them, and each banked up his sand with a distance of a foot between the two piles. Porcupine-pemmican again spoke to Hunts-the-enemy, who again sent out two young men. These returned carrying *macúgakcā*

brush in their arms. Porcupine-pemmican stuck all these leafy branches into the sand heaps. Nearby was a buffalo skull, which Porcupine-pemmican took and placed between the sand heaps so that it faced Hunts-the-enemy. He got a small dish, put water into it, and placed it before the skull. He put a package of white clay into the water and stirred it up, then he prayed to the Sun as follows, "You, Sun god, this man has raised a house for you. I want to paint up his body and face. I ask you to let him have what he wishes for." Then he got four sprigs of big-leaved sage, dipped them into the clay, and sang, motioning before Hunts-the-enemy's face in a half circle as if he were painting him, then repeated the motion on the other side of his face. Then he actually painted one side of Hunts-the-enemy's face with the sage-brush and then painted down the arm of the same side, whereupon he seized and shook his protégé's thumb. He went through the same movements on the other side.

Suddenly some people in the village cried, "The enemies have stolen some of our horses!" Then all of us young men dashed out to catch the thieves. I mounted one of my neighbor's horses and caught one of my own horses. I saw the rest chasing the enemy. As soon as I got my horse, I jumped on and followed the others; my horse was very fast. We got from old Ft. Berthold to the site of Elbowoods, where the enemy kept in the woods under the bluffs. I caught up with the foremost Hidatsa. We lost their tracks. They went north and yelled for us, we got there and found their tracks again. We got to the hills in the Bad Lands, where we rested our horses for a while. East of us we saw plenty of people and took them for our enemies, but found them to be white soldiers, who were friendly. We told them the enemy had stolen our horses and they told us they had chased them till they got into the woods, where they must still be. We got off ready to fight. Some of our boys ran ahead. In a coulée they saw some enemies, who immediately jumped into the timber. It was a pretty large wood. We saw no men, but shot in there, and they began to shoot back. We shot where there was smoke. They saw us and killed one of our men. A half-breed soldier also was killed. One of the enemies was crying, "My friend, you are killing me." All fired in that direction and killed him. Hunts-the-enemy got into the timber and struck this man, then plenty of us entered the woods and killed two enemies. I also struck an enemy and got a scalp. Hunts-the-enemy delivered a speech: "This is what I am after. I have suffered. This is what I want to get for our tribe. We have lost two, but we have killed two. So all of you who are not drinking water may drink water." Accordingly, all of us drank from a spring nearby. Rabbit-head was the first to count coup on the second enemy. He made another sun dance ceremony. We believed that anyone who suffered in honor of the sun would strike enemies and become a chief. Hunts-the-enemy's ceremony was short, but usually it lasted four nights.

Some young men would go home after spending two nights in the lodge, others after three, still others after four. I was among the last-mentioned when Keeps-his-hair made the ceremony. Some underwent more suffering than others. They cut the skin of their breasts, put sticks through on both sides, and tied them to the buffalo skin hanging from the center poles. Putting back their hands, they would sometimes jump into the air and swing round, then swing back so as to untwist the rope. On the fourth day about noon I tried to do as the rest, before that I was afraid. One father's clansman of mine was there. I went to the ceremony maker for clay and painted my body white in token of what I was going to do. Then I went to my father, wanting to swing. He said, "You are a man, this is the way to overcome the enemy."

He took a steel-headed arrow. I sat with my back against the center pole and my clan father said, "We'll cut a wider one." One man rubbed off the paint, the other punched a hole through my skin and ran a hard chokecherry stick through it, then attached the rope to the ends. One of them held it and pulled hard. It seemed to me as though they pulled out my heart. Then they began to sing. An older man said to me, "Try to be brave." He encouraged me. "Pull the rope backwards, walk round, loosen the flesh." I pulled it back. "Now dance, put back your back and your hands." Then I danced. I wished to swing. I danced, jumped off the ground and swung close to the earth, then untwisted the rope again. My kinswomen cried for pity, while the men said, "Other men did this and became chiefs." I did this several times, then I got to be very weak and could not repeat the performance. The songs were drawing to a close. I fell back, weak, and listened to the song. At its close I sat against the pole and then someone said, "Fathers, rise and take the rope off your son, he is worn out." The clan fathers came, saying, "Son, get up, we'll take off the rope, you are too tired." "Well, let me try once more." "All right, you are a man. Thus some have acted and become chiefs." Someone said, "Let him do it again if he wishes." So the clan fathers sat down again. The singing recommenced. I tried to dance and run but my legs were too weak, so I walked round and pulled back till the close of the song. Then they said it was time to cease and my clan fathers took out my skewers. At sunset Porcupine-pemmican rose, got some sage, and brushed off the sacred quality from every person and also from the lodge. "You crying boys, we are going home now." So we all left.

When I got home, my (own) father asked me to go down the river, bathe, and put clay plastering down the sore spots. I did this, putting clay over the cuts and pushing it down. Then I ate more than usual. My father opened all his medicine bundles and fixed my bed before them, saying, "Perhaps you will get a vision there." So I lay down there. I did not sleep that night at all on account of a stomach ache. I lay awake till daylight, then I dreamt of a man singing a victory song outside the lodge. I got honor marks and the man called my name as 'Long-bull,' and in a second song he called me 'Good-bull.' Thus I dreamt, but the dream was not fulfilled, for soon thereafter all wars ceased.

On the earlier parts of the ceremony Wolf-chief supplied the following account, adding some more general comments:—

Good young men with honor marks were called, and one of them was selected (sometimes two were), who received this order: "Go out west to the edge of the river and try to find a straight tree with a fork at the top." When he had found one, he returned to within approximately a mile from the village, where he howled coyote-fashion to indicate that he had seen an enemy. The villagers gathered together to hear his report, and the scout announced, "I have seen one Dakota." When they were ready to go for the tree, the Painter and all the other members of the Sun fraternity gathered and proceeded toward the tree, making four stops. The pledger of the ceremony carried a straight pipe and a piece of cooked meat, both of which he laid down by the forked log, which had drifted downstream. A member of the fraternity took the pipe and raised it toward the log, saying, "Smoke this, my enemy, I want to kill you very easily; bring some of your friends with you too." Then he lit the pipe and after smoking it first he offered smoke to the log once more, saying, "Smoke, we want to paint our faces black and have a good time." Each of the men,

possibly to the number of ten or twelve, went through similar actions and words. When they had done, they removed the ashes and put them on the log. The piece of dried meat was taken off and also offered to the musicians and others by Porcupine-pemmican. He held the same pipe, standing near the foot of the log, where they wanted to cut it. He raised the pipe into the air, saying, "We want to kill enemies safely." The man behind him had an ax. Porcupine-pemmican feigned striking the log with his pipe. After he had three times pretended to do this, the other man actually struck the log. Then all shouted, "We have killed our enemy!" Then the log was cut square at the bottom and all its branches were chopped off, but the fork was left at the top. When this had been done, Porcupine-pemmican got some sage-brush, and beginning at the bottom he brushed off the log, saying, "Make your body lighter, we want to take you."

Three young men had carried a bull-boat to the log along the bank upstream. When Porcupine-pemmican had done, the log was rolled down toward the river and they said, "We want to bring our enemy down the river." Then they rejoiced and brought the log dragging behind the boat to about two miles below the village. In the evening the men took the boat home. The Sun fraternity people got up on a roof and said, "The scouts sight the enemy down below. Brave young men, get ready to run against the enemy. Tomorrow we must charge the enemy. Get your medicines, decorate your horses, and prepare so as to be ready early." The following morning some members got on a housetop and cried, "Young men, get your horses and prepare to fight the enemy." This man was painted according to his vision as if he were going against the Dakota. He said, "Young men who go out to fight must get sticks." He also bade the young women get sticks. Then he continued, "Young men, take your sweethearts on horseback and bring leaves with them." The Sun fraternity all went afoot a little ways from the village and seated themselves there. Another man said to the second group of young men, "Go out to fight the enemy." We all jumped on horseback and I put my bird medicine on my head; I wore nothing but a breech-clout, had put on red face paint, and was carrying a gun. We all got to where the Sun fraternity sat. There we halted, waiting for some people from the village to join us. All gathered, then Porcupine-pemmican delivered a speech to us: "Young men, one of our enemies is near. I'll sing four songs. When I have done, charge against the enemy." His songs were Sun fraternity songs; he sang four of these. "When I close my song, run as fast as possible. Whoever shall strike first, will strike an enemy first. I know this is the way it has been in the past." So all the young men ran their race horses as fast as possible. I whipped my horse to make him go as fast as I could. If anyone fell off, it was dangerous for him, as others would trample on him. But this time no accident occurred. The one ahead jumped over the log and said, "I strike the enemy first." Four struck the log, then the others shot at it with their guns. The Sun fraternity were stationed half a mile from the village and a mile and a half from the log. Now they walked to the log and came up to us.

Porcupine-pemmican prayed to the Sun, then he said, "This log will get lighter all the time." He selected two good young men on horseback, tied a rope to either end of the log, and had them drag it. Then the other mounted men attached ropes to different parts of the tree and dragged it, continually shooting at it amidst shouting. Porcupine-pemmican ordered them to make four stops before bringing the log to the hole marking the site of the lodge. We all got ready to start and Porcupine-pemmican sang mystery songs, at the close of each of which we shouted and clapped our mouths.

After we had done this four times, the order was given to start. Then it felt as though we were merely pulling the rope, though the log was about forty feet in length and more than a foot in diameter. We halted, discharged our guns, and yelled. We did this four times, then we reached the site, where we put the log down with its bottom close to the hole. Round this the ground was cleared, which was always done by members of the Old-Woman fraternity. There were a few singers there. Porcupine-pemmican also got there and asked us log-haulers to go back and change our dress to ordinary clothing. We did this, putting away our other medicine objects. He called on some additional young men to raise the poles: "Bring your tent poles and rawhide ropes to work with." I looked and saw young men, some riding double with girls, others alone, bringing cottonwoods. On that day it was proper to show off one's sweetheart in the daytime. We young men took positions, getting ready for raising the poles. Porcupine-pemmican again sang sacred songs, at the close of which we shouted, then we began to lift the poles. Some put sticks on, and they seemed light. The post hole was about an arm's length in depth and we pulled from different sides to get the post into its place. It was already afternoon, and another group were bringing in sticks and rafters for the frame of the lodge, which was about twenty steps in diameter. Porcupine-pemmican sang, walked round outside the cleared spot, where the members of the Old-Woman fraternity were still at work, setting forked eight-foot posts along the circumference and joining them by cross-beams. To the fork of the center post was tied a dry bull skull skin with the horns. The bones were removed and the horns were hollowed, then sewed to the skin of the head. The skin was dried and tough and appeared to be that of a live animal. When the people were ready, a young man who was a good climber took a rope round his shoulders and climbed the center post. The bull skin included a strip running down the back and the tail. The climber dropped his rope, the people tied the buffalo skin to it, he raised it and arranged it so that the head faced the door. The nose was perforated and a rawhide rope passed through it. It was by this nose rope that I suspended myself. The climber descended. Porcupine-pemmican stayed by the entrance. The Old-Women ceased working and waited for their fee. Porcupine-pemmican began to sing. The young men carried in rafters, placing the upper end first on the center pole, then the butt on the peripheral posts. Rafters were also placed on the cross-beams at a distance of a foot from one another. Porcupine-pemmican told the young men to put leafy branches across the rafters and to put upright sticks between the peripheral posts except where space was to be left for the doorway.

The first part of the ceremony was the Cut-round-the-mouth dance (*ihakðpi di'ci*). In the evening the musicians were outside facing the door, seated in a semi-circle and began to sing. Good young men were selected, those having honor marks on the head and legs. Those who had killed an enemy were put into the front line, facing the door; there might be three lines of from two to four young men each. These were scouts who had achieved some meritorious deeds near a hostile camp. They sang and danced forward towards the door, then danced backwards again. This was done four times in accompaniment to as many songs. The Pledger paid the Old-Women for their services with robes and goods contributed by various people; he similarly compensated the dancing braves. Then all ceased with their activities and returned to the village.

At sunset the Pledger entered the lodge, followed by the other men seeking a vision. They fasted for four nights. An oval painted on the face represented the

rings round the sun, while a circle of white clay on the breast represented the sun himself, the distance between the sand piles his path, and the piles his resting places. After painting the men Porcupine-pemmican had the right to conduct the ceremony. His son, Rabbit-head, may know all about it. Porcupine-pemmican had power from the Sun and Moon, who are considered as one, and whenever any offerings were made to them it was he who directed the proceedings. Anyone else who wanted to learn about such things had to pay him and get the power from him. Porcupine-pemmican also treated people who got hurt while chopping wood; he would brush his patient with sage and sing over him.

The Pledger appointed a father's clansman to get three sacred objects for him. At the close of the ceremony these were given to the Pledger, who gave his clan father considerable property in return.

The Pledger did not torture himself by suspension but always cut off one of his finger joints on the last day as an offering to the sun. Some also cut off a piece of flesh from the breasts, and these (according to Butterfly) practically all became chiefs. After such a sacrifice the Pledger sometimes saw a vision. He would stand in position till tired, crying and dancing. During the performance the master of ceremonies sat on his left, but went home for every meal. Sometimes the other men who sought visions failed and would ask to have the lodge left standing a little longer. Then they would fast two days more. Ordinarily, immediately after the close of the ceremony, the rafters and posts were taken down and those who needed them carried them off to their homes; but the center pole, being sacred, was never taken down.

Hunts-the-enemy made the ceremony four times. All the Sun worshippers formed a society, and if one made the ceremony the others joined him. Any one who dreamt of the (Mandan) *ōkēpə* might go through it,¹ but the *naxpiké* was only undertaken by one who was acquiring his father's medicine bundle. Each boy as he grew up wanted to get possession of his father's bundle.

PREVIOUS ACCOUNTS.

Wolf-chief's narrative agrees rather well with Mr. Curtis's account, the fullest available for purposes of comparison,² though the latter does not bring out the hereditary nature of the privilege to pledge a sun dance. Both show the prominent place assigned to a father's clansman, but Curtis's statement that there was disapproval if a would-be visionary asked a clan father to pierce his body is not borne out by Wolf-chief's testimony. My informant mentions a single officiating director, Porcupine-pemmican, who is designated the Painter; Curtis speaks of a Priest and a Singer. His use of this latter term at all events corroborates the parallelism of the *naxpiké* and other bundle ceremonies. Curtis, as well as Clark, attaches great importance to the initial procuring of

¹I am not at all sure of the correctness of this statement.

²Curtis, Edward S., *The North American Indian* (Cambridge, 1908), vol. 4, 152 seq.; Matthews, Washington, "Ethnography and Philology of the Hidatsa Indians" (*Miscellaneous Publications, United States Geological and Geographical Survey*, no. 7, Washington, 1877), 10, 45; Clark, W. F., *The Indian Sign Language* (Philadelphia, 1885), 194; Maximilian, Prince of Wied, *Reise in das innere Nord-America in den Jahren 1832 bis 1834* (Coblenz, 1841), vol. 2, 226.

buffalo robes to be given away at the ceremony, while in my account this feature enters only incidentally. A point of importance not mentioned by Wolf-chief is the Pledger's purchase of various bundles brought in by their owners. Curtis corroborates Wolf-chief as to the clearing of the site by the Old Women, also with reference to the tearing down of the lodge except for the center pole. His description of the Pledger's actions in the lodge is important enough to be quoted since it adds specific details to my informant's narrative:—

The Dancer was not pierced, but danced toward the pole and back, springing from the ground with rigid legs, his feet close together, his eyes fixed on the buffalo-head, blowing his whistle in rhythm with the beating of the drum; his mind was intent on the desire to become a great warrior, and he prayed silently for visions. Thus he continued until he fell from exhaustion, and there he lay until the vision appeared, remaining until the end of the fourth day if necessary.

Matthews describes mainly the securing of the center pole and the forms of torture, which embrace those commonly in vogue among the Plains Indians, but also that of leading a horse by cords attached to the sufferer's perforated shoulder muscles.¹ Regarding the center pole, he speaks of the felling of the tree, while Wolf-chief consistently referred to the center pole as one that had drifted down stream.

Maximilian's account is brief and not of the degree of accuracy usual with this author, for he confounds the *naxpiké* and the *ōkīpə*. His name for the festival is clearly, as Matthews correctly notes, the Hidatsa designation for the Mandan festival, not for their own sun dance. According to Maximilian there was a final running about in a circle of all those who had undergone torture as in the Okipa. He connects the ceremony with the preparations for a war party, the lodge being put up by the prospective captains. These, according to his narrative, spent four days and four nights lying stretched out in oblong pits, naked save for a leather loincloth. The leader of the party selected an associate or assistant to go through the ceremony with him. All this does not harmonize with later accounts, but certain details are correctly reported, such as the use of white clay, the buffalo skull on the fork, and the beating of a buffalo hide by the musicians.

Charles Mackenzie's is probably the earliest record of an Hidatsa sun dance (1805).² Though it is purely objective, it is of interest in

¹This method is quoted from E. James, "Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains performed in the years 1819, 1820 (London, 1823)", I, 254-256.

²Mackenzie, Charles, *The Mississippi Indians, a Narrative of Four Trading Expeditions to the Mississippi, 1804-1806-1806, for the North West Company*, 354-357. (In *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest. Récits de Voyages, Lettres et Rapports inédits relatifs au Nord-Ouest Canadien*. Par L. R. Masson, Quebec, 1889.)

establishing for the Hidatsa sun dance the type of torture characteristic of the Mandan Okipa. Since it is not readily accessible, it seems justifiable to reproduce it verbatim.

July 10th 1805.—To celebrate the Great Festival, all the old men of the Enasa village assembled at the lodge of the First Chief to appoint proper officers in order to keep the peace during the ceremonies.

11th. This morning at day break, an old man harangued through the village: soon after appeared twelve robust young men with their heads in bladders, bodies bare, painted half way with vermillion and half with white earth, the emblems of punishment and pardon united in the same person. These guardians of the peace entered into every lodge, giving instruction for good behaviour. The women were directed to go into the woods for branches to cover the Medicine lodge, while the men were occupied in dressing themselves.

When all were ready, the men walked into the lodge with their pipes and drums, the women went with kettles and dishes full of the best of things to prepare for the feast. At the door of the lodge, the vessels, were aired over a blasing fire made of certain hay or weeds selected for the occasion, and ample offerings were variously made to the Sun. When the eating part was over, the remainder of the day was joyfully passed in innocent recreation, such as smoking, dancing, &c.

In the forenoon of the 12th, several young men placed themselves in a row on their bellies; an old man holding an arrow approached them and with the barb of it pierced a hole at the shoulder blades of each, through which he passed a pin of hard wood four inches long and half an inch thick. To this pin he fastened a cord of eight yards in length at the end of which were tied seven bulls' heads or more, according to the repute of the warrior. Such as had killed some of the enemy and taken scalps had a man's skull fixed to each breast and a scalp fastened a little below their eyes, with a cane in the right hand, to which also was fastened a scalp. But such as were less successful in war were not distinguished by so many ornaments; they had not the honor of dragging so many bulls heads after them, and their canes, in lieu of human scalps, were graced only with eagle tails. These young warriors were entirely naked, but painted white.

When the old man had finished this first part, the young warriors started up and moved forward, but the bulls head which they trained having their horns entangled rendered their progress slow and painful. One, however, who was more loaded than any of the rest, rushed through the crowd, unmindful of all obstacles which stood in his way, and soon gained his destination in the Great Lodge, where he was received by a multitude of spectators with shouts of applause. The others would fain have followed the example, but their hearts failed them; they often leaned on their canes.

As the warriors arrived at the lodge, all the heads were thrown on a high beam, and their weight serving as a counter-poise raised the bearers from the ground. In this position they remained suspended like so many criminals upon a gibbet.

In the mean time, spectators of all sexes and sizes united in singing, dancing and beating their drums, &c., while the old man approached the principal *Hero* and asked him what he was disposed to offer to the Sun, so that the Sun might continue to shine upon him with kindness: "I shall give to the Sun," said he "in order that he may shine upon me with kindness, two strips of flesh from each of my arms, beginning at my shoulder blades and finishing at my wrists; I shall also give to the Sun one of my

fingers, and shall allow you, moreover, to imprint with a red hot iron an emblem of the Sun upon my breast."

The same question was put to each of the others, who were fifteen in number, but they were much more moderate in their devotional donations. They contented themselves with giving a finger or a slice of flesh respectively.

The old man, who was provided with the necessary instruments for the execution of his duty, began his operations upon the boldest of the heroes. He began by cutting on the shoulder two circles from which he raised two strips in parallel lines down to the wrist, then the little finger of the right hand was cut off at the second joint, and then the bit of a bridle was introduced, red hot, and applied to the breast until the flesh in a large circle rose into a hard crust. All this time, the sufferer as well as his companions on trial were hanging suspended from the beam of the lodge by the cords through the incision in their shoulders, their feet at some distance from the ground and unable to stir during the operation. The noise of the spectators was very great; if the sufferers complained, they could not be heard.

As soon as each had undergone the pains he had imposed upon himself, he was relieved from his elevated station at the beam and allowed to return from where he came, still dragging his original *equipage* of heads, until he placed the whole where he found them, and where fit persons were stationed on purpose to untie and receive them.

When the wooden pins were taken out of the shoulders, an old woman sucked the blood from the wounds, which she stuffed with a preparation made with her teeth from a certain root for the purpose. Then the suffering *hero*, or whatever we may choose to call him, took his strips of flesh and his finger joint, placed them in a neat little bag, with which he hastened to the outside of the village to depose it as an offering to his God, and singing a lamentable dirge as he went on.

Tired of so dreadful a scene, I withdrew and returned to my quarters, where I found the guards of police indulging with the girls during the absence of their parents. As to the warriors, the sun was high the next morning before the last of them left his companions stand at the beam to take his painful turn before the old priest.

The old priest was handsomely rewarded for his trouble and attendance, the young warriors on whom he operated so signally loaded him with presents, and, the next morning, he was one of the richest men in the village.

COMMENTS.

Inadequate as are Wolf-chief's data, they suffice to establish the parallelism in principle of the Hidatsa sun dance with other bundle ceremonies, while on the other hand its objective features manifestly align it with the sun dances of other tribes. Though my informant refers to the director of the ceremony as the Painter, it is obvious that he corresponds to the Singer of other bundles, and Curtis's account even suggests that he may have been designated by the same title. Hunts-the-enemy is clearly the maker of a bundle ceremony, desirous of establishing his hereditary rights, and courting the assistance of a clan father to secure the necessary elements of the bundle. Viewed from this angle, the *naxpiké* is a transfer ritual. The interrelations of distinct fraternities are exemplified by the activities of the Old-Women.

The emphasis on the warlike purposes of the Pledger links the Hidatsa ceremony with that of the Crow. It is noteworthy in this connection that with the killing of enemies the ceremony might abruptly terminate in both cases.

Finally may be mentioned the fact that the Hidatsa Wolf ceremony (*tsēc ati+akè*) in at least one of its three varieties presents interesting analogies to the sun dance. It, too, was essentially a bundle transfer, beginning with the customary requisitioning of a clan father's services. The specific resemblance lies in the invitation extended to brave young men outside the fraternity to attend as fasters for four days with their own bundle, at the close of which period it was customary for some of them to inflict tortures on themselves. Wolf-chief himself resorted to almost the identical method cited by Matthews,—that of leading a wild horse secured to his back.

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