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PROPERTY-RIGHT IN EAGLES AMONG THE HOPI

By J. WALTER FEWKES

Spanish accounts of the extreme southwest, dating as far back as the middle of the sixteenth century, mention the existence of domesticated "fowls" or gallinaceous birds among the Pueblo Indians. As no direct statement concerning the uses to which these birds were put is made in the early chronicles, it is naturally inferred that they were kept for food, and the discovery of many turkey-bones in pueblo ruins would seem to support this conclusion. There are also found bones of the turkey made into various implements, as awls, bodkins, whistles, and the like, indicating that a great many of the birds were killed, and implying that they were highly prized for purposes other than food.

Few writers, early or recent, seem to have been particularly impressed by the fact that the Pueblo tribes of New Mexico and Arizona, like those of Mexico, domesticated birds, and comparatively little attention has been paid to this fact in studies of zoöculture among the North American aborigines.

Birds and dogs were the only animals which the Hopi had under domestication at the time they were first seen by Spaniards, in the middle of the sixteenth century. It may be instructive to consider the status of each in relation to the development of zoöculture.

The Turkey and the Parrot

Although there is no doubt that the bird with long, pendent chin, to which early Spanish travelers refer as having been seen among the Pueblos, was no other than the turkey-cock,[1] when our

[1] As pointed out by Winship. The first accounts of the Hopi make no mention of their having turkeys, but as the Rio Grande tribes possessed these fowls, they were also doubtless kept in the Hopi villages.

HP699

regarded, from the point of view of ownership, in the same way as is the horse, cow, or sheep,—eagles are property over which the Hopi have rights which all their number respect. Unfortunately, however, this right is often violated by white men or by the Navaho, who see no reason why wild birds should belong to a person living perhaps forty or fifty miles away. There are no other wild creatures which the Hopi now regard in the same light of ownership that they do the eagle.

As already suggested, proprietary rights with reference to the eagle inhere in the clan rather than in the individual; nests, eaglets, and adult eagles are owned by the whole clan, not by any one member, although the male head or chief of that clan represents its rights; he speaks of them as his property, and has inherited the right to do so through his mother. This is an ancient form of ownership which prevails likewise in the case of land, springs, peach-trees, houses, and other possessions. Some clans are poor, and own no eagles; but among the "wealthy," two members of the same clan may have nests in different localities. As a rule, however, the nests of eagles near village ruins are owned by the descendants of clans which once lived in their neighborhood.

Ownership of Eagle-nests Effected by Clan Migrations

As has been previously shown, the present population of Walpi is composed of descendants of clans which from time to time drifted together from different directions for mutual protection. Some of these clans came from as far north as Rio Colorado, while others came from the Gila basin and still others from Rio Grande valley. In their early migrations from distant pueblos to their ultimate homes, each clan halted at intervals, where towns were built but were afterward deserted. The sites of these abandoned villages are indicated by ruins which are very numerous in Arizona and also in parts of New Mexico. Thus it resulted that men of certain clans claim rights in springs

HP700

near ruins in which their forefathers lived, and at times of ceremony they revisit these ancestral springs to obtain water which is considered particularly efficacious in the performance of ancient rites; thus, also, certain tracts of land are regarded as the property of this or that clan. The present ownership of eagle-nests in the vicinity is a survival of a similar claim. A consideration, therefore, of the situation of eagle-nests claimed by clans is directly related to former migrations of the clan. In order to appreciate the bearing of the claims of clans to eagle property in different directions from Walpi, let us briefly consider the salient points in the early history of that pueblo.

In remote times there came into what is now the Moki reservation, several clans from New Mexico, which founded different pueblos, among them being (1) a settlement of Bear clans on the terrace below the present site of Walpi; (2) a pueblo, called Sikyatki, about three miles away, and (3) a village called Awatobi. At this early period there was a settlement of Flute people at Leñanobi, northeast of Walpi, but there is no reliable information regarding the origin of its former population.

In the course of time there entered the country from the north a group of Snake clans which joined the Bear settlement. They had formerly lived with the Horn clans, but in their southern migrations the latter separated from the Snake people and joined the inhabitants of the Flute village, or Leñanobi. When the Snake clans became well united with the Bear settlement, they were joined by combined Horn and Flute clans, which deserted Leñanobi. At this time there were three large pueblos near the East Mesa, viz., Walpi, Sikyatki, and Awatobi. The inhabitants of Walpi and Sikyatki had frequent trouble with each other, which culminated in the destruction of the latter town and the absorption of its clans by the former. The remaining two pueblos, Walpi and Awatobi, increased in size, each receiving increments to its population until the beginning of the eighteenth century, when Awatobi was destroyed by the people of Walpi, and its

HP701