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THE MIWOK

THE Miwok Indians formerly occupied three distinct areas. One division held a very small territory in Lake county at the south end of Clear lake, where they were surrounded by Pomo, Yukian Wappo, and Patwin (southern Wintun). A larger Miwok area included Marin county and the southern part of Sonoma county up to a few miles north of Bodega bay. These Coast Miwok, or Olamentke as they were called by early writers, were contiguous to Pomo, Wappo, and Patwin, but much the greater part of their borders was the coast line of the ocean, the Golden Gate, and San Pablo bay, and their culture was necessarily far different from that of the inland members of the family. The principal Miwok area lay on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada, from the summit to the eastern line of San Joaquin valley, and between Fresno river in the south and Cosumnes river in the north; except that east and southeast of Lake Tahoe the Washo extended their borders some little distance down the western slope to the beginning of the oak groves, and further that between Cosumnes and Calaveras rivers the Miwok country spread westward into San Joaquin valley. It is this third and largest division of the Miwok that will be described in this chapter, for in the Lake and the Coast areas there remains practically no field for the investigator.

Miwûk is the plural of *miwû*, person, and is simply a convenient term adopted to supply the lack of any native name for these people. The former occupants of the three regions mentioned above have been held to constitute a linguistic family known as Moquelumnan, which is adapted from Mokélumni, "people of Mókel," a former village on Mokelumne river; but the recent reclassification of California tribes by Dixon and Kroeber includes them, with Yokuts, Costanoan, Maidu, and Wintun, in the new Penutian family.

Four dialects of the Miwok proper are recognized. Roughly the boundaries are these: the Plains dialect, in the plains between Cosumnes and Calaveras rivers; the Northern, in Amador and the northwestern part of Calaveras counties; the Central, in the remainder of Calaveras and all of Tuolumne counties; and the Southern, in Mariposa county. As in other dialectic classifications, the lines of division are not clean-cut. Within any one district here outlined there are noticeable differences of speech, so that vocabularies secured from different

individuals may vary considerably; and just when variation ceases to be sub-dialectic and becomes dialectic is a question not too easily decided, even with detailed comparative studies of full data, which no one yet has given to Miwok dialects.

The Miwok themselves recognized no such divisions by name, although of course they were aware of differences in speech throughout the territory of Miwok-speaking people; but their point of view 'was that every village beyond their immediate ken had its own peculiar accent, and no attempt was made to generalize or classify. In fact, they were so little inclined to travel beyond the bounds of their own village lands that no one individual could possess very extended knowledge of the rest of the Miwok country. To this extreme isolation is due the fact that almost without an exception they possessed no characteristic or distinctive names for other tribes, calling them simply northerners, easterners, *et cetera,* and including therein those of their own family who happened to live in the specified direction.

Their neighbors were the Maidu on the north; the Washo across the mountains in the northeast; the Shoshonean Mono on the east and southeast; the Yokuts in the south and southwest; and the Patwin at the northwest corner. Such limited intercourse as the Miwok held with these people was generally friendly.

Outside of the limited valley land in the north, Miwok territory falls into two zones: the mountains and the foothills. The high Sierras, with their abundance of food-bearing trees and shrub — spines, oaks, chinkapins, berry bushes of many kinds — and of game and fish, furnished a bountiful and delightful retreat from the excessive summer heat of lower altitudes. Here are some of the most famous of California's natural features, such as Yosemite Park and the sequoia groves. The wonderful valley of the Merced was regularly occupied in the summer by a Miwokband who called their village at that place Âwâni. This of course ought logically to be our name for the valley, but through error or design on the part of someone now unknown we have the equally euphonious Yosemite, which is English for central Miwok *ûsûmati,* bear (not, as usually translated, grizzly-bear).

But desirable as were these high altitudes for summer residence, they were perforce abandoned before the coming of the tremendous snowfall which made them uninhabitable not only for man but for most of the larger wild animals. With the advance of autumn therefore

the people gradually withdrew, first to the lower slopes of the Sierra, and finally to the foothills where their permanent winter settlements were already established. Here they harvested their principal supplies of acorns for the winter, as well as the seeds of numerous species of grass and other plants, besides tubers and bulbs. Game, driven out of the mountains by snow, was abundant, and the streams swarmed with fish.

The Miwok must be classed as quite inferior in their manufactures. With the exception of the pair of grooved flat stones for smoothing arrow-shafts, they made no stone implements. Obsidian points for arrows and fish-spears were purchased from the Mono.[1] The pestle for crushing acorns and seeds was a naturally shaped stone, and the mortar a natural depression in a bowlder, deepened by actual use. Here, as in the adjacent Maidu country, a granite surface with ten to twenty such holes is not an uncommon sight. The few perforated magnesite cylinders in possession of the Miwok were obtained by barter.

Of bone material were the deer-bone awl and the toggle fish-hook. Disc beads of clam-shell were obtained from the north, and were valued at five dollars for two feet. The rare spoons were unworked mussel-shells. Even bone points for the salmon-spear, which are well-nigh universal in the entire Pacific zone from Alaska southward, were absent here. The Miwok fish-spear had a California mahogany shaft about seven feet long, near the lower end of which a divergent foreshaft of the same wood was lashed, so that in effect the shaft was forked. Each of the two heads was a wooden, socketed member, to the end of which was fastened by means of cord and pitch a tip of obsidian, and wood barbs were similarly attached. These two heads were connected by a short cord, and from the pair a line passed up the shaft to the spearsman's hand. The implement differed from the spear of other tribes only in the substitution of wood-barbed obsidian tips for the more practical and durable bone points.

Wood split from a cedar branch furnished the material for bows, which were reinforced by deer-sinew glued to the back and covered, as a preservative from moisture, with fibres of a root resembling soapplant. They were from three to nearly four feet long. Arrow-shafts were

1 This may not have been true outside the southern and central districts.

reeds, with foreshafts of service-berry, and they were straightened by means of a perforated piece of cedar. Fire was produced with a drill, the spindle of which was twirled between the palms. The tobacco pipe was exceedingly rude, being nothing more than a section of elder stalk with the mouth-end partially closed by a bit of wood. The drum was made by covering an excavation in the floor of the ceremonial house with a slab, on which the time-keeper stamped, while the song-leaders clicked their split-elder batons. The shaman's rattle was a cluster of ten to fifteen cocoons pendent at the end of a short stick. A crude flute was made of elder wood. Canoes were unknown, and those who could not swim were ferried on logs pushed by swimmers. Sometimes suspension bridges were constructed across deep, narrow streams or gorges by throwing across the space two grapevines and laying thereon a floor of transverse poles. As the Miwok lacked the antler wedges so commonly used to aid in felling and splitting trees, they secured fuel by burning down dead trees and breaking up the branches with heavy stones. Sometimes a partially split log was opened by placing a thin fragment of stone in the crack and pounding it with a heavier stone.

After the partially dried stalks of milkweed (*Asclepias*) had been beaten with a stone, the fibres were drawn out and twisted between palm and thigh into cord, one of the uses of which was for making dip-nets. More common than the net was the fish-trap, which was a long, tubular, open-mesh willow basket placed with the bottom downstream and above the surface, so that the fish, crowding in, forced those ahead of them out of the water, where they were easily taken out through a trap-door.

Miwok baskets are both twined and coiled. The materials for twined work are oak, willow, sugar-pine, and sedge, and the principal examples are the cradle, and baskets for burden-bearing, winnowing, sifting, and storage. The base of the cradle is a warp of oak rods and weft of oak withes, while the head-piece, or hood, separately made and bound to the base, contains oak for the warp and sugar-pine withes for the weft. In the northern portions of Miwok territory a commoner form of cradle is made by lashing cross-sticks to a pair of uprights, which are bent over at the top so as to produce a frame over which a piece of deerskin may be draped to shield the infant's face. The burden-basket is conical, from eighteen to thirty inches deep and sixteen to twenty-six in diameter, and is made of willow rods

and oak weft. The smaller ones are used for transporting acorns, berries, roots, and seeds, the larger ones for bulkier burdens, such as fuel; and they are supported on the bowed back by a thong fastened just above the middle and passing across the bearer's head. Winnowing baskets are scoop-shape, of many sizes from nine to twenty-four inches long, either shallow or deep. The materials are willow warp and oak weft. Trays for sifting acorn meal are shallow plates eighteen to twenty inches in diameter, and the warp is shoots of *Rhus trilobata* (central dialect, *súlpanû;* southern, *táma*). The southern Miwok bands use split fibres of *Rhus trilobata* for the weft, and by leaving the new bark on they produce reddish designs; but the central Miwok employ the root-stock of a sedge (*súli*) for the weft. Indoor storage baskets for seeds and other dry food, and larger outdoor granaries elevated on platforms for the preservation of acorns, were formerly made, and the materials were willow and oak.

The materials for coiled basketry vary in different sections. In the south the foundation is a bundle of the stems of a tall, white grass called *húlup;* the wrapping material is the subterranean stock of the grass *péwisa;* and black ornamentation is secured by overlaying the wrap with blackened fibres from the roots of bracken (*Pteridium*), which is called *lûna*. In the north the foundation is one or three rods of willow, or more rarely hazel; the wrapping material, maple (*sáyi*); the black overlay, bracken-root; and reddish-brown overlay, bark of the redbud (*tapátapu*). Examples of Miwok coiled basketry are the large, flaring vessels in which boiling is accomplished by the aid of heated stones; the similar but smaller ones in which cooked food is served; bowl-shape dippers; and the almost hemispherical baskets, about fourteen inches broad, in which meal or seeds were parched by shaking them with intermixed embers.

Men ordinarily wore only a deerskin breechcloth, which was either draped about the loins or passed between the legs, and in cold weather they, like the women, threw a small robe of deer-fur or woven rabbit-skins about the shoulders. Some had a winter garment consisting of three deerskins sewed together, with a hole for the head to pass through. This of course was not worn constantly. Deerskin moccasins, with long tops that were wrapped about the calf, were worn when necessary. Women had either a knee-length double apron of deerskin, fringed, and beaded on the fringe, or a loin-cloth like that of the men.

Both sexes wore the hair hanging loose without parting it, or tied it in a bunch at the back; and they had the chin tattooed, usually with three vertical lines, as well sometimes as the forehead and wrists. Especially among the women the chest and shoulders were tattooed, and sometimes a long line extended from the lower lip to the abdomen. Some men of means, and more women, wore in the nose and ears slender, perforated cylinders of clam-shell, which came from the Yokuts. A more common ear-plug was a cylinder of wood with quail crest-feathers attached around one end.

The frame of the winter house consisted of poles, the bases resting on the edge of a shallow, circular excavation and the tops meeting at a common point, where a hole was left for the passage of smoke. Withes, usually willow, were interwoven transversely through the poles, and numerous courses of dry grass were lashed to the withes. In many cases the roof was made of cedar- or pine-bark. The doorway, which was about four feet wide at the bottom, was protected by a pent-roof, so that rain would not run down the roof and into the house; and it was closed when necessary with slabs of bark. It opened eastward. The house of a large family, where one or more married children lived with the parents, was not more than ten to fifteen feet in diameter and seven feet high, but many houses were barely large enough to permit the inmates to lie down without getting their feet into the fire. The under-bedding consisted of dry pine-needles or dry grass, and the covering of rabbit-skin or deerskin blankets. Summer houses were mere booths, usually of willow branches. They were frequently circular and completely walled in except at the doorway, but in many cases only a shade was erected.

The sudatory was built over a pit three and a half to four feet deep. Two or more forked beams meeting above the central point, and numerous smaller poles with their tops resting on these crotches and their bases on the edge of the pit, formed the frame, which was thatched with grass and covered with earth. The entrance was an inclined tunnel running under the wall, at the bottom of which the fire was built. The sudatory was used only by men. Some of the Miwok took a sweat nearly every day, ending with a plunge into the water; among other groups the sweat was used rather exclusively by hunters as a pseudo-religious rite before starting on the chase. When a good singer was available, songs were sung during the sweating to the ac-

companiment of split-elder batons.

The ceremonial house, or in local phraseology the "round house," was covered with earth. The frame consisted of four crotched posts, with numerous rafters resting on the edge of the shallow excavation. Each principal village possessed one of these houses, which were sometimes large enough to accommodate a hundred persons or even more, and during the progress of a ceremony many of the men, women, and children slept there.

The vegetal foods available to the Miwok were those common to other people of central California. Of principal importance were the five species of acorns, and the other nuts — pine-nuts, buckeyes, hazelnuts, chinkapins. Second only to acorns was pinole, the meal of parched seeds, particularly those of tarweed and wild oats. Various bulbs, corms, and berries were of importance. Salt, or at least a salt mixture, was obtained by pulverizing dry salt-grass and shaping it into balls, which were wrapped in green grass and baked in hot ashes.

It is sometimes said that the Miwok ate every species of living creature available to them, except the skunk. The statement is not true. They regarded the skunk as excellent food, and this opinion was shared by many other tribes, not all of whom were inhabitants of California. Other animals not commonly used for food, but eaten by the Miwok, were the bat and certain species of snakes. The flesh of kingsnakes, however, was held to be poisonous, and rattlesnakes were not eaten, although the Yokuts had no such scruple. The larger carnivores, fox, coyote, and mountain lion, were eaten, and in necessity the predatory and carrion birds. Dogs were not eaten, probably because they were too valuable. Worms and larvae were relished.

The country of the Miwok was overrun with deer and elk, yet they were compelled to eke out a rather miserable and precarious existence by the use of lower forms of life, some of which are good food and many of which are decidedly not, even to the uneducated palate of a savage. The conclusion seems warranted that the Miwok were not industrious and skilful hunters.

Deer were stalked by a hunter masked with the skin of a deer's head fitted with wooden horns, and by this method the largest deer were killed, because the oldest bucks would approach to give battle to the supposed rival. Community drives were sometimes organized, and brush blinds were built beside the deer trails; also, driving the game

over a precipice was practised. Snares and pitfalls were foreign to the Miwok. In winter the use of snowshoes sometimes made it possible to slaughter deer and elk helpless in the snow. Black bears were smoked out of their dens and killed with arrows, but the grizzly was religiously avoided. By far the largest part of their meat diet was furnished by jack-rabbits. In the community hunts preparatory to a ceremonial feast, each hunter took for his own use the lower part of the legs, the head, the neck, and the internal organs of the deer he killed, and the rest of the carcass was hung up on poles awaiting the feast. When a hunter, working alone or in company with others, brought in game, it was cut up and distributed among all the people.

Grasshoppers were caught in two ways: the field was burned over, and the singed insects were gathered up here and there; or several pits in the centre of the field were partially filled with water, and the grasshoppers, driven into them by a great circle of people, were scooped out by means of seed-beaters. The chief divided the catch among the people.

Among the southern and central bands of Miwok salmon were taken only by means of the spear. In some localities suckers were driven into tubular basketry traps, and elsewhere into small dip-nets. Trout were caught with bone gorge-hooks sharpened at both ends and attached at the middle to the line. Trout and other fish lying hidden under overhanging banks were captured by the ancient method of tickling. The favorite, because the least arduous and most certain, method of fishing was to throw into a pool of quiet water a quantity of pulverized buckeyes mixed with earth, or a mass of crushed soap-plant, and in a short time scoop out with a winnowing basket the stupefied fish as they floated to the surface.

The Miwok rarely practised warfare, unless the word can be applied to the assassination of men believed to be sorcerers. The killing of these medicine-men was a frequent occurrence, and expeditions for the purpose were sometimes made to rather distant villages within the Miwok boundaries. While the main body lay in waiting, a scout entered the village as if on a friendly visit. After observing the disposition of things in the shaman's house, and especially the location of his bed, he reported to his companions and then returned to the village as if to spend the night. In the dead of night the executioners closed in, entered the house, seized the medicine-man, and after informing him

for what particular deed he was being killed, shot him full of arrows. Very rarely indeed did other members of the household attempt to assist him. In fact, medicine-men were so thoroughly feared that they never had any real friends, and therefore vengeance was never sought. After killing the offending shaman, the executioners assisted in the cremation of his body and returned home.

The favorite play of course is the hand game (central and southern dialect, *hínwa*). The Mono still make an annual pilgrimage from Mono county to Yosemite valley to contest against the southern Miwok who continue to spend their summers there, and the game is played with the greatest enthusiasm and for fairly high stakes.

The dice game (southern dialect, *cháta;* central, *chatátûû*) was played by women, sometimes by men. The dice were six halves of acorns, which were cast from the hand upon a sifting tray. If all fell alike, the count was two; if they were evenly divided, one; the other two possible combinations meant the loss of the cast.

Tâli (southern dialect) was a contest shared by men and women, in which the object was to toss across the goal line by means of throwing-sticks a pair of wooden blocks united by a thong. A similar game (*tíkli*, central dialect) was played by women exclusively, the missile being a small hoop and the goal a wicket several feet high.

Ámta (southern and central dialect) was a ball-game for women, sometimes for men and women together. Starting at the middle of the play-ground, women tossed the hair-and-deerskin ball from their seed-beaters, and men, if any were contesting, kicked it.

Wîtpâ (southern dialect) was a kicking race contested by men. Two large balls of hair covered with deerskin were set up side by side on small mounds of earth, and the players stationed themselves at intervals along the course. The two leaders started the contest by kicking their respective balls forward, and the others kicked them on as the opportunity was presented.

The Miwok were neither a tribe nor a group of tribes. They were an aggregation of villages, speaking a common language, contracting intermarriages, and, where too much difficult country did not intervene, joining in the celebration of ceremonies; but in other respects having practically no relations with one another. Each village, or each group of small scattered settlements within a radius of perhaps a mile or two, had its chief, whose principal duties were concerned with di-

recting such communal undertakings as ceremonial observances and the organized hunts and food-gathering expeditions in preparation for the accompanying feasts.

When any such event was contemplated, all the people assembled in the "round house," and the chief addressed them, after which the elder men discussed the matter and agreed on the general plan. The principal question to be settled was the time. Some would wish to begin in perhaps ten days, others desired a longer time for preparation. When the time was finally decided, a number of cords of twisted human hair were prepared, and in each cord were tied as many knots, less four, as there were days intervening before the beginning of the celebration. Runners were sent out to take one of these *yéya* to each village that was to be invited. Having been informed how long the runner had been on the way, each invited chief knew on what day to begin loosing one knot daily, and so had an accurate record of the date of the ceremony.[2]

In his morning harangue to the hunters and the women, the chief even specified the number of deer to be killed and the number of baskets of meal to be ground for the ceremony. This of course was a mere formality. He possessed no such authority as this minute attention to details would perhaps indicate. In fact, like most California chiefs, he was far less a ruler than a priest and official host.

Again, if another chief came and reported that his people were in need of some kind of food that grew plentifully in his host's territory, the latter at once directed his people to gather a certain quantity and pile it up before their visitor.

The office of chief was hereditary, passing normally to the incumbent's son; or, if he left no son, to his daughter, for whom some male relative performed the actual functions of office, although she herself was regarded as the chief.

Miwok society consists of two exogamic, patrilineal divisions without clans. Totemism is not present; not, at least, if the meaning of the word is going to be held within reasonable limits. Totemism

2 The southern Miwok did not use knotted cords as tokens of invitation. The central and northern Miwok probably derived the custom from the Maidu.

involves belief in a supernatural connection with animals or the forces and phenomena of nature, either as actual ancestors or as tutelary spirits. Such conceptions do not enter Miwok thought, nor is there a shred of evidence that they ever did so. The characterization of Miwok moieties as totemic is an error. C. Hart Merriam[3] and S.A. Barrett,[4] who first reported the existence of Miwok moieties, both use the word. Gifford[5] also declares that "totemic symptoms are frequent," but admits "a rather weak foundation." The only foundation at all is that personal names refer, usually by implication, to a natural object or phenomenon. But there is not the slightest evidence that the Miwok ever felt that the possessor of a name, or his forebears, had any connection whatever with the thing implied by the name.

The two divisions of Miwok society are called respectively Kikûû ("waters")[6] and *Tunúka* ("dries"). The former are said to be "wet," and by the central Miwok are nicknamed Frogs *(Âlâsaii),* by the southern Miwok, Coyotes (*Ahéli*). The *Tunúka* are nicknamed Bluejays (*Kúsutuna*) by the central, and Bears (*Ûhûmati*) by the southern Miwok. To recapitulate, Miwok moieties are:

Kikûû ("waters"), Frogs or Coyotes.
Tunúka ("dries"), Bluejays or Bears.

Personal names refer always to an animate or inanimate object, or to a natural phenomenon, and so, theoretically, indicate the social affiliation of their possessors. Thus, those whose names are associated with fog, rain, water, abalone, fish, turtle, snail, plainly belong to the water moiety. Few of the implications, however, are so obvious as these. Beads of course are made of clam-shells, the killdee is a shore

3 Totemism in California, *American Anthropologist,* 1908.

4 Totemism among the Miwok Indians, *Journal of American Folk-lore,* 1908.

5 See his excellent and exhaustive account of Miwok Moieties in *Univ. Calif. Publ. .Amer. Arch. and Ethn.,* Vol. 12, No. 4, 1916; also his Clans and Moieties in Southern California, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1918. The present writer acknowledges his indebtedness to this investigator.

6 The southern Miwok usually call the "wet" moiety *Ah'léya.*

bird, and acorns are eaten in a semi-liquid form; but how do deer, mountain-lion, buzzard, and oak, connote wetness? Badger, bear, dog, sun, pine are naturally enough dry; and the sun being dry, we can account for star, sky, dawn, and even for an occasional cloud name in the land moiety; but why the swamp-growing tule? Nor is this uncertainty all. Many objects are claimed by both moieties, and even among the old men of two generations past there was a good deal of disagreement as to which moiety had the better claim to certain names.

Before suggesting an explanation of this want of system, it must be understood that names almost never actually mention the object by which moiety membership is decided; in fact, most names are merely verb forms. For example, the name Huwátpaye is a form *of huwáte,* to run. Asked to translate her name, the owner says it means "running dog approaching." To her and to those who know her the name means that, for the simple reason that when she was named in infancy the old man who bestowed the name explained to those present what was in his mind; but a Miwok from another district would know only that her verb to run, and would be utterly ignorant of the reference and of her moiety.

Thus there is no practical limit to the number of names that may be invented, all referring to dog. A running dog almost necessarily is running on dry land. There is nothing about him to suggest wetness. Suppose a name to be built on the verb to dig, with the connotation of a dog digging at a mound of earth around a gopher's burrow. Plainly this is another name appropriate to a member of the land moiety. A few names of this sort will tend to establish the dog as an animal belonging to the land moiety. Now suppose a man is called upon to name the child of a water man. Into his mind comes the picture of a dog lapping water. He utters a form of the verb to lap, describes his mental picture to those assembled, and so introduces the dog as an animal appropriate to water moiety names. This tendency to dual reference of name objects with its resultant inconsistency was no doubt fostered by the fact that in mythology animals and objects are often placed in the most incongruous surroundings; and as the old men who were invited to bestow names were precisely those best versed in mythological lore, it must frequently have occurred that the mental pictures on which they based the new names were suggested by mythology, with the result that in many such cases the object referred to by the name was

one rarely or never associated in nature with the element by which the moiety in question was represented.

Gifford has recorded three hundred and fourteen central Miwok personal names. Of these only three connote frog and four bluejay, although frog and bluejay are the nicknames for the moieties. Coyote and bear, the southern Miwok nicknames, are represented respectively by ten and sixty-nine. Next to bear, are deer and salmon, both of the water moiety, with twenty-six and twenty-one respectively. With the exception of the coyote names, which are about equally divided between the two moieties, all these here mentioned are one-moiety names.

Exogamy was the rule. A water man was expected to marry a land woman, and *vice versa*. To propose the contrary course was to call forth frowns and strong protests, and to persist in it was to become the object of much adverse criticism. However, there was no way to prevent an endogamic marriage between those who were determined to brave the public.

Polygyny, though a recognized institution, was not of very common occurrence. A man had the first right to his brother's widow, but the privilege is said to have been rather rarely exercised. On the other hand, a widower was expected to take the unmarried sister of his deceased wife, and neglect of her in preference of another caused adverse comment. The wife's younger sister was a man's logical choice if he desired and could support two wives; he also had the right to these relatives of his wife: her brother's daughter, and her father's sister. Blood relatives could not marry, with one exception: a man and his mother's brother's daughter, that is, his first cousin. But this cousin is precisely the woman whom his father also has the right to marry, because she is his wife's brother's daughter. We thus have a situation where either a man or his son may properly marry a certain woman. Marriage of blood relatives is contrary to Indian feeling, and this contravention of custom Gifford ingeniously explains as probably the result of the father's passing on to the son his prior right to a woman whom he did not need.

This right of father and son to the same woman offers a possible solution of the widespread and unexplained taboo on conversation between a woman and her father-in-law, and between a man and his mother-in-law. If the son married her, she became the daughter-in-law of a man who might have been her husband; and if he were seen con-

versing with her there very likely would have been a suspicion that he was arranging a clandestine meeting to claim the privileges that he had yielded to his son. Granting this origin of the taboo between a woman and her father-in-law, it is not difficult to imagine that the corresponding one between a man and his mother-in-law was simply a logical extension of the original taboo.

Among the Miwok the taboo on conversation, physical contact, and exchange of glances, applied not only to these two relationships, but also where the relationship was merely potential. Thus, it applied to a man's conduct toward his mother-in-law's sister, his mother's brother's wife, and his brother's mother-in-law, because any one of these might, according to custom, become, or at least might have been, his mother-in-law. For a similar reason it applied to a woman's relations toward her father-in-law's brother, and her sister's father-in-law.

The brothers of a man's wife were highly honored. Frequently a hunter would tell his brother-in-law where his kill would be found, and the latter would bring it in and distribute it among the people as if he himself had killed it.

Women in parturition were assisted by midwives, and no medicines were employed. The afterbirth and navel-cord were always buried, and when a woman wished to avoid any additional progeny, something, the identity of which is unknown to the informant who discussed this subject, was buried with them.

At the age of about one month a child received a name at a feast given by the families of both parents, and this was retained through life. It might be a newly invented one, or it might be that of an elderly relative or of one long dead. The name of a recently deceased person could not be given, because it was grave sacrilege to utter such a name. Male children received names from the father's side, and female children from the mother's.

The ears of young children were pierced without formality, and if the nasal septum was to be pierced, it was done at the same time.

There was no training school for boys, such as existed among the Wintun and the Maidu, but as soon as they were able to stand the hardships of the trail they accompanied the hunters and learned the ways of the chase. They were not permitted to eat of the first game they killed.

A root called *hâpâli* was worn suspended from the neck by boys

whose parents desired that they become good hunters. Those who showed aptitude for singing were taken in hand and taught ceremonial songs and dances by the ceremonial officials; and boys and youths who were to become shamans observed the vigil.

A Miwok girl, when her first menses occurred, was not confined to the house, and the principal restriction upon her conduct was that meat and fish could not be eaten until, at the end of her period, she had been bathed by her attendant in a large basket, prior to the feast. There was no dancing. Some women observed the taboo of meat at every recurrence of the menses.

In many cases girls were pledged in marriage while they were mere children. The parents selected a young man of about twenty, and if the match met with approval, the respective families exchanged objects of value, the shells and other articles given by the man's family being regarded as payment in advance for the girl. Immediately after her puberty feast he simply went to her house and shared her bed. His relatives at this time presented shell beads and meat to the young wife, who distributed them among her people, and they in turn gave him baskets, which he passed on to his relatives. Sometimes a girl, after growing up, refused to marry the man who had bought her, but he had no recourse. On the other hand a man, after making such an engagement, feared to break it and marry someone else rather than wait for the child to mature, lest her relatives hire a shaman to "poison" him. When a union was arranged between persons of marriageable age, the same exchange of valuables took place, and without further formality the man went to his bride's bed. If she refused his approaches, as sometimes happened, the marriage was not regarded as consummated and the presents were returned. A newly married couple lived with the girl's parents for a time, sometimes for a month or so, but usually until after the birth of their first child, when the husband took his wife to his father's house or built one of his own.

The husband of an adulteress might kill her paramour, or castigate the woman, or abandon her. Murder for such a cause did not regularly cause a family feud; for if the friends of the dead man took up the matter and attempted to kill the slayer, or actually accomplished it, public opinion was against them, so that the brawl soon subsided. In such quarrels the services of a medicine-man were more apt to be employed than those of the assassin, for his spells were worked in secret.

The payment of blood-money was a custom unknown to the Miwok.

The dead were cremated. Immediately after death occurred, the female relatives with some assistance from the men, all being of the opposite moiety, prepared the body by washing it and adorning it with all the ornaments possessed by the deceased person. Meanwhile runners had been despatched to the nearer settlements, and the body was kept as long as two or three days awaiting the arrival of relatives from a distance. When all these had arrived, the family selected a man of the opposite moiety to build the funeral pyre, in which he was assisted by many of his family. Several months later these men would be rewarded by an abundant feast, to the preparation of which the bereaved family devoted many days. These same men carried the body to the pyre, laid it on the wood, and placed a basket beneath the head and another over the face. If the dead person had possessed any feather or bead ceremonial ornaments, these were laid on the face. Finally they applied the fire, and the entire company stood about the pyre wailing. Relatives and friends cast valued possessions on the flames, and all the personal property of the deceased was burned. Sorrowing relatives sometimes attempted to leap into the fire, and had to be restrained. An informant saw his father's sister throw herself upon a pyre with the result that her hair was burned off before she could be rescued. The ashes and fragments of bone were collected and placed in a basket, which was buried in a place selected by the family.

At the conclusion of the funeral rites the men in charge symbolically cleansed themselves and the people by formally washing with water in which crushed leaves and twigs of "wormwood" were mixed. Here also the moieties acted reciprocally, men of the water moiety washing the people of the land moiety, and *vice versa*.

Close relatives of both sexes singed their hair short by means of a glowing stick, and old women smeared charred laurel-berries over the face. For either a few years, or merely until the spring following the death of her husband, a widow remained in seclusion, and in the presence of men kept her face averted. Names of the dead were not spoken for a year or two.

In the following summer or fall, or perhaps not until the second season, after large quantities of food had been provided, the Yálka ("crying") was held in memory of the dead. If more than one person had died since the last memorial, their families might combine in this

mortuary ceremony, but it was not necessary. All the neighboring villages were invited. Although the people might remain assembled for a week, the "cry" itself lasted only three or four days. Each night they congregated in a large booth and wailed until about midnight, but during the day nothing of a ceremonial nature occurred. On the last night a very large pyre was built by men of the opposite moiety, and at about daylight, after crying in the booth intermittently throughout the night, all gathered around the pyre and threw articles of value into the flames. The formal purification by water mixed with wormwood concluded the rites.

Apparently there was no definite conception of a future world, although belief in the life of spirits is evidenced by the fact that it was thought ghosts appear to the living and thus frequently cause death.

Miwok religious practices were indeed simple. There was an acorn feast, expressing the wish that the acorn crop might be abundant. This was borrowed from the north, probably from the Maidu, and long ago fell into disrepute and was abandoned, because it was thought that the shamans were employing it as a means of "poisoning" the people. Their mythology included the usual preternatural monsters, such as *hóhoho,* an enormous bird, which carried two or three men in each of its claws, and was killed by heaping pitchy wood about its nest and setting fire to it; and *héyumpûllû* ("one-sided"), an expert bowman with only one leg who went hopping about the country to visit the people. Furthermore, all animals were credited with preternatural powers. But as to beings strictly spiritual, their only conception was that of ghosts of the dead. An informant related that some years ago while travelling across the mountains at night he met six ghosts, whom he recognized as dead relatives and friends. He left his saddle by the trail, and leading his horse followed them among the mountains. They were dressed in their dance costumes, and at intervals stopped to sing and dance, in which he joined them. About daylight they led him back to his saddle, and just at dawn disappeared. When he reached home his sister and his wife asked whom he had been dancing with, for they said they had heard several persons singing, and thought he and some friends were drunk. This remarkable experience had no effect in causing sickness or other bad luck.

There are in general two methods of becoming an Indian medicine-man, or shaman. One method is by direct gift from one who

already possesses shamanistic power; the other is by the favor of some supernatural being, who is besought in lonely vigils by the aspirant, or who voluntarily appears in dreams. The Miwok practice combined both principles. The novice was usually the son or grandson (daughter or granddaughter) of a shaman, who selected him in his boyhood as a promising youth. The training involved many night vigils in the woods or in the mountains, either alone or in company with the shaman himself. Sometimes the novice lay all night beside a spring, hoping to acquire some power from it. Again, he might chew the root *mânui* (probably Jamestown-weed), which caused frothing at the mouth and made him act as if he were intoxicated, and in this state he would run from the village and remain absent all day. On his return he was able to enter any house and unerringly find objects there concealed. Consequently he was in demand for the recovery of lost and stolen articles.

Treatment of the sick consisted in sucking, and, in very difficult cases' singing and using a cocoon rattle. Among the southern Miwok it formerly lasted only one or two days, but more recently the practice was four days, following the custom of the northern Miwok. An unconscious or delirious patient was thought to have been made ill by seeing a ghost in his dreams. Successful treatment of sickness caused by the malevolence of a shaman was evidenced by the extraction of the "poison," or, if a ghost was the cause, of some part of a human body, such as an eye or a kneecap. Very large fees were required before the medicine-man would begin his work, and the family of the patient sometimes stripped themselves of almost every possession of value. If the treatment was not successful, the fee was sometimes returned, though the bereaved family seldom would accept it; yet when the patient died, summary vengeance might be taken. Sickness not readily explained was thought to be the result of "poisoning" by a shaman, the identity of whom was usually determined by the patient himself, who would say either that he had seen a certain medicine-man watching him closely, or that he had frequently dreamed of that medicine-man. The fate of a man thus accused was generally death with little delay. It was thought that shamans sometimes met at night in secret places to lay plans for the killing of a victim, and appointed for the work one of their number, whom they would "poison" if he failed to accomplish his task.

Like many other people of central California the Miwok assert

that in times past there were men who could at will transform themselves into grizzly-bears. According to Miwok belief, this ability was acquired by living with the bears and receiving instruction from them; in other words, their power was a strictly spiritual, personal attribute. In this respect they differed radically from the Pomo "bear doctors," whose power was thought to reside absolutely in the actual bear-skins they are said to have worn in their work.

The Miwok ceremonies having more than casual significance are those previously mentioned: the funeral rites, mourning ceremony, puberty observance, and acorn feast. With the exception of the war-dance, Pita, in which men performed around a pole and shot arrows into an effigy at its top, the other dances of the Miwok were intended for amusement. Chief among them was Ukána, which as practised by the southern Miwok was held at any time of the year and lasted four nights. On the first three nights it continued until about midnight, and on the last until daylight. When singers, drummers, and all the people had assembled in the "round house," the *ukána* appeared. One by one they entered the house, each preceded by a woman singer of the opposite moiety, who by spreading out a blanket concealed him as much as possible until he came to the fire. There he danced briefly and went on around the fire to take his place in a row before the singers. Bears (land moiety) and Coyotes (water moiety) went respectively to right and left of the fire. They wore either loin-cloths or dance-skirts of pendent strings from which feathers dangled, and head-bands of yellowhammer-feathers. The Bears, both men and women, always were painted with stripes of white, red, and black, and the Coyotes with spots in imitation of a fawn. After the *ukána* came four *tutútpe,* each with a bone whistle on which he blew *tutu, tutu*. There were four dances to each song, and in the intermissions the dancers rested and smoked. Dancers observed continence during the ceremony, and menstruating women were not admitted to the house. It was the duty of *wâchâli,* the clown, who always was a Coyote, to move constantly about, both inside and outside the house, and see that this latter rule was observed. He wore the tail of a fox, a deer, or other animal; his body was smeared with white clay, and on his face were black marks imitating the markings of a coyote. His official ensign was a cane, the upper end of which was curved to represent a bird's head with partially opened beak. Cocoon rattles were fastened to it. With this he kept the people back

from the dancing space, pecking at them like a bird. Sometimes the *tutútpe* dancers would climb up the central posts of the house, while the clown stood below and with ludicrous gestures pretended to be solicitous lest they fall. Ukána was danced also among the northern Miwok, but not among the most southerly bands of Madera county.

These Southerners danced Álte, in which the performers had the face smeared with red paint and the head surrounded by a circlet of long feathers. They wore feather skirts, and danced by stamping on the ground, while singing the chorus of the songs at a signal from the leader.

So long obsolete that the informant never saw them and cannot describe them, are the dances called Hálu and Málû, the latter of which took place in the "round house" in the darkness.

Miwok mythology pictures the world in the beginning of things as a waste of water, from the depths of which certain waterfowl brought up bits of mud. Out of this material Coyote created land, and he not only improved the earth with mountains, streams, plants, and animals, but brought into being people and established for them all customs and institutions.

The narration of myths was a recognized and honored profession, and the story-tellers travelled from place to place to chant or recite their myths in the public assembly house by night.

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