

WOLF CLAN ORIGIN LEGEND

INTRODUCTION TO THE WOLF CLAN: THE IOWAY¹ WOLF CLAN PEOPLES were known as **Shúⁿta Kiráje**: They Name Themselves (after the) Wolf or by their sacred name, **Mijíraje**². They belong to the Earth Clans lead by the Black Bear People in the Autumn and Winter Seasons. The close alliance between the Wolf and the Bear Clan was asserted both by the Ioways and the Winnebagos (Hotúje). The other associated Clans are the Elk Clan, the Eagle & Thunder Beings, and the Beaver Clan People. According to tradition, each clan was founded by four animal brothers, who became human beings. There were four recognized sub-clans prior to 1900, namely, **ShúⁿtaⁿThéwe**: Black Wolf; **ShúⁿtaⁿXóje**: Grey Wolf; **ShúⁿtaⁿThká**:³ White Wolf; **ShúⁿMañikathi**: Prairie Wolf ~ Coyote. These subclans represented each of the four founding Wolf Clan Brothers: **Híⁿgru**, **Héna**, **Hága** and **Hágaⁿiñe** who arrived on this land. It is from these four ancestors that the Clan received its Sacred Pipe, war bundle and tattooing bundle. In 1880, **Máhiⁿ** (Knife) was the leading chief of this Clan.⁴ He came with the active members and other traditional Ioways to Oklahoma beginning in 1877 thru 1882, staying at first with the Sac & Fox Tribe before acquiring their own reservation. The Wolf Clan Sacred Pipe was last in possession of the "Ioway wife of (Otoe) Chief Little Deer", residing near Red Rock, Okla. It was collected by A. Skinner on July 10, 1922 and deposited with the Museum of Milwaukee.⁵

It is said that the Wolf Clan People brought the bow & arrow and other weapons, teaching the People how to hunt with it. However, the useful hunting weapon also became the cause of men wounding and/or killing one another. Some early day elders said that when the Wolf Clan People first arrived, they spoke different languages, according to the different subgens. Others say that they brought the tobacco, as they have many personal names derived from that plant, such as: **UxráHgaMi**: White Blossom Woman[MDCI].⁶ However, few of these names are known by present day descendants. In fact, little of the oral history has survived through known members, so the story has to be gleaned from the early day missionary records, ethnologists and the Wolf Clan legends of the Winnebago (Hotúje), the Grandfather tribe, which tradition and linguistic evidence indicate are the lineage of the Ioway, Otoe and Missouia tribes.

THE WOLF CLAN ORIGIN story was fervently guarded, being told only to those who had an inherited right to hear the Clan's sacred origin. And there were certain individuals authorized to tell it at Sacred Pipe Ceremonies and Clan Bundles renewal. A separate personal request for a blessed telling of the story was accompanied with a small amount of tobacco, and an invitation to come for dinner. Afterwards, the narrator would recite the story to the family gathering. In appreciation, a small gift was given the storyteller. How the Sacred Pipe came to the Clan has been lost, other than a reference to it having come from above (the Heavens). The origin legend was told on occasions of giving names to new Clan members

¹ Only the Ioway reported a Wolf Clan in the 1880's. However, J.O.Dorsey obtained a list of the Otoe-Missouria Clans from KéGredhe(Spotted Turtle), an Otoe, Skájeⁿiñe (Little Player), a Missouria, and Battiste Deroine, the interpreter for the two tribes, which included a "Muⁿtciratce, Wolf". Dorsey, James O. "The Social Organization of the Siouian Tribes", *Journal American Folklore*, 4, 1891. p.340. Also see: Skinner, Allison, "Traditions of the Iowa Indians", *JAFL*, 38. 1925. p.502-3. Also: Whitman, W., "The Otoe", *Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology*, 28. 1937. p.15-18, 35. Early day documents (1820) attest to an Otoe Wolf Clan in the person of *Shaumaonekusse* [ShúnMáñiKathi: Prairie Wolf], better known by his warrior name, "Iotan". Treat, John Irving, "Indian Sketches", *University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK. 1955. McKenney, T.L., et.al., "The Indian Tribes of North America 1. pp. 156-164.*

² An archaic sacred name for the Wolf Clan and its members.

³ Joseph Springer reported this sub-clan to be "Shuntánka: Big (Black) Wolf" in Skinner, A., "Iowa Societies", *Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History. 11:9. NY, 1913. p.734.*

⁴ Dorsey, *op.cit.*, p.337.

⁵ Skinner, A. "Ethnology of the Ioway Indians". *Public Museum of the City of Milwaukee. Bull. 4. 1920.*

⁶ The [MDCI] refers to a current enrolled member on Ioway Roll or Census (1880 to present-day).

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during the Autumn - Winter Seasons. The Clan names were composed during the arrival of the first Wolf Brothers on Earth.⁷ The names commemorated incidents that occurred as they affiliated with the other clans and established themselves as a people and tribe in the new land. There were several versions told of the Clan origin legend which present a lack of consistency. However, such incongruity was considered unimportant by the traditional Ioway People.

WOLF CLAN “*MÁⁿDADÁÑIDA, MaháShùjeda,...*”⁸ IN THE BEGINNING OF TIME, at Red **ORIGIN** Earth, ... The Creator, **Má[^]uⁿ: Earth Maker**, had already made the Earth. And all the **LEGEND:** peoples, animals, birds and those in the waters, even the trees and plants are all come from The Creator, **Má[^]uⁿ: Earth Maker**, they say.⁹ And it is said that previously, the Clan lived under the ground in another world, and like the Bear and Elk Clans, they came from an island. It is the same one that the Eagle and Pigeon Clans alighted on when they came down to earth, it seems. Some even say that the four Wolf Brothers emanated from a lodge at the bottom of the ocean, where they lived with their children. Other narrators have stated that the original place was in the middle of the ocean or even on the other side of the ocean. Irregardless, they did come forth out of the water, they say. This occurred by **Ñíto: Big Water (Ocean)**. They were at a place they called **MáyaⁿShúje: Red Earth** or **MáⁿShúje: Red Bank**,¹⁰ they say.

“*Shúⁿta iyáⁿki ní axéwe gú; idá náhe[^]shuⁿ wamáni ki...*”¹¹ A Wolf, ...he appeared out of the water¹²; ...he came walking from there.... **MáñiHú [RS], MáñiHúMi:**¹³ **Come Walking (From Creation), Háⁿwe Gú: Dawn** (I.#28)¹⁴ [AR]. And then, he was joined by his brothers, and they sang songs as they came out, it is said. The Winnebago (Hotúje) tell that each brother had a color and those colors were associated with the names of the four Brothers. And in that way, they received their names that were in turn, given to the subclans¹⁵.

“*Wáⁿshige níje ki; Wanúhshjesta mínaminañe ki; áñe ki...*”¹⁶ There were no people.... Only animals were sitting around, they said.... And then, the brothers went walking about, looking around at the land, the trees, and the different kind of plants. **Badhí Xáñe: Big Cedar** (I.#27) [JR].

“*Ráye idáⁿda ^úⁿgráñe ki,*”¹⁷ They made other names for themselves.... “*Wixóbriⁿhsji ki,*” It was really something holy.

⁷ The Winnebagos said that there were four male wolves and four female wolves. Radin, Paul. “The Winnebago Tribe.” University of Nebraska Press. Lincoln, NE. 1970. p.190. (Originally published in: Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution. Washington, D.C. 1923.)

⁸ GoodTracks, Jimm G., Field Notes on Ioway-Otoe with UxráHgáMi [MDI]. Topeka, KS. 1971.

⁹ Traditional oral narration in the language includes a number of prescribed endings to sentences, for example, “they say”, “it is said” or “it seems”. Also, there are more frequent adverbial connectives at the beginning of sentences, (“And then”, “Again”, “So then”, etc.), which were considered in good style, and appropriate when narrating the traditional *wékaⁿ* and *wórage* (stories).

¹⁰ The “Island” is thought to be around the Great Lakes, as “MáyaⁿŠúje: Red Earth” is considered to be located Northeast of present day Green Bay, Wisconsin. The “Ñíto: Ocean/ Big Water” is presumably Lake Michigan.

¹¹ GoodTracks. op.cit.

¹² In the Winnebago version, it is stated that the four Wolf brothers came up from the sea and swam toward the shore, causing waves to go before them. Therefore, one of their Clan names is **Chaashján: Wave**. (Báxoje= **Táshdaⁿ**). Radin. op.cit. p.191-192. See Hidatsa story of “First Creator” [Itúⁿ Wáⁿshige [LAC]] ~ Itúⁿ Má[^]uⁿ: **First Creator**] in collection by Beckwith, Martha W. *Mandan-Hidatsa Myths and Ceremonies*. American Folklore Society, 1937; Kraus Reprint Co., NY. 1969. pp.1-17.

¹³ **Mi** is the feminine ending, that alters a personal name for female use; it may be rendered as “Woman” or “Female”.

¹⁴ The (I.# 28) refers to the Ioway Census of 1880 as furnished by Rev. William Hamilton and Indian Agent M.B. Kent. *National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.. James Owen Dorsey(NAA 4800)(920). 1881.*

¹⁵ These Winnebago sub-clans were White Wolf, Green Hair, Gray Wolf and Black Wolf. Radin. op.cit. p. 192.

¹⁶ GoodTracks. op.cit.

¹⁷ Ibid.

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*“Wanúhsje bróge náhe^shu” wá^shige wíthge ^u^ hanáhe itúgra^ñe hñe ki.”*¹⁸ All the animals indeed decided that they would be like human being.... Indeed, they had first appeared as Wolves, and then they made themselves to look like human beings, **IkíJire(Mi): Walking Erect ~ Standing Herself Erect** (l.#85) [JD].¹⁹ And then, they built themselves a lodge to live in, but they did not have fire, it seems.²⁰ It is said that they had great power over all the four footed animals. Furthermore, they are credited to have brought bows and arrows, they say. So they composed names referring to these weapons... **MáAñiMañi: Travels Carrying Arrows** (l.#77) [LT]; **MahíHga: White Knife** (l.#5) [MG], ...as well as other names referring to the way they conducted themselves. **Pabrúxe: He Scents** (l.#36) [WD]; **Nax^ú^Máñi: Hearing; Thigré Uth^uñe: Tracker/Trailer.**

WOLF MEETS WHEN THEY FIRST came, they saw the tracks of the Black Bear Clan, they say. And **BLACK BEARS:** it happened that their first encounter with anyone, was meeting the Bear Clan People. And so, they made a friendship with them. The Black Bears were traveling along, it seems, when they saw the track of a Wolf, **Shú^ta Thigré: Wolf Track** (l.#38) [DD]. They followed the tracks until they came to a hole in the ground, they say. And then, they came to another hole in the ground and striking the ground with their war clubs, they made a wolf come out. **Shú^ta: Wolf** (l.#120) [JWW]. The Wolf says to them: “My brothers, it is I. I am your brother”. **HaXáge: Wolf Cry. Shú^ta Náyi^: Standing Wolf; Shú^ta^iñe: Little Wolf; Shú^taHsji(Mi): Real Wolf** (l.#23) [MW]; **Shú^ta Xóje: Grey Wolf.**

DIFFERENT YET *“Shú^ta Mijíraje Kirájeñenahàre ráye igrágañe ki,”*²¹ Wolf (Sacred Wolf) People they called themselves by name. Some tell that Wolf and Bear people used to fight and **SAME:** eat one another. And then, they met one day, they paused. One of them said: “Yes, We are so alike, yet we are so certain we’re different! You’re short and I’m tall. Your hair is coarse; mine is fine. Your words are different when you speak. But, we are both black” – It was the Black Wolf who spoke. “We both have teeth, we have eyes, and ears alike. Yet I’ve seen you weep in sorrow. I’ve heard you shout in anger. You tremble in fear, you blush in love. The words may be different, but the feelings are the same. So we must be brothers. Help me remember how alike we are, you and I, who are so different. Let us not fight anymore.” So they learned to understand the ways that they were the same, and through the friendship, they grew and became strengthened for the ventures ahead of them.

MEET EAGLE/ THUNDER & PIGEON: WHEN THEY FIRST CAME, the Wolf People saw the tracks of the Black Bear Clan, they say. And so, they meet up with the Black Bear Clan People and made friends with them. And, they went traveling with the Black Bears, **MáñiWáñi: Travels Having Them** (l.#78) [WT]. And that is how they met the Eagle (&Thunder) Peoples and the Pigeon Clan People. **KugráJidaHírè: Soaring (One’s Own Arrive Standing From Below).** At the outset, the Eagle/ Thunder People were afraid of the Wolf People.²²

The Wolf Clan asked them to come into their lodge, it is said. And with much difficulty, the Wolf People persuaded the Eagle/ Thunder People to enter, but immediately, they wanted to go. Wolf insisted that they stay four days, they say. So their guests agreed, but built themselves a separate lodge with a fire inside. And after four days, the Eagle/ Thunder Clan People went home.²³

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ When the Wolf became a human being, he was then master of himself, hence the Wolf Clan names: Master of Himself/ Mistress of Herself. Skinner, A., “Traditions of the Iowa Indians”, op.cit. p.503.

²⁰ Radin. op.cit. p. 191.

²¹ GoodTracks. op.cit.

²² Radin. op.cit. p. 191.

²³ Ibid., p.191.

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WOLF KILLS THE WOLF CLAN PREYED upon the Buffalo People, who were exceedingly worried.
BUFFALO It seems that the other Clans had asked the Wolf People to kill the Buffaloes for them,
PEOPLE: while they sang:

I am your brother, I am of the Wolf Clan.
 I am invited to a buffalo chase.
 I am your younger brother.
 Staggering, it is about to die;
 The tail trembles.²⁴

One day the Buffalo Chief said to them, “Here is some corn. Eat it. It is good!” They ate it, but it was raw and hard. It made their mouths bleed, it seems. And the blood stained the corn red. So today, that is why so much of the Indian corn is red or speckled red.²⁵

IT WAS THEN THAT the Eagle/ Thunder People called them into a large sacred skin tent. This was the lodge of the Eagle & Thunder Clan, as well as, the Pigeon Clan People. Inside, the conflicting clans engaged in combat, they say. And it seems about a thousand men were killed. It is then that the oldest Eagle/ Thunder brother said, “Now then, you have killed one another enough to your satisfaction. Let there be an end to this.” So the two Sky Clans made a feast by taking some of the corn and cooking it over the fire. **ÑiGidañe(Mi): They Soak It In Water Female (I.#105) [ED]; NúweJí(Mi): Two Arrive Woman [Corn Sprouts] (I.#82; 86) [AD; MW]; Wapúx^eMi: Boils Them (Woman) (I.#35) [EWC].** When they boiled it, the corn was made very pleasant to eat.²⁶ And from that time on, they all lived together in peace and harmony, it is said.

“Ida Má”Shujeda aré ki.”²⁷ There was made a village at MáⁿShúje, Red Earth.... All the Indians lived there at that time, it seems. And it was while these first Clans dwelt there, that the other Clans came and asked to be admitted to their village. So they pitied them and allowed them to come in, it is said. They taught the people how to hunt. **Wíroxi^iñe: Instructions (The y ask for it).** Also, however, they brought the arrows, and so, they are the cause of men to wound one another with the arrows. **MáRéHsji: Arrow Goes Flying (I.#88) [JD]; MáDoye(Mi): Broken Arrow (O.#29).**

THE CLAN ELDERS TOLD how the Wolf Clan helped the Bear Clan lead in the Autumn Hunt and regulating tribal affairs. Together they used to do all the talking and planning for starting the hunt or performing ceremonies, until the season when the frog are heard in the Spring.

The Clan reveres water,²⁸ even more so than others, in honor of the **Ñíto: Big Water** from which they merged as told in their sacred origin legend. Water is basic to all ceremonies and one of the ever-present sacred foods. Water is drunk by all present before a ceremonial feast in remembrance that it is fundamental to the life of all plants, animals, birds, as well as to human beings. They say that Wolf kinsmen are incapable of dying in water.²⁹ When the tribe is traveling and have to cross a large stream at the same time that there is a strong wind, a Wolf Clanmen is called to calm the wind before crossing.³⁰

²⁴ J. O. Dorsey, op.cit.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ GoodTracks. op.cit.

²⁸ Radin. op.cit. p. 190.

²⁹ Ibid. p.192.

³⁰ Ibid.

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DEATH OF A WOLF CLANSMAN: WHEN A WOLF CLANSMAN dies, his relatives paint his forehead with *máhatò: blue paint*. The deceased soul travels West, they say. The spirit does not look back, least it hesitate, and begin to have a yearning for something of this earth. When they arrive in the Spirit world, their relatives there, those that have arrived before them, will greet them. And they ask about what their relatives had said, those that were left behind. And so the new arrival will say how they wished everyone well, and they would follow at sometime latter on. However, it would not be any time soon.³¹ That is reason that one may observe during a wake service, various friends and relations will be seen addressing the deceased lying in state. The spirit stays nearby for four days and are aware of the services and what is said to them. At the first feast that is prepared to feed to visitors, the *itádo: friend* of the deceased takes a small parcel of each of the main foods and places it in a small bowl. Water is taken first. The bowl is tied up inside of a new white handkerchief. In turn, it is placed under the casket for the duration of the wake. Upon burial, the enclosed dish of spirit food is placed upon the grave by the *itádo*, for the deceased to utilize on the journey to *Wanáxi China: Spirit Village*, in the *máyaⁿ mágrida: in the land above*. In former days, a small fire would be kindled for four nights, to light the way for the spirit journey.³²

SPRING RENEWAL FEAST: IN THE SPRING, the Wolf Clan would provide a feast for its members at which time they would renew their Sacred Bundle and Pipe. This occurs after snow and ice have melted, and the grass begins to grow, and flowers are in bloom. At this time, the children would be given their Clan names after the origin legend has been recited. Children were sometimes named after the first four Wolf brothers that swam up to the new land; the ones who later founded the subclans that carry their names. Among the Winnebago, other clans were allowed to hear the narration.³³ The principal food that was cooked is boiled rice with deer or buffalo meat.

AND SO, THAT IS HOW the “Wolf Family came out of the ground (from) the other side of the sea to this country; and these three, the Eagle, Wolf and Bear Families made friends and are the first families. I do not know much about the other families, as they tell their history secretly. These are sacred things and I don’t like to tell them, as it is not our custom to do so only when we make a feast and collect the people together and have the Sacred Pipe. There are four kinds in each family.... The Wolf Family has four kinds. They are White, Grey, Black and Prairie Wolf. I am of the White Wolf Family. He is found only on the prairie or in the Buffalo country. “Pumpkin” (he) was of the Prairie Wolf Family....”³⁴

THERE WAS A SOCIETY, **Ch[^]é[^]Uⁿ Washí (Acting Dead Dance)**, founded by a man who fasted to obtain spiritual powers. He was blessed by the White Wolf, who taught him the ritual of this society, which he in turn taught his friends. As such, it was also referred to as the “Wolf Dance”. It was open to whoever desired to belong. Dave Tohi said that “It was a long hair lodge,” as the only admission requirement of members was to let their hair grow to their waists. As such, it was not a Wolf Clan activity, but one that was open to the entire community. It was blessed by a White Wolf Spirit Spirit, which most likely was not one of the original four Wolf Brothers. The dancers would go from house to house, howling like wolves, through the whole village. Two reknown chiefs were known to be members, namely, **Gáⁿige Wásasi:**

³¹ *Ibid.* p.191.

³² The funnral services are much the same for all clans, except that other clans paint the face of the deceased with *kíkuⁿdhe: red earth paint*. See Bear Clan Origin Legend under the “The Funnral Wake”.

³³ *Radin. op.cit.* p. 190.

³⁴ Unpublished journals of Rev. William Hamilton that are a part of the Henry Lewis Morgan Collection, University of Rochester Library. Box 25; Folder 93.

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Osage Chief, and **ájeNiŋ** **No Heart**.³⁵ The Otoe Coyote Dance seems to be a modified version of this ceremony.³⁶

Some of the Winnebago (Hotúŋe) Wolf Clan names³⁷ that are appropriate and coincide with the Ioway Wolf Clan Origin Legend include:

<u>Winnebago</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Ioway</u>
HishjáSgáága	White Faced	I ⁿ jeHgà
HishjáJóópga	Four Eyed	IshtáDòwe
HñPñWùga	Good Haired Female	Hí ⁿ PiMi
Hñäooga	Blue Furred/ Hair	Hí ⁿ Tò ³⁸
HóóMiinák'a	She (who) Sits Howling	Hótu ⁿ MinaMi
MääniJóópga	Four Walking	DóweMäni
Péé'Osgáága	White Forehead	PéHgà
Xéé'AsharaMiinák'a	Sits On Bare Hill	AhéShra ⁿ Mina
Xéé'OMiinák'a	Dwells In A Hill	AhéUmina
SñäZhùga	Bushy Tail	Shí ⁿ jeShkòwe
ÄââRawéga	Holds Deer In Mouth	TáRathwè
ÄââSífRawéga	Holds Deer Feet In Mouth	TáThiRathwè
ÄoonââkeHûûkga	Chief Wolf (<i>using archaic term</i>)	MijírajeHùŋ
ÄoonââkeÄooníWùga	First Wolf Female	MijírajeItú ⁿ Mi
ÄooníMiinák'a	Sits First (as leader)	Itú ⁿ Mina
WaRawé'iNík'a	Little (One) Carries In Something Mouth	WaRathwè [^] Yiñe
WaRawéGuga	Returns With Something In Mouth	WaRathwè [^] Yiñe
WaRuxéWùga	She (who) Chases	WaRúxeMi
WiRapéga	Waits For Them	Wákida

(The above composite synopsis is compiled from, Robert Small, [MániHú: Comes Walking (*From Creation*)], Oklahoma Ioway Wolf Clan³⁹; ShúⁿtaYiŋ [“Shontayinga”]: Little Wolf⁴⁰; Ñiyumañi [“Neu-mon-ya”]: Raining [aka “Walking Cloud” and/ or “Pumpkin”]⁴¹; James Owen Dorsey (*Manuscripts*); Rev. William Hamilton (*Manuscripts*); and contemporary Ioway Wolf Clan informants: UráxHkaMí (MDI) and ShexidaHsjiMi (BDY), in addition to ThigréPí (FM) and MašíMäni (TD).

³⁵ Skinner, A. “Societies of the Iowa”. *Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History*. 11. pp.701-702. NY. 1916.

³⁶ Whitman, W. “The Otoe”. *Columbia University Contributions to Anthropology*. 28. pp.126-127. NY. 1937.

³⁷ Radin, *ob.cit.*, pp.192-193. From: *Dorsey, J., ob.cit., NAA 4800; 293.*

³⁸ Also the name of an Otoe Elder (HD).

³⁹ Skinner, A., “Traditions of the Iowa Indians”, *ob.cit.*

⁴⁰ Rev. William Hamilton, *op.cit.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.* Also in Records of Bureau of Indian Affairs, Ioway Agency, August 3, 1835.