

BRINTON DANIEL GARRISON

THE LENAPÉ AND THEIR
LEGENDS

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Daniel G. Brinton

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PREFACE

In the present volume I have grouped a series of ethnological studies of the Indians of Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland, around what is asserted to be one of the most curious records of ancient American history.

For a long time this record – the Walam Olum, or Red Score – was supposed to have been lost. Having obtained the original text complete about a year ago, I printed a few copies and sent them to several educated native Delawares with a request for aid in its translation and opinions on its authenticity. The results will be found in the following pages.

The interest in the subject thus excited prompted me to a general review of our knowledge of the Lenape or Delawares, their history and traditions, their language and customs. This disclosed the existence of a number of MSS. not mentioned in bibliographies, some in the first rank of importance, especially in the field of linguistics. Of these I have made free use.

In the course of these studies I have received suggestions and assistance from a number of obliging friends, among whom I would mention the native Delawares, the Rev. Albert Anthony,

and the Rev. John Kilbuck; Mr. Horatio Hale and the Right Rev. E. de Schweinitz; Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull, Prof. A. M. Elliott and Gen. John Mason Brown.

Not without hesitation do I send forth this volume to the learned world. Regarded as an authentic memorial, the original text of the *Walam Olum* will require a more accurate rendering than I have been able to give it; while the possibility that a more searching criticism will demonstrate it to have been a fabrication may condemn as labor lost the pains that I have bestowed upon it. Yet even in the latter case my work will not have been in vain. There is, I trust, sufficient in the volume to justify its appearance, apart from the *Red Score*; and the latter, by means of this complete presentation, can now be assigned its true position in American archaeology, whatever that may be.

CHAPTER I

§ 1. The Algonkin Stock.

Scheme of its Dialects – Probable Primitive Location

§ 2. The Iroquis Stock.

The Susquehannocks – The Hurons – The Cherokees

§ 1. *The Algonkin Stock*

About the period 1500-1600, those related tribes whom we now know by the name of Algonkins were at the height of their prosperity. They occupied the Atlantic coast from the Savannah river on the south to the strait of Belle Isle on the north. The whole of Newfoundland was in their possession; in Labrador they were neighbors to the Eskimos; their northernmost branch, the Crees, dwelt along the southern shores of Hudson Bay, and followed the streams which flow into it from the west, until they met the Chipeways, closely akin to themselves, who roamed over the water shed of Lake Superior. The Blackfeet carried a remote dialect of their tongue quite to the Rocky Mountains; while the fertile prairies of Illinois and Indiana were the homes of the Miamis. The area of Ohio and Kentucky was very thinly peopled by a few of their roving bands; but east of the Alleghanies, in the valleys of the Delaware, the Potomac and the Hudson,

over the barren hills of New England and Nova Scotia, and throughout the swamps and forests of Virginia and the Carolinas, their osier cabins and palisadoed strongholds, their maize fields and workshops of stone implements, were numerous located.

It is needless for my purpose to enumerate the many small tribes which made up this great group. The more prominent were the Micmacs of Nova Scotia, the Abnakis of Maine, the Pequots and Narragansets, in New England, the Mohegans of the Hudson, the Lenape on the Delaware, the Nanticokes around Chesapeake Bay, the Pascataway on the Potomac, and the Powhatans and Shawnees further south; while between the Great Lakes and the Ohio river were the Ottawas, the Illinois, the Pottawatomies, the Kikapoos, Piankishaws, etc.

The dialects of all these were related, and evidently at some distant day had been derived from the same primitive tongue. Which of them had preserved the ancient forms most closely, it may be premature to decide positively, but the tendency of modern studies has been to assign that place to the Cree – the northernmost of all.

We cannot erect a genealogical tree of these dialects. It is not probable that they branched off, one after another, from a common stock. The ancient tribes each took their several ways from a common centre, and formed nuclei for subsequent development. We may, however, group them in such a manner as roughly to indicate their relationship. This I do on the following page: —

Cree,
Old Algonkin,
Montagnais.
Chipeway,
Ottawa,
Pottawattomie,
Miami,
Peoria,
Pea,
Piankishaw,
Kaskaskia,
Menominee,
Sac,
Fox,
Kikapoo.
Sheshatapoosh,
Secoffee,
Micmac,
Melisceet,
Etchemin,
Abnaki.
Mohegan,
Massachusetts,
Shawnee,
Minsi, }
Unami, }

Unalachtigo,}
Nanticoke,
Powhatan,
Pampticoke.
Blackfoot,
Gros Ventre,
Sheyenne.

Granting, as we must, some common geographical centre for these many dialects, the question where this was located becomes an interesting one.

More than one attempt to answer it has been made. Mr. Lewis H. Morgan thought there was evidence to show that the valley of the Columbia river, Oregon, "was the initial point from which the Algonkin stock emigrated to the great lake region and thence to the Atlantic coast."¹ This is in direct conflict with the evidence of language, as the Blackfoot or Satsika is the most corrupt and altered of the Algonkin dialects. Basing his argument on this evidence, Mr. Horatio Hale reaches a conclusion precisely the reverse of that of Morgan. "The course of migration of the Indian tribes," writes Mr. Hale, "has been from the Atlantic coast westward and southward. The traditions of the Algonkins seem to point to Hudson's Bay and the coast of Labrador."² This latter view is certainly that which accords best with the testimony of language and of history.

We know that both Chipeways and Crees have been steadily pressing westward since their country was first explored, driving

before them the Blackfeet and Dakotas.³

The Cree language is built up on a few simple, unchangeable radicals and elementary words, denoting being, relation, energy, etc.; it has extreme regularity of construction, a single negative, is almost wholly verbal and markedly incorporative, has its grammatical elements better defined than its neighbors, and a more consistent phonetic system.⁴ For these and similar reasons we are justified in considering it the nearest representative we possess of the pristine Algonkin tongue, and unless strong grounds to the contrary are advanced, it is proper to assume that the purest dialect is found nearest the primeval home of the stock.

§ 2. *The Iroquois Stock*

Surrounded on all sides by the Algonkins were the *Iroquois*, once called the Five or Six Nations. When first discovered they were on the St. Lawrence, near Montreal, and in the Lake Region of Central New York. Various other, tribes, not in their confederacy, and generally at war with them, spoke dialects of the same language. Such were the Hurons or Wyandots, between the Georgian Bay and Lake Erie, the Neutral Nation on the Niagara river, the Eries on the southern shore of the lake of that name, the Nottoways in Virginia, and the Tuscaroras in North Carolina. The Cherokees, found by the whites in East Tennessee, but whose national legend, carefully preserved for generations, located them originally on the head waters of the Ohio, were a

remote offshoot of this same stem.

The Susquehannocks

The valley of the Susquehanna river was occupied by a tribe of Iroquois lineage and language, known as the *Susquehannocks*, *Conestogas* and *Andastes*. The last name is Iroquois, from *andasta*, a cabin pole. By some, "Susquehannock" has also been explained as an Iroquois word, but its form is certainly Algonkin. The terminal *k* is the place-sign, *hanna* denotes a flowing stream, while the adjectival prefix has been identified by Heckewelder with *schachage*, straight, from the direct course of the river near its mouth, and by Mr. Guss with *woski*, new, which, he thinks, referred to fresh or spring water.

Of these the former will appear the preferable, if we allow for the softening of the gutturals, which was a phonetic trait of the Unami dialect of the Lenape.

The Susquehannocks were always at deadly feud with the Iroquois, and between wars, the smallpox and the whites, they were finally exterminated. The particulars of their short and sad history have been presented with his characteristic thoroughness by Dr. John G. Shea,⁵ and later by Prof. N. L. Guss.⁶ They were usually called by the Delawares *Mengwe*, which was the term they applied to all the Iroquois-speaking tribes.⁷ The English corrupted it to Minqua and Mingo, and as the eastern trail of the Susquehannocks lay up the Conestoga Creek, and down the

Christina, both those streams were called "Mingo Creek" by the early settlers.

It is important for the ethnology of Pennsylvania, to understand that at the time of the first settlement the whole of the Susquehanna Valley, from the Chesapeake to the New York lakes, was owned and controlled by Iroquois-speaking tribes. A different and erroneous opinion was expressed by Heckewelder, and has been generally received. He speaks of the Lenape Minsi as occupying the head waters of the Susquehanna. This was not so in the historic period.

The claims of the Susquehannocks extended down the Chesapeake Bay on the east shore, as far as the Choptank River, and on the west shore as far as the Patuxent. In 1654 they ceded to the government of Maryland their southern territory to these boundaries.⁸ The first English explorers met them on the Potomac, about the Falls, and the Pascataways were deserting their villages and fleeing before them, when, in 1634, Calvert founded his colony at St. Mary's.

Their subjection to the Five Nations took place about 1680, and it was through the rights obtained by this conquest that, at the treaty of Lancaster, 1744, Canassatego, the Onondaga speaker for the Nation, claimed pay from the government of Maryland for the lands on the Potomac, or, as that river was called in his tongue, the *Cohongorontas*.

The Hurons

The Hurons, Wyandots, or Wendats, were another Iroquois people, who seem, at some remote epoch, to have come into contact with the Lenape. The latter called them *Delamattenos*⁹ and claimed to have driven them out of a portion of their possessions. A Chipeway tradition also states that the Hurons were driven north from the lake shores by Algonkin tribes.¹⁰ We know, from the early accounts of the Jesuits, that there was commercial intercourse between them and the tribes south of the lakes, the materials of trade being principally fish and corn.¹¹ The Jesuit *Relations* of 1648 contain quite a full account of a Huron convert who, in that year, visited the Lenape on the Delaware River, and had an interview with the Swedish Governor, whom he took to task for neglecting the morals of his men.

The Cherokees

The Cherokees were called by the Delawares *Kittuwa* (*Kuttoowauw*, in the spelling of the native Aupaumut). This word I suppose to be derived from the prefix, *kit*, great, and the root *tawa* (Cree, *yette*, *tawa*), to open, whence *tawatawik*, an open, *i. e.*, uninhabited place, a wilderness (Zeisberger).

The designation is geographical. According to the tradition of

the Cherokees, they once lived (probably about the fourteenth century) in the Ohio Valley, and claimed to have been the constructors of the Grave Creek and other earthworks there.¹² Some support is given to this claim by the recent linguistic investigations of Mr. Horatio Hale,¹³ and the archaeological researches of Prof. Cyrus Thomas.¹⁴ They were driven southward by their warlike neighbors, locating their council fire first near Monticello, Va., and the main body reaching East Tennessee about the close of the fifteenth century. As late as 1730 some of them continued to live east of the Alleghanies, while, on the other hand, it is evident, from the proper names preserved by the chroniclers of De Soto's expedition (1542), that at that period others held the mountains of Northern Georgia. To the Delawares they remained *kit-tawa-wi*, inhabitants of the great wilderness of Southern Ohio and Kentucky.

Delaware traditions distinctly recalled the period when portions of the Cherokees were on the Ohio, and recounted long wars with them.¹⁵ When the Lenape assumed the office of peacemaker, this feud ceased, and was not renewed until the general turmoil of the French-Indian wars, 1750-60. After this closed, in 1768, the Cherokees sought and effected a renewal of their peaceful relations with the Delawares, and in 1779 they even sent a deputation of "condolence" to their "grandfather," the Lenape, on the death of the head chief, White Eyes.¹⁶

CHAPTER II

The Wapanachki or Eastern Algonkin Confederacy

The Confederated Tribes – The Mohegans – The Nanticokes – The Conoys – The Shawnees – The Saponies – The Assiwikalees

The Confederated Tribes

All the Algonkin nations who dwelt north of the Potomac, on the east shore of Chesapeake Bay, and in the basins of the Delaware and Hudson rivers, claimed near kinship and an identical origin, and were at times united into a loose, defensive confederacy.

By the western and southern tribes they were collectively known as *Wapanachkik*– "those of the eastern region" – which in the form *Abnaki* is now confined to the remnant of a tribe in Maine. The Delawares in the far West retain traditionally the ancient confederate name, and still speak of themselves as "Eastlanders" —*O-puh-narke*. (Morgan.)

The members of the confederacy were the Mohegans (Mahicanni) of the Hudson, who occupied the valley of that

river to the falls above the site of Albany, the various New Jersey tribes, the Delawares proper on the Delaware river and its branches, including the Minsi or Monseys, among the mountains, the Nanticokes, between Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic, and the small tribe called Canai, Kanawhas or Ganawese, whose towns were on tributaries of the Potomac and Patuxent.

That all these were united in some sort of an alliance, with the Delawares at its head, is not only proved by the traditions of this tribe itself, but by the distinct assertion of the Mohegans and others, and by events within historical times, as the reunion of the Nanticokes, New Jersey and Eastern Indians with the Delawares as with the parent stem.¹⁷

The Mohegans

The Mohegans, *Mo-hé-kun-ne-uk*, dwelt on the tide-waters of the Hudson, and from this their name was derived. Dr. Trumbull, indeed, following Schoolcraft, thinks that they "took their tribal name from *maingan*, a wolf, and *Moheganick* = Chip. *maniganikan*, 'country of wolves.'"¹⁸ They, themselves, however, translate it, "seaside people," or more fully, "people of the great waters which are constantly ebbing or flowing."¹⁹ The compound is *machaak*, great, *hickan*, tide ("ebbing tide," Zeis; "tide of flood," Campanius) and *ik*, animate plural termination.

The Mohegans on the Hudson are said to have been divided into three phratries, the Bear, the Wolf and the Turtle, of

whom the Bear had the primacy.²⁰ Mr. Morgan, however, who examined, in 1860, the representatives of the nation in Kansas,²¹ discovered that they had precisely the same phratries as the Delawares, that is the Wolf, the Turtle, and the Turkey, each subdivided into three or four gentes. He justly observes that this "proves their immediate connection with the Delawares and Munsees by descent," and thus renders their myths and traditions of the more import in the present study.

Linguistically, the Mohegans were more closely allied to the tribes of New England than to those of the Delaware Valley. Evidently, most of the tribes of Massachusetts and Connecticut were comparatively recent offshoots of the parent stem on the Hudson, supposing the course of migration had been eastward.

In some of his unpublished notes Mr. Heckewelder identifies the *Wampanos*, who lived in Connecticut, along the shore of Long Island Sound, and whose council fire was where New Haven now stands, as Mohegans, while the *Wapings* or *Opings* of the Northern Jersey shore were a mixed clan derived from intermarriages between Mohegans and Monseys.²²

The Nanticokes

The Nanticokes occupied the territory between Chesapeake Bay and the ocean, except its southern extremity, which appears to have been under the control of the Powhatan tribe of Virginia.

The derivation of Nanticoke is from the Delaware *Unéchtgo*,

"tide-water people," and is merely another form of *Unalachtgo*, the name of one of the Lenape sub-tribes. In both cases it is a mere geographical term, and not a national eponym.

In the records of the treaty at Fort Johnston, 1757, the Nanticokes are also named *Tiawco*. This is their Mohegan name, *Otayāchgo*, which means "bridge people," or bridge makers, the reference being to the skill with which the Nanticokes could fasten floating logs together to construct a bridge across a stream. In the Delaware dialect this was *Tawachguáno*, from *taiachquoan*, a bridge. The latter enables us to identify the Tockwhoghs, whom Captain John Smith met on the Chesapeake, in 1608, with the Nanticokes. The *Kuscarawocks*, whom he also visited, have been conclusively shown by Mr. Bozman²³ to have been also Nanticokes.

By ancient traditions, they looked up to the Lenape as their "grandfather," and considered the Mohegans their "brethren."²⁴ That is, they were, as occasion required, attached to the same confederacy.

In manners and customs they differed little from their northern relatives. The only peculiarity in this respect which is noted of them was the extravagant consideration they bestowed on the bones of the dead. The corpse was buried for some months, then exhumed and the bones carefully cleaned and placed in an ossuary called *man-to-kump* (= *manito*, with the locative termination, place of the mystery or spirit).

When they removed from one place to another these bones

were carried with them. Even those who migrated to northern Pennsylvania, about the middle of the last century, piously brought along these venerable relics, and finally interred them near the present site of Towanda, whence its name, *Tawundeunk*, "where we bury our dead."²⁵

Their dialect varied considerably from the Delaware; of which it is clearly a deteriorated form. It is characterized by abbreviated words and strongly expired accents, as *tah! quah! quak! su*, short; *quah! nah! qut*, long.

Our knowledge of it is limited to a few vocabularies. The earliest was taken down by Captain John Smith, during his exploration of the Chesapeake. The most valuable is one obtained by Mr. William Vans Murray, in 1792, from the remnant in Maryland. It is in the library of the American Philosophical Society, and has never been correctly or completely printed.

The Nanticokes broke up early. Between the steady encroachments of the whites and the attacks of the Iroquois they found themselves between the upper and the nether millstones.

According to their own statement to Governor Evans, at a conference in 1707, they had at that time been tributary to the latter for twenty-seven years, *i. e.*, since 1680. Their last head chief, or "crowned king," Winicaco, died about 1720. A few years after this occurrence bands of them began to remove to Pennsylvania, and at the middle of the century were living at the mouth of the Juniata, under the immediate control of the

Iroquois. Thence they removed to Wyoming, and in 1753, "in a fleet of twenty-five canoes," to the Iroquois lands in western New York. Others of their nation were brought there by the Iroquois in 1767; but by the close of the century only five families survived in that region.²⁶

A small band called the *Wiwash* remained on Goose creek, Dorchester county, Maryland, to the same date.

The Conoys

The fourth member of the Wapanachki was that nation variously called in the old records *Conoys*, *Ganawese* or *Canaways*, the proper form of which Mr. Heckewelder states to be *Canai*.²⁷

Considerable obscurity has rested on the early location and affiliation of this people. Mr. Heckewelder vaguely places them "at a distance on the Potomac," and supposes them to have been the Kanawhas of West Virginia.²⁸ This is a loose guess. They were, in fact, none other than the Piscataways of Southern Maryland, who occupied the area between Chesapeake Bay and the lower Potomac, about St. Mary's, and along the Piscataway creek and Patuxent river.

Proof of this is furnished by the speech of their venerable head chief, "Old Sack," at a conference in Philadelphia in 1743.²⁹ His words were: "Our forefathers came from Piscatua to an island in Potowmeck; and from thence down to Philadelphia, in old

Proprietor Penn's time, to show their friendship to the Proprietor. After their return they brought down all their brothers from Potowmeck to Conejoholo, on the east side Sasquehannah, and built a town there."

This interesting identification shows that they were the people whom Captain John Smith found (1608) in numerous villages along the Patuxent and the left bank of the lower Potomac. The local names show them to have been of Algonkin stock and akin to the Nanticokes.

Conoy, Ganawese, Kanawha, are all various spellings of a derivative from an Algonkin root, meaning "it is long" (Del. *gunew*, long, Cree *kinowaw*, it is long,) and is found applied to various streams in Algonkin territory.³⁰

Piscataway, or Pascatoway, as it is spelled in the early narratives, also recurs as a local name in various parts of the Northern States. It is from, the root *pashk*, which means to separate, to divide. Many derivatives from it are in use in the Delaware tongue. In the Cree we have the impersonal form, *pakestikweyaw*, or the active animate *pasketiwa*, in the sense of "the division or branch of a river."³¹ The site of Kittamaquindi (*kittamaque-ink*, Great Beaver Place,) the so-called "metropolis of Pascatoe,"³² was where Tinker's creek and Piscataway creek branch off from their common estuary, about fifteen miles south of Washington city.

The "emperor" Chitomachen, Strong Bear (*chitani*, strong, *macha*, bear), who bore the title *Tayac* (Nanticoke, *tallak*, head

chief) ruled over a dominion which extended about 130 miles from east to west.

The district was thinly peopled. On the upper shores of the west side of the Chesapeake Captain John Smith and the other early explorers found scarcely any inhabitants. In 1631 Captain Henry Fleet estimated the total number of natives "in Potomack and places adjacent," at not over 5000 persons.³³ This included both sides of the river as high up as the Falls, and the shores of Chesapeake Bay.

Chitomachen, with his family, was converted to the Catholic faith in 1640, by the exertions of the Jesuit missionary, Father Andrew White, but died the year after. When the English first settled at St. Mary's, the tribe was deserting its ancient seats, through fear of the Susquehannocks, and diminished rapidly after that date.

Father White was among them from 1634 to 1642, and composed a grammar, dictionary and catechism of their tongue. Of these, the catechism is yet preserved in manuscript, in the library of the Domus Professa of the Jesuits, in Rome. It would be a great benefit to students of Algonkin dialects to have his linguistic works sought out and published. How far his knowledge of the language extended is uncertain. In a letter from one of the missionaries, dated 1642, who speaks of White, the writer adds: "The difficulty of the language is so great that none of us can yet converse with the Indians without an interpreter."³⁴

That it was an Algonkin dialect, closely akin to the Nanticoke,

is clear from the words and proper names preserved in the early records and locally to this day. The only word which has created doubts has been the name of "a certain imaginary spirit called *Ochre*."³⁵ It has been supposed that this was the Huron *oki*. But it is pure Algonkin. It is the Cree *oki-sikow* (*être du ciel, ange*, Lacombe), the Abnaki *ooskoo* (*katini ooskoo*, Bon Esprit, *matsini ooskoo*, Mauvais Esprit, Rasles).

It was nearly allied to that spoken in Virginia among Powhatan's subjects, as an English boy who had lived with that chieftain served as an interpreter between the settlers and the Patuxent and neighboring Indians.³⁶

The Conoys were removed, before 1743, from Conejoholo to Conoy town, further up the Susquehanna, and in 1744 they joined several other fragmentary bands at Shamokin (where Sunbury, Pa., now stands). Later, they became merged with the Nanticokes.³⁷

The Shawnees

The wanderings of the unstable and migratory Shawnees have occupied the attention of several writers, but it cannot be said that either their history or their affiliations have been satisfactorily worked out.³⁸

Their dialect is more akin to the Mohegan than to the Delaware, and when, in 1692, they first appeared in the area of the Eastern Algonkin Confederacy, they came as the friends and

relatives of the former.³⁹

They were divided into four bands, as follows: —

1. *Piqua*, properly *Pikoweu*, "he comes from the ashes."
2. *Mequachake*, "a fat man filled," signifying completion or perfection. This band held the privilege of the hereditary priesthood.
3. Kiscapocoke.
4. Chilicothe.⁴⁰

Of these, that which settled in Pennsylvania was the *Pikoweu*, who occupied and gave their name to the Pequa valley in Lancaster county.⁴¹

According to ancient Mohegan tradition, the New England *Pequods* were members of this band. These moved eastwardly from the Hudson river, and extended their conquests over the greater part of the area of Connecticut. Dr. Trumbull, however,⁴² assigns a different meaning to their name, and a more appropriate one — *Peguitóog*, the Destroyers. Some countenance is given to the tradition by the similarity of the Shawnee to the Mohegan, standing, as it does, more closely related to it than to the Unami Delaware.

It has been argued that a band of the Shawnees lived in Southern New Jersey when that territory first came to the knowledge of the whites. On a Dutch map, drawn in 1614 or thereabouts, a tribe called *Saw wanew* is located on the left bank of the Delaware river, near the Bay;⁴³ and DeLaet speaks of the *Sawanoos* as living there.

I am inclined to believe that, in both these cases, the term was used by the natives around New York Bay in its simple geographical sense of "south" or "southern," and not as a tribal designation. It frequently appears with this original meaning in the Waluam Olum.

The Sapoonees

A tribe called the Sapoonees, or Saponies, is mentioned as living in Pennsylvania, attached to the Delawares, about the middle of the last century.⁴⁴

They are no doubt the Saponas who once dwelt on a branch of the Great Pedee river in North Carolina, and who moved north about the year 1720.⁴⁵

They were said to have joined the Tuscaroras, but the Pennsylvania records class them with the Delawares. Others, impressed by the similarity of *Sa-po-nees* to *Pa-nis*, have imagined they were the Pawnees, now of the west. There is not the slightest importance to be attached to this casual similarity of names.

They were called, by the Iroquois, *Tadirighrones*, and were distinctly identified by them with the nation known to the English as the Catawbas.⁴⁶ For a long time the two nations carried on a bitter warfare.

The Assiwikales

This band of about fifty families, or one hundred men (about three hundred souls), are stated to have come from South Carolina to the Potomac late in the seventeenth century, and in 1731 were settled partly on the Susquehanna and partly on the upper Ohio or Alleghany. Their chief was named Aqueioma, or Achequeloma.

Their name appears to be a compound of *assin*, stone; and *wikwam*, house, and they were probably Algonkin neighbors of the Shawnees in their southern homes, and united with them in their northern migration.⁴⁷

CHAPTER III

The Lenape or Delawares

Derivation of the Name Lenape. – The Three Sub-Tribes the Minsi or Wolf, the Unami or Turtle, and the Unalachtgo or Turkey Tribes – Their Totems – The New Jersey Tribes the Wapings, Sanhicans and Mantas – Political Constitution of the Lenape – Vegetable Food Resources – Domestic Architecture – Manufactures. – Paints and Dyes. – Dogs – Interments – Computation of Time – Picture Writing – Record Sticks – Moral and Mental Character – Religious Belief. – Doctrine of the Soul. – The Native Priests. – Religious Ceremonies.

Derivation of Lenni Lenape

The proper name of the Delaware Indians was and is *Lenapé*, (a as in father, é as a in mate). Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull⁴⁸ is quite wide of the mark both in calling this a "misnomer," and in attributing its introduction to Mr. Heckewelder.

Long before that worthy missionary was born, the name was in use in the official documents of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania as the synonym in the native tongue for the Delaware Indians,⁴⁹ and it is still retained by their remnant in

Kansas as the proper term to designate their collective nation, embracing its sub-tribes.⁵⁰

The derivation of *Lenape* has been discussed with no little learning, as well as the adjective *lenni*, which often precedes it (Lenni Lenape). Mr. Heckewelder stated that *lenni* means "original, pure," and that *Lenape* signifies "people."⁵¹ Dr. Trumbull, in the course of a long examination of the words for "man" in the Algonkin dialects, reaches the conclusion that "Len-âpé" denotes "a common adult male," *i. e.*, an Indian man; *lenno lenâpé*, an Indian of *our* tribe or nation, and, consequently, *vir*, "a man of men."⁵² He derives these two words from the roots *len* (= *nen*), a pronominal possessive, and *ape*, an inseparable generic particle, "denoting an adult male."

I differ, with hesitation, from such an eminent authority; but this explanation does not, to my mind, give the precise meaning of the term. No doubt, both *lenno*, which in Delaware means *man*, and *len*, in Lenape, are from the pronominal radicle of the first person *né*, I, we, mine, our. As the native considered his tribe the oldest, as well as the most important of created beings, "ours" with him came to be synonymous with what was esteemed ancient, indigenous, primeval, as well as human, man-like, *par excellence*. "We" and "men" were to him the same. The initial *l* is but a slight modification of the *n* sound, and is given by Campanius as an *r*, "*rhenus*, homo."

Lenape, therefore, does not mean "a common adult male," but rather "a male of our kind," or "our men."⁵³

The termination *apé* is said by Heckewelder to convey the idea of "walking or being in an erect posture." A comparison of the various Algonkin dialects indicates that it was originally a locative, signifying staying in a place, abiding or sitting. Thus, in Cree, *apú*, he is there; in Chipeway, *abi*, he is at home; in Delaware, *n'dappin*, I am here. The transfer of this idea to the male sex is seen in the Cree, *ap*, to sit upon, to place oneself on top, *apa*, to cover (animate and active); Chipeway, *nabe*, the male of quadrupeds. Baraga says that for a Chipeway woman to call her husband *nin nabem* (lit. my coverer, comp. French, *femme couverte*), is coarse.

The Lenape Sub-Tribes

The Lenape were divided into three sub-tribes: —

1. The Minsi, Monseys, Montheys, Munsees, or Minisinks.
2. The Unami, or Wonameys.
3. The Unalachtigo.

No explanation of these designations will be found in Heckewelder or the older writers. From investigations among living Delawares, carried out at my request by Mr. Horatio Hale, it is evident that they are wholly geographical, and refer to the locations of these sub-tribes on the Delaware river.

Minsi, properly *Minsiu*, and formerly *Minassiniu*, means "people of the stony country," or briefly, "mountaineers." It is a

synthesis of *minthiu*, to be scattered, and *achsin*, stone, according to the best living native authorities.⁵⁴

Unami, or *W'nāmiu*, means "people down the river," from *naheu*, down-stream.

Unalachtigo, properly *W'nalāchtko*, means "people who live near the ocean," from *wunalawat*, to go towards, and *t'kow* or *t'kou*, wave.

Historically, such were the positions of these sub-tribes when they first came to the knowledge of Europeans.

The Minsi lived in the mountainous region at the head waters of the Delaware, above the Forks, or junction of the Lehigh river. One of their principal fires was on the Minisink plains, above the Water Gap, and another on the East Branch of the Delaware, which they called *Namaes Sipu*, Fish River. Their hunting grounds embraced lands now in the three colonies of Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey. The last mentioned extinguished their title in 1758, by the payment of one thousand pounds.

That, at any time, as Heckewelder asserts, their territory extended up the Hudson as far as tide-water, and westward "far beyond the Susquehannah," is surely incorrect. Only after the beginning of the eighteenth century, when they had been long subject to the Iroquois, have we any historic evidence that they had a settlement on the last named river.

The Unamis' territory on the right bank of the Delaware river extended from the Lehigh valley southward. It was with them and

their southern neighbors, the Unalachtigos, that Penn dealt for the land ceded him in the Indian Deed of 1682. The Minsis did not take part in the transaction, and it was not until 1737 that the Colonial authorities treated directly with the latter for the cession of their territory.⁵⁵

The Unalachtigo or Turkey totem had its principal seat on the affluents of the Delaware near where Wilmington now stands. About this point, Captain John Smith, on his map (1609,) locates the *Chikahokin*. In later writers this name is spelled *Chihohockies*, *Chiholacki* and *Chikolacki*, and is stated by the historians Proud and Smith to be synonymous with Delawares.⁵⁶ The correct form is *Chikelaki*, from *chik'eno*, turkey, the modern form as given by Whipple,⁵⁷ and *aki* land. The *n*, *l* and *r* were alternating letters in this dialect.

The population was, however, very sparse, owing to the predatory incursions of the Susquehannocks, whose trails, leading up the Octorara and Conestoga, and down the Christina and Brandywine Creeks, were followed by war parties annually, and desolated the west shores of the Bay and lower river. When, in 1634, Captain Thomas Young explored the river, the few natives he found on the west side told him (through the medium of his Algonkin Virginian interpreter) that the "Minquaos" had killed their people, burnt their villages, and destroyed their crops, so that "the Indians had wholly left that side of the river which was next their enemies, and had retired themselves on the other side farre up into the woods."⁵⁸

North of the Chikelaki, Smith's map locates the *Macovks*. This name does not appear in later authors, but near that site were the *Okahoki* band, who occupied the shores of Ridley and Crum creeks and the land between them. There they remained until 1703, when they were removed to a small reservation of 500 acres in what is now Willistown township, Chester county.⁵⁹

The Totemic Animals

These three sub-tribes had each its totemic animal, from which it claimed a mystical descent. The Minsi had the Wolf, the Unami the Turtle, and the Unalachtigo the Turkey. The Unamis claimed and were conceded the precedence of the others, because their ancestor, the Turtle, was not the common animal, so-called, but the great original tortoise which bears the world on its back, and was the first of living beings, as I shall explain on a later page.

In referring to the totemic animals the common names were not used, but metaphorical expressions. Thus the Wolf was referred to as *Ptuksit*, Round Foot (*ptuk*, round, *sit*, foot, from the shape of its paws;) the turtle was *Pakoango*, the Crawler; and the turkey was *Pullaew*, he does not chew,⁶⁰ referring to the bird's manner of swallowing food.

The signs of these animals were employed in their picture writing, painted on their houses or inscribed on rocks, to designate the respective sub-tribes. But only in the case of the

Unamis was the whole animal represented. The Turkey tribe painted only one foot of their totemic bird, and the Minsi the extended foot of the wolf, though they sometimes added an outline of the rest of the animal.⁶¹

These three divisions of the Lenape were neither "gentes" nor "phratries," though Mr. Morgan has endeavored to force them into his system by stating that they were "of the nature of phratries."⁶² Each was divided into twelve families bearing female names, and hence probably referring to some unexplained matriarchal system. They were, as I have called them, sub-tribes. In their own orations they referred to each other as "playmates." (Heckewelder.)

The New Jersey Lenape

The native name of New Jersey is given as Shā'akbee (English orthography: ā as in fate); or as the German missionaries wrote it, *Sche'jachbi*. It is a compound of *bi*, water, *aki*, land, and the adjective prefix *schey*, which means something long and narrow (*scheyek*, a string of wampum; *schajelinquall*, the edge of the eyes, the eyelids, etc.) This would be equivalent to "long-land water," and, according to the rules of Delaware grammar, which place the noun used in the genitive sense before the noun which governs it, the term would be more suitable to some body of water, Delaware bay or the ocean, than to the main land.

The Lenape distinctly claimed the whole of the present area

of New Jersey. Their great chief, Tedyuscung, stated at the Conference at Easton (1757), that their lands reached eastward to the shore of the sea. The New Jersey tribes fully recognized their unity. As early as 1694, at an interview with Governor Markham at Philadelphia, when the famous Tamany and other Lenape chieftains were present, Mohocksey, a chief of the Jersey Indians, said: "Though we live on the other side of the water (*i. e.*, the Delaware river), yet we reckon ourselves all one, because," he added, giving a characteristically native reason, "because we drink one water."⁶³

The names, number and position of the Jersey tribes have not been very clearly made out. A pamphlet published in London, in 1648, states that there were twenty-three Indian kinglets in its area, with about 2000 warriors in all. Of these, Master Robert Evelin, a surveyor, who spent several years in the Province about 1635, names nine on the left bank of the Delaware, between Cape May and the Falls. The names are extremely corrupt, but it may be worth while giving them.⁶⁴

1. Kechemeches, 500 men, five miles above Cape May.
2. Manteses, 100 bowmen, twelve leagues above the former.
3. Sikonesses.
4. Asomoches, 100 men.
5. Eriwoneck, 40 men.
6. Ramcock, 100 men.
7. Axion, 200 men.
8. Calcefar, 150 men.

9. Mosilian, 200 men, at the Falls.

Of these, the Mantes lived on Salem creek; *Ramcock* is Rancocas creek; the *Eriwoneck* are evidently the *Ermomex* of Van der Donck's map of 1656; *Axion* may be for Assiscunk creek, above Burlington, from Del. *assiscu*, mud; *assiscunk*, a muddy place. Lindstrom and Van der Donck name the most Southern tribe in New Jersey *Naraticons*. They were on and near Raccoon creek, which on Lindstrom's map is *Narraticon Sipu*, the Naraticon river. Probably the English name is simply a translation of the Del. *nachenum*, raccoon.

In 1675 the number of sachems in Jersey of sufficient importance for the then Governor Andros to treat with were four. It is noted that when he had made them the presents customary on such occasions, "They return thanks and fall a kintacoying, singing *kenon*, *kenon*."⁶⁵ This was the Delaware *genan* (*genama*, thank ye him. Zeis).

The total number in New Jersey a few years before this (1671) were estimated by the authorities at "about a thousand persons, besides women and children."⁶⁶

The "*Wakings*, *Opings* or *Pomptons*," as they are named in the old records, were the tribe which dwelt on the west shore of New York harbor and southwardly, or, more exactly, "from Roeloff Jansen's Kill to the sea."⁶⁷ They were of the Minsi totem, and were the earliest of the Lenape who saw white men, when, in 1524, the keel of Verrazano was the first to plough the waters of New York harbor.

The name Waping or Oping is derived from *Wapan*, east, and was applied to them as the easternmost of the Lenape nation.⁶⁸ Their other name, Pompton, Mr Heckewelder identifies with *pihm-tom*, crooked-mouthed, though its applicability is not obvious.⁶⁹

In the middle of the eighteenth century the remains of the Pompton Indians resided on the Raritan river. The boundaries of their territory were defined in 1756, at the Treaty of Crosswicks.

The *Sanhicans* occupied the Delaware shore at the Falls, near where Trenton now stands, and extended eastward along the upper Indian path quite to New York bay. Heckewelder says that this name, *Sankhican*, means a gun lock, and was applied by the Lenape to the Mohawks who were first furnished with muskets by the Europeans. This has led some writers to locate a band of Mohawks at the Falls.

The Sanhicans were, however, undoubtedly Lenape. Campanius, who quotes the name of the place in 1642, classes them as such. In Van der Donck's map, of 1656, they are marked as possessing the land at the Falls and Manhattan Bay; and De Laet gives the numerals and a number of words from their dialect, which are all pure Delaware, as: —

	<i>Sanhican.</i>	<i>Delaware.</i>
Deer,	atto,	achtu.
Bear,	machquoyuo,	machquak.
Wolf,	metumnu,	metemneu.
Turkey,	sickenum,	tschickenum.

Their name has lost its first syllable. It should be *assanhican*. This means not merely and not originally a gun-flint, but any stone implement, from *achsin*, or, in the New Jersey dialect, *assun*, a stone, and *hican*, an instrument. They were distinctively "the stone-implement people."

This is plainly with reference to their manufactures near Trenton. The great deposit of post-glacial gravels at this point abound with quartzite fragments suitable for working into stone implements, and to what extent they were utilized by the natives is shown by the enormous collection, numbering over thirty thousand specimens, which Dr. Charles C. Abbott, of Trenton, has made in that immediate vicinity. A horde of over 125 beautifully chipped lance heads of quartz and jasper, and the remains of a workshop of remarkable magnitude, were evidences of the extensive manufacture that once prevailed there.

The left bank of the Delaware, from the vicinity of Burlington quite to and below Salem, was held by a warlike tribe known to the settlers as the *Mantas*, or *Mantos*, or *Mandes*, otherwise named the Frog Indians. They extended eastward along the main or southern Indian path, which led from the Delaware, below the

mouth of Rancocas Creek, to the extensive Indian plantations or corn fields near Sandy Hook, mentioned by Campanius and Lindstrom.⁷⁰

Mr. Henry has derived their name from *mangi*, great,⁷¹ and others have suggested *menatey*, an island; but I do not think either of these is tenable. I have no doubt that *mante* is simply a misspelling of *monthee*, which is the form given by the East Jersey and Stockbridge Indians to the name of the Minsi or Monsey sub-tribe of the Delawares.⁷² This is further indicated by the fact that toward the beginning of the eighteenth century they incorporated themselves wholly with the two other Lenape sub-tribes.⁷³ We thus find that the Minsis were not confined to the North and Northwest, as Heckewelder and others wrote, but had pressed southward in New Jersey, quite to the shores of Delaware Bay.

The New Jersey Indians disappeared rapidly. As early as 1721 an official document states that they were "but few, and very innocent and friendly."⁷⁴ When, in 1745, the missionary Brainerd visited their settlement at Crosweeksung, Burlington county, he found some "who had lived with the white people under gospel light, had learned to read, were civil, etc."⁷⁵ Those with whom he labored at this place subsequently removed to New Stockbridge, Mass., and united with the Mohegans and others there.⁷⁶

The Swedish traveler, Peter Kalm, who spent about a year in New Jersey in 1749, observes that the disappearance of the native population was principally due to two agencies. Smallpox destroyed "incredible numbers", "but brandy has killed most of

the Indians."⁷⁷

The dialect of the New Jersey Indians was soft and vocalic, avoiding the gutturals of their northern relatives, and without the frequent unpleasant forcible expirations of the Nanticoke. A vocabulary of it, obtained for Mr. Thomas Jefferson, in 1792, at the village of Edgpiihik, West New Jersey, is in MS. in the library of the American Philosophical Society.

Political Constitution

Each totem of the Lenape recognized a chieftain, called sachem, *sakima*, a word found in most Algonkin dialects, with slight variations (Chip. *ogima*, Cree, *okimaw*, Pequot, *sachimma*), and derived from a root *ôki*, signifying above in space, and by a transfer frequent in all languages, above in power. Thus, in Cree,⁷⁸ we have *sâkamow*, "il projecte, il montre la tête," and in Delaware, *w'ochgitschi*, the part above, the upper part (Zeisberger), etc.

It appears from Mr. Morgan's inquiries, that at present and of later years, "the office of sachem is hereditary in the gens, but elective among its members."⁷⁹ Loskiel, however, writing on the excellent authority of Zeisberger, states explicitly that the chief of each totem was selected and inaugurated by those of the remaining two.⁸⁰ By common and ancient consent, the chief selected from the Turtle totem was head chief of the whole Lenape nation.

These chieftains were the "peace chiefs." They could neither go to war themselves, nor send nor receive the war belt – the ominous string of dark wampum, which indicated that the tempest of strife was to be let loose. Their proper badge was the wampum belt, with a diamond-shaped figure in the centre, worked in white beads, which was the symbol of the peaceful council fire, and was called by that name.

War was declared by the people at the instigation of the "war captains," valorous braves of any birth or family who had distinguished themselves by personal prowess, and especially by good success in forays against the enemy.⁸¹

Nor did the authority of the chiefs extend to any infringement on the traditional rights of the gens, as, for instance, that of blood revenge. The ignorance of this limitation of the central power led to various misunderstandings at the time, on the part of the colonial authorities, and since then, by later historians. Thus, in 1728, "the Delaware Indians on Brandywine" were summoned by the Governor to answer about a murder. Their chief, Civility, answered that it was committed by the Minisinks, "over whom they had no authority."⁸² This did not mean but that in some matters authority could be exerted, but not in a question relating to a feud of blood.

Agriculture and Food Resources

The Lenape did not depend solely on the chase for subsistence.

They were largely agricultural, and raised a variety of edible plants. Indian corn was, as usual, the staple; but in addition to that, they had extensive fields of squashes, beans and sweet potatoes.⁸³ The hardy variety of tobacco was also freely cultivated.

The value of Indian corn, the *Zea mais*, must have been known to the Algonkin tribes while they still formed one nation, as the same name is applied to it by tribes geographically the widest apart. Thus the Micmacs of Nova Scotia call it *pe-ās'kumun-ul* whose theme *ās'ku-mun* reappears in the *wuskannem* (Elliott) and the *scannemeneash* (Roger Williams) of New England, in the Delaware *jesquem* (Campanius), and *chasquem* (Zeis.), and even in the Piegan Blackfoot *esko-tope*.

The first radical *ask*, Chip. *ashk*, Del. *aski*, means "green." The application is to the green waving plant, so conspicuous in the fields during the summer months. The second *mün* or *min* is a generic suffix applied to all sorts of small edible fruits. In the Blackfoot its place is supplied by another, and in the Unami Delaware it is abbreviated to the letter *m*.

On the other hand, in the Chipeway word for corn, *mandamin*, Ottawa *mindamin*, Cree *mattamin*, the second radical is retained in full, while for the first is substituted an abbreviation of *manito*, divine ("it is divine, supernatural, or mysterious"); if we may accept the opinion of Mr. Schoolcraft, and I know of no more plausible etymology.

Tobacco was called by the Delawares *kscha-tey*, Zeis., *seka-*

ta, Camp., or in the English orthography *shuate* (Vocab. N. J. Inds.), and *koshāhtahe* (Cummmings). I am inclined to think that these are but dialectic variations and different orthographies of the root '*ta* or '*dam* (*a* nasal) found in the New England *wuttām-anog*, Micmac *tùmawa*, Abnaki *wh'dāman* (Rasle), Cree *tchistémaw*, Chip. *assema* (= *asté-maw*), Blackfoot *pi-stā-kan*; a root which Dr. J. H. Trumbull has satisfactorily identified as meaning "to drink," the smoke being swallowed and likened to water. "To drink tobacco" was the usual old English expression for "to smoke."

If this etymology is correct, it leads to the inference that tobacco also was known to the ancient Algonkins before they split up into the many nations which we now know, and furthermore that they must have lived in a region where these two semi-tropical or wholly tropical plants, Indian corn and tobacco, had been already introduced and cultivated by some more ancient race. To conclude that they themselves brought them from a tropical land, would be too hazardous.

The pipes in which the tobacco was smoked were called *appooke* (modern Delaware *o'pahokun'*, Cumings' Vocab.) They were of earthenware and of stone; sometimes, it is said, of copper. According to Kalm, the ceremonial pipes were of a red stone, possibly the western pipe stone, and were very highly prized.⁸⁴

Of wild fruits and plants they consumed the esculent and nutritious tubers on the roots of the Wild Bean, *Apios tuberosa*,

the large, oval, fleshy roots of the arrow-leaved *Sagittaria*, the former of which the Indians called *hobbenis*, and the latter *katniss*, names which they subsequently applied to the European turnip. They also roasted and ate the acrid cormus of the Indian turnip, *Arum triphyllum*, in Delaware *taw-ho*, *taw-hin* or *tuck-ah*, and collected for food the seeds of the Golden Club, *Orontium aquaticum*, common in the pools along the creeks and rivers. Its native name was *taw-kee*.⁸⁵

House Building

In their domestic architecture they differed noticeably from the Iroquois and even the Mohegans. Their houses were not communal, but each family had its separate residence, a wattled hut, with rounded top, thatched with mats woven of the long leaves of the Indian corn or the stalks of the sweet flag (*Acorus calamus*,) or of the bark of trees (*anacon*, a mat, Z.) These were built in groups and surrounded with a palisade to protect the inhabitants from sudden inroads.⁸⁶

In the centre was sometimes erected a mound of earth, both as a place of observation and as a location to place the children and women. The remains of these circular ramparts enclosing a central mound were seen by the early settlers at the Falls of the Delaware and up the Lehigh valley.

Manufactures

The art of the potter was known and extensively practiced, but did not indicate any unusual proficiency, either in the process of manufacture or in the methods of decoration, although the late Mr. F. Peale thought that, in the latter respect, the Delaware pottery had some claims to a high rank.⁸⁷ The representation of animal forms was quite unusual, only some few and inferior examples having been found.

Their skill in manufacturing bead work and feather mantles, and in dressing deer skins, excited the admiration of the early voyagers. Although their weapons and utensils were mostly of stone, there was a considerable supply of native copper among them, in use as ornaments, for arrow heads and pipes. Some specimens of it have been found by Dr. Abbott near Trenton, and by other collectors in Pennsylvania,⁸⁸ and its scarcity in modern collections is to be attributed to its being bought up and melted by the whites rather than to its limited employment.

Soap stone was hollowed out with considerable skill, to form bowls, and the wood of the sassafras tree was highly esteemed for the same purpose (Kalm).

The maize was broken up in wooden or stone mortars with a stone pestle, the native name of which was *pocohaac*, a word signifying also the virile member.

Their arms were the war club or tomahawk, *tomhickan*, the

bow, *hattape*, and arrow, *alluns*, the spear, *tanganaoun*, and for defence Bishop Ettwein states they carried a round shield of thick, dried hide.

The spear was also used for spearing fish, which they, moreover, knew how to catch with "brush nets," and with fish hooks made of bone and the dried claws of birds (Kalm).⁸⁹

Paints and Dyes

The paints and dyes used by the Lenape and neighboring Indians were derived both from the vegetable and mineral realms. From the former they obtained red, white and blue clays, which were in such extensive demand that the vicinity of those streams in New Castle county, Delaware, which are now called White Clay Creek and Red Clay Creek, was widely known to the natives as *Walamink*, the Place of Paint.

The vegetable world supplied a variety of dyes in the colored juices of plants. These were mixed with the acid juice of the wild, sweet-scented crab apple (*Pyrus coronaria*; in Lenape, *tombic'anall*), to fix the dye.

A red was yielded by the root of the *Sanguinaria Canadensis*, still called "Indian paint root;" an orange by the root of *Phytolacca decandra*, the poke or pocoon; a yellow by the root of *Hydrastis Canadensis*; a black by a mixture of sumac and white walnut bark, etc.⁹⁰

Dogs

The only domestic animal they possessed was a small species of dogs with pointed ears. These were called *allum*, and were preserved less for protection or for use in hunting than for food, and especially for ceremonial purposes.⁹¹

Interments

The custom of common ossuaries for each gens appears to have prevailed among the Lenape. Gabriel Thomas states that: "If a person of Note dies very far away from his place of residence, they will convey his Bones home some considerable Time after, to be buried there."⁹² Bishop Ettwein speaks of mounds for common burial, though he appears to limit their use to times of war.⁹³

One of these communal graveyards of the Minsis covers an area of six acres on the Neversink creek,⁹⁴ while, according to tradition, another of great antiquity and extent was located on the islands in the Delaware river, above the Water-Gap.⁹⁵

Computation of Time

The accuracy with which the natives computed time becomes

a subject of prime consideration in a study of their annals. It would appear that the Eastern Algonkins were not deficient in astronomical knowledge. Roger Williams remarks, "they much observe the Starres, and their very children can give names to many of them;"⁹⁶ and the same testimony is borne by Wassenaer. The latter, speaking of the tribes around New York Harbor, in 1630, says that their year began with the first moon after the February moon; and that the time for planting was calculated by the rising of the constellation Taurus in a certain quarter. They named this constellation the horned head of some great fictitious animal.⁹⁷

Zeisberger observes that, in his day, the Lenape did not have a fixed beginning to their year, but reckoned from one seeding time to another, or from when the corn was ripe, etc.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, they had a word for year, *gachtin*, and counted their ages and the sequence of events by yearly periods. The Chipeways count by winters (*pipun-agak*, in which the first word means winter, and the second is a plural form similar to the Del. *gachtin*); but the Lenape did not apparently follow them in this. They recognized only twelve moons in the year and not thirteen, as did the New England nations; at least, the names of but twelve months have been preserved.⁹⁹ The day periods were reckoned usually by nights, but it was not improper to count by "suns" or days.

Pictographic Signs

The picture writing of the Delawares has been quite fully described by Zeisberger, Loskiel and Heckewelder. It was scratched upon stone (Loskiel), or more frequently cut in or painted upon the bark of trees or pieces of wood. The colors were chiefly black and red. The system was highly conventionalized, so that it could readily be understood by all their tribes, and also by others with whom they came in contact, the Shawnees, Wyandots, Chipeways, etc.

The subjects had reference not merely to matters of present interest, but to the former history of their nation, and were directed "to the preservation of the memory of famous men, and to the recollection of events and actions of note." Therefore, their Agamemnons felt no anxiety for the absence of a Homer, but "confidently reckoned that their noble deeds would be held in memory long after their bodies had perished."¹⁰⁰

The material on which the drawings were made was generally so perishable that few examples have been left to us. One, a stone about seven inches long, found in central New Jersey, has been described and figured by Dr. Abbott.¹⁰¹ It represents an arrow crossing certain straight lines. Several "gorgets" (smooth stone tablets pierced with holes for suspension, and probably used for ceremonial purposes), stone knives and pebbles, showing inscribed marks and lines, and rude figures, are engraved in Dr.

Abbott's book; others similar have been seen in Bucks and Berks counties, Pa.

There was a remarkable series of hieroglyphics, some eighty in number, on a rock at Safe Harbor, on the Susquehanna. They have been photographed and described by Prof. T. C. Porter, of Lancaster, but have yet to be carefully analyzed.¹⁰² From its location, it was probably the work of the Susquehannocks, and did not belong to the general system of Algonkin pictography.

If the rude drawings appended to the early treatises as signatures of native sachems be taken as a guide, little or no uniformity prevailed in the personal signs. The same chieftain would, on various occasions, employ symbols differing so widely that they have no visible relation.¹⁰³

An interesting incident is recorded by Friend John Richardson when on a visit to William Penn, at his manor of Pennsburg, in 1701. Penn asked the Indian interpreter to give him some idea of what the native notion of God was. The interpreter, at a loss for words, had recourse to picture writing, and describing a number of circles, one inside the other, he pointed to the centre of the innermost and smallest one, and there, "placed, as he said, by way of representation, the Great Man."¹⁰⁴ The explanation was striking and suggestive, and hints at the meaning of the not infrequent symbol of the concentric circles.

An alleged piece of Delaware pictography is copied by Schoolcraft¹⁰⁵ from the London *Archæologia*, Vol. IV. It purports to be an inscription found on the Muskingum river in 1780, and

the interpretation is said to have been supplied by the celebrated Delaware chief, Captain White Eyes (Coquethagechton). As interpreted, it relates to massacres of the whites by the Delaware chief, Wingenund, in the border war of 1763.

There is a tissue of errors here. The pictograph, "drawn with charcoal and oil on a tree," must have been quite recent, and is not likely to have referred to events seventeen years antecedent. There is no evidence that Wingenund took part in Pontiac's conspiracy, and he was the consistent friend of the whites.¹⁰⁶ Several of the characters are not like Indian pictographs. And finally, White Eyes, the alleged interpreter in 1780, had died at Tuscarawas, two years before, Nov. 10th, 1778!¹⁰⁷

Record Sticks

The Algonkin nations very generally preserved their myths, their chronicles, and the memory of events, speeches, etc., by means of marked sticks. As early as 1646, the Jesuit missionaries in Canada made use of these to teach their converts the prayers of the Church and their sermons.¹⁰⁸

The name applied to these record or tally sticks was, among the Crees and Chipeways, *massinahigan*, which is the common word now for book, but which originally meant "a piece of wood marked with fire," from the verb *masinákisan*, I imprint a mark upon it with fire, I burn a mark upon it,¹⁰⁹ thus indicating the rude beginning of a system of mnemonic aids. The Lenape

words for book, *malackhickan*, Camp., *mamalekhican* Zeis., were probably from the same root.

In later days, instead of burning the marks upon the sticks, they were painted, the colors as well as the figures having certain conventional meanings.¹¹⁰

These sticks are described as about six inches in length, slender, though varying in shape, and tied up in bundles.¹¹¹ Such bundles are mentioned by the interpreter Conrad Weiser, as in use in 1748 when he was on his embassy in the Indian country.¹¹² The expression, "we tied up in bundles," is translated by Mr. Heckewelder, *olumapisid*, and a head chief of the Lenape, usually called *Olomipees*, was thus named, apparently as preserver of such records.¹¹³ I shall return on a later page to the precise meaning of this term.

The word signifying to paint was *walamén*, which does not appear in western dialects, but is found precisely the same in the Abnaki, where it is given by Rasles, *8ramann*¹¹⁴, which, transliterated into Delaware (where the *l* is substituted for the *r*), would be *w'lam'an*. From this word came *Wallamüink*, the name applied by the natives to a tract in New Castle county, Delaware, since at that locality they procured supplies of colored earth, which they employed in painting. It means "the place of paint."¹¹⁵

Roger Williams, describing the New England Indians, speaks of "*Wunnam*, their red painting, which they most delight in, and is both the Barke of the Fine, as also a red Earth."¹¹⁶

The word is derived from Narr. *wunne*, Del. *wulit*, Chip. *gwanatsch* = beautiful, handsome, good, pretty, etc.

The Indian who had artistically bedaubed his skin with red, ochreous clay, was esteemed In full dress, and delightful to look upon. Hence the term *wulit*, fine, pretty, came to be applied to the paint itself.

The custom of using such sticks, painted or notched, was by no means peculiar to the Delawares. They were familiar to the Iroquois, and the early travelers found them in common employment among the southern tribes.¹¹⁷

As the art advanced, in place of simple sticks, painted or notched, wooden tablets came into use, on which the symbols were scratched or engraved with a sharp flint or knife. Such are those still in use among the Chipeway, described by Dr. James as "rude pictures carved on a flat piece of wood;"¹¹⁸ by the native Copway, as "board plates;"¹¹⁹ and more precisely by Mr. Schoolcraft, as "a tabular piece of wood, covered on both sides with a series of devices cut between parallel lines."¹²⁰

The Chipeway terms applied to these devices or symbols are, according to Mr. Schoolcraft, *kekeewin*, for those in ordinary and common use, and *kekeenowin*, for those connected with the mysteries, the "meda worship" and the "great medicine." Both words are evidently from a radical signifying a mark or sign, appearing in the words given in Baraga's "Otchipwe Dictionary," *kikinawadjiton*, I mark it, I put a certain mark on it, and *kikinoamawa*, I teach, instruct him.

Moral and Mental Character

The character of the Delawares was estimated very differently, even by those who had the best opportunities of judging. The missionaries are severe upon them. Brainerd described them as "unspeakably indolent and slothful. They have little or no ambition or resolution; not one in a thousand of them that has the spirit of a man."¹²¹ No more favorable was the opinion of Zeisberger. He speaks of their alleged bravery with the utmost contempt, and morally he puts them down as "the most ordinary and the vilest of savages."¹²²

Perhaps these worthy missionaries measured them by the standard of the Christian ideal, by which, alas, we all fall woefully short.

Certainly, other competent observers report much more cheerfully. One of the first explorers of the Delaware, Captain Thomas Young (1634), describes them as "very well proportioned, well featured, gentle, tractable and docile."¹²³

Of their domestic affections, Mr. Heckewelder writes: "I do not believe that there are any people on earth who are more attached to their relatives and offspring than these Indians are."¹²⁴

Their action toward the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania indicates a sense of honor and a respect for pledges which we might not expect. They had learned and well understood that the Friends were non-combatants, and as such they never forgot to

spare them, even in the bloody scenes of border warfare.

"Amidst all the devastating incursions of the Indians in North America, it is a remarkable fact that no Friend who stood faithful to his principles in the disuse of all weapons of war, the cause of which was generally well understood by the Indians, ever suffered personal molestation from them."¹²⁵

The fact that for more than forty years after the founding of Penn's colony there was not a single murder committed on a settler by an Indian, itself speaks volumes for their self-control and moral character. So far from seeking quarrels with the whites they extended them friendly aid and comfort.¹²⁶

Even after they had become embittered and corrupted by the gross knavery of the whites (for example, the notorious "long walk,") and the debasing influence of alcohol, such an authority as Gen. Wm. H. Harrison could write these words about the Delawares: "A long and intimate knowledge of them, in peace and war, as enemies and friends, has left upon my mind the most favorable impression of their character for bravery, generosity and fidelity to their engagements."¹²⁷ More than this, and from a higher source, could scarcely be asked.

That intellectually they were by no means deficient is acknowledged by Brainerd himself. "The children," he writes, "learn with surprising readiness; their master tells me he never had an English school that learned, in general, so fast."¹²⁸

Religious Beliefs

With the hints given us in various authors, it is not difficult to reconstruct the primitive religious notions of the Delawares. They resembled closely those of the other Algonkin nations, and were founded on those general mythical principles which, in my "Myths of the New World," I have shown existed widely throughout America. These are, the worship of Light, especially in its concrete manifestations of fire and the sun; of the Four Winds, as typical of the cardinal points, and as the rain bringers; and of the Totemic Animal.

As the embodiment of Light, some spoke of the sun as a deity,¹²⁹ while their fifth and greatest festival was held in honor of Fire, which they personified, and called the Grandfather of all Indian nations. They assigned to it twelve divine assistants, who were represented by so many actors in the ceremony, with evident reference to the twelve moons or months of the year, the fire being a type of the heavenly blaze, the sun.¹³⁰

But both Sun and Fire were only material emblems of the mystery of Light. This was the "body or fountain of deity," which Brainerd said they described to him in terms that he could not clearly understand; something "all light;" a being "*in* whom the earth, and all things in it, may be seen;" a "great man, clothed with the day, yea, with the brightest day, a day of many years, yea, a day of everlasting continuance." From him proceeded, in

him were, to him returned, all things and the souls of all things.

Such was the extraordinary doctrine which a converted priest of the native religion informed Brainerd was the teaching of the medicine men.¹³¹

The familiar Algonkin myth of the "Great Hare," which I have elsewhere shown to be distinctively a myth of Light,¹³² was also well known to the Delawares, and they applied to this animal, also, the appellation of the "Grandfather of the Indians."¹³³ Like the fire, the hare was considered their ancestor, and in both instances the Light was meant, fire being its symbol, and the word for hare being identical with that of brightness and light.

As in Mexico and elsewhere, this light or bright ancestor was the culture hero of their mythology, their pristine instructor in the arts, and figured in some of their legends as a white man, who, in some remote time, visited them from the east, and brought them their civilization.¹³⁴

I desire to lay especial stress on these proofs of Light worship among the Delawares, for it has an immediate bearing on several points in the Walam Olum. There are no compounds more frequent in that document than those with the root signifying "light," "brightness," etc., and this is one of the evidences of its authenticity.

Next in order, or rather, parallel with and a part of the worship of Light, was that of the Four Cardinal Points, always identified with the Four Winds, the bringers of rain and sunshine, the rulers of the weather.

"After the strictest inquiry respecting their notions of the Deity," says David Brainerd, "I find that in ancient times, before the coming of the white people, some supposed there were four invisible powers, who presided over the four corners of the earth."¹³⁵

The Montauk Indians of Long Island, a branch of the Mohegans, also worshiped these four deities, as we are informed by the Rev Sampson Occum;¹³⁶ and Captain Argoll found them again in 1616 among the accolents of the Potomac, close relatives of the Delawares. Their chief told him: "We have five gods in all, our chief god appears often unto us in the form of a mighty great hare, the other four have no visible shape, but are indeed the four winds, which keep the four corners of the earth."¹³⁷

These are the fundamental doctrines, the universal *credo*, of not only all the Algonkin faiths, but of all or nearly all primitive American religions.

This is very far from the popular conception of Indian religion, with its "Good Spirit" and "Bad Spirit." Such ideas were not familiar to the native mind. Heckewelder, Brainerd and Loskiel all assure us in positive terms that the notion of a bad spirit, a "Devil," was wholly unknown to the aborigines, and entirely borrowed from the whites. Nor was the Divinity of Light looked upon as a beneficent father, or anything of that kind. The Indian did not appeal to him for assistance, as to his *totemic and personal gods*.

These were conceived to be in the form of animals, and

various acts of propitiation to them were performed. Such acts were not a worship of the animals themselves. Brainerd explains this very correctly when he says: "They do not suppose a divine power essential to or inhering in these creatures, but that some invisible beings, not distinguished from each other by certain names, but only notionally, communicate to these animals a great power, and so make these creatures the immediate authors of good to certain persons. Hence such a creature becomes *sacred* to the person to whom he is supposed to be the immediate author of good, and through him they must worship the invisible powers, though to others he is no more than another creature."¹³⁸

They rarely attempted to set forth the divinity in image. The rude representation of a human head, cut in wood, small enough to be carried on the person, or life size on a post, was their only idol. This was called *wsinkhoalican*. They also drew and perhaps carved emblems of their totemic guardian. Mr. Beatty describes the head chief's home as a long building of wood: "Over the door a turtle is drawn, which is the ensign of this particular tribe. On each door post was cut the face of a grave old man."¹³⁹

Occasionally, rude representations of the human head, chipped out of stone, are exhumed in those parts of Pennsylvania and New Jersey once inhabited by the Lenape.¹⁴⁰ These are doubtless the *wsinkhoalican* above mentioned.

Doctrine of the Soul

There was a general belief in a soul, spirit or immaterial part of man. For this the native words were *tschipey* and *tschitschank* (in Brainerd, *chichuny*). The former is derived from a root signifying to be separate or apart, while the latter means "the shadow."¹⁴¹

Their doctrine was that after death the soul went *south*, where it would enjoy a happy life for a certain term, and then could return and be born again into the world. In moments of spiritual illumination it was deemed possible to recall past existences, and even to remember the happy epoch passed in the realm of bliss.¹⁴²

The path to this abode of the blessed was by the Milky Way, wherein the opinion of the Delawares coincided with that of various other American nations, as the Eskimos, on the north, and the Guaranis of Paraguay, on the south.

The ordinary euphemism to inform a person that his death was at hand was: "You are about to visit your ancestors;"¹⁴³ but most observers agree that they were a timorous people, with none of that contempt of death sometimes assigned them.¹⁴⁴

The Native Priests

An important class among the Lenape were those called by the whites doctors, conjurers, or medicine men, who were really the

native priests. They appear to have been of two schools, the one devoting themselves mainly to divination, the other to healing.

According to Brainerd, the title of the former among the Delawares, as among the New England Indians, was *powwow*, a word meaning "a dreamer;" Chip., *bawadjagan*, a dream; *nind apawe*, I dream; Cree, *pawa-miwin*, a dream. They were the interpreters of the dreams of others, and themselves claimed the power of dreaming truthfully of the future and the absent.¹⁴⁵ In their visions their guardian spirit visited them; they became, in their own words, "all light," and they "could see through men, and knew the thoughts of their hearts."¹⁴⁶ At such times they were also instructed at what spot the hunters could successfully seek game.

The other school of the priestly class was called, as we are informed by Mr. Heckewelder, *medeu*.¹⁴⁷ This is the same term which we find in Chipeway as *mide* (*medaween*, Schoolcraft), and in Cree as *mitew*, meaning a conjurer, a member of the Great Medicine Lodge.¹⁴⁸ I suspect the word is from *m'iteh*, heart (Chip. *k'ide*, thy heart), as this organ was considered the source and centre of life and the emotions, and is constantly spoken of in a figurative sense in Indian conversation and oratory.

Among the natives around New York Bay there was a body of conjurers who professed great austerity of life. They had no fixed homes, pretended to absolute continence, and both exorcised sickness and officiated at the funeral rites. Their name, as reported by the Dutch, was *kitzinacka*, which is evidently Great

Snake (*gitschi, achkook*). The interesting fact is added, that at certain periodical festivals a sacrifice was prepared, which it was believed was carried off by a huge serpent.¹⁴⁹

When the missionaries came among the Indians, the shrewd and able natives who had been accustomed to practice on the credulity of their fellows recognized that the new faith would destroy their power, and therefore they attacked it vigorously. Preachers arose among them, and claimed to have had communications from the Great Spirit about all the matters which the Christian teachers talked of. These native exhorters fabricated visions and revelations, and displayed symbolic drawings on deerskins, showing the journey of the soul after death, the path to heaven, the twelve emetics and purges which would clean a man of sin, etc.

Such were the famed prophets Papunhank and Wangomen, who set up as rivals in opposition to David Zeisberger; and such those who so constantly frustrated the efforts of the pious Brainerd. Often do both of these self-sacrificing apostles to the Indians complain of the evil influence which such false teachers exerted among the Delawares.¹⁵⁰

The existence of this class of impostors is significant for the appreciation of such a document as the Walam Olum. They were partially acquainted with the Bible history of creation; some had learned to read and write in the mission schools; they were eager to imitate the wisdom of the whites, while at the same time they were intent on claiming authentic antiquity and originality for all

their sayings.

Religious Ceremonies

The principal sacred ceremony was the dance and accompanying song. This was called *kanti kanti*, from a verbal found in most Algonkin dialects with the primary meaning to sing (Abnaki, *skan*, je danse et chante en même temps, Rasles; Cree, *nikam*; Chip., *nigam*, I sing). From this noisy rite, which seems to have formed a part of all the native celebrations, the settlers coined the word *cantico*, which has survived and become incorporated into the English tongue.

Zeisberger describes other festivals, some five in number. The most interesting is that called *Machtoga*, which he translates "to sweat." This was held in honor of "their Grandfather, the Fire." The number twelve appears in it frequently as regulating the actions and numbers of the performers. This had evident reference to the twelve months of the year, but his description is too vague to allow a satisfactory analysis of the rite.

CHAPTER IV

The Literature And Language Of The Lenape

§ 1. Literature of the Lenape Tongue – Campanius;
Penn; Thomas,

Zeisberger; Heckeweider, Roth, Ettwein; Grube,
Dencke;

Luckenbach; Henry; Vocabularies, a native letter.

§ 2. General Remarks on the Lenape.

§ 3. Dialects of the Lenape.

§ 4. Special Structure of the Lenape. – The Root and the
Theme;

Prefixes; Suffixes; Derivatives, Grammatical Notes.

§ 1. *Literature of the Lenape Tongue*

The first study of the Delaware language was undertaken by the Rev. Thomas Campanius (Holm), who was chaplain to the Swedish settlements, 1642-1649. He collected a vocabulary, wrote out a number of dialogues in Delaware and Swedish, and even completed a translation of the Lutheran catechism into the tongue. The last mentioned was published in Stockholm, in 1696, through the efforts of his grandson, under the

title, *Lutheri Catechismus, Ofwersatt på American-Virginiske Språket*, 1 vol., sm. 8vo, pp. 160. On pages 133-154 it has a *Vocabularium Barbaro-Virgineorum*, and on pages 155-160, *Vocabula Mahakuassica*. The first is the Delaware as then current on the lower river, the second the dialect of the Susquehannocks or Minquas, who frequently visited the Swedish settlements.

Although he managed to render all the Catechism into something which looks like Delaware, Campanius' knowledge of the tongue was exceedingly superficial. Dr. Trumbull says of his work: "The translator had not learned even so much of the grammar as to distinguish the plural of a noun or verb from the singular, and knew nothing of the "transitions" by which the pronouns of the subject and object are blended with the verb."¹⁵¹

At the close of his "History of New Sweden," Campanius adds further linguistic material, including an imaginary conversation in Lenape, and the oration of a sachem. It is of the same character as that found in the Catechism.

After the English occupation very little attention was given to the tongue beyond what was indispensable to trading. William Penn, indeed, professed to have acquired a mastery of it. He writes: "I have made it my business to understand it, that I might not want an interpreter on any occasion."¹⁵² But it is evident, from the specimens he gives, that all he studied was the trader's jargon, which scorned etymology, syntax and prosody, and was about as near pure Lenape as pigeon English is to the periods of Macaulay.

An ample specimen of this jargon is furnished us by Gabriel Thomas, in his "Historical and Geographical Account of the Province and Country of Pensilvania; and of West-New-Jersey in America," London, 1698, dedicated to Penn. Thomas tells us that he lived in the country fifteen years, and supplies, for the convenience of those who propose visiting the province, some forms of conversation, Indian and English. I subjoin a short specimen, with a brief commentary: —

1. <i>Hitah takoman?</i>	Friend, from whence com'st?
2. <i>Andogowa nee weekin.</i>	Yonder.
3. <i>Tony andogowa kee weekin?</i>	Where Yonder?
4. <i>Arwaymouse.</i>	At Arwaymouse.
5. <i>Keco kee hatah weekin?</i>	What hast got in thy house?
6. <i>Nee hatah huska weesyouse og huska chetena</i>	I have very fat venison and good strong skins,
<i>chase og huska orit chekenip.</i>	with very good turkeys.
7. <i>Chingo kee beto nee chasa ag yousa</i>	When wilt thou bring me skins and venison,
<i>elka chekenip?</i>	with turkeys?
8. <i>Haiapa etka nisha kishquicka.</i>	To-morrow, or two days hence.

1. *Hitah* for *n'ischu* (Mohegan, *nitap*), my friend; *takoman*, Zeis. *takomun*, from *ta*, where, *k*, 2d pers. sing.

2. *Andogowa*, similar to *undachwe*, he comes, Heck.; *nee*, pron. possess. 1st person; *weekin* = *wikwam*, or wigwam. "I come from my house."

3. *Tony*, = Zeis. *tani*, where? *kee*, pron. possess. 2d person.

4. *Arwaymouse* was the name of an Indian village, near Burlington, N. J.

5. *Keco*, Zeis. *koecu*, what? *hatah*, Zeis. *hattin*, to have.

6. *Huska*, Zeis. *husca*, "very, truly;" *wees*, Zeis. *wisu*,

fatty flesh, *youse*, R. W. *jous*, deer meat; *og*, Camp. *ock*, Zeis. *woak* and; *chetena*, Zeis. *tschitani*, strong; *chase*, Z. *chessak*, deerskin; *orit*, Zeis. *wulit*, good; *chekenip*, Z. *tschekenum*, turkey.

7. *Chingo*, Zeis. *tschingatsch*, when; *beto*, Z. *peten*, to bring; *etka*, R. W., *ka*, and.

8. *Halapa*, Z. *alappa*, to-morrow; *nisha*, two; *kishquicka*, Z. *gischgu*, day, *gischguik*, by day.

The principal authority on the Delaware language is the Rev. David Zeisberger, the eminent Moravian missionary, whose long and devoted labors may be accepted as fixing the standard of the tongue.

Before him, no one had seriously set to work to master the structure of the language, and reduce it to a uniform orthography. With him, it was almost a lifelong study, as for more than sixty years it engaged his attention. To his devotion to the cause in which he was engaged, he added considerable natural talent for languages, and learned to speak, with almost equal fluency, English, German, Delaware and the Onondaga and Mohawk dialects of the Iroquois.

The first work he gave to the press was a "Delaware Indian and English Spelling Book for the Schools of the Mission of the United Brethren," printed in Philadelphia, 1776. As he did not himself see the proofs, he complained that both in its arrangement and typographical accuracy it was disappointing. Shortly before his death, in 1806, the second edition appeared, amended in these respects. A "Hymn Book," in Delaware, which

he finished in 1802, was printed the following year, and the last work of his life, a translation into Delaware of Lieberkuhn's "History of Christ," was published at New York in 1821.

These, however, formed but a small part of the manuscript materials he had prepared on and in the language. The most important of these were his Delaware Grammar, and his Dictionary in four languages, English, German, Onondaga and Delaware.

The MS. of the Grammar was deposited in the Archives of the Moravian Society at Bethlehem, Pa. A translation of it was prepared by Mr. Peter Stephen Duponceau, and published in the "Transactions of the American Philosophical Society," in 1827.

The quadrilingual dictionary has never been printed. The MS. was presented, along with others, in 1850, to the library of Harvard College, where it now is. The volume is an oblong octavo of 362 pages, containing about 9000 words in the English and German columns, but not more than half that number in the Delaware.

A number of other MSS. of Zeisberger are also in that library, received from the same source. Among these are a German-Delaware Glossary, containing 51 pages and about 600 words; a Delaware-German Phrase Book of about 200 pages; Sermons in Delaware, etc., mostly incomplete studies, but of considerable value to the student of the tongue.¹⁵³

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