

## NOTE ON ARIKARA TRIBAL ORGANIZATION

This note is from information given by William Deane and is supplementary to information previously obtained from other informants in a paper entitled "Notes on Arikara Tribal Organization," published in *Indian Notes*, Vol. 4, pp. 332-350, Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York, 1927.

William Deane's family is one of those originally comprised in the village called *Tukstánu*, which means "Sod House Village." It was also designated as "First Village," being the chief village of the first group, the group at the northeast, which comprised *Tukstánu*, *Nakanustš* and *Níšapst*. In the age long northward migration of the Arikara nation the ancient twelve villages in their four groups, of three villages each, allocated respectively to the four quarters, maintained their relative geographic positions toward each other. The northeast group, with the First Village, *Tukstánu*, in the van, led out; then followed in their turn the group of three villages allocated to the northwest, of which the chief village was *Tukátuk'*, then the group of the Southwest, of which the chief village was *Hukáwirat*; last of all was the group of the southeast, their chief village, *Awáhu*, as the rear guard. The name *Awáhu* signifies "Left Behind," not in any disparaging sense, but only in relative position. The rear guard is considered no less honorable a position than the van guard. It is a prerogative of the *Awáhu* that any member of that village is privileged to take up and appropriate any offering or sacrifice which may have been left by others to the elements. Thus, an *Awáhu* has a right to appropriate a pipe or other object of value, which he may find where it has been left upon a lonely hill in sacrifice. Any objects left behind as offerings by any persons of any of the other villages in the progress of migration of the Arikara might legitimately be taken up by any *Awáhu* when, last of all, their village passed by that way.

Tradition sets forth that one time very long ago before the time of the Sacred Bundles, the village *Tukstánu* set out and traveled far away towards the west, but the other villages did not follow. It is said the *Tukstánu* continued traveling westward until they had crossed a range of mountains. They came into sight of a great body of water, which was so extensive that no land could be seen beyond. Then *Tukstánu* came

back and rejoined the nation.

During the time that *Tukstánu* had been away, the other eleven villages had been favored with Divine gifts and revelations concerning the Sacred Bundles. Each village had its own Sacred Bundle. These were all much alike in the general plan and import, but each differed from others somewhat in contents and in details of ritual. A Sacred Bundle for *Tukstánu* had been prepared and was waiting for them again their return. It is said that the ceremonies connected with the Sacred Bundle of *Tukstánu* are simpler and less developed in details than those of the other villages. To explain the comparative paucity of detail in *Tukstánu* ceremonies they say that, as this village was absent at the time when the other villages received instructions as to ceremonies, less complete instructions came to them than probably would have been given if they had had a personal representative present to receive such instructions.

My informant made reference to a difference of version of the Sacred Legend as he had heard it from that given by Four-rings on the first appearance of sickness and death among the people,<sup>1</sup> but he did not discuss the matter at length.

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<sup>1</sup>Gilmore, Melvin R., *The Arikara Book of Genesis*, Papers Mich. Acad. Of Sci., Arts and Letters, Vol. XII, 1929, pp. 102-103. Published 1930.