



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS
IN
AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

Vol. 6

Nos. 2 and 3

THE GEOGRAPHY AND DIALECTS OF THE
MIWOK INDIANS

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ON THE EVIDENCES OF THE OCCUPA-
TION OF CERTAIN REGIONS BY
THE MIWOK INDIANS

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BERKELEY
THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
FEBRUARY, 1908

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Since Mr. Barrett's paper on the Geography and Dialects of the Miwok Indians was sent to press and announced, but previous to its publication, there has appeared an article on the same subject by Dr. C. Hart Merriam.¹ While these two contributions, which were made entirely independently, corroborate each other closely in the main, they differ on certain points. These differences, which relate in part to the territory of the Miwok stock as a whole, and in part to tribal and linguistic divisions, it has seemed best to discuss briefly.

As regards descriptions of the boundaries of the Miwok stock, Mr. Barrett and Dr. Merriam agree closely for the most part. Considering the impossibility of obtaining absolutely accurate information at a time when the Indians are much diminished in numbers, in certain regions entirely extinct, and often dispossessed from their native habitats; considering also that one investigator has probably been able to carry inquiries farther in certain sections and the other in other districts, and that in many cases one describes a boundary more in detail and the other summarily; the agreement of their conclusions as regards the greater part of the Miwok territory is so close as to be strictly corroborative. In one region, however, the differences are considerable and important. Mr. Barrett assigns to the Miwok no part of the

¹ Distribution and Classification of the Mewan Stock of California, *Amer. Anthr.*, n. s., IX, 338-357, with map, pl. XXV.

San Joaquin-Sacramento valley proper except the district between Cosumnes and Calaveras rivers, extending to the Sacramento delta. Dr. Merriam adds to this territory a considerable region between the lower Sacramento and Cosumnes, a strip on the lower San Joaquin and in the Sacramento delta, the entire valley east of the San Joaquin between Tuolumne and Calaveras rivers, and the territory west of the lower San Joaquin as far toward the coast as Mt. Diablo. Such a wide discrepancy on the part of contemporary investigators is explainable only by the scantiness of available information, due to the almost total extinction of the former inhabitants of the valley districts in question.

Dr. Merriam on the authority of one informant expressly counts the Chilumne of the east bank of the San Joaquin, just north of Stockton, as Miwok. All other evidence points to their having been of the Yokuts family. The Bureau of American Ethnology, both in its earlier and more recent map of the linguistic stocks of North America, assigns this area to the Yokuts. In Powell's paper of 1891, as well as in the "Handbook of American Indians," these people, following earlier authors, such as Chamisso, are called Cholvone; but these sources say nothing of the linguistic affinities of the Cholvone that enables their being positively placed in any family. The material on which the Bureau has classified them as Yokuts (Mariposan) has not been published, nor is it known whether Messrs. Henshaw and Curtain obtained any information regarding them, but a Cholvone manuscript by A. Pinart is referred to. This is probably the same as an article entitled "Etudes sur les Indiens Californiens: Sur les Tcholvones de Chorris," published in some source unknown to the author, and with which he is acquainted only through a separate (paged 79-87) in the possession of Dr. R. B. Dixon. M. Pinart in this paper gives a vocabulary which is pure Yokuts.²

² Compare the following few selections: sky, tipxne; moon, hopem; at night, toine; rain, sheel; water, ilikie; rock, selet'; egg, hon; wood, ites; extinguish (evidently imperative), shaap-ka; the fire is out, shaap-inn-in (showing Yokuts intransitive and present-future suffix). The last two pages (86 and 87) of the copy available seem to be from some other language. None of the terms are recognizable as Yokuts; an r is used, which does not occur in Yokuts or in the first part of the vocabulary; names of tropical animals and plants are given; and several translations in the first part of the vocabulary are repeated but in connection with different native terms.—Dr. Dixon suggests that the pamphlet may be from the *Actes de la Société Philologique* of Paris, but like the author has no full set accessible from which to verify this supposition.

He states that the Tcholvones, or better, Čolovomnes (Cholovomne), inhabited a rancheria situated nearly where to-day the town of Banta (Bantas) is. The other rancherias related to the Cholovomnes and speaking the same dialect were Jačikamne (Yachikamne), beside the town of Stockton; Pašašamne (Pashashamne); Nututamne; Tammukamne; Helutamne; Taniamne; Sanaiamne; Xosmitamne.³ All these rancherias were in San Joaquin county. A little farther up the San Joaquin river and on its affluents were the Lakkisamnes, the Notunamnes, and the Tuolumnes,⁴ who spoke dialects very similar to the Yachikamne. M. Pinart's vocabulary was obtained near Pleasanton (Plaranton) in 1880, from a woman called Maria, of Yachikamne origin. She stated that she was the last survivor of this rancheria; and that she had also lived in the Cholovomne rancheria, which, however, had long since disappeared. The husband of Maria, Philippe de Jesus, was a Lakkisamne Indian, that is to say, from a rancheria friendly and related to the Yachikamne. He corroborated the statements of his wife, adding that he also had inhabited the Cholovomne rancheria, and that the Indians of this village did not differ in any way from the other Tulareño (Yokuts) Indians.

In 1906 Jesus Oliver, near Ione, stated to the author that the people of the vicinity of Stockton were called Chulamni. This term is evidently the same as Chilumne, and probably the same as Cholovomne and Tcholvone.⁵ He belonged to these people, but owing to their extinction had mostly forgotten the language. The words and phrases he remembered are grammatically correct Yokuts that would be understood by the Indians as far away as Tule river reservation: *ilik*, water; *hites*, wood; *hotol*, fire; *ukunka*, drink (imperative); *hileu ma tanin*, where are you going?

It thus seems indubitable that a Yokuts-speaking body of Indians called by some form of the name Chulamni or Cholovomne lived in the plains on the lower San Joaquin in the vicinity of Stockton.

³ Cf. the Kosmitas of Chamisso in Kotzebue's Voyage, III, 51.

⁴ Cf. the Lakisumne and Fawalomne (for Tawalomne?), cited in Bancroft, Native Races, I, 451.

⁵ Tchabalabones and Tcholoones in Chamisso, *loc. cit.*

It is not quite so well established that the remainder of the plains region, from Calaveras river south, was Yokuts. But here too there is evidence only of Yokuts, not of Miwok occupation.

First of all there are three short vocabularies obtained by Mr. Barrett. One of these is from an Indian called Wilson, at Merced Falls, given as the language of all the people that formerly lived below the edge of the foot-hills, in the open valley, as in the region of Snelling, and as far as Fresno.

ilek, water	okunk, drink
osit, fire	tuiku, shoot
luiku, eat	mokteo, old man

This is not only good Yokuts, but a dialect very similar to Chauchila, as shown by the assimilation of the vowel of the imperative suffix *-ka* to the stem vowel.

The second vocabulary is from Charley Dorsey, at Sonora, and was said to be of the language of Lathrop, a town situated not far from Stockton east of the San Joaquin.

yet, one	hapil, earth
podoi, two	ilik, water
sopit, three	silel, rock
saat, eye	uyits, wood
teli, teeth	kateiu, coyote
saba, mouth	pulubhal, man
hosip, north	utubhai, chief
hobotin, south	utub, great
dotu, east	tooi, good
latsu, west	luika, eat
tsupit, above	ukudka, drink
tuxil, below	

This is good Yokuts of the northern valley dialectic group, except that *n* and *m* have been throughout changed to *d* and *b*. This may have been an individual peculiarity. The verbal forms, like those in the preceding list, show the imperative suffix.

Some words from this informant have no known Yokuts or other equivalents:

hupil, fire	telex, girl
tsubuk, smoke	hapal, arm
sikel, ashes	tsowotse, four
bokos, manzanita	kide, six
dutodil, person	

The phonetic appearance of nearly all these words is however Yokuts. *Abika*, come here, and *piska*, tobacco (perhaps smoke), seem to show the Yokuts imperative ending *-ka*.

Several other words seem to be Yokuts:

tidela, world (attil-la,	tkos, ear (tuk)
land) ⁶	tutas, foot (dadat, dad-
watia, woman (water-ii,	ate)
girl) ⁷	

The third vocabulary is from Charley Gomez, a half-breed encountered by Mr. Barrett at Jamestown, and was said to be in the old language of the region about Knight's Ferry on the Stanislaus river, which is still his permanent home. This informant had been previously stated by the before-mentioned Jesus Oliver to be the son of an old man of the Tawalimni tribe, some time dead, who had lived at Knight's Ferry. Of the habitat and language of the Tawalimni Jesus had no certain knowledge. He thought that they may have lived west of the San Joaquin, perhaps opposite Stockton, and that the old man Gomez, and perhaps others, moved to Knight's Ferry from their original habitat. This is probably not the case, as the Tawalimni are evidently the Tuolumne, placed by Dr. Merriam in the valley between Stanislaus and Tuolumne rivers, and by M. Pinart, with other rancherias, farther up the San Joaquin and on its tributaries, than the Yokuts villages in San Joaquin county. It is therefore more likely that as stated by the informant Gomez himself to Mr. Barrett, the language is that of Knight's Ferry and the plains to the west.

⁶ Coconoon; Powers, *Tribes of California*, 575.

⁷ Calaveras County; *ibid.*, 573.

ilik, water	husiusu, north
hotol, fire	seele, rain
tooi, good	luika, eat
uyete, wood	huyoska, stand
dotu, east	puus, dog
toxil, south	utubhai, chief

These are all Yokuts. The following belong to no known linguistic stock and probably rest in part on misunderstandings:

aku, head	hate, hand (Miwok, hate, foot)
hiteku, eye	
asi, ear	hake, smoke (Miwok, ha- kisu)
uxu, nose (Costanoan us)	
ait, tongue	kawate, pipe
us, nail (cf. nose)	huti, tobacco
oyis, foot	aiyisi, bluejay
kulo, arm (Miwok, koro, foot)	dapa, father

There is also the well known Yokuts vocabulary obtained by A. Taylor⁸ at Takin rancheria at Dent's ferry on Stanislaus river. This place must have been near the present Knight's Ferry, and the dialect of the same rancheria may be represented by this vocabulary and by the last.

In the same connection may be mentioned the Coconoon Yokuts vocabulary from Merced river, collected by Adam Johnson and published in Schoolcraft and Powers.⁹

Finally it is significant that Dr. Merriam places no Miwok in the plains region between the Tuolumne and the Fresno river, though this territory has in the past—on the statements of Powers and Powell and in the absence of information—always been assigned to them. If there were Yokuts here south of the Tuolumne, and Yokuts north of the Calaveras, the intervening region of the same physiographic character is less likely to have belonged to the Miwok.

The great similarity and practical identity of the Chulamni dialect with the Yokuts dialects spoken on the lower Chowchilla,

⁸ Reprinted from the *California Farmer*, XIII, 42, March 23, 1860, in Powers, *Tribes of California*, 570.

⁹ Schoolcraft, IV, 413; Powers, 570.

lower Fresno, and upper San Joaquin are also much easier to understand now that it seems that the Chulamni were not cut off from their relatives by Miwok territory. In 1906 it was said:¹⁰ "The language of the Chulamni shows them undoubtedly to have been a very recent offshoot from the main body of the Yokuts," and in 1907¹¹ that "the isolated Chulamni of the region about Stockton is known to have belonged" to the immediate sub-group of "Northern dialects spoken in the plains" about Fresno and San Joaquin rivers. These conditions are now explained by the continuity of Yokuts territory.

In the face of this evidence, and the lack as yet of any specific material such as vocabularies to the contrary, it seems that the whole valley east of the San Joaquin and south of the Calaveras was Yokuts, and that the Miwok habitat on the plains was confined to the region north of the Calaveras.

The valley land west of the San Joaquin may also have been Yokuts. On the maps of the Bureau of Ethnology and the University of California it has been assigned to the Costanoan family; but there is no evidence known to the author in favor of such a view, other than the statements of certain of Mr. Barrett's informants. There are several indications that the region in question was Yokuts. In the accepted Yokuts territory, both north and south of Tulare lake, there were tribes, such as the Tulamni and Tachi, on the west as well as on the east side of the valley. M. Pinart's Cholovomme rancheria was at Banta, which is not far from Tracy, near the westernmost arm of the San Joaquin and west of the main channel. Jesus Oliver believes that a Tawalimni subsequently at Knight's Ferry came from the region opposite Stockton; however erroneous this view may be, it is probably founded on a similarity of language in the two places. The Yachimesi, or Yachiehumne, mentioned as the original Indians of Stockton,¹² and stated in 1906 by Jesus to have been at least near the site of the city, are put by Dr. Merriam west of the San Joaquin, between it and Mt. Diablo, which region is

¹⁰ Boas Anniversary Volume, 65.

¹¹ Present series of publications, II, 325.

¹² Cited in Bancroft, *Native Races*, I, 452. See also the citation given by Dr. Merriam, which places a village of the Yachekumnas on the site of Stockton, and the above-mentioned statement of M. Pinart to the same effect.

also mentioned as their habitat by one of Bancroft's informants.¹³ It would thus seem that the entire plain of the San Joaquin valley from south to north, west as well as east of the central stream, was everywhere held by the Yokuts, a circumstance not suspected until Mr. Barrett's investigation. However this may be, and whether the land west of the lower San Joaquin was Yokuts or whether it was Costanoan, it seems clear that it was not Miwok.

On the eastern side of the Miwok territory, the difference between Dr. Merriam's and Mr. Barrett's maps is only nominal, though at first appearance considerable. Dr. Merriam, it would seem, shows only territory permanently inhabited, and therefore leaves the entire higher Sierra region blank. He does not state that the entire western side of the higher Sierra above the Miwok foothills was occupied by Shoshoneans or Washo. Mr. Barrett shows as Miwok all territory claimed by them or used by them during the summer, and thus brings at least part of the eastern boundary to the crest of the Sierra.

On the second point, that of tribes and dialects within the Miwok family, there is the same close agreement between Dr. Merriam and Mr. Barrett in the foothill region, and only the plains present differences of moment. The territory of the Northern, Middle, and Southern, or Amador, Tuolumne, and Mariposa, Miwok of both authors nearly coincides, and both make identical statements as to the practical unity of speech within each of the three areas and the absence of any distinctive tribal or group names for the people of the three areas or dialects.

In the valley Dr. Merriam distinguishes ten tribes, who he says all spoke dialects of a common language, the Yatchachumne being the only one whose speech is somewhat doubtful. Of these ten, Mr. Barrett and the author have given the Mokosumni, Mokolumni, and Ochekhamni as Miwok.¹⁴ The Chulamni, Tuolumni, Yachikumni, and Dr. Merriam's Siakumne,¹⁵ must be regarded as Yokuts. This leaves doubtful the affiliation of the Hulpoomne, the Wipa, and the Hannesuk. Judging only from their assigned

¹³ *Ibid.*, from San Francisco Evening Bulletin, September 9, 1864.

¹⁴ *Am. Anthropol.*, n. s., VIII, 659, 662, 1906. *Ibid.*, also Lelamni, Tawallimni, Sakayakumni, Walalshimni. Except perhaps the Lelamni, these are all mentioned by the informants cited by Bancroft, 450-455.

¹⁵ Also given in the citations by Bancroft, *ibid.*

geographical position, the Hannesuk were probably Yokuts, the Hulpoomne¹⁶ more likely Miwok than Yokuts. The territory in which Dr. Merriam places the Hulpoomne has generally been considered Maidu.

As regards the apparent tribes, each with its distinctive name, in the valley region, the question arises whether these, at least among the Miwok, are not really only villages, as affirmed by Mr. Barrett.

M. Pinart throughout speaks of the Cholovomne, the Yachikamne, the Tuolumne, and the other groups mentioned by him, as rancherias, and does not once use the word tribe. The Cholovomnes "inhabited a *rancheria* or *village* situated nearly where the town of Bantas is to-day." "The other *rancherias* related to the Cholovomnes and speaking the same dialect were the Yachikamne, beside Stockton; the Pashashamne," etc. "All these *rancherias* were in San Joaquin county." "Farther up . . . were the Lakkisamnes," etc. "Baptism administered to individuals from this *rancheria*" (Cholovomne). Maria, of Yachikamne origin, claimed "to be the last survivor of her *rancheria*;" she had lived also "in the *rancheria* of the Cholovomnes." Her husband was "a Lakkisamne Indian, that is from a *rancheria* allied and related to the Yachikamne." And so on.

The informant Jesus, when asked regarding the so-called Yachikumne, said that the word was *not the name of a tribe but of a place*, properly Yachik, near Stockton. Wana was another inhabited site, a short distance below the steamer landing in Stockton. He believed that it was to this place that his own ancestors, whom he called by the more general or tribal designation Chulamni, belonged. Kui was a third site.

Dr. Merriam himself speaks of several of his valley tribes as if they were village groups, the Mokozumne being the only one of which he gives a number of villages. He mentions the "principal *rancheria*" of the Hulpoomne near Freeport; the "principal village, *Muk-kel* (from which the tribe takes its name)" of the Mokalumne; and "*Lā-lum-ne*, a *rancheria* near Clements" which "may be included under the Mokalumne tribe as its inhabitants

¹⁶ Mentioned as the Khoulpouni and Chulpun by Choris and Chamisso, cited *ibid.* The Hannesuk and Wipa do not seem to appear in any published lists.

spoke the same language." The Ochakumne he calls also Ochehak or Ochehakumne. Ochekh (Oteex) was obtained by Mr. Barrett as the name of a place. Hannesuk shows a similar ending. It seems likely that this term is literally the name not of a body of people but of their "principal village," which was "on a big river."

As all the evidence from this region bears out Mr. Barrett's statement that -amni is a suffix applied to place or village names to designate the inhabitants of such sites; and as Dr. Merriam states that all the tribes in question spoke dialects of a common language; the conclusion seems warranted that all the Miwok of the plains formed a single dialectic group in every way analogous to the northern, central, and southern dialectic groups of the foothills, and that the Mokosumni, Mokelumni, Ochehamni, and others, instead of being co-ordinate with these three larger groups, found their equivalents, in the foothill region, in such rancherias as Awani or Upusuni. In Mr. Barrett's and the author's terminology, the northern, middle, and southern "Mewuk" are dialectic divisions or dialect groups, each comprising a number of independent villages; the valley "Mewko tribes," so far as they are Miwok, are independent villages collectively forming one, and only one, dialectic group, which is exactly co-ordinate with, for instance, the northern foothill group.

It must be admitted that the habit of the plains Miwok, of speaking not of Mokel but of Mokelumni, not of Ochekh but of the Ochehamni, gives the impression that there were in this region true tribes. It is possible that intimate contact with the Yokuts, who so far as known were everywhere anomalous in possessing a true tribal organization, may have somewhat modified the political and social organization of the plains Miwok in the same direction; but it is necessary to distinguish carefully between actual evidence of an approach to tribal organization,—which is so far entirely lacking—and the mere appearance of such an organization as produced by the plains Miwok use of a suffix meaning "people of." Every Yuki rancheria can in the same way be dignified into a tribe by laying undue stress upon the suffix -nom, "people of," which can be added to its name, and by emphasizing the fact that the Yuki have a habit of mentioning more frequently the inhabitants of a place than the village itself. Such conditions

are matters of linguistic idiom, and we should exercise the greatest reluctance to deduce from them, without further direct evidence, any conclusions as to the actual organization of the people. It cannot be too often reaffirmed that the only safe rule to follow in ethnological studies in California is invariably to assume, in the absence of positive information to the contrary, that the only actually existing units of organization are the village and the language or dialect, and that the tribe, in the ordinary sense of the word, and as an intermediate division, is absent.

The ending *-amni*, which thus seems to be at the bottom of the differences of view regarding the Miwok "tribes," appears to be used in this stock principally or only in the northwestern or valley dialect. Mr. Barrett's examples of its employment and significance are all from this dialect; and all the Miwok groups mentioned by any author and having names showing this suffix, are from the territory of this dialect. This fact goes to explain why "tribes" like those of the plains have not been alleged among the foothill Miwok.

While the ending *-amni* is found among the Yokuts, its employment by them is different from that of the plains Miwok. It occurs on many tribal names, but is lacking from more, such as Tachi, Yaudanchi, Gashowu, Pitkachi, Chauchila, Chukchansi, Choinok. The ending has no apparent meaning in Yokuts. Its subtraction from names like Choinimni, Telamni, Chulamni, Yauelmani, Tulamni, usually leaves no words that have meaning to the Indians or that are stems identifiable by the linguistic student. The suffix cannot be added to names of places to form designations of people; the people at Tishechu are the Choinimni, not the Tishechimni, a term that would probably not be understood by the Yokuts. The universal Yokuts suffix that in its usage and meaning is the exact equivalent of valley Miwok *-amni*, is *-inin*: as in *Alt-inin*, people of alit; *khomt-inin*, southerners, people of *khomot*, south; *padu-unun*, people below; *khosm-inin*, northerners. The supposition may therefore be hazarded that the ending *-amni* is originally a Miwok ending, occurring at present chiefly or only in the plains or northwestern dialect of the Sierra or main division of the stock, with the meaning "people of;" that from this dialect its use spread, as an ending of tribal designations, to the adjacent but linguistically unrelated Yokuts,

among whom however, except possibly in the region in immediate contact with the plains Miwok, it did not remain a freely usable suffix, but crystallized in certain tribal names; and that it spread in the opposite direction to the Maidu, among whom it occurs on several names of what have been designated villages.

In the case of the northernmost Yokuts, there is some doubt regarding the use of the ending -amni. If all M. Pinart's names are, as he says, village names, the stem of each word must have been used to denote the site of the village. It may be, however, that such names as Yachikamni are not Yokuts but Miwok formations, and that the Yokuts themselves spoke only of Yachik, as one of the places inhabited by the Chulamni tribe. It is probable that not all the extreme northern Yokuts names given by M. Pinart and Dr. Merriam are co-ordinate in scope. There are too many for them all to have designated tribes equivalent to the tribes of the Yokuts farther south, and M. Pinart's identification of them with village-communities indicates that at least some of the number were such. On the other hand the existence of distinct tribes elsewhere among the Yokuts leads to a natural hesitance to accept all these names as only designations of village-communities, though such a departure from the normal Yokuts status might have been brought about by close association with the non-tribal plains Miwok.

As regards Mr. Barrett's Marin or southern coast Miwok, in place of whom Dr. Merriam recognizes the Lekahtewutko and the Hookoeko, it is sufficient to say that Dr. Merriam states the language of the two divisions to be essentially the same, that the name of the Lekahtewutko is taken from Lekahtewut,¹⁷ a rancheria near Petaluma, and that the name Hookoeko, which was not encountered by Mr. Barrett, is unexplained. It would seem therefore that in this region also a true but nameless unit of division, a homogeneous dialectic group, has been split and the two fragments more or less arbitrarily designated by terms which in native usage were the names only of single villages, comprised, with numerous others, in a larger dialectic but non-tribal group.

Berkeley, California,
November 25, 1907.

¹⁷ Cited by Bancroft, *Native Races*, I, 453, as the "Lecatuit tribe" of Marin county, and by Powers, 195, as the Likatuit.



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