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THE NAVAJO COUNTRY*

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PART II. THE PEOPLE

KISANI AND NAVAJO

The discovery of native tribes in northern Arizona dates from 1540, when Don Pedro de Tovar and Juan de Padilla, cavalier and priest, were guided by men from Zuni to the "Province of Tusayan." They found there a "very intelligent people" living in villages and successfully carrying on agriculture. No account is given of another race, and not until 1629 is the Navajo tribe specifically mentioned in the Spanish chronicles. At the present time the country between Rio Puerco and Rio San Juan is in the hands of the Navajos; but included with the Navajo lands is an area set aside for the Hopis, the modern representatives of the ancient race whose long occupation is attested by innumerable ruins. That the modern pueblos and the ruined dwellings, ancient terraced fields, and abandoned burial grounds are the work of a single composite race is not questioned by Hopi or Navajo, and, following the Navajo custom, I find myself using the term "Kisani" for the people whose occupation of this region has been uninterrupted for probably a thousand years.

HOPI AND NAVAJO

Though living within the same area and forced by proximity to intermingle to a slight degree, the Hopis and Navajos maintain their independence and as tribes are strongly contrasted in culture and manner of life.

The Hopis are small of stature, but agile and wiry and built to endure hardship; they mature early and die young. In mental traits they have no superior among Indian tribes; they are excessively religious and their social code is elaborate and complex. They are peaceful, quiet, industrious and home-loving, not, it appears to me, as the result of superior wisdom, but rather in consequence of centuries of struggle with natural phenomena. Their eyes are

*Concluded from August *Bulletin*, pp. 561-577. For location of geographical features, consult map there published on p 562. Figures 24, 25, 28 and 29 were drawn by Miss Gladys M. Wrigley, Research Assistant on the Society's staff.

HP916

turned toward the past; new conditions are met with reluctance. They have successfully resisted Christianity since the days of Coronado, and in other respects their response to the influence of missionary and Government official is negligible. Their one request is to be let alone; to spend the dying days of their race in accordance with the revered customs of their ancestors.

The Navajo, on the other hand, is tall, lithe, active, and enjoys out-of-door work and manly sports. He is independent but helpful and genial. There is nothing of the stoic in his mental make-up. He is intellectually alert and overcrowds the school accommodations. He belongs to the vigorous Athabascan stock whose branches extend from the Arctic Circle to central New Mexico. Navajo family life is clean and the position of women is probably higher than in any other uncivilized tribe. His social and political organization is based on the theory that leadership belongs by right to the wise and far-seeing. As a race the Navajos are increasing in numbers and in physical and mental strength. They look toward the future with hope (Figs. 19 and 20).

The Hopi, like his ancestors of the Kisani race, is sedentary, a village dweller and agriculturist. Through centuries of experiment he has become surprisingly skillful in selecting fields and caring for crops in a region where the white man fails. During the growing season his days are spent in working ground one, five, or even ten miles from his pueblo, to which he may return at night. Corn, beans, melons, supplemented by piñon nuts and the flesh of small desert animals constitute his food supply; and that his menu is not modern except for mutton is indicated by the presence of corn cobs, beans, and bones of various animals in ancient cliff houses. Both dry farming and flood irrigation are practiced, and that his mind is intent on water conservation is shown by the organization of clans and by the elaborate ceremonies devised to enlist the cooperation of unseen powers which are believed to control the rainfall. Endless toil and endless prayer, both designed to insure water for his corn crop, constitute the life of the Hopi. To offset failure and the ill will of the gods, Kisani houses, both ancient and modern, include a granary in which two to four years' supply of corn is stored for famine years (Figs. 21 and 22).

In marked contrast with the Hopi the Navajo is a nomad, a stockman adjusted to an arid climate. His normal place is on horseback; a walking Navajo is a rare sight. His hogan is a temporary structure of poles and mud or of brush (Fig. 23); his life consists in following his flocks from place to place where water and forage

HP917

ness of the fact that these native races, particularly the Navajos, have attracted the attention of the Government only during recent years (Table I). As yet the interchange of ideas between Indian and white involves the use of an interpreter. The absence of a white population and the inharmonious relations between Navajo

TABLE II—AGRICULTURE ON THE NAVAJO-HOPI RESERVATION, 1912

Agency	Agricultural Lands											
	Irrigated	Irrigable but not irrigated	Irrigation not necessary	Miles of ditches	Lands cultivated by Indians	Number of farms	Average size of farm	Value of crops raised	Grazing lands	Unfit for any purpose	Total
	acres	acres	acres		acres		acres		acres	acres	acres
Navajo Extension	20	500	.....	5	Not reported		Not reported		75,000	283,340	358,860
Navajo	.....	10,000	.....	*	10,000	2,000	5	$ 6,000	4,990,000	.....	5,000,000
San Juan	5,000	.....	.....	100	5,000	1,000	5	162,500	3,810,000	.....	3,810,000
Pueblo Bonito	Unknown			Unknown	400	200	2	1,388	1,500,000	.....	1,500,100
Western Navajo	1,000	12,000	7,300	45(est.)	1,000	400	2.5	10,100	3,020,347	358,700	3,379,347
Hopi	10	.....	3,999	*	4,000	1,500	2.67	22,000	1,568,320	720,000	2,472,320
Total	6,030	22,500	11,299	200	20,400	5,100	3.43	$201,988	14,983,667	1,342,040	16,520,627

* Navajo and Hopi together 50 miles.

and Hopi are doubtless responsible for the singular purity of the native stock. Tuberculosis and especially trachoma have gained a foothold from which they are to be dislodged only by vigorous exertion on the part of the present much undermanned medical corps.

HP918

at First Mesa and five at Second Mesa are now in ruins. By those unfamiliar with the historical evidence these ruins have been taken as proof of former larger population, whereas the old sites have merely been abandoned for new. In the Jadito district Awatobi, perhaps the largest of all the villages known to the Spanish explorers, was destroyed by war in 1700 and, as the chronicle runs, "the prisoners were taken to the sand hills of Mishongnovi for treatment." A few years ago the "stand pat" party of Oraibi seceded and built a new pueblo at Hotevilla.

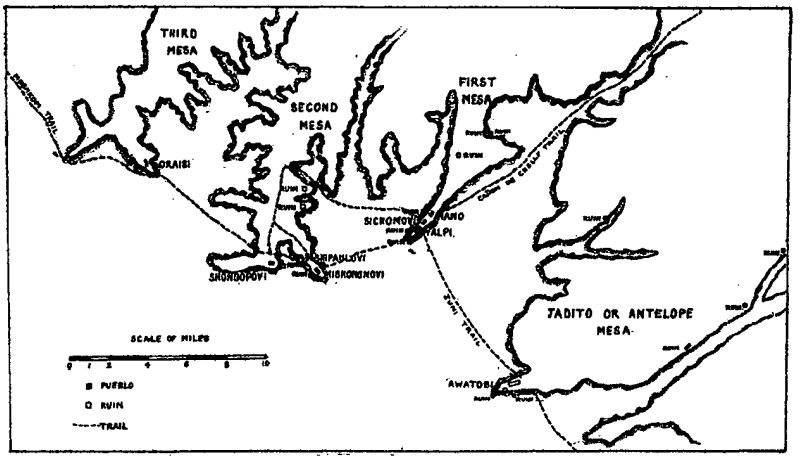

FIG. 24—Map of ancient and modern villages in the Province of Tusayan based on topographic and archeologic surveys. The villages represented by ruins are in unprotected positions, suitable locations before the advent of the Navajo but untenable during the raids of the warlike nomads.

Within a radius of ten to twenty miles from each Hopi village are a number of "suburban villas," some quite elaborate, which are occupied for four or five months each year by Indians whose fields are at a distance. For many years the well-built pueblo of Moenkopi, with rooms for 200 people, was occupied only during the growing season by farmers from Oraibi, forty miles distant. Since 1890 numerous small houses have been erected at or near springs in the foothills at some distance from the centers of population, and Fewkes[11] is of the opinion that children now living may see Walpi depopulated. This process of integration and disintegration of populations in response to the coming and going of hostile neighbors appears to be normal to Hopi life.

The source of the clans at Walpi and Sichomovi is interesting in

[11] *Bur. Am. Ethnol., 17th Ann. Rept.*, 1898, Part II, p. 580.

HP919

attains lengths of ten or even twelve inches whereas two to four inches is normal for common varieties[12] (Fig. 28).

5. Water for domestic use. The amount need not be large, but must be permanent and capable of protection. Flowing water on the Navajo Reservation is scarce, but springs which have been known to outlast three continuous years of drought are fairly numerous. For many years no permanent water was found at certain large ruins, but belief in its existence has led to its discovery at several places. At Burro Springs a good supply was found by trenching sand dunes. In Jadito Wash an ancient spring was recovered by removing talus; and at one of the largest ruins in Arizona, Kinteel or Wide Ruin, whose source of water was long unknown, excavation revealed a well which now furnishes water for 1,000 head of sheep in addition to supplies for a trading post.

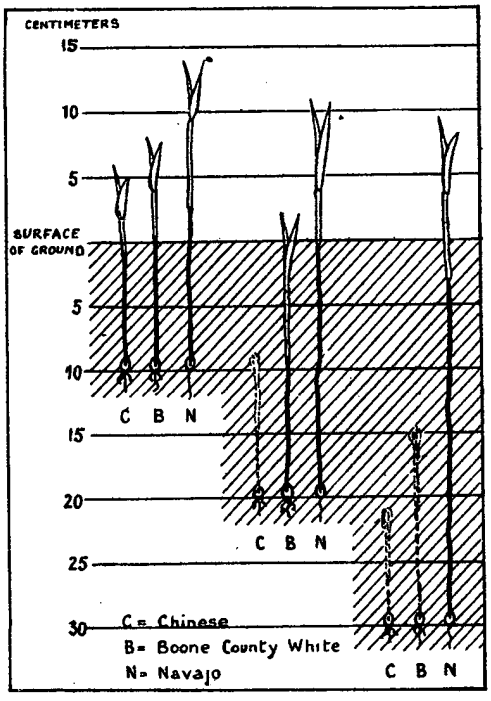

FIG. 28—Diagram showing the root habit of Hopi corn as compared with other varieties, indicating a remarkable adaptation to arid conditions.

In view of these facts, I see no reason why the present Hopis in numbers equal to the probable population of these ancient settlements could not succeed as agriculturists in the homes of their ancestors. In fact there is a well-authenticated tradition that a colony of Hopis, about 1750, reoccupied the abandoned fields and cliff houses of Canyon de Chelly.

It is interesting in this connection to note that the geographic conditions which controlled the location of settlements of the ancient Kisani race exert the same influence on the modern Indians, both Hopi and Navajo, and also guide the white man in his efforts to make the Navajo country more habitable. As shown on the map

[12] G. N. Collins: Pueblo Indian Maize Breeding, *Journ. Heredity*, Vol. V, 1914, No. 6.

HP920

mon occupation in 1878. The accounts of Indians, traders, and Government officials agree in placing the beginning of vigorous erosion at about 1885. Without considering at this time the factors responsible for this change of stream habit, two geographic results may be pointed out:

1. The number of perennial streams has been increased and their surface flow augmented. More water is available for irrigation by diversion, and a larger number of reliable watering places for stock has been provided. It is interesting to note that strata containing corn cobs, broken pottery, and remnants of ancient gardens are exposed in the banks of these newly made channels, indicating occupation during periods of aggradation and erosion alike.

2. Many fields, including some of the best agricultural land on the reservation, have been destroyed. The allotting agent for the Hopi Reservation estimates that 10 per cent. of the land cultivated by the Hopis in 1890 had been destroyed by 1910. This figure may be used as representative for the entire Navajo country.

The response of the Hopi and Navajo farmers to these changed conditions is suggestive. Many fields in the valleys were gradually deserted and the adjoining summer dwellings abandoned. New fields on the higher slopes were selected, and ancient plots on interstream spaces far removed from their present homes were reoccupied. Judging from the amount of pottery, some of these farms had been cultivated for long periods in olden times and the state of the ruins and the age of brush now occupying the fields indicate that they may have lain idle for 50 or 100 years. Other fields were selected in places where flowing water, revealed by recent erosion, afforded opportunity for irrigation directly from streams. At Moenkopi, where the supply of water has greatly increased, the temporary settlement has become a permanent, thriving village (Fig. 31). It is probable that the history of the Kisani includes a number of such episodes which involved readjustment, but not depopulation. The acreage now under cultivation, on the Navajo Reservation, so far as determined, has not decreased as the result of the changes during the past 30 years.

Conclusion

The Navajo country is a virgin field of geographic research; only reconnaissance work has as yet been undertaken. So far as present observations extend there is scant evidence of fundamental changes in the physical environment during the past six or eight centuries. Detailed studies may result in a different conclusion, and lead to

HP921