Crow and Cheyenne women: Some differences in their roles as related to tribal history

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION**

**CHAPTER**

I ORIGIN AND WANDERINGS OF THE CHEYENNE AND CROW TRIBES PRIOR TO THEIR ENTRY ONTO THE PLAINS .......................... 1  
- Background and Wanderings of the Cheyenne Indians  
- Background and Wanderings of the Crow Indians

II SOME TRIBES RELATED TO AND INFLUENCING THE CROW AND CHEYENNE 16  
- The Mandan  
- The Hidatsa  
- The Arikara  
- The Arapaho  
- The Sioux

III GENERAL ETHNOLOGY OF THE CROW AND CHEYENNE: 1790-1850 38  
- The Cheyenne Tribe  
- The Crow Tribe

IV SPECIFIC ROLES OF CROW CHEYENNE WOMEN DURING 1790-1850 51  
- Cheyenne Women  
  - Economic Activities  
  - Familial Roles  
  - Religious Roles  
- Crow Women  
  - Economic Activities  
  - Familial Roles  
  - Religious Roles

V CONCLUSIONS .................................................... 82

GLOSSARY

REFERENCES CITED
INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The central problem of the following work is two-fold. The first part involves tracing the origins of the Cheyenne and Crow tribes, as far as can be determined through archaeological and ethnological sources; and, using the same type of sources, to describe the wanderings of the two tribes as they migrated toward the Plains, finally arriving in Eastern Montana, the Dakotas, and Wyoming. The Indian tribes with which the Crow and Cheyenne came into contact during their migrations are described, so as to determine any possible influence and effects upon the Crow and Cheyenne after their adoption of Plains cultural traits.

The second part includes recovering all available data on the roles of Cheyenne and Crow women after adoption by the tribes of Plains culture, and before significant white contact. The period of time involved was thus roughly from around 1790 to 1850. The specific feminine roles examined include:

1. Economic activities, their importance compared to the male economic roles. This consisted mostly of gathering vegetable products, roots, and berries. The making and trading of beadwork, and especially prepared hides was a source of wealth to many women and their families. Women were given horses and other goods by friends and relatives in exchange for gifts and such services as healing the sick.

2. Woman's roles in the family, her place as a sexual partner, housekeeper, socializer of the children. Also considered was the definition of a "good woman," and how a woman could bring prestige and honor to her family.
3. Religious roles, the part women played in tribal activities, family religious ceremonies, individual activities such as the vision quest, pledging the Sun Dance, becoming a shaman or "medicine woman". The problem involves examining these roles, to see how they differed in each tribe, and between men and women, and to determine, if possible, how these differences were related to the backgrounds of the two tribes in their original settings.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis of the paper is that the roles of women do differ in the two tribes, as do general tribal values. The tribes have different ideas as to what constitutes a "good" woman, what a woman's goals are, and how her status relates to that of men. These differences can be at least partially attributed to the different orientations and activities of the tribes before their adoption of Plains culture.

Methodology

The collection of data was done entirely through library research, utilizing both primary and secondary sources. Archaeological data and the records of early explorers and traders provided most of the data for the first section of the problem; secondary sources correlating some of the material was also used. Ethnographic sources, both primary and secondary, plus the writings of early trappers and traders provided the data for the second section of the thesis.
CHAPTER I

ORIGINS AND WANDERINGS OF THE CHEYENNE AND CROW TRIBES
PRIOR TO THEIR ENTRY ONTO THE PLAINS

Background and Wanderings of the Cheyenne Indians

The name "Cheyenne", like many of the terms by which Indian tribes become known, is not the word by which members of the tribe refer to themselves. "Cheyenne" really derives from "Sha-en-na," a Siouan term meaning "those speaking a "red" or foreign tongue". The Cheyenne call themselves Tsistetas, which means "our people". By changing the accent, this same word could mean "gashed ones" (Hodge 1907:251). In the Plains sign language, the sign for this tribe is indicated by drawing the right index finger over the left wrist and arm, in a slashing motion (Clark 1885:98). This could refer either to the Cheyenne practice of slashing the arms, or to their use of striped turkey feathers on their arrows; they are known as "striped arrows" to the Hidatsa, Shoshone, Comanche, and Caddo.

The Cheyenne speak a dialect of the Algonkian language family, which is widespread over the Eastern United States and Eastern and Central Canada. According to Nelson (1946:8) the first of the three great waves of Asiatic peoples into America were the Algonkians. Whether or not they were actually the first emigrants, the wide distribution of the Algonkian speakers certainly suggests an early arrival on this continent. They migrated first to the Eastern seaboard of Canada and the United States; then some groups, as the Cheyenne, moved or were forced westward. Many traits of the Eastern and Central Algonkian tribes remained part of Cheyenne culture when the tribe arrived on the Plains.

Among all of the Plains tribes, the Cheyenne were most noted for
the chastity of their women and their restraint about sexual matters. In the Eastern and Central Algonkin tribes around the 17th and 18th centuries, this same restraint was an important feature of the culture. Courtship was leisurely; the suitor would visit a girl at night until she consented to marry him. He would then inform his mother, who consulted the girl's parents. If both sets of parents agreed to the match, presents were exchanged; no further ceremony was necessary. The couple moved in with the boy's family. After marriage, they might (ideally) refrain from sexual intercourse for some months, to prove that they married for affection, and not from lust (Blair 1911:67-9). Central Algonkin tribes such as the Fox and Sauk and Menominee utilized the "marriage blanket" to prevent physical contact between newly married couples (Dusenberry 1956:72). Further, it was thought to be harmful for a woman to conceive while still nursing one child, so a husband and wife of these tribes ideally did not live together for at least one year after a child was born (Ibid.:275).

Another practice retained by the Cheyenne was the ceremonial piercing of a child's ears (and sometimes nose) at the age of six or seven (Blair 1911:76). Women did the usual household chores, cured the animal hides, raised and harvested the grain. Even among these Algonkin tribes, hunting was the main means of subsistence; grain was not stored. While there were no formal soldier clubs as on the Plains, the rudiments of such organizations existed. The rules of the hunt were agreed upon beforehand, and observed by everyone. Those who disobeyed had their weapons destroyed (Ibid.:120).

It is not known which group of Algonkins migrated westward to become the Cheyenne, nor exactly where they had been located. Traditions,
carefully memorized and handed down from one generation to the next, are very suggestive. In the case of the Cheyenne, tradition is supported in many instances by archaeological evidence. The official "tradition of the Cheyenne Indians" was in the charge of a special keeper, trained by the former keeper. The tradition first was made available to whites when the last keeper, fearing it would be lost, told it to John Segar (1924:1140-55). According to the story, long ago the Cheyenne lived in the North, in a much colder climate. They went naked, and had no weapons to get food. Panther cubs were raised to kill deer, then flint was used to cut the hides for clothing and shelter. Later, a great flood covered the earth, apparently near the head of the Missouri, in a valley. One band disappeared; the Cheyenne have been looking for them ever since. When they were attacked by another tribe, the Great Spirit helped the Cheyenne to defeat the enemy, then sent the Cheyenne to an old woman who taught them how to plant corn and kill buffalo. Here on the Missouri they trained young wolves as pack animals, until horses diffused to the Cheyenne from the South. (Other traditions speak of bearded white men from the South, presumably Mexicans, bringing the Cheyenne's first horses.)

Other legends of the Cheyenne relate how they lived many years on the edge of a big lake in the North, in a mild climate where they wore no clothing (Grinnell 1923:7). Here, fishing was the main source of food. Later they moved to a land of sugar maple trees. This story is confirmed by the fact that when the Cheyenne were hunting on the Plains, they were the only tribe to tap box elder trees and make syrup from the sap (Dusenberry 1956:9). Fish were not tabu as food to the Cheyenne, as they were to the Crow. In another legend, the Cheyenne, wandering east,
crossed a frozen neck of sea. A young girl, attracted by a large horn
sticking out of the ice, tried to pull it out. When she did this, the
ice broke and a large chasm appeared. Some Indians were left on each
side of the chasm. Dusenberry suggests that the band thus separated
from the main group may have been the Suhtai, whom the Cheyenne later met
on the Plains and absorbed (1956:3). The two tribes spoke languages so
similar that they could not have been separated more than a couple of
centuries. The name "Suhtai" can be interpreted to mean "left Behind"
(Ibid.:18). But other tribes, including the Kutenai of Montana (Dr. Car-
ling Maulouf, personal communication), have similar legends of chasms in
ice, so Dusenberry may be placing too much emphasis on it.

The Cheyenne first appear in the literature in 1680, when a group
of "Chaa" or "Shaha" visited LaSalle's fort on the Illinois river. They
said they lived at the head of the Great (Mississippi) River (Hodge 1917:
251). Mooney says the Cheyenne were originally situated south of Hudson's
Bay. After the English established trading posts there around 1669, pres­
sure from the Assiniboine Cree and Ojibway pushed the Dakota southwest, and
the Dakota in turn pushed the Cheyenne south and westward (in Dusenberry
1956:10). The Chaïena appear on a map of Joliet and Franquelin prior to
1673, on the eastern side of the Mississippi, above the mouth of the Wis­
consin River just south of Lake Superior. While they were living in the
north, fishing was the main source of food, just as related in tradition.
Women made willow seines, and pounded fish bones for oil. In the Spring,
they gathered bird's eggs and young birds; in the Fall, the tribe ate
skunks; and in the Winter, rabbits (Will 1913:68).

Reliable traditions of the Cheyenne state that they lived at one
time near St. Anthony's Falls on the Mississippi, and on a stream known
as the "river of Turtles," perhaps the Turtle tributary of the Red River, or the St. Croix, which enters the Mississippi below the mouth of the Minnesota (Hodge 1907:252). The Sioux state that the Cheyenne lived in earth lodge villages on the Minnesota river (near present day Minneapolis, several hundred miles below the head of the Mississippi) and planted corn. Dr. Riggs had identified earthworks in this region near Yellow Medicine River as Cheyenne, dated around 1650 (Grinnell 1918:360). Will (1913:68) dates these same earthworks at 1693, which seems more consistent with the dating of other sites. Carver mentions the Shians as living on the Minnesota River in 1776 (Ibid.:359). Will and Spinden place the Cheyenne site on the Minnesota as near Lac Qui Parle, near the South Dakota border, where, they say, the Cheyenne "learned to cultivate the soil and built a village" (1917:43). From the evidence presented above, however, it seems likely that the Cheyenne were both planting corn and building earth lodges before they had migrated this far westward. Another site suggested as Cheyenne is near Kettle Lake, west of Lake Traverse, on the border between Minnesota and South Dakota, also near Lac Qui Parle and probably contemporaneous with the site there (Grinnell 1918:360).

From Minnesota, the Cheyenne gradually migrated to North Dakota, where they built a permanent earth lodge village of 60 or 70 lodges, holding 500-600 people, on the Shyenne river near present day Lisbon, North Dakota. The old Sioux name for this site is "Shaion wojibi" or "the place where the Cheyennes plant" (Will and Hyde 1917:43). The Cheyenne population at this time was around 3500. Since no single known site is large enough to hold the whole population, Grinnell suggests that the sites in North Dakota and Minnesota were not necessarily occupied successively, but were merely "different permanent, if scattered camps or
villages of distinct bands of Cheyennes" (1933:21). Camps were occupied for a generation or two, then abandoned, the general trend being westward, toward the Missouri. The village on the Shyenne River was abandoned around 1770, and the tribe moved on to the Missouri River (Jablow 1950:10). That the move was caused by an attack and defeat of the village is known; sources differ, however, as to the identity of the attacking tribe. Grinnell insists that it was the Assiniboine Sioux (1918:365). Mooney, following Williamson, says the attackers were Dakota; Will, that they were Assiniboines. Swanton rejects these theories on the evidence of an account of the battle in David Thompson’s Narrative of His Explorations in Western America. This account was written by a French-Canadian employee of the Northwest Co., Jean Baptiste Cadotte, and a Chippewa chief named Sheshapeshat. According to them, it was this chief and his band who had chased the Cheyenne westward, destroying the village (Swanton 1930:156-9). The Cheyenne themselves claim the attackers were Assiniboines, and that they got their first guns from some of the dead Assiniboine warriors (Will 1913:71-2). Will also describes the site, as does William Duncan Strong (1910:371-5).

Another band of Cheyenne were probably driven from the Red River region a few years before. Will and Spinden cite Alexander Henry as stating that the Cheyenne left that area around 1735. They were met by the younger Verendrye (who mistakenly called them Sioux) in 1743, above the Arikara and below the Mandan on the Missouri (1906:43). Around 1733, one band built an earth lodge village on the Missouri above Standing Rock (just below the mouth of Porcupine Creek), where they again planted corn (see Grinnell 1918:375, and Will and Hyde 1917:43). From this site, which tradition states was abandoned around 1784, part of the tribe
moved on toward the Black Hills to hunt; another band moved south and built a village near the mouth of the Cheyenne river (not to be confused with the above-mentioned Shyenne River) in South Dakota. A site also occupied around 1733, twenty miles above the Grand River, was inhabited until 1840. This village was mainly tipis rather than earth lodges. Hunting was the main source of food, although the women continued to plant corn (Mulloy 1952:135). Corn supplied most of the food supply for the earth lodge villages on the Missouri; the Cheyenne continued to make dugout canoes and fish with seines, a survival of their former life in Minnesota and Canada (Will 1913:76).

On the Missouri near Fort Yates, North Dakota, are two earth lodge villages probably contemporaneous with the Cheyenne river site.

When horses diffused to the Cheyenne (according to Verendrye, around 1738-43), their subsistence became much more heavily based on big game hunting. It was not long before at least some bands completed the westward migration toward the Plains and the transition into nomadic hunters, abandoning their earth lodges and corn fields. Horse bones have been found in several parts of the site on the Shyenne River site, and the abundance of bison bones at the site indicate a growing dependence on hunting as well as horticulture (Strong 1940:375). The abandonment of this site in 1770 (see above) marks a turning point in Cheyenne history; the transition from a sedentary to an equestrian tribe had been accomplished, in the relatively short time between 1738-43 and 1770.

In 1802, Perrin DuLac met a group of Cheyenne whose range was on both sides of the Cheyenne River in South Dakota. They hunted in the summer, planting corn and tobacco by their permanent village when they returned (Mooney 1905:373). Grinnell says the Cheyenne cultivated fields of corn
on the Little Missouri as late as 1850 (cited in Hodge 1907:251). This was probably only one band, however, for some groups of Cheyenne were trading meat with the Arikara in exchange for corn at least by 1803 (Jablow 1950:10). Cheyenne, Arapaho, Kiowa, and Gataha (Apache) were all trading with Arikara villages on the Missouri in South Dakota between 1760 and 1790. By 1795, Truteau noted that they were encamped up the Cheyenne River, and had shifted their trade to the Mandan villages because of hostile Sioux who were camped by the Arikaras (Hyde 1959:143).

Some years after acquiring horses, then, the various bands of Cheyenne at different times moved on to the Plains, roaming the Little Missouri, Powder, Tongue, and Rosebud Rivers, not crossing the Yellowstone except above the mouth of the Tongue. They fought and pushed back the tribes already occupying this territory, namely the Crow, Apache, and Comanche (Clark 1885:100). Around 1804, pressed by the Sioux, the Cheyenne moved on to the Platte River, driving the Kiowa south.

The early history of the Cheyenne can be summarized into three main periods (see Jablow, Mooney, Grinnell, Dorsy, and Will). In the first, before migrating to Minnesota, their economy was based on small game hunting and fishing. Lodges were mat-covered pole wickiups. In the second period, which lasted at least until the third quarter of the 18th century, the Cheyenne were semi-sedentary horticulturalists, in Minnesota and later on the Missouri, Sheyenne, and Cheyenne Rivers. They lived in earth lodge villages, like the other horticultural tribes in North and South Dakota. Toward the end of this period, some bands were wandering onto the Plains to hunt bison, living in portable tipis, then returning to the permanent villages. By the end of the 18th century, most had completed the transition to a fully nomadic, equestrian way of
Life, although some women continued to plant corn until around 1840. In 1833, the tribe divided into the Northern and Southern Cheyenne; more will be said about this later. This period lasted until the last quarter of the 19th century, when the Cheyenne were settled on reservations, the Northern Cheyenne in Montana, and Southern Cheyenne in Oklahoma.

Background and Wanderings of the Crow Indians

The name Crow, by which this tribe is known to the whites and to the Indians surrounding it, is one translation of the term "Ab-sa-ro-ka" or "Apsaruke", the Crow name for themselves. Some writers say the term actually refers to a peculiar fork-tailed bird formerly found in North Dakota, others say that it means anything flying. Crow informants themselves differ as to the meaning of the work, but in one creation myth, the newly created Indians are named after the "black birds". In sign language, this tribe is indicated by bringing the hands up a little higher than the shoulders, and moving them a little to indicate the motion of wings (Clark 1885:132).

The Crow language belongs to the Siouan family, which is, next to the Algonkian, the most widespread in America. Siouan speakers originally extended from the Mississippi north to the Arkansas and west to the Rocky Mountains. Some groups extended from Minnesota into Canada in the direction of Lake Winnipeg; another group lived in eastern America, where a small remnant still remains in Virginia and the Carolinas, and near Biloxi, Mississippi. There are differences of opinion as to where the Siouan speakers were originally concentrated. Some authorities say that sections of the Siouan speakers scattered from Canada, where the Winne-
bagos live today, or from the region of the Great Lakes. The eastern Siouan tribes have decreased tremendously, from warfare with other tribes, especially the Iroquois, and from the European settlers on the Atlantic coast. The Eastern and southern Siouan groups lived mostly by raising corn, as did the other tribes in the area (Hodge 1907:578). While it is difficult to say for certain exactly where individual tribes migrated from, the Mandan and Hidatsa seem to have reached the upper Missouri from the northeast, moving upstream then (Ibid.:577).

The Crow Indians themselves have traditions of their origin and wanderings which are somewhat suggestive, but unfortunately rather contradictory. Also, unlike the evidence for the Cheyenne case, a good body of archaeological sites is lacking. One creation myth, which is obviously not more than two hundred years old, states that the Crow were created near the Yellowstone River, and that the Creator gave them all the land around (Ibid.:132). An older tradition recalls that the Crow once dwelled in a "land of many waters," possibly Minnesota. From there, the tribe worked westward, eventually living in earth lodge villages along the Missouri in North and South Dakota. A Hidatsa tradition retained by the Crow confirms the westward migration; it states that the tribe climbed a grapevine out of the earth and emerged into the waters of present day Devil's Lake in North Dakota. From here, they arrived on the Missouri sometime before 1770 (Nabokov 1967:xvi).

Lieutenant James Bradley, who fought against the Sioux, discussed the Crow in his journal written around 1876. His theory was that the tribe emigrated from the Southeast, once dwelling upon the waters of the Gulf of Mexico or along the Atlantic coast in Georgia or South Carolina. The Crow have a tradition that they once dwelt upon a body of water so
wide they didn't know it's end. From this water came the first white men and horses they ever saw (Bradley 1896:178). Lieutenant McClerand thought the water mentioned in legend was Lake Michigan (Ibid.:177). Other traditions which convinced Bradley of the southeastern origin of the Crow were tales of their once dwelling in a land of perpetual summer, where they grew corn. (As mentioned above, the eastern and central Siouan tribes did grow corn, though their land certainly was not one of "perpetual summer").) Bradley also maintained that the Crow retained a dim knowledge of the alligator (1896:178). Linderman (1932:126) agrees with a southern origin, on the same type of evidence, i.e., tales of alligators and sea monsters. Such tales, however, are very vague, and may even have been adopted from other tribes; they are not very substantial evidence.

Will and Spinden (1916:97) state that the Ohio valley was a dispersal point for Siouan speakers who migrated to the Plains. The Crow (at that time still part of the Hidatsa tribe) and the Mandan were apparently the first wave, a number of years ahead of the other groups, probably around the fifteenth century. Will and Spinden present archaeological evidence for the early arrival of at least the Mandan. About 1765, the Crow had arrived in the vicinity of the Little Blue River in Kansas, according to the recollections of a very ancient Crow woman in 1875. From there, they moved slowly northwest, erecting stone piles to mark the route, until they reached the North Platte (Bradley 1917:218). If the "Beaux Hommes" whom Verendrye met in 1742 were the Crow, than at least some Crow bands were in the country near the Little Missouri at that time. Attacks by the Snakes (Shoshone) probably encouraged a migration into the Yellowstone valley (Hyde 1959:140). In 1770-80 Cheyenne and Arapaho
drove a group of River Crow from the Little Missouri. These Crow went north and joined the Atsina (an Algonkian group also known as the Gros Ventre of the Prairie, not to be confused with the Siouan-speaking Hidatsa, or Gros Ventre of the Missouri). It is probable that these Crow left some of the temporary camp sites with associated pottery along the Yellowstone described later in this paper (Ibid: 177).

Most sources agree that by the last quarter of the 18th century the Crow were leading a semi-sedentary life on the Platte, living at least part of the time in earth lodges and raising corn, hunting buffalo part of the year. Around 1777 or 1780 the Crow and the Hidatsa (also known as the Minnetaries and the Gros Ventre of the Missouri) separated. The reason commonly given for the separation is a quarrel between the two groups over the distribution of meat during a famine, the Crow allegedly being insulted by the offer of only the manifold, or first stomach of a bison. The Hidatsa call the Crow "Kihatsa", they who refused the stomach (Matthews 1877: 39). Curtis supplies more details. The quarrel, he says, occurred on Heart River, between the Shiptatsse and the Awatuhere bands of the Midhokats. The Shiptatsse band, under No Vitals, migrated west to become the Crow; the Awatuhere, under Red Scout, stayed on the Missouri and became the Hidatsa (Curtis 1909: vol.4: 38). Lowie states that the Hidatsa once had four villages on the Knife River, with a fifth in the middle, called Heroroke (among them). The latter were the ancestors of the Crow, who separated from the Hidatsa when the group was situated on the Missouri (1912: 183). In the same place, Lowie notes that the theme of separation because of a quarrel over meat is a common one and cannot be accepted uncritically as historical. The date of the separation is in dispute also. Denig puts it at about 1774 (1961: 137); Matthews says it
was at least by 1777, and probably around 1677. Curtis, by estimating the years of the fourteen chiefs between the legendary No Vitals and 1914, places the separation at about 1676 (p. 38). Lowie guesses that the split occurred in the fifteenth century (1935:4). According to Lowie the dating depends on whether the separation occurred before or after the Crow had abandoned their horticultural life for one of hunting (in Denig, 1961:138). Horses diffused to the Crow around 1742, and they could not have become full-time hunters before this time.

At any rate, it would seem that after the separation, the Crow moved northwest, toward the Yellowstone. The Hidatsa also moved north, joining the Mandan on Heart River, then moving still more north to the Knife River, building earth lodge villages. The Hidatsa absorbed many Mandan traits, especially those associated with the corn complex, and remained in close contact with them. More will be said about both these tribes later.

Several archaeological sites are described by Mulloy as indicating a westward movement of Mandan-Hidatsa culture; the Crow are probably responsible for at least part of this material (1952:124-39). The first phase of the movement is illustrated by Ludlow Cave in northwestern South Dakota, the Hagen site near Glendive, Montana, and the Ash Coulee site near Terry, Montana. These yielded potsherds, points, beads, etc., of Mandan-Hidatsa type, as well as coiled pottery. In the second phase, illustrated by a prehistoric village stratum in the Hagen site, there are many cache pits, suggestive of a corn-based economy. This site also had Mandan-type pottery, with some differences from the pottery of the first phase. Phase three had pottery similar to that of phase two. In Ash Coulee during this phase, there were no permanent dwellings, but rather
tipis. The associated tools and bones indicate an increasing dependence on hunting large game for food. These sites are thoroughly described by Mulloy (1952:131). Some villages of log lodges which may be Crow have been found along the Yellowstone. Mandan-Hidatsa potsherds are associated with these villages. Also of possible Crow origin are stone piles in the Dakotas and Yellowstone country, with associated Mandan-Hidatsa sherds; the old Crow woman's statement (see above) would support this identification. Pictograph Cave near Billings, Montana, has more of the same type of sherds. Crow informants told Mulloy that their ancestors constructed log lodges. They avoid Pictograph Cave for religious reasons, and also continue to put rocks on stone piles, but there is no conclusive evidence that these sites are Crow (Ibid.:133). However, sites along the Yellowstone may be regarded in part as ancestral Crow, and reflect further cultural reorientation from their sedentary life as raisers of corn. Remains at these sites suggest nomads, who moved in small groups and were dependent on bison and other game. There is no evidence of horticulture or earth lodges; pottery is simple and sherds are fewer, suggesting its decreasing importance (Ibid.:133).

Even for the later migrations of the Crow there is no conclusive archaeological evidence; there is even less evidence to indicate their ancestral home. Along with other Siouan-speaking groups, they wandered onto the Plains from the East, or possibly the Southeast, living in semi-sedentary villages, gaining at least part of their food supply from grains, if tradition can be trusted. They may have lived for some time in Kansas, before moving north to the Platte River, in Nebraska. From here, their wanderings are more definitely charted. While on the Missouri or one of its tributaries, part of the tribe split off to become the Hidatsa,
adopting the corn-based culture of the Mandan. The other group, who were known as the Crow by at least 1795 (they appear by that name in Trudeau's journal (1914:22)) continued north and westward, changing their economy and culture to that of migrant hunters, a change made possible by their acquisition of horses. This change probably took a number of years, and was not accomplished by the entire group at once.
CHAPTER II
SOME TRIBES RELATED TO AND INFLUENCING THE CROW AND CHEYENNE

Both the Crow and the Cheyenne, in their migrations westward had frequent and prolonged contact with the village tribes of the Upper Missouri and certain Plains tribes, with consequent effect upon the cultures of these two tribes. Some of the important features of these tribes and their possible connection with the Cheyenne and Crow will be presented here.

The Upper Missouri can be defined as the region along the Missouri River from the mouth of the Platte up to the Rocky Mountains, and a large area of land on both sides. "The Missouri, with its tributaries, was the backbone of the whole region, and played a prominent part in the life of nearly all the tribes, even the most distant tribes in the Plains making occasional journeys to the Indian villages on the Missouri to barter and visit" (Will and Hyde 1917:34). All the tribes of this area using earth lodges had a complex social organization centering around the villages, clans, or lineages. The increased population made possible by the steady food supply may have been instrumental in the development of clans, which were matrilineal among the Mandan and Hidatsa, and weakly so among the Arikara because of the economic importance of the women (Eggan 1952:42).

The Mandan

Probably one of the first tribes to settle in this area was the Mandan. The Mandan are a Siouan-speaking tribe, most closely related to the Tutelo and Winnebago. Driven gradually up the Missouri River, around the beginning of the 16th century they reached the area where
the Heart River enters the Missouri, and it was here that the early explorers of the 18th century found them. The Mandan, like the Crow, have generally been friendly to the whites, and George Catlin and Maximilian, Prince of Wied, among others, have written vividly in praise of this tribe.

The Mandan villages were composed of earth lodges, and were surrounded by a wooden stockade with a dry moat within to fortify the village against attack, especially from the Sioux. The earth lodge itself was built by the combined labor of a man and his wife or wives. The men cut, hauled, and set the heavy posts and beams which formed the framework. The women did the binding, thatching, and sodding of the lodges. The finished lodge was occupied by an extended family composed of a man and his wives (usually sisters) and various relatives of the wives. The homes were arranged so that there was always at least one open space in the center of the village, where the "ark' was supposedly a survival of the great Flood of Mandan legend. While no lodges were built in this space, caches and corn scaffolds might be erected there. The lodges surrounding the open area belonged to prominent people (Will 1924:329).

The women owned the land, and did all of the horticultural labor which provided most of the food supply of the village. The main crop was corn, with squashes, pumpkins, sunflowers (grown for their seeds), and tobacco also important. In contrast to the Plains, wild plants were not a significant source of food. With the main tool a dibble, such horticultural labor was difficult, but the women performed their tasks willingly and with care, taking great pride in doing their work.
well. Although many visitors felt that this work was degrading to the women, this opinion was certainly not shared by the Mandan themselves. Young girls worked with their mothers (each wife owned her own plot of ground) and there was much visiting back and forth and singing of special songs. The scene was further brightened by the presence of young (and old) men, there to guard against hostile raiding parties, and incidentally to flirt with the young girls (Will and Hyde 1917:117). For fun, the young men sometimes helped to harvest the corn, as among the Hidatsa, A feast was their reward (Ibid.:93).

Bison hunting was done by the whole village. The earth lodges were temporarily abandoned, the families living in tipis (with a three pole foundation) for the duration of the hunt. Bison were hunted by surrounds, and on horseback. Unlike the vegetable products, which belonged to the individual women and their families, game was divided equally among the families of the tribe (Bushnell 1922:126). The food supply was supplemented by small game hunting and fishing, done by the men, who owned the fishing weirs and traps individually. Fish and small game were more important to the Mandan than to the other upper Missouri tribes.

Mandan social organization was fairly complex. Kinship was matrilineal, governed by exogamous matrilineal clans. Cousin terminology was the Crow type; Murdock says matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the norm (1967:110). No information is available on the incidence of pre-marital sexual relations, whether they were common, as among the Crow, or forbidden, as among the Cheyenne. After marriage, however, relations with persons other than the spouse seem to have been common. Virtue apparently was prized but rare. The marriage ceremony was simple, merely
an exchange of gifts between the two families. Sororal polygyny was quite common. After marriage, residence was either matrilocal (which was preferred) or virilocal.

Mandan sexual freedom was a feature not only of the social system, but was an integral part of many religious ceremonies as well. At some dances, men and women had sexual intercourse in full view of the entire crowd (Henry 1897:327). For most of the men's societies, the surrender of his wife for a time was part of the purchase price for a buyer into the societies. This appears to have been a well developed complex on the upper Missouri. The ceremony of buying into a society lasted twenty to forty days, and each night the buyers' wives would be offered to the ceremonial "fathers". Most of the sellers only took the women outside and prayed, for fear that bad luck would result if they took full advantage of their privilege (Lowie 1916b:308-12).

Women had other important functions in some of the men's societies. Four "Fox women" were appointed by their families (not by the societies, as in some tribes) to assist the Kit Fox society at feasts and to sing at ceremonies. These girls were unmarried, but two members of one Fox society later married two of their girls (Ibid.:298). This was a rare type of occurrence, as most societies called their girl companions "sister". The Mandan Bull society chose six Bull women; the Blacktail Deer chose two.

Besides the graded men's societies, the Mandan had four graded women's societies of a religious and social nature. The women in each society considered themselves "sisters" to one of the men's societies, and aided them with gifts and food. Lowie has described these societies, as well as those of the Arikara and Hidatsa, in great detail.
The Hidatsa

The Hidatsa were a Siouan speaking tribe, once part of the Crow tribe, and closely related to the Dakota. They were long associated with the Mandan, since they separated from the Crow and joined the Mandan on Heart River. Here, and at other sites along the Missouri, the Hidatsa settled down, planting corn and adopting the earth lodges of the Mandan.

While the Hidatsa earth lodges were basically the same as those of the Mandan, the village plan was quite different. The houses were crowded throughout the village, with no open space or distinctive medicine lodge in the center (Will 1924:330). Bowers (1965:22) states that "the Hidatsa never reserved a fixed ceremonial area within the village, nor... lodge orientation within the camp area". Malouf, on the other hand, says that villages may be arranged around a central plaza, and that one building might be set aside as a "dance hall" or ceremonial center (1963:148-51). Conditions may have varied from one village to another. The lodges themselves were constructed by both sexes, as among the Mandan.

According to Murdock, (1967:110) the economy of the Hidatsa had a slightly different emphasis, possibly a holdover from their previous nomadic life. The Mandan did little gathering or hunting of small game; six to fifteen percent of the Hidatsa food supply came from this source. Sixteen to twenty percent came from hunting and trapping, some from fishing (an important source to the Mandan), and 56-65% (more than the Mandan) from horticulture. Women did the gathering and caring for the fields, which they owned, although the men sometimes aided in the gathering of crops. The main crops were corn, squash, pumpkins, and sun-
flowers, and tobacco for ceremonial use. Hunting and fishing were done by the men, who owned their own traps and weirs, as among the Mandan. Horses were the only animal raised (besides the dogs); any activities concerning them were participated in by both sexes, although men did much more than the females (Ibid.:112).

Exogamous matrilineal clans existed among the Hidatsa, but the basic kin group was a small extended family, generally polygynous (preferably sororal). The entire family occupied one earth lodge. Residence after marriage was generally patrilocal; descent was patrilineal, with terminology of the Crow type. The girl, as in the Crow tribe, had a great deal of choice as to a marriage partner. Marriage was accomplished by a simple exchange of gifts between the two families. Divorce was easy for both partners, but rare among the "better class" (Matthews 1877:53). Women, according to Matthews, were usually faithful to their husbands, but sometimes a married woman would elope. In such a case, the seducer offered presents to the husband; if he accepted them, his wife was free. If he refused the presents, the husband could kill her without fear of reprisal. By giving the eloping couple gifts, the husband gained status. However, if he should have taken her back, he has permanently lost status (Ibid.:54). A similar pattern was present among the Crows. The sexual practices of those Hidatsa who were not of the "better class" must have been somewhat different. An early visitor described the Hidatsa as being very loose morally, offering wives, daughters, and sisters for any small present (Henry, Coues ed. 1965:348). Henry's viewpoint was colored by Europeans' standards, of course, and perhaps part of what he observed was the institutionalized surrender of wives during purchase of membership in the men's societies. Catlin des-
cribed the women as beautiful and voluptuous, but did not comment on their morals (1903:212).

From their long association with the Mandan, the Hidatsa societies of both the men and the women had many points of similarity with those of the Mandan. As mentioned above, one feature of purchasing membership in the men's societies was the surrender of the buyer's wife. A single man would borrow a friend's wife for this purpose. The Mandan sellers would often refuse the favor, but the Hidatsa didn't, unless the woman was a relative (Lowie 1916b:22b). This wife surrender was a feature of the society in other instances. According to Maximilian, a woman might approach an eminent man, and by stroking his arm, invite him to have intercourse in a secluded spot. Indians desiring to get the blessing of another man offered their wives in the same way. Sometimes clan fathers were offered the wives of clan sons, even when no purchase was involved. In one particular ceremony, distinguished warriors invited the prettiest married women to join them in a special lodge covered with jerked meat. Each offered a fine horse to a woman, then enjoyed her favors in the presence of everyone. The husbands of these women gave their consent before the ceremony began (Ibid.:229). It may be noted that all of these instances involved married women only. Data is lacking on the standards of chastity for unmarried girls; the early visitors such as Maximilian and Henry did not specify whether the women whose "immorality" shocked them were only married women or if all the young women of the villages were involved.

As among the Mandan, women played other important roles in the men's societies. The Hidatsa Little Dog society selected four single girls to attend all their meetings, where the girls occupied the place
of honor. They joined the Little Dogs in their feasting and singing, and if any of their female relatives had food, the society was invited to share it. The Little Dogs never married the girls, and called them "maraku'ec", a term applied to male friends. One of these girls could still attend the meetings after her marriage, if her husband didn't object (Ibid.:271). The Buffalo Bull society also chose several women comrades who helped in the singing and sometimes prepared a feast for them.

Women's societies were fairly important in Hidatsa life. The Skunk and Enemy Women's societies, like the Gun woman's society of the Mandan, were associated with war. The Wild Goose woman's society, as the Mandan River and White Buffalo societies, was concerned with religion, particularly religious ceremonies to insure the food supply. The Hidatsa also had an Old Women's society, composed of the women who performed sacred bundle ceremonies, and who performed when an enemy had been killed (Ibid.:338-9). These societies included some social functions, e.g., if a woman became sick, her society would plant her garden (Ibid.:324). Like the corresponding Mandan groups, the women in a society were "friends" with the men in one of the men's societies; they helped each other buy membership into new societies, gave each other feasts, etc. The Goose society would hand up meat sometimes, and a men's society would ritually steal it, leaving blankets (Ibid.:334).

Because of the long association of the Mandan and the Hidatsa, it is difficult to determine which elements of the cultures are indigenous to the groups, and which have been borrowed from on another.
The Arikara

The third village tribe, the Arikara, spoke a Caddoan language, and were closely related to the Pawnee. They migrated slowly northward, and according to Swanton, probably influenced the Upper Missouri tribes in their horticultural practices (1952:275). In 1770, they were located a little below the Cheyenne River. Lewis and Clark (1805) found them between the Grand and Cannonball rivers. By 1825 the Arikara had settled on the Missouri, and in 1851 were on the Heart River.

The earth lodges of the Arikara were quite similar to those of the Mandan and Hidatsa. Tipis (with a 3-pole foundation) were used on the buffalo hunts. In addition, log cabins as well as earth lodges were in an Arikara village near Fort Berthold. The villages were arranged around a central open space, like the Mandan villages, but instead of the Mandan "ark of the first man," a place of refuge called the sacred lodge was in the clear area (Will 1924:329).

Arikara economy was essentially the same as that of the Mandan. Twenty-five to thirty-five percent was based on hunting and trapping, 16-25% on fishing, and 45-55% on agriculture (Murdock 1967:110). The men hunted, trapped, fished, and cared for the horses. The women performed all the horticultural activities. The main crops raised were corn, pumpkins, and squashes. Inheritance of the land was probably from mother to daughter. The women owned all of the products of their work, including wild plants gathered. What was not used immediately for the family, or stored in caches for the winter, was traded for other goods. "Though the women do all the labor of tilling, they are amply compensated by having their full share of the profits thus accruing" (Denig 1961:46-7).
Like the Mandan and Hidatsa, the Arikara were organized into small extended, polygynous families, each occupying an earth lodge. Residence after marriage was uxorilocal; Murdock reports the absence of both patrilineal and matrilineal kin groups (1967:110). The closely related Pawnee were characterized by matrilineages, so it is possible that the Arikara also had matrilineages which have disappeared, leaving uxorilocal residence as a survival. It is interesting, to say the least, that this should have happened when the Arikara were so closely associated with matrilineal tribes on the Missouri. Eggan (see above) felt that the Arikara had weak matrilineal clans. Kinship terminology for cousins was of the Crow type, a further indication of matrilineality. Marriage was effected by a simple exchange of gifts. Polygyny, which was common, was generally sororal, a concomitant of uxorilocal residence.

By European standards, Arikara morals were even worse than those of the Mandan and Hidatsa. In 1794, Trudeau described them as generous, never robbing or murdering one another. But their women, he said, seemed to be "common property..., are so dissolute and debauched... that there is not one whose modesty is proof against a bit of vermilion or a few strands of blue glass beads". Daughters, sisters, and wives were offered to whites for any small gift (1914:460-1). Tabéau, writing about the same time, observed sexual relations between brothers and sisters, and found that such relations between mother-in-law and son-in-law were customary (something very unusual in the Plains area) (1939:181-2). Denig, about fifty years later, stated that "many of the Arikara families sleep indiscriminantly together, the father beside the daughter, the brother with the sister, and this is the only nation among whom incest is not regarded as either disgraceful or criminal (1901:53). By 1885,
customs seem to have changed somewhat, for Clark describes a "test-dance" to prove the virtue of married and unmarried women. If a woman was falsely accused, she went to her husband or father and asked him to give a feast and dance. During the dance, she took an arrow, touched a painted buffalo skull, and made a solemn oath of chastity. Any woman who couldn't pass the test was "put on the prairie," or as Clark puts it, "abandoned to the lusts of whoever might desire them" (1885:45). A similar test, though not with the same punishment, was present among the Crow, and may have diffused to the Arikara.

The Arikara, like the Mandan and Hidatsa, had age graded societies for both men and women. Some interesting points of similarity existed among the societies in the different tribes. Wife surrender was not such an established part of buying into a society among the Arikara, but it was sometimes practiced, particularly if the buyer wished to become a singer in the society (Lowie 1916:655). The candidates for the Crazy Horse society regularly surrendered their wives, but most of the sellers didn't take advantage of this offer (Ibid.:670). The Fox society always had two unmarried girls in their processions, and also chose a girl singer. The Foxes didn't marry these girls, but regarded them as sisters. The consent of the Foxes, as well as of the girl's fathers and brothers had to be obtained before they could marry. The groom and the Foxes exchanged presents, and called each other brother-in-law. The girl singer still performed her duties after marriage (Ibid.:677-8). This was an elaboration of a pattern present in Mandan and Hidatsa societies.

There were two Arikara women's societies, the River Snake and the Goose society. Membership in the Goose society was inherited from a
girl's mother, but a girl had to have ability in gardening. Both societies performed ceremonies to increase the corn supply. Like the corresponding groups among the Mandan and Hidatsa, the women in each society were "friends" of the men in another society, and aided them in feasts, etc. (Ibid.:676).

At this point, it might be interesting to note that despite the great amount of interaction, and influence the three village tribes had upon one another, each kept its own language. Although there were of course, many individuals in each village who could speak the language of more than one of the tribes, there seems to have been no sign that a common language was evolving.

Both the Crow and the Cheyenne were influenced by the village tribes. In addition, the Cheyenne had a great deal of contact with the Sioux and the Arapahoe, especially after they had switched to a nomadic way of life. For this reason, a brief outline of some of the important features of the Sioux and Arapahoe tribes will be presented here.

The Sioux

The Sioux, or Dakota tribe, was divided into seven politically independent groups, or "council fires": Mdewakanton, Wakpehite, Sisseton, Yankton, Yanktonai, and Teton. Each was further subdivided. The Teton and Yankton were the Western Sioux, and therefore the main objects of our concern here. The territory of the Sioux included the eastern half of North Dakota, all of South Dakota, and the northeastern part of Nebraska. Each of the different bands hunted in different areas. Sioux territory, except along the rivers, was generally too dry for the type of horticulture practiced by the village tribes. Large herds of bison
and other game animals roamed much of the area, except for the Black Hills; Sioux economy, therefore, was based almost entirely upon hunting and trapping these animals. Six to fifteen percent of the food supply consisted of wild plants and small game (Murdock 1967:110). Dakota women gathered prairie turnips, wild artichokes, wild peas, red plums, and choke cherries (Denig 1961:11). Bison, elk, black and white tail deer, big horn sheep, antelope, wolves, foxes, beaver and otter, grizzlies, badgers, skunks, porcupines, hares, rabbits, muskrats, and mountain lions were hunted for clothing, food, or trade (Ibid.:13).

The Sioux, especially the Oglala and Minneconjou divisions of the Teton Sioux, engaged in constant fighting with the Crow. In 1846, the Minneconjous became allies with the Arikara and camped near them (with consequent changes in the trade patterns of other Plains tribes); raids on the Mandan and Hidatsa were still common. After fighting with the Cheyenne for many years, they became friends after the Cheyenne moved onto the Plains, camping near them often, and allying with them against such tribes as the Crow.

Sioux social structure was typically Plains, and in many ways similar to that of the Cheyenne. Both patrilineal and matrilineal kin groups were absent; family organization was in the form of small extended polygynous families. Descent was bilateral; cross cousins were equated with one another, but differentiated from both siblings and parallel cousins.

Premarital sexual relations were forbidden. Murdock (1967:113) says the sanctions were weak, and such relations were not infrequent in fact. But other sources indicate that young girls wore the same chastity rope as the Cheyenne girls, and attempts to violate them would have
been greeted with the girl's butcher knife. Sandoz states that a man who violated a girl would be driven out of the tribe, and any attempts were punished by banishment from the camp circle (1961:73). Each lodge had an old woman, to do chores, and guard the virtue of the young girls. Girls were honored at puberty; there was a public ceremony at which she was instructed in the duties and ways of virtue. At this time she started wearing the chastity rope mentioned above, and she was now eligible for marriage.

If a boy was seriously courting, he would wrap his blanket around the girl and chat with her in the evening. If she accepted his attentions, he might leave horses tied by her father's tipi. If her parents took the horses, he was encouraged, and would ask an old woman to act as go-between and negotiate the marriage. Sometimes a couple simply eloped, but the more honorable way was for the groom and his parents to give substantial gifts to the bride's family. Residence after marriage could be either virilocal or uxorilocal. Ideals of chastity before marriage were carried over somewhat into married life. "A man who had been with a woman recently was prone to wounding in unexpected enemy attack" (Sandoz 1961:65). Children were usually spaced so no woman had more than one child too small to run in case of attack or other dangers (Ibid.:67). Sources do not say how this spacing was accomplished.

Divorce was easy for both. A woman who desired to get rid of her husband merely threw his things outside of the tipi; a man usually threw his wife away at a dance, by throwing a stick at the crowd. Whoever caught the stick took care of the woman for a while, but was not obligated to marry her (Ibid.:65). This pattern was present among most of the Plains tribes; sometimes the catcher of the stick was considered
married to the woman.

Certain ceremonies and societies also emphasized chastity and virtue. A society, borrowed from a northern tribe and composed of women of all ages, was called the Praiseworthy Women (Wissler 1916:70). For those women who had reached the age of forty and had never had relations with any man but their first husband, there was the Own-Alone society. When a feast was given, those who felt qualified gather in the open, where they were subject to challenge by the men. If a man accused a woman of infidelity, she could require him to take a solemn oath. If he did, she was pelted with dung, and run out of camp. Virtuous young men and women underwent a similar test. All the people assembled and dug a hole about 18 inches deep with a knife and an arrow beside it. Virgin girls reached into the hole, then bit the knife. Young men who had never been intimate with a girl or had never touched a girl's genitals (a courting custom) reached into the hole and then bit the arrow. If a girl pretended to be virtuous and was not, a man who knew the truth could throw dirt in her face or drag her from the place while the crowd looked on (Ibid.: 79). Similar tests of virtue were present in other Plains tribes, notably the Crow.

Of course, not all of the societies were of this nature. One very old woman's society, called the Shield-Bearers, was composed of the wives and relatives of men with many war deeds to their credit. They danced to honor these men (Ibid.: 76). The tipi makers seem to have formed a kind of guild, which was said to have served to elevate the craft. Women who were proficient in quill work had their own society, which had a somewhat sacred character, as it was founded because of a dream (Ibid.: 79). Such guilds brought honor to the women.
The men's soldier societies were of the type common on the Plains. They were ungraded, although men usually retired when they reached middle age. No purchase was involved. Some of the societies threw away wives at a dance. The better the wife, the greater the sacrifice, and it was considered a great honor to the woman (Ibid.:70). Some of the Sioux societies had virgin helpers, a common trait, as we have seen.

Both men and women could belong to dream cults, since either could have medicine dreams. Both got various powers from visions, and either could pledge a sun dance.

Sioux women voted equally in the council with the men. It is clear that the position of women in Sioux society was extremely high in all aspects of life, a characteristic also of Cheyenne and Crow women, as shall be seen.

The Arapaho

The Arapaho, with their close relatives the Atsina, form the most aberrant group of the Algonquian linguistic stock (Swanton 1952:385). They once inhabited the Red River valley in Minnesota and North Dakota, but migrated westward a little before the Cheyenne did. They too gave up a semi-sedentary life to become nomadic hunters, in northeastern Wyoming. Soon after they arrived on the Plains, the Atsina, perhaps forced north by the Crow, separated and joined the Siksika Blackfeet in Montana and Canada. There were five major division of the Arapaho proper, once separate tribes; each spoke a different dialect. Within the last century, the Arapaho have divided into a Northern and a Southern band, the former living along the Platte and the latter near the Arkansas River. Treaties of 1867 and 1876 placed the Arapaho on reservations.
Always allied with the Cheyenne, in 1840 the Arapaho made peace with the Dakota, Kiowa, and Comanche. They continued fighting with the Utes, Shoshone, and Pawnee, until the reservation period.

Arapaho economy was the same as that of other Plains tribes. Sixteen to twenty-five percent of the food supply was dependent upon gathering wild plants and small land animals; 76-85% was dependent upon hunting and trapping (Murdock 1967:110). The only domestic animals were dogs and horses. The men cared for the horses, which were owned by both men and women; dogs generally belonged to the women. There were no individual property rights in land, as there were among the village tribes, nor any rules regarding inheritance of land. Rules of inheritance regarding movable property were not fixed; most of a person's belongings were destroyed, buried or given away at death. Widows and children could be left almost penniless.

The tribe wandered in bands for at least half of the year, hunting. The rest of the year they regularly returned to a fixed camp. The average population of a community was from 200-400 people. Communities tended toward local exogamy, although exogamous clans were lacking. There was a good deal of intermarriage with the Cheyenne.

Descent was bilateral, although residence after marriage was uxori-local. Allcousins were called by sibling terms, and marriage with first and second cousins was forbidden. Courting followed the Sioux custom, in that a young man would hold the girl in his blanket and talk to her. If he became serious about one particular girl, he would keep it a secret until the formal asking for her hand. At this time, he sent a female relative to the girl's family with gifts of horses. As among the Cheyenne and other tribes, it was the brother of the girl who decided
who her groom would be. If the answer was yes, the old woman was told, then the young man waited until the girl's parents called him over. This happened when they had a new tent for the couple, and could be the same day. Her parents brought presents to the tent, generally outfitting the young couple for married life. When the boy entered the tipi, he and the girl were considered married. The two families had a feast, where one of the bride's male relatives told her the duties of a good wife (Kroeber 1902:12). Latter, the husband often married his wife's sisters as they came of age.

Instead of this more honorable form of marriage, a couple sometimes eloped to a friend of the boy's for a time. Then they brought presents to the girl's family, who in turn gave them gifts and considered the couple properly wed. Occasionally a boy ran off with a girl, but instead of marrying her, put her on the prairie (Ibid.:13). Tabeau, an early fur trader, described the Arapaho and Cheyenne as reserved and chaste, even in speech (1939:182). In Kroeber, on the contrary, the Arapaho men are described as "more reserved, treacherous, and fierce, and the women as more unchaste, than those of other tribes" (1902:3). His evidence does not bear this judgement out, however, and the Arapaho seem to have been at least as chaste as the Sioux.

Running off with another man's wife followed the same procedures as among the Sioux. The seducer presented the husband with presents through his ceremonial grandfather. If the husband took the presents, his wife was safe from his anger. He could take her back (unheard of among the Crow), or send her to her lover. If he refused the gifts, he could kill his wife without fear of revenge from her family, or merely cut her nose, cheeks or hair. Both men and women were jealous, and men
were known to kill their wives for looking too much at certain young men (Ibid.:114). If, on the other hand, a husband mistreated his wife for no good reason, her brother could destroy his property, and take the woman away from him. She was then free to remarry, but her former husband received two or three horses from the man she married (Ibid.:13).

Arapaho women shared extensively in tribal ceremonial life. Both men and women had visions and could gain supernatural powers. Women could also inherit sacred bags, as well as own them; these bags corresponded to the seven sacred bags of one of the important ceremonies. The dancers' wives played important roles in all the ceremonies; the women's society had a regular dance corresponding to the dances of the men's societies. This dance was the buffalo dance, performed because of a pledge. While it was an honor to dance, some women could refuse because of the high payments involved. As in the men's dances, there were several degrees. The dance was essentially religious in character, and one function was to increase the buffalo. While there was no quilling society such as there was among the Cheyenne, much ceremony was involved in both quill embroidery and tent decorating.

Summary

For nearly a century, the Cheyenne were living in earth lodges and raising corn. For part of this time, they were in close association with the village tribes of the upper Missouri. But surprisingly few of the traits of these tribes seem to have had much influence on the Cheyenne when they converted to Plains culture. With a nomadic existence, pottery making was discontinued. Traits surrounding the corn complex disappeared, except for the band which continued to plant corn until
As in all the tribes where wild plant food was important, Cheyenne women did the gathering. This trait is so widespread and general that probably no tribe practiced it as a result of direct influence from another tribe. Women owned the products of their own labor in most tribes. Among the village tribe, men were more likely to aid the women, always in building the lodges, and often in the corn fields. Gathering plant food, and all work connected with building the tipis were considered strictly women's work by the Cheyenne. As among the village tribes, women had definite property rights in movable goods which they produced or traded for. In the economic life of the men, fishing (practiced by the Cheyenne alone among Plains tribes) may have been a survival of earlier ways or may have been re-introduced by their association with the village tribes.

Similarly, matrilocality may have been retained from an earlier form or matrilineal descent (all studies show that the Cheyenne were bilateral), or adopted after their sojourn on the Missouri. In most social and sexual matters, the Cheyenne resembled the Sioux far more than they did the village tribes. Premarital chastity, so revered by the Cheyenne, was either missing or ignored by the village tribes; the Cheyenne and Arapaho may both have gotten this trait from their Algonkin ancestors. Marriage among all the tribes was generally effected by an exchange of gifts between the two families, except for the Sioux. Sororal polygyny was the rule in all the tribes, perhaps because of the matrilocal residence practiced by all. In all the tribes, adultery was usually handled by the presentation of gifts from the seducer to the husband. The Arapaho husband had the option of killing the adulterous woman; the Hidatsa lost status if he took his wife back. Cheyenne chiefs
were supposed to ignore the whole situation.

The military societies of all the tribes had virgin helpers. The Cheyenne probably absorbed this trait from contact with the village tribes. The ceremonial wife surrender during the Sun Dance which the Cheyenne practiced only between the chief priest and the pledger's wife could also have resulted from this contact. It certainly was in variance with the rest of Cheyenne culture.

The importance of women in religious ceremonies in general may also have arisen from contact with the village tribes. No data is available on women in the religious life of the early Algonkins, so this must remain a mystery for now.

Virtually the only contact the Crow had with the Sioux and Arapaho was in battle, so these tribes didn't have much direct contact upon one another. The Crow had many more links with the village tribes, particularly the Hidatsa. Such traits as dances diffused from the Crow to the other tribes (and vice versa) even after they were placed on reservations.

Like these tribes, the Crow were organized into matrilineal clans. Standards of premarital and post-marital sex relations were nearly as loose among the Crow, although ceremonial wife surrender was absent. However, wife hospitality was sometimes practiced, and may have been connected with the wife surrender of the village tribes. Marriage and divorce patterns were virtually the same as in the village tribes.

Although the Crow planted corn and other crops when they lived among the village tribes, after their split with the Hidatsa the only crop grown was the ceremonial tobacco. As among the Cheyenne and other Plains tribes, the men hunted and the women gathered. But young Crow men were more likely to help their sweethearts in their labors among the
berry patches. This may have been a survival of pre-migration days, or simply a trait borrowed from the village tribes. The log dwellings sometimes constructed by the Crow fall into this same ambivalent category of traits.

Crow women, like those of the Cheyenne tribe, held an important position in religious affairs, being indispensable in most of the major ceremonies. Since this is also true of the village tribes, it is impossible to ascertain the origin of this feminine role.

Although it is difficult to determine the full extent of the influence of the Mandan, Arikara, and Hidatsa tribes upon the Crow, it was extensive, and cannot be ignored in any study of the Crow.
CHAPTER III

GENERAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE CROW AND CHEYENNE TRIBES: 1790-1850

Clark Wissler (1917:206-7), when describing the Plains area, states that both the Crow and the Cheyenne are among the eleven of the eighty-one tribes considered as "manifesting the typical culture of the area". The chief traits of this culture area were the dependence upon the buffalo, very limited use of roots and berries, absence of fishing, lack of agriculture; no basketry or pottery; little work in stone, bone or wood; no true weaving; hide covered mobile tipis; highly developed leather working, hide clothing, special bead and quill techniques; and the circular shield. Characteristic of Plains tribes is the number and complexity of the ceremonials, especially the "Sun Dance", which is found in the same form in most tribes, although its functions differ. The "vision quest", an isolated fasting vigil to gain spiritual powers, is also generally emphasized. Men's warrior societies were ubiquitous, these societies were ungraded among the Cheyenne and Crow, despite their extensive contact with village tribes, which emphasized grading. Most tribes, again including the Cheyenne and Crow, utilized "medicine bundles," which seems to be a central and northern Algonkin trait.

Almost all of the animals found in the Plains were utilized by the Indians for food, hides, or trade. The most important (common names only are given) were: bison, pronghorn antelope, mule or blacktail deer, white-deer, elk, big horn sheep (in the mountains); animals hunted for fur include

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1. Before becoming typical Plains tribes, pottery was present among both the Cheyenne and Crow, and in the early 18th century, all Cheyenne women could weave grass baskets (Grinnel 1923:168). The memory of these baskets persisted well into the present century.
skunk, beaver, fox, lynx, weasel, mink, otter, black bear, grizzly bear, wolf, coyote, and muskrat; small game animals and birds include jackrabbit, prairie dog, hawk, and eagle (prized for their feathers). The most important animal of all to the Indians was of course, the bison.

Every part of this animal is eaten by the Indian except the horns, hoofs, and hair, even the skin being made to sustain life in times of great scarcity. The skin is used to make their lodges and clothes, the sinew for bowstrings, the horns to contain powder, and the bones are wrought into various domestic implements, or pounded up and boiled to extract the fatty matter (Hayden in Bushnell 1922:371).

Buffalo robes were also an important item of trade. Buffalo, as well as antelope were sometimes hunted by driving the animals into pounds or over cliffs. After horses were plentiful, these animals were hunted by chasing them on horseback and shooting them with arrows, which were preferred to guns. Other animals were hunted with bows and arrows and guns, or caught in traps.

The material culture of both the Cheyenne and Crow tribes was virtually the same. The Cheyenne women formerly wore the two piece dress of skirt and cape typical of the Eastern woodlands rather than the one piece dress typical of the Plains, and Cheyenne men originally didn't wear the skin shirts. However, except for decorative motifs, the dress of both men and women corresponded to that of their Crow counterparts after a few years on the Plains. All the clothing, as well as the tipi covers, was made from the tanned hides of the bison, elk, deer, antelope, and mountain sheep.

In both tribes it was the women who performed the difficult task of tanning the heavy hides. The basic tanning tool kit consisted of a toothed scaper (bone or metal), flesher, drawblade (a willow with a sharp bone splinter to remove hair), and a softening rope or bison scapula for working and softening the hide after the tanning mixture of fat and brains was
applied. Other household items of women included a stone maul, used to break up fuel, drive the tipi pegs, and crush bones, meat and berries. Women made spoons of horn, sometimes tortoise shell and wood. Water bags were formed of bison bladders and pericardia. Two types of dibble sticks were used to dig roots, both usually of wood, perhaps with a tip of metal, or a handle of antler.

For cooking food, fire drills rotated between the palms were used to start fires. Rotten bark or manure was used for fuel. Roasting or broiling the meat over the fire was common; stone boiling was another method of cooking meat. This consisted of lining a pit with a hide, filling it with water, then dropping heated stones into the pit until the water boiled. Food cooked more rapidly this way than on modern ranges and ovens. Soups of meat and vegetables were often eaten. pemmican was eaten during times of scarcity or on marches.

As already noted, agriculture was not practiced on the Plains. The only crop grown was tobacco, for smoking and for ceremonial purposes. The Cheyenne grew tobacco only until 1802, afterwards getting it from the Arikara and white men (Lowie 1963:27), but the Crow continued to grow it well into the reservation period. The implements used included a hoe and a rake for softening and leveling the soil, and a buffalo rib for piling the earth around the plants. Smoking pipes were either straight, or with a bowl projecting elbow-fashion from the stem; they were made of wood, pipes- stone, or soapstone.

Travois, drawn by horses and dogs, were used by the women to carry firewood, children, and most of the household goods when the camp moved. This crude vehicle consisted of two long poles (usually tipi poles) converging at the tips for attachment to the animal's shoulders; between the
two poles was a frame or a net to which the load was attached. Except for the travios, the other gear of the horse was adapted from the whites. The saddle the men used was a pad, or a frame of elkhorn tree and cantle with wooden side bars. Women used a high pommeled and cantled form more similar to Mexican saddles (Ibid.:44).

The weapons used in war and on the hunt included bows and arrows, clubs, spears, and shields. Bows were of wood or horn and were about three feet long. Wooden bows could be simple or sinew backed; horn bows were nearly always sinew backed. Arrow shafts averaged about 25½ inches. Stone, bone, horn, and later metal points were attached to the shaft with sinew; three feathers were attached to the butt end of the shaft. Club heads were attached to their shafts with wet rawhide casings. The circular shields were of buffalo hide, and sometimes had sacred significance.

Articles of white manufacture, particularly iron utensils and projectile points, and guns, had diffused to the Plains tribes some years before any Plains Indian actually saw a white man. The first to come were trappers and traders. In 1805, Laroque was the first white man to meet the Crow Indians; in 1917 Manual Lisa built his fort on the Big Horn River in Crow territory. Trudeau, writing in 1794, met a group of Cheyenne, and some French explorers were living with the Cheyenne bands long before Lewis and Clark arrived. But white contact remained sporadic for many years. Indian country was without settlers from 1821-54. Settlers started moving to Oregon in the 1840's; the Mormons headed West in 1847. After the Gold Rush in 1849, many settlers were brought into contact with the Indians, and it was not long before the "Indian wars" began.
The Cheyenne Tribe

Sweet Medicine, one of the two main cultural heroes of the Cheyenne, told his tribes as he was dying that they would one day meet men with light skin and hair, and long hair on their faces. These men would bring the Cheyenne many new things. When a starving man fitting this description wandered into camp, he was fed and cared for, and remained long enough to learn the language. After leaving for a short time, this man (possibly a Spaniard) returned with other white men, bringing guns, iron needles, and other articles which they traded for skins (Clark 1885:34). The Cheyenne first had contact with a Frenchman on the Missouri (some say at the mouth of the Cheyenne River) in the late 1700's. He had a two-wheeled cart and a gun which he demonstrated. Other Frenchmen also brought guns to the Cheyenne. The Cheyenne also traded with Mexicans, who wandered as far north as the Tongue River, bringing salt, bows, arrow shafts, and iron for arrowheads, which they traded for dried meat, parfleches, robes, and moccasins (Ibid. :35). Oddly, Lewis and Clark refer to the Cheyenne as shy and unwilling to deal much with whites. But the Cheyenne did act as intermediaries in British trade goods which they obtained at Mandan villages and distributed to other tribes.

One white trader, William Bent, had a profound effect upon tribal organization. In 1833, he requested the tribe to move near his trading post by present day Pueblo, Colorado. Some bands stayed in the Black Hills, and part of the tribe joined Bent. The Fort Laramie treaty of 1851 made this division of Northern (Omissis) and Southern (Sowania or Hevhaitaneo) Cheyenne official. This treaty also granted the Southern Cheyenne large sections of Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado. For this and, many battles were fought, especially after a treaty of 1861
reduced this land to a small bit in Colorado.

From this time on, the friendly relations of the Cheyenne with
the whitemen deteriorated into a series of battles fought by the Chey­
enne to preserve their hunting lands promised them in the treaties.
Marie Sandoz, among other writers, effectively describes this period in
her book, Cheyenne Autumn.

In her book (1953:8), Sandoz blames the enforced stay of the Chey­
enne in the late 1870's in the Indian territory in Oklahoma for some
significant changes in the mores of the tribe. Here, she says, there
was so little food during the long winter, so much sickness, so little
to do, that Cheyenne changed some of their old ideals and took on the
whiteman's quarrelling ways. Some men whipped their wives and children;
wives and daughters took off their chastity ropes and prostituted them­
selves to the white soldiers. Clark, on the other hand, wrote that
Cheyenne women were remarkably chaste while imprisoned at Fort Keogh and
Pine Ridge agency in 1881. He said these women were noted for their
chastity (1885:106). Both observations are valuable, because they stress
the chastity of the Cheyenne women during aboriginal times, famed through­
out the Plains area.

Lewis and Clark on August 22, 1806, described the Cheyenne women
as "homely, coarse-featured, wide mouths" (Thwaites ed. 1915,V:356).
Alexander Henry described the men as tall, stout, well proportioned,
their tents and dishes very clean, and the people very decent and modest
(Coues ed. 1965 1:383). To Washington Irving, the Cheyenne were a
"civil, well-behaved people, cleanly in their persons, and decorous in
their habits. The men were tall, straight and vigorous, with aquiline
noses, and high cheek bones" (1903:262). Most of the adult Cheyenne
males were over six feet tall, among the tallest of North American Indians. There are probably no pure Cheyenne today, and for many decades admixture with other tribes has taken place. While the tribe lived on the Missouri, they intermarried with the Arikara, Mandan, and Hidatsa. War captives from all tribes contributed their genes, too. Since 1840, they have allied and intermarried with the Sioux, also absorbing many Sioux customs; the same applies to the Arapaho.

The main tribal divisions of the Cheyenne are the bands. Mooney (1915:411) says there were four primitive and original bands, occupying the four segments of the circular camp enclosure. From this premise, he draws the conclusion that "Cheyenne tribal life was organized, not on a clan system, but on a ceremonial geographical basis, as determined by the four cardinal points". It is true that if a clan organization had ever operated in the tribe, it had disappeared before the Cheyenne ever reached the Plains. The bands were not exogamous and kinship ties cross-cut them. Curtis (1910 6:108-9) names five main bands: Hiar, Buffalo Aorta Shriveled, Dog Men (formerly a soldier society), Eaters or Omissis (now the name of the Northern Cheyenne), and Suhtai. Since the Suhtai joined the Cheyenne at a later date, and weren't fully incorporated until after 1831, this number is not inconsistent with Mooney's. When Grinnell studied the Cheyenne, there were ten bands, each still occupying its own place in the camp circle. He says that the members of each band were originally related, descended from a common ancestor, and that the bands were matrilineal and matrilocal, practicing exogamy (1923:91). Other sources do not agree with Grinnell's statement of band exogamy. The rules of exogamy applied to all degrees of relationship, but as stated above,
the kin ties cross-cut the bands. Matrilocality was the rule, and a child naturally identified with his mother's band, but he could easily change band affiliation when he grew older, if he wished. Marriage of non-relatives within the band was perfectly permissible.

"Among the Cheyenne and Arapaho the most characteristic social relations are those between kindred. Kinship relations not only prevail in everyday life but ramify through the other aspects of social organization as well" (Dusenberry 1956:39). Cheyenne kinship today is bilateral, although it may have at one time been matrilineal, as suggested by several early writings (including the above mentioned Mooney), and the presence of matrilocality. As mentioned above, however, matrilocal residence may have been borrowed from the village tribes. It may also have arisen after the arrival of the Cheyenne on the Plains. Such a custom would ensure several hunters for each household (important when the food supply is not assured, and enough women to prepare the meat and hides. The death of a spouse or divorce wouldn't break up the family unit and the children would be provided for. Women also had more security with this system.

The terminology for cousins followed the "Hawaiian" system, i.e., all cousins are called by sibling terms, as are the spouse's siblings; these terms may also be extended to friends and members of one's society, serving to draw the whole group together. Parents-in-law were called grandparents, which is common among central Algontcin tribes. Dusenberry notes the possibility that the Cheyenne maintained old forms of classification relatively unchanged, despite their adaptation to Plains life (1956:68). Conflict between son-in-law and mother-in-law was reduced by the usual Plains method of the mother-in-law avoidance tabu. Conflict
between daughters and their mother after marriage was avoided by the respect relationships which a child had with parents of the same sex. Relations with parents of the opposite sex (and parents' siblings, called "distant parents") were more affectionate, though never familiar. There was a division in terms of sex in practically every aspect of life but since it centered around cooperation, it drew the family together rather than otherwise. Brothers and sisters remained very close, even after adolescence caused them to observe tabus against being alone together. Sisters could influence their brothers in choosing a wife, and brothers had the right of disposing of their sisters in marriage. Siblings-in-law were possible mates because of the sororate, levirate, and the practice of sororal polygyny. These in-laws had joking relationships with each other. Grandparents and grandchildren also had joking relationships to buffer the disciplinary relations of parents and children.

The general orientation of the tribe was that of most Plains tribes, centering around the hunt, especially hunting of bison; and around war. War was much more a means of capturing horses and earning honor than a matter of defending property, taking captives, or destroying an enemy. The roles of men were thus emphasized, as the main providers and the defenders of the camp, and their exploits were a matter for great praise. But woman's role was by no means a menial one. Her contributions were honored and recognized. The Cheyenne placed much more emphasis than other tribes on the preservation of harmony within the tribe, and throughout the world. The great religious ceremonies were performed for this purpose and the contribution of every Cheyenne was important.

The Crow Tribe

When first met by the whites, the Crow Indians lived in an area
from the "north Platte river to the Yellowstone along the Eastern base of the Rocky mountains...as far eastward as the mouth of the Yellowstone and occasionally pressing northward of that stream into the valley of the Musselshell and Judith Rivers" (Bradley 1896:177). The reservation is today within this territory. Perhaps no better description of Crow country can be found than that of Rotten Tail, as told to James Bradley (1923:306-7):

The Crow country is in exactly the right place. It has snowy mountains and sunny plains, all kinds of climates and good things for every season. When the summer heats scorch the prairies, you can draw up under the mountains, where the air is sweet and cool, the grass fresh, and the bright streams come trembling out of the snow banks. There you can hunt the elk, the deer and the antelope when their skins are fit for dressing; there you will find plenty of white bears and mountain sheep.

In the autumn when your horses are fat and strong from the mountain pastures you can go down into the plains and hunt the buffalo, or trap beaver in the streams. And when winter comes on, you can take shelter in the woody bottoms along the rivers; there you will find buffalo meat for yourselves and cottonwood bark for your horses...the Crow country is in exactly the right place. Everything good is to be found there.

From the first contact of white traders with the Crows, the Crow tribe has been invariably friendly to the white man, even scouting for the white troops in their battles with the Sioux and Cheyenne. They proudly say that they have never deliberately shot a whiteman. The only tribal attack against the white invaders was an attack in 1834 on a fort which traded with the Blackfeet. The Crow were frightened off by a cannon.

Contact began early in the nineteenth century. Soon after Colter's visit to the Crow in 1806, Manuel Lisa built a trading post at the mouth of the Big Horn River in Crow territory. Also in 1807, Edward Rose left his party of trappers and joined the Crow, marrying one of the tribe, and
becoming a "man of great influence among them" (Bradley 1396:177). Other trading posts included Ft. Union, established in 1831 on the Yellowstone, Ft. Cass on the Big Horn, Ft. Van Buren on the Yellowstone, which stood from 1835-1852 and was replaced by Larpenteur's Fort Alexander, and Ft. Sarpy, built in 1850, the last on the Yellowstone River.

Early traders and trappers often mentioned the Crow in their journals, not always in the most flattering terms. Denig (1961:156) describes the Crow women as having "bad features and worse shapes, filthy habits...the young women are hard, coarse-featured, sneaky looking, with sharp small noses, thick lips, red eyelids caused by the venereal diseases. The old hags can be compared to nothing but witches or demons." Catlin (1913:56) said merely that the women had "glossy and beautiful hair, and a great profusion of it," although most wore it short. The men, he noted, grew their hair very long, even to the ground (he evidently did not know of the custom of augmenting the natural hair with lengths of hair attached by gummy substances). Most of the Crow men are six feet tall, and very handsome, he adds; the Crow head has a "semilunar outline, with an exceedingly low and retreating forehead" which sets them apart from other tribes (1903:58). Bradley (1917:207) wrote that the Crow girls turn old fast, and old women are the "most repulsive looking objects imaginable". He further (p.197) describes the Crow as having hair and eyes usually black, although brown hair, even among the young occurred often (a trait also found among the Mandan), but no baldness existed. Bradley also mentions that consumption, rheumatism and scrofula were the most common diseases. Venereal diseases seem to have been fairly prevalent later. Besides such physical traits, Bradley maintains that "as to their emotions, they do not exhibit the
stoicism usually attributed to Indians. Their passions are strong."
(1917:199)

Politically, the Crow were divided into three main divisions, which
were grouped into the politically independent River and Mountain Crow.
The break was between the Black Lodges, led by Rotten Belly (later the
River Crow), and the Many Lodges and Kicked-in-their-bellies bands
(later the Mountain Crow) led by Long Hair. It occurred sometime before
1825, as they are treated separately in a government treaty of that year.
Legend reports that the cause of the split was a fight over the division
of meat, but this is given as the cause of practically every disagree­
ment among tribal divisions (including that of the Crow and Hidatsa, as
stated above).

The River Crow roamed along the Yellowstone and Missouri, and had
close contact with the Assinibione and Hidatsa (reflected in the diffusion
of ceremonies of these tribes to the River Crow). The Many Lodges ranged
in southeastern Montana and part of Wyoming. The Kicked-in-their-bellies
band joined them in the Spring, but went to the country of Wyoming Sho­
shone in the winter (Lowie 1912 a:184). In 1835 the Mountain Crow num­
bered 480 lodges, the River Crow, 240 lodges (Bradley 1917:153). All the
Crow usually united in the summer to hunt buffalo.

The basic kinship divisions consisted of the thirteen matrilineal,
exogamous clans, which cross-cut the political divisions. These clans
were loosely grouped into six phratries, which were not strictly exo­
gamous. The closely-related Hidatsa also have exogamous, nicknamed clans,
but these are grouped into moieties. None of the clan names correspond
in the two tribes. Most of the Crow marriages were between members of
the same band. Band affiliation was probably simply a matter of residence
and could be changed. Fellow clansmen always helped one another; a clansman's wife was considered a sister-in-law just as was a brother's wife. The kinship system was classificatory, frequently disregarding generations. Parallel cousins were called by sibling terms, but cross cousins were called "son and daughter" (mother's brother's children), and "father and father's sister" (father's sister's children).

Although descent was matrilineal, residence after marriage was usually virilocal. A girl called her parents-in-law by the same terms she used to refer to her own parents. A man avoided both of his parents-in-law, although, as among the Cheyenne, this could be overcome by an exchange of presents. He had to also avoid his wife's brother's wife, and his daughter's husband. A man and his wife's sisters had an obscene joking relationship, since they were potential spouses. Avoidance was practiced, however, if the girls were already married.

The ungraded military societies were important to the men; there were no comparable women's societies as there were among the Hidatsa, nor the craft guilds which played such an important role in the lives of Cheyenne women. Basically the same sorts of pursuits were followed by both the tribes. But the Crow were more interested in living the good life and did not share the overwhelming concern of the Cheyenne with world harmony. Thus the outlook or "world view" of the two tribes was different, and this difference was reflected in the roles of the women in the two groups.
CHAPTER IV

SPECIFIC ROLES OF MEN AND CHEYENNE WOMEN DURING 1800-60

Cheyenne Women

Economic Activities

The period during the first 75 years of the 18th century, when the Cheyenne tribe lived a semi-sedentary life in the Dakotas, was probably the time when Cheyenne women enjoyed the greatest economic importance. At this time, raising crops provided the greatest source of food. The women were in complete charge of the cornfields, as among the true village tribes. Before the northward diffusion of the horse, women also played important roles in the buffalo hunts. The women and children helped form the drive lines for both the buffalo jumps and buffalo drives. They retained this function in the antelope drives which were performed well into the historical period.

With the arrival of the horse, changes in some women's roles were the inevitable result. As the buffalo were hunted by the men on horseback, the women devoted more time to the preparation of skins for market, the need for which greatly increased with the appearance of white fur traders and trading posts. The Cheyenne women also exchanged some "leather, robes, smocks, and dried provisions" for corn from the Mandans and Hidatsas (Henry, Coues ed. 1897:384). In most cases, the profits from these trading ventures belonged to the women; most were used to provide food and other goods for the families. As one woman could prepare about ten skins a year, and two women many more, an increase in polygyny probably resulted, as women were now capital assets (Jablow 1950:21).

The making of robes, tipi covers, quill and bead designs for par-fleches, dresses, and moccasins, whether for family use or for trade, was,
until recently, tightly controlled by "guilds". Each guild had a leader and assistants, all experts. Admission, as to the men's societies, could only be gained by costly feasting and presents. Initiates were taught all the details of the art, the technical terms, and the symbolism of the designs. Members were called moninieo, "women who have chosen" (Mooney 1905:145-16). So honored was the skill of these women, that when a new lodge was raised, coup was counted upon it by a prominent warrior. This warrior entered the lodge before anyone else. Obviously, a woman's future economic status depended heavily on her ability to gain entrance into one of these guilds. The authority of these societies and the association of the tipi with the Sun Dance and Medicine Arrow rite have operated to retard changes in the structure of Cheyenne society (Cambell 1915:685). That the women could prevent changes for so long is further evidence of the high regard in which they were held and their influence in tribal affairs.

Besides the quilling guilds, women had economic importance in the gathering of edible vegetable products. In one camp above the Grand River, the women continued to plant corn until 1840. But this cultivation was unusual for the period.

When digging roots, each woman owned the products of her own labor, although the women usually worked together in small groups. Women often gambled their roots against each other at the end of the day. The dibble stick, given to them by the Great Medicine Spirit, was the basic tool of this work. Because of its origin, the dibble had sacred aspects, and figured in the Sun Dance. There were two kinds of dibbles; a short one with a knob at one end which was held against the stomach when the digger was on her knees and a long one which was used as a crowbar.
Indian turnips and lily roots were the most common Cheyenne root foods. They were dug in the Spring, eaten raw, boiled, or sun dried to preserve them. Also common were prickly pear fruit, milkweed, thistle, and various types of berries. Camus and bitterroot, so common among Western Montana tribes, were generally absent, although some Eastern Montana tribes traded for these delicacies. The gathering of wood for fuel might also be mentioned in this context as an economic activity of women.

The Cheyenne women enjoyed their work, making it pleasurable by singing, visiting, and as mentioned above, gambling the roots they dug. They recognized the importance of their products for the health of their families, particularly in the winter months, when food of all sorts might be scarce. The men, too, gave some recognition to the efforts of their wives. If the women had been digging pomme blanche (Indian turnip) they might pretend to be a war party and attack the men on their return to the village. The men tried to capture the roots and then eat them. Hoebel (1960:61) describes this activity, calling it a "vicarious release of suppressed sex antagonisms". Both men and women seem to be poking fun at the pretensions of the men to superiority. This kind of statement is, of course, difficult to prove or disprove, but may throw some light on the actual status of the women in relation to the men.

A woman could also bring prestige and material gain to her family by becoming a healer, which she could do even before menopause. Powers of healing could be bought or received through dreaming and supplemented by teaching from another doctor. If a man became a doctor, so did his wife. The wife also had to learn certain secrets of healing. Women could become healers through their own dreams, without their husbands joining them (Grinnell 1923 II:128-9). The art of midwifery was a com-
mon practice for women. In contrast to these privileges, women in the
times were forbidden to dress coyote, wolf, and bear skins, because
of the great spiritual and healing powers of these animals (Ibid.:105).

While men could gain much economically from the death of a relative,
women seldom did so. If a man decided to give away his property before
he died, he often gave most of his horses to his daughters, because they
could not steal animals for themselves. But if he died first, his wife
and children might be left without much property at all. Most of the
property went to the male relatives; the widow could only direct to whom
the goods went. To really show her grief, the widow would give every­
thing away and camp away from the main body for a period lasting from a
few months to a year. She would eventually be reinstated, and reoutfit­
ted by relatives (Llewellyn and Hoebel 1941:217-18). When a wife died,
her male horses went to her husband. Her mares, tipi, and utensils were
given to a female relative. The husband was under pressure to keep only
one horse apiece for himself and his children, give the rest away, and
move away from the camp just as a widow did. Death thus caused some
redistribution of goods, but was unlikely to raise the economic status
of any single person. In fact, the status of survivors generally
decreased for a while.

Because of the division of labor along sexual lines, women were
economically very important to the Cheyenne family and tribe. Besides
gathering nutritious vegetable produce, women helped drive antelope,
butcher the buffalo which the men killed, dry the meat, tan the hides,
erect the tipis, and make the clothing for themselves and their families.
Skillful women organized into powerful guilds which influenced the
entire tribe. The regard with which a man usually held his wife was
proof of their mutual interdependence.

Familial Roles

The Cheyenne mother was highly regarded for giving the tribe more warriors. The life of a Cheyenne was so sacred that miscarriages as well as abortions were considered murder, and the mother punished accordingly. No data is available on the incidence of miscarriage, but abortion was definitely rare during this period.

Pregnancy was generally easy on a woman. She could not eat entrails, or wear belts, so the umbilical cord would not choke the child; there were no tabus on her husband. Most deliveries were uncomplicated. A woman's mother and other female relatives, plus a midwife were present at the birth; the only males allowed were medicine men. The husband remained outside helping a woman cook for those in the delivery lodge.

Both boys and girls were named after father's relatives, linking them to this side of the family. The Crow, a matrilineal tribe, followed this same practice. Father's sister usually named the girl, giving her a pony and a cradle board. Later the little girl would give gifts to her aunt; the relationship between the two was always close.

Very small children of both sexes played together, swimming and riding horseback. Small girls also engaged in "tiny play" which excluded boys. The "large play" of older children included both sexes; the girls set up miniature tipis and the boys shot mock buffalo and generally performed the duties of husbands and fathers. If adolescent boys or young men tried to join, however, the girls would run away. From the very earliest, girls were trained to stay around home. Her mother and father's sisters instructed a girl to stay away from young men. If one
had to go out after dark to gather water or wood, another girl (perhaps her special friend), or her mother would go with her. Even adolescent brothers and sisters had to avoid each other, although girls still made moccasins and other presents for their brothers, and brothers took an active interest in their sisters' affairs.

When a girl had her first menses, she told her mother, who informed the father. This event was celebrated by a public ceremony. After bathing, the maiden's hair was unbraided and she was painted red all over. Then she was purified by the smoke of a fire with sweet grass, cedar needles, and white sage incense sprinkled on it. After this ceremony, the girl and her grandmother went to a small, special lodge for four days. At the end of this period, she purified herself again. Her father made a public announcement of the proud event and gave away a horse. A few tabus were attached to menstruating women; anything of a sacred character had to be removed from the lodge before the girl could return. Married women sometimes slept in the menstrual hut to avoid endangering their husbands. While females usually rode mares by choice, menstruating girls were required to ride such animals (Grinnell 1912:14). After puberty a girl's status rose, as she could now marry and bear children. At this time she assumed the chastity rope wound around her legs, and wore it at all times away from home and at night. She was continually urged to act in front of young men in such a way as to keep their respect.

Though girls were eligible for marriage after puberty, about fifteen years of age, the average Cheyenne girl married at 17. Since boys didn't usually marry until they had proven their prowess as hunters and warriors, the average age of marriage was 21 for young men. In the old
days, courtship was a tedious process. Since adolescent boys and girls did not mix except at dances or while playing a special deer hoof-bone and string game, opportunities were few. The round dance and the scalp dance, performed at the end of a successful war party, were courting dances in which boys and girls danced together. The round dance symbolized the capture of the girls by the boys. The second movement, or slippery dance, showed that the girls had control over the boys, and also illustrated the influence sisters had over brothers. The final dance of the series signified the culmination of courtship and marriage (Hoebel 1960:77). When a boy became interested in a girl, he would dance with her at these dances and follow her around as she gathered wood, waiting for an opportunity to speak with her. If she seemed genuinely disinterested, one of various love charms might be tried to win her. Love potions were common. If his courting was successful, the suitor would send an elderly female relative as an emissary to the girl's lodge to plead his cause. If her relatives were agreeable to the match, the whole tribe investigated to make sure that the pair were not related in any degree; this remained in effect up to at least 1900. The Suhtai, however, sometimes married relatives (Grinnell 1923:1:93). If a young man was on a war party with the brother of the desired girl, he might cut a slab of wood from a tree, draw on it the figure of a girl and symbols of the presents he would offer for her hand. This graphic splinter was then sent to the war lodge of her brother. If the brother agreed to the match, he would draw another girl, along with the presents her family would give the groom. After the war party returned to the camp, the gift exchange took place and the marriage was consummated (Ibid. II:27).
The marriage ceremony itself was exceedingly simple. The groom would go to the girl's lodge and curl up outside. When all her family had gone, he joined his bride inside, and the pair were considered married. Later, a feast for all of his male friends was held to signify his leaving them. "From then forward, he would be found only beside his wife unless hunting or warfare took him forth" (Dusenberry 1956:111).

This type of marriage, by gift exchange, was the only honorable type.

If a girl was not consulted, and did not like her brother's choice of a mate for her, she could escape by elopement with a young man more to her taste. If her brother had already accepted horses from a suitor, thus sealing his pledge, his sister's elopement might cause him to commit suicide in shame. She was then considered a murderess for having caused her brother's death. Fortunately, elopement did not always have such tragic consequences. Young men actually preferred to elope as a matter of pride. The pair went for a few days to the lodge of his older brother or mother's brother, who considered the visit an honor. The usual exchange of gifts between the two families then took place and the marriage was validated. The two families sometimes exchanged gifts after the marriage because of the feeling that the groom's family should "look out for her" (Ibid:162).

In later years, elopement became more common. Courtship customs also changed somewhat and the Sioux method of holding a girl in a blanket and talking to her became common. Another Sioux technique, widely frowned upon by older Cheyenne, was for the suitor to visit his sweetheart in her lodge at night. He would try to touch her breast and genitals; this gave him a feeling of ownership. If he later decided not to marry the girl, however, she was shamed, considered immoral, and would
perhaps lose her chance for an honorable marriage by gift exchange. Hilger (1946:67) states that a woman who got pregnant out of wedlock lost her reputation, and was expected to marry the father of her child. However, she was not ostracized if she failed to marry, and no stigma was attached to the child in any case. Both this situation, if true, and the adoption of less formal courting customs might seem to indicate a definite change in the status and high regard formerly accorded to girls who remained absolutely chaste before marriage. In one recorded case of incest (between a father and daughter) in aboriginal times, no public notice was taken of the affair; however, no one would marry the girl (Llewellyn and Hoebel 1941:180).2

Polygyny was fairly common, but few men had more than two wives. A man's wives were usually sisters to insure peace in the family. The sororate claim was a privilege, not a right, as in some tribes. A son-in-law who was a good provider, and desired his wife's sister would give horses to her parents. If they accepted, he had a legal claim upon the second daughter. If she thought otherwise, he might feel he had a right to put her "on the prairie", but her family, and public opinion against the practice usually saved the girl. Both the sororate and levirate were practiced, but again, they were not compulsory. A dead man's brother would take care of the widow until she remarried, if he did not desire to marry her. A widow was free to choose whom she would marry; her suitors would give a horse to her father or brother, just as for single girls. A man who cared for his friend's body on the war path was

2. Today on the reservation, adultery, fornication, and incest among members of the nuclear family are common problems of the tribe, according to welfare workers in the area (personal communication).
likely to be given a sister or cousin of the deceased for a wife (Grinnell 1923:150).

In aboriginal days, before significant cultural changes occurred, adultery was rare. A man had the legal right to cut off an erring wife's braids or nose. Only one such case of mutilation was known to Llewellyn and Hoebel's informants. This girl was punished not for adultery, but for refusal to marry her brother's choice of a husband (1941:187-8). Suspected wives couldn't be tortured, as they could among the neighboring Comanche; a suspected wife could make an oath on the Sacred Hat and clear her name. There was no pattern of behavior for cuckolded husbands. In one case of adultery which happened when the husband was on the warpath, he put the case before his warrior society (the Elks). The seducer confessed, and offered to help care for the expected child. The Elks advised the husband to accept the offer and keep his wife, which he did (Ibid.:190). If a wife had been unfaithful more than once, her husband had the right to put her on the prairie, but this was not often done. Cheyenne women were definitely against the practice, and the men were generally ashamed of it. But in such matters, men did have more legal rights than women. A husband could punish an adulterous wife and prosecute the correspondent for alienation of affection, which a similarly injured wife couldn't do. However, "the legal difficulties which a woman suffered were few, while there were effective positive checks against malicious cruelty on the part of the husband..."; such cruelty was sufficient grounds for divorce (Ibid.:189). Public opinion was also effective, not to mention the fact that the relatives of the wife might beat an exceptionally unkind husband.

In matters of divorce, men and women had virtually equal rights.
A man dissatisfied with his wife could "drum her away" at the Omaha dance, throwing a stick representing the woman into the crowd. Whoever caught the stick had the right to marry the woman, or the obligation to at least take care of her until she did remarry; the Cheyenne had no alimony, but they held their women in such high regard that even an unwanted wife was never left alone and uncared for. The last Omaha dance was held on the Cheyenne reservation in 1899. A wife thus thrown away was disgraced, but as among the Sioux, it was an honor for a sister to be given away by her brother at such a dance. Apparently this practice was rare, however, as most men valued their sisters' happiness above prestige (Ibid.:181). A woman who had been divorced four times became a "free woman," or fair game for any man. She could only regain social status if a man gave her a religious ceremony of purification and then married her (Ibid.:181-2).

Absconding was actually more common than divorce, and was not considered immoral, as adultery was. A woman might leave a husband who mistreated her and become another's wife. The Cheyenne had no concept of a concubine or mistress—a woman who had sexual relations with a man, and who lived with him was called his wife (Ibid.:181). In such a case, the husband never tried to get his wife back as he might if she merely returned to her parents. A woman leaving her husband never joined a war party, as a Crow woman would under similar circumstances. The absconder gave gifts to the aggrieved husband, making the woman legally his. Often the chief acted as intermediary; the two men smoked to insure that the affair would be peacefully settled. If the absconder didn't send gifts, the husband would send the chief with his demands, or he might simply take one of the offender's horses (Ibid.:194). There
are no known cases of a married woman being stolen without her consent. If a woman returned to the lodge of her parents, and her husband failed to convince her or her brothers that she should rejoin him, she could remarry. But her new husband had to give horses to her former spouse before he would relinquish all claims on the woman.

Small children of both sexes remained with the mother when their parents divorced. Matrilocal residence insured that they and their divorced mother always had the security of a family. Older boys might stay with their father. The mother did (and still does) most of the raising of small children, with father's sister taking a great interest in her nieces, giving them presents, and disciplining them if necessary. Mother's parents also cared for the children, watching and teaching them. Father taught his sons to hunt and fight, and the moral and mental attitudes necessary to be a good Cheyenne man. The bulk of the socialization of the children, however, fell to the mother, and she constantly admonished her children in the ways of the Cheyenne. She taught them individuality and subordination to the greater good of the tribe.

Sweet Medicine, the aforementioned cultural hero, exhorted the Cheyenne to adequately space their children. The ideal was to not have a second child until the first was about ten years old, in order to give each child a chance to develop freely. Contraception was not used; abortion was considered murder. So after the birth of one child, dedicated parents made a sacred vow of abstinence as a great sacrifice to the gods. Intercourse during this period was believed to kill the child. This practice was probably related to the custom of vowing that a pony would have total rest for some months to enable it to grow strong. It is not known whether the vow of abstinence applied to a man's relations with
his other wives, although there are indications that it didn't (Ibid.: 263). When the second child was born at the end of the ten year period, the father would give away a horse at a public gathering. All the people praised the self-control of the couple (Grinnell 1912:15). Even if no such vows were made, lactating mothers were supposed to refrain from intercourse for five years after the birth of a child (Murdock 1967:112).

Grinnell (1923:128-9) speaks of the affection which (because of the marriage patterns) often existed between a man and his wife. He further states that the women are the actual rulers of the camp:

They act as a spur to the men, if they are slow in performing their duties. They are far more conservative than the men, and often hold them back from hasty, ill-advised action. If the sentiment of the women of the camp clearly points to a certain course of action as desirable, the men are quite sure to act as the women wish.

Even the folk hero, Wihio, was beaten by his wife until he acceded to her wishes (Grinnell 1961:223).

By exemplifying the traits of a "good" Cheyenne, by being a good housekeeper, modest, faithful, good-tempered, skillful at tanning and quill embroidery, a woman brought prestige and honor to herself and to her family.

Religious Roles

In religion, Cheyenne women had a somewhat ambivalent position. Menstruating women were considered dangerous to sacred objects, and were forbidden to go near them. Long ago, men would not smoke if a woman was in the lodge (Ibid.:179). Further, women were forbidden to look at the Sacred Arrows, one of the two great tribal fetishes, or participate in the Sacred Arrow ceremonies. On the other hand, in most of the other ceremonial activities...

3. The Sacred Arrow ceremonies, unlike the Sun Dance, were held irregularly, when the Arrows needed cleansing because of the murder of a Cheyenne by another Cheyenne.
major religious ceremonies, including those of the Sacred Hat, (the other
great tribal fetish) women played an indispensable role.

When the camp moved, the Sacred Hat bundle traveled on the travois of
the Keeper's wife. The Hat itself was carried on her shoulders. The
Hat directly represented food (bison) and was concerned with such things
as food, health, clothing, and shelter (Grinnell 1910:543); these are
surely feminine concerns. A woman could not be the actual Keeper, but
at one time (from 1953-58) a woman cared for the Hat until a new Keeper
could be chosen.

Various folk tales indicate that women, as individuals might gain
mana, or spiritual powers (Grinnell 1961:223). The usual method for
women to obtain these powers was through dreams, rather than the vision
quests which were common for men. As mentioned above, powers of healing
(especially in female ailments and pregnancy) were often given to women.

Most of the major religious ceremonies of the Cheyenne, as in the
majority of Plains tribes, had many elements in common. Various com­
binations of these elements were given different emphasis in each cere­
mony. For this reason, a description of one or two major rites will
serve to illustrate the essential roles that the women played, and their
status in religious activities.

In the Buffalo Men ceremony, the principals were the pledger and
his actual or ritual wife, the instructor, and his wife, who was the
painter and intermediary in initiating ceremonies (Anders.n 1956:94).
Other men who had been in the rite before assisted in singing songs. The
ceremony was pledged to cure a sick person. In the evening a tipi was
erected, followed by ritual smoking and feasting. The next day the
pledger and his wife were painted and the sweat lodge was erected. The
designs painted on the two people were identical, except that the man's were black and red, the woman's purple and red. In addition to these designs above the waist, the man was painted red on his legs (Ibid.:95). In the sweat lodge, after preliminaries, the pledger's wife danced in four movements toward a pile of white sand near the door. She picked it up, dropping it in five piles around the fire pit. Then she joined the instructor's wife outside the lodge. The pledger traced a ritual figure on the ground, first with ashes, then with red paint. At this time his wife reentered, traced ritual lines with the bowl of a straight pipe, ceremonially gave the pipe to her husband, then left. After more ritual, the pledger's and instructor's wives came into the lodge; all smoked, completing the ceremony (Ibid.:97). Obviously both wives were essential to the rite, as in most Cheyenne ceremonies.

In the Sun Dance (or Medicine Lodge, as it was known to the Cheyenne, and as it is still performed), women played an equally important role. In fact, women as well as men could pledge a Sun Dance, and form a club of former pledgers, which owned a Sun Dance bundle. When a man pledged a Sun Dance, his wife shared the rites in the lone tipi of the high priest. In preparation for the rite, the pledger and his wife, under pain of death, abstained from sexual relations from the time the vow was made until the completion of the dance. This period of abstainance could last from a few months to a year. (This is a further example of the extreme sexual repression of the Cheyenne.) The preliminary rites on the first three days included the cutting of the center pole, gathering of brush, ritual sweat baths, and erection of the main circular lodge. No special qualifications were needed to cut the center pole or perform some of the other preparations, as among the Crow. On the fourth day of the dance, when
the Sun Dance lodge was finished, the chief priest and the pledger's wife purified themselves. Then this couple had sexual intercourse, as a "great act of regenerative consecration...so that all lives may be born" (Hoebel 1960:15). (Dusenberry denies that this rite took place, but he is the only authority to do so.) The Cheyenne and the Arapaho were the only tribes to have this ritual wife surrender as part of the Sun Dance (Spier 1919:175). After this ceremony, the dancing began. The next day, the priest, assisted by the wives of the chief priest and of the pledger, built an altar within the dance lodge. This altar represented the "completed and realized earth" toward which the whole ceremony is directed. Through the efforts of the entire tribe, men, women and children, the harmony of the whole world had been preserved and renewed, and with it, the well-being of the Cheyenne.

In the Crazy Animal dance, the purpose of which was to insure the fecundity and abundance of the animal herds, the wife of the pledger played a role similar to the one she played in the Sun Dance. The other women participated in this dance by building the symbolic antelope or bison corral (Hoebel 1960:17).

Except for the quilling society, women had no religious societies corresponding to the men's societies, as women of the village tribes did. The Cheyenne men's societies were mostly of a military and social nature, rather than religious as among the village tribes. Except for the Dog and Contrary societies, each had four virgins as maids of honor who participated in the ceremonies and sat in the council of war chiefs. The girls were called "sister" by the members of the society (who could not marry them), and also "female soldier". They served as models of chastity for the whole tribe, and if any should lose her virginity before...
she married, it would bring bad luck to the whole group of warriors.

Women who had been to war, though few in number, were noted for their courage and skill. They formed a secret society of their own. The Paynes spoke of one such Cheyenne woman who "was like a chief, and they honored her more than a man" (Grinnell 1910:553). Dusenberry (1956:96) also mentions a woman's warrior society, and states that a woman joined a war party because she "loved her brother or fiancé". He does not say whether the brothers and fiancées of such girls approved their actions. And neither he nor Grinnell give any data on the frequency of these female warriors. Grinnell (1923 II:94-5) describes a few specific cases, presumably the only ones he was aware of. One was the sister of Chief Comes in Sight, who charged against the white troops in Crook's battle on the Rosebud, saving her brother's life after his horse was killed. In an attack on the Pawnees, White Frog's wife was attacked by a Pawnee carrying a hatchet. She wrenched the hatchet from his hand and knocked him from his horse. One of the last fighting women, Yellow Haired Woman, died in 1915. In an important battle between the Cheyenne and the Shoshone in 1868, she killed one Shoshone and counted coup on another. Marie Sandoz and other writers on the wars between the Cheyenne and white soldiers mention that women sometimes spontaneously seized weapons and fought fiercely when their bands were attacked by troopers. This reaction was not favored by the men, however, and they did their best to keep the women out of sight and away from the fighting. This was more in keeping with the general Cheyenne attitude that Cheyenne women were to be protected. The fact that the women who fought formed a special class or society, unlike their Crow counterparts, illustrates their difference from ordinary females. They might be honored for their bravery, but they
were certainly not encouraged in such pursuits. A Cheyenne woman earned more regard for her skill in feminine roles.

CROW WOMEN

Economic Roles

In economic matters, Crow women performed much the same sorts of tasks that Cheyenne women did, although there seems to have been less formal recognition of their contributions. Denig goes so far as to say that the Crow ate little but meat. The area has wild cherries, plums, service berries, and a few esculent roots. But, he maintained, "none of these were collected in sufficient quantities to form a resource in time of need...they depend entirely on the chase for subsistence" (1961:160). He underestimates entirely the importance of vegetable products in the Crow diet. Nearly all other accounts mention the digging of roots and gathering of wild berries by groups of women or by young girls and their sweethearts. These were eaten raw, boiled in soup, or crushed and added to pemmican. Other wild plants included wild turnips and carrots, bitterroot, and potatoes (Linderman 1932:30). In addition, meat was traded with the village tribes for corn and squashes. According to Murdock (1967:110), 16-25% of the Crow economy was based upon gathering wild plants and small land fauna. The sacred ceremonial tobacco was the only crop grown; it's cultivation and harvesting was in the hands of special religious societies, to which both men and women belonged.

As among the Cheyenne, and all Plains tribes, the main source of food was the large herds of deer, antelope, elk, and bison which roamed the Plains and near-by mountains. Bison were hunted by surrounding, shooting them from horses, by impounding, and by driving them over
cliffs. Women shared the important job of forming drive lines for both impounding the bison and for the jump drives. When the men hunted on horseback, their sweethearts held their pack horses. And of course, it was the women who packed the meat to bring it to the camp. There they dried some, pounded some into pemmican, boiled and roasted fresh meat for the meals. Some girls themselves, were skilled with the bow and arrow, at hunting deer and other animals, contributing thusly to the family food supply (Erlich 1937:335).

Hides were tanned by the women, then used to make the clothing of the whole family, and the lodge covers. Crow tipis were noted for their long poles, which extended as far beyond the smoke hole as they did under the cover. Some log houses were also found in Crow territory, but it is not known whether the men or the women built these dwellings. Men built their shelters when on a war party, and probably the sweat lodges. But women did most of the work connected with their homes. The tool kit of the Crow woman was essentially the same as that of the Cheyenne woman, tanning tools, mauls, dibble sticks, awls, needies for embroidery with quills and beads.

Crow women had definite property rights; a man could not sell or gamble away the property of his wives without permission. Women owned the lodges, and all of their household equipment, as well as their own horses. Daughters inherited these goods from their mothers.

Women could gain material rewards by having a dream or vision which gave them healing powers (usually of a highly specific type). Skilled women often served as obstetricians.

There were no special guilds or societies organized around feminine skills or duties, as in the Cheyenne tribe. However, the right to cut
lodge covers was special, a mark of both character and ability. Sewing of the covers was done by any woman (Linderman 1932:158). A Crow woman's satisfaction had to come from within herself, or from the recognition of her family and friends that she was performing the duties of a wife well.

**Familial Roles**

Both men and women could serve as obstetricians at the birth of a Crow child. Bradley (1917:178) notes that although natural sterility was not common and the pregnancy rate was the same as for any other group, Crow families actually had few children. The reason for this was the high rate of abortion. Bradley estimates as many abortions as live births, adding his belief that few women were harmed by this process. Denig wrote that two-thirds of the women practiced abortion, producing them by hitting the abdomen or leaning on a stick with the weight on the belly and swinging back and forth. But he adds that three fourths of all the women who die, did so because of this practice. In earlier times, abortion was not considered a disgrace, but public opinion by Denig's day (1655) looked upon the practice as improper.

Children were named by wise old women, or by great warriors. Girls often received nicknames, but unlike boys, would only change their name if they got sick, or their namesake died. Children were named for their father's clan, and given funny names so the spirits would take notice of the child, perhaps giving him powers (Curtis 1909 IV:25).

Young boys and girls played together, sledding and sleighing in winter, playing "house" in the summers. Grandmothers watched the girls, admonishing them to be good. After about the age of fourteen, mothers usually accompanied their daughters when they left the lodge for water,
Before puberty, girls wore little clothing. After their first menses, girls had to cover all of their body except the face and hands. The dresses were of mountain sheep skins, fringed on both sides, the bottom and neck, embroidered with quills around the neck and sleeves. Leggings went from the ankles to the knees. Oddly enough, the rule of keeping the body covered was disregarded every morning, when the whole tribe bathed naked together in the river. Maidens were supposed to bathe together in a secluded nook, watched over by an old woman.

There were no menstrual huts, either for the first menses or for any thereafter. Menstruating women only had to avoid sacred objects. Unlike the Cheyenne customs, a girl's puberty brought no ceremony or public announcement. This was probably because girls generally married (or at least had sexual intercourse) one or two years before their first menses, which occurred about the age of 15 or 16 (Bradley 1917:198).

Boys had no puberty ceremony, either. Boys married at 25, or earlier if they had counted coup. If they had not counted coup before they married, their wives could not paint their faces at ceremonies.

If a girl had a baby before marriage, its birth was kept secret. Some of the illegitimate infants were left to die, because a child without a father was very unfortunate (Erlich 1937:354). At least one affair before marriage seems to have been the norm (Denig 1961:153). Unchaste girls had at least as good a chance to marry as anyone else. They were not treated any differently after marriage; however, they did not enjoy the special status accorded to pure women. On public occasions pure women took precedence, e.g., when a young man distinguished himself, a chaste female relative led him about camp, singing his praises (Lowie
This double standard was especially evident in religious matters, and will be mentioned in that context later.

Courting was marked by much more freedom than existed in Cheyenne society. Sweethearts rode double, cut lodge poles, went on berrypicking expeditions together, danced and played games together. After a war party, boys would invite girls to ride behind them and "sing before a tipi." In the winter, young men pulled their sweethearts around on improvised sleds of bison ribs. If a young man became serious about a particular girl, he would take meat to her family, and generally make himself useful and welcome around her lodge. Finally, he would send a relative to her brothers and her mother's brothers. If they approved his suit, he continued sending meat, and finally approached the girl herself and asked her consent. If she said yes, he took her to his lodge and consummated the marriage. Many tales related how pretty girls refused suitors, so personal preference has apparently played a part in Crow marriage from time immemorial. The loyalty of women to their lovers, jealousy, and romantic love are also frequent themes in the tales (Erlich 1937:394).

The day after the wedding, the groom's relatives gave the bride an elk tooth dress (worth many horses), belt, leggings, moccasins, blankets, parfleches, everything that she needed to start her new life. Her brothers in turn brought presents to the new husband. For a while after the wedding, the pair were honored when the camp moved, surrounded by the husband's clansmen. The bride carried many blankets on her horse, as well as her husband's medicine bundle, shield and spear (Ourtis 1909IV:31).

Besides marriage by gift exchange, elopement was very common. If gifts had been exchanged, the bride's younger unmarried sisters became
wives without any more presents being given to the parents. A man might also take wives that were unrelated, or raise his female slaves (girls captured from other tribes) to the status of wives (Linderman 1932:73).

Curtis (1909 IV:1) says that "social laws rigidly adhered to, prevented the marriage of those even distantly related." This does not seem to have been strictly true. First cousins on both sides were tabu as mates, and all the member's of one's mother's (necessarily one's own) clan. It was probably not considered quite right to marry into father's clan, but such marriages occurred.

Wives might all live in the same lodge or in separate tipis. Lord Dunraven in 1874 said that the tipis held 15-20 people, with several families occupying one in common (Bushnell 1922:153). Probably he meant several wives and their children. Bradley (1917:206) says that each wife generally had her own tipi, and the husband visited each in turn. This would probably be more common if the wives were unrelated. A young couple lived with the husband's parents for a while, helping them obtain meat, then built a lodge of their own close to the husband's parents. This pattern of virilocal residence associated with matrilineal descent is fairly rare.

Although they might feel great affection for one another, adults never kissed in public. Men might, however, caress their wives or sweethearts. The terms applied to each other by a husband and wife depended upon the permanence of the marital situation. If they felt certain they would remain with one another, they called each other by name. If either felt they would be divorced, they called each other by another name, and referred to each other as "that one who is going" (Lowie 1912:211).

Women liked to have other women find their husbands attractive, as
it was a compliment to both husband and wife. A wife would get jealous only if some girl seemed likely to win her husband away from her. All young men, married and unmarried, had sweethearts in their own and other camps, with full knowledge of their wives (Marquis 1928:197-8).

For a wife to take a lover was cause for divorce, but her husband might offer her to another man. The myths speak of wife hospitality; one tells of the tragic consequences of a wife's refusal to give her attentions to her husband's guest (Erlich 1937:391-3). Clark (1885:134) mentions the prevalent custom of a man offering female relatives, wives, sisters, or daughters as a mark of hospitality, sometimes even selling the favors of their wives. Friends might surrender their sweethearts to one another. Sometimes, too, a young man who wanted to get some medicine from an old man would offer a wife as a bribe (Lowie 1924:77).

Besides such institutionalized wife lending, common adultery was not unusual for either men or women. If a man actually caught his wife in adultery, she would be beaten and probably divorced, but never tortured or killed as a Blackfoot, for example, might do. Sometimes her husband's clan members would rape her. A male adulterer might have all of his goods destroyed by an aggrieved husband (Lowie 1912:223). If a man took another's wife on a war party, the injured husband and his sister could, on the return of the guilty ones, beat the man and kill him if he resisted. On the other hand, if he submitted, and was beaten so hard that blood was drawn, he had the right to kill the beaters (Bonner 1856:406-7). Denig says all quarrels concerning women were settled by horses (1961:151). Maximilian claimed that the Crow women, along with the Nees, were "the most dissolute of the tribes of the Missouri" and exceeded all others in "unnatural" practices (Thwaites, ed. 1907 22:352).
One practice noted by most visitors to the Mountain Crow was the institutionalized wife stealing held every spring by two rival military societies, the Foxes and the Lumpwoods. During this period, which lasted about two weeks, a member of one society who had been intimate with the wife of a member of the other society had the right to abduct her. She might go willingly, or resist. If she begged very hard, her former lover might let her go. Sometimes the woman was informed in advance of the plot and joined him voluntarily. Some women hid until the period of danger was over. Whether the woman went willingly or not, under no circumstances could her husband help her or resist the abduction, no matter how much he hated to lose her. Not only would he lose status, but he might be tied up and rubbed all over with excrement. Then all the blankets of his society brothers could be cut up by the rivals (Lowie 1916a:164). The stolen women were given presents by the society, and exhibited as prizes in the camp. They rode behind men who had distinguished themselves in a special way, and were generally treated as new brides. After a short time, a stolen woman was usually discarded, free to remarry. Her husband could not take her back, or her would lose face. (Some apparently did, however, and justified themselves by citing a myth in which the cultural hero, Old Man Coyote, took back a stolen wife.) This practice was common even before the Crow had horses, as the stolen women originally straddled sticks and performed a dance (Ibid.:196-7).

Ordinary divorce was quite easy and frequent for both men and women. In fact, it was considered disgraceful for a man to stay with a woman for too long a time. A man might simply leave his wife, or throw her away at the Hot Dance (the same as the Cheyenne Omaha Dance). One woman threw her husband away at this dance (Lowie 1912a:224), but most simply left a
husband they disliked.

When parents divorced, children usually went with their mother, but retained ties of affection with their father; older boys might elect to stay with him. Crow were distinguished by "marked parental affection," wrote Kurz (1937:251). Parallel aunts and uncles were called mother and father, and treated the children as their own, so divorce seldom had a traumatic effect upon the children. And mother usually remarried.

As in the Cheyenne tribe, it was the mother who undertook the socialization of the children. Also attached to every Crow household was an old woman (often father’s mother) who helped the wife, made beds, and chaperoned the young girls (Marquis 1923:37). All the wives of the household (particularly if they were sisters and thus parallel aunts) were called "mother," and shared in the raising of all the children. Children were given much freedom, except when their noise or playing interfered with the adults. From earliest childhood, they were taught the tasks they would perform as adults: small girls gathered wood and berries with their mothers. Small boys were encouraged to be brave, "sturdy individualists," as Cheyenne children were, but unlike their Cheyenne counterparts, were not sexually repressed or forced to subordinate their individuality for the general good of the whole tribe.

The only time a Crow warrior put the good of the tribe above his own was during the annual communal hunt, when his conduct was enforced by the soldier societies. War parties were usually small and loyal only to the leader; men even then acted as individuals.

To the Crow, a "good woman" was "virtuous, skilled in feminine accomplishments, physically attractive" (Eggan 1955:77). Good looks were considered very important, and if early travelers did not find Crow women...
attractive, Crow men apparently did. If a woman was chaste, this was the best way she could bring prestige to herself and to her family.

Religious Roles

In religion, Crow women played important roles, a fact reflected in the ancient myths. In one of these legends, Old Man Coyote's wife is depicted as a cultural heroine who originates moccasins, leggings, tanning, and the making of pemmican. In another tale, she is prominent in a debate with another woman on how affairs should be arranged on the earth and in Crow society (Lowie 1935:132). Catlin, misjudged the place of Crow women when he stated that they, like all Indian women were the slaves of their husbands, being obliged to perform all the domestic duties and drudgeries of the tribe and not allowed to join in their religious rites or ceremonies nor in the dance or other amusements (1913 I:58).

As far as individual religious practices, Crow women were not disadvantaged. They could inherit medicine bundles (although not medicine shields [Lowie 1922:402]). Women often went on vision quests, received spiritual power, and even acted as shamans.

One woman's spiritual visitant, Eagle, sent her on the warpath, and she returned victorious. There are other stories of women going to battle and counting coup, though not necessarily because of spiritual prodding. One, a Gros Ventre captured by the Crow at the age of 10, did so well that she was given a place of honor in the council, took several wives for economic profit, and attained a position of wealth and honor equal to any man in the tribe (Deig 1961:195-200). In 1848, Kurz met a female warrior about 45 years of age, highly renowned for her skills in battle (1937:213). She may have been the same one mentioned by Denig. Beckworth loved another woman warrior, Pine Leaf, who was very feminine despite her
manly pursuits. When her twin brother was killed at the age of twelve, Pine Leaf vowed to revenge his death by never marrying until she killed one hundred enemies with her own hands. She became skilled at riding and with weapons, and joined many war parties. She fulfilled her vow, but apparently had no inclination to marry (Bonner 1856:175). While women were never encouraged to develop ability in the field of war, those who did so were allowed to join war parties, and if successful, were honored just as male warriors were. There is no evidence that these women were considered especially "masculine," or that they were berdaches. In fact, female berdaches are not mentioned in any of the literature on either the Crow or the Cheyenne. Those women who went to war because of their spiritual experiences may perhaps be compared to those men who became berdaches because of dreams ordering them to do so.

Women were not excluded from the sweat lodge, although they usually only went there for major religious ceremonies such as the tobacco ceremony, in which they played an important role. The tobacco ceremony involved many common rites, the altar, sweat lodges, incense smoking, facial paint, fourfold repetition, and other common elements. It was performed to benefit the tribe as a whole. Women as well as men could be the Painters, or Mixers (those who mixed together the sacred tobacco), and had the most important part in the dancing. Women planted the tobacco; some even had visions which directed them to organize new chapters of the ceremony.

As many women as men harbored animals within their bodies, which they exhibited in the Bear Song Dance. One woman, for example, had a horse inside her; during the dance, its tail protruded through her mouth. When a man was adopted into the Tobacco Pipe ritual, his wife was adopted also,
and was included with him in all the ceremonies (most rituals into which a man was adopted included his wife on equal terms).

The Cooked Meat Singing Ceremony, a feast given because of a dream, was almost entirely under the direction of women. The wife of the visionary supervised the making of special pemmican; the wives of the invited quests helped her. Men and women smoked the pipe, singing songs to the meat. Pemmican and loaves were distributed. Either a man or woman could have the vision which dictated the ceremony.

Either a man or a woman could pledge the Sun Dance, which unlike the Cheyenne Sun Dance, was held irregularly, to vow grief and revenge by someone who had lost a relative in battle. There was no world renewal ceremony, but the self-torture element was prominent. The Sun Dance was also an opportunity for women to demonstrate their chastity. One who wished to do so took elk droppings and scattered them between the rest of the tribe, who were lined up in two rows. She then walked along this path to the dried bison tongues hanging from one of the Sun Dance poles. After asserting her virtue, she ate a slice of tongue and returned the same way. If any man knew that her oath was false, he threw an arrow on the ground in front of her. This disgraced the woman and her family (Marquis 1928:137-9). Beckwourth, who also lived among the Crow, described the same rite, but stated that woman who was guilty of adultery was shot and hacked to pieces if she attempted the oath (Bonner 1856:243). This seems a little harsh, and as Beckwourth was noted for exaggeration, the statement of Marquis is probably more accurate.

Absolutely chaste women were necessary for several of the preliminaries of the Sun Dance ceremony. Before the Dance even began, the Doll
owner obtained a deerskin from his wife, which they took to a virtuous woman, who then bore it back to the Doll owner's lodge. The Doll owner smoked the hide, himself, and the woman with cedar incense, to prepare them for the Dance. The woman who performed the important and highly honorary job of tree notcher had to be chaste, and married by purchase rather than elopement. Afterwards she was respected, and always received the first share of food distributed; women sometimes refused the task anyway, because a tree-notcher couldn't remarry if her husband died. The firewood carrier also had to be chaste, but need not have been married by purchase. The leader of the expeditions to get white clay had to be a virtuous man who had never taken liberties with any but his own wife, not even his sister-in-law, with whom he had an obscene joking relationship.

In direct contrast, the period of preparation for everyone else was one of sexual license, encouraged by a crier through the camp.

Women shared equally with the men in the preparations and the rite, except for the self-torture in which the men suspended themselves from a pole by skewers through their breasts or backs. The branches and leaves for the tongue lodge were cut by five or six women who were notable good workers. Two women were included among the best singers for the first ceremony; women sung with the men during the other rites. After the first tree had been notched, a captive female painted a ring around the tree before it was cut down. Then young men and women, riding double, cut the other logs needed. A complete description of the Crow Sun Dance can be found in Lowie (1922), but from the above summary, it is plain that in this important ceremony of the Crow, the women played at least as necessary a part as the men.

Other ceremonies, such as the Chaste and Unchaste Women's dances,
were specifically for the women, though men were sometimes involved. The Chaste Women's Dance was simply a get-together for married and single women who had never had an illicit love affair. (Lowie 1924:361). In the Crazy, or Unchaste, Women's Dance, men were invited; usually only bachelors accepted. Men and women danced, hugging each other. Two couples danced in the center, then kissed. The men gave the women presents; sometimes the dancers got married afterwards. Another courting dance, which may have been the same, was the Goose Egg Dance. The Hidatsa and Crow did this dance together, and exchanged presents (Ibid.:362). In the Greasy Grass Dance, which held in the Spring, women dressed like men and carried guns. Any woman could participate. If a young man loved a girl, he would give her presents for a kiss (Ibid.:363). When a victorious war party returned, an old woman directed the young girls in a dance in which they grabbed young men while the old woman sang songs for the war party (Ibid.:364).

Although he has the typically European attitude that the ordinary labor of an Indian woman was "degrading," Beckwourth (Bonner 1856:180) still made an illuminating comment on the position of Crow women in their society:

All Indian women are considered by the stronger sex as menials; they are thoroughly reconciled to their degradation, and the superiority of their "lords and masters" is their chiefest subject of boast. They are patient, plodding, and ambitious, although there are instances in savage life of a woman manifesting superior talent, and making her influence felt upon the community.

Such instances were and are much more common than the shortsighted Beckwourth ever imagined.
Both migrating to the Plains, both the Crow and the Cheyenne lived a semi-sedentary life. Most of the food supply was produced by the horticultural activities of the women. When these tribes changed to a hunting economy, the economic importance of the women declined, though without a corresponding decrease in their importance in other spheres. Women in both tribes adopted the general economic role of women in other Plains tribes. This included gathering wild vegetable products; preparing and preserving all the food; erecting and caring for the lodge; tanning hides for lodges, clothing, and trade. Their economic roles, differed little. Crow girls were often accompanied by their sweethearts on berry-picking expeditions, a practice reminiscent of the young men in the village tribes helping in the harvesting of the crops. Among the Cheyenne, a little more formal recognition of their skills, particularly in the making and decorating of lodges, clothing, etc., was afforded to the women. But no significant differences existed; the roles were dictated by circumstances and the environment, which were the same for both tribes.

It is in the area of social relationships that the greatest differences lay. Childhood for both Crow and Cheyenne girls was much the same, similar in some respects to the childhood of little girls everywhere. They played with other children of both sexes, imitating their parents and other adults, erecting miniature tipis, playing ball and other games. With puberty the pattern changed.

For the Cheyenne girl, puberty meant a great public ceremony, the donning of a string chastity rope, and virtual seclusion from young men.
During her courtship she was constantly watched and guarded by her female relatives, lest she be seduced and disgrace her family. For the Crow girl, puberty was no important event, since she was already married, or had had her first love affair. She would perhaps have several affairs before marriage. Courtship was characterized by relative freedom, and many opportunities to associate with sweethearts. The marriage ceremony for both Crow and Cheyenne girls was the same, a roughly equivalent exchange of gifts by the two families. Elopement, while present in both tribes, was in neither the preferred form of marriage. In both tribes, the brother had the final choice of a mate for his sister, but a Crow would never commit suicide if his sister preferred another man, as a Cheyenne might.

After marriage, a Cheyenne woman remained circumspect in her behavior, even wearing the chastity rope if she left her lodge. Adultery was rare. A Crow woman didn't change much after marriage, either. Love affairs were frequent, and a certain form of wife stealing was even institutionalized. Divorce in both tribes was equally easy for men and women, and effected in the same ways. The number of children in each tribe was limited in characteristic ways. The Crow practiced abortion; Cheyenne women and their husbands practiced sexual continence. Socialization of the children was much the same in the two tribes. The Cheyenne put much more emphasis on tribal welfare, though they too, stressed individualism. In both tribes virtue was prized, though more for its rarity among the Crow.

In religion, the status of the women of the tribes was much the same, although their roles differed. They held a position almost equal to that of the men in most religious matters. Like the men, women could have
visions and dreams to obtain spiritual power, could pledge the Sun Dance, and also played essential parts in the other religious rites.

It can not be stated definitely how many of the differences which exist in the roles of women in the two tribes are the result of the different origins of the Crow and Cheyenne. However, evidence indicates that the Cheyenne have, indeed, retained many general Algonkin traits. The Cheyenne generally practiced matrilocal residence. For the early Algonkin speakers, residence was not matrilocal, but the man worked for his mother-in-law for two years, and always helped to support her. Such tendencies toward matrilocal residence could have been strengthened by the influence of the village tribes. Courtship for these Algonkin tribes, as for the Cheyenne, was a lengthy, carefully guarded process. Chastity before marriage was essential, and couples often refrained from consummating the marriage for some months. (Among the Cheyenne, a wife was allowed to retain the chastity rope up to fourteen days.) The marriage ceremony was an equivalent exchange of gifts, rather than a bride price, as among some Siouan tribes. Ceremonial ear piercing at infancy rather than at puberty was another feature shared by both tribes.

The Arapaho, an Algonkin tribe related to and closely associated with the Cheyenne, who also migrated west, also shared many of these traits. The Arapaho kinship system is very similar to that of the Cheyenne, being bilateral and matrilocal. Chastity before marriage was greatly desired. Although Dodge (1892:211) described the Arapaho women as "loose almost without exception", this may have been the result of extensive white contact. Like the Cheyenne, a husband often kept an adulterous wife, which was rare for the Crow. Women could have visions, and were important in the ceremonies. Since the Arapaho also adopted Plains
culture, it is difficult to determine which traits were Algonkin and which were incorporated later. But traits common to both the Cheyenne and the Arapaho which are missing among Siouan tribes such as the Crow are more likely to be survivals of their Algonkin origins.

For the Crow, the problem is even more difficult. They have many Siouan traits, but because they had a period of association with the Siouan-speaking Mandan and Hidatsa, both before and after adopting Plains culture, it is almost impossible to determine what resulted from this contact and which traits are survivals. Certain traits shared by both the Sioux proper (Dakota) and the Crow are likely to have ancient origins, as the two tribes are fairly closely related, but had no friendly contact after they had become Plains tribes. An Oglala ceremony very similar to Crow tests of virtue was the "Owns Alone" ritual, in which a woman publically proclaimed her fidelity to her husband. She could require an oath of any challenger; if any man so swore, she was chased out of camp with bison chips. A young girl who pretended to be a virgin and who was not was ridiculed and beaten in the same way. Each Sioux lodge also had an old woman to help the wife and guard the young girls. Except for the Sioux and the Crow, this does not seem to be particularly common among the Plains tribes. Sioux women had much religious equality, and apparently political freedom as well. Women voted equally in the council with men. Cheyenne women did not participate in the Council of Ḥé, although the maidens attached to the military societies were permitted to attend. But Kurz (1937:184) stated that the Crow women went to councils and "enter the discussions and make the braves listen to reason". Today Crow women enter aggressively into tribal affairs and also participate actively in extra-tribal matters.
The closely related Hidatsa share some traits with the Crow which may be survivals of their earlier existence together (or the result of later contact). Girls in both tribes have a good deal of latitude in their choice of a marriage partner, more than in most Plains tribes. If a married woman in either tribe ran off with another man, the husband could not take her back without losing status. In both cases, the seducer was required to give the husband gifts. The Hidatsa were matrilineal, almost certainly a survival of earlier days. Unlike the Crow, they were also matrilocal, probably because the women owned the corn fields. The men often shared in the woman's labor in the corn fields, as Crow men sometimes helped their sweethearts pick berries. The two practices may be connected; the Cheyenne men never assisted the women in their labor.

While the evidence seems to indicate that some of the differences between the cultures of the Crow and Cheyenne tribes lie in their different origins, such a conclusion can only be assumed at this time, and not stated positively.
GLOSSARY OF WORDS AND PHRASES NOT DEFINED IN TEXT

Levirate—the practice in which a man married his dead brother's widow.

Cross cousins—the children of one's father's sister and one's mother's brother.

Mana, "medicine"—generalized, neutral power, diffused throughout the world and possessed in greater or lesser degrees by certain spirits, men, objects, etc. In some tribes, this power may be bought; in others, it can only be bestowed by a spiritual helper. See "Vision Quest".

Matrilineal—descent traced through the mother.

Matrilocal—residence after marriage in the home of the bride's mother, or near her home.

Parallel cousins—the children of one's father's brother and one's mother's sisters.

"Put on the prairie"—to put a woman on the prairie is to expose her to group rape, usually for adultery or some similar offense.

Sacred Arrows—one of the two great tribal fetishes of the Cheyenne. There are four arrows, two representing men, and the other two, bison. If one Cheyenne murders another, the Arrows are polluted and the tribe will have ill luck in hunting and fighting. Therefore the Arrows must be purified as soon as possible. The Cheyenne never practice capital punishment, as this would also pollute the Arrows.

Sacred Hat—the other tribal fetish of the Cheyenne, originally brought by the Suhtai, made of a bison hide with the two horns of the bison. Like the Arrows, the Hat brings good luck in hunting and war to the Cheyenne.

Shaman—one who has received much power (mana) from the spirits, usually in love, hunting, gambling, or healing.

Sororate—the practice in which a woman married her dead sister's husband.

Virilocal or patrilocal—residence after marriage is in or near the home of the groom's parents, or of the groom (virilocal).

Vision Quest—a search for power from a spiritual helper; the usual procedure was to fast for four days in a lonely spot until a spirit took pity on the sufferer.
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