NOMLAKI ETHNOGRAPHY

BY

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PREFACE

A DESCRIPTIVE ethnography should be more than a catalogue of the contents of a culture. Yet to be useful for comparative studies it must also endeavor to include the total range of cultural detail. The functional anthropologists have devoted their attention to the character of culture and its internal consistency. In doing this they have neglected the details that appear secondary to the theme they develop. The ethnographer concerned with distributional studies or the reconstruction of culture history has often lost sight of culture itself. The community studied is often lost in the mass of detail ordered to a prearranged pattern primarily useful for comparative analysis.

The present study of Nomlaki ethnography is an endeavor to serve both ends. A consistent effort has been made to understand the culture as an ethos and the society as a structure. The relationship between cultural elements has not been relegated to footnoted cross references, but rather the interplay of various aspects of the cultural whole has received direct emphasis. In particular, the structure of social life, because it is central to my personal interests, has been treated in its manifold ramifications. But there has been no avoidance of the details of ethnography. The present work was written, not for commercial publication, but for an audience of specialists. That fact does not lessen my responsibility to lucid writing, but it does give me more freedom to go into ramifications that would distract the attention of the nonprofessional reader. Comparative analyses and historical reconstructions have been included wherever they have been indicated by the data.

The chief difficulty was not in combining the two ends, but derived from the nature of the available data. Nomlaki life was disrupted a century ago, and the data were obtained from informants of limited knowledge. None of them had participated in the culture that is described here, and none of them could create the picture of the totality presented. In this sense I have gone beyond the data and erected a construct of total life. Aware of the potentialities of error, I have rather assiduously quoted from my informants' statements, giving as much information as possible in native words and offering the reader a basis for checking the validity of the construct.

Undoubtedly there are some who would view this procedure with alarm. I have felt it justifiable on several grounds. First, the description of a cultural totality always partakes of a construct, and to deny the reconstruction of a dead culture on these grounds would be to deny entirely the study of cultural totality. The strides that have been made in understanding human behavior through functional analyses make defense of the cultural construct unnecessary. Second, if a construct is to be made, it must be made by the ethnographer himself. It is inevitable that some detail, some feeling, be lost in recording the material obtained from long, daily conversations with natives (even deculturated ones), so that the reader can never share all the ethnographer understands and feels about the culture under discussion, however fully the facts have been reported.

More important than these considerations is the fact that, with all the detailed analysis of California native life, such a description has never been made. No ethnological region is more interesting to the student of society than that of Cali-
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fornia. It is primitive, it is diversified, and it is ancient. No other region has been so completely explored from an ethnographic point of view. The amassing and recording of data on the California Indians by Kroeber and his students and associates have saved from limbo the data on this important region. However, little attention has been given the culture of the California Indians as a way of life. Some aspects of this culture are treated briefly in Gayton’s *Yokuts and Mono Chiefs and Shamans,*1 and less satisfactorily in McKern’s *Functional Families of the Patwin.*

Even such students as Du Bois on the Wintu,2 and Foster on the Yuki3—students committed to a study of cultural totality—revert to the catalogue pattern of ethnographic reporting. The trait-emphasized nature of the California ethnography is therefore not a limitation of the students, but of the very data. It seemed appropriate for one student to endeavor a functionalist study of these defunct cultures. The extent of my success remains for the reader to determine. I myself am aware of many limitations.

I should point out also that the approach of the functionalist is often fruitful of historic insights. Something of the kind was discovered by Thurnwald in Buin,4 where he uncovered two cultural strata through functional analysis. In our analysis of the Hupa White Deerskin Dance,5 Driver and I found the distributional and the functional data mutually corroborative of historical insight concerning the origin of that important northwestern California ceremonial. Finally, I believe that the present analysis of Nomlaki culture also adds to historical understanding of a segment of California prehistory.

The field investigations were made in the summer of 1936, with two brief subsequent visits, made possible by funds from the research grant of the Department of Anthropology of the University of California, Berkeley. The work was done under the direction of Professor A. L. Kroeber, to whom I wish particularly to express my appreciation.

The analysis of the data and a first draft of the report were completed over a decade ago. Other research interests prevented final preparation of the manuscript until now. In reworking it at the present time, with the aid of a small grant from the University of California, Los Angeles, I have done no more than improve the writing and clarify the analysis.

I wish to express my appreciation to the members of the department in Berkeley—especially Professor Kroeber—who made this piece of research possible and thereby gave me not only my instruction in anthropology but my apprenticeship in the field. A number of my fellow students—particularly Harold E. Driver, Robert F. Heizer, Margaret Lantis, and George Foster—were helpful to me during the initial stages of preparation. I wish to express my appreciation to Harry Hoijer, Ralph Beals, Joseph Birdsell, and George Brainerd, my colleagues at the University of California, Los Angeles, who graciously read the manuscript and suggested various improvements. I want to thank particularly my wife, Gale Goldschmidt, for

1 Gayton, 1930.
2 McKern, 1922.
3 Du Bois, 1935.
4 Foster, 1944.
5 Thurnwald, 1934.
6 Goldschmidt and Driver, 1940.
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her help in all stages of the analysis and for her encouragement in the work of
preparation. I am indebted to Official Project No. 655-08-3-30, Unit A-15 (Works
Progress Administration) for assistance in typing. Mr. Stuart Peck prepared the
map and drawings.

The real authors of this monograph are the small group of descendants of the
Nomlaki who gave their information generously. I am especially grateful to Jeff
Jones, who had an ethnographer's interest in his native culture and whose mind
was a storehouse of information, and to Andrew Freeman, whose vivid imagery
gave insight into the covert aspects of aboriginal Nomlaki culture.

Orthographic symbols differing from regular English values are as follows:

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CHAPTER I

NOMLAKI CULTURE AND HISTORY

The Nomlaki inhabited the foothill area of the territory ascribed to the Central Wintun or Wintun proper. They occupied the land extending from the edge of the river plain westward to the summit of the Coast Range, in the country between Stony Creek and Cottonwood Creek, in the Sacramento River drainage of central California. A century ago the Nomlaki probably numbered more than two thousand individuals; today only a remnant survives.

The Nomlaki subsisted by hunting, by gathering acorns, roots, wild seeds and fruits, and by fishing in the streams that crossed their territory. They had no domestic animals or plants—not even the dog or tobacco. They had no ax, the pestle being their only ground-stone implement. Of their crafts, basket weaving held first place. They had attained no virtuosity in either flint chipping or fur processing. The houses were generally very crude, although a rather substantial semisubterranean structure was built for the headman.

The society was divided into a series of familistic groups that were more or less autonomous units with patrilineal descent. Each group occupied a separate village, and over each was a headman, who was more a leader than a chieftain. Although the Nomlaki are considered a unit, their exact borders cannot be defined because there was no formal organization of the villages into a true tribe, although neighboring villages did unite for economic and religious activities as well as for war against a common enemy. There was also a secret society that controlled the wealth activity. This cult distinguished important persons from the common people and tended to unite disparate units into a greater functioning whole.

In so poor a society it is surprising to find a definite emphasis upon wealth. Nevertheless, certain goods, such as eagle feathers and bear skins, were highly desired and were purchased by the wealthy with clamshell-disk beads formed into long necklaces or ropes. Trade, which was a formalized activity of the wealthy members, brought widely separated groups into contact and also served to enrich native life by bringing distant products into the region. The Nomlaki formed a link in the chain of trading between the San Francisco Bay region and the headwaters of the Sacramento River.

Religious concepts suffused the whole of Nomlaki life. Most activities were hedged by one or another formal restriction, and the spiritual ability to perform specific crafts was obtained by initiation into a secret society. There was a girl's puberty ceremony, largely a social gathering, and probably also other formalized dances. Spirits and sacred springs existed and were of great importance to the shaman and other professionals. Although the shaman's primary function was to cure sickness and disease, he also possessed powers of evil and consequently was much feared.

HISTORY OF THE TRIBE

Prehistory.—No archaeological work has been done in the area in which the Central Wintun live. Further south, in territory historically occupied by their linguistic neighbors the Patwin, archaeological excavations of burial sites have been made by members of the anthropology departments of the University of California and Sac-
ramento Junior College. The results of these excavations have been reported in two publications. Three cultural periods have been established: Early, Transitional, and Late. The Late period is subdivided into prehistoric, protohistoric, and historic phases, largely upon typological evidence but in part by stratification and circumstances of deposition. Although there is some hazard involved in using archaeological evidence from the territory of a neighboring tribe, the implications of these findings are suggestive for a tentative reconstruction of Nomlaki prehistory.

There is considerable conformity between the ethnological data on the Nomlaki and the culture pattern of the Late period described by the archaeologists. The preponderantly Late-period traits found among the Nomlaki are:

- flexed burial
- burial accompanied by possessions of deceased
- burial accompanied by gifts to the deceased
- house sites “agree with ethnographic description”
- clamshell-disk beads
- tubular magnesite beads
- stone pipes with bone stems
- bird-bone whistles
- incised geometric designs
- acorn anvil

A number of traits demonstrated archaeologically were not specifically reported by my informants, but there are no startling disconformities. Between Nomlaki culture and either of the two earlier phases there are no specific items of agreement that do not appear also in the Late phase. It is probable, therefore, that Nomlaki culture, in a form generally like that described here, appeared in the third of the three horizons in the archaeological record. The exact date of this development is not mentioned by the archaeologists themselves, but a recent one is suggested. This new cultural horizon, although it involves a number of new traits, is not discontinuous with the preceding phase. Therefore it may be assumed that a local development (possibly stimulated from the outside) took place during the centuries preceding the first white contact, gradually forming into the culture known from ethnographic accounts.

Another aspect of the archaeological record is highly suggestive of the kind of historical changes that occurred. Certain traits in the Late phase are associated with the wealth complex among the Nomlaki: clamshell-disk beads, tubular magnesite beads, and flexed burial. Among the Nomlaki, clamshell-disk beads were used as money; tubular magnesite beads were highly prized (“Indian gold,” in the words of the informants); and flexed burial was associated with the practice of wrapping the corpse in a bearskin shroud (the bearskin was the Nomlaki’s most valued possession). Interment or destruction of property of the deceased and destruction of other property by the friends of the deceased are both associated with the Nomlaki wealth complex.

Among the Nomlaki, as I shall show in detail, the wealth complex was associated with the secret society and the pattern of occupational specializing. This wealth

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1 Heizer and Fenenga, 1939; Lillard, Heizer, and Fenenga, 1939.
2 With reference to McKern, who describes Patwin houses in detail. Nomlaki houses also follow this pattern.
complex was an institutional development that has every appearance of having been superimposed upon an earlier and simpler pattern of familistic-village organization. The evidence suggests that this wealth complex moved into the area from the south, where clamshell-disk money was in use and where the secret society was more highly developed.

Furthermore, the analysis of the Nomlaki secret society made in chapter ii shows it to be a part of the Kuksu system. The archaeological data and the ethnological evidence from the Nomlaki support the historical reconstruction made by Kroeber.8 On the basis of the distribution of the Kuksu cult and its variations, Kroeber determined that the Kuksu system was relatively late. This reconstruction is supported by the archaeological evidence that the wealth complex is late and the association between this wealth complex and the Nomlaki version of the cult.

From skeletal material there is evidence suggesting a gradual and peaceable invasion of the new culture form. Mr. Russell Newman is making a detailed analysis of male skeletons from archaeological sites in central California.9 He informs me that a physical type found sporadically in Early and Transitional periods of the archaeological sequence appears in new strength in the Late horizon. This suggests that the cultural change from Early to Late (and presumably involving the introduction of the Huta wealth complex) was brought about by a gradual encroachment of people, not by conquest and certainly not by the elimination of one population by another. Such a conclusion conforms to expectation in terms of the kind of culture change involved.

The prehistory of California can be reconstructed as follows: At some early time a people speaking a language of Penutian stock spread through the central California valley. They were probably without benefit of the bow (as archaeological data suggest), having only the spear and perhaps the spear thrower. The society of this period was organized about a family village similar to the Patwin sere and the Nomlaki olkapna. At a later date, stimulated either by the Pomo or their neighbors or by developments in the San Francisco Bay region, a new institutional form developed—a cult with secret ritual. This institution had the effect of separating a social elite, of creating a measure of unity among the wealthier members of separate family groups, and of establishing new values and motives in individual behavior. The spread of this cultural complex appears to have been a peaceable invasion of a new idea, probably not involving conquest and almost certainly not involving the replacement of one population by another. Interest in trade and high evaluation of furs and bows made in the north may have been incentives to the northward movement of this cult. At any rate the family-village organization was combined with a secret-cult organization and wealth differentiation to form a more complex social system.

The exploration period (1808–1849).—The twenty-first and last Spanish mission in California was established at Sonoma in 1823. This mission had close contact with the Suisunes or Southern Patwin. The Nomlaki, being considerably to the north, were outside the orbit of the direct influence of Spanish missionary activity. However, a certain amount of Spanish influence was suggested by informants when

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8 Kroeber, 1923.
9 Newman, MS.
they mentioned that striking fire was "learned from the Mexicans." Furthermore, the word "salapi" was given for "blanket" (serape).

Very little is known of early explorations in the area. In October, 1808, Alférez (Ensign) Gabriel Moraga reached Glenn in Glenn County and a point near the present Oroville in Butte County.\(^6\) Glenn County is within River Wintun territory. In October, 1813, Luís Argüello and the diarist Father Ordáz crossed Glenn and Tehama counties.\(^b\) By this time the Indians told Argüello and Father Ordáz of white men who had preceded them. Argüello crossed the Coast Range, but it is doubtful that he penetrated Nolmaki territory.

In 1832–1833 the Ewing Young party crossed the area on a trapping expedition. Colonel J. J. Warner described the decimated condition of the Indians of California.

The banks of the Sacramento river, in its whole course through the valley, were studded with Indian villages, the houses of which in the spring, during the day time were red with the salmon the aborigines were curing.\ldots On our return, late in the summer of 1833, we found the valleys depopulated. From the head of the Sacramento to the great bend and Slough of the San Joaquin, we did not see more than six or eight live Indians, while large numbers of their skulls and dead bodies were to be seen under almost every shade tree, near the water, where the uninhabited and deserted villages had been converted into graveyards.\ldots\(^7\)

This smallpox epidemic of 1833 was the first serious blow of white civilization upon the Central Wintun. Its worst toll was in the villages along the river; its effect on the Nolmaki cannot be determined.

In 1839, when Sutter's Fort was established at the present site of Sacramento, there must have been some contact between the whites and Indians. By 1847 Tehama County was occupied by a group of settlers. Members of the Wilkes Expedition reported the presence of cattle up the Sacramento River in 1841, but there is no evidence that the Indians herded stock or kept horses. By this time the contact with whites had had definite effects on the river dwellers.

[At the confluence of the Feather River with the Sacramento] the ground was strewn with skulls and bones of an Indian tribe, all of whom are said to have died, within a few years, of the tertian fever, and to have nearly become extinct in consequence. Near this had been an Indian village which was destroyed by Captain Sutter and his trappers, because its inhabitants had stolen cattle etc. The affair resulted in one of the Indians having been killed, twenty-seven made captive, and the removal of the remainder beyond the limits of his territory.\(^8\)

In August, 1841, a part of the Wilkes Expedition under Dr. Charles Pickering went up the Sacramento River beyond the Marysville Buttes to a point given as 39\(^°\) 13' 39" north latitude and 122\(^°\) 12' 17" west longitude.\(^9\) Here they met with a tribe of Indians which they called Kinkla. At this point in the river, probably still within Patwin territory, was a fish weir blocking the boat's progress. The Indians were ready to remove the dam (which suggests frequency of similar white expeditions up the Sacramento), but Pickering decided to go no farther up the river. Instead, he remained with the Indians long enough to note some features of their

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\(^{8}\) Chapman, 1921, chap. xxxii. This discussion was based on manuscript material of H. I. Priestley.

\(^{9}\) Ibid.

\(^{7}\) Lewis, 1880, p. 49 (quoted without footnote reference).

\(^{8}\) Wilkes, 1884, vol. 5, p. 195.

\(^{9}\) Ibid.
culture and to obtain a short vocabulary. He particularly describes the houses, the village, dress, and the fish weir—data I have incorporated in the ethnographic account where it seemed pertinent.

L. T. Emmons, in charge of another party from this expedition, entered the Sacramento Valley from Oregon. He described what were probably the southernmost group of Wintu. Mr. Dana, one of the party, collected a short vocabulary, the words of which agree fairly well with the Central Wintun dialect, linguistic differences between the two tribes not being great. Emmons' description includes mention of houses, food, customs, hair style, and facial decoration. Emmons included also a drawing of a man in profile. Perhaps his most striking statement was that "the whole [village] was surrounded by a brush fence, which served for a stockade."

This is the only evidence of such a practice.

During the first half of the nineteenth century the Central Wintun became acquainted with whites. No white men are known to have come through the Nomlaki territory during this period, but it is impossible to believe that the presence of the whites remained unknown to the Nomlaki or that these Indians were entirely unaffected. However, the general tenor of River Wintun life was not changed until the 1833 epidemic, and not uprooted until 1850. Earlier contacts appear to have been merely sporadic encounters, for the most part peaceable.

*Period of the Nome Lackee Reservation (1849–1863).—* In 1848 only about ten white men lived in the Sacramento Valley within the present boundaries of Tehama County. However, by 1849 Tehama was a flourishing boom town destined to be the leading community of the northern Sacramento Valley for many years. The impact of white civilization was tremendous on the Indians of the hill country of the northern Sierra Nevada and Coast Range of California. The Indians were introduced to the worst our civilization has to offer; they were exploited as labor and were killed on the slightest provocation, real or imaginary. By 1851 certain settlers requested that the Indians be segregated from the white population on a reservation. Others preferred to keep the Indians available for menial labor. This created difficulty when agents attempted later to move the Indians to reservations.

It must be remembered that Tehama County was devoid of gold. The principal economic asset was land, which was quickly overgrazed and overfarmed. Cheap labor was much in demand.

Sutter acted as Indian agent from 1847 to 1849, when Adam Johnston was appointed. At this time the chief policy of the agents was to maintain peace. In 1851 a commission of three was appointed to make a series of treaties with the tribes of the central drainage, following a policy that was to get the Indians "down from their mountain fastnesses and place them in reservations, along in the foothills bordering

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20 Ibid., vol. 5, pp. 258 ff.
21 Ibid., vol. 6, p. 630.
22 Lewis, 1880, p. 15.
23 In a communication to Thomas J. Henley, under a date line "Nome Lackee Reservation, August 31, 1856," E. A. Stevenson says in part: "... a large number are on the ranches or farms of private individuals, who are using them as working hands, and who seem to have adopted the principle that they (the Indians) belong to them as much as an African slave does to his master. ... Many of these Indians have left their place and come to the reservation, and have been followed and demanded by persons claiming them as private property." From the Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, accompanying the annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior for the year 1856, Washington, 1857, p. 251.
on the plains."""The treaties were accepted by the Indians but rejected by the United States Senate because, in the words of Congressman McCorkle of California, "the reservations of land, which they [the commissioners] have set apart for the different tribes of Indians, comprises, in some cases, the most valuable land in the state. . . .""

In 1852 Superintendent Edward F. Beale started the policy of establishing Indian reservations, and in September, 1854, his successor, Thomas J. Henley, established the Nome Lackee Reservation on a tract of 25,000 acres in the foothills of western Tehama County between Elder and Thomas creeks. H. L. Ford, later to be made agent in charge of the Nome Lackee Reservation, made a survey of the region and reported to Henley on September 4, 1854.

This section of Country is inhabited by a tribe of Indians calling themselves Nome Lacka and they claim as their country all the land between Thomas [Thomes] and Elder Creek. South of Thomas [Thomes] Creek is inhabited by a tribe calling themselves Shon Pons. . . . All of these Indians speak the same language as far north as Shasta and Trinity. . . .

I had a talk of about one hour with them (Nome Lackee Indians) during which time I learned that their Tribe was now reduced to less than three hundred, but all that was left would if an establishment was made, come in and work with good will, they also stated that a party of Mexicans had been for the last six months roving through the country, that whenever their women and children ventured out to gather seeds, they attacked them carrying off their young women and children. This I found corroborated by some of the settlers of the valley who informed me that a short time ago a party of Mexicans came to Colusi having with them some fifteen or twenty children including both sexes, which they were taking below to sell. I made them some presents and told them you would be here in about two weeks time, when I wished them to have all their tribe gathered together in the valley that I have named reservation valley, they appeared very much elated and said they would assemble between two and three hundred Indians. . . .""

The reasons for the establishment of the reservation and for the good will of Superintendent Henley are indicated by the following excerpts from a letter of September 25, 1854, from him to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, G. W. Many-penny."

The establishment of the Northern Reservation I found absolutely indispensable. On my return from Washington, I received petitions and was called upon by deputations from every County in the Middle and Northern portions of the State, urging upon me speedy action in reference to the Indians in the precincts of the white settlements, those Indians having heretofore been entirely neglected by my predecessor, considerable excitement prevailing on the subject. I assumed then that as soon as the appropriation passed Congress I would immediately locate a Reservation in the North and take the preparatory steps towards putting into operation the plans of the Government in regard to the Indians. Accordingly on hearing of the passage of the appropriation I proceeded at once to the task of selecting a suitable location for a Reserve in which I have succeeded to my entire satisfaction and which is highly approved by the public so far as I have learned. . . . The importance of commencing operations in advance of the rainy season is so eminent, longer delay so injurious to the interests of the service, and the disappointment to the people which would have ensued so great, I determined before returning here to take the necessary steps to occupy the reservation this fall. . . . I am compelled to go on and I have determined to apply my own means to the payment of the debt already created, which will enable me to prepare for planting the crop. . . .

34 Quoted from a letter written in 1851 by Worencraft (one of the three commissioners), Hoopes, 1932.
36 This letter was copied by Mr. Warren N. Woodson of Corning, California, who kindly gave me a copy.
37 Obtained from copies of letters in the hands of Mr. Woodson.
The report sent by E. D. Keyes, Captain of the Third Artillery, to Major E. D. Townsend, August 15, 1855, gives a picture of the situation and attitude at the reservation after its first establishment.

After counting the Indians in the three camps, which have been established, carefully, and afterwards, counting again in several groups of Lodges, I concluded 1,000 to be a fair estimate of the number of Indians actually present on the Reservation. The proportion of women and children being larger than I had heretofore observed in California, when I had reason to suppose whole tribes were assembled together, I could easily believe what I was told by the gentleman in charge of the Reservation, that a large number of the males were absent hunting, or for other purposes.

At the time of my first visit to the Reservation, in the beginning of last October [1854], no labor had been done, and only about 200 Indians were assembled there. The Indians presented, at that time, a meager, squallid appearance, and were almost without clothing, or any means to acquire subsistence. At the present time the Indians have the appearance of being well fed, are far better off in regard to clothing, and nothing I could see among them indicated discontent. Besides the wheat and barley raised the past season, I found about the lodge immense amounts of wild oats, grass seeds, and roots, cleaned and stored up in sacks and baskets and everything to indicate a disposition to remain on the reserve.

At one of the camps, several small wooden huts have been erected for the accommodation of the Indians, and it is the intention of the Superintendent to erect more... It will without doubt have a beneficial effect to accustom the Indians to live in houses and to induce them to assimilate in their habits to the regularity of the white people.

Under the instructions of an American woman the young squaws have been taught to plaid straw and to make straw hats— This they do with great dexterity and apparent pleasure, and the hats they make are very good. The squaws have been also taught to sew, and they make their own clothing and such as are needed by the men and the children.

...nothing appears to have been attempted with a view to elevate the character of the Indians in the scale of civilization— The course of conduct adopted by the Superintendent in the management of this Reservation appears to be founded on a wish to neutralize, as far as practicable, the evils attending the presence of Indians in the country— He does not entertain the fantastic hope that he can civilize them, or Christianize them, or that he can prolong the existence of their tribes; an experience of two hundred and fifty years, should satisfy all men that American Indians cannot be civilized; and the entire extinction of all these tribes which once inhabited the eastern portion of this continent is sufficient proof that they cannot be perpetuated when in contact with the white man.

In certain elemental virtues the Indian is equal, if not superior to the white man.

An Indian youth will learn to read and write and to draw as quickly as a white boy— An Indian man will learn the use of the hoe, rake and spade, scythe and reaping hook, with more facility than one of our race of an equal age. An Indian's knowledge of topography as shown by his observation of inequalities and objects on the ground, their distances apart and relative positions, his skill in finding his way from point to point, where he has once travelled, or where the way has been described to him, and his vigilance in finding or evading an enemy, are so much superior to our own that he might justly claim to belong to a race of a superior order of comprehension... In this family there is an appearance of kindness and forbearance notwithstanding the drudgery and degradation of the females and the nakedness and want of the children. He is capable of great perseverance involving mental and physical qualities in the pursuit of friendship, revenge, and in the occupations of the chase. He laments the decease of his friends and guards with care the sepulchers of his ancestors. He can be eloquent and patriotic, and in fortitude and constancy under sufferings and privations he has no parallel.

The existence of so many individual virtues in the Indians, and the gloomy pride of his character, have excited the imaginations and exercised the philanthropy of our people from the first settlement of this continent.

The 1856 report of the Indian Commissioner viewed the situation at Nome Lackee with satisfaction. The reservation was caring for Nomlaki, "Nome Cults" (Yuki at
Round Valley, which was then considered an extension of this reserve), "Noi Mucks" (Patwin), and "Wye Lackees (Wailaki)." The thousand acres of cultivated land produced an estimated fifteen thousand bushels of wheat, as well as corn, pumpkin, melons, turnips, and other vegetables. The labor was done entirely by the Indians with white overseers. The number of inhabitants had increased to two thousand Indians (including Round Valley). The reports of 1857 were also favorable despite two changes of agents at the reservation, and the crops continued to be superabundant for the needs. The population of 2,500 Indians "as a general thing . . . are contented with their location on the reservation and express a desire to remain." In 1858 Henley wrote to the Indian Commissioner, Charles E. Mix: "The Nome Lackee reserve is flourishing equal to my most sanguine anticipations. . . . Nome Cult (Round Valley) proves to be as good, if not the best location . . . yet selected."

The major problem at that time was with the whites, for the report states:

... in most cases where there are Indians, the whites are divided in sentiment relative to their removal: Those who have good Indian house and farm servants oppose their removal, while those less favored urge it. . . . In other localities again there is opposition made by men who are living with Indian women. . . . Again there are localities in which the Indians have been made to perform all kinds of drudgery and labor, for which they get a scant subsistence, and in consequence the old ones become worn out and helpless, and then it is their former task masters wish to get rid of them, but insist on retaining the young and healthy ones . . .

But another factor came into play. During the same year (1856) a special agent, G. Bailey, reported to Commissioner Mix an unfavorable account of the situation, based largely on the fact that the reservation was a more expensive means of providing for the Indians than a direct dole. He dismissed any intangible benefits by saying, "There is no gain in the way of civilization to go on the credit side of the account. . . ." Perhaps his real point of view is revealed when he says, "The government provides a magnificent farm of 25,000 acres in one of the finest grain countries in the world." He goes on to recommend that the Nome Cult farm (Round Valley) be made a reservation and that Nome Lackee be abandoned. In the 1859 report the question of the value of land assumed concrete form. A report of August 31, 1859, from V. E. Geiger, Nome Lackee agent, to Superintendent J. Y. McDuffee, clearly shows this development. After saying that sufficient grain had been raised, Geiger mentions that some land, omitted in error from the survey, had been sold. He goes on to say:

This reserve . . . has probably fulfilled its mission . . . the country in the vicinity of the reservation is thickly settled with white citizens who have no apprehension on account of the Indians. . . . The stock of the settlers range all over it and unless there is allowed additional white force to accompany the Indians in their efforts to drive off and keep off the herbs that encroach upon us, it will result in partial destruction of whatever crops may be sown this fall. The Indian vaqueros require the presence of white employees to protect them from those who have stock, and who

39 Ibid., 1858, p. 284.
40 Ibid., 1858, p. 289, 290.
41 Ibid., p. 300.
42 Ibid., italics mine.
43 Ibid., 1859, pp. 438 ff.
threaten and deter the Indians when in the act of draining off the stock from the reserve.... The settlers of Round Valley still refuse to vacate their land claims....

By 1861 the reservation had fallen into desuetude, and, except for a few recommendations for its disposal, no more is heard of it. Indians from the Sacramento Valley were transported to Round Valley. This little valley, so admirably adapted for an Indian reservation because it is isolated and still fertile enough to accommodate a large population, was discovered by a member of the Nome Lackee agency. It was unobtrusively attached to the reservation as the Nome Cult farm (nōmkuēl, Yuki). White settlers were eventually permitted to come in, and when an attempt was made to buy out their improvements, they refused to release the land. However, a reservation was established there and is still maintained. The feud between the whites and the Indians continues to this day. The Indians may not have been entirely blameless, but the depredations of the whites in destroying Indian Service property and ruining and burning the Indians’ crops were beyond belief. To protect the Indians from the whites, troops were requested but did not arrive. In the report for 1863 the correspondence between the commandant of the fort and the agent for Indian Affairs gives some insight into the hardships of the Indians when they were moved en masse from the Sacramento Valley to Round Valley. The following fragment is sufficient:

[At the Nome-Lackee reservation] I found a few Indians scattered in single families, dependent upon their white neighbors and the acorn crops for subsistence. The buildings are fast going to ruin, the fences gone, and the fine fruit orchard which was on the place entirely destroyed. I arrived at Round Valley and found everything in a state of confusion.

On passing over the trail [between the Sacramento and Round valleys], I passed over sixty sick Indians and squaws at the different watering places, who had been left at the "Mountains House" by Captain Starr, on his passage with the Indians from Sutter County to the reservation....

Thus the Nomlaki were reduced in number during this period and later well treated for a while on a reservation in their own territory. Here they learned much of white culture by direct teaching. With the Indians no longer a threat to safety, however, the whites began to covet their valuable land, and the reservation was abandoned in 1859-1860. Three years later the Nomlaki were driven to Round Valley, where they found treatment no better, either at the hands of the whites or, it may be assumed, by their traditional enemies the Yuki.

Native account of early white contact.—The following account of the coming of the whites was given by my informant Andrew Freeman. Many central California tribes refer to a man who predicted the appearance of the whites.

We had a man at Thomes Creek that had power given to him. He was young. He sang all the time. He drank water and ate once a month. He ate a little of everything, then took one swallow of water and smoked. He stayed in the sweat house all the time.

Now our captain used to get out early every morning on top of the sweat house and, calling everybody by name, would tell them what to do.

This fortuneteller from Thomes Creek would tell the people just how much game they would get and whether any mishaps would fall. He lived across from our reservation [at Paskenta]. One day he said, "There are some people from across the ocean who are going to come to this country." He looked for them for three years. "They have some kind of boat [teōlōtai] with which they can

\[1\] Ibid., 1863, pp. 519 ff.
\[2\] Ibid. Addendum to Appendix, letter from E. Steele, Superintending Agent of Indian Affairs, Northern district of California, to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, October 31, 1863, p. 519.
cross, and they will make it. They are on the way." Finally he said that they were on the land and that they were coming now. He said that they had fire at night and lots to eat. "They cook the same as we do; they smoke after meals, and they have a language of their own. They talk, laugh, and sing, just as we do. Besides, they have five fingers and toes; they are built like we are, only they are light [white]." He said their blood was awful light.

"They have a four-legged animal which some are riding and some are packing. They haven't any wives, any of them. They all are single. They are bringing some kind of sickness."

So everybody was notified. The night watch and day watch were kept. He said that they had something long which shoots little round things a long distance. They have something short that shoots just the same.

Finally the whites came in at Orland; many of them. When they came in they started shooting. There were thousands of Indians in the hills who went to fighting the whites. The Indian went after them but they couldn't do anything to them. Finally they got to Newville, and the man who was telling these fortunes said the whites were going to be there. The Indians were ready for them. The whites came by Oakes' place and down the flat at one o'clock in the morning. They killed the first Indian that showed himself. The captain told the others to stay in the house and get their bows and arrows ready.

The captain yelled to the whites that he was ready inside the house. He told his men, "When you get ready, run out and crowd into it." The captain sent them to fight at close range. He said, "We are dead anyway." The whites couldn't load their muzzle-loaders, so they used revolvers. The captain told his men to spear them. They fought from morning till afternoon. The Indians had come all the way from Colusa. They killed all those whites. The Indians were afraid of gray horses. They killed the horses. They examined everything. They divided everything up. One old man from south of the Tapscott place took away a lot of their money. His children used to take the money and play with it. Finally he took it up the canyon and hid it. The whites are looking for that money today but can't find it.

Another group of whites came to Mountain House [lopōm]. They killed many of the Indians. White people hit women and children in the head. One Indian shouted from a rock when the white man started back. The whites came up there, and that Indian went into the rock cave, and they shot one white man from there. But the whites threw fire into the cave and killed all the Indians in there.

They had been hiding in the hills. Indians couldn't get to the salt. They got very weak—they say salt keeps a person fit. There was no rain for three years, and fighting going on every day. No clover, no acorn, juniper berries, or peppergrass. Nothing for three years. Very little rain.

Finally the Indians got smallpox, and the Indian doctor couldn't cure them. They died by the thousands. Gonorrhea came amongst the Indians. That killed a lot of them. My grandfather said that if he had fought he would have been killed too. But he went up to Yolla Bolly Mountain with about six hundred others and stayed three years. On the third winter there was a heavy snowstorm. The snow was over his head. He said women can stand more starvation than men. They singed the hair off a deerhide shoulder strap and ate it.

Men died every day from starvation. That was in Camp of Dark Canyon in the winter. Women would find a little bunch of grass and eat it and would bring a handful back for their husbands. The women would have to chew it for the men. The man was too weak to swallow it. She would take a mouthful of water and pour it into his mouth. That was the way they saved a lot of them.

One man and his brother were lying among the rocks. They wanted to steal something. They saw six riders with forty head of cattle. The Indians lay there and watched them. The riders left after they corralled the cattle. The two Indians got a long willow sprout and made a whip. They tore the fence down and drove the cattle up the creek. They brought the cattle up to Newville Creek and over to Mountain House and turned them across Lake Hollow [anumawol, turtle spring]. It was warm snow and moonlight. They cut the throat of a calf that was dying. They cut the meat and roasted it right there. Then they went up the mountain and drove them over the summit into Henderson Glade. There was water there. Both of the men got under the water [supposedly to keep warm] and put a rock under their head. They stuck their nose out and went to sleep. They almost froze to death when they got out of the water. They met Indians who had come from camp and learned that some had died. They killed one of the steers. First they shot it
with an arrow and then hit it in the head with a rock. Then they cut its throat. They skinned it and divided the meat among the people. They had a big feast and they had to make soup for the weak people. They heated water in a basket. Then they put meat in the basket. That saved the people.

After that the whites began to gather up the Indians. They made the Nome Lackee Reservation in Tehama County. They take a tame Indian along when they bring Indians together on a reservation. They worked the Indians on the reservation. Old Martin was given a saddle mule and clothes. He wouldn't wear anything but the shirt—the overalls hurt his legs. He was a kind of foreman. Every Saturday they killed four or five beef and divided it among the Indians. They ground wheat and made biscuits. The women shocked hay. They had to examine all the men and women for disease.

Garland on the present Oakes' place wouldn't let them take the Indians off of his land, and that's what saved them. When they took the Indians to Covelo [in Round Valley, on the Nome Cult reserve] they drove them like stock. Indians had to carry their own food. Some of the old people began to give out when they got to the hills. They shot the old people who couldn't make the trip. They would shoot children who were getting tired. Finally they got the Indians to Covelo. They killed all who tried to get away and wouldn't return to Covelo.

The modern period.—After the Nome Lackee Reservation was abandoned, no more was heard of this tribe; indeed, the word is apparently dropped by the Indian Service. Some Nomlaki returned to the Sacramento Valley, and others remained at Round Valley. In the 1880 census there were 157 Indians listed in Tehama County, not all of them Nomlaki.

Of major interest in recent history was the introduction of the 1870 Ghost Dance, a cult that came from the Northern Paviotso and spread through much of California. The history of this movement has been given in full by Du Bois.  

The cult was brought into central California by the half-Wintu, half-Yana Indian named Norelputus. It went first to the Patwin (where the deep Earth Lodge element was inserted) and then back north into Nomlaki territory. The cult, known as Hesi, came to the Nomlaki stressing the motif of the end of the world. It retained, but did not emphasize, a belief in the return of the dead. Later, in 1873, Homaldo (probably a Wintun) and Lame Bill, a Patwin, created the Bole-Maru, which followed the previous cult to the north. Among the Nomlaki it was referred to as the Bole, and from this the modern Big Head dance developed.

The surviving Nomlaki are now divided between the "rancherias" of Grindstone (at the confluence of Grindstone and Stony creeks), Paskenta, and the reservation in Round Valley. The older men, especially unmarried ones, herd sheep for white ranchers, and the younger men get seasonal jobs in the rice and fruit fields. Many receive aid from the government. They are provided with wooden shacks and sufficient land for a small garden, which they rarely use. Individual allotments at Round Valley make the residents there somewhat more prosperous. Friendly if patronizing relationships now exist between the Indians and the local farmers, and recently the sweat house at Grindstone was roofed with shingles furnished by friendly whites. This sweat house offers a cool place in which to gossip or play games. The dances of the religious cult also take place here.

The Big Head dance is still influential. It has tended to unite the remnants of several of the small tribes in the western Sacramento Valley into a single whole, thus preserving a larger but composite cultural unit. The sharing of dances by neighboring tribes follows the old pattern, but now tribes cooperate that would

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Du Bois, 1939.
never have done so in prehistoric times. This can be ascribed in part to the automobile, in part to recognition of their common past. Probably the most important reason for this coming together is the desire to congregate their heavily decimated numbers into a larger group that can claim some solidarity. It is noteworthy also that in this cult are only tribes among which there was little enmity in prehistoric times; the formerly hostile Yuki do not participate. Not all the Nomlaki are members or followers of the Big Head dance; some are Christians, belonging to the Pentecostal Church. It is impossible to determine what factors led some to one, some to another, religious activity. Age is not a factor. The Grindstone rancheria people tend more to follow the dance; those at Paskenta (where no Big Head dance house exists) are mostly Christian.

Little of Nomlaki culture remains in practice. A few of the kinship designations, some license between a man and his sister-in-law, mourning dirges, the destruction of property of the deceased, a few animosities probably representing old attitudes—these are about all that is left of the culture described in this ethnography.

**ETHNOGEOGRAPHY**

The Central Wintun claimed a territory in the Sacramento Valley of California bounded by the Sacramento River on the east and the summit of the Coast Range on the west, extending from Cottonwood Creek on the north to the present town of Willows. This area is approximately forty-five miles wide and sixty miles long. The boundaries, as nearly as they can be determined, are shown in the accompanying map.

The people spoke a language of the Penutian stock, closely related to the Wintu to the north and the Patwin to the south. There were two major subdivisions: the River Wintun and the Hill Wintun. The border between them ran approximately north and south through a point just east of the present Henleyville. This boundary was referred to as an “old hunting line” and marked the minor dialectical and cultural differentiation between the Hill and River groups. According to Hill Wintun informants, the River Indians were of two groups: the memwailaka (water north language) in the north, and the puimok (east people). The Hill people were given the general name Nomlaki but were actually subdivided into dialects extending along the several creek drainages. These dialectical areas were: Redbank area, wakewel; north of Elder Creek, waltokewel; Elder Creek to below Thomas Creek, nomlaka; Grindstone Creek, noikewel or kolaiel. People from further south were called noimok whether or not they spoke a related language.7

Only Nomlaki informants were consulted in detail, because in the other groups there were no informed older persons still living. Thus all information, unless otherwise specified, pertains to the area including Elder and Thomas creeks.

Kroeber8 lists place names for Wintun territory. Such terms are almost infinite in number, for the Wintun gave names or descriptive designations to virtually every geographic feature of their small territory. Kroeber’s names that could be located definitely have been included on the map.

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7 The word kewel means place, the ending mok means people, the ending laka means language. Hence the division is geographic rather than dialectical. That these represent dialectically different groups appears from the informants’ statements.

8 Kroeber, 1932, p. 363.
The Nomlaki territory. Tribal boundaries are approximate. Local groups are indicated in small capitals where localization was possible. A few important villages are indicated in italics.
The several kinship groups (see pp. 319–332) occupied specific territories, and when these could be ascertained with reasonable accuracy they have been shown on the map and underscored. Only a few appear, because most of the groups are nearly forgotten.

The Nomlaki designated their neighbors chiefly by the direction in which they lived. These terms are given in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnological designation</th>
<th>Popular term</th>
<th>Nomlaki term</th>
<th>Meaning of Nomlaki term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yuki</td>
<td>Yuki</td>
<td>nōmkél</td>
<td>nōm, west</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northeastern Pomo</td>
<td>Stonyford</td>
<td>noimôk</td>
<td>noy, south; mók, people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patwin</td>
<td>Sites, Colusa</td>
<td>noimôk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Maidu</td>
<td>Chico</td>
<td>noïkên</td>
<td>yûkên, enemy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Wintun</td>
<td>Tehama</td>
<td>puimôk</td>
<td>pui, east</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Wintun</td>
<td>Tehama</td>
<td>mêmwailaka</td>
<td>mêm, water: wai, north; laka' language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wintu</td>
<td>Shasta</td>
<td>Wailaka</td>
<td>wai, north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinity Wintu</td>
<td>Trinity</td>
<td>wainômsus</td>
<td>(Taken over from Wintu)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER II

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND STATUS
DIFFERENTIATION

Nomlaki society was organized on two major axes: the geographic-familistic and the wealth-status system. In Nomlaki society the system of wealth, the geographically patterned groupings, the use of kinship, and the political organization were all inextricably woven, so that a discussion of the social system must take all these institutional mechanisms into account. This chapter, therefore, will discuss the village, the clanlike family grouping, the secret association, and the system of wealth and status.

A general preview of this social system will act as a guide through the details that follow. The society was divided geographically into a series of autonomous villages, each presided over by a headman whose position was semihereditary and whose powers were limited. The village was also basically a family group within which all were patrilineally related except the women who married into the family. These family-village groups were called okkapna.

Cutting across this system of localized groupings was a recognized social class differential. Fundamentally, the status distinction was based on wealth, since the economy of the Nomlaki included a monetary system and a number of material items that were privately owned by persons of prestige. In turn, this development of wealth and prestige was associated with a rather intensive specialization of crafts and professions, although certain basic economic tasks appear to have been the province of all. A secret society, with an initiatory ordeal designed to produce a coma or trance, was the institutional mechanism that supported and sanctioned both the system of wealth status and the specialization into crafts and professions. Through this initiation the individual became a recognized member of the elite and at the same time could acquire through a dream experience the right to engage in a specific craft or profession. The association of this elite acted as a mechanism for unifying the otherwise atomistic village-family system.

The description of any social system partakes of the nature of a construct. Individuals act toward certain ends; the system as such is not recognized by the members. In the present ethnography this construct was pieced together from fragmentary information. It should be repeated here that the Nomlaki social system became defunct in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Much of the detail has been lost even to the memory of the oldest informants, none of whom knew Nomlaki culture before it was affected by whites. I believe, however, that in its major outlines the description is accurate, and I have indicated points on which doubt still remains. As a check upon this construct I have included many quotations from informants, so that the reader can examine critically the basis upon which the synthesis rests.

The Local Group

The people we call Nomlaki were not a united tribe. There were no institutional mechanisms for effecting tribal unity, although a vague sense of tribal identity prevailed. The Nomlaki were divided into numerous (but unnumbered) local groups.
Draw

Fig. 1. Diagram of a Nomlaki village. The small houses were grouped about the larger chief's house, which they faced. The chief's house faced the stream, into which the men plunged after certain sweating ceremonials. Later houses were built toward the spring, which was the source of water. The large house was a postwhite addition, away from the remainder of the village. The menstrual hut was at the opposite end of the village from the water supply.

The diagram was prepared by Jones. It does not represent a particular village, but shows characteristic relationships.

Each of these local groups centered in a village or këwêl; it held a certain amount of land in common and generally had a second area of land in the mountains of the Coast Range.

The këwêl consisted of a chief's house (êlkêl) surrounded by a group of individual family houses. A diagrammatic sketch of such a village is shown in figure 1. The chief's house was the focal point of the village. The individual family houses faced toward it. In the chief's house were centered the group activities: gambling, smoking, storytelling, and the important "sweating dances." The chief's house had something of a sacred character. Children and women were especially admonished.
to comport themselves with restraint when they entered it. In front of the élkêl was an open area that acted as the village square, where ceremonial and secular gatherings took place.

In a three-quarter circle about the chief's house were gathered the brush shelters or lâtcikêl, popularly called wickiups. A single family of man, wife, and minor children lived in each of these shelters. In rare cases of polygamy the second wife apparently shared common quarters. The circle had no significance, and if the village grew, houses would be placed beyond, usually toward the source of water. The menstrual hut was built on the opposite side of the village from the water source, in an "out-of-the-way place" where it would be "out of danger." In historic times the large, multipost dance house was placed off to one side, usually at some distance.

There were anywhere from five to fifty family houses in a single village, with a population of from twenty-five to more than two hundred persons. An average of a hundred persons in a village seems a conservative estimate. Villages were frequently within calling distance of one another.1

THE KIN GROUP

The village comprised, in a sense, a single kin group. These kin groups were named, patrilineal, exogamous social units, the members of which considered themselves blood relatives whether or not the ties of kinship could be directly ascertained. These groups were called olkapna. The men and unmarried women of each village were members of the same olkapna, so that the social unit had a primary economic function. When, as was occasionally reported, the same olkapna name occurred in two separate villages or when otherwise unrelated persons claimed the same olkapna name, they considered themselves to be of the same group; the men "called one another brother," and intermarriage was forbidden. The olkapna must therefore be considered clans.2

Each olkapna was named. Table 2 shows the names of the nineteen known to informants, as well as an indication (where possible) of the meaning, the approximate location, and the affiliation of one or more persons for each. In the names no pattern is discernible. Some are clearly place names (e.g., sênkênti, in which kênti is a locative meaning "down under"); others have reference to people (e.g., dolitewa and Nomleak1). However, most of them cannot be translated at all. Informants refer to these names occasionally as surnames, which indicates their analogy to our own family names and refers to the patrilineal character of affiliation.

The olkapna were patrilineal. Genealogical data could not be obtained, but wherever reference was made to inheritance or affiliation, it was referred to as

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1 Kroeber has estimated the aboriginal population of the Wintun as between twenty-five and forty-five persons for each hundred square kilometers. Since he places them marginal to the area of higher density, they probably fall at the upper level of this range. (Kroeber, 1939, p. 154.)

2 I have elsewhere discussed the relationship of the olkapna to similar familialistic groupings in central California and the importance of this situation to the theory of clan development (Goldschmidt, 1948). While the formal requirements for clan organization are filled by the Nomlaki olkapna, the implications of clan organization were certainly not fully realized. The absence of any ceremonial sanctions or of great emotional content suggests how incompletely the olkapna fulfilled the potential role of clan organization. Because of this marginality and in accord with sound practice, I shall employ the native term rather than the word "clan" in reference to these groups.
patrilineal. Inheritance of personal property was not important, since most possessions were destroyed or buried with the dead. But inheritance of affiliation and attitudes of kinship followed patrilineal lines. According to informants, the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. pōxmalē</td>
<td>Elder Creek, north of Paskenta</td>
<td>Ellen James, Andrew Freeman, Bill Freeman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to make fire)</td>
<td>Ull Place, northwest of Paskenta</td>
<td>Dominic, Dominic’s grandfather, Nettie Hastings, Alice Joe</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. tcekōn</td>
<td>Mountain House, west of Paskenta</td>
<td>Jones’s mother, Maggie Hokay, Joe Freeman</td>
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<tr>
<td>(tcek, strings)</td>
<td>near Paskenta</td>
<td>Dick Raglin’s mother, Andy Freeman’s maternal grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. kellebė</td>
<td>Lopom, near Paskenta</td>
<td>Molly Freeman, Anne Raglin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(kel, house)</td>
<td>Newville, kolatēl</td>
<td>Lee Kirk, Burrows’ brothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. tčistava</td>
<td>Elder Creek, north of Paskenta</td>
<td>Jordan’s mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. nōmpōmha</td>
<td>near Paskenta</td>
<td>Andy Freeman’s maternal grandfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. sunsunu</td>
<td>near Newville</td>
<td>Bill Finnell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(sunu, bird’s nest)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. appak</td>
<td>one near Lowrey, another at Tehama</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. tuiko</td>
<td>near Newville</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(sore eyes?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. yaitowa</td>
<td>Burrows’ place, Dry Creek (“not our people”—Jones)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. sēnkęnti</td>
<td>(down under the “rabbit stick”)</td>
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<td>11. dōkōki</td>
<td>one near Lowrey, another at Tehama</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. doliteva</td>
<td>near Newville</td>
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<tr>
<td>(north people?)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. ta·ponas</td>
<td>Burrows’ place, Dry Creek (“not our people”—Jones)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. holotcitci</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. p’ana</td>
<td>(western language, cf. Nomlaki)</td>
<td>(Jones: “Katalmen rancheria of Noimōk tribe, also a few in our tribe.”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. nomleak’</td>
<td>(young oak tree)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. tō·k</td>
<td>near Paskenta</td>
<td>George Freeman</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. pōhwai</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19. soyt’</td>
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mother’s relatives were “not considered important.” Affinal relatives were likewise secondary to consanguine ones. For instance, it was the family of a deceased person who made the decisions about his burial; the spouse did not participate in plans for this important rite.

The exogamic character of the oklapna is clearly established. An informant said, “No sunsunu would ever marry another sunsunu.” The following statement is indicative of attitudes toward oklapna exogamy.
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[Jones: ] Once there was a family [olkapna] that did not associate with other families but lived to itself in a small fertile valley. They would only marry their own people, and when one or two did drift out they would go right back. The women never went out, and no outsiders ever visited them. They stayed apart—isolated, I suppose—because they were ashamed of the way they lived, and finally the whites scattered them.

They were not particularly poor. If a man saw one of them, he would talk to him but would only speak of them as animals or coyotes when he got back home. The women never married out. Some captain must have taught them that "devil way." D's mother was one of that tribe—that's why he is the way he is. [D had an unsavory reputation with the other tribe members.]

The unity of the olkapna was demonstrated by Jones in another context. A River Wintun woman took care of him at one time, saying, "Your mother and I are sisters through names. Any child of any kellebi [olkapna] are my relations—you are almost a son of mine." This suggests that the bond was equally matrilineal (as does the kinship identity of a sister's child with children when a woman is speaking), but it must be recalled that Jones had no paternal relatives among the Nomlaki.

**Kinship Regulations**

The olkapna was central in a general system for the regulation of interpersonal relationships through bonds of kinship. As is generally true, related persons had certain mutual rights and obligations that ordered behavior.

Gifford's kinship system seems more accurate than the information I obtained. Table 3 shows the essential features of this system. Some of its diagnostic characteristics are as follows:

1. Cousins. Parallel cousins are classed with siblings while cross cousins are differentiated from siblings and from one another. The mother's brother's child is classed with mother's brother and probably with grandparent. Its reciprocal (father's sister's child) is classed with sister's child and with grandchild.

2. Parent's siblings. The father's brother and his wife are equated with the mother's sister and her husband; in short, parallel aunts and uncles are equated. The stepfather and stepmother are equated with these parallel uncles and aunts. The equation is carried on by the cousin terms. The children of these uncles and aunts are equated with siblings.

Terms for cross-uncle and cross-aunt transgress generational lines. The mother's brother is equated with grandfather (a term which is used for all males of the second ascending generation, including wife's grandfather). The father's sister and her husband are equated with older sister and sister's husband. This is in accord with the cross-cousin terms already discussed.

3. Nephews and nieces. The reciprocals of the above terms are practically the only ones where the sex of the speaker is of importance. A man equates his brother's child with his own, whereas a woman equates her brother's children with her younger brother or younger sister (by whom she is called older sister). The sister's son is equated by a man with grandchild, the reciprocal to his grandfather term. A woman equates her sister's child with her own. Another way of viewing this is to say that parallel nieces and nephews are equated with children, just as parallel uncles and aunts are equated, and though distinguished from parents, are in other aspects equated with them.

4. Siblings. Reference has already been made to the distinction between older and younger siblings, with reference to the speaker. The age distinction is carried over to the parallel cousins who are referred to by sibling terms. These age distinctions occur in no other place in the kinship system.

5. Affinal relatives. Father-in-law and son-in-law are self-reciprocal terms. Mother-in-law and daughter-in-law are separate terms but they have an apparent etymological relation (tumbelum and belumbu, respectively).

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8Gifford, working before 1918, had informants that died prior to my field work. His system is more closely in accord with neighboring groups. My best informant had no male Nomlaki relatives, and his data on this phase were not based on experience in use. (Gifford, 1922.)
6. Grandparents. No distinctions, except sex of grandparents, is made within either the 2nd ascending or 2nd descending generations. The terms for grandparent and grandchild are used for more distant generations.

Some generalizations can be made about the function of the relationship system in the ordering of interpersonal behavior. Although a distinction was made between father and his brothers, wife and her sisters, husband and his brothers, the children of these relatives were not distinguished. A stepparent was called by the term of parent's sibling. These facts are in accord with the levirate and sororate usages found among the Nomlaki. Thus the father's brother could become the father (but was called uncle or stepfather), and his children could become siblings, as they were already identified.

Some features of the system supported the integrity of the olkapna organization. Chief among these features was the identification of parallel cousins and siblings. The olkapna ties were strengthened also by the fact that a man identified his brother's children with his own; a woman identified her sister's children with her own. It was not, however, a system perfectly aligned with a clanlike organization, for group identities and differences were not regularly demonstrated.

Of eight principles on which kinship was based, the following were important: sex of relative, consanguinean versus affinal relationship, generation differentiation, lineal versus collateral relatives, cross versus parallel relatives, differentiation of age within generation, and sex of speaker. Age of connecting relative was not brought into the picture.

Kinship regulated behavior in many situations. Details of obligation and duties are discussed elsewhere, but a few may be mentioned here. Co-wives might or might not be sisters, but "if a man has two wives they claim sisters even though they might not be." Both the sororate and levirate were reported. In this connection, a man and his sister-in-law had license to "talk rough with one another" and to indulge in vulgar horseplay. On the other hand, a man was expected to avoid any association with his mother-in-law and to behave with extreme decorum with his father-in-law and discuss only matters of importance. A woman avoided her father-in-law, but she spent a great deal of time with her mother-in-law, who acted as her "protector."

CHIEFTAINSHIP

Nature and Function.—Over each village was a captain, teabatu, who had usually succeeded his father but who owed his power as much to his personality as to inheritance. The captain was a leader, not a ruler. His first duty was to advise, admonish, and direct his followers. Thus each day he arose at dawn, climbed on the roof of his ēlkēl, and planned the day. He would start his harangue to the people with moralistic clichés: "Do right, don't get into trouble, help your neighbor," accompanying his words with great, sweeping gestures. Then he would call persons or groups by name and give duties to each. Thus he might have some men investigate the source of a specific grass and report on their finds; he might have youths gather wood, women make porridge. If a dance or social gathering was to be held, he would give each person his duty for that event. The harangue, which had begun with moral admonition, might end: 'If you have to strike an enemy, that's different. You have to protect yourself.'

This function of the chief was probably his most important one, and being a "good talker" was a prime requisite for the office. He could, however, hire a man to do the talking, especially in connection with important social functions. This was expensive, since the talker (te'ëwë) received good pay for his services. A prospective chief often went into the woods to practice talking—behavior showing a commendable attitude in the youth.

Small villages were often close together, and a single captain might be over a group of them. This suggests that the chief was not simply the olkapna elder. The chief's influence might occasionally extend over a larger territory than his own particular domain. Jones said that Dominic's grandfather, who was head of teekôn family, which owned a fertile section of land on Elder Creek, was sought out by people from as far away as Newville for his advice in disputes. His less popular son did not have this influence; perhaps the introduction of whites altered the circumstances.

The second major function of the chieftain was that of arbiter. As a rule, disputants endeavored to arrive at an agreement between themselves. But if such an agreement could not be reached, the chief might be called in to arbitrate. More detail on legal disputes appears below.

The chief was also expected to make decisions on matters affecting his village. Thus, if a group of men wanted to build a dance house, they would bring their plan to their chief, who would render a presumably final decision. Any person of importance might leave the village in protest against some action by the chief, but that was his only recourse beyond his powers of persuasion.

Finally, the captain played an economic role. He was, under prewhite conditions, a rich man—perhaps the richest in the village, but not necessarily so. He kept on hand a supply of perishable necessities of life for use when visitors came to trade. It was his duty to be always in a position to trade. Thus a war might be ended by an agreement to barter goods, and it was apparently necessary for the prestige of the group to make a good showing in these postwar negotiations. Furthermore, any family falling short of food replenished its stock from the chief's larder.

Such loans from the headman's supply were either paid for with beads, rope, or some other item of fairly standard value, or later returned in kind. Acorns were, however, kept in a common granary to be drawn upon by each family. They were not the property of the headman, but it was his duty to see that no person took more than his reasonable share.

The role of the chief as an economic stabilizer was reflected in a similar pattern in connection with feasts. The rabbits killed for a ceremonial occasion were placed in a common pile and redistributed by the chief to the family heads according to their individual needs. Each family would roast and pound their rabbits, making patties of the pounded meat. A youth was sent around with a basket to collect one of the patties from each family head for the chief, who thus had a supply of meat for any latecomers or for children who became hungry later in the evening.

Succession of inheritance to the chieftainship was from father to son, though a brother might inherit before the son. A cousin or grandson might succeed in the absence of closer relatives. If there were no one to take the place, the old men of the group would meet to appoint a successor. A chieftain father would train his son
from boyhood for his position, especially in the art of oratory. People would give presents to the prospective chief "so that he knows his place." He would also be under close scrutiny by the people, because if a man was felt to be unworthy, the rules of succession could be overridden by the demand of the men of the village, who apparently made some kind of formal acceptance of the successor.

Aside from the social prestige of the office itself, the chief gained status through his wealth. One reason for his advantageous economic status was that he was in a position to trade with outside persons as well as with villagers. Furthermore, he apparently used the supplies brought in by other people for his trading activities. The chieftain also enjoyed an immunity from the more menial tasks, such as rope-making and hunting, and lived from the produce of his fellows' labors, just as he enhanced his wealth by using their goods as capital in trading. Also because of his position he was able to marry rich wives—usually several of them—which in turn improved his economic position. He was, in fact, expected to marry a rich man's daughter, any other match being frowned upon. Such marriages were often contracted by the girl's parents while the bride was still a child, perhaps at about the time the chief inherited his position. This girl would receive special attention in keeping with her future position.

**Female chiefs.**—Occasional women chiefs were reported among neighbors of the Nomlaki. One informant mentioned an elected female chief who was the male chief's wife, but his statement is unclear. Women of high status enjoyed some distinctions, as in the case of the future chief's bride-to-be.

[Jones:] Charms are men's property. Only the daughter of a big man is counted as a man and must be considered for any important business. A woman may become a chief. No common woman could keep a charm, but a "queen sort of a woman" could take such property.

**Modern chiefs.**—Of all the captains in the memory of the informants, the grandfather of Kroebert's informant Dominic\(^*\) was the most vivid. Dominic, with whom Jones had lived as a boy, evidently painted this ancestor as an important man, but he did not accord his father such a rank. These men belonged to the *tcekon* olkapna, which owned fertile lands in the region near the present Lowrey, California. Dominic's grandfather was pictured not only as a peaceable man and a good talker (lesser captains came from distant villages for his advice) but also as one willing to fight when necessary (see pp. 343–344). His great virtues, as described by Jones, were his ability to talk, his generosity, and his kindness. Dominic, although considered a chieftain, was said to have been a poor talker and seems to have been unpopular.

The postwhite chieftain of Paskenta who looms largest in native memory was Captain Jim, *sayë*. "He handled the whole outfit. He went from one village to another to see how the people were getting along. The people took care of him. Captain Jim was of the *teistawa* olkapna." Since Captain Jim's death there have been a number of Nomlaki who were selected to act as chief, but none of them had any real influence or authority.

**The "peacemaker."**—A separate functionary in the political structure was the "peacemaker," an office that might be filled by the chieftain or by a separate person. He was "right next to the captain, a man who doesn't have to work or hunt but only

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\* Kroeber, 1932, p. 355.
has to entertain visitors; just naturally a good talker, he says things in such a way that it just seems the right thing to do."

This persuasive personality appeared at the scene of battle, either between combatants in a blood feud or at a war, and attempted to induce the disputants to come to an amicable agreement. More specific data as to his function appear below in the war stories.

Summary.—At this point it may be advisable to summarize the social structure as far as it has been examined. The area was divided into autochthonous villages or village groups. The population was divided into several clanlike extended families called olkapna. The village comprised a single extended family as well as the married-in women, the temporarily married-in men, the persons who for some reason adopted the village as their home—that is, there was a loose correspondence between village and olkapna. The villages or village groups were led by a chieftain. This leader's power was a result of his personality, his ability to talk, and his wealth; it was derived by hereditary right with the approval of the important men of the tribe; it was limited by the necessity of conforming to a considerable degree to the will of these men.

The Huta Group

The initiatory body.—In order to understand the political system of the Nomlaki it is necessary to examine the organization known as the Huta society and the social status of the initiates. However, very little is known either of the exact functions of the group or of the formal organization of this body as a secret society.

Jones and Andrew Freeman were the only informants who could be persuaded to give information about the Huta. Neither of them had ever been members of this group. Other informants considered it unimportant, their reasons being unclear. Thus Molly Freeman said: "Huh'ti is just a sweat. It doesn't make doctors or any such thing." Jordan analyzed it thus: "Huta was a contest to see who could stand the most heat. They dance around the fire in the sweat house. After they have stayed in there as long as they can, they run out and jump into the creek." These statements may be given little consideration in view of the data I was able to extract from the accounts given by both Jones and Freeman.

The initiation ceremony took place in the semisubterranean sweat house. The candidates underwent a series of food taboos during the day before the night's ceremony in order to avoid "smothering" from the heat of the fire. Manzanita was the preferred firewood because of the intense heat it provided. The naked initiates danced around the fire to the accompaniment of singers, the split-stick rattle, and a drummer who performed on the log drum. The songs were sung in what Jones called "Indian Latin," the meaning being unintelligible to those not already initiated. The dancing continued until the candidates became exhausted. When they fell they were dragged away from the fire and left prone on the floor of the sweat house. During this period of coma, dreaming might take place. Water might be thrown on the comatose dancers. Then, at three or four in the morning the revived initiates left the sweat house and plunged into the near-by creek. Neither food nor water was taken until the feast that followed, probably about daybreak. At that time acorn mush and other foods were consumed and nonalcoholic "wine" made from crushed manzanita berries was drunk. Then the initiates described whatever
dreams they had had. These dreams were interpreted and instruction was given by the older members of the society.

Freeman said definitely that this ceremony took place in the spring, but both he and Jones also referred to its being held upon the construction of a new sweat house. How long the actual ceremony lasted is uncertain. The dancing certainly took place at night within a twelve-hour period, but Freeman indicated that the instruction of the candidates might last for as much as four or five days.

Powers described what was undoubtedly this ceremony when he said:

They have nothing that can be considered a religious ceremony, unless it is one of their fanatical dances in the assembly chamber, wherein they act in an extraordinary manner, running around naked, leaping and whooping like demons in the execrable smudge and heat, and stench, until they are reeking with perspiration, when they clamber up the center pole and run and plunge neck and heels into the river. Sometimes they fall into a swoon, like the plantation negroes in a revival when they are affected with "the power," and lie unconscious for two or three days. I cannot believe this is any religious frenzy...*

Women were rigidly excluded from all the proceedings, and it is clear that there was no public announcement of what was to take place. The officials for the ceremony seem to have been a dance leader (dauheimé), a wood gatherer, and two attendants (workmen, totnit) who lifted the exhausted initiates away from the fire. Neither of the informants knew on what basis the candidates were selected except that they were young men of between sixteen and thirty. The number chosen was given variously as four or five, or fifteen to twenty. Jones says that the candidates were tested and tempted in order to determine whether they were properly secretive and could be relied upon to keep the secrets of the society.

Boys unable to stand the heat of the fire or the other tests were excluded. Those who passed the ordeal of prolonged dancing and the heat of the fire may be subdivided into two classes. Those who dreamed might become seers (tlahit). They were expected to sing upon recovering from the coma into which they had fallen. It may be mentioned, however, that both informants specifically said that the shaman's power was not acquired in this way. Nondreamers were apparently instructed in various crafts or techniques, becoming specialists (see pp. 331–332).

Members of this secret organization called each other brother and were expected to help each other. The closeness of the bonds within the organization is witnessed by the fact that members who divulged a part of the esoteric knowledge of the group would be sought out and killed, one reference indicating that hired assassins from among the Shasta were employed for this purpose.

Trading between individuals who had passed the Huta ordeal seems to have been a recognized and possibly an important aspect of the society. Jones indicated this in particular. This feature of the functional aspect of the group in addition to the emphasis on reciprocal help between members indicates quite clearly that the organization was something over and above the village and olkapna affiliation. Reference was also made to the fact that a deceased member was mourned in a ceremony held in the sweat house by fellow members of the society, after which the body was returned to the relatives for the regular Nomlaki mourning and burial ceremonies.

The above outline of the nature, the organization, and the function of this group is necessarily incomplete. Nevertheless, the Huta initiates, though not a named body, were a formal organization of males possessed of esoteric knowledge that led to the control of certain crafts or to other special positions within the society. Some of the principal points on which data are lacking have to do with the special prerequisites for membership, the relation between the organization and the tribal captain, and more particularly on the precise nature and extent of the control exercised by this group in various crafts and professions. It is quite certain that the Huta organization had a large measure of control over the wealth as well as over the political power of Nomlaki society. Some aspects of the nature of this control are discussed later in the sections on trade and specialization. The society appears to have included the artisans in certain leading professions and to have maintained trading relationships; common men did not ordinarily enter into large-scale trading activities.

**Relationship of the Huta to the Kuksu system.**—The Huta initiation of the Nomlaki was undoubtedly part of the religious-cult system of central California. This has been the subject of several specific studies. In Kroeber's early work he anticipated the presence of an element of the Kuksu system among the Wintun.

For the Central Wintun information is doubtful. The Colusa Patwin declares that the characteristic Kuksu forms, such as the Hesi ceremony and Moki impersonator, were not known beyond uppermost Stony Creek. Beyond, on Grindstone and the middle course of Stony Creek, and about Paskenta only "common" dances were made, the southerners declare.

On his map of "Ritual Cults of California," Kroeber credits the Wintun with possession of the complex, largely because of their wedgelike location between tribes known to possess it. He recognized that if the cult was practiced by the Wintuns, it lacked some of its outstanding dramatic features in their hands.

In his later review of the data, Kroeber notes the absence of Hesi, Moki, and Kuksu, and excludes the Central Wintun (now generally called Wintun) from the area possessing the system. Loeb, influenced by Kroeber, did not make investigations in Wintun territory.

There are indications that the Nomlaki version of the secret society was not related to specific Kuksu or Hesi societies of the Patwin, but rather to a more obscure part of the system, the Wai-saltu society. The following is excerpted from Kroeber's statement on this part of the Patwin religious system, with italics supplied:

> The wai-saltu or north spirits perform the ceremony called waiyapai, north dance. This is separate both from the group of dances associated with the hesi and from the kuksu ritual. It appears to have an initiation of its own, though what seems to be such was not so designated by informants; at any rate only those who belong can participate, or even be present at part of the ceremony. The wai-saltu therefore evidently formed a separate organization. This is in some respects the counterpart of the Pomo kuhma or hahluigak and Yuki hulk'ilal, the old native ghost society as distinct from the modern revivistic ghost dance. One Patwin informant stated that the wai-saltu acted like ghosts, and their get-up, cry, and actions appear to bear out the same idea. But the ghost concept is not so clear in the Patwin mind as it is in the mind of the Pomo and Yuki, who consistently speak of the performers as representing ghosts or "devils," that is, spirits of

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1 Kroeber, 1925, chap. xxvi; 1923, chap. xii; 1932, various sections; Loeb, 1932; Loeb, 1933.
2 Kroeber, 1925, p. 369.
3 Ibid., pl. 74.
4 Kroeber, 1932, pp. 358, 393.
deceased human beings. The Patwin do however look upon the ceremony as powerful and dangerous as compared with the hesi. The wai-saltu performers are supposed to go actually insane; the Pomo-Yuki ghosts are merely strange and terrifyingly queer. In both cases the performers are numerous, simply costumed, and undifferentiated.

Not all the Patwin practiced the wai-saltu. For the Cortina hill Patwin, a wai-saltu ceremony is reported. . . .

References to the north recur throughout the wai-saltu, just as the kuksu is associated with the south. . . .

Some Patwin informants restrict the wai-saltu ceremony to men, but one explicitly mentions women participants or members. Children are not taken in; the initiates are adult.

The ceremony lasts three elapsed or four counted days. The performers are completely blackened with charcoal, which disguises them, and wear little or nothing but a feather headdress and perhaps a tule shirt or olout. Their shout is rendered as a prolonged ha or o-o-o or ho-ho-ho-ho. On the last afternoon they sweat intensely, bleed at the mouth or nose, become demented, run out and off, and sometimes fall into swamps where they lie helpless and drown, to be ritualistically brought to life later, in the dance house. Each performer is followed by relatives, who watch and “herd” him and try finally to drive him back to the dance house for ritual doctoring to restore him to sanity. The performer may let himself in by dropping through the north roof-entrance. While not so stated, this performance is evidently the initiation into wai-saltu membership. . . .

The older members seem not to go crazy, but presumably direct the people who guard the wandering novices. The head master or director, the tautu, lies still in the dance house, reciting and perhaps partly enacting a formula which relates to the travels of the spirit wai-saltu and is probably the esoteric myth explanatory of the rite.11

The above suggests that the Wai-saltu had the following in common with the Huta initiation: the association with the north; the apparent limitations to adult males; the limitation of participants to actual members; the process of sweating; the induced comatose state with the implications of death and rebirth; and the general association with the wealth complex (among the Patwin in the form of purchase of this privilege). Finally, we may note the term waiyapai, translated as “north dance” to yapaitu, (spirit) among the Nomlaki. This spirit form is discussed in the next chapter.

Therefore, the Huta may be placed in the sacred-society system of which the Kuksu cult is a part. The implications are that it represented an earlier, simpler stratum of the system and that the elaborations practiced in the south were never adopted by the Nomlaki. At the same time the Huta represented a northern outpost of the ritual form. There is no evidence of this cult among the Wintu, whose culture has been described in detail, the Yana, Achomawi, or Atsugewi. The extension of the pattern to include the Central Wintun alters the distribution in such a way as to include nearly all the people holding river-bottom lands in north-central California, and limits it to areas of relative low altitude. Whether this association has any special significance is not readily apparent.

The Nomlaki data suggest a close association between the secret-society initiation and the central California wealth complex. This complex may be formulated: initiation—social status—wealth—money—trade; that is, the initiation ceremony marked off those with high social standing, persons who acquired wealth, handled money, and engaged in trade in wealth objects. It was suggested earlier that the wealth pattern was derived from the south, whence, incidentally, the raw money came. It seems likely that the Huta initiation spread northward from some southern

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11 Kroeber, 1932, pp. 315–317.
center in connection with this money economy and wealth status. It seems likely
that the pattern of accumulated wealth might have been limited to the richer and
more densely populated valley and foothills lands.

**Status and Privilege**

The Huta initiation marked off an elite from the body of ordinary people among the
Nomlaki. This distinction into two separate social classes based upon initiation into
the secret society pervaded all aspects of social life, and the Nomlaki appear to have
been highly conscious of status and prestige in all their interpersonal relationships.
Nomlaki status was associated with the possession of wealth, the control of certain
crafts and professions, the right to trade in and perhaps even to own certain types
of goods, and prestige and importance in the community.

The recognition of rank was given verbal expression. Several terms denoted
social position:

*toabatu*, rich man, chief. Further described as "a big wise fellow, a big man, like a chief. He
doesn't have to be a chief. He is a rich man, a good, honest, straight-up man. He is a man who
is wealthy and descended from chiefs. He is lucky about getting things. He doesn't work, because
everybody provides for him. He is a man who can control his people; he is a man of means. He is a
kind of clown too. He can do everything, for he is smart and can act like a fool [be a ceremonial
clown] and speak sense in company."

*hehit*, "a sort of clown who serves all kinds of purposes and can do all sorts of things. When they
first start a big time, he yells a long he e e, and tells the people what is going to happen. He is also
a clown who does all kinds of foolish things—he falls down and spills things and gets scolded.
He does things like this on purpose." It appears that this role served a ceremonial and a general
function, that the *hehit* was a person of importance with considerable force in the community by
means of his right and powers of ridicule.

*nēhkīt*, rich man. Also means "he finds it." "Nēhkīt is a rich man, not a chief or anything more.
He is just a man who is worth a lot of property." We may assume that *nēhkīt* is the more general,
and *toabatu* the more specific term.

*waitamawin*, ordinary man, commoner, from *waitama*, ordinary; *win*, man. "*Waitamawin* is
just a common man—not a good talker, doesn't do anything, doesn't pay attention to anything.
One would say of him, 'Aw, he is nothing.'" The word *waitama* is used to refer to anything
ordinary, such as a plain meal.

*elama*, lazy person. "They gossip about these people."

The implication of status to daily life and social relationships may be appreciated
through the following statements:

When they see a strange man, they would ask, "Is he a man?" meaning, "Does he belong to
something?" A person might answer, "No, he is just a *waitamawin*.

Specialists [i.e., Huta initiates] may hunt occasionally, but they do not do so ordinarily. They
always have a lot of work to do and are well paid, so that they don't have to go hunting. Such a
man's wife cooks, but she doesn't have to go into the hills to gather like other women unless she
wants to. She is not supposed to go out and work. She has on good clothes, things that are silk and
jewelry to the Indians. The wife of a tradesman doesn't have to go out, and may even have an
aunt or a grandmother to cook for her. She would wait on her husband.

Women wear beads and such things only at big times, or when they are showing themselves,
unless they have nothing to do except dress up and look pretty. A chief marries a well-to-do woman.

The more beads a man has, the more important he is. Those who have more beads than others
feel rich and are what are called "big Indians" and go around acting proud like rich white people.

People who don't have anything at all usually come to a supper late—such people as boys
living with girls who didn't have any relatives so that they couldn't get married in the regular
way, or orphans, or someone of that kind. Such a person would come within sight of where the people were having their time but would not come in until invited. He would wait where he can be seen until he is called. If anything is left, the people might give him something to cook. If he puts something into the chief's basket [i.e., the common larder kept for later distribution by the chief], the people appreciate that and talk favorably about it. But if he is selfish, the people won't pay any attention to him.

How closely these distinctions in status were marked by the initiation is not entirely clear. Apparently the privileges of owning eagles and of access to the chief's house were so limited. Jones believed that a person could achieve a measure of status by personality traits.

A common man, if well liked by a "made man" and if he carried himself well and behaved right and built himself up with the rules, even if he didn't belong to the Huta group, even though he was an outsider, might build up a group of his own separately. He would have to be a good person and agreeable. Then he might start a new rancheria and might come to be of some importance.

Yet Jones and other natives expressed themselves in a manner that tended to deny a belief in social mobility. A constant expression was that "it was given to a man" to be or do something. In matters of social position the underlying philosophy seems to have been that a person's abilities, wealth, and social position were inherent in him—not by biological processes but by virtue of his spirit. Their attitude might be likened to an unformulated mana concept, with a note of predetermination if not fatalism. This attitude is discussed in more detail in the chapter on religion.

The existence of a slave class is doubtful. The following suggests that war captives were either returned or killed:

[Jones:] Dominic's grandfather got servants by capturing them from another tribe. He used a couple of Yuki as slaves until they grew up. He was about the only one who had Yuki servants. He had to send them back because other people wanted to kill those two boys.

They take slaves in wars, but sometimes those who had lost the most relatives would kill the captured slaves. Sometimes they would send the slaves home at night. They don't hold slaves very long, nor do they keep very many.

**Specialization**

The initiation was viewed as an experience through which youths acquired the ability to engage in a profession or special craft, and a prevailing attitude regarded that ability as a special talent presumably resting on a spiritual base. All this suggests a rather elaborate system of occupational specializing and division of labor.

Specific statements that certain persons were especially qualified for certain tasks were made in connection with the following crafts or professions: shamanism, necromancy, message running, fishing, trapping squirrels, trapping rats, bow making, arrow making, flint chipping, breaking of flint blocks, stone-pipe making, stone-bead making, tattooing, cutting of ear and nose septum, haircutting, skirtmaking, climbing for pine nuts, preparing buckeyes, salt leaching (from a weed—used in the valley only), and fire making.

Most of the above occupations and processes are discussed elsewhere, and it is unnecessary to go into detail here. Occasionally specialization became almost ritualistic. One description said that three separate persons had specialized tasks for the act of breaking flint: one to heat the flint, a second to tend the fire in the heating process, and a third to do the actual breaking. It seems likely that this activity had
ritual meaning involving the supernatural, although this was not explicit. Bear hunting (p. 404) involved several persons with special powers or abilities. Similarly, in gathering pine nuts one person climbed the tree and dislodged the cones, a second one sits under the tree and chants, and others pick up and shell the nuts (p. 410).

The development of specialization and the concept of “calling” in this simple society was somewhat unusual. In many instances the specialization formed a source of particular power and prestige, and the specialists were evidently always persons of substance and importance in the community. Probably—although it is not certain—a man who had not gone through the Huta initiation could not act as any kind of specialist, with the possible exception of the shaman. In this connection it is noteworthy that specialized crafts did not exist among the women, except that some women were shamans. It was recognized that some women excelled in such arts as basketmaking, but never with the implication of a specialized functionary who had supernatural power and social privilege.

Although specialization of crafts is not usual among simpler societies, it was not unique to the Nomlaki. In fact their neighbors and close linguistic relatives, the Patwin, shared the concept of craft specialization, as has been ably set forth by McKern. Among the Patwin, craft specialization was associated with specific families, who held a monopolistic hereditary right over the particular activity. Although there is some evidence that the Nomlaki individual achieved his skill and his prerogative from an older relative, it was not defined as the family characteristic and not associated in any discernible way with the olkapna.

Control of a special craft or function in Nomlaki society occasionally freed an individual of the work involved in basic food production. [Jones:] Everybody feeds other people like the runners. Hunters give them food too. The tradespeople are fed by others. Such a person may go hunting if he has caught up with his other work, but he is taken care of while he is working. That is why they like to be big men and why women like to marry that kind of a man.

It is doubtful if specialization in activities ever completely freed anyone from the tasks of hunting, fishing, and food gathering. Shamans and chiefs might be freed from such labors, but it is more likely that everyone engaged in these basic activities. Control over a craft or profession was, however, a source of special wealth, so that the specialist found his activity served his own economic and social advantage.

This would be possible only in a society in which material wealth was an established social goal and in which there existed a mechanism for the free transfer of goods by either barter or sale. For this reason it is necessary to an understanding of the structure of the society to examine also the nature and role of wealth and the characteristics of barter and trade.

PROPERTY AND WEALTH

Resource property.—Ownership of land resided in the olkapna. Each olkapna usually owned a valley territory and another area in the mountains. Since the control over usage rested in the hands of the village chieftain, informants occasionally made reference to individual ownership.

19 McKern, 1922, pp. 235–238.
Personal ownership could apparently be claimed of certain favorable trees or fishing places. The term of ownership is not entirely clear, but it probably had reference only to the seasonal product. The following statements are offered as indicative of attitudes, although they do not give concrete institutional mechanisms.

If a person has a good fishing or hunting place, he can keep it to himself. Men keep good hunting grounds away from other people. If a man isn’t at his fishing place, someone else uses it. Everybody knew the trees that were his own property. There was no inheritance of trees.

Where there is a tree of small acorns, some family owns that tree. He will lean a stick against the tree on the side toward which he lives. Thus the people know what family owns it. He may set up too many and will give away the others to his relatives. This person kind of owns the tree—like you would a fruit tree. In those days the families owned them. They own trees in the mountains too. They maintain border lines, but if you are friendly with them they may give you a tree in time of need.

The private ownership of land resources was limited and unimportant to the economy and social structure of the Nomlaki. For all intents and purposes, productive resources were held by the village olkapna. But private possession of various forms of chattels was significant. These can be divided into three categories: capital goods or equipment, wealth and ceremonial objects, and magic formulas.

Important items in the first category included bows and arrows, pestles, baskets, and nets—especially the large and expensive deer nets. In the second category, the prime items of wealth were the hide of the black bear, beads of magnesite and shell, and feathers. Magic formulas of greatest importance were knowledge of “poisoning” magic and special “charm stones.” Ownership of wealth items was particularly the mark of status, and there is evidence that such property could be held only by persons who had undergone the Huta initiation. This might be called a system of sumptuary laws or—perhaps better—sumptuary customs.

Wealth. In native values the pelt of the black bear was the most valuable economic item. No man of distinction would ever be buried without being wrapped in a fine bearskin he himself had obtained during his lifetime. He might, of course, obtain several and use some for relatives, but the finest would always be for his own interment.

Other hides, especially the otter, the fisher, and some of the foxes, were valuable as quivers. They were a decorative part of the man’s costume and a mode of conspicuous display.

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33 [Jones:] The land does not belong to individuals. Dominic’s grandfather, by being such a big and good man, was favored. He was left a big valley. He owned one big oak tree of a special kind. It was a singular tree called *nuši*. There was a rancheria nearby, but old Dominic’s grandfather owned that tree and got all the acorns from it. He also owned a valley of about 2,000 acres of open land. It was two or three miles away from his home. This valley was staked off—each different division [olkapna] got a different part of the valley for themselves. They had poles to mark the different persons’ territories.

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33 Cf. Nisenan usage, where land is held by the village but rights to trees are privately established. Beals, 1933, p. 363.

34 In 1906 Washington mentions the supreme value of the black bearhide, which was desired for purposes of burial. “[It] must be black and must be perfect as regards eyebrows, whiskers, and claw. Forty years ago, a trader sold such a bearkin to an Indian of this region for commodities to the value of one hundred dollars. . . . Next to a skin of a black bear were esteemed skins of the brown, . . . the grizzly, and the panther, in the order named.” Washington, 1906, p. 144.
The possession of feathers was similarly a sign of wealth. Especially desired were the yellowhammer quills, woodpecker scalps, and eagle feathers. Eagle feathers served both utilitarian and ceremonial purposes and formed a mark of distinction. The following account of eagle ownership indicates the value of these birds as well as the simple manner in which the wealthy maintained ownership of this form of property.\footnote{Eagles elsewhere are considered important property. Cf., for example, Fewkes, 1900, p. 690.}

[Jones:] If you have an eagle nest, that is yours. There is a special ceremony for killing and plucking the eagle, and it is buried with a string of beads around its neck. People who handle eagles are well-to-do. One man may own a couple of nests with birds, or he might buy birds for their feathers. After burial they gather the feathers, and the dancing feather man takes care of them. The tail feathers are for arrows, the wings for dancing, the down for caps (which distinguish the important warriors from the rest). Almost all the feathers are used, but not the beak or claws. Wristlets for dancers were made out of some of the feathers. The eagle is an important bird among the Indians. A man who finds a nest figures on getting money. A common man may own a tree. Thereby every spring he can get birds and sell them to the fellow, but it is against the rules for a common man to keep the eagles. If a person is poor they try to keep him down—they buy the stuff before he gets a start. They get the benefit. The rich people never get enough of anything. Those who can, get yellowhammers and then sell them.

\textit{Money.}—Among the Nomlaki the form of economic wealth that can be defined as money was shell beads, which were used as currency throughout north-central California. These beads were strung, the string often measuring from finger tips to shoulder. It was considered bad form to count out beads in trading, because it was a sign that the person was penurious.

Several kinds of shell were known: the clamshe1l, a small bivalve used for earrings, abalone, and dentalia. Clamshells were traded from the Patwin and North-eastern Pomo, who, Wintun informants believed, lived near the sea. Their source was probably the several tribes of Coastal Pomo and the Coast Miwok. Only occasionally did the whole shell come into Wintun territory. More often the disk-shaped beads were already roughly tooled, but were improved by the native craftsmen.

[Jordan:] Beads come from down south. They must be closer to the coast down there. They get the shells and chip them into pieces and break the corners and grind them on rough stones. Occasionally we get the rough shells.

[Jones:] Our tribe didn’t grow beads. The beads came from the Noiomok [i.e., Indian groups to the south]. Sometimes they buy shells from these people; it is cheaper that way. The Noiomok get over to the sea and trade back and forth with the ocean Indians and sell the raw goods to the people to the north.

The earrings made of a small bivalve (\textit{daotêdê, lônôk}) were scarce and used solely for ornamentation, a matched pair being particularly desirable.

A few dentalia came into the area from the north, where, according to Du Bois,\footnote{Du Bois, 1935, p. 25.} they were highly prized but did not function as currency. They were not considered very valuable by the Wintun.

[Jones:] There were shells that the northern tribes [Trinity, Shasta] get, called k’obi. They are long and are used for necklaces. We had a few in here. We never valued that ready-made stuff.

The abalone (\textit{tcén}) was used in small rectangular and triangular pieces as a decoration on skirts and hides. Another type of bead was the baked magnesite, often referred to by informants as “Indian gold.”
[Jordan:] Abalone shell is broken up and a hole drilled through the pieces to make ornaments for around the neck. Łonôk are small, round, twisted shells that are strung into a belt. They are used whole. Mêmpak, [mêm, water; pâk, bone] are clamshells of which they make beads. I have seen them cut holes in small ones and wear them in the ears. I’ve seen two or three old fellows wear these shells. These earrings are called ma ‘tlâta. Some mêmpak beads are small; some are large. The thickness increases the value. The best are about a third of an inch thick. Some of mine are about an inch in diameter, but the smaller ones look prettier. The big men wear the big ones. Tulul [magnesite] is mined out of the ground. Whites have taken it over and we can’t mine it any more. It grows in Lake County. They dig it out of the ground and wrap it in leaves; then they bake it in the ashes. It gets colored and is worth more. Some of it is clear and looks like measles; and some is colored red or dappled like pinto, and this is the prettiest. It is prepared by wrapping it in leaves and placing it in hot ashes. This is usually done right where they get the magnesite.

TABLE 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation of Nomlaki Wealth Goods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Article</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grizzly bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belt of 20 earring shells</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair of earrings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulul (magnesite)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mêmpak (clam disks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle (alive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowhammer headress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The relative values of these several types of objects are best given in tabular form, even though the evaluations are only approximate. This table was compiled from the various informants’ statements and from Kroeber’s data.37

**Trade, Barter, and Exchange**

Nomlaki society recognized wealth as a primary orientation for the patterning of behavior. They had a form of currency, and they secured certain items of culture from outside their own territory. Trade was therefore an important aspect of Nomlaki social life.

Trade etiquette.—The Nomlaki made a distinction between trading and the exchange of gifts, but the etiquette of trading demanded that the trade articles be offered as gifts.

[Jones:] They don’t agree over the price. If a man refuses a cheap offer, he is not well thought of. One can’t say no to a trade. This system evens out after a while. Whenever a fellow counts his beads close, they don’t like to trade with him and might refuse to because it takes too long, even if his stuff is good. You have to sell anything that is wanted that you have brought with you. They make friends by trading in such a way. They can come across the border and trade. They come

a-talking—saying that they want to see so-and-so, calling the man's name. Only a couple of the "big guys" will come up and listen to the trade. They talk as well as they can. Ordinarily they come back to the same person to trade—they are sort of trading partners then. Hosts always give visitors a gift as a last present.

Formerly, if a man was trading he would put down a basket; the other has to take it. This man gives what he wants—he might give a string of beads. Now it is his time to throw down something and ask for baskets. They took turns in offering things to trade. If goods aren't suitable, they may make remarks but hardly ever back out of trades.

[Freeman:] If we come to the border line to trade, we go to the captain's house. All the captains [?] sit down on their heels. They all smoke a pipe and talk business and don't fight. While trading, Indians won't hand a foreigner both the bow and arrows at the same time.

Trading was not always amicable. "If some people felt cheated in a trade, the head chief might send some man to quiet things down. He always sends two men to settle matters of trading. He has special men who are good talkers, usually older men."

Types of trade.—There were three distinct types of trade: the internal or incidental trading; the east-west or river-products, hill-products trading; and the north-south or bead-pelt trading.

The first of these was of secondary but not minor importance. This type of trade was the purchasing of incidental supplies from neighbors—the barter that followed when one group ran out of seeds, tobacco, or various small objects that could change hands unceremoniously. Even fire was mentioned by one informant as an object to be purchased in an emergency. The chief (p. 324) apparently acted as a sort of clearing house in this form of exchange, maintaining a supply of goods from which purchases could be made. "If outsiders come in or run short, they buy goods from the chief. The chief sells some goods to outsiders. He keeps trading until he has more than others. These goods belong to the chief, not to the tribe. They buy tobacco from a headman, the same as going to a store. Sometimes they go quite a way to buy it." Ropes or small strings of beads were used as currency, but the trade often amounted to a temporary informal loan. This trade afforded a means of distribution of necessities when a group ran out of a supply that could not be replenished except by mutual sharing.

The trading between the foothill Wintun on one hand and the valley groups on the other was a transfer of the surplus produce of one environment for the different produce of another. The important articles of transfer in this east-west trading were pine nuts, acorns, mountain seeds, and animals from the foothill people in return for salmon and river animals from the valley. Trade was not by direct barter between these goods, but was carried on by use of shell money and exchange of other valuables.

Trading with the Yuki to the west, also in the second trade category, was less active because travel was more difficult between the two areas, and the two groups were for the most part enemies. However, the Yuki desire for salt was an incentive to trade.

In the third form of trading—between north and south—the Wintun formed a link in the long trade chain that extended from San Francisco Bay to the Shasta territory. Between the central California coast and the Shasta, trade was an eco-

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18 Goldschmidt, Foster, and Essene, 1939.
nomically effective activity, since there was a flow of clamshell disks northward in exchange for their superior stone, pelts, and yew wood. As these articles moved in the trade route, the value of each was enhanced in proportion to the increased scarcity of each. Interestingly enough, in this transfer of goods the Wintun added little, but profited chiefly by their role of middleman, which resulted from their location between the two producing areas. The Nomlaki had fewer pelts than the peoples to the north, no valuable flint or obsidian deposits, and of course no raw material for shell beads. Magnesite beads were the major exception, and salt perhaps a minor one. The Wintun increased the value of northward-moving clam disks by working the crude clamshells or imperfectly formed beads to greater fineness. They did no such improving of pelts, bows, and flint blades as these goods passed southward. The informants themselves recognized their northern neighbors as superior in tanning fur and the manufacture of bows. One informant said, “We didn’t furnish anything.”

This trade route was so firmly established and the profits so marked that it was exploited by a white man who attached himself to Homaldo at the time of the northward movement of the Ghost Dance. The informants told of his buying shells and beads in the south and bringing them to the north, where he traded them for pelts that he traded in turn in the south. His profit, no doubt, lay in the extra pelts he could place on the white market.

The following account of native professional middlemen is of exceptional interest, but this activity was undoubtedly an unusual one.

[Jones:] Once there were two fellows who roamed around from place to place to trade. The folks kind of got after them. “Why do you go around to trade; why don’t you let them come here?” they would ask. “If I stay home,” they answered, “I won’t learn anything. By going from place to place I learn more, I learn other people’s ways and how they act and treat each other. If I stay here, I don’t see anything and can’t learn anything. By traveling around I learn more of different things, of talking.” Probably this man was a good speaker, but he learnt how to act and carry himself and to treat things differently. “By going around I trade for things that I don’t want, but I take them to the next place and trade for something else. When I get something that I care for or that would be handy to me, I keep it. I’m stingy with that.” The people could not do anything with these traders. It was dangerous in those old days. There was no need of lying around like a bear or something, they thought. They were pōzmalé from Paskenta. That was long before the whites came into the country. They always got by; they got along. There were only three or four who could go any place and travel around. They were wise and would travel and were good speakers. They would go to the house of some good speaker first, have something to drink [soup], and say what they had come for. They would smoke and talk and joke. The next morning the hosts would give them some food to get to the next place on. They would go on for three or four days. The old people objected, but these men insisted that they could be treated no better by their own people. They learned quite a bit and picked up a lot. They got so that people would invite them from a great distance.

Trade and war settlement.—Trading was also a concomitant of warfare, taking place either after the battle or in lieu of fighting, when the “peacemaker” prevailed upon the parties to come to terms. This is reminiscent of the northwest-coast Potlatch and is closely allied to the general practice of paying weregild, the settlement of paying with goods instead of with a life.20

20 See Du Bois, 1939, p. 64.
21 Among the Hupa and their neighbors the development of peace trading and the peace dance was apparently converted into a major social ceremonial. Cf. Goldschmidt and Driver, The Hupa White Deerskin Dance, 1940, pp. 126–128.
[Jones:] After a war, there would follow trading. The river Indians would bring up salmon or river foods, while the hill people might bring lots of acorns or pine nuts. They would do a lot of trading after the peace was made. They might trade a bearhide for otterhides. After the trading is made they might mourn the dead. They would make visits over the border line in order to trade and buy.

When enemies meet they call to one another. If the settlement is friendly they approach closer and spread out their goods. One man would throw something in the middle, one man from the other side would throw in something for it and take the traded material back. They trade till one side has traded everything. The ones that have some left make fun of those who have run out, bragging about themselves. The first offenders have to buy out the offended before they pay for the body of the murdered man, whose death has first caused the dispute, but they have already agreed to pay. This trade takes place on the border line. The Paskentas out-traded the river people by gathering up lots of things and having more than the others. They got things together during the night. The offenders [Tehama, in this case] have to buy a bearskin in which to wrap the corpse. This is payment for killing a man.

*Gift exchange.*—A distinction was made between gift exchange and trade. There were various occasions on which it was appropriate to offer gifts, creating an obligation on the part of the recipient but not a demand on the part of the donor. The obligation was strong, and the rules of etiquette of gift giving were formalized.

[Jones:] If you are getting acquainted with strangers and a girl has a nice string of beads, you can ask her what she wants for them. She has to sell them to you at your offer if she wants to claim you for a friend.

They used to give to outsiders for the purpose of making friends. You can trade gifts. It is an insult to refuse a gift. If they later meet face to face, the fellow who offered the gift will ask the other [belligerently] what he meant by refusing the present. Then the other man might start begging to be let go, and would give a string of beads, maybe unwillingly.

[Freeman:] In order to remain friends, people give each other presents. The gifts go back and forth. When a person gives a friend something, it is because he thinks that person needs it. The other man will give him something in return without explaining what it is for. I don’t know how they got started doing that. They say there were stingy Indians among the people too. I heard them talk about my grandfather’s brother. They say he was stingy. If you were fishing with him and didn’t catch any, he wouldn’t share his catch with you. The same with deer or any kind of game. He was a good hunter but awful stingy.

[Jones:] When you are given a basket of food, you refill it with something else. If you return the basket empty, the donor will dust it out and turn it bottom side up [as an expression of disdain]. If you fail to return the gift it is an insult, and the person will not visit you until you do return it. Indians notice such things.

When a young man of importance comes to another man of importance, the latter may ask someone in a whisper who the stranger is. The man will answer, will tell who the stranger’s mother was too. The host will try to find if there is any relationship between them through the father or the mother. He might give the younger fellow a present. The younger man’s relation has to return this present in some way.

A ceremonial gift exchange among the River Wintun approaching the pattern of the northwest-coast Potlatch is described by Powers:

Between the nummok [Noimök] and the Norbos [a southern group of Wintu] tribes there existed a traditional and immemorial friendship, and they occupied a kind of informal relation or cartel. This cartel found its chief expression in an occasional great gift dance (đůr-yu-pu-đi). There is a pole planted in the ground, near which stands a master of ceremonies dancing and chanting continuously while the exercises are in progress. The visitors come to the brow of the
hill as usual, dance down and around the village, and then around the pole, and as the master of ceremonies announces each person's name he deposits his offering at the foot of the pole. Of course, a return dance is celebrated soon after at the other village, and always on these occasions there is great rivalry of generosity, each village striving to outdo the other, and each person his particular friend in the neighboring village. An Indian who refuses to join in the gift dance is despised as a base and contemptible niggard.\(^a\)

**Payment for services.**—Services of others appear to have been hired for pay. The services of a "talker" was occasionally hired by an inarticulate chieftain.

[Jones:] A speaker for a chief who can't make speeches will tell the chief at the end of a big time, "I guess I'll go now." The chief knows about what he owes, and lays a string of beads by the speaker, who will wear these to show the people. He may get two or three ropes [of beads].

The hiring of shamans and runners is discussed below. I had two reports of hired labor.

[Jones:] A man might chop wood to get food from a neighbor. He might work for a bow to hunt with or for a set of arrows. He would have to ask for what he wants when he is through. His wife might help him.

When a man sends another man after flint, he pays for his service. A person might order flints of greater weight made for him. He might send six or eight miles to get someone to do this. The maker would send the first one he made as a sample to the man who wanted the arrows; perhaps he would haft the point.

**Borrowing.**—My informants made only one mention of borrowing.

[Jones:] If you borrow something, you borrow it for a specific time; and if it is not returned on that day, they will come after it the next and they won't come alone. They don't lend to strangers.

**Origin of the wealth complex.**—As discussed above, the wealth pattern was apparently derived separately from and later than the olkapna-village institution in the organization of Nomlaki society. Specifically, these particularly important aspects of the wealth complex were associated archaeologically with a Late phase. The connection between wealth and the Huta initiation suggests an association with the Kuksu system, which Kroeber has found to be a relatively late cultural manifestation in the region immediately to the south of the Nomlaki.

The Nomlaki were located geographically between the Patwin and the wealth-oriented societies of northwestern California. There were only one or two tribes intervening between them and the Hupa. It might be inferred, therefore, that the wealth pattern came southward from the coast of British Columbia, via the tribes of northwestern California, up the Trinity, and thus to the tribes of the Sacramento drainage. The central California development may have derived ultimately from the Northwest Coast, but it did not come to the Sacramento Valley via the Trinity Alps. If it was ultimately of northwestern provenance, it must have moved southward to the San Francisco Bay region and then back north.

There are two reasons why the Nomlaki must have obtained the wealth complex from the south rather than from the Hupa. First, the intervening Wintu to the north did not share the pattern in any important degree. Second, the details of cultural affinity point southward rather than to northwestern California. These details are itemized in table 5.

\(^a\) Powers, 1877, p. 238.
TABLE 5
NOMLAKI WEALTH COMPLEX IN ITS RELATIONSHIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture Practice</th>
<th>Nomlaki</th>
<th>Patwin*</th>
<th>Hupa-Yurok†</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Money</td>
<td>Clamshell-disk beads</td>
<td>Clamshell-disk beads</td>
<td>Dentalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important items of wealth</td>
<td>Black bear pelt,</td>
<td>Black bear pelt,</td>
<td>White deerskins,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>magnesite beads</td>
<td>magnesite beads</td>
<td>“flints”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most valued feathers</td>
<td>Eagle, Yellow-</td>
<td>Yellowhammer,</td>
<td>Woodpecker scalps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hammer</td>
<td>woodpecker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control of wealth</td>
<td>Limited to Huta</td>
<td>Family monopolies</td>
<td>Theoretically open to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>initiates</td>
<td></td>
<td>all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inheritance</td>
<td>Unimportant; prop-</td>
<td>Unimportant; larger</td>
<td>Chief means of acqui-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>erty of deceased</td>
<td>part burned with</td>
<td>sition of wealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>destroyed</td>
<td>dead</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition of wealth</td>
<td>Apparently a means</td>
<td>Acquired by monopo-</td>
<td>Not a recognized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>through profession</td>
<td>of wealth acquisition</td>
<td>ly of skills and profes-</td>
<td>means of wealth acquisi-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or skill</td>
<td>tion</td>
<td>sions</td>
<td>tion (except by shamans)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land and resources</td>
<td>Only trees, eagles,</td>
<td>None recorded as</td>
<td>All resource property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>privately held</td>
<td>and occasional</td>
<td>privately held; but</td>
<td>held in private; no</td>
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<td></td>
<td>items</td>
<td>under authority of</td>
<td>control through</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>chief</td>
<td>chiefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destruction of property</td>
<td>Most wealth</td>
<td>Much property</td>
<td>Little property</td>
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<td></td>
<td>destroyed at funeral</td>
<td>destroyed at funeral</td>
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<td></td>
<td>of owner</td>
<td>of owner</td>
<td>of owner</td>
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<tr>
<td>generosity</td>
<td>Generosity prime</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Generosity unimpor-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>virtue</td>
<td></td>
<td>tant; close bargain-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealth as source of status</td>
<td>Important to status,</td>
<td>Relation to status</td>
<td>Wealth only source of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>but within ascribed</td>
<td>not clear, inherited</td>
<td>social status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>group</td>
<td>chiefship most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Kroeber, 1932; McKern, 1922.  
† Kroeber, 1925; Goddard, 1902; Goldschmidt and Driver, 1940.

Table 5 shows that the Nomlaki shared with the Patwin the use of clamshell-disk beads as money and did not value the highly prized dentalia of the northwestern Californians. Nomlaki and Patwin wealth objects were closely similar but clearly distinct from the Hupa and Yurok. The Nomlaki social pattern relating to wealth was again in greater conformity with the peoples to the south than with those to the north. The central California tribes destroyed wealth at death (so inheritance was secondary); they tended to limit the acquisition of wealth by sumptuary regula-
tions that were foreign to northwestern California legal theory; they did not recognize private rights to productive resources as did the Hupa and Yurok; and wealth appeared rather as an adjunct to status instead of the means by which status was acquired.

WARFARE

The Nomlaki recognized two levels of blood conflicts: feuds and warfare. In both cases disputes were between groups. In feuds the dispute was limited in extent and generally more personal in implication; in warfare a wider number of persons were involved and the grievance appears to have been against a group rather than an individual. Thus disputes over poaching would more likely lead to war, whereas disputes over women or murder would result only in a feud. Finally, warfare always involved separate tribal units, but feuds were fought between groups within a single tribe.

War stories have been the chief source for ethnographic data on warfare. These stories, which purport to be accounts of actual conflict, follow a pattern of such uniformity that their accuracy as history is invalidated. But for the same reason they can be taken as an expression of native attitudes and cultural expectancies.

In 1939 there was published a group of nine stories of the wars between the Nomlaki and the Yuki, neighbors and traditional enemies across the Coast Range. Three of these stories were obtained from the Nomlaki by me, one was obtained by Essene, and five were obtained from the Yuki by Foster and Essene. The general pattern of the stories is as follows (figure indicates the number of stories using that theme): A small party is attacked (8) while camping (3), gathering (2), poaching (2), or trading (2). A woman or girl returns with the news (5), a war party is formed (7), and after a period of preparation (5) either a surprise attack is made (4) or a prearranged battle fought (2). The enemy is nearly wiped out (7) with little or no loss of life (2), scalps are taken (3) and a victory dance celebrated (4). Four of these accounts purport to refer to the last Yuki-Nomlaki conflict. These accounts always claim victory for the side of the teller and always place fault with the enemy. There is no individuation of heroes, although careful reference may be made to places. None of these stories is reprinted here, but some others given below show similar patterning.

The cause of war was usually transgression of property rights or occasionally a murder growing out of a dispute over a woman. “Fighting is usually over hunting grounds. Sometimes they fight over women.” There was no clearly demarked warrior class. It was not necessary to be a Huta initiate to join the fight, but not all men engaged in warfare. Those who did fight underwent special practical and magic training, and it was said that warriors “uphold one another in a pinch” and call one another brother.

A warrior is trained by being shot at with blunt arrows. He has to learn to dodge them. They practice that way. This dodging is called t’eya. Those who can’t dodge are advised to stay out of the thickest of battle. Such a man might go to war, but he would stay in the rear because they put the best in front. Good dodgers do this almost without moving. Some shots come quick and are hard to dodge, so it is necessary to turn one’s side to the enemy. The wobbling shots are harder to dodge than the straight ones.

=Goldschmidt, Foster, and Essene, 1939.
They have good runners and fighters picked out for war. Those who can't run or shoot well can't get into war. They pick the men like they do a ball team. It takes a good runner to run with the elkhide armor. Warriors don't get anything for fighting. They have to practice to be good fighters. They hunt and have foot races, wrestle, carry wood, and practice lifting as training for warfare.

[Jones:] Newsboys can carry news from Paskenta to Tehama and back between evening and dawn. It is about thirty miles each way. They trot. They have free passage into enemy territory. It is necessary that they eat special kinds of food which is more preserving to the Indian body. The runners have to be careful of their diet. They are from twenty-five to forty years old, for they can't do this work when they are too young. They have to keep their wind. Special ones are picked for this—not just anyone. They try out on the plains—people say that that is the hardest place for runners.

The runner is in a dangerous position. He does no other work, for he must always be ready to go. When he isn't running, he practices. He doesn't hunt or fish, but is well taken care of. He gets paid for his trips wherever he goes and he accumulated quite a lot. Several people may pay him for one trip, and he might get as much as seventy-five dollars. There aren't runners at each village; they are pretty scarce. They are important for wars.

Old blind Martin had been a newsboy. He made trips from Paskenta to Tehama. He said he never shot at a man in his life. He carried news over and back and had to remember every word he heard. After the runner comes back, after he catches his breath, he tells everything that was said. Two fellows repeat what he said, so that everything is heard three times. Everyone listens, and when they are all through they discuss the matter.

In war times there are arrow carriers, who also carry the spears. Normally everyone carries his own, but in tight places they give the extra arrows to these carriers.

There is always a lookout on watch when a group of women are gathering seeds. If anyone comes to molest the women, the lookout will yell a war whoop in warning, and the people know what that means. They know by the way the watcher yells that fighting or killing is going on.

Warfare was not without its magic practices and practitioners. Each fighter utilized special springs for bathing. These were called *yuhkin sawal* (*yuhkin*, “go to fight,” cf. Yuki, “enemy”).

There were two important practitioners: the seer and the poisoner. It was the business of the seer to determine the proper course of action and predict the outcome. The poisoners “will sneak through to the enemy on their bellies and do their work, and sneak out again, as quietly as possible. They kill people in this way.” Details of poisoning will be found in the section on shamanism.

The actual conduct of war appears to have been of two kinds: surprise attacks or short pitched battles. Most war activity among the Nomlaki appears to have been devoted to preparation, travel, and the aftermath. There were generally one leader, a number of warriers of various skills, and the special functionaries already indicated. Certain of the warriors were protected by elkhide armor, not unlike a portable turret, from which they could shoot arrows with some degree of protection.

They fight at close range. They let their fastest runner use the elkhide. He runs up close and then crouches down. The men come and stand behind this shield. The enemy can't hit the Huta members because they dodge the arrows and are good fighters. If a warrior wastes his ten arrows without any results, he doesn't fight any more. They never shoot back the enemies’ arrows, but they might save them. A man who is being held at bay may shoot back an enemy arrow, however. They quit fighting just at sunset. The peacemaker will yell, “Quit, the sun is down.”

It is against the rules to throw rocks at an enemy who is being held at bay hiding under a bush. They won't shoot arrows at such a person unless they actually see him. It is too wasteful of arrows.

They aren't allowed to club one another—they can spear, knife, or shoot. They carry the *šen* with them, but aren't supposed to use it.
They never talk about wars except among themselves, and then only in a whisper. They don't brag about what they have done except at the place where they killed the man. If they want to disgrace a person whom they have killed, every person will throw a stone over his body until he is covered. That means hatred. They will leave the body there, and never tell where it was left, though they will send word to the people to get it.

They rob whomever they kill. Take away the bows, arrows, elkskin armor. They take a scalp if it is a bad war or if they hate the enemy and want to get even. After a war dance they cover the scalp with rocks. Each person brings a rock about nine inches in diameter. That makes the other side mad. They might use, sell, or trade whatever they took off the enemy.

Killing a common man isn't important, but they like to get a man with a lot of tattooing because he will be a “big man.” They don't take every scalp—just those of certain people, such as the headman or a person close to him. The brother of a chief would be satisfactory. They like to kill some “big man” and take his scalp.

If they get a warrior who has been a lot of trouble, they give a war dance. I haven't even seen one. I don't know what they do with the scalp when they are through with it. They take a big scalp from across the forehead and temple and all the way around. The Tehama Indians [River Wintun] scalped Andrew Freeman's grandfather. He fell as if he were dead and they scalped him, but he lived through it and became an old man. He always wore a handkerchief around his head.

They put the scalp on a long pole so that everyone can see it. There is a bunch of straw on the end of this pole. The dance leader carries it around. When the dance is nearly over, everyone shoots an arrow into the straw.

People come from miles around to a war dance. They pass the scalp from one rancheria to another. The people follow the scalp as far as it goes. They say that a rancheria will pay to use a scalp. They pass it on to all the people who knew the man.

Powers describes the River Wintun war dance as follows:

The Nulmok [River Wintun] . . . have a magnificent costume for this [war] dance, which consists of a long robe or mantle made of the feathers of different birds, arranged in rings or bands, and the head surmounted by a plume of the longest eagle feathers, the whole presenting a brilliant and gaudy appearance. In the scalp dance (hupchúna) a scalp was hoisted on top of a pole, on the head of an effigy made in the human figure . . . After all the villages had assembled they danced around it together, yelling and discharging arrows at the effigy. That village was accounted victorious that lodged the most arrows in it.

The following stories add substance to the general discussion on warfare. In addition to the stories below, there are the several accounts of warfare with the Yuki already mentioned. 24

[Jones:] In antelope times they used to go down hunting and get across the border and get killed or get into a fight. If they kill somebody and the murderers don't stop and pay for the body, that means a fight. They don't say what the person did; they will just say, “You turned one down at such a place, we turned one down here. That makes us even. We'll meet you where you want.” Then the river Indians go home and send the news by a messenger, who is not molested. Thus they arrange a meeting. They come about fifty yards apart and talk over the matter. The men will want to fight. There is always a peacemaker, like Dominic's grandfather, who doesn't believe in war or bloodshed. The peacemaker is always a chief. He might be from a neighboring place. The peacemakers will work to try to stop the men from fighting, saying, “It's always best not to lose any blood, not to fight, but to try to be friendly. Let's try to get along and live the right kind of life.” The people might take him at his word. There might be one at each side, each keeping his side from too much trouble. If they make peace the men come together, but they remain wary because they take prisoners at peace or any time. The offender may pay for the burial. The river Indians would bring up salmon or river foods, the hill people might bring lots of acorns or pine nuts. They would do a lot of trading after the peace was made. Perhaps also bearhides would be traded for otterhides, the bearhides being used for caskets.

24 Powers, 1877, p. 237.
25 Goldschmidt, Foster, and Essene, 1939.
After the trading is finished they might mourn the dead. Then perhaps some families might visit. They have to watch out, keep inside the houses, and get away at night. It is difficult to get anything across a border line.

These Indians ran the Tehamas away. It was the last war they had among the Indian tribes before the whites came into the country. The Tehamas had gotten the best of our Indians who were fishing across the border line, but they ran too far west. So our side went down and caught the Tehamas on the plains and killed a lot of them. They cut the Tehamas down just to get a few good warriors.

They gathered Newville and northern Nomlaki together, and they sent spies to the east, who visited the Tehama. The spies were fed; they were loaded with fish before they went home. The spies found all the snares that the Tehama had set out and all the strings across the paths. They had a lot of trick stuff that they put out late at night. The spies cut the snares down, and met their own party halfway. The spies cut the trails wider too. The warriors reached Tehama at the break of day. The people there swam across the river, and our men shot at them. A whole lot got across by swimming, but they left the women. The Nomlaki people called out the women and told them why they had done this. There were a few big fellows left. The runner came out and told who he was. Our people started to kill him but decided not to. Some of our people who were related helped the women mourn and then came back home. They didn't kill the children. After that there were no big warriors among the river Indians. They had to kill all to get the ones they wanted. Those who had not swum across the river were those who were related to the hill people or those who were known to be peaceable. Some of our people wanted to kill these fellows, but others stopped them. They remembered this war after the whites came in and would get the Paskenta people drunk and kill them. They are related in a way, but the warriors get angry.25

One time a niece of Dominic's grandfather was killed, while gathering seeds, by some of the Shasta [Wintu] Indians from Cottonwood. There was a group of men out hunting. Most of the women got away from these men, but this girl was caught. As she fought all the way while they were returning, they had to kill her. Our men were near by but not close enough. They finally caught up with these Shasta and started fighting. The Shasta were good shooters too, and both sides were afraid. Our people ran out of arrows, and they had to send a messenger boy after some.

Our Indians' rule was to quit fighting as soon as the sun went behind the mountains. The sun was almost down when Dominic's grandfather came up. He took one shot and killed their leader, who was called Suywayha, just before sunset. He had called to this old teckón, "We are over our line and just about home," to which the old chief retorted that he had killed deer and bear with a single shot. He showed what he meant by pulling his bow and killing Suywayha then and there.

### Blood Revenge and Criminal Law

The differentiation between war and vengeance was one of degree. Among the Nomlaki it was cause for vendetta when a member of a near-by group committed a crime; war was brought on when a person from a distance did the harm. Further, revenge was called for when the act was personal; war was necessary when the offense had more general implications. Vengeance was most frequently retaliation against invasion of sexual rights or gambling indiscretions; war was frequently caused by poaching and disregard of property rights. The distinction was not sharp, however.

Responsibility for action against legal offenses rested with the person harmed or his immediate family. No data exist to show clearly the range of obligations in legal matters or whether all olkapna members were called upon to support their olkapna brothers in legal cases. In narratives about legal disputes, the offended person usually handled his own private vengeance, acting alone or with a brother (pre-

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25 Jones frequently expressed himself in hypothetical terms, as in this story, rather than give a specific account. Since specific accounts always partake of the general and since Jones's data always are based upon specific incidents, the difference is chiefly in mode of expression.
sumably a blood brother). This vengeance was usually the murder of the offending party. Then the plaintiff became the assailant, and the family of the original offender demanded justice. However, there was no vested authority empowered to mete out justice; it had to be wrested by strength through vendetta.

The technique of settlement was similar to that of war settlement. One party (presumably the last aggrieved) demanded of the other that they meet in open battle. The two sides, mustering their full strength in manpower, came together in fighting regalia, bringing with them trade goods such as pelts and shell money. A “peacemaker” who was adept at public persuasion stood between the two hostile parties and harangued them to come to an amicable settlement. There may have been one such functionary from each side. If these speakers, who did not have any vested power, could not prevail in their peaceful sentiments, fighting ensued. If the peacemakers were successful in gaining a hearing, the opponents proceeded to a specific property settlement. By that time, fault had usually accumulated on both sides, and so payment would be forthcoming from both parties. The mere transfer of the net amount due would have been unthinkable; each offense had to be settled separately. The payment for the murder appears to have involved the costs of proper burial—black bearhide and all. This was no fixed sum, however, since it was Nomlaki practice to bury and destroy as much property as possible in the grave of the deceased. After the settlement for damages had been concluded, the two parties engaged in trade. Informants are agreed that these settlements did not succeed in allaying all ill feeling in the dispute, but grudges continued to be borne and each party awaited the opportunity for retaliation.\[Jordan:\]

The nature of feuds is more graphically described in the following accounts. The first two are divergent tellings of the same case.

[Jordan:] I heard of a man killing another man for sleeping with his wife. It was this way. One man took a woman away from another who had failed to pay him his gambling debt. The woman's husband went to his older brother in Newville and told what had happened. The older brother said that they would have to go after the man.

The girl's mother told her daughter's captor that they had better go out in the hills, but the man said that he wasn't afraid. He had been hunting for antelope all day and was tired. The old lady wanted them to go into the hills.

The two brothers went in the night to the woman's house. They came late in the night. The old lady was sleeping outdoors by the windbreak, in front of the house. The two brothers talked to the old lady. She tried to offer them something to eat. The younger brother had a spear in his hand. He sized up the house to see if he could handle his spear inside. He laid it over the fire in order to burn the handle down short. About midnight he walked in, put a little grass on the fire to make it blaze up so he could see. He found the man fast asleep. He giggled this man right above the diaphragm. The man grabbed for his bone knife and tried to fight back, succeeded in getting a few slashes on the other man's arm. The two brothers held the man pinned down until he died. The wife went into a corner and cried, but her husband yelled to her, “Shut up or I'll kill you.”

The brothers went to their father who lived close by and told him, “We kind of crippled our brother-in-law [1].”

The old man knew from this that they had committed murder. He thought it would be all right if he got a bear skin and gave it to them to bury the dead man in.

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\[In northwestern California, settlements were carried out in a similar manner, but there was a strong sentiment against reopening a dispute once settled. This sentiment received sanction, not only in strong community feeling, but also in the recognized principle of law that the person guilty of reawakening hostilities was liable to a fine double that originally agreed upon. Apparently no such sanction existed among the Nomlaki.\]
The murdered man's relatives found out about the murder in a little while. They shot the brothers' father when he was bringing the bearskin, and then went after the two boys. They ran these two boys from morning until evening, until they began to get tired.

The older brother told the younger to get away; so he left and ran, while the older one hid in a willow thicket on the creek bank. He didn't have many arrows. He could hear the enemies talking. "Go in after him," one of them said. He shouted to them to come on.

The man who wore the elk skin came up. He shot and just scraped the hiding brother's shoulder. The brother shot this man in the neck and jumped out and got his arrows. After that the others begged to be let alone, and he agreed. The younger brother had believed that the older one had been killed, and was very pleased when they met. They moved down to Elder Creek, and the former husband never bothered to get his woman.

Once after that there was a group of men who were playing games. The younger brother almost threw another man into the fire. The next morning this man came out with his bow and arrow pretending he was going to shoot a hawk. As he took his bead he turned on the younger brother and killed him. Then he ran away. He belonged to another tribe which had been friendly. They say he had been hired. When he got out on a hill he yelled, "That wasn't my fight," and named the man whose it was. That must have been before the whites came in.

[Jones:] I heard the story this way. They were gambling, and when the young man lost every-thing he wouldn't give over his money, and the winner took the other's wife. The loser said, "If she wants to go, take her. I can't give you this money." The girl got ready and went with the man. The young man told his brother about this, and the brother said that they would have to do something about it.

They went after the winner, and this man fought against the brothers and wounded the younger. Soon the brothers were fighting a whole lot of this man's relatives, and they had to give up. They were ashamed about this. The man who lost his wife said that he couldn't stand it. His mother-in-law thought a lot of him and carried food to him. Finally he got well and decided he would take care of the matter himself. The old lady told him where the couple were in the house. He went in. His spear was too long, so he came back out and burned it off and then went in the house and pinned this fellow down to the ground. His woman ran outside. He took her back home.

At daylight they found the man lying dead. They figured out who had done the killing. They sent word that he would have to pay for the killing, and he said that he should be paid for being crippled. They argued back and forth for a while until the man who lost his wife thought that he could lick the others; so he agreed to fight.

They came to the appointed place with their property on both sides, and all the people came to see what kind of a fight there would be. They talked and talked. The one said, "You can't collect a gambling debt." He said that he hadn't completely lost the game, that he had been angry. Finally he suggested, "You pay me for getting hurt, and I'll pay you for killing this man."

They paid off this way. Then they made their trades, and they buried the dead man. The killer furnished the bearskin and the nets and ropes with which to tie the corpse.

The following story presents another form of marital difficulty and the attendant settlement.

[Jones:] I heard a story about a man who married a girl he didn't want because both parents kept urging him to do so even though he loved another girl better. He lived with his wife for about a year and they had a child. He stayed away from her quite a bit and only slept with her occasionally. One day he decided to go to the other girl he liked best. He just started living with this girl.

His wife cried and cried for several days. Her brother said, "Why do you cry? He's not dead." But she kept crying. The brother got up one morning, straightened an arrow, and went to the brother-in-law's house, saying, "I'll give you something to cry about." He killed his brother-in-law while at breakfast and returned and told them what he had done. The family of the murdered man came over and demanded payment from the wife's brother, but he didn't pay. They sent word for him to meet them at a specific place and time, saying that otherwise they would kill a member of his family. So the brother-in-law came. Both parties went there with all their wealth and met at this place. A peacemaker was there and gave a big talk. He asked what was going to be done
about the matter. The murderer agreed to pay the funeral expenses rather than shed more blood. The peacemakers do all the talking. They have a settlement, but the grudge always remains between the two parties. It won’t really be settled.

**SUMMARY OF NOMLAKI SOCIAL ORGANIZATION**

The inevitable complexity of a description of the social organization makes it advisable to draw together the major features into a compact summary. The organization of social life revolved on two axes: the geographical-familistic grouping into village-olkapna units on one hand, and initiatory wealth-owning cult with its status implications on the other.

Daily life centered in a village with a population of from twenty-five to two hundred persons under the leadership of a chieftain who owed his powers more to force of personality than to any culturally established sanctions. His office was hereditary in the male line, although succession was subject to review by the men of the village. The village itself was a kinship group comprised of persons related in the male line together with their married-in wives (and a few outsiders, owing to temporary matrilocality). This kinship group was named and exogamous, and its members recognized kinship to any strangers who belonged to a like-named group. It was, therefore, a clan in all its major features. Within the village olkapna there was a series of separate families comprised of man, wife or wives, and minor children. These families were the food-producing and food-consuming units, but they shared food resources with their fellow village members (and olkapna kin).

Cutting across these spatial kinship groupings was another division, which distinguished persons according to social status. An initiatory rite introduced a limited number of adult men into a secret society. The members of this group were persons of status, having a disproportionate measure of authority in public matters and having certain sumptuary rights, especially those of engaging in trade in wealth objects that were the specific goals of this class. This group also controlled most of the skilled crafts and professions, which gave them a special source of profit and social position. Members apparently commanded the respect of their fellow initiates and obtained special privileges by their brotherhood in the organization.

The wealth objects recognized by the society included furs and shell beads, and the greatest desideratum was the pelt of the black bear, which served as a burial shroud. These goods served as goals to attainment, and their acquisition marked off distinctions in status. They were acquired in part by trade with neighboring tribes, the profit accruing to Nomlaki traders by virtue of enhanced value as the goods moved further from their place of origin.

There was a general absence of officialdom and legal authority with any vested powers. Disputes were adjusted by means of warfare and feuds. In the absence of legal authority, property played an important part in arriving at settlements. Wealth property was transferred to the offended party in payment for crimes, not as a result of established system of fines for specific criminal acts, but by negotiation between the two disputant parties. Wealth therefore played an important part, not only in the establishment of status, but in the maintenance of law and order.
CHAPTER III

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religious aspects of Nomlaki culture may be examined under three fundamental headings: concept of the world, modes of influence over the supernatural world, and socioreligious institutions and activities.

Concept of the world included the understanding of the forces of nature, the origin of the earth and its inhabitants, the idea of causative forces, the supernatural sanctions for behavior, and the general world view. Modes of supernatural influence were techniques and devices that mortal man may use to influence the course of supernaturally controlled events. Socioreligious institutions and activities were gatherings the chief purpose of which was to satisfy some magico-religious need. Needless to say, the three were interwoven.

Unfortunately none of these aspects of Nomlaki religious life is adequately comprehended by living members. Whereas other categories of culture may be lost in activity and often in memory, religious belief and attitudes are not so much lost as transmuted. The process of manufacture of an arrow, for instance, is a cultural fact that is either remembered or forgotten. The notion of an unseen spirit takes on the imagery of angels drawn on the covers of hymn books; the dance patterns have been altered by the revivalistic movement, which has borrowed from many Indian cultures as well as from the Christian religion. In addition to these natural handicaps, my best informant had little personal interest in the supernatural, and my most religious informant was in his middle years and had been much influenced by his personal experience with ideologies and concepts foreign to his “native” culture. In the following discussion I have tried to point out the more important native concepts and practices and to give all available data on subsequent and current religious life. It was often impossible to determine what was native and what was a later addition.

To the Nomlaki, the world of “reality” and the world of the supernatural were inseparable, so that even the most practical undertaking was circumscribed by elaborate ritual inspired by the religious ideas with which the act was invested. Hunting, trading, warfare, and the Huta were only a few of the Nomlaki activities that carried ritual restrictions. Every important phase of the individual life cycle required the proper ceremony to insure spiritual purity and strength of the principles involved.

Concept of the World

Basic notions of causality.—No modern Nomlaki can give a coherent native explanation of the origin of the world or of its general character. Indications suggest that this does not differ significantly among the neighboring Indians. Two of the basic features of this world view appear in incidental statements made by informants.

The Nomlaki world was animistic. “Everything in this world talks, just as we are now—the trees, rocks, everything. But we can’t understand them, just as the white people do not understand Indians.” In such a world all inanimate things had to be treated with circumspection, although the inherent power of some things was far greater than that of others. This circumspection was evident in the special treat-
ment accorded some animals, in the restrictions on manufacture of articles and on
the maker himself, in the differential evaluation of various types of flint, and
elsewhere.

People had special, inherent powers. Thus the economic and social activities of
people were believed to be determined by their supernatural talents. This concept
of the natural gift had superficial similarities to the modern popular notion that
a person's capabilities are inborn. According to the Nomlaki concept, the talent
appears to have been supernaturally rather than genetically acquired. Super-
natural acts therefore were significant to the course of the individual life. The
Huta sweating ordeal, with its subsequent dream, and the effort of an elderly
artisan to give his creative powers to the novice are examples of this concept in
action. It is as impossible to determine how deeply this concept patterned the be-
havior of the individual as it is to evaluate accurately the similar attitude in our
own culture. The phrase "it is given him" was used for most manifest talents, and
appears to have offered a rationale for the differences in human abilities and
achievements.

Creation.—Only a single statement of the world's creation and the origins of
man was received. This narrative, highly colored by the influence of Christianity
and knowledge of the modern world in its detail and imagery, must be viewed as
essentially native in basic concept.

[Freeman:] The old-time Indian preaches that once there was an Indian girl. The Indians preach
it and they cry about it. Where did that girl come from? Who put her here?

That girl had a boy, Christ. Just as soon as she had Christ she went into the air behind the sun.
Her baby lay there on the earth. Coyote, who was the first animal on earth, came trotting around
the baby. The fire the woman had was left there. The baby waved his hand around and there was
food and he fed his coyote.

Finally he said (he grew pretty quick), "You [my mother] discarded me, but I'm going to find
you." Next day at sunrise (the same time she had gone) he went up through the smoke hole and
went the same way she had gone. He got behind the sun and found his mother there. She turned
her back on him. He called, "Mother!" She said, "How is it that you call me Mother?" He said,
"You know you're my mother. You may be smart but you can't fool me." So she laughed. He
stayed up there with her.

The Coyote tracked and tracked after his lost boy. He cried all the time, looking for that boy,
just like a dog would. "I don't know where that boy went," he said. Finally Coyote smelled up
and he went straight to the east. The boy is called Saltu. The boy knew that the dog was after him
and he prayed to him. Finally the Coyote found him.

Saltu said, "I must travel. This is a big country. I must put something to eat for the Indians,
so that when I put Indians here they will have food. They will only have to go out and get it. There
will be deer, bear, quail, all kinds of birds, acorns, juniper and manzanita berries, grapes, and
so on. There must be seasons for these things. They will only have to gather for the winter. First
he went north. He said, "I'll put a winter there, and will put water down in this canyon." When-
ever he threw his hands around and said these things, they came true.

He traveled in that way. He had a walking stick [tw-wa]. He traveled for three years. Then
he came home and stayed around for a few days. "I'm going to put the water around this world,"
he said. So he went to where sun came up, and dropped his cane and dragged it. When he pulled
the cane, there was water—the ocean—behind him. He looked back and there were many kinds
of animals—sturgeon, shark, salmon, shellfish. Whatever he said appeared there. That is the
ocean today. This was still within the three years. Then he went home and stayed a few days. "I
must have an outlet for this water, and there must be a lot of fish to come up this river in spring
of the year." He dropped his cane up above Dunsmuir. "The water can start here" he said. Then
he drew the cane down and made the Sacramento River. We call it mempân.
Finally he said, "I guess I will put a lot of Indians here." He had a room like the one we are in where he sat and ate, and he had another place where he slept. He told Coyote, "I'm going to put an Indian girl here, and don't you try to make friends with her till I come in and see her. Then you can come in."

He went out and scraped up red dirt and rolled it between his palms, spat on it, rolled it, and then he blew his breath on it four times. Then he put it in bed and covered it up. At midnight there was a pretty Indian girl sitting in bed. She was fixing her hair. Coyote knew, because he had been watching. Coyote came in and wagged his tail, and the girl turned to nothing.

Saltu came in at dawn and there was nothing. He scolded Coyote and told him not to do that again.

He did the same thing and rolled it up like a cigar and blew his breath on it and put it to bed. At midnight the same girl came back. Coyote stayed outside. He kept watching but didn't come in. So Saltu came in and she got up and walked around. She didn't have any clothes or any shame.

The next night Saltu did the same thing again with red dirt. That night a nice-looking young man sat up in bed. The two humans started talking, and they didn't have a stitch of clothes on.

Finally Saltu said, "Well, I don't know what to do about this." He said, "There has to be trouble amongst the people—sickness and death. What shall I do about this?" He said that when they are first born in this country they must have language so that they can understand one another. When they die they must have a different language. If anything happens to them, they will die and lie for four days and then come to and live for the rest of time and never die again. But if they are going to talk a different language after they die, they should go to a different place—they should go to father [netan, literally father-in-law] in heaven [šōndōm]—and I'll keep them separate.

The Indian people increased from those two. This boy and girl had a baby and became very ashamed. They tried to wear anything after that, which you call "sin." The two were related in a way. From that time the Indian people increased.

Saltu went around and talked to people. He told people that Indian doctors must be spiritless [†], that they must get power from sun and cloud and big springs. So that's the way Indian people get power. It's just a gift—the person can't help it, for he has to do it. Most of the people wouldn't believe Saltu. So he said that the world would come to an end. "I must save a few of everything, male and female, of all the animals and insects I put on earth. He saved male and female of everything. He made the Butte at Oroville [šōndōm] and said, "That's where I'm going to save everything." The water overflowed from the ocean, and all the rest of the people drowned. The world was all under water. The water came from the north and overflowed from the ocean. The water drowned everything, except that he saved some of every kind. Then he turned everything loose and the earth came back. That was one wreck we had here.

Then he went on and made Marysville Butte [teuôlimboho; boho, stay, remain] and saved some of everything from the second flood. That was the last flood we had here. He saved all the insects male and female—he saved them all.

Now came a big fire from south. The world was red hot; water was boiling for several days. That was the second [†] time the world came to an end. Then he turned the animals loose and they came back again.

Then he went round and talked to his people and they made fun of him. The Indian people said, "We are going to kill you, you're so smart. You know everything and have so much power. We are going to kill you. You claim you can die and come to again, and we are going to see if you can do it." He answered, "You can do it. Dig a hole as deep as you want to and get as big a rock as you can. When you kill me, put me in the hole and throw dirt over me and roll the rocks on me and put all the weight on me that you can. You don't believe me; go ahead and kill me and then watch. At 12 o'clock I will come to and show you people I have the power. I'll go to the heaven where my father is, and you will suffer the same as I do. You'll be on the same road. In four nights I will ride up." So they shot arrows into him. They kicked him and made fun of him. They just treated him terribly. Finally he died. They punished him terribly. They threw him in the hole and tamped him down; they rolled rocks on him, they laughed and made fun of him.

1 It must be remembered that Freeman was a shaman. See his story under the discussion of shamanism, pp. 360–363.
They sat around and watched. He said that on the fourth night he was going to come to at midnight. That night came, and you could hear the whole ground shaking. Pretty soon the rocks bounced off every old way, dirt flew, and he sat on the edge of the grave and brushed the dirt off his head and body. He got up and never spoke a word. All at once he looked up and raised right up. He was gone. That was the last they ever saw of him.

My grandfather told me this story. I heard an Indian preacher [a chief or other person versed in native mythology] and my grandfather talk about this, and they cried. It's just as good as the Bible white people read. It's close enough to it.

God.—Informants all spoke of God, but they also related their own mythical beings to Christ. It seems improbable that the concept of a single superior deity was native to the Wintun. The Wintu deity olēbēs′ was never mentioned, although olēlpōm (land up above) was used for heaven. One informant spoke of olēlpōm sēktu (chief), of which he said, "It must have looked like a person or something like that. He made the earth. He was good." But sēktu is not a Wintun but a Patwin word for chief. Nor did the somewhat unreliable informant repeat this name in a later discussion of the same subject. The only statement that could be obtained from Jones was: "They say there is a maker who was a man like we are. That is what they taught us. They used to tell us young people to be careful and not act foolish. They would say, 'They see you above; they see what you are doing. He made you, and you couldn't be without Him.' They called Him wintepcit (man come from dead)."

Spirits.—Three types of spirits were distinguished: yapaitu, lēs, and holowit. Kroeber gives yapaitu for the Wintun concept of spirit. "Yapaitu," said Jones, "is some great thing that nobody has ever seen. It might be God. Indians say they can hear Him talk but can't see Him." Andrew Freeman said, "Yapaitu is used sometimes for white man, but it means spirit. It can be almost any kind." On the other hand, Jordan said, "We call yapaitu a big animal that kills people and that people are afraid of. I don't know what he looks like, for he's just something to be afraid of. The Noimok [Patwin] call this saltu." These variant concepts cannot be definitely compromised. It is my guess that yapaitu was a spirit (or spirits) associated with the Huta initiation and the secret society. This would help to account for the general lack of knowledge about the spirit; none of the informants was a member of the secret society, and presumably information about an important spirit would not readily be passed on. It was also in accord with the association with the Patwin saltu. In general, the various descriptions could be different aspects of the spirit rather than direct conflicts of meaning, as they appear to us.

Each person had a spirit, which was called lēs. It was defined as night man, shade, shadow, ghost. It dwelt in him during his lifetime. "Lēs is in us and is what gives us life. When it is gone, we are gone—it just leaves us like a broken automobile [Freeman]." "It keeps our tongue going [Jones]." "The spirit stays in our body just like our shadow [sic]. Once in a while people get nervous or dissatisfied, and

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* Kroeber, 1932, p. 360.
* Kroeber, 1932, p. 315, writes: "The wai-saltu or north spirits performed the ceremony called wai-yapai, north dance." The similarity between walyspai and yapaitu can hardly be fortuitous, although the meaning is altered. It is noteworthy that this is associated among the Patwin with the north (therefore the Wintun?) and that it is "separate both from the group of dances associated with the Hesi and from Kuku ritual." See also the discussion in the preceding chapter under Huta initiation.
* Du Bois, 1935, p. 78, discusses the similar concept of lēs among the Wintu.
Indians claim that that is when the spirit goes out and comes back. The shadow of a crazy man goes far away from him and he doesn’t know anything.”

The lês of a person could be either helpful or harmful to him. It was his life spirit, to be sure, but “a person’s own lês may bother him or may help him during sickness.” The permanent departure “caused” death in the individual, but “it may be something cruel in the body [i.e., foreign spirit] that causes the spirit to leave.”

After death, the spirit might stay near the grave or with relatives, or it might go to heaven. [Freeman] : “The Indian belief is that if you lose a close relative, the spirit remains with you, and I believe that. My wife is still with me. Spirits stay with a person as long as he is on earth.” As indicated elsewhere, Jones felt the presence of his wife for four days after her death. Yet, according to Freeman again, “Our spirit goes to heaven. Spirits of bad people go there too, but they have a hard time getting there. Such a man’s spirit is punished before he gets there.” The concept of spirits going to a world above is found among the Wintu, who believe that the soul rises to the Milky Way (called spirit trail) and thence to a plain covered with green grass and flowers where Indians live “who are always having a big time.”

The free lês of deceased persons were a source of danger. They were visible only to certain persons, but anybody who “made fun of them” would see them. One informant claimed to have seen lês, and her brother “had been troubled by this spirit.” Seeing lês was evidently far from desirable. To what extent fear of the spirits of the dead acted as a motivation to conduct and a rationale for ritual behavior is not made clear.

Holowit was a ghost. “It is something you see right quick that frightens you. It might be a person. If you have a nightmare or see uncertain things quick and get scared, or if in a nightmare someone is about to kill you, you would say holówina.”

Springs and their inhabitants.—The sawal were hallowed places, usually inhabited by a spirit. These springs had powers for good and evil and were of great importance, particularly to the shaman, but also to warriors, hunters, gamblers, and specific craftsmen. Each spring was visited by the person interested in its particular power, and such visits increased his luck, purified him, and strengthened him for his endeavor. On the other hand, a person might not visit a sawal to which he did not have a specific right, as for instance a layman might not visit a doctor's spring (although of course a novice might). The afterbirth and the navel cord were buried most frequently at the hunting sawal. A gambler might visit a gamblers’ sawal to insure luck and success for a son. The body of an eagle from which the feathers had been removed was buried at a special spring.

Some springs were said to be good; others were considered bad. Perhaps the difference lay in the person himself; an ordinary being might not visit a shaman’s spring, and a menstruant or her husband had to avoid any contact with supernatural places or things. Many sawal were inhabited by various spirits. These spirits might harm a person who should not be there; or, on the other hand, they could bring great benefit to the visitor entitled to their services.

[Jones:] Each trade has its own spring to swim in, and persons following it can't swim in the springs of another trade. Doctors and runners have their own springs. Their dreams [at the Huta]

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*Du Bois, 1935, p. 79.*
tell them where to go to swim. The person who dreamed tells his dream, and if it is a bowmaker’s
dream they will call an old bowyer for advice. The young man follows this advice and may use the
older man’s spring.

[Ross:] If you want to be lucky, you go to springs and swim. If you want to be a hunter, you
swim at a spring and that night you will dream, and that will give you good luck. Just the same
for gambling, but you go to a different spring.

[McGetrick:] They have a name for every spring, good and bad. In the old days you couldn’t
drink out of every spring. Sawal is a bad spring [i.e., has magical potency], good springs are
called tcálimém [drinking water: tcál, good; mém, water]. If you drink the water from one of
them in Dry Creek, it will kill you. The water doesn’t hurt you, but something in there does. If
you stoop down, something that lives there faces you, and you are done for. The animal or the
man or woman that is in the spring is called pómëpurí [póm, ground; purí, †]. There is another
spring two miles from that place. At night you can hear children crying at the spring.

[Raglin:] Frog, watak, lives in the springs. The doctor’s frog is powerful. That is why they don’t
like strangers to fool around springs. I never did go into my father’s spring, which is way up on
the butte.

[Jones:] There are several different kinds of things that live in springs. There might be a
hunched-up, wrinkled old woman in a spring. If one saw her, he might fall like dead on the way
home from being scared stiff. He might be killed from it. A doctor might be able to rub him
and bring him to life again. Such things happen when the person has a woman who is unwell [men-
struant wife]. Sometime there is a large animal in the spring.

The following account is somewhat circumstantial, but it does portray a part of
the pattern of mythical inhabitants of springs:

[Jones:] On Stony Creek there is a place where a man who used to be a great diver went under for
an hour. He was reported drowned. He had taken a long grapevine and gone under there where he
could hold his head up. He strung a lot of fish on the grapevine, and when the crowd got there he
was sitting there with his string of fish. They were crying, expecting to send divers under for him.
He told the people that there were fish under there. Some were afraid to go, and only two or three
learned how he did it. They said a drift log was under there, completely out of water. There was
some kind of animal watching them. It would open its mouth and make faces. It looked like a
human but wasn’t. It looked more like a monkey, for it had four hands and no feet and a tail. The
other fellows saw it. The Indians never fished there any more, because they were afraid of that
animal. They told me about it a long time ago. The place is now known as Miliseat; it is a good
fishing place.

Supernatural beasts.—In addition to the monsters that inhabited sacred springs,
there were two other mythical forms: a giant bird (wukwuk), and men in animal
form. Informants’ accounts of these give their essential features. The myth of the
large wukwuk may have been inspired by the condor.

[Jones:] They say there is a bird which was seldom seen or caught. I only heard of seeing this
one. A man1 was coming over a low gap. He had hunted all day without getting anything and
was very tired. This bird, which is called wukwuk, popped up in front of him. He took out after
the bird and chased and chased, often almost catching it. Finally he became so run-down he could
hardly walk. Then the bird dropped a feather and disappeared into a little hole. The man took
the feather and dug after the bird. He got help, and they dug for a long time. Uncle John had
the feather, and I saw it. The quill was as big around as your finger, and the barbs were all worn
off. They say that if you take the quill and rub it for luck, talking your wish to it, you will be
lucky. It will help you in hunting, fishing, or gambling. The feather had been obtained by some
of our relatives many years ago. No one else could see the bird, and they thought he had gone
crazy. He dug a big hole—it was still large the last time I saw it. The place is called wókwokum
êíha [êíha, gone in].

1 The individual was referred to in the informant’s account as “Uncle John Martin” at this point,
but as the story progresses, the events appear to have taken place in the distant past.
Apparently it was the same bird that was called molok by another informant, who said that it lived on Paskenta Butte and that it tried to catch Indians.

Animals who took human form, such as the werebeasts referred to by Du Bois, were not reported, but humans who took animal forms were widely known. Frequently it was neighboring peoples who were accused of such practices, but some Wintun persons were said also to possess the power. Modern informants more frequently paint these characters as devilish pranksters bent on mischief rather than as fearful beings doing harm; yet it was recognized that they occasionally killed people. The attitude of fear, which accompanied the discussion of lès, was not noted.  

[Jones:] There was a Noymok who could turn into a bear and scare people. He was from sontoštik south of Elk Creek. The man was very hairy and looked like a bear. His name was takaltu.

They say that one time they were going to a big time and there was one man who scoffed at the story of this sort of power. "How could a man do that?" he asked. They were strung out along a trail. This bear-man ran ahead and got the name of the scoffers. When they got to a place, the people following all went on and the bear-man threw chaparral and feeses all over the scoffers. He rubbed excrement over him and sat on him. He warned the scoffers not to talk too much. Then he went on and slipped back into the crowd. There was a woman further south who used to hide in the brush by the river during blackberry-picking time. She would destroy her enemies. She could turn into a bear too. Neither of these were doctors.

[McGetrick:] Notwita was a human just as we are, but my grandfather always told us that he could turn into a bear any time he wanted to. We children always went swimming with him, and he had thick, black hair two inches long all over his body. His fingers were as big around as my wrist. He was a nice man, always full of fun. My uncle is a man who is a clown and doesn't believe in such things, so this fellow turned into a bear and chased him. That was in broad daylight. When he had worn my uncle out, he got up as a human and laughed. I never saw this happen, but I have been told about it. I hardly believe it.

[Freeman:] They say there was a man around Stonyford who turned into a bear and caught and killed people. He would catch men who went to his country to trade. Grandfather said he would fight this man. Once my grandfather was down there trading and visiting, and this man asked him if he was going home, and my grandfather said that he was leaving the next morning at sunrise. But grandfather watched the trail very closely the next morning, and soon he saw this bear-man come toward him up the trail. Grandfather had his stick ready and spit on his hand, and when the bear came up he pounded on it. The bear charged him over and over again, but grandfather was getting the best of it when finally it changed back to the man who had asked him about leaving. This bear-man said, "Don't hurt me; I'm just playing with you." Grandfather was mad and said that he should have been shot. The bear-man paid grandfather some property and told him not to tell anyone.

There was a man they called madit who lived across from the Paskenta cemetery, and he could make clouds rise over the mountain. He told the people he could walk over big, heavy clouds, and then he would go behind the house and soon the people would see him on the mountain. He would go hunting and turn into a buck and get in a deer net and have a great time. They would try to hit him but they couldn't, and finally he would turn back into a man. He could turn into a bear and tear up a net or catch a man. If women were fishing, he would turn into a salmon and come upstream. The women would get clubs and chase him into shallows, and then he would throw water on them. When they got the best of him, he would turn back to a man and just laugh. One day he said to the people to take care of themselves, for he couldn't remain on earth long. A few days later he put some beads around his neck and said, "Now you people watch me; I'm going down by the bank.

8 Du Bois, 1935, p. 84.
10 See story "Magpie and Chicken Hawk," pp. 396-398, for a myth of transformation into bear.
and turn into a rock for the last time." It was in the morning. He laid down on his stomach facing north and he turned into a long rock. He is there today, right across from the Paskenta burial grounds.

There was a great, large animal that lived up on Table Mountain. No one ever saw it, because he never got a chance to show himself. A seer said the animal was dead. Since then a large fossil was found up there, which proves that this animal really existed. They say that the animals and things in these springs left because they didn't like the smell of white men. White people's smell killed them off.

**Influence over the Supernatural**

The natural world of the Nomlaki was peopled with unseen spirits having wills of their own, and nature in its many manifestations was animate. However, the Nomlaki were not helpless before these powers. They could influence the course of supernatural events by the use of prayer, magic, and charms. Practical acts were surrounded with special incantations and other ritual, and restrictions on behavior served to protect the Indian against these unseen forces.

*Prayer.*—The use of prayer seems to have been extremely limited and was rarely reported. Frequently it would be said of a craftsman that he "would talk to it," as in fire making. A rain-making formula and prayer were given:

[Jones:] Indians believe they can make rain. They take some green limbs and put them in a fire. Then they take a firebrand into the dark and whirl it in the air and say things. They twist the brand and beg for the one above to send rain. They imagine that that makes it rain. Once there was a drouth and they got together to make it rain. They tried and tried and decided they had the wrong kind of wood, and so they got a willow and whipped a brand of it around. It turned cold and rained. They got a flood, and then they had to beg it to stop. They did the same sort of action but begged the rain to stop. Finally they got it stopped, and the year turned out fine and the grass was good. Any good speaker, not necessarily a doctor, can ask for rain. At dances someone might make a speech to the Lord, "Look down upon us; we are trying to do what you have taught us." They ask to be told how to do the way they were taught. This is the way they pray for rain:

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olēthē'ēn yeta tenwān luhā ke'ünay konīlā (Repeat)
Man above/ Father look down/ water/ we have no/ dry
mēmnō do mēm konīlā
water me/ give/ water/ dry
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The prayer was given in English:

- My Father above, send me rain,
- We are starving, we need help,
- Look down upon us, feel sorry for us,
- Send us rain.

*The cause of illness.*—The Nomlaki subscribed to the widespread theory that sickness and death were caused by the intrusion of a foreign substance, which informants call "pain." This malignant object was thought to be visible and tangible, and the cure of disease lay in its proper extraction. The "pain" might be introduced into the body because of some breach of conduct, most particularly "fooling with a menstruant woman," or because of the work of a magic "poisoner." It is not clear whether natives recognized other causes of death, such as the direct effect of an arrow wound, falling, or drowning. They distinguished between communicable diseases—which they know were introduced among them by whites, and which they cannot cure by native methods—and native sicknesses. They recognize certain "poisonous" properties of special types of flint and obsidian, which are considered particularly valuable for arrows because of this power (see pp. 418–419).
A poisoner may or may not be a doctor. But in either case his knowledge of poison makes him particularly vulnerable, and he must be especially careful of his conduct.

[Jones:] All Indian doctors had poisons that they worked with. I've never seen it work, but I could have been a poison man. Molly Freeman's father was distantly related to me, and when he was a real old man he said to me, "Since I am going to quit work, do you want my property? I'll just give it to you. You travel among the Indians a lot, and if you want to be able to take revenge I'll train you. But you can't eat any meat, fool around with girls, or have many friends unless you want to touch somebody." But since I couldn't eat meat (unless I put the poison away) and have woman, I refused. He could have given me his poison and taught me how to handle it. If you have poison and fool around girls who are unwell [menstruants], it would injure you instead of the girl. The girl's blood is stronger than the poison, and the fumes of it draw the poison. A girl can throw some of her menstrual blood at a person with poison and kill him. Some girls are stronger than others; some can hit you, and you won't feel the effects right away, but the place will become sorer and sorer. It takes an Indian doctor to get such a pain out of you.

Poisons were concocted from different things. One informant claimed that dried rattlesnake fangs were the strongest poison and that lizards and bullfrogs brought about "slow consumption." Actual snake poison, which might be rolled in earwax, was said to have been used. Hummingbirds were also used for poisoning, and according to legend this bird was considered a great doctor. Although red flint was considered poisonous in itself, it was not reported to have been used for black magic.

[Freeman:] Indians make poisons by taking dried frogs, bull snakes, lizards. They pound these up into powder, using the usual kind of hopper and pestle, but not the same one that is used for food. Then they drop the blood of a bull snake in that. While they are doing this they don't eat meat. That medicine gives consumption. They dope one another like that when they don't like one another. They put the poison into water or something. Another poison grows on some lake. It has red flowers with little black seeds that look like gunpowder, and that is deadly poison. Put it on a person's body, and it goes right in and gets into the body and stops the blood from circulating. There is no cure for that one. Indians can't send poison through the air. They handle it when among a crowd of people. They say it is carried in a human leg bone taken from a grave. A section plugged up at the bottom and stoppered at the top is used. Sometimes they put the poison under their fingernail and flick it at a person.

[Jones:] One can work magic on a person by putting a stick in his feces and leaving it there, and that will constipate him. One can do the same to the urine. It takes a doctor or some man who has learnt it from a doctor to do this. Therefore almost everybody covered up his excrement. Lots of poison men aren't doctors at all, but they are trained by doctors. An Indian doctor can walk by and "shadow" you, and something will happen to you—either you get sick or go crazy or something. No common man can do that. A doctor can paralyze one with his shadow, but no one here has such power any more.

Rumors of present-day black magic were afloat, and the following accounts refer to recent uses of the art.

[Raglin:] Nancy was saved from a poison by white doctors. A Stonyford Indian poisoned her. All the Noimok are a tricky and mean bunch.

[Moore:] There was a man who wanted to marry a woman, but she wouldn't have him. He slipped up close to her with poison in his fingers (perhaps a little oat straw corked at each end). When he poisoned her he left, and at about two in the morning she died. I knew the man had poisoned that woman, but they [the white doctors] didn't know what caused her death.

Poisoning was a technique of warfare (see pp. 342–343). Warriors kept a night watch to prevent poisoners from sneaking in and killing. The chief use of poisons
was for "meanness" or to wreak vengeance, and a poisoner might be hired by someone to kill an enemy.

Curing methods.—Disease of magic provenience was appropriately enough cured by magic methods. Aboriginally this was done by sucking out the "pain."

[Jones:] The doctor lays the patient on a pallet on the floor and leans over him. He feels until he finds the spot and then holds his finger on it. He always finds the right spot. He bites and sucks on that, drawing out the blood until it seems to choke him. Then he works to throw up. He has sucked a bug out; it is sharp at both ends like a grain of barley. He shows it to the patient in the palm of his hand, and it seems alive. After a while he may chew and swallow the pain [but this does not seem to be common]. Our doctors don't sing. Pitt River doctors get into a trance, but our doctors don't. Ours just sit down and watch the patient for a while until he sees what the ailments are. They put their hands on the patient's heart and feel around with both hands. He takes out little broken sticks that he calls broken pieces of sickness. These are about an inch long and like pieces of sinew. He gets these out by sucking and throwing up, and there may be many of them and some blood. He spits all this into some straw he has, and picks this up by carrying it along the ground like an airplane takes off. He carries this nest of sickness far away and buries it, taking care that no one is watching, and then walks back, coming in from another direction.

[Molly Freeman:] When a person called my father, he never stayed back but went quickly. He sat down by the sick person and looked, because our doctors never smoked. He got water in a little basket and sat down and doctored. He drank the water (or rinsed his mouth with it). He would draw out little pieces just like meat. Father got a little straw and put it down by the sick person, and when he doctored he would cough and pick the sickness off his tongue and put it on straw and then drink water. Then he would tell the patient, "You'll be all right. Next time I come to doctor you again, you will be walking around." He knows that some people suffer a lot when they are sick, just as a white doctor does. When he saw a person who was so sick, he might say, "You're too far gone; I can't do anything for you." Nowadays the doctors sing and smoke, but my father never did that way. After he sucked the pain out he would ball it up in straw by rubbing it and then take it out and throw it away.

They have to pay a lot of money for doctoring service. One time a man's wife was sick, and he offered my father a horse for doctoring her. My father was a big doctor, so he said he would go to see what was the matter with her. She was hollering and suffering, and my father said to her, "You are too bad, but I'll try it." Pretty soon the doctor asked where it hurt, and he doctored and took out a big sickness from her abdomen and said, "You'll be all right when I take this sickness out. You get up and sit down." He took the mare away with him, and she got well. When I was sick he got another doctor because he never would doctor me.

The modern method of rubbing out the pain will be described below. It is not native Nomlaki but appears to have come in with the Ghost Dance.

The role of the shaman.—In the parlance of the informants, the shaman was a "doctor," and his chief function was curing the sick by the means already described. He might also use his magic powers against his enemies or his tribe's enemies, to poison them by throwing "pains" into their bodies. But this power of black magic does not appear to have been limited to doctors, as has already been discussed.

The position of doctor was not clearly defined. Those familiar with central California ethnology will recall the strong political and social position of the shaman in Yokuts society, where the doctor and the political leaders coöperated in their control of society.¹ No such pattern was described for the Nomlaki, although narratives indicate that the shaman was a man of power and wealth. Yet the role of a doctor was not an easy one; he had to undergo an initiation and observe restriction,

¹ Gayton, 1930.
and each shamanistic séance itself was undoubtedly a trying and debilitating experience.

[Jones:] A kind of punishment makes a doctor. It is a job that nobody wants but just comes to him. The doctor job is nasty and hard work, and I wouldn't want to have it. People as a rule don't fancy that kind of work.

[Freeman:] This doctor business is very hard on you. You're like crazy, you're knocked out, and you aren't in your right mind when you get it. People think it's easy.

We may assume that the Nomlaki doctor had prestige compounded out of fear of his power, respect for his ability, and recognition of his wealth. The modern shaman does not enjoy such a position, because of the ambivalence concerning his curative power, the little wealth to be acquired by doctoring, and lack of fear of his potential sorcery.

**Becoming a shaman.**—Apparently it was not necessary to undergo the initiatory Huta to become a shaman, although the dream experience might lead to that profession. There was no formalized initiatory schooling as reported for the Wintu by Du Bois, but the Wintu schooling bears a resemblance to the Huta itself.

[Jones:] When a person starts to become a doctor, he gets out of his head; he won't talk but just stands around as though he doesn't know you, like a man who is unconscious. His eyes, ears, and nose may be bloody, and instead of tears, blood is in his eyes. He gets worse and worse, just like a dog with running fits, and finally he runs off. He will wander around and then come home. He will get up at night and sneak off. Older doctors won't bother, but the other people will look for him. He might be gone for two or three days and nights. Finally he will come in and lie down without saying anything, perhaps all day. Or maybe a big doctor would sit down beside him and talk to him; perhaps they would smoke an Indian pipe together. The older man would ask the young fellow what he found out, and the young man would tell what he had seen and been told by whatever took him. In the night he will slip out again even though he is watched and perhaps stay away another couple of days. He goes to some spring, and whatever is down there teaches him what to do and not to turn anybody down [i.e., refuse anyone's request to be doctor]. It seems peculiar, but that is what they say happens. After he comes back a couple of times he is a thorough doctor. When someone calls him for a job, one of his doctor relatives goes with him and helps him out until he gets in practice of doing the work. After a while he gets along alone.

Some people are natural doctors, inheriting the ability from generation to generation. R's father was a natural doctor, a "given doctor." He had a funny-shaped foot with toes that turned over on each other. All his forefathers had been doctors as far back as his great-great-grandfather or something like that. R would have become a doctor, but someone stopped her by using a river bulb on her to drive the Indian power away. A person gets to be a doctor when he is a young man, for it is in the family blood. There are women doctors, but more often men are doctors. Occasionally a woman doctor and a man doctor are living together, and then their children are apt to become doctors too. Sometimes they Huta, but they don't have to. A person in an old doctor family is already a doctor [i.e., doesn't have to be initiated].

**Shamans' fees.**—The shaman worked for a fee, presumably determined by the nature of the case. Payment consisted of various articles; in aboriginal times chiefly skins and beads. Clothes, money, skins, beads, basketry, and horses were all mentioned by informants as doctoring fees. Jones gives the mode of payment in some detail:

> When you go after a doctor you take the pay with you and show it to him, saying, "So and so is sick and sent me to get you to help him." The doctor sits there for several minutes; he may

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scatter out the beads and say "These are pretty rough" [poorly finished and therefore of little worth], meaning that he wants a little more. He might say that the rich man is stingy, and complain about the work and the pay so as to make the patient put up more money. When the messenger brings back more, the doctor will pick it all up and come. When he gets to the sick person he will sit down while the patient tells him his ailments. The doctor leaves the pay near the bed of the patient, and the pay is sent to him when the patient begins to eat.

_Narrative of a fabulous shaman._

[Jones:] One old doctor could cure anything. He was an old man and had a young wife. The woman had a lot of pubic hair, and he cut this off with the skin and tanned it and hung it up. He considered this his greatest wealth. He hung it up and showed it off. The woman was afraid of him, so she just sat down and hardly moved because her pubis hurt her. She wouldn't tell anyone about this, but her people kept after her for not moving around until finally she showed them. Then they spread this news around, but everybody was afraid of this powerful doctor. All the lesser doctors got together and decided that this man who had done something wrong had to be killed, but he was a poison doctor and could poison them from a distance or perhaps by just touching them, carrying his poison under his fingernails. Finally they agreed to get him, but many were hurt, and he had spread poison all over himself to keep from getting killed. Eventually they got enough arrows in him and overpowered him so that he died. [It is not clear what part magic played in the killing, if any.] Then they were all pretty sick from the effects of his poison. These lesser doctors doctored and doctored, and finally, realizing that some one of them would have to die, one said to the rest that he would take all the poison. "Just put me away good," he requested of the others. So he doctored the rest till he got all the others cured, and he died and the rest got well.

There was a doctor in Shasta County who sent word to this big doctor by a newsboy that he could send poison underground to poison him. He asked the big doctor what he thought about that. This big doctor answered that if he could do that, to tell him to try it. "All I have to do," he said, "is to rub it with my foot and kick it back and send some of mine back if your own poison doesn't hurt you." By this means this doctor was the strongest, biggest, and most reliable doctor that they ever had.

There are a lot of vulgar stories about this big doctor. He had a big penis and would hit girls with it and then laugh and pay them with a string of beads.

_Bole or dream doctors._—The old shaman has gone from the Wintun area. He has been replaced by the Bole doctor, who rubs the pain from the body instead of sucking it. He does not produce a visible pain, and operates by entering a trance induced in part by smoking. This type of shaman is a historical innovation associated with the Bole dance cult.

[Jones:] There are dream doctors who dream that they have done things. Andrew Freeman is one [see below]. He says they tell him in his dreams what will happen, and these dreams come true. I have never heard anyone else tell such things, but Andrew has done some wonderful things. A rubbing doctor works by rubbing where the body feels sore. Such a man will feel for the pain where the muscle is knotted. When he gets there he gives it a jerked motion so that it hurts for a second, and then the place breaks loose and scatters [†]. Perhaps the doctor will rub the patient down afterward. If the patient isn't careful the pain might jump back there again. The rubbing doctor doesn't get anything out of you. It takes an Indian doctor [as opposed to the Bole doctor] to work or suck a pain out of you. Some of the Indians don't believe in the Indian doctors. I don't believe all of them are honest, but the rubbing doctors are all right.

[Jordan:] It seems as if there is some dream or something that gives the power to dream doctors. They smoke a lot and go into a kind of trance and dream about something. I heard Andrew talk about it all the time. They go into a trance while doctoring, and an interpreter tells what they say. The doctor doesn't know himself what he is talking about, they claim.

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32 See Du Bois and Demetraeopoulou, p. 393, for reference to a woman with pubic hair like a bear hide.
How Andrew Freeman became a dream doctor.—Modern shamanism in the area has been reported in considerable detail by Du Bois in her ethnology of the Wintu to the north. The single modern Nomlaki shaman received his training from a Wintu, and his story forms an adjunct to Du Bois’ account. Andrew Freeman was working as a shepherd when interviewed. He was in his fifties, very friendly, articulate, and willing to talk. His tales and stories bear the mark of a vivid pictorial imagination that has borrowed from white as well as native lore. He was a robust man with no outward manifestations of strong mental aberration, although attitudes of persecution are evident in this account and in other statements he made.

[Freeman:] I was bothered by the sun, *tuku*, from the first beginning. When the sun gets warm, I get sleepy and doze off. First I heard a rumbling noise toward the sun and something up there telling me what is going on. The moon, *teonal*, is the same way; the moon tells things. It looks like an Indian man in the moon. There was something that sings in a cloud, and the angels were climbing over the cloud. I saw them in dreams too. When I got sick the angel would come and pray to me, but she never would speak to me. Then I got so I would walk in the air with Jesus Christ, walking across the ocean without sinking down, following him. I saw all that in a dream. The angel looks like a little white girl you see in pictures. She’s dressed in white and has wings. When I doze off in the heat of the day, seven angels will fly around me like buzzards.

They had been bothering me that way, and something told me—that is, I just heard them talk—"There are seven angels; you want to count your angels and try to put your hand on the smallest; she’ll be last. She is the strongest and the best angel in the bunch. The bigger angels, they are weak. If you can put your hand on the little angel, you’ll be all right. She will be kind to you." One day I was in the mountains herding. At nine in the morning I lay down by a tree, and along came these angels. I counted them and put my hand on the seventh one when she came down, and that was all. She went on. After that I always got out of things when people got me in bad. Mean men came to me but they never hurt me. I never flew off the handle any more, but just talk to them and laugh at them and go right on.

I was bothered by the sun from the time I was nine years old until recently. I didn’t believe in it, and so I didn’t pay any attention but only thought I was going crazy. I went to Dr. M in Corning and told him I thought I was crazy. He looked at my tongue, took my pulse, and said I needed a good rest, and gave me some tonic and pills that never helped me. I remained just the same. I took up this doctor business in 1923.

I and my woman separated on October 4, 1921, and I was going around by myself, and it seems as if I got worse. I could see things way off. There was an Indian doctor named Albert Thomas [cf. Du Bois, pp. 91 ff.] who used to go into a trance and tell things. I didn’t have any money, but I told him I needed help for I didn’t know what was the matter with me. He went into a trance and told me what I had to do. He said that I would have to help people like he does. He said he would help me to get along. While he was in a trance he sang into my right ear and deafened my left ear. He told me to sing the song he was singing till I got my own song, and that I would lose his song when I got my own. He said, “You go back to your country. You know one big spring there is a sulphur spring. Indian people used to bathe in that spring to be your kind of person. I can tell you it’s below a willow patch. I never was there, but I know. Your people all go there to become doctors.” Then he told me to get soaproot and go back into the hills where no one is around and set up a windbreak and build a fire out of manzanita wood. He said that I should take my clothes off and mash the soaproot and spread it all over my body and stand by the fire. I should do a little talking, asking for help. Before noon when the sun came along I was to ask him [†] for help. Then he said for me to put my clothes on and go home, singing my song all the time. He told me not to eat supper. Then I was to go to that spring about nine or ten o’clock that evening, and when I get there I was to ask for help, to tell them that I am weak and about done up and that I want help. I was to say that to the spring and then get into it and bathe,

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wetting my head good with water and taking mud and making an “X” on my forehead and chest and a little dot on each of my arms and down each side of my leg. Then he said I should go home and go to bed.

I did all this.

That night about twelve o’clock there was a fellow coming in the air on a sled with a buckhorn on the front of the runners. The man was driving at a steering wheel just like on a car, but there were sled runners on it and he was coming in the air. Then he stopped and stepped off. He was a nice-looking man, an Indian, and he didn’t have any clothes on at all. When he stepped off he rubbed his hands like this [indicating a horizontal back-and-forth motion in front of the body] and said to me, “I’m God’s son; I travel and I stop in the center of this world for about four minutes—that is the only place I stop. I never stop till I come here in the middle of this world again. I’m a powerful man. Nothing can overpower me on top of this earth. There is another powerful man in the center of the world looking north. I have been watching you since you were a little boy, and I sure feel sorry for you. You have been abused a lot by all kinds of people, and they are still going to treat you badly. Whites, Indians, and your own relations too. They are going to talk about you. You are going to have trouble with your women, for they will treat you wrong. But don’t feel bad; just pray to me. You’re a man; don’t get mad; take it, carry it, and pray to me. They will be sorry in the long run. Those same people will come to you for help, and you help them if you can. Don’t throw your hand around over anybody, because you have the power; and don’t try to overpower a man like yourself. If they talk too much, just don’t pay any attention to them. Some day you will have a good help that comes to your right hand in time [1]. Don’t set any prices, but just go ahead and help them if you can and let them pay what they can.

“People have electricity in their body like an electric battery. The way you have to do is this: smoke your pipe, and your power will rise from your body. When you put your hand on pain and sickness, you take the pain away and charge their body with your power. There are a lot of people you can’t help—they’re too far gone. You are bound to lose some cases. I’ll sing you a song, and when you smoke you go into a trance and you sing this song.”

And then he sang the song. He went on, “Very few people have seen me; the white people are pretty smart, but they don’t know who I am. This is the last time you will ever see me; but you know where your friend is, and no matter where I am, pray to me. But I sure feel sorry for you; the people are going to treat you awfully mean, you are going to have a lot of trouble on your hands. I’m going.”

I saw this all in my dreams. After that I was like drunk. I’d forget things, and I staggered when I walked. I lost Albert’s song. I went to singing and I just felt fine. In the morning my blood would come up and I just felt fine, laughing and singing.

That same fall [1923] Lulu Freeman was sick with what they call gallstones. She had been to white doctors and to Chinese doctors, and she was just as poor [thin] as she could be. So I told her I got this practice business coming on now and asked her to let me put my hand on her where the pain was. She said she hurt all over—her heart and chest and hands—and she was cranky. So I took my pipe and smoked and I sang for her and prayed for her. Then I put my hands on her chest, her head, her hands, and her feet. That night at twelve an angel come to her bed and prayed for her. She backed off and faded away. When she went away, something—I don’t know what—said she was pretty sick and that she had a dry spot on one lung that would start consumption. It looked like a little cabbage leaf on one side of her lung. We [the informant used “we” here] guaranteed her for three years and said that if she was going to live she would go longer, but if we lost her it would be close to the end of three years. In two weeks you wouldn’t have known her, she had picked up so. Now she gets sick once in a while. She is Joe Brown’s wife. After she got well she joined the Christian life [Pentecostal Church]. She thinks that they prayed for her and helped her to get well.

From then on, people have been coming to me. I didn’t want people to come bother me, and I didn’t have a license. I saved several people who didn’t have any money. I doctored Tom [a white man] when I was herding sheep with him. I told him I could help him. I touched him on the hand and head and went to sleep. I imagined I could see pretty flowers and a pretty road going north.28

28 Du Bois reports imagery of flowers in connection with heaven, obelbis, among the Wintu (Du Bois, 1935, p. 79).
This man was going to get well all right, but he was going to kill a man in seven years. This was in 1933. In the summer of 1931 he killed a man in Oregon over some trouble with sheep. I told him he was going to kill a man.

When I first learned to doctor I could just look at you and that was all there was to it. But I don't do that any more.

This white man I doctored shot my brother. He bought a gun, and something told me he was going to shoot one of my brothers but that if I prayed, my brother wouldn't get killed. When I prayed I sang and traced my hands all around four times, and then I closed my fist, then rubbed my palms together, and then I rubbed them on my face. Then I asked who would be shot, and they said that it would be my youngest brother. The man shot my brother in the face, and the bullet went around the scalp.

Some of the Indian people like me [i.e., shamans] can kill and cause trouble. In Oregon they kill a man like me because they make too much trouble. If I would poison my Mabel [the woman who had recently left Andrew] another doctor could help her if she weren't too far gone. The doctors are afraid of one another. I'm not, because I am friendly.

Last year there was a fellow around Big Bend. They call him Little Frank. He was a great talker [braggart]. Last summer an Indian from Oregon came in and found Mr. Frank and took him and some boys off somewhere, and then the Oregon man came back and said that that fellow killed his partners. Frank was killed all right. That is why I don't want anything known. It's dangerous for me [i.e., danger of being killed by suspicious Indians].

They hate Albert Thomas. He tells fortunes too much. He has to watch out, for they have tried to kill him three or four times. The rule is never to do anything wrong to anybody. Suppose my boy died. I would be working on the fellow who killed him from here where I am, and pretty soon that man would be dead. But a man must be careful. Sometimes I get disgusted and wish something could happen to me.

I had a dream that told me Charlotte [who had been buried a few weeks earlier; see pp. 380–381] was going to die. I went to see her and said I hoped my dream wouldn't come true. She told me that her head, ears, and teeth had been hurting her. Later I went up to Oroville and heard that she was down in bed with the flu. All the Christians had been praying for her, and they had a couple of white doctors. They came after me in the middle of the night, and I sang for her. She had a pain on the right temple, and her face was cold. She was dead at the head and the feet and alive around the heart. I said I would come back the next night. The Christian [Pentecostal] Indians didn't like this and said that they had charge of her, that I was just a sort of devil, and that they didn't want me to touch her at all. I told Mabel that Charlotte was dying and was not going to live no matter how many Christians she had around her. I couldn't have helped her, but I took the pain away from her [relieved her of pain].

When I have answered somebody's call for me, after I get back I go to bed. The minute I get to bed I see heaven open to me. It lies kind of south where the sun goes down [sic], and there's the prettiest chute that goes up and curves back to the east. When that road is open, the patient can't be saved because heaven is open for him. When one gets up there—it is miles and miles long—there are the prettiest marble walls and pretty flowers of all colors on each side. Water is running all the time. Dead people are walking all around. Different bunches have different-colored clothes. In the center it is like my hand [†], with a great big building and a pretty door like a church facing the dead people's walk. When the person goes in (he is a soul or breath and goes in like the wind) he cries all the time. He goes to this big round door, and a man is inside there to meet the spirit and take him into a room. There is a big room on the east of the building, and there is a big pile of beads there. The spirit is taken in there, and he gets on the pile of beads. You can hear pretty, slow, sad organ music playing. There is a lever which comes down and the beads begin to burn. The lever goes down and makes the fire blaze and burn the beads [see pp. 379–380]. When the lever gets to the floor, the person walks out and everybody is glad to see him. Before, nobody had known him, but now he loses his language and talks their [i.e., spirit] language.

Whenever I doctor somebody I head him away from there. If I can get him turned on the road toward the North Pole, he is safe. If the heaven stays open, then he is gone and there is nothing that I can do. I tell that to people lots of times. Maybe I'm crazy, but that is what I see. I
wouldn't do this work if I could help it; but what is the use—if a person is supposed to do these things, why, he can't help it. I never get poison out of people. Sucking doctors get poison out, but I have never seen them. Albert Thomas drew some medicine the white doctors gave him through the navel and put it in a pan of ashes; I saw that.

I doctor for three nights on a hard case. On the last night I sing my cloud song and see if I can make it cloudy. I pray to the cloud and call for thunder and rain and snow. Then it will cloud up and maybe thunder and rain. In April I got a thunder when I doctored my grandchild. I make it rain to call for help. Sometimes it'll only cloud up; other times it rains. An answer means help. I work under the sun, moon, and cloud. Albert Thomas sang to the cloud. One time I saw some fire way out in the canyon; Albert showed me that. We both smoked, and way up on the graveyard there was a long, blue blaze going in the air. He said that that was a spirit light and that though I couldn't make it appear like that, he could.

When I doctor I sit straight and brace myself. I smoke, talk, and sing. Then I blow smoke east, then south, then west. Finally I blow smoke north, and that throws me into it. Then I get sick and throw up—I get awfully sick. Then it feels as if things were crawling up me, and I get sick, and then I sing and sing and sing and think about nothing but that thing. Then I rub my palms together four times with both hands across my head, and then I blow in my hands and lay them right over the pain and throw my power in the patient, and that gives them my charge.

They say that Charlie Klutchie [a Wintu, see Du Bois] can cross the river without getting wet, just like walking on ice. Johnny Stacy told me about that. I saw him doctor when I went up to his country with Ed and Elaine Jordan. Elaine sent Ed to lay a twenty-dollar bill on the table and come back to our camp. That night we went up to the house. Ed and Elaine lay down. Charlie smoked. Soon he went into a trance. He got over it and started to sing. When he was singing and talking he said, "These folks got the consumption. I can't do much for them. They know that." Ed pulled up his shirt, and Charlie put his mouth down and drew on his lung [the informant indicated the diaphragm]. He drew blood up and something that he put in his hand. He had grass fixed like a tamale and tied at both ends. He opened a little place and spit in it. Every time he drew out something. He doctored both of them that way. The next night he doctor Ed with his mouth again. He said he was going to get the sickness with his hand for the girl. He sat down and ran his hands over her from head to feet. She kept her clothes on. He brought his hand down across her body and caught it as though he were catching a housefly. He had a hard time holding it because it throbbed up and down. Everybody grabbed him and held him. He was the wildest-looking man and he could hardly talk while he was holding that thing. Finally we took him outside and told him to wrap his hand in meat or deerhide, but they couldn't get any. Finally they poked his hand in a big lard bucket of water. He rested when we got his hands in there, but he had a hard time when he took it out. Finally he got calmed down by rubbing his hands with a deerhorn, and he put that thing in the grass. I never saw it. I think that was in 1926. Both of them died.

Seers.—The seer was known as *tlahit* and had the power of foretelling the future. The profession was important in warfare (*q.v.*) and presumably other activities. The *tlahit* had no curative powers.

[Jones:] Seers smoke and get in a trance. They sing and smoke and talk "Latin," which is translated by an interpreter, *dauyumoiyo* (tells what this man is saying). In this way they can find out about things in the near future. These men can lie down and smoke and tell how many soldiers are coming and where they are, and in this way their side gets an advantage. They can tell what is happening somewhere, also what will happen in the future.

Long time ago, before whites came into the country, there was one Indian who said what was coming before the whites had ever arrived. He told about white man's food, his looks, the animals they had, etc. Some foreteller told all these things and said that our chiefs would be done for. He was from the border between Tehams and Shasta County, probably a Redbank Indian. We had other seers for wars who told short, near-by things and such like, but this one could see a thousand miles away.
Another informant gave a more circumstantial account of the prediction of the coming of whites:

In Anderson, years ago before white people came over here, there was an ordinary man who slept four days and nights without waking. He breathed the whole time, so he was alive. The fourth morning he awoke before the sun came up. He told the people to gather together. “I’m going to tell you something that is going to happen. I have been knocked out for a long time. My spirit told me things that are going to take place.” So this man sang a song, and in this song he told what was to happen. He said people were coming from the east and south—people like us, only white. He said we wouldn’t be able to say “our women” or “our land” or “our hunting ground,” because these people will steal them all. They will bring animals that tear the ground [hogs]; they will bring animals that they ride; animals with long horns. They will steal our women; they are going to have something that makes noise and kills us; they are going to bring a red stuff [liquor] that makes people crazy. He said he didn’t know how long it would be, but that it would happen pretty soon. The people kept string count, and in seven years the whites were in the country. Everything he said came true.

The native account of early white contacts starts with a vision of the arrival of whites that is similar to the above (see pp. 311–313).

SOCIORELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Inadequacy of group ritual.—Religious gatherings and group activities of a sacred or semisacred nature were not highly developed among the Nomlaki. Most religious activity was individual: either the individual was directly concerned with religious experience, or the group activity was directed toward a single individual at the life crises of birth, puberty, and death. The principal exception to this generalization was the Huta, the initiation taking place as a group ceremonial at irregular intervals. Even here the emphasis appears to have been on the individual initiate rather than on the development of group solidarity. The Huta was, however, a religious activity—indeed, probably the most sacred of all group activities. I have described this ceremony under “Social Organization” because its secular aspects were emphasized by the informant, who only dimly understood the religious significance.

The character of sacred group activities among the Nomlaki must be viewed as important to the relative lack of integration of their social units. There were no religious sanctions for the olkapna, which left these clanlike structures rather weak and socially ineffectual. Larger territorial entities, such as tribelets, were not supported by religious rites that might have dramatized their unity and furthered political cohesion.

Indigenous group ceremonies were the Huta, puberty ceremonies, the group rituals at birth and for mourning, war dances, and what Powers calls the gift dance (dūr’-yu-pu-di).\footnote{Powers, p. 237.} Powers also says there was a pine-nut dance, “celebrated when the pine nuts are fit to gather.”\footnote{Ibid.} The spring dance was the only indigenous group ceremony not already mentioned.

Spring dance.—The spring gathering (oltēpōmteono) was described as follows:

\[\text{Jones:} \] Our people dance every spring and have all kinds of dances. When everything is all very green, when winter is over and everything is warm and the sun is coming north, then the birds holler witwitwit, the people begin to ask, “Why can’t we play a little?” Then they send news to...
their close neighbors that they are going to have a dance. The people ask the chief before they can give the dance, and if he agrees he will get out early in the morning and tell all the people to go hunting, fishing, and so on. He will name off the people for the various jobs early in the morning while they are outside listening.

The meat is brought to the chief, who gives each person some to be brought back prepared in the evening. Everybody gets some. At about five in the evening they start to dance, perhaps practicing first—some old fellows with the youngsters. This is a spring dance, a play dance, a home dance. They don’t gamble. It’s held inside the sweat house. There aren’t an awful lot of dances among our people [i.e., there is not a great variety of dance forms]. One is a fast dance called to-totcono that takes place in the sweat house.

The dance group included two drummers, two singers, one person to call the dances, from two to six male dancers, and as many female dancers as were available. They dressed behind the drum; the singers stood in front of it, and the timekeeper in front of them with a split-stick rattle in his hands. There is a leader who “dances the girls out” of the dressing place one at a time toward the end of the dance [apparently dancing back and forth from the curtain to his position]. This is said to be a strenuous part. The women sing a sort of chorus in accompaniment to the two singers and then dance back with a heavy beat [stamp of the foot?] behind the drum, where the curtain hides them.

The dancers received no pay for their performance but were fed by the people. They usually bathed after the dance. After the first spring dance, others might follow.

The dance costumes included feather capes, yellowhammer bands, and beads.

Because of a lack of knowledge of native dance rituals, some informants believe that no dances were indigenous. Andrew Freeman said, “They claim our people never had their own dances—only other people’s,” although he quickly excepted the puberty ceremony and the Huta. Kroeber accepted this evaluation, saying, “There are said to have been only two occasions for dancing, the taking of a scalp and the adolescence of a girl—besides the emergency dancing for a snake-bite.”18 Powers’ account and Jones’s description, given above, seem to establish clearly the spring ceremony and make likely the existence of others. The absence of information stems from the relative unimportance of the native gatherings and the great importance of the ceremonials brought by the 1870 Ghost cult that have captured the attention of living Nomlaki.

Religious dances of historic times.—The poverty of native ceremonial is in strong contrast to the rich development of ritual dances as a nativistic response to subjugation by the whites. The religious movement known to ethnographers and historians as the 1870 Ghost Dance originated among the Pavioitos of western Nevada and spread rapidly throughout California and the west coast generally.

The portion of the movement that affected north-central California in general and the Nomlaki in particular has been minutely analyzed and described by Du Bois.19

The original form of the cult stressed the theme of death and rebirth, the destruction of the whites, the return of the dead, and the return to native culture. As the cult moved across the Sierras it became reinterpreted by a Yana named Norelputus. He emphasized the use of the Earth Lodge, the semisubterranean structure known to the Nomlaki as the lut, as a protection for Indians in the imminent world

18 Kroeber, 1932, p. 358. No data on the emergency dance were obtained, and no further information was offered by Kroeber.
19 Du Bois, 1939. This classic monograph treats the movement historically in terms of the individuals and forces operative in the spread and alteration of a religious cult. Its implications for social process have been inadequately appreciated.
catastrophe. In this form, according to Du Bois, the cult spread southward, to be reinterpreted and elaborated by two natives of central California: Homaldo, a Wintun from Dachimechini, south of Grindstone, and Lame Bill, a Patwin. Homaldo was responsible for spreading the version known to the Nomlaki as Bole and referred to by Du Bois as Bole-Maru. Lame Bill spread a later form known to modern Nomlaki informants as Hesi (a term taken from the indigenous Patwin dance from which Lame Bill obtained part of his inspiration). Both these forms reached the important Nomlaki rancherias—the Bole first and the Hesi later. The dance continues, usually under the name Big Head, Bullhead, or Shake-head, and partakes of both the earlier movements.

[Moore:] The Bole dance is supposed to be a dream dance. It came from the east—from Sitting Bull’s people. They claim that if you dance Bole your mother and father will come to life again. People danced themselves to death over Bole. There is another dance called Hesi, and that is different. It is danced at Elk Creek, in Redding, and down south on Cash Creek. It is a dream dance too. Members don’t eat meat till they are through with the dance. Bole came from everywhere [sic], and dancers believe that they will see their parents. Those who dance it go without eating for five days, and many of the weakhearted people die from hunger. They talk over beforehand concerning whom to pick for singers, and they choose a man who really believes in the Bole. Some wear feathers, and others don’t. For other dances you have to have feathers, but the Bole members claim that the more dancers there are, the better. The dance steps are just the same for Bole and Hesi and are like the Shake-head dance.

Hesi is more recent than Bole; it is about the newest dance the Indians have. It is about forty or fifty years old.

Bole was introduced to the Nomlaki by Homaldo, who was said to have been a Wintun, but Nomlaki informants said he spoke a different language. Du Bois’ data led her to feel that Homaldo’s cult activities were motivated by personal profit rather than sincere belief in his own message. He brought with him a white man named Frank Uri. According to informants, Uri profited by the native trade route (see pp. 336–337) and at one time operated a saloon within Wintun territory. According to Du Bois, his efforts to exploit the cult did not meet with success. The following accounts enrich the data that Du Bois gives on the cult among the Nomlaki.

[Jones:] They say old Homaldo was great. He could do a lot of sleight of hand and he made the Indians look up to him. He dreamt it. I never saw him because children weren’t allowed to watch him. I went to the sweat house at Jake Oakes’ house just beyond Paskenta on the road to Covelo. He had a flag above the house. Mother wouldn’t let me look at it because it was dangerous. I did though.

They say he could make fourteen-inch-long elder sticks dance around the fire by themselves and then fly through the smoke hole. After he did this he would sing and reach up and get coins out of the air and fill a basket. He said he got his money that way. He had the Indians scared to death. They say he was a terrible-looking man. He carried the dance on to the north. Others couldn’t do these things. They gave him twenty dollars a night for the dance, and he stayed two or three nights. It was pretty cheap at that. He was an Indian from some place between here and Stonyford. He brought the Bole, which is different from the Bole-Hesi.

No one else could do the tricks, but they did the dances and songs afterward. After that they would dream about a dance and certain kinds of costumes. They danced these all through this region. The Tehama Indians danced the Dream dance [Bole].

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Du Bois notes that this confusion stems from the Nomlaki named Dominic, who had read about the Ghost Dance movement of the Plains in 1899 and erroneously assumed an identity between the two.
I was five or six years old when Homaldo and his people came through. Uri joined the group and acted as pilot and interpreter, getting twenty dollars a night. The Indians had more money then. Homaldo's language was different from ours. Uri carried on trading for about ten years. He lived among our Indians from the start and could talk the language pretty well. He gave the Indians a long talk about how they would have to use Homaldo or they would die, become crippled, blind, or something. They scared the money right out of the Indians—made sixty dollars or eighty dollars out of each rancheria. Since that time the Bole was brought by different people, but they couldn't do any tricks.

[Freeman:] Homaldo told the Tehama Indians to build sweat houses, for he wanted to dance for them. He would put a big striped pole with a flag on it over the dance house, and then he would dance. After he came here he went on to Cottonwood and did the same, and then to Hayfork. He brought the Bole. The dancers don't eat, drink, or sleep when they are dancing. They only dance a few nights. My stepfather was a young man and he did the singing. My stepfather [George Freeman] nearly went crazy after he got through with this because he lost so much sleep. He'd go up on the butte and sing all night. He was afraid to sing the song to me. He would hear people saying, "Let's go," and he would go out and sing and he thought the people would be dancing around him. He would stay out all night.

[McGetrick:] Homaldo could move his hand back and forth in a horizontal motion with his arm stretched out, and lizards and frogs would come out. I'm telling you what I saw. Then he held his hand over his head palm forward, and they were all gone in a second. He was a man who went against his own will, and that is what took his life. He worked under this will [power] all his life; and that thing that told him what to do, that took his life. He was a Stonyford Indian. He could tell about a death happening there just as though he were seeing it. He could walk into a store, blow smoke in his hand, and have two or three dollars there to pay with. The money would not be good after he left. If he were living today he would be worth a million dollars. He can make lots of things move on you—you imagine lots of things crawling on you. He works at night on people who don't believe in such things.

The following is an incomplete account of the dance performance itself, presumably the Bole.

[Freeman:] Captain Charley used to say, "Come on, boys, come on up to the drum," and they would go to the drum and close the curtain. Charley understood how to make a breechclout out of a shirt by tying the arms around the waist and bringing the tail between the legs. Then he put an eagle coat, tépî, on each dancer. This reached from the back to the ankles. It is tied on by straps over the shoulder. A net, koma, holds the feathers on the head. This is a fine-mesh net sack about five inches in diameter and is filled with downy eagle feathers. The yellowhammer band, tewôi, is tied to the forehead, and magpie-wing feathers are fastened to the back on a springy stick. This is called yanomha. Three duck feathers attached to the end of a stick, kalak, are put in the hair, one on each side. The sticks are springy, and they quiver while the wearer is dancing. They use elder-stick or crane-leg whistles.

When the dancers are dressed they come out from behind the curtain. There are two singers, tâuwit, and a drummer and one man who calls the songs and stands in front of the singers. One singer starts a song, and the dancers start around the fire, keeping it to their left. The two singers alternate throughout the song, each taking a certain number of turns. They sing hard and use their split-stick rattles. After the dance they give a big feast and the dancers bathe. After that they may go to their wives.

The Hesi is described in the following full account. The informant's references to old times may refer to the period of introduction of the cult or to the regulations of the Hesi among the Patwin before it became a part of the Earth Lodge movement. The Hesi and the clown Moki, are almost certainly not native to the Nomlaki.
The Hesi is a secret dance that is not a part of the secret society [i.e., Huta initiation]. The Colusa Indians had it. It came from the south and got as far as Colusa and finally into Chico, where it existed for a number of years. Finally it got around south of Stonyford, where they carried it on for a while. It was never danced at Paskenta. It was danced here at Grindstone, but never at Paskenta.

The chief is not a member of this society. Dominic’s grandfather, I understand, wouldn’t have anything to do with it. There were no women in this, though some joined down south. Santiago at Stonyford is probably the leader. Charley Watson [Wartham?] was the leader. He went to Ukiah, where he died, and that broke things up. Woodie Thatcher is a leader of the society now [1936] and he sings the Hesi.

At each rancheria there is a group of Hesi members with a leader, perhaps four bullhead carriers, one red cap, two singers, a drummer, and a dresser. They have sticks, tokki, about three inches long which they bundle together and tie with a string. When someone invites them to a dance they bring a bundle to the leader, and if he takes it, that means he is planning to come to the dance. The headman gives a stick to each dancer, and if he doesn’t want to go he backs away from it. When they go they take their feathers [i.e., regalia].

The leader dances to the door, leading in one bullhead. When he gets in position the singers start in, and the leader goes back and forth four times on each of three sides with the first dancer. Then this bullhead sits down back of the singers, while the leader dances another in and around the same way. Then this dancer sits down, and the third and fourth bullheads are danced in. After the fourth the red cap comes in and dances very slowly, and then he sits down. After they have their marches they go outside and undress by the stream. They rest until it is their time again. No women used to be allowed on the inside for the old-time Hesi, but they could see the parade on the outside. When the dancers finish on the last day they all go back and sit down. Then all the people from a rancheria parade around and march out to their own dressing place, where they hold a kind of worship—they throw their hands out and one fellow says things and they all holler in some kind of “Latin.” They say, “Like to see a good year, like to see good time, hope there is plenty of fun.” Some would say something foolish too. After they are through they all take a bath. When everything is over they gamble, perhaps for a day and a night.

Bullheads make a cap of a tule which is tied over their head. They have sticks about fourteen inches long, with a feather on the end of each and another feather a third of the way down. They stick these all around in the tule, a couple dozen for each dancer. The Bole-Hesi dancers make a yellow poppy out of colored cloth and a white feather in the middle. They paint their arms and legs with a kind of brown clay and streak their breasts with charcoal. Some don’t paint at all. When you painted yourself in the old days, you couldn’t eat any meat. They wear tight-fitting breechclouts or make one out of a shirt. The red cap is made in an oval shape. This dancer wears a woman’s hair over the face; and they call him woman when he dances, but he is a man. They pick a sort of fattish, heavy-set fellow for this job. They used to make red caps out of woodpecker scalps, but lately they use red velvet because it takes about five hundred [†] woodpeckers. It’s a pretty wide cap.

The leader wears two horns made with the feathers from under the wings of ducks. He has a yellowhammer band across his forehead, shell beads around his neck and arms, and a bead belt around his waist. The red cap wears a skirt made out of willow-bark strips. The bullheads use two split-elder-stick rattles. The dresser’s duty is just to dress the other fellows—he has no special costume. They use split-stick rattles to keep time. The drummer stands on the drum and beats it with a big stick.

The Moki is supposed to be around, but they don’t always have one. The Moki is a clown and a person you don’t want to fool with. Lee Kirk is a Moki. The Moki carries a club and may hit you. A person is not supposed to touch him nor notice him at all. He acts as a spy for stray remarks around the outside. His coat is made of crow or magpie tail and wing feathers and hangs to the ground. It is like a sack with a little top thing over the head, but is light because it is made of feathers on a net.

As late as 1939 the Nomlaki engaged in religious dances stemming from the Ghost Dance movement. They were held in the large dance house at Grindstone.
and at other rancherias among neighboring tribes. In 1936 the cult movement was moribund, but by 1939 interest had been rekindled. I was unable to determine what influences brought about this change, although the assistance of local white benefactors in rebuilding the sweat house, and the Indianist policy of the Indian Service, both must have contributed. A youth of about eighteen spoke enthusiastically of his recent initiation and surreptitiously showed me his ritual paraphernalia. His surplus money was spent on these luxuries.

The Ghost Dance movement originated in a need to re-establish self-esteem among a population that had been degraded by twenty years of frontier life and subjugation to an alien force. Seventy years later it serves to give ritual meaning to an otherwise drab existence and to signify a new bond between tribes that, though former enemies, were now united by a cultural background presenting a homogeneous resistance to the white culture that has engulfed them.

The death-and-resurrection theme, clearly associated with cult movement rather than with native ideology, was expressed in the following narrative. The imagery is characteristic of Freeman, from whom the story came.

One man dreamed in the Huta that he should make a certain call and a being would appear. This being would cut the people in two, and then they would never die or be sick. They gave a big supper and talked the matter over. They called this man who was to come Saltu. [See Freeman's narrative of creation, pp. 349–351.] One of these people named Benito lived on this side of Stonyford. It was the Stonyford people who did this. I saw a scar he had around his waist.

They counted out two hundred men to be cut in two. They cut a big pile of boughs with which to cover the people. They went south of the house and put a post there and brought beads and all kinds of Indian property. They sang. One went to where the stake was. He was whistling out a big whistle. The people were singing. The fellow went there and called and then ran back to where the other people were. Saltu didn't come. He went a second time and called. It was midmorning. Pretty soon they saw something dark, and this man ran as far back as he could. Soon this animal—whatever it was—came. They say that this animal looked like a big rooster. He had only one long feather sticking in the middle of his head.28

He stood first on one foot then on the other. He was about three and a half feet tall. He was black. The man who had called said, "Here are the people who want to be cut." They came out one at a time, and he ducked his head with a sideward motion. That cut the Indian in two—dead as can be and bleeding. Two others picked the dead ones up, put the two pieces together facing with the feet to the north lying on the back. They covered them with willow boughs. Blood was running down the hill.

When he cut the last one he ran south like a rooster. He was supposed to be back in four days. Of course they called him again. This time he came on the first call. As soon as he came, he went to the first man and put his head over him. These dead people got up and rubbed their eyes. They were healed just as quickly. They thought that that was pretty good.

Later they got two hundred more and called him again. He cut two hundred more. One man sneaked around with a bow and shot at this animal when he was on his way home. He never did come back though the people called and called. Those who were cut in two rotted.

Benito is the only man alive of those who were treated in this way. He had a scar all around his body, and I saw it.29 This man with the scar proves that they did this to the people.

I heard Captain Charley tell about it. He preached about it to the young people. He said that it was by going according to the rules that such things could happen.

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29 Du Bois, p. 60, quotes a statement by Nancy Jordon in which there is reference to a scarred man brought by Uri who "tried to say he was one of the Indians which had come back. All the Indians walked out. Frank Uri was trying to fool them."
CHAPTER IV
SOCIAL LIFE

GENERAL ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Implicit in much of the ethnographic data obtained are certain generalized attitudes toward life and morality. These tenuous aspects of culture are difficult enough to capture from a society in full stride; they must be viewed as extremely tentative when strained through informants whose life experiences have been greatly influenced by whites.

The Nomlaki had a strong sense of the moral, and this was constantly fed by the daily harangues of the chiefs, whose directions to activity were interlarded with moral clichés: "Be industrious, be honest, be friendly but do not hesitate to stand upon your rights." The good person worked diligently, provided for his family, was generous. At the same time the Nomlaki were aware of social differentiation. They recognized differences in both skill and status, and assumed, not without reason, that skill and status went hand in hand. Skills were "given to a person," as has already been shown, and the acquisition of skills appears to have been limited to some extent to persons who were wellborn.

Despite the virtue of generosity among the Nomlaki, wealth was sought and accumulated. My impression, however, is that the acquisition of wealth was a privilege of a few, the whole community not participating in the drive to riches. In general, a person's position was fixed by forces outside the individual, forces that appear to have been of a spiritual nature. These forces had the same implications as the modern popular theory of inherent abilities.

It was particularly difficult to get reliable information on matters pertaining to sex from Americanized informants because in our own society these matters are both hedged by taboos and surrounded with bravado. I often deliberately entered into obscene conversations with male informants, some of whom bragged about their exploits. The attitudes seemed to have been affected by the whites, with whom similar conversation must have been frequent. The longest and most fruitful interview on this subject elicited the following information concerning established attitudes between the sexes.

[Jones:] Women are troublemakers. An old woman said that to me when I was young. Out of my four women, only one got along with me nicely. Indian women are jealous. Children will get you into trouble. The older people teach us not to get in the habit of fussing with our wives, and if one starts complaining, to walk away if you can. A woman is more jealous than a man. A man isn't after a woman for nothing.

As a rule, a poor man has more children, but I guess he lies around and has more babies. A man of importance isn't around the house very much. Such a person hardly ever jokes with his wife. He may only be around in the evening. He may lie down alone for a while and then come to her to get warm. There are some men who like to be around their women all the time. They get to hating each other bitterly after a little while because the more love-making they do, the less time the marriage will get. There are some men who will stick with their women, and women with their men. They always go around together; she'll go along carrying wood, he'll go gather berries. Such a marriage may last. That kind of people are said to "hang together." There are families that stay together, and perhaps none of them ever get married. They say that in such a family the baby girl is often as wild as can be. Often that will happen in Indian families.
An orphan girl who doesn't pay attention to anyone may be foolish, and such a girl might sleep with men; she won't have a particular man, but live with one for a while or just a night. There might be a few in a rancheria; a couple might get together and go around. Many of the young men don't like to be caught with such a woman, but they go to this kind. Boys who don't have anyone over them might go to such a woman, but boys with parents are usually kept away. A woman of this kind might go gather seeds occasionally. People thought little of them; everybody scolded them, though they in turn didn't pay any attention to this.

Parents try to keep their daughters virgins, for men of good account won't marry a loose woman. Looseness cuts the chances of a good marriage. Usually girls are accompanied by a female relative when they step out at night; their parents always try to keep a watch on them. They feel that a man is only taking advantage of a girl that knows no better, especially if he is older.

**Life Cycle**

*Birth.*—The Nomlaki understood fully the processes of birth and indicated no magic methods of inducing pregnancy. Infanticide was not practiced, but abortions were occasionally attempted by drinking a mistletoe infusion. During pregnancy the man and wife had to observe certain restrictions. The man could not kill a bobcat or any inedible game. He could not handle a cottontail, since this would cause difficulty in parturition—the fetus would “sit inside and look around and not come out, like an ambushed cottontail.” About two weeks before delivery the woman was sometimes given an herb to ease labor. The mother was attended by a midwife, usually an old woman adept at aiding in childbirth.

A midwife or “hand doctor” is called in to deliver the baby. Occasionally two are called. Some midwives are considered better than others because they have electricity or something.

The midwife won't work with a woman unless she gets the pay in advance, and she won't come unless she is satisfied with the amount. She is paid in beads or in yellowhammer quills. The midwife will lay her hands on the woman's stomach, and she will give birth without any pains. When the doctor has to deliver a baby by inserting her hands, she charges more. The midwife washes the baby with warm water and puts it in a special basket. Then the doctor goes for the afterbirth; she sets the woman up and squeezes the stomach until it comes out.

Hand doctors don't doctor within their own family, but have someone else come unless it is a case of emergency. They tell of cases where they sent for a midwife as far as a couple of rancherias away and the baby was already born by the time she got there. The midwife then comes and takes care of the baby. She makes a present to it (something like earrings) but doesn't accept any pay.

The birth takes place inside the woman's house if she is in her own village. If she is a [visiting] outsider, they may make her have the baby in the girls' hut, where she will stay for a month.

Old people and cripples (people who are just living there and are too old to get around) will leave the house as soon as they learn that the woman is feeling her pains. They claim that it affects them. They won't stay around a menstruant woman either. Everyone goes out until the birth is over, and then the stronger ones come back in. The weak ones stay away for the entire month.

The father had to cut the navel cord. Formerly they were supposed to bite it off, but one informant admitted to using scissors.

The woman was expected to stay in bed for five days. The woman stayed in a warm place. After four or five days her husband slept by her. (One informant said that he was made to sleep alone for a few days after his daughter was born, but that he had slept with a woman five or six days before a birth.)

They have an extra basket for the child; an aunt might have given an old one, or a grandmother might have made one especially. They roll the inside bark of red or white willow (rich people use maple bark) into soft balls that they use as diapers. Layers of it are put in the baby's basket, and the baby is laid on it. The infant is covered with this bark “cotton” and then tied down. The
diaper material is changed; it might be washed once or twice but, if possible, clean material is used. They are always very particular to keep these things nice and clean. When the baby is first put into the basket, they have a peculiarly shaped rock as a pillow for the head. This flattens the head and is used because Indian people don't like the looks of a long head. They keep it there for about a week and then take it away. The baby stays in the basket till he is old enough to crawl, and sometimes he crawls with the basket still on. Occasionally the baby wants to get back into his basket.

Old women squeeze the breast until the milk is all right. First it comes out in lumps. When women don't give milk, a kind of salt (kikiku wé) is rubbed between the breasts and over the shoulders. It makes the women give milk. They now sometimes use Indian salt but don't like to use white men's because they don't know where it comes from.

The father buried the navel cord at a hunting spring and "wished his luck." He went to the spring and expressed aloud his wishes for himself and the baby. Jones said that the older people told him what to say when his daughter was born. "I wished she would be a good basketmaker and a good girl." Another informant said: "My father buried my navel cord at a spring between the buttoes, and that is where I put my children's."

The birth of a child involved certain dangers, as indicated by the fact that old people (and those who feel themselves to be weak) absented themselves. These dangers were further indicated by the restrictions placed on the parents. For a month after the first child was born, the woman and her husband ate "no meat or grease of any kind." Furthermore, "they don't associate with other people, and even converse at a distance for a whole month." One informant said that he gave a feast at the end of a week (when the navel cord dropped) but he and his wife didn't partake of this dinner. At the end of a month, when the period of restriction was ended, a feast was held. As one informant said, "It is a chance to make a fuss over the baby. The men all hunt and bring food and eat it there. Some of the old fellows preach, and they all josh one another about hunting and failing to get anything. Then they give a supper (tami). After that the couple takes a bath and clean themselves and they can eat meat."

Names.—A child will be given nicknames at birth, but his real name is acquired later. Sometimes nicknames referred to the particular craft in which a person engaged; occasionally they were vulgar. True names were usually some object, such as little back acorn (kanilé), or some event, getting a basketry splinter in your hand (könkonkewa, Jones's Indian name).

[Jones:] Usually a person is named after something that happened to his grandmother. Sometimes if a man is old and has a good name, he will give it to someone else. They give a present along with the name—something pretty valuable like a net or a bow or arrows. The child's parents might then do something for this old relative, such as give him a present in return to show that they care for him. Sometimes this man is the boy's uncle, but sometimes it is his cousin.4 He has to be considerably older than the child. The man who gives the name changes his own back to one he had as a boy [1].

Jones did not know definitely which relative was supposed to give his name in this way. A relative was never addressed by his true name or his nickname, but only by the proper kinship term. After a person's death his name was never spoken.

Education and child discipline.—The Nomlaki child was given little formal

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1 Note that the term for maternal cross-cousin is grandfather (see p. 321).
education. In a large measure he learned from precept and example of his elders. Girls learned their household tasks by helping their mothers; boys were given small bows, arrows, and quivers with which to practice hunting.

[Jones:] The older people trained the younger ones, and when a hunter has a boy who is large enough to travel, he takes the child along. Some of the boys don't care to hunt while others do. Fathers or uncles are the ones to train the boys. After the boys do all right on the first trip they may be given a longer one.

Children were usually disciplined by relatives other than the parents. Punishment was occasionally severe, as for example for misbehavior at the Bole dance.

[Jones:] An uncle or grandfather teaches the boys to stay out of mischief, to do good, to help people. Usually an uncle [either maternal or paternal, according to statement] has charge of the whipping and makes them mind. A girl baby may be whipped by her mother, aunt, or older sister. A father seldom whips his own son. Several uncles may take charge of disciplining the children. They talk to the youngsters all the time, drilling them on how to behave, how to treat people, etc. The mother talks to the girls less than others do. When a girl gets old enough (about two years old), some aunt or someone who likes children takes charge of her. It might be a grandmother.

I don't suppose girls ever get whippings, because they aren't worth anything. They won't whip a mean boy who is no good and of whom they don't think anything. They say that such boys usually turn out good—they learn for themselves. Other children won't mind their parents no matter how hard they are beaten. Whippings are given with oak switches and are so hard that they leave marks on the child. The old people talk to the girls and may yank them around, but they don't spank them. They sometimes make a child go into the house and stay there for punishment.

One informant claimed that children who cried during a dance would be stripped and whipped so hard with chaparral-sprout ropes that welts would be raised from shoulder to ankle. This was intended as a toughening process, as was the practice of daily early-morning baths in the local stream.

Young women were not allowed to go out after dark except in the company of an aunt or older sister. "The people try to make something of the girls, so they don't allow them to chase after boys. They want a girl to turn out to be a nice woman and to show herself as a good worker."

Special knowledge was acquired by undergoing the Huta initiation, which gave the necessary magic power. There was also some specific training in addition to the initiation. A warrior practiced dodging arrows, or a chief's son might go into the woods to practice speechmaking (see pp. 324, 341). An artisan, such as an arrow maker, might take a young man's hands and slap them, saying "I am an arrow maker, I am your grandfather (or uncle, etc.) I am an arrow maker. I hope you have good luck." In this way he tried to make a fletcher of the youth. Similarly, a youth who derived a profession through his Huta experience might go to an established artisan for advice and even use his spring (sawal). "A chief would teach his son to make speeches," said one informant, "or have good talkers train him from boyhood on. People give such a boy presents so that he knows his place and in that way is trained to be a chief."

Puberty and menstruation.—The Nomlaki considered menstrual fluid dangerous and the menstruant a source of disaster. The fluid was especially dangerous for the feeble and the infirm, for gamblers, hunters, and artisans requiring "luck." It was
also especially dangerous for shamans, menstrual fluid being a poison that only the most skilled doctor could overcome. It had the particular power of making the doctor's poison work against him. The danger was greatest at the time of first menstruation, the restrictions on the woman subsequently being less severe. The subject of menstruation was consistently treated with considerable circumspection, even by informants who were otherwise unrestrained. Thus, rather than use a phrase directly referring to a pubescent girl, they would say, “When a girl gets about so high,” indicating a height of about four and a half feet.

A girl was confined at the onset of the first menses. If there was no menstrual hut, the girl's mother would ask a male relative—a brother or uncle—to prepare one. He in turn would send the men after poles, and the women to gather wormwood. The small structure would be completed during the day so the girl and her attendant could move in at night. The hut was placed outside the circle of dwellings and at a distance from the source of drinking water. The girl and her attendant were secluded for a month; if the menstruant was a member of a wealthy family, the seclusion might be extended for five or six months.

The attendant was usually a cousin of approximately the same age, but one who had already undergone the puberty ceremony. Although the attendant and the menstruant were subject to similar restrictions, girls “like to do this because they get dressed up when they are finished.”

The news of the girl's condition spread, and “if the family is well liked,” people came from all over to sing. This ceremony, which might continue for a full month, was a ribald gathering outside the dance house. It is not clear what part, if any, the girl took in this activity. One informant said, “They sing the most vulgar songs you ever heard all night, and when the dirty songs run out they sing the nice ones.” It is apparently this aspect of the puberty ceremony to which Powers refers in the following:

When a girl arrives at maturity, about the age of twelve or fourteen, her village friends celebrate the event with a dance in her honor which may be called a puberty dance, to which all the surrounding villages are invited. First, . . . the maiden is compelled to abstain rigidly from animal food for the space of three days and to allowance herself on acorn porridge . . . . She is banished from camp, living alone in a distant booth, and it is death to any person to touch or even approach her. At the expiration of the three days she partakes of a sacred broth or porridge, called khlup [of roasted buckeyes boiled in sand pools with hot stones] . . . . As each village or deputation from it arrive on the summit of a hill overlooking the scene, they form in line, two or three abreast or in single file, then dance down the hill and around the village, crooning strange, weird chants. When all the deputations are collected, which may not be for two or three days, they unite in a grand dance, dancing around the village in solid marching order, chanting many choruses the while. . . . In conclusion of the ceremonies the chief takes the maiden by the hand and together they dance down the line, while the company sings songs improvised for the occasion . . . . Sometimes the songs are not so chaste and innocuous . . . but grossly obscene.

Such a program of song and festivities might continue for many nights, “if the girl is well liked,” but apparently the first night was of major importance.

[Jones:] When she is about cured, the men start to talk about having a big time (tami). Hunters come in with what they can get, and by the time they all come in they have between seventy-five and a hundred rabbits for the Indians to eat. When everyone is there, a big fire is built in front of the house where the menstruant girl is sick, and they issue the rabbits to the men. A young son

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* Powers, 1877, p. 235.
of one of the large [wealthy] families carries the rabbits to them. When they are distributed, the headman tells them to start cooking. The young chief-to-be will carry around the basket to collect food for the chief and gives it to him. This food is for the orphans and latecomers. They have venison when they can get some and acorn bread and soup etc. The women fix acorn soup that day, and this is issued around. All the food is counted out before they start dividing it. Everybody furnishes some acorns; even if they are short they bring their last bit of food. If they haven't got food they will bring rope or something.

Neighboring villages are invited to these feasts by messengers through the chiefs of each rancheria. These headmen get up early in the morning of the last day before the dance and say, "Tonight we will go to the place of such and such a person and try to finish what we have started." He tells his working class of people [i.e., important people] about the dance earlier, but the general populace doesn't know when it is going to turn up until the morning for which it is scheduled. Only bread is cooked before the day set; soup and meat are prepared on the spot at the tami. Usually this is done near the stream. The people begin to arrive in the early evening.

The father won't talk unless he happens to be a [professional] speaker. After supper the speaker gets up and calls out what the people are to do for the evening. They might gamble, for everyone brings something to bet. After the gambling they might have their round dances (tcslels and yowena). These are fun dances, not "real" dances. They dance them over the girl. She is set free with these dances. Sometimes after a month they have another sort of dance. If the father is able, it might even be bigger and he might even call in enemies.

The dances and gambling may last for two or three nights or a week, the people hunting and working in the daytime. Indians didn't do things in a couple of nights; that's why they are so damn poor. The last day of the puberty dance the girl and the relative who took care of her all this while are set free. These two girls are painted up and go around arm in arm through the crowd. The girls use a blood-red paint [k'oba] like red lead. It is made from a soft stone which comes from the hills and is hard to find. They paint red horizontal lines across the cheeks. Breasts and arms are painted black with soft coals of some kind. While these two girls go around, if they see a young fellow they like, they hit him a pop with their hands or whatever they have. [A menstruant woman is not ordinarily allowed to hit a person.] The boys run from them. They say they are testing whether the boys can control their tempers. If the boy goes off pouting, they think he is no good and tell him so and hoot and poke fun at him and make him mad. If he doesn't control his temper, he is no good. They do this over and over. After they do this they go back in the house till the dance goes on, when they are made to sing.

For the yowena the girls wear beads and all the valuables they can. People who have wealth wear all the beads they can carry. For the yowena they stoop over to sing, and the beads hang to the crotch. The last round is the tcslels, which is just at dawn. They get in a circle and dance around the fire with their arms over each other's shoulders. One person starts the song, then someone else takes it, and so on, one person singing at a time, until almost everyone has taken the song. People may drop out of the circle or join it. The dance is jolly. Sometimes they get to giggling or laughing. Just as the sun is breaking they get to singing faster and faster, going round and round faster and faster until someone falls down, and then the dance is ended.

Everyone goes home except the important men. One or two from each rancheria stay to hear what the headman is going to say. The big men stay back and talk over what is to be done next [i.e., whether to have another dance]. They don't talk loud. The father discusses the matter with his family. If the women folk feel that it should be done again, they will have another time. Then he goes out and tells the men. The girl is turned loose for this time the same as any woman [i.e., apparently the confinement is usually terminated, even though there might be a subsequent tami]. The girl has nothing to say about this—only the old people.

The menstruant was not confined at subsequent periods, but she and her husband were subjected to a large number of interdictions that came close to having the same effect. The following specific prohibitions were mentioned by informants: The woman and her husband might not eat meat or fish; they might not travel; they might not go where there is dancing or gambling, to the chief's house or dance
house, to a funeral, or to visit a sick person. If the woman or her husband was a shaman, he could not doctor any person during this period. The husband was not supposed to hunt, touch his bow, or repair anything. The woman was not supposed to pound acorns or pinole, "for it ruins the pestle by making it soft." But the informant who gave this restriction noted that "sometimes she has to if there is nobody else around to do the work." Similarly, the man, if he had children, would "hang around the hunters. They will leave some of the meat but won't hand it to him. He will have the children clean and cook the meat."

No reference was made to use of the scratching stick by menstruants. The woman might bathe, and she frequently went into the creek. Sweating was "supposed to loosen them up good." At the close of the menstrual period she washed herself and her clothes.

If a girl found herself in a menstrual condition while visiting a neighboring village, she retired to the menstrual hut (which was ordinarily used only for pubescent girls) until she was ready to go home, when her people covered her head and took her out. She might under no circumstances enter the hut; dancers refused to perform when such a woman is present. One informant said that he knew a man who could discern whether such a woman was in the dance house, and it was his business to send her out before the dance started.

The restriction on behavior had its sanction in magic belief. Failure to abide by the rules might result in insanity. "Women, as a rule, are the ones to go crazy. This is due to eating meat when menstruating. They begin by chewing their tongue, then get to biting and eating themselves. After a while they have to be killed, but first they are watched. Doctors claim they can't cure some women who are crazy."

A tale frequently heard, with minor variations, accounted for the conformation of a part of the Paskenta Butte and carried a moral pertaining to menstrual prohibitions. One version goes as follows:

[Molly Freeman:] Once two Tehama [River Wintun, but others dealt specifically with Nomlaki people] girls were menstruating, and someone told them to go after water, which they did. When they returned they found their baskets empty. After they repeated this, they turned and saw something beckoning to them, and they followed this. She [the informant said that it was a girl, but used the masculine pronoun, presumably because of speech difficulty] went up a big hill and told the girls there was a nice place up there, and the two girls sat down and rested for a long while. The people didn't know where those two girls went, but followed the chips that they had dropped, and could follow the girls on up to where they had sat down. One of the girls had started looking for lice on the other's head when they began to turn into rock. The rock came up, starting with the feet, and by the time the old people had arrived, the girls had completely turned into stone. You can see now from a certain angle that there are two girls up there on Paskenta Butte.

According to another story, a similar fate befell a husband who had broken menstrual taboo while he was trying to feed his starving children. These tales (bahtahunbo'ho) were told as a warning to pubescent girls. A girl was advised not to exert herself unduly at the approach of pubescence, because early menstruations were thought to shorten the individual's life. Girls were told about the menstrual process by an older relative in anticipation of this pubescence.

Marriage—In an earlier section it was noted that marriage was exogamous with respect to the olkapna, and hence to the village. Customarily the groom moved
temporarily to the village of the bride, and after an indefinite period he returned with her to establish permanent residence in the village of his parents. Marriages were generally arranged by the parents of the couple, the young people having little choice in the matter. Polygyny was recognized and approved, but rarely practiced except among the well-to-do.

Some ideals of marriage were expressed by informants. They repeatedly said that men and women both wanted spouses who were industrious, children being so advised by their parents. The informants said they had not chosen their mates on the basis of beauty. Marriage between young men and old women took place "because an old woman has more and knows more." Some informants said that a woman would as soon marry a common man (watlamawin) as a rich man (néhkit), but others said that the daughter of a néhkit was expected to marry another rich man.

[Jones:] When a young man is about twenty, his family will want to make a match for him; so they talk to the parents of some girl of about eleven or twelve years. The boy will take the hint and drop his kill in front of her door. He will always leave over half of what he gets. This continues till she gets to be a woman. He will haul wood for her parents. Then, when the girl gets to be fifteen or sixteen, the old folks make the match. The boy's parents carry over some property, and she keeps these things if she wants him. If she refuses him, the boy's family demands pay for what he has done. The boy won't make the demand, but his parents will insist on repayment for what he has done for her. Her parents might talk her into the marriage, and she might give in; but then she doesn't care so much for him. They say that people married in this way get along better than when they love each other.

When the girl is old enough to get married, the aunt [or some other female relative] brings in the news to the man's family and after a while this aunt takes the news [?] back to the girl. A woman has to do this. Then an aunt or first cousin living in the same house with the man is usually sent to take beads to the girl's parents. If she accepts, then she can expect a husband that night, and he lives with the girl till they get thoroughly acquainted.

The girl frequently gathered seeds or pounded acorns for her prospective mother-in-law, who perhaps might make a basket in return. These reciprocal gifts, along with the early betrothal, apparently formed all the ceremony attached to marriage, although one informant said that a dance, tcumal, was held at the wedding.

Divorce.—Marriage among the Nmklaki appears to have been rather brittle. Separation might be determined by mutual agreement or at the wish of either party. If mutual agreement was reached, an exchange of presents was considered proper.

[Jones:] A couple can decide to separate by agreement. If a woman who is a basketmaker wants to leave a man, she will make him a real nice basket, mad and pouting all the time. This may take her from six months to a year. She will remain there and work for him and talk to him, but the two will simply not be getting along very well. When she finishes the basket she will hand it to him, saying that she is leaving. He gives it to his mother and tells her what has happened. Now the man's parents have to give her parents something. That is a friendly separation.

A man might leave a woman without any cause, but this seems to have been strongly disapproved. He must make payments to the girl's parents. "His father pays her father such things as ropes and nets; his mother pays hers in baskets. The woman has to wait a year before remarrying. The man shouldn't talk to his former wife. He shouldn't get another wife for about a year." Under these circumstances children stay with the mother.
If a woman deserts a man and lives with another, the man's people (it's always the old people, not the man himself nor his father, but his mother, aunts, or uncles) will demand pay from the man who took the wife. If the man wants to keep this woman, he pays the amount the husband had originally given to her parents to the husband's parents. If he refuses to pay, they will have a fight.

Once a girl left a man, and his family went after the child and she had to give it up. If there was no cause for her leaving except her fickleness [as in one case known to the informant] and the woman refuses to give up the baby, the relatives of her husband might kill her. His brother would probably do the killing. Then the girl's father would demand pay for the girl.

If a man catches another with his wife, he would go into his parents' house and either not say anything or tell his parents to let the woman go. He will quit the woman and won't provide for her any more. She will stay there a while and then go back to her mother and later perhaps marry this man. Even though the man had been a good friend of the husband, he now treats him coolly. Later the husband may get to talking to the man and call him brother and not get mad, but he will ask the man to give him something. As a rule the man will pay the husband, and then they would become friends. This then settles the matter, and the man has the woman in a regular way.

Then again the man may get mad if he catches his wife with another man and might kill him or kill them both. Then it makes trouble. If the husband kills an adulterer who has a number of relatives living, these might demand pay after the man is buried. Usually they will talk it over peaceably, or the man might even contribute on his own accord toward the burial. They won't always get mad. The man's people deserve a little pay. Sometimes a man will kill his wife's lover in order to leave her to worry and not simply have a good time.

Old age.—The aged seem to have been neither venerated nor despised. The only point mentioned was that certain foods never touched by others were eaten by old people. Thus, when porcupine was first discovered (the informant thought that this happened recently in the area), only old people ate the meat, because their possible death was of no importance. Similarly, if someone killed a coyote, he took it to the old people. Heart, liver, and lungs, as well as the intestines of small game, were eaten by the aged.

Burial and mourning customs.—When a person, either man, woman, or child, stopped breathing, the people picked up the body while it was still limber and placed it on its heels in a flexed position, pushing the head between the knees and folding the hands at the sides. The body was said to groan when they did this. They then tied rope, forty or fifty feet long, around the body, leaving a handhold at the nape of the neck. When it was tied into the proper position, they wrapped a bearhide, fur side inward, about the bundle; around this they wrapped a net, about ten feet long and six or eight feet wide. Every wealthy person had provided himself a good bearhide for this purpose; a man who had several pelts would earmark his own “casket” in which to be interred, picking the very finest in his possession.

If a man was killed while out hunting, they carry him home on a stretcher of poles. But first they bring in the news and will not touch the body until his wife arrives. While they bring in the news the body is being protected by others, and the woman goes back with the men. She will cut all her hair off and burn it where the body has been lying, mashing the ashes and scattering them over the blood. This she then gathers up and buries on the spot. The woman follows the body back home, mourning all the way. The body is then broken down into the regular position by forcibly bending it and is marched to the grave with a march song. The bereaved and bows of the man will be destroyed right away.

Men don't cut their hair upon their wife's death, but if a woman likes her husband, she sings her hair close to the head and has tar made out of pine pitch and deer tallow, mixed and cooked together, which she smears over her head, on her face, and down over her neck. [One informant
said that rattleweed nuts were mixed with this paint.] This pitch is a glossy black. The widow
never washes it off, but remains indoors until the pitch comes off.

The round grave was dug to a depth of about three feet with a mahogany stick,
but not the regularly carried sén. The dirt was removed in baskets. The graveyard,
which was usually about three or four hundred yards from a village (and might
be used by two or more villages), was in a favorable location for digging. The
corpse was carried to the grave on a pole slid through the rope loop and was let fall
into the hole with a thud. The individual’s belongings, amounting sometimes to
two or three hundred dollars worth of beads, were buried with the body. The grave
was packed down by tramping on it, presumably to prevent robbery by wild ani-
mals or thieves.

The burial usually took place very soon after death, preferably the same or the
next day, though there was no rule about this. No adult in the village slept the
night of the death, but all wailed more or less continuously throughout the night.
This was done in groups, some of the mourners crying for about an hour, then a
second group, a third, and so on. “Children often took notice and got to feeling
sorrowful and were not able to sleep. Some of the young people could sing [the
funeral dirge or mourning songs] as well as the old people, and a young person
might have to start the songs because he wouldn’t be so broken up. No living person
understands these songs.” Some people marched back and forth in a kind of step;
others just wept. One song would be repeated several times; then another person
would start a different song. Mourners “showed their feeling in this way, and it
made them feel better.”

[Jones:] “If a member of the secret society dies, they take the body into the sweat house. After
their secret ceremony they turn it over to the father and mother.”

After the burial the people returned home and cried and sang all night, stopping
at sunrise, for “when the sun looks upon us, everything is cleaned away.”

Many valuable things were burned, and nominally all the belongings of the de-
ceased were destroyed as well as much that belonged to his friends and relatives.
Another burning was held after a year, which freed the surviving spouse from
further mourning. This second ceremony took place during the night. The fire was
started in a hole or pit, and the goods were gradually fed to it. Eventually the
charred remains were stirred until all was reduced to a bed of coals. Then it was
sprinkled with water and covered over level with the ground. A little before sun-
rise the mourners trampled the earth solid. The mourners sang all during the
burning, and in the morning they washed their faces and were done with their
sorrows—perhaps only the chief mourner still mumbling to herself. The Nomlaki
did not hang things on poles. They burned the dead person’s property, and perhaps
the chief mourner would destroy his own things. “If a man loses his wife, he gathers
all her belongings, every single thing, any piece of hair or anything of value that
belonged to the woman, perhaps even the house. In this way they forget.”

* One informant knew this custom from the Valley Maidu. He said: “The Chico Indians make
things especially to burn. A Chico woman will start an immense basket two or three days after
the funeral, and she is in mourning so long as she is working on it. Her friends furnish the material.
When she finishes she sets a day for the burning. They put up a scaffold to show what she wants
to destroy.”
Occasionally articles were specially prepared for the second burning, but little care would be lavished on these. Acorns, oats, and similar foods were saved in great quantities for the purpose, but they were not hulled or cleaned. Skins were included in the fire only for a man—not for a woman. For a person of importance the amount of goods destroyed was great, and often much bead “money” was consumed in the flames. People brought things to be destroyed on the grave of an important person, either to be buried with his body, to be crumbled over the grave, or to be burned. The brother of the deceased might be given some nets, which he might keep, but he would not use them for a year or more, then preferably trading them for something else. A latecomer to the funeral of a chief or of any well-liked person would mash beads or whatever he had brought and sprinkle them over the grave. Poor persons were wrapped in “whatever could be found,” such as fish nets, deerskins, or common rope made from the inside of maple bark. In recent years money and modern objects have been buried in the graves. The dog belonging to the mother of one informant was killed and buried when she died.

If a woman died, her children were cared for by a relative but supported by the father. A widow or widower might remarry after the first year.

Some funeral customs and social attitudes regarding death remain, but modern custom tends to conform largely to American practice.

Jones told of his last wife’s death, about a year prior, completely in tears. She had been ill for some time, and when she felt she was going to die she called him to her side. She foretold the day of her death and said that she would remain about their house for four days after that. She would not be seen, but he would know she was there. She also told him what to do with her possessions. A sewing machine was to be given immediately to her stepdaughter (Jones’s daughter), and other things were to be Jones’s. The remainder was to be burned. In other words, all her possessions were to be burned, so she gave away valuable articles in advance.

After his wife’s death Jones spoke to his brother-in-law about the property, telling him the wishes of the deceased. He, a younger and more acculturated person, objected to the destruction of property. Jones left the matter to him, with the result that the goods were piled up and everyone was allowed to take what he wanted.

“And do you know, Walter,” Jones said to me with deep hurt, “they took everything away. Why, they took rags you wouldn’t have picked up off the ground and carried home.”

Jones felt the presence of his dead wife for four days after her death. He could hear her over the stove but would not see her, and he could feel the caress of her hand on his arm. After four days these sensations stopped and “she was gone.”

We note here the continuation of old concepts and the acculturation of the new. Noteworthy also is the recognition that the funeral arrangements were made by the blood relative of the deceased, not the affinal.

A girl of eighteen died during the first days of my visit with the Nomlaki. A few facts concerning the funeral are noteworthy. The body was returned to the girl’s house at Paskenta, and Indians from all the Wintun territory and beyond attended the funeral. Some living near by stayed away because of personal animosity to the aggrieved family. The body was placed in a pine coffin and kept in the house for a whole day (while efforts were made to locate the father, who was separated from
the mother). The grave, in shape and depth like those of American society, was
dug by native young men. Then the boys and men went to the house of the
decased and had a large meal outdoors. The crowd was subdued but not depressed. At
intervals a group of older people and close relatives went into the house and sang
dirges or waited. Usually old men led these dirges, each lasting about fifteen min-
utes. Young men rarely participated. The funeral was held the following day, an
interminable oration being preached by a Pentecostal missionary. The older women
waited a dirge among loud sobs during the sermon. The girl’s possessions, such as
clothes and guitar, were placed in the grave beside her. The earth of the grave was
not trampled down, because the girl had objected to the practice as “being too
cruel.” The burning of possessions, which was scheduled for that night, did not
take place.

GAMES AND RECREATION

The Nomlaki were fond of games, which accompanied every type of social gather-
ing. Games were of two classes: sports and gambling. Some sports contests, in the
nature of “track and field” events, were frequently accompanied by betting.

Sports.—The kick race was a relay race along a predetermined course with three
men to each side. Each of the first men kicked a buckskin ball toward the same goal.
When the ball belonging to one side reached the second man of that team, he kept
the ball going along the course toward the third, who kicked it to the goal. The side
that got the ball to the designated point first was the winner. The informant was
not positive that the game was aboriginal.

Hockey, wêta, was played on a field with goals about eighty yards apart. The
players were divided into two teams. The puck (also called wêta) was a quiotlike
hoop of rope about eight inches in diameter and was moved along by flipping with
a stick about four feet long. Touching the wêta or running with it was forbidden.
Each team had a captain, who acted as center. If two opponents both get their sticks
through the wêta at the same time, there was a tussle. There were no set number
of players, and in this sport old and young, men and women, all played together.
Sometimes at celebrations the separate villages played each other; sometimes men
against women. The game was played at the puberty ceremony, but informants did
not agree as to whether the menstruant might play.

Kûta was a type of shinny. The puck, tudut, was a rough, more or less rounded
knob of wood slightly larger than a baseball. The hardwood sticks were bent at the
lower end. This game was essentially like wêta but was usually for men only. It was
also played at the puberty ceremony. There were six or seven players on each side: usu-
ally a center, three guards, and three forwards. One goal constituted a win, but
teams usually played for the best two out of three games.

Gambling games.—Several forms of gambling games were known. The “hand
game” or kéni, was one in which a player guessed the hand in which a special bone
was held by another player. These bones were four-inch lengths of deer or moun-
tain-lion leg bone. They were in pairs: one (tuit) was filled with pitch and wrapped
with sinew and was the ace, the other (puk) was plain. The object was to win all
the twelve counters, which were divided between the two players or teams, by
guessing in which hand (or hands) the ace (or aces) were held. There might be
one player on the side, or there might be two. If there were two, each person of the
same side put the bones in a mass of straw, and after elaborate shuffling and efforts
to confuse the opponents, they extended their hands, holding the bones wrapped
in straw. One person of the opposite side guessed where the aces were. Simple sig-
nals were used for the four possible positions: holding out the right hand and
saying "tēp" indicated both aces in the right hand; holding out the left hand and
saying "tōkisēn" indicated both were in the left hand; raising one finger and say-
ing "winēmpom" indicated aces in the center; raising two fingers and saying "toi"
indicated they were on the outside. A correct guess caused the bones to change
hands; an incorrect one lost two points. When the position of an ace was correctly
guessed, one point was lost and one pair of bones turned over to the guessing side,
which then tried to guess the single remaining pair. The players were surrounded
by onlookers, who made side bets.

Various forms of cheating were possible, such as rolling up the straw without
putting the bone inside, holding the bone in the hand after the guess was made,
using double the number of bones, or putting the bones under the knees. All these
forms of cheating required great manual dexterity. No great onus seemed to have
been attached to unfair play.

Native games had seemingly given way to card games when in 1939 the use of
bone gambling reappeared. Here is an account of a game started for my benefit.

After supper we sat on the porch of Jones's small house, not knowing whether a game would be
held or not. Various men came up to Jones, but I was excluded from the conversations. It ap-
peared that there were difficulties in getting together money. One man was collecting a purse from
each side. Finally, after it was quite dark, the purse of about fifty cents was made up. We were
all to receive in proportion to our contribution. We gathered in the dance house, where a large
fire was started. Delay followed delay; now it was proper grass that was wanting, again some
other cause was indicated. Finally small tarpaulins were laid about twelve feet apart in such a
position that the fire was to one side. One man was in the center with a Durham sack containing
the money, and the twelve counters.

After desultory talk the grass was brought in and dampened. Two men kneeled side by side on
each tarpaulin in front of a bundle of grass. Suddenly one pair started singing native high-
pitched songs, mere repetitions of phrases. As they were singing they picked up large bundles of
grass and rolled the bones in them with many flourishes, finally separating the two but still
shuffling them from hand to hand. After a few minutes of singing they thrust out their hands, and
one of the members of our side made a guess.

The guesses were according to the pattern described. If one was correctly indicated, that man
threw his pair of bones over to the guessers, and the other continued until his bones had been
correctly guessed. For each failure to guess correctly, one stick was given from the center pile to
the person shuffling the bones. Thus the shufflers could win two, one, or no sticks. For a correct
guess, the guessers got the bones but no sticks. When the center pile of counters was exhausted, a
successful shuffler took a counter from the winnings of his opponents. To win, one side had to get
all twelve counters.

While shuffling the bones the men sang and kept time with a swaying of the body. All their
partisans among the watchers sang and kept time with them. The shuffling was very much after
the pattern of modern dice rolling. They spit on their hands or the grass; they rolled and rolled
the dice together, taking as much time as they wished. They tossed the roll of bones and grass up
and caught it; when they finally put the arms out before them, they frequently crossed them.
They then stared at their opponents, waiting for the guess but never ceasing to sing. So few
words were passed that it was difficult to tell when the guess was made. Sometimes it was merely
indicated with the hand. Any person on the guessers' side might make the guesses.

Youths and old men played together, but women never joined in either the handling of the
bones or the guessing. They were present and supported one or another side. I tried my hand both
at guessing and handling the dice. The importance of the singing and other distractions are readily appreciated by the novice. It is impossible in the firelight (or probably in full daylight) to keep track of the "ace." Nevertheless there is a keen consciousness of the psychology of the game on the part of the Indians, and guessing is half art, half luck.

After the first game others were readily started, and the stakes began to rise. The first was perhaps a come-on for the novice at the game. The playing lasted till early morning.

The multiple-stick game, bohemtcechu, is said to have come from Shasta County. Two persons played with a small bundle of slender sticks tapered at each end. The sticks were shuffled and divided by one player, and the other guessed in which hand the single marked stick was held. If he guessed the left hand, he pointed with his right and said, "Left hand." If he pointed across the body, the shuffler could interpret the guess either way and so, of course, win. In this game twenty counters were put in the center and taken in the manner described for the hand game. Informants said it was less easy to cheat at this game.

A woman's dice game, tedela, was played with six split-elder sticks painted black on one side and white on the other. Twelve counters were used. When a player threw a scoring arrangement of colors, she took counters and threw again; otherwise the sticks were taken by the player on the other side. The scoring arrangements were not known.

Essentially similar to the foregoing was another women's dice game, tel-a. Ten split-elder sticks of the same size and weight were cleaned of the center pith and painted. These sticks were rolled vertically between the palms and dropped end down. Certain combinations counted one point, others counted two. Women chose sides and bet heavily on this game. The tallies were won as before. There was a second way of handling the counters: They were first divided, but the original pile was kept separate from the pile of winnings. Then, when a player won the pile by his opponent, he played for the pile at his own side. This seemed to cause no different winning results from the foregoing method but was simply an alternate convention. Sixteen tallies were usually used. The winning combinations were: 3 up and 3 down, 1 point; all up or all down, 2 points; other combinations, no score. Needless to say, magic practices accompany all gambling.

Other games and contests.—Various other contests were a feature of Nomlaki festivities. There were foot races, by both boys and girls, and jumping contests. Men shot untipped arrows at a target of a bundle of grass, the best shot taking all the arrows. If two archers hit the target, the one whose arrow was nearest the center picked up all the arrows that had missed. He then shot off the tie with the runner-up for the two remaining arrows. A contest to shoot the farthest was also reported. There was a men's contest of throwing mahogany sticks (sēn) at a target from a distance of twenty or thirty feet. The sharp end was supposed to pierce the target for a win. Wrestling contests were also mentioned. A most unusual form of rivalry was an attempt to count the most coils of a basket while holding one's breath.

Miscellaneous Customs

Seasonal variation.—The seasons greatly affected Nomlaki life. The winter months were lean. In the spring, green foods reentered the diet and dances were held. Later, in the summer, all those who were able went to their mountain camps to gather
food, leaving the villages in the valley deserted or with only a few old people. Several families usually went together, always to a place known as their own. Frequently the entire village would be camped in a small area within shouting distance of the headman. The group unity seems not to have been broken by the summer life. Food was sent into the village as it was gathered, but the body of the population remained in the mountain until the first cold weather.

**Songs.**—The songs of the Nomlaki were an accompaniment to many other activities. The songs in turn were accompanied by drums, rattles, flutes, or whistles (see pp. 426–427). Songs were evidently believed to be potent with magic. Thus gambling was always accompanied by singing, and a person making gambling bones was supposed to sing. Dirges were the central feature of the burial ceremony. Whether Wintun doctors sang in aboriginal times is not certain, but singing became very important to the later shamanism (see pp. 359–363), and the aboriginal diviners had special songs. Every form of tribal ceremony was accompanied by vocal music, from the Huta to the girls’ puberty ceremony, the first day of which was largely given over to vulgar songs. All dances seemed to have been accompanied by singing.

Several of the informants knew native songs, but musical notation was impossible. The songs were sung in an unnatural voice, apparently made by tightening the vocal cords and forcing out the breath with great pressure, giving a high, throaty quality to the songs. I could find no meaning for any of the words.

**Puberty songs:**

heyo weyo weyo hëno
weyo hëno we.

tou· tou· ye he, tou· tou· ye he
waiñomël hilila ye he
waiñomël hilila ye he

Each song is repeated over and over.

One informant spoke of love songs—sad melodies that were sung in solitude. “Early in the morning,” he said, “you hear Indians singing and patting time on their chests while lying in bed. At night too they lie down and smoke and sing.” This is the only example of a love song I could find.

hëne ni ni, hëne ni
hëna wat touda

The informant said that this means something like “I am sorry for him (my loved one), I’m crying for him,” but he couldn’t translate the individual words. The song has a sad, plaintive quality.

**Body adornment.**—Permanent adornment of the body included occipital flattening of the head, piercing of the nasal septum and ear lobes, and tattooing on the face, body, and arms. Heads were deformed by a stone placed behind the infant’s head in the cradle (see p. 372).

Tattooing (dopna; topa, to cut) was done by rubbing soot from burned oak balls into cuts inflicted with a flint knife; the wound is then covered with pitch. Both boys and girls were tattooed when they were almost fully grown, “so that the mark would keep its shape.” The age for tattooing girls was between twelve and fourteen, with no indication of any connection with the puberty ceremony. The
most frequent Nomlaki design was three serrated lines from the lower lip to the chin and was worn by both men and women. The northernmost Wintun group, along Cottonwood Creek, tattooed a double line from the lip to the chin on women, three double lines on the man (see figure 2).

The markings served to distinguish a person's tribe and social status. The commoner had marks only on the chin, but a person of substance was also decorated on the body with a design of diamonds "like on a bow." Cheek marks were also reported.

Not everyone was able to execute the tattoo, and one informant specifically stated that the ability was obtained through the Huta (see pp. 327 and 331). Frequently a person had to go to a distant rancheria for the operation and had to pay the artisan for his work. If blood poisoning ensued, the tattoo artist was blamed. The Wintun naturally considered their own designs the best. "The Yuki and Wailaki have funny patterns—they just spoil their faces by making the whole face look black."

The lobes of the ear were punched with a bone knife, the opening being preserved by inserting a straw, string, or stick. This was done to both men and women so that shell earrings (mātala) could be worn.

[Jones:] They pierce the nose when they are between six and ten years old, and pierce a young man when they make something out of him. It takes a particular person to do this, an aunt or an older cousin [the informant was not positive of the exact relationship]. When they do this they make a present of a set of earrings to the child. These are worth about four or five dollars. The girl keeps hers until she is a grown woman [pubescent?] before she wears them. Men wear shells in their ears when they are dressed up for a special occasion. Ordinary women only wear them at tami or when they are "showing themselves."

The Nomlaki wore a stick or feather in a hole through the nasal septum. The New-ville people wore a few beads on a stick in the nose.
Neither men nor women ordinarily cut their hair. Men tied it in a knot on top of the head and held it in place by means of a hardwood or bone hairpin (tlalak); women either did the same or let braids of hair fall down the back. If the hair should get uncomfortably long, it might be singed off by holding it over a chip of bark and burning it with a coal, or it might be cut by holding it over one stone and pounding it with another. This was done, supposedly, by a person adept at the process. As the Wintun were proud of their long hair, they probably seldom parted with it. However, the women cut their hair after losing a relative, and singed it to the scalp at the death of a husband (see p. 378). This removed hair was always destroyed. Various tribes wore their hair in different manners, “so you can tell them at a distance.” Depilation was also practiced.

[Jones:] Those who have a little beard will pull out the hairs, but those who are full-bearded [sic] won’t try to shave it off. Up north they are all slick-faced, but our people all have some beard, though there is considerable variety. I’ve seen them pick hairs out with their pocketknives. They like the hair on the body because it protects them, though they make fun of hairy people.

Sexual attitudes.—Chastity and marital fidelity were regarded as virtues more particularly for girls and women than for men. However, there were no severe penalties against intercourse, except in the case of adultery, and even here leniency on the part of the cuckold was not unknown. Thus, “There were no rules of punishment for lack of chastity in a girl. The parents of the girl may scold her, but they can’t do much to the man. A bastard child is looked down on, but he can live it down.”

Full-grown women, widows, can be visited quietly so no one knows, and a man will give her something. She would not be considered completely loose, for she wouldn’t take everyone. Our people think badly of a woman who does things like that. Still, some men realize that everyone wants sexual satisfaction and has to get it. Some men might not be jealous or resent such a past in a woman. Even though people warn him, such a man may make allowance for this sort of thing. I’ve heard some of the old folks talk that way.

The word udit was used for prostitute and also for a man of loose morals. Concerning the existence of prostitution, one informant said, “I heard about a woman who traveled among the people a long time ago and got paid for what she did. We call such people udit. She didn’t keep a house. Nobody would marry her. Once in a while such a woman would settle down and get something [i.e., a husband, property].”

No periods of sexual license or any institutionalized sexual freedom existed in Wintun society. There were various terms for intercourse: tunhumukpa (putting bodies together to get warm) was a polite form used with one’s wife; yo le kënbële (let us lie down for a while) was a more familiar form used with one’s wife; kadupa (sexual intercourse); si-pa was the vulgar form “you don’t use around a woman unless she is very fast,” maibehekuda (I would like to lie down with you) was considered a polite form of proposition.

A person could be induced to love by magic (see p. 356) or by love songs (see p. 384), which were sung in the evening or morning to oneself, not to the beloved one.

Men were expected to refrain from vulgarity in front of women, although less so before their own wives and sisters-in-law (see p. 323). Women were discreet before men and always tucked their aprons between their legs when sitting. Mo-
rality was apparently not the concern of a brother, for "if a man takes a liking to his chum's sister, the chum is supposed to leave the two alone. Their conduct isn't his affair."

The institution of berdache or transvestite was reported as follows:

[Jones:] Walusa means hermaphrodite [another informant gave the word tohket], or he is a boy who goes around with women all the time. I once saw a person with a man's face and dressed like a man but with a woman's form. Such men are childishly like.

[Jordan:] I have heard them talk about hermaphrodites (walusa) who pound acorns, gather seeds, and act like women. I never saw one. I never heard of homosexuals in the old days.

The "red cap" in the Bole dance impersonated a woman in that ritual.

Dreams.—To the Nomlaki a dream, kinkila, might be of some significance, but every dream was not necessarily important. Dreaming was a major factor in choosing an occupation and was a factor in luck. The modern dance cult and shamanism are suffused with dreaming as a major force, but this does not seem to have been the aboriginal condition. One informant said that whatever was dreamed would come true, and another said that the Indians would discuss dreams in the morning and perhaps combine two of them to derive a meaning. Sexual dreams were reported. Aside from the dreams in Andrew Freeman's autobiographical account (pp. 360–363), the following is interesting.

When I am about to go home, I dream about Mother. Once I was feeling drowsy, and something came and told me, "Don't you know you are going home; you're not going to stay here very long." Then I was home and heard my brother playing the gramophone. My brother had played the record that very evening. I can see my children sick before they get ill, or myself before I do. Dad dreams too. It gets the best of people when they dream, and they can't stand it. One time I dreamt about up above [heaven], and I nearly died after that. I was flying like an angel. I kept a-going and a-going. Another lady was singing. There were flowers and a stone walk. I saw my cousins and talked to them. They were glad to see me. I turned around and came back. We went kind of like an angel. After that I was sick in bed for five months. Doctors have terrible dreams too. I used to dream about springs too, but I forgot about them. Now I dream about the future; I dream about the trees, grass, and flowers. I dream when my daughter is going to be sick or get better.

Etiquette.—Several forms of social salutation were used. An arriving person was greeted, "henam" or "weyam," "Did you come?" He answered, "henda" or "weda," "I came." A person arriving at a house was greeted, "élwi," "Come in"; "dewinam," "good morning"; "kënia," "sit down." On leaving, a person said, "haida," "Goodbye," and was answered, "hë hë hai hai," "Go ahead." A person might also say, "ha'kudahèpèn," "I have to go now," to which the reply would be, "mia-a," "It's up to you." It was said that men and women had a slightly different way of speaking, the latter being "less rough."

Certain manners adhered to the business of eating. People usually ate a breakfast and a second meal later in the day, although they might eat whenever it was convenient or when they were hungry. A person did not break his work day to eat a lunch. Children ate with adults, and men were served by the women (but it is not clear whether or not they ate together). Informants claim that Indians did not eat heavily, especially the industrious ones. Each family ate separately, in front of the house when weather permitted. No food was ever eaten hot. Mush was scooped up with the four fingers held parallel and slightly cupped; pinole was picked up in
the finger tips and tossed into the mouth. People always carried food when they went visiting. Boys were forbidden to whistle at night or while a woman was preparing acorn meal.

**Intellectual Achievements**

**Numeration.**—The Nomlaki had a system of counting based essentially on a vigesimal system. In this system the numbers 1 to 5, 7, 10, 20, and 100 were individual words; all others were combinations. The numerals 6, 8, and 9 were combinations of smaller figures. The numbers above 10 were built on that figure until 15 was reached, which was 3 times 5. The numbers 16 to 19 were built on 15, whereas all the numbers above 20 were built on that number, the system henceforth being vigesimal. The terms for 100 and 1,000 were not given with assurance. Probably another way of saying 1,000, perhaps purely figuratively, was ketewitat, one big man.

The following numerals indicate the system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numeral</th>
<th>Numerical Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 kêtêt</td>
<td>25 kêtêtasak toansen (20 + 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 pale</td>
<td>30 panol sema (3 x 10) or kêtêtasakema (20 + 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 panol</td>
<td>40 palsak (2 x 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 tla-wit or tla-wit'</td>
<td>41 palsak kêtêt (40 + 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to'ansem (one hand)</td>
<td>50 palsak sema (40 + 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 sepanol (2 x 3)</td>
<td>60 panolsak (3 x 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 teumol</td>
<td>70 panolsak sema (60 + 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 setlawit (2 x 4)</td>
<td>80 tlawisak (4 x 20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 teanlawi' (5 + 4)</td>
<td>90 tlawisak sema (80 + 10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 semah (2 hands)</td>
<td>100 kêtêtewitat (1 man) or kêtém not (1 arrow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 semakêtêt (10 + 1)</td>
<td>121 kêtêtewita kêtêtasak kêtêt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 semapalei (10 + 2)</td>
<td>(1 man + 20 + 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 panol toansen (3 x 5)</td>
<td>125 kêtêtewita kêtêtasak kêtêt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 panol toansen kêtêt (15 + 1)</td>
<td>200 palwitat (two men)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 kêtêtasak (1 x 20)</td>
<td>1,000 semanot (10 x 100)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Calendrical and astronomical knowledge.**—Very few astronomical observations were made by the Nomlaki, and fewer still are remembered by living descendants. Four seasons were recognized: pomsin, winter; pomkalal, spring, papil, summer, and kaidau, fall. Twelve months were said to have been recognized and named, but only four could be identified: yömtuku, January (yöm, poison, tuku, sun); pomkalaltuku, March (pomkalal, flowers on the ground); papiltuku, July (papil, summer); lessalat, December (lès, spirit?, salat, moon). Other month names, not equated with any of our months, were: tümituku', foggy sun; tcaisalat (tcai, willow); púsatu, buckeye sun; mituku, tree sun.

The changes of the moon were observed: new moon, tcanalpoheka (translated as new moon in sight); full moon, nernkekili (moon is big); dark of moon, komala; and third-quarter moon, pwitber (moon won't be up until late). When the moon was eclipsed they claimed that the bear of the air has caught it, and they tried to do something to help it out.

They designated different parts of the day: sunrise, tw'kupat kéna; midmorning, noméla; noon, hölóbohaiña; afternoon, nomitihla; sundown, tw'kukenha; dusk, kumaïhaiya; dark, ku'umah; moonlight, seytékila.

There was no recording of the solstices, but the phenomenon of the equinox was
known. The sun’s apparent movement to the south was noihaihayu; summer solstice, waiwita (wai, north, wita, stopped); winter solstice, noiwita; sun coming back north, waihaweya. It was said that the old people reckoned time by months and by such natural phenomena as “certain birds that go witwitwit” and the weather. Some stars (tluyuk) were noted: the morning star, tcáztilluyuk; the evening star, lerntilluyuk; the pleiades, sêklobit. Some terms for natural phenomena were: thunder, tupúpit; lightning, kentcalokta (the thunder was considered the active element); fog, tumit; cloud, k’a; snow, yola; ice, tòtot; rain, luka; dew, pon; north wind, noitìhìa; south wind, wailìhìa.

The Nomlaki thought that news was brought by the whirlwind. They feared thunder.

Only one means of recording facts—and this a matter of time reckoning—was reported: a mnemonic device by which everyone knew when to come to a tami.

[Jones:] The messenger who announces the tami to neighboring villages and invites the people has strings with knots in them—one for each day until the dance is to start. One string is given to each headman of a village, and every day he unties one knot until they are all untied. The first knot is untied on the day that the messenger delivers it. The people come on the day the last knot is untied. The Indians used to laugh about this custom because now they can just say, “Next Saturday.”

Decoration.—The highest developments of artistic ability among the Wintun were probably in the realm of basketry and featherwork, but these Indians decorated many things, from their own bodies to their many implements. The human body was tattooed (see pp. 384–385) and painted for festive occasions, especially the puberty ceremony. Bows, arrows, and spears were all embellished with decorations of the various localities. Pipes were stained a deep yellow. Skin skirts, bear-hides, and quivers were decorated with incised and painted marks as well as with shells of various kinds. The unadorned rabbitskin blanket was an exception to this practically universal custom of decoration.

Medical knowledge.—The supernatural causes of and magic cures for disease have already been described. Practical medical knowledge and the use of herbs were also reported. The herb doctors, dikiyöm, constituted a special occupation.

[Jones:] Herb doctors use all kinds of herbs, especially angelica root (ôxtelik). They dig it up and dry it. It is strong and very good. Another herb, toowataoi, is larger but not so strong. It is smoked by a dyspeptic person. They are made to inhale and blow smoke out through the nose every morning. It is also made into a bitter and peppery tea for colds.

When Indians dig up the angelica root they go into the hills and sit down and talk. After they have it out they drop a bead into the hole to pay for the root. They let the root dry for about a year, for the older it gets the stronger it is. They use other weeds and bushes, sometimes roots and leaves. They get dry pitch from around an old digger pine tree. It should be so old it is almost turned to dirt. They pulverize this and sprinkle it on raw sores to dry them up. Usually men are herb doctors, but women may know a few good remedies. Herb doctors may charge a little but usually take whatever you want to give them.

Angelica root was chewed and placed on a cut or swallowed to heal the sore. Mountain balm, koutcu, was chewed for colds or sore throat. Manzanita-leaf tea was taken to stop diarrhea. Mistletoe was used for abortions, and herbs were said to have been known to ease childbirth. No surgery was known, but broken bones were set in splints.
Mythology

Myths of Wintun-speaking peoples have been collected by Jeremiah Curtin and by Du Bois and Demetracopoulou, but none are specifically Nomlaki.

The following tales were collected in English. The informants do not readily speak their native language, so it was impossible and beside the point to collect them in text form. They are reproduced as close to the Indian's English as seems consistent with clarity. In addition to the stories that follow, narratives have been placed elsewhere in the ethnography to illustrate or enlarge upon descriptive material. Some of these may be considered myths or folklore. Rather stereotyped bear-capturing narratives appear in the section on hunting (see pp. 404–405). The tale of a menstruant disobeying taboos (see p. 376) has a thoroughly mythological character. Stories of werebeasts, mythical animals, and persons turned to stone are found in the section on supernatural beasts (see pp. 353–355). It was impossible to obtain a myth cycle, and those recorded here must represent a mere fragment of the total stories. Narratives of war with the Yuki have appeared in print elsewhere; other such stories appear in the section on warfare (see pp. 343–344).

All but two of the following eight stories were collected from Freeman. They show the indelible mark of his personality. His unique imagery, which shows up so plainly in his autobiographical account (see pp. 360–363), is evident in many places in the stories. His tales are always long and involved, and one is not always certain he has not combined elements from several stories. Yet they are more consistent than first appears, and they contain a developed plot. They lack climax and denouement, however, in a manner that leaves the non-Indian listener disappointed, and the teller must announce that the story is concluded. Native songs share this absence of climax.

Of ethnologic interest is the recurrent theme of hostility between a man and his in-laws. This appears in the story of Magpie and Chicken Hawk, where Chicken Hawk is called brother-in-law although he is actually the rejected suitor of the Magpie girls. It appears also in the tale of the boy and the rabbit, where the boy endeavors to win over his parents-in-law, who put him to severe tests. To appreciate the impact of this story, remember that the son-in-law did a period of service for his bride's parents under the rule of temporary matrilocal residence.

The antics of Coyote are too familiar a theme to require more than mention. His slapstick errors appear in several of the tales, sometimes incidental to the story, sometimes as stories in themselves.

Storytelling usually took place in the chief's house. "The old people would sit in the sweat house and tell stories for a week at a time without repeating once. They tell one story for a whole night. But they stopped doing that when the whites came in. Sometimes songs were sung with the stories." Jones quoted his old friend Dominic concerning native stories: "There was never any story in any book that tells how we Indians were put here. All other nations have books, but we don't have any. We have our stories in mind. We Indians must be outcasts that were turned down at

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* Curtin, 1898. Du Bois and Demetracopoulou, 1931.
* Goldschmidt, Foster, and Essene, 1938.
Babel. We were placed where we were out of hearing. We know nothing about how we were put here." Jones, with his detailed knowledge of Nomlaki culture, was a disappointing storyteller.

**COYOTE GETS DAYLIGHT**

[Freeman:] They claim this world was once dark. There was no light. The light was back east. There the sun shone all the time.

All the animals said, "Maybe we ought to go over and get that light. Then we would have light all over the country."

They sent Coon after light. Coon took a lot of property and things, for he was going to buy the light. It was dark and he ran into the brush and lost all his property. He never did come back.

So they sent Skunk the same way with property. Then Fox went with property on his back. By God, he never did come back either. He lost all his property in the brush.

They sent Badger and he got lost.

So they said, "Brother Coyote, he's pretty smart, he will go." By golly, he went. He had beads and things in his sack. He lost all his goods, but he kept going.

The closer he got, the lighter it got, and then he could travel better. He came to an ocean, and there was water for miles and miles. "How in the world am I going to cross it?" he thought.

He came to a log. "Say, brother Log, I want to go across. If I throw you into the water and get on top, will you carry me across?"

The log said, "If you throw me in, I may go down and may go across. I can't say. I may get lodged against a drift pile. The next high water will start me again, but I don't know where I will go."

So Coyote went to Oak Ball. He asked the oak ball, "Can you take me across? I notice you always stay on top of the water."

Oak Ball said, "You dig a small hole out of me and save the stuff you dig out. Then get in the hole and pull the stuff over you. Then you can pull me in the direction you want to go. I may roll over and over, but I'll get you somewhere on the other side." So Coyote did that. Oak Ball was floating over the waves, and once in a while Coyote stuck his head out and pulled him the way he wanted to go. He was on the water several days and finally got to the east side of the ocean.

Then he went on, for he had a good light now. He was sneaking around north of the camp and came upon a mole gnawing on a big dry oak tree, trying to cut it down. Coyote said to himself, "I will turn into a little Indian boy. I'll fix him. I'll ask him a lot of questions and find out about this place." So Coyote turned into a little Indian boy and walked up to the mole.

"Hello, Grandfather."

"Hello," the mole said, "Where are you going?"

"Oh, just around. What are you doing?" he said to Mole.

"I'm trying to get this tree down for firewood."

"What are you doing with so much wood?"

"I'm gathering it for the people in the camp."

"How can you pack all this wood?"

"When I cut this tree there won't be a broken limb. It will just fall. I put this pad on my shoulder and raise the tree onto my shoulder. Then I can pack it. When I get to camp with the wood, I throw it down and it will break into pieces. The people in the camp will help themselves to the wood."

"Then what do you do with this pad and your walking stick?"

"Well, sir, I go toward the house and put my cane and my pad against the north side of the house." "Then what, Grandfather?" Coyote asked. He is trying to find out everything.

"When I get inside, everybody brings acorn soup and other things for me to eat. I take one bite of everything they have there. Then I have a smoke and I go to bed on the north side. It is a big, high bed. That is where I sleep. The young people come in there and sometimes they dance and sometimes they have grass game, but they never bother me. I always go to bed. In the middle of the night they all go to bed." 

The mole had the front part of a coyote foot in his ears for an earring. "Grandfather, what is that you are wearing in your ear?"
"Why, that's a coyote foot," he said. "I wear it for an earring."
"Why do you wear anything like that on your ear?"
"Because the coyote is my enemy."
"Yes?" Coyote asked.
The tree was down, and the mole put the pad on his shoulder and raised the tree up and put it on the pad. When he began to get his shoulder under the load, Coyote said, "Can I help you, Grandfather?"
"No," he said. "Get away—you might get hurt." Coyote was getting closer all the time. Just as the mole got the wood straight up, Coyote jumped on top of the wood and mashed the mole down. Coyote kept jumping up and down on that log till he killed Mole. He pulled Mole out and took the pad and walking stick. He couldn't raise the tree up. "Come on, wood, raise up. Be light; I want to help you." He put the pad on his shoulder, and the tree raised up. Coyote packed it, using the cane. It was late afternoon. He took the tree to the place where the old man [Mole] always threw his wood down. The wood didn't break to pieces when he threw it off his shoulder. It was still sitting way up. Everybody come around and looked at the wood. They said, "What's the matter, Grandfather; what's the matter with your wood?" "Why, I'm getting old," he said; "things aren't right any more."
Of course he had changed into a mole just as natural as could be. He had ear rings too.

So Coyote took his pad and cane and put them on the north side of the house where the old man used to leave them. He walked in on the north side and sat down where the old man used to sit. The people brought everything for him to eat. By golly, he cleaned up everything they brought, because he had been starved to death, I guess.
He looked up at the light, sizing it up. He kept turning around at it.

One gnat was up there keeping watch over this light. Every once in a while this little gnat said, "I smell Coyote."
Coyote said, "What you are smelling is my earring—that's what you're smelling." Then he went to bed in the high bed—the old man's bed. The fly [gnat] was still shouting, "I smell Coyote."

Pretty soon the people came in, singing and dancing. Coyote was lying there and watching the light and figuring how he was going to get it. He wished they would quit dancing and go to bed. Finally they all quit and went to sleep and everything was quiet. Mr. Coyote climbed off the bed and climbed up to where the light was. He put the light on his back and ran. So the little gnat came down and said in a little voice, "Say, somebody has taken the light. Somebody came up here and stole the light." The people didn't awaken. The fly got into the mouth of one man who was sleeping and bit his tongue. This man spit him out. Then the fly got up and said, "Don't you know, you people, somebody took that light?"
The people all got up and started after Coyote but couldn't catch him. They came back and said that they would get Fog brothers to catch him. They can spread all over the ground and catch him. So they called on Fog.

Fog brothers overtook Coyote. Coyote had turned into a group of boys throwing buckeyes up the hill. The Fog brother said, "Hey, have you seen anybody go past here with a light?" "No," Coyote said, "we haven't seen anybody. He could have passed here, for we have been making so much noise, but we didn't see him."

So the fog started back. They looked back and saw the light way in the distance. They turned back after Coyote. When they overtook him he turned into an old man gathering wood.

"Hey, old man, did you see anybody come by here?"
"No, I didn't see anybody. I can't see good anyway."

They went up a way and turned back. They looked back, and there went the light again. So the fog turned back and scattered close to the ground all around and overtook Coyote. Coyote turned into an old lady who had a big pack basket. She was singing a sad song and crying and gathering wood.

"Hey, old lady, did you see anybody come by here with a light?"
"No, grandchild, I haven't seen anybody. They could have gone past here."
The Fog boys said, "That's funny. I believe this is the same fellow we have been overtaking. Look in that basket. Maybe the light is in there."

They started toward her, and the old woman said, "No, grandchild, don't get into that basket. I have some acorn bread in there." She ran and grabbed the light out of the basket before the boys got hold of it. He [Coyote] took it and threw it on the ground and mashed it and threw the light all over the world.

"Now," he said, "We all can see. No use in having light in one country and dark in the other." That's the last of it.

Coyote Gets Fire

[Freeman:] Coyote had a sore foot. It was swelled up, and he had it tied up. Coyote had two wives. Blackbird came from the south. He said, "sa'lolai so'lolai he" (I don't know what that means). He came to call everyone to the dance.

Coyote got up and preached for everybody to come over and hear what this fellow was talking about. Coyote didn't know what he was saying. So everybody came. When Blackbird took coals and marked his face and pointed south, they knew he meant for them to come to a dance.

They said that they would be along. They had one day to get ready. They were supposed to get there on the fourth day from the time they left home. The day they were getting ready Coyote said to his wives, "Wives, I can't go. You two can go with your brothers, the Coons."

The people got ready and started. They left Coyote there. Coyote told the Coon brothers to take care of their sisters-in-law, his wives. He told his wives to go along with the Coons, that it would be all right.

They were gone for three days, and on the last day Coyote said, "I believe I'll fix myself up some way and go. I'll do some doctoring around here myself. One of his legs was swelled all the way up to his knee. He went limping up the hill, and came up to a sharp rock. He said to Sharp Rock, "Brother, could you do anything for my foot? If it was opened up, it would be all right and I could walk and go to the dance."

Sharp Rock answered, "I can't do anything for you."

He went on up the hill and came to a stump. "Say, brother, could you help me? If my foot was open I could go to the dance."

"Why, no, I can't do anything. I'll just sit here and rot."

He said to a dry chaparral, which always has snags sticking up, "Brother, could you help me? If my foot was opened, I could go to the dance. Chaparral said, "Well, I can't do anything for you."

Finally he came to a sharp manzanita snag lying on the hill. "Say, brother, could you help me? I have a sore foot here, and if it was opened I could go to the dance."

Manzanita Snag said, "Sure, I don't feel sorry for anybody." (You can chop manzanita, and it will snap back and hit you in the face.) "Why, yes. Go up the hill and run down as hard as you can and kick me as hard as you can. I'll cut that foot wide open."

He went up the hill and came down and kicked the manzanita and broke his foot wide open, and he fell over in a faint and just lay there.

After he came to, he limped down to the house. He was jumping around, getting ready. He took down some little beads and some big beads and all his dancing things and laid them down. He got a basket of water and set it down in the middle of the house. He put beads around his neck and an otter cap on his head, then saw how he looked in the basket of water. He put different feathers on; he changed things around to see how he looked. He got moccasins out and put them on his feet and stepped around. He got his bow and arrows. He had a pantherhide fixed for a quiver.

Coyote left in the late afternoon. He was supposed to catch up even though he was crippled. He caught up with them as it was getting dark. They could see the fire where the dance was going to be. The people were practicing how they were going to dance. They were to start the dance from that place and dance all the way to the fire. Coyote was going to join the crowd. He was dressed up, a fine-looking man. Coyote said, "You want to sing the song like this when you leave here dancing?"

Coon said, "You are always interfering in things like that; you always want people to do what you say."
Coyote said, "Let me take the lead then—let me be the dance leader—then the people will say, 'kobi mai k'a puna' [sic] came in as the leading dancer. People will be telling one another that." Coyote wanted to get a name for himself. His wives had young men as partners (not the Coon brothers). One of them looked at him a long time and then hunted up her sister. "Say, sister, I believe our husband is here. Come, we'll see him." Of course it was dark by that time.

They stood and looked at him. "Is that our husband, sister?"

"Sure, that's him. Can't you tell by the way he talks?"

"It does sound like him, but this is a fine-looking man, the way he is dressed up. It can't be our husband, even though he talks like him."

"Why, sure, that's him."

"We better get back and stay behind our brothers-in-law." So they kept close to the Coon boys. Coyote didn't pay any attention to his wives though he had seen what went on.

They started, and Coyote took the lead going to the dance. The people had a big fire and were shouting. They came up to the fire dancing, the singers following and the women right behind them. Old Coyote was dancing lively. He was jumping around and never got tired. There were two girls in the house. They peeped around and watched him. "Isn't he a fine-looking fellow?" one of them said. They fell in love with this kobi mai k'a puna.

One girl said, "When he finishes the dance let's get him by both arms and bring him into the house and lock the door on him." The other agreed.

After the fourth set they stopped dancing. The two girls walked out and caught Coyote by each arm and took him into the house and locked the door [sic]. The people were still dancing. A big band of blackbirds were jealous of him. They were flying over the house and coming down on it and making sparks. Coyote was shouting, but the girls said it was all right, that they wouldn't hurt him. The people danced all night, and toward morning all the home folks were asleep. Still the dancers were dancing. The headman said, "All the people are asleep; let's steal their fire. We'll get their fire and take it home." They got a coal and started home with it. They would throw the coal from one hand to the other [to keep from being burned]. They took turns. One man would run way ahead and turn toward the fire carrier, who would toss the coal ahead. Then this man would carry it the same way. There were several doing that.

Coyote said, "My wife, I guess we had better go; the crowd is leaving, and we better go back with them." The two girls said, "All right."

They caught up with the crowd, and Coyote said, "Let me have the fire, brother." They told him, "You can't handle the fire. You always bother us."

"Well," he said, "just think, I'll have a name. Kobi mai k'a puna brought the fire into this country."

They were running with it, and finally they got tired of him. "Give it to him and let him carry it. But don't take it back from him; let him carry it all the way."

They gave the fire to him, and he was tossing it back and forth, running at top speed with it. He got tired and called for help. "Somebody come get this fire; I'm getting tired." He put it between his teeth and ran with it. Then he put it in an ear and ran with it, then in the other ear. Finally he put it next to his little finger. It burned his finger and he shook his hand and the fire fell to the ground.

The fire began to burn. It burned all over the country—down in the valley and up the mountain. Coyote's people left him and his two wives. They were ahead of the fire, which was coming north. A big wind was blowing, bringing the fire all around them. One wife said, "I'm tired—what am I going to do?"

He put the tired girl on his back and led the other and ran with them. Then he changed and carried the other one. Finally they both got pretty tired, and he was tired.

Coyote said, "What shall I do? I'll have to let one go, and I can pack the other one. I believe I'll let the oldest girl go." She burned up of course.

Finally he dropped the other one. "I'll have to drop her and save my life," he said.

He couldn't run any more, so he trotted. Fire was right behind him, catching him. Finally he was just walking. He just managed to stay out of the way.

"Brother Big Hill," he said, "suppose I got up there on the bald place—could you save me?"

"No, when the fire gets here and goes over me, I'll be red hot."
He came to an oak tree, “Say, brother, you big oak tree, could I climb up to the top of you? Could you save me?”

“How, no, when that fire gets here the grass at my side is going to burn to the top. I’m apt to burn.”

“Say, brother, you big rock, could I climb on top of you? Could you save me?”

“No, when that fire gets here I’ll be hot.”

“Say, brother, you big cave, could I get way back in there? Could you save me?”

“No,” he said, “When the fire gets here I’ll get hot and cave in.”

Then he said, “Big Hole of Deep Water, could you help me if I go down to the bottom?”

“No, when that fire gets here the ground will get hot and the rocks will get hot. I’ll boil dry.”

So Coyote started towards the mountains.

“Say, brother Big Cedar Tree, could I climb to the top of you? Can you save me?”

“No, my back is loose and I’ll burn all the way to the top.”

“Say, Sugar Pine, brother, could I climb to the top of you? Can you save me?”

“No, I’ll burn up,” he said, “when the fire gets here I’ll burn to the top.”

“Say, brother White Pine, could you save me?”

“No,” he answered, “I’ll burn all over.”

“Say, brother Spruce, could you save me?”

Spruce Tree said, “Yes, I’ll burn up quite a way, but I won’t burn all the way to the top.”

So Coyote went up that tree, all the way to the top.

The fire passed and the tree began to burn. The fire came up the tree. It burnt Coyote’s toe, and his toes came off and fell to the base of the tree. Coyote said, “Brother, I’m tired up here. I’m going down—the fire is past.”

“You better not go down,” Spruce said, “The ground is pretty warm down here—you’ll burn up.”

After Coyote stayed there several days he came down hungry and dry for water. He saw his toes lying on the ground and ate them. He went over the hill to a little canyon. There was a little water hole nearly dry. It had a lot of tadpoles [hun6’ldu] in it. “Well,” Coyote said, “I have found some fish; now I’ll eat them.” He called the tadpoles fish. He was so hungry he didn’t chew them. He put them in his mouth and swallowed them whole.

The tadpoles were alive inside him. He fell over right there. Bluejay came along and perched on his head. He picked at Coyote’s eye and said, “tcai, tcai!” Coyote mocked him, “tcai, tcai! I have been eating fish, and it made me sleepy.” He got up and went around. “Well,” he said, “I’ll have a name bringing this fire in the world. “kobi mai k’a puna will have a name for bringing this fire into the world.”

That’s the last of it.

**COYOTE GETS FIRE FROM WILDCAT**

[Baglin:] Way down in southern California noykéntocabat [Wildcat] had fire on a chunk of coal. He was bringing it into this country. Coyote said, “Brother, brother, let me pack it, I’ll throw it up—I’ll carry it.” Noykéntocabat refused. Coyote said he could do it. They got halfway home, and Coyote kept nagging him. Finally noykéntocabat said, “I know you, you’re full of meanness, but here it is.”

Coyote dropped the coal and ran. Noykéntocabat ran. The whole country caught on fire and burnt everything up. Coyote ran to Rock and asked, “Can you save my life?” The rock answered, “No.” Coyote ran to Water, but Water couldn’t save him, for it would boil. He went to Trees then. Then he went to Mountains. He asked Sakmi, Pine Tree. The top of this tree doesn’t burn. Coyote went up to the top of the tree. He was there two days. He was thirsty and saw melted pitch running. Pine Tree warned him, but he went to drink the pitch and got stuck. So Coyote was burned up.

**COYOTE AND GRAY SQUIRREL**

[Freeman:] Gray Squirrel was jumping a canyon a hundred feet deep. He would take shelled pine nuts and yell, “Tu tu tu” (that’s the way squirrels yell). He ran around and threw these

1 See Du Bois and Demetracopoulou, p. 354, where fugitives from fire hide in an oak tree.

2 The Wintun have a strong aversion to eating reptiles and amphibians, and this appears to be the major point here. See Du Bois and Demetracopoulou, pp. 288 and 307, where lizards are called deer and eaten.
shelled pine nuts in his mouth, and took an oak ball between his leg and burst the ball between his leg; then he would go way up and over the canyon and sit on the other side and yell. Then he came back the same way.

Mr. Sedet [Coyote] came along and said to Gray Squirrel, “Brother Squirrel, where were you when I was doing that? You learned that from me. You watched me and saw me doing that.”

“You never did that,” said Squirrel.

“Yes, I did. You learned that from me.”

“You couldn’t do that. It’s a long way across there.”

“Just watch me—I’ll show you.” He grabbed a manzanita and said, “Tlu tlu thu.” He rubbed the manzanita berries and threw them in his mouth and ran to the edge of the canyon. He took his testes and squeezed them and broke them to pieces and went tumbling down the cliff.

He lay there several days. A bluejay came there and said, “Tcaik, tcaik,” and sat on Coyote’s head picking at his eyes. Sedet said, “Tcaik tcaik! Get away from here, yelling ‘Tcaik tcaik!’ I have been jumping this bank and I came down here to get a good sleep.”

**Magpie and Chicken Hawk**

[Freeman:] Magpie (a boy) had two grown sisters, a little baby brother, and a mother and father. He was living over the mountain. It must have been in Covelo. He came to our county for a race. He had a friend, Hummingbird, who was a great Indian doctor, according to the story. He always called Magpie brother-in-law [sémoén].

Magpie said to Hummingbird, “Well, brother-in-law, we have to go over to the valley because we are called for a gathering of all the birds. Birds of all kind are going to fly to the summit to see what bird can fly the fastest. So they went to the valley. They picked out all the fastest fliers: Dove, Hummingbird, Bullet Chicken Hawk, Duck, Quail, Bluejay, Magpie. There was another kind of bird going to fly, a kind that always said Tew, so Indians called him Tew. He ran too.

Magpie sang all the time. It was a fast song. This is what it said:

*We are in this race for prize*
*to find out who can fly the fastest,*
*we’re in the game, brother-in-law.*
*It won’t be long.*
*We are on the summit looking down at our home.*
*It won’t be long till we’re back home.*

The race started, and Dove got ahead. Next was Quail, next Duck. Hummingbird, Bluejay, Tew, and Magpie—these three [sic] came on the summit last. So Hummingbird and Magpie went home. When they got home after supper the captain yelled, “All you people come into the sweat house [tut] tonight and we’ll dance.” So when night came they all went in, and there were all kind of people doing an Indian dance.

The two Magpie girls were in love with the Wolf brothers. When the captain said that the Wolf brothers were going to dance the next dance, the two girls decided to go to the smoke hole and watch them dance.

The Wolf brothers were dancing. The two girls went up to the smoke hole and looked down. Hummingbird was watching the smoke hole, for he knew they were coming. He saw those two girls got down. Hummingbird jumped into the dance, and he looked up and winked to the girls. The girls got off and went away, and when he found they were done he quit and sat down.

The next morning at daylight the captain came out and told the boys to get up and eat. He told the men with the deer net to go up on the ridge and hunt and to meet at the sweat house. He told some to bring wood to the house, others to pack water to the place so people could drink, the women to cook some food—acorn soup or pinole. He said, “We’ll eat and dance and have a good time. Don’t sleep, all you boys and girls, don’t sleep. Beat the sun up. Don’t sleep your life away, be bright and early—that’s the way to do!”

So the boys went out on the range hunting deer. They strung the deer net on the ridge just as far as it would reach. Then they come home at night. (The old man who told me the story had those fellows hunting at a certain place, but I can’t tell it that way.)

* Cf. Du Bois and Demetracopoulou, story 56, Coyote and the Stump; and note 120, which gives distribution of this element.
They danced that night again, and they danced every night the same way.

One morning the captain said, "We got word to come to war. All you people get up and be ready for the war. We have to go. String your bow, straighten your arrows, get your spear ready, get out your elkhide."

So they went to war. (I don't know which way they went.) They came home at night.

When they were dancing one night Bullet Chicken Hawk sneaked over to see the two Magpie girls. He came in the house, and the girls said, "What are you coming here for? Why aren't you over there with the crowd? Why do you come here?" Chicken Hawk said, "I come to see you girls."

They said, "We don't want you here, so don't ever come back here again." Chicken Hawk answered, "Would you girls talk that way to me?" The girls said, "What are you?" He replied, "I'm a doctor."

"Yes, you're a doctor, but people can order you around! You're nothing! You let people give you orders. You go out and don't come back any more."

So he went to where they were dancing and stood around. He went outside and stood around and said to himself, "It's no use living. I like those girls and I can't get them. I'm hurt. I'm going to turn bad. I'll see that you girls don't get the boys you are after, the Wolf brothers. You aren't going to get those boys."

It was a nice bright moonlight night, so he flew straight to the moon in the sky. The moon said, "What's the matter, grandchild? What do you want me to do for you?"

"I want you to turn me into a bear. Those girls wouldn't have me; they turned me down, and it hurt my feelings. So I want to turn against the people; I don't want to live."

Moon said, "Now, grandchild, you go down and get a hair off each girl's head."

"I don't think they'd allow me in there. How am I going to get my hand on their heads?"

"I'll be all right. I'll overpower them so they won't know anything about it."

So Chicken Hawk flew back down. The girls were sound asleep, and he pulled one hair off each girl's head. He brought the hair up to Moon. They sat down, and Moon boiled water in a great big kettle. "You are going to have a lot of arrows in you, and I have to figure out where to put your heart. If I put your heart on the end of your nose, they're bound to hit you. There's only one place that would be safe. I'm going to put your heart on the little finger on the front foot, where it will be pretty hard to hit. I think it's safe." So he took the hawk's heart out and laid it on the sand. He threw Chicken Hawk in the boiling water and poking him way under so the feathers began to come off. Then he took him out and laid him on the table. He took all the feathers out of the water. He took the two girls' hair and boiled them in that water, then he threw Hawk into it and held him down in the boiling water with a stick. In a little while Hawk turned into a bear big brown bear.

Then Moon hauled him out by the neck and picked his heart up and put it on the little toe of the front foot. "Now, grandchild," he said, "practice around and see what you can do on the flat; run around here." It was still night.

So the bear ran around the flat and threw his arms around and yelled and practiced [being a bear].

"That's pretty good, grandchild, but there is a big manzanita bush. See if you can pull that up, and see what you're going to do with it in the morning."

So the bear started and ran up to the manzanita bush. He grabbed the bush and pulled it up and threw the bush on all the people.

The moon said, "That looks good to me. Now once more, see if you can pull up that young oak tree."

The bear started running. He got down and hugged the tree and pulled it up, threw it, and got on the tree and stomped it.

The moon said, "That's fine, grandchild. Now, where do you want me to put you—which direction from the house?"

The bear said, "They'll go west over the gap. There is a nice flat there, and the people go across it in the morning. If you would leave me on the north side of the trail next to the hill, I would meet the people there in the morning." So the moon brought him down and left him where he wanted to be.
He dug a hole way down and was lying there.

Daylight came. The captain yelled to the boys, "Wake up—we have to go hunting, we have to go out on the range. Wake up and get your bows and your nets and get ready. We have to go hunting this morning."

So it wasn't long before a group of boys came along—laughing, joking, playing, and teasing one another on the trail. They soon got right in front of where the bear was lying. The bear made a big squeal and came out after the boys. The boys shouted, "Bear," and went to shooting him with arrows. Some gave signals that indicated bear. Down at camp they said, "Listen!" Someone said, "Rush up there, boys; a bear fight is going on up there." The bear was slashing right and left. The bear pulled up brush and mashed the Indians down, and they couldn't do anything with him. They were shooting at him. The captain said, "Boys, get close together and shoot him. There's something wrong somewhere. He can't be a real bear and catch people that way. Last night that bullet chicken hawk didn't act right. He was missing last night, and I believe this is him." Magpie and his brother-in-law, Hummingbird, had come along.

Hummingbird said, "Brother-in-law, I'm going to examine him. I'm going through his nose and all through his head and examine him to see what he is." So he did. He went all through his body wherever he could. He came back to Magpie, and he said, "Brother-in-law, that isn't a real bear. He hasn't any brains, heart, or liver. He's hollow, he's nothing but a shell. I don't know where his heart is."

So Magpie said, "I'll never pull my arrow on you, because I'll never do anything to you, brother-in-law Chicken Hawk. I know that you have my blood. What can I do if my sister doesn't like you? Whenever I shoot, nothing gets away from me, but I won't try it." So he broke his bow and arrows across his knee. Magpie did this. He went up to the bear, who broke him to pieces. The mother and the father and the rest of the Magpie family did the same thing. They let Bear kill them.

The two Magpie girls had a baby brother who had only a few feathers. They were sitting on the house watching the fight. The little Magpie said, "Hurry up and bathe me. Give me a good cold-water bath. One of you get a chaparral switch and make me a little bow, and get a little piece of chenise brush [f] for an arrow. Put only one feather on the arrow, and string the bow. Any old way will be all right, because I need only one." They did what he said.

Then the bear went up to the house after them. The girls and the brother Magpie flew to the top of a tree. The bear went there and shook the tree. They went north, and the bear was there to shake them again. This kept up night and day till they got all the way north. This was in the spring of the year. Late in the fall they started back south, and Bear was still following them. Bear was full of holes. You could see daylight through him.

The girls said, "Brother, we are worn out; we want water and something to eat." They were weak from hunger and dry for water. "Brother, you are young and you better make a getaway, for we can't go any longer." Then little brother climbed down, and the two girls cried. The little bird said as the bear came after him, "If my people had only known who you were and where you have your heart, it would have been all right. I knew, but I was too little. The doctors are supposed to be šalabit [seera], but they didn't know you nor where you kept your heart. You want to be my brother-in-law—that's what made you mad."

The bear was still after him while he was talking. Finally Magpie shot the bear in the little toe, and he fell over.

**The Boy Who Killed the Bear**

[Jones:] Once a bear chased and killed everything all over the world except a little boy and his grandmother. The bear was still after these two. This boy grew to be a man. He told his grandmother to make a bow, and she did. He said the bow was all right but the string was no good. He said he wanted a string made out of her pubic hairs. She did this and made the bowstring. He wanted to kill the bear. They [f] tried to stop him, but he insisted. The boy shot this bear through the heart. The bear had put his heart between his toes to hide it, but the boy knew this.

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10 Apparently a synoptic and somewhat variant version of the preceding tale.
The Boy and the Rabbit

[Freeman:] A boy heard of a family up north—two sisters and their mother and father. He went up there, and they killed him. His brother went to look for him and was killed. They went out to look for one another and got killed. Finally the old people began to go—the father, mother, and relatives. I couldn't tell you how long they were at it, but a baby they left grew to be quite a boy. Finally he went looking for them. He'd camp all night on the road. When he got about halfway he saw a rabbit sitting down in the middle of the trail. Every day he was on the road this rabbit would be sitting on the trail or galloping along ahead of him. On the last day the rabbit was sitting pretty close, so the boy sat at him with an arrow. The rabbit went up in the air and over the hill. Then he came close to the brush patch. So the little boy said, "Why is it you're ahead of me all the time? Do you want to tell me something?"

"Yes, I want to tell you something—I feel sorry for you. All your people were killed over there. There are two girls there that do all the shooting. All your people come to see those girls. They got killed, and the old people looking for them also all got killed. I'll tell you all about it. There is a bear on either side of the trail before you get to the house. Watch out for the right-hand side of the trail, for that bear is going to come first. You want to shoot him and then watch out for the bear on the left-hand side. That bear is going to come. Shoot that one too. Tie their legs together and pack them to the house. They will be glad to see you. The old man and lady will call you son-in-law. They will cry, but that is their hard luck. That is their wish." [1] There was a little white spot over the eye of the rabbit. He took it off and put it on the boy, saying, "That'll help you through. I am only lending you that. It's the power I'm going to give you. Every night we'll get together and I'll tell you what's coming to you so you'll know what to do." Then he went away.

The boy came to the bear on the right-hand side and shot him. The other bear came from the left-hand side, and the boy shot him.

"Now, Grandfather," he said, "I got him." "Tie them up and pack them to the house and throw them down in front of it," advised the rabbit. When he got there with the bears, the people said, "That's good." They were both laughing and glad to see him.

The old lady and old man went in a special room and cried. That was because he killed the bears.

Rabbit advised the boy, "When you go to bed with your two wives, they will put you in the middle. Look out, for in the middle of the night they are going to get out of bed because a flint knife is coming down in the middle of the bed. You want to watch out and roll to one side and let it come."

When he went to bed he watched that. The girls began to roll to one side, and the big knife came down in the middle of the bed. He rolled down to the lower end, and the knife came down and hit the middle of the bed and broke into pieces. The old man and lady came running in and asked, "What's the matter?"

"Something fell down in the bed and broke up," he answered. The old folks went into the special room and started crying. The next morning they said, "Well, son-in-law, we'd like to have some pine nuts. You go down to the other side of the hill and get some pine nuts."

The rabbit told him that when he climbed the tree it would grow up into the sky and a big wind would come out of the north and blow him all the way to the south. It would go to the north twice and to the south twice, and he would have to stand these big rides. He shouldn't try to jump off or get frightened. This was his parents-in-law's wish, and he had to ride along.

So he climbed, and the tree went all the way to the sky. Then the wind blew, and the tree went right to the south with him at the top of it. The top hit the end of the world and then went north in just the same way—two times each way. When it hit the north end the last time, it straightened itself. Then the rabbit went up the bottom of the tree and scratched it with his toenail, and it opened itself wide and the boy climbed down. The tree fell to pieces on each side of him.

"Now what'll I do, Grandpa?"

"Take the pine cones and burn them and break them open, then take the pine nuts to your mother-in-law."

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[1] Cf. Du Bois and Demetracopoulou, 1939, story 7, Tuulilheres and Old Man Sun, pp. 291–296. Many of the specific ordeals are the same, such as the falling knife and catching the big fish.
So he took the nuts to the house and threw them down where he had thrown the bears. The old folks were very glad, and then they went into the room and started crying. He went to bed, and there was now no knife to bother him.

The parents said, "Son-in-law, there are a lot of potatoes [roots] in the canyon. We like to eat them. Go down and get them for us." He went down and found them growing. He dug but didn't find the potatoes. Grandfather [Rabbit] said, "Stay with it. You'll find them pretty soon. Keep on digging." Water began to come in and the mud began to fly up, yet he kept going down right beside the potatoes. "Stay with it. Hold your right hand up, but stay with it." He kept going down beside the potatoes. He got out of sight and couldn't hear Rabbit talk any more. Rabbit straddled the place where the boy started digging, and then the boy popped out of the mud and had potatoes. "Come out with them. Take them home and put them in the same place where you have been dropping your game."

The next morning Father-in-law said, "Sorry, we are called for a war. We have to go up north and join the crowd." The boy went north and met the crowd. They fought all day and defeated the people. It was nothing but that old man's wishes that caused the war. The old man went crying into the room with his wife.

The next day the old man said, "Son-in-law, they are climbing a slick pole for prizes and they want you. They heard of you, and they want you to try." The boy went to the northeast, where this place was. The men there couldn't climb it. They could only go a short way up.

The boy was called next. He tried it. He would go up a way and slide back. Rabbit told him to put pitch on his hands and on his knees and go right up, and he did. He went all the way to the end, up into the blue sky. Rabbit threw a rock up there, and the boy came sliding down and hit the ground on his feet. He had his wives with him that time—the first time he took them out.

He came home. The old man and lady went into the room and cried.

The next morning Father-in-law told him to go down in the canyon and get some salmon. "The gig is here, and you can take it along," he said.

He took the spear east to the river (Sacramento), where salmon were spawning. "Shall I dig this one, Grandfather?"

"No, wait a minute, get a better one." So in the afternoon there came a great big red salmon. Rabbit shouted, "There's the one—spear him!" He speared the fish. The salmon was jerking him and dragging him into the river. He kept pulling the boy little by little—took him all the way down, waist deep. The boy looked back, "Grandfather, I'm going to let him go—I'm tired."

"No, stay with him. That's your father-in-law's wish. Stay with him and show your father-in-law what you can do." Salmon was still dragging him into the water. Water was up to his neck.

"I'm going to let him go."

"Stay with him, stay with him. You'll be all right." He was out of sight, couldn't see nor hear any more. Rabbit picked up a white rock and threw it where the boy had gone down. That brought him out.

"What'll I do, Grandfather? Shall I clean him?"

"No, don't clean him. Take everything up for your mother-in-law and father-in-law and your wives. Put a string around his tail and head and put the pole through. Put him on your back and take him home." So the boy was walking head down, studying. He began to walk behind Rabbit; he kept hanging back. He threw his salmon down and made a few steps backing off toward the north. He made a jump and went straight to the sun.

Rabbit turned around and saw him going and waited till he got close to the sun. Then he pulled out one of his eyes and threw it between the sun and the boy. The boy came tumbling down and hit the ground. When he hit the ground the Rabbit took that power, which he had given to the boy, away from him. He told the boy, "I'm through with you. I've saved your life and done a lot for you, but I'm through with you. You can do what you want, but I won't have any more to do with you if that's the way you do. All you're doing is trying to get away with that power I gave you. I just loaned it to you."

12 Informant did not know of native pole climbing except in this story.
CHAPTER V

SUBSISTENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Hunting and Fishing

The subsistence economy of the Central Wintun, like that of the entire California area, was one of exploitation of the natural products of the land. Hunting, fishing, and the gathering of wild vegetal foods were the major economic activities, which varied in importance according to geography and season. Of these activities, hunting and food gathering were most important among the Nomlaki; fishing in the intermittent streams was clearly secondary.

Animal food.—Deer and rabbit were the chief sources of meat, but many forms of wild game were eaten. Other mammals of importance for food were: antelope, elk, squirrel, rat, and kangaroo rat.

Other animals occasionally eaten, or eaten only by old people “that didn’t matter if they died,” were: skunk, bobcat, raccoon, badger, coyote, and fox.

Apparently bear was also eaten, but its hide was of greater importance than its flesh.

Mammals that were never eaten were the beaver, fisher, otter, and perhaps also the mole.

Neither reptiles nor amphibia were considered fit for food, with the exception of the turtle. Specifically mentioned as inedible were snakes, toads, and lizards.

The most important food bird was the quail. Quail eggs were also eaten. Also eaten were: dove, duck, goose, blackbird, yellowhammer, bluejay, robin, and grouse. Baby crow was taboo for young persons. No one ate hawk (which “carried sickness”), hummingbird (which had an important role in mythology), owl, crane, eagle, or buzzard.

The salmon was the most important fish in the Wintun diet. Scarce in the foothills, they were plentiful in the Sacramento River (see p. 407). Other fish eaten were: trout, sucker, perch, pike, hardhead, as well as the roe of certain fish. There were no shellfish.

A “tailed grasshopper” (cricket), found in hollow trees in the fall, lice, and angleworms were also eaten. Bumblebee honey was gathered.

Hunting.—The acquisition of animal foods was the major occupation of the male Nomlaki. Although meat did not bulk large in the diet, hunting was surrounded by important ritual and taboo, and hunting and associated activities were the primary masculine industry. The apparatus used by the Nomlaki included the bow and arrow, a knotted mahogany club, nets, snares, and traps. The valley people used slings for killing birds.¹

Hunting was done by lone individuals and groups. All men hunted, but there were outstanding hunters and specialists. Some were recognized as especially gifted in hunting, and certain types of trapping were the province of specialists. There were also the inept and unskilled hunters: the men devoted to other professions that occupied much if not most of their time; and the doctors and chieftains, who hunted only rarely.

¹ Kroeber, 1925, has suggested that the sling is essentially an upland weapon.
Driving game into a net was the most productive means of getting animal food. Deer, rabbit, and quail were caught in this manner. The deer net was made of sinew rope; ten sections about six feet high and ten feet long were loosely pegged to the ground so as to form a fence about one hundred feet long. Such a net would be placed at a natural gap, and the deer were then driven toward it. One or two persons would remain at the net to club the animal after it was caught in the wide (about eighteen inches) meshes of the net. Extending from both sides of the net was either a brush fence or a single strip of tule laid from bush to bush. "They say that deer won't go over or under this tule strip but will run along it." Such tule strips were never used twice, although the material was taken in and used for other purposes, such as beds. The nets were valuable. They were privately owned by one or several persons but were freely loaned. Mending materials were carried along on hunting trips to repair damages. Bears accidentally caught were especially disastrous to these nets.

Rabbit drives were on the same principle. Rabbit nets were three to five feet high and as much as a hundred yards long, with meshes of about one and a quarter inches. They were made of "Indian hemp" rope. Such a net was stretched over forked sticks in a long, curved line. One man would remain at each end of the net, and a line of men would beat the brush and drive the animals toward the netting. The trapped rabbits were beaten with the knotted mahogany sticks and thrown to one side.

Quail were obtained in a similar manner, except that a horizontal net was used. This net, which was supported by forked sticks, reached the ground at the edges. In the early morning the net was placed in the crotch of a V-shaped low fence that had been built on the side of a hill. One or two persons remained at the trap, and others slowly drove the birds toward the fence, often from a great distance. The herders clapped two rocks together as they moved the birds up the hill. When the quail were under the net, the props were pulled so that it fell over the birds. The Indians killed quail by crushing the skulls between thumb and forefinger. As many as twenty-five or thirty birds were caught at a single drive, and one informant said that sometimes there were so many birds that they would tear the net down. The fence was permanent and "belonged to a family" (see p. 333). The trap was brought in and prepared for a future hunt, because it had to be smoked before it could be used again.

Cooperative drives were also one means of obtaining grasshoppers. The insects were driven with willow switches toward the center of a narrowing circle until the insects were well concentrated. The brush was then set afire, and those who had been driving the grasshoppers would continue over the burned area toward the center and gather the grasshoppers. Children and old people engaged in this activity.

There were other cooperative hunts that did not utilize nets. Most spectacular was the running down of deer or elk in relays.

[Jones:] The Indians hunted elk. They went back into the mountains and surrounded the elk and started them eastward. They know more or less which way the elk would run, so the Indians range themselves at high points along the way. The starters trot after the elk, yelling out in which

\[\text{Cf. Powers, 1877, pp. 241, 242.}\]
direction the animals are going. When the animals get to the next hunter, they let him take over the chase. They take a shot at the leader at the first chance they get and thus weaken him. They chase on till they wound all three or four of them.

The man who first flushed the game was given credit of ownership and received the hide and sinew. The flesh was divided among the group.

Antelope were too fast for this mode of capture.

[Jordan:] Antelope are driven. Good shooters go to certain narrow places. All the men and boys chase them from the valley toward this gap. Antelope will follow each other through such a place like sheep.

Individual hunters would also go out with bow and arrow to bag a large animal, or with the mahogany stick to kill smaller game. Traps, snares, and other devices were also used.

Deer and antelope were stalked, but not elk. A Nomlaki impersonated a feeding deer until he came within shooting range. The camouflage might be a real deer head stuffed with straw, or a similarly stuffed imitation one with sticks to resemble horns.

Antelope calves were caught in the early morning. They were taken after the mothers had arisen and before the calves were awake. Fawns were occasionally captured in this way and, according to Jones, were kept as pets until grown, when they would be killed and eaten. Does made the better pets and also served as decoys. To indicate that a deer had been tamed, something would be tied around its neck. Another informant denied that pets were kept.

Birds were trapped in a net dropped over them while they were feeding on bait or while they were feeding in the bare spots under trees after a snowfall. (There is usually only light snow in this region.)

Properly speaking, the capture of eagles was neither hunting nor subsistence economy. The birds were never eaten, but were highly prized for their feathers.

[Jones:] Eagles are caught when young. The owner of the nest watches the mother feed her eaglets. When they begin to stand around on the edge of the nest, he brings them down, ties a string on their legs, builds a perch, and places small game out for them to eat. When they are fully grown they are killed.

Indians raise eagles just for the feathers, which are valuable because they make war caps and dancing coats. While they pluck eagles they go through the following ceremony: throw one feather south, another west, east, north, all the while saying something. The man talks a while, then he picks every feather that is of some use. Then he goes through a ceremony that I don’t know and puts a little string of beads around the bird’s neck. He fixes it up and buries it, wrapped in grass and ropes and in common nets. There is a special place to bury it.

The wood rat was caught with a trap made of stiff strings (?) placed over the rat-nest hole while the trapper jumped on top of the nest. If the rat didn’t come out, the hunter dug for it. To trap the kangaroo rat, a large flat stone was propped with a long acorn at an angle to another stone in such a way that the animal in gnawing the seed away was trapped between the two stones. This trap was set in the evening and visited in the morning. Such work was said to be the job of a specialist (see p. 331).

After the first fall rains, ground squirrels would be drowned out of their nests by water diverted from the freshets into their holes. Usually the half-drowned animal was easily caught as it crawled out. This was also a specialized technique
engaged in by special hunters. "He gets sole ownership of the nests once he has made a claim."

A loop snare with a complex trigger arrangement was described by Jones. These snares were set on regular trails. A sapling served as spring to draw the loop tight when the trigger was released. The trigger was a slanting stake held in place by a branch covered with wormwood. This heavy branch was set along the trail and placed over the stake in such a manner that the animal's weight would dislodge it and thus release the stake, allowing the sapling to pull the loop around the rabbit.

A simpler snare for rabbits and rats was a small, light net, "like a hair net." A loop snare was woven through the outside meshes of the net, and one end was tied to a tree or rock. The net was tied with fine strings across the trail. When a rabbit jumped into it, the net was torn loose and carried forward so that the loop was pulled tight and acted as a pucker string, forming a sack that enclosed the animal.

Squirrels were killed when a tree was chopped down. The entrances to their holes, if noticed, were first plugged. Gophers were caught in the winter by knocking over the mound. The hill informants knew no ways of catching and killing such river fauna as beaver. Fox, coon, coyote, and wildcat were evidently taken only by shooting.

The bear, more than any other animal, captured the imagination of the Nomlaki. He was involved in many tales, and his pelt was an object of great wealth. The grizzly bear was certainly the most dangerous animal in his environment. The strong flavor of peculiar social evaluation is caught in narratives of bear killing. It is impossible to say what portions of these narratives reflect practice, what express merely belief. On either score they are of ethnological interest.

[Jones:] I have been told there is a peculiar way to kill bear. They say a bear understands our language and that there are certain men who can talk to them and go around them. Indians don't set out on bear hunts. They occasionally kill a cinnamon bear if he is handy. When a bear comes to camp he is apt to catch a man and kill or wound him. Once the men were all camped in the mountains on a hunt, and only women, children, and old men were around camp. One night a woman had a young baby asleep a short distance away from the camp. The bear took the baby and ate it and bit the woman's foot and ate that. Everyone began to yell. Some watched which way the bear went, others went to get the men. The "bear-man" went to the place where the bear was supposed to have gone. He talked to the bear and told her to come out, that the people would get her anyway. They shot many arrows at her. The bear went back and eat down in a hole she had made under a ledge. One man threw little round rocks in front of the bear from about twenty yards away and then ran at an angle up the hill. The bear came out after him. Others were stationed behind trees and shot at the bear, which then ran back to shelter. They repeated this again and again, but she wouldn't die even though there were many arrows in her.

Another fellow was bragging about what he could do about killing the bear and went down and threw rocks at her. The bear came out after this man and caught him, feet in the air. The bear-man [specialist] made a rush for the bear and grabbed her, so that the young fellow got away. A man held the bear by the scruff of the neck [sic; see also the next story] while others killed her from in front. When they killed the bear they dragged her to a flat place. They ripped her open and got the baby out of her stomach. Then they skinned the bear and brought the hide and the meat (I guess, for they eat bear meat) and buried the baby and the woman's foot. They wrapped the baby in the bearskin to bury it.

[Jones:] A man takes a torch into the bear's den. From behind he grabs the bear's neck with both hands. They say bears won't bite you in their den. The man has someone posted to get the bear as he comes out, for they don't shoot bears in the den. Bear-men are strong. I don't know how they
learn to become bear-men or how they get so they can kill a bear in this way. Occasionally they get slapped, which makes a pretty bad scar. The bear can't get at them if they hold the front feet off the ground. The man who draws the first blood gets the hide even if he doesn't kill the animal.

If a bear chases you, get up a tree with the mahogany club in your hands. You can protect yourself with this.

The grizzly is a very desperate, clever, and active animal; he is dangerous. Indians ate bears, but I don't know if they ate grizzlies. The bear-man goes by the name of ē'ui. He is always called that. The man that talks to the bear is not the ē'ui, and he won't help kill the bear. To kill a bear three separate men are needed: the one who talks to the bear, the one who throws rocks and lets the bear chase him [ē'ui], and the one who holds him by the scruff of the neck. I don't know if any of these people are doctors. The talker must have some kind of power, but I don't know how he gets it. He may get it at the Hut'a initiation; I don't know.

[Jordan:] If someone finds a bear den, he owns that place. He can go in wintertime and feel of the bear. Then he can smoke the bear to death. The bearhide makes the owner a "big man." They take any kind of bearhide, but the black bear's is worth the most. Indians are afraid of the grizzly and let it alone; they kill them only occasionally.

Once a grizzly was in a willow patch eating wild grapes. People passed by him as they were going fishing, and the grizzly came out and caught a young man. The crowd climbed trees and shot at the bear. The young fellow's father went in after the bear and was killed. Then the bear got away. They couldn't kill it. They tend to let the grizzlies alone. Black bear and cinnamon bear are easily treed and killed. The grizzly will fight.

[Freeman:] One time Grandfather and his brother were setting nets on the trails. When it got dark, one went around to scare up the rabbits, the other watched the nets. They hadn't caught many on this particular night. They had hard luck and were hurrying home with their nets. They heard a bear walking and panting. It was almost sundown. Grandfather wanted to let the bear pass; but his brother wanted to shoot the bear, and he waited with his bow ready. He missed the bear. Instead of standing he ran, and the bear finally caught him and held him with his left forepaw. Grandfather sent the dog after him. The bear threw the man down and sat on him. Grandfather hit the bear on the forearm with his club. The bear finally started down the hill with Grandfather's brother. Finally after continual beating, the bear dropped the man and ran away. Grandfather's brother had a collarbone and some ribs broken.

Not everybody can fight a bear—Father could punch a bear with a stick and run around trees. To do this was fun for him. He would get a bear chasing him down a hill and then swing around a tree, and the bear would keep going right past him. It would not come back either.

Social and ritual activities associated with hunting.—There was some conscious attempt at training the youths for the important economic activity of hunting. Young boys were given small bows, arrows, and quivers for practice. Boys' quivers were made of gray squirrel or raccoon pelts, which were considered unsuitable for established hunters. Similarly, "they make bows of oak or some common wood" for the boys. An older man would take several boys out on hunting trips. As they proved capable, youngsters were taken on longer journeys. Not all boys cared to hunt or were adept, and there was apparently a selection of better hunters. Some ritual aspects of this education are indicated in the following:

[Jones:] When a boy first goes hunting he may kill a rabbit. Some old fellow may be along. The young man is not supposed to touch the meat or to eat any for some time until he gets to be a good hunter. Later when he gets older, about fourteen or fifteen, if he is out with a hunter, he may get a deer. He would tell a relative where he killed the deer. The relative goes to get the deer—a father, cousin, older brother, uncle. The boy doesn't eat any of that meat. His people get the hide and sinew. He doesn't eat the first fish he catches either. Some of the old folks might eat it.

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3 This was part of a story about a stray dog.
According to Nomlaki belief, if a youth ate his first kill of the various animals, he would never be able to get any more of that type of game. Good hunters (those who were "gifted" in trapping various kinds of game) acquired their skill in the dream quest connected with the secret association (see pp. 326 ff.) and thereby obtained a sort of local monopoly on the particular activity.

A man did not hunt during his wife's menstrual period. He did not kill inedible wild animals or the cottontail rabbit while his wife was pregnant. Apparently certain persons, such as doctors and chiefs and perhaps other specialists, were freed from the daily task of hunting (see p. 332).

In communal hunting, the headman of the village would take the leadership, announcing to the group that they should go hunting, indicating the course the hunt was to follow, and allocating the duties of each hunter.

The first to draw blood or the man who flushed deer or elk was given credit for the kill and received the sinew and hide. (This person was not always the one who dealt the death blow.) The meat was divided among all the hunters.

[Jones:] The man who started the deer running gets the sinew and hide; everyone who helped gets some meat. Everybody makes his claim. They cut up the deer where they kill it. The starter might get a little of the meat, but his part is the hide and sinew. Some fellows kind of fight over the meat and their parts. The one who first shot the deer doesn't—he knows his part. I don't know how they make decisions over disputes on this. There are so many that everyone gets just a little.

If a person kills a deer, everybody tells everybody else about it. All come running. Everybody claims a piece of the meat. The killer doesn't lay his hands on the deer. It is perhaps divided between two rancherias. The man who first draws blood—no matter who finally kills the animal—gets credit for the deer and receives the sinew, sinew, and brains. If the Indians are hunting to supply a meeting, they carry the whole animal into camp, and the captain divides the food. The killer may get one ham for home use; the rest is given away. If a hunter gets a deer while hunting alone, then he carries the deer in alone; he takes the entire body—head, horn, gut, and all.

Rabbits are often especially hunted for a group festivity. Then everyone adds his kill to a common larder, and food is distributed according to rule (see p. 324).

Fishing.—Salmon were important to the River Wintun diet, but in Nomlaki country these fish were relatively rare and fishing was on a smaller scale. The Nomlaki did not use the harpoon in the shallow creeks, they did not seine for fish, and they did not build weirs. Several methods of obtaining fish were known. The most spectacular and apparently one of the most productive means was by diving after them. This was men's activity.

[Jones:] They dive with a net, trying to herd the fish into a corner and catch them in it. They do this until the fish all hide, and then they go with bare hands and catch the fish that are hiding behind ledges and bring them up with their hands. When they locate a number they keep diving, and they can stay under water a long time. They grip down on the fish behind the gills so that it can't get away. Occasionally they take bigger fish with both hands. If they can't get the fish away from the water, they break its neck with their hands or by biting. These hand nets won't hold salmon, so that they have to be brought up carefully. Our people had no salmon spearing. When there was a run, they were caught in nets or were driven into shallow waters and stoned or clubbed to death. The river Indians had seines and spears.

Poisoning stagnant holes was women's work. Turkey mullen and soaproot were used. The weeds were gathered, wetted, pounded on rocks at the edge of a water hole, and then mixed into the water. The fuzz from the turkey mullen got into the
gills of the fish and stifled them, so that they could be picked up by hand when they came to the surface.

Two forms of fish trap were described. One was made of willow branches woven together, but no informant could give the details of construction. The other was a large envelope of netting with a mouth held open by a curved willow branch, essentially similar to that illustrated by Dixon. These traps were used in shallow water and were made effective by building a dam with a narrow opening.

McGetrick said that crude, bone-pointed spears—not harpoons—were used for getting fish; Jones and Jordan both knew the harpoon as a river implement, the latter informant agreeing with the drawing as reproduced by Du Bois as to its construction.

![Fig. 3. Drawing of a Wintun fish weir, from the narratives of the Wilkes Expedition.](image)

Powers described a Wintun fishing station. Two stout poles in the form of a cross were planted in deep water, and a log was run to them from the bank. The fisher stood on this log. Sometimes a “booth” was built over the water, “but it is not nearly so ingenious or pretty a structure as those on the Klamath.” Pickering also noted fishing platforms on the Sacramento River, probably within Patwin territory but close to the Wintun border. In the Sacramento he also saw a fish weir, which he described as follows:

The fish weir was constructed with a great deal of art: stakes pointing down the stream had been driven into the bed, having three openings which led into square pens above; over each of the entrances into the pens was a platform, on which the natives stand to take fish; on these also there were heaps of ashes, indicating that the natives made use of fire to attract the fish [see figure 3].

Powers was impressed by the Wintun ability to remain submerged under water, as they did when diving for clams. He also said that fish were carried by laying them parallel and running two thongs through their bodies. They were carried so that the upper fish lay across the shoulders, the others hanging below. The men handled and cleaned the fish.

Glue was a salmon by-product and was used chiefly for attaching the sinew to the wood in making bows. According to Jones it was made by working together salmon skins and a slime from stagnant water and boiling the mixture until it attained the right consistency. Glue was used out of a dish-shaped stone.

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1 Dixon, 1905, p. 142, fig. 13.
2 Du Bois, 1925, p. 128.
3 Powers, 1877, p. 233.
Whole communities or large groups often spent the day fishing together. Such a day might close with a feast. Any fish not eaten would be divided among the participants, even though only one or two salmon were caught. The division was made according to the size of each family involved, but the catcher received the head portion, a delicacy to native taste.

There is no evidence of any first-salmon rite, and informants specifically denied its existence. There was, however, a taboo on eating a person's own first catch of salmon or other kind of fish, similar to that on eating his first kill of animals.

Jones stated that "fishing is specialized—not everybody and anybody can do that kind of work." Other informants disagreed with this statement.

**Plant Foods**

*Varieties of plant food.*—"Acorns were the main item in the food line for Indians," according to McGetrick—undoubtedly a correct evaluation. Acorns, wild seeds, and roots of various kinds were gathered by women and together formed the major portion of Wintun diet.

The following acorns were named: *tl'ixla*, valley acorn; *penel*, mountain acorn (very desirable); *tc'ik iuw*, white oak acorn; *widök*, long mushoak acorn; *nuis*, similar to the above but sweet enough to be eaten raw (very rare and desirable); *samtei iuw*, black oak acorn; *te'uman iuw*, liveoak; *munuk*, a sweet acorn.

The following food grasses* were listed: *lovki*, wild oats; *t'on*, tarweed; *tana*, tumbleweed; *tcinięk or tciñeök*, a ground vine with many seeds; *yodôh*, peppergrass; *k'ôt*, a grass with white blooms and knoblike pods; *pat*, an upright bush with fine pods; *khowï or kôlôm*, sunflower; *luxpux*, a ground creeper with red blooms and fine black seeds; *wokan*, a grass with white flowers and black seeds.

Other vegetal foods supplemented the diet. They included various roots, "Indian potatoes," and a clustering root called *tcubui*. Important and appropriately characterized as "Indian greens" were the various clovers.

Fruits and berries that were utilized included: manzanita, mountain blackberry, wild grape, elderberry, chokeberry, buckeye, thimbleberry, and sarvisberry.

Pine nuts were relished. Mushrooms were known in two varieties: *mi'mude* and *kitmude*.

*Acorns.*—There was no ceremony connected with the gathering and preparation of acorns. The trees are seldom difficult to scale. The lower nuts were often knocked down with a pole, but the top ones were left to ripen until they fell to the ground in the late fall. Children were kept away from the trees until the nuts were ready to be picked. A tree might belong to a particular individual, as in the case of one tree with an especially desirable variety of acorns called *nuis* that belonged to an important captain.

Acorns were picked in great quantities, especially in the summer camp. After cleaning they were stored in dry granaries, where they would not spoil.

*Seeds.*—The harvesting of wild seeds was the work of women. The women of the village would go out with the children, especially half-grown daughters, to gather the ripened seeds. Perhaps the captain had already sent scouts out to determine where the seeds were ripe and the crop plentiful, so that on a certain

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*It was unfortunately not possible to collect and have identified the plants here listed.*
morning he could order the women to go in a specific direction. This was group activity, probably because it afforded a sociable day as well as protection. Some stories indicate the possibility of raids by Yuki or other alien groups and also that a watch was kept over women thus occupied (see p. 342).

The work lasted all day. The women went out with the conical carrying basket and a mandolin-shaped seed beater. They did not take a lunch or drink water during their day's work. A good day's harvest for one woman was two sacks of sunflower seeds or one of oats. When they returned they dumped their load in piles on a cleared place, where it was left to dry. Old women and girls who had been left at home prepared this clearing as well as the supper for the harvesters.

The women would continue this seed gathering for several successive days. Dried seeds were stored for winter use. One informant said that the Indians came from the north to trade for seeds and also made raids to get the grain.

[Jones:] In the valley, when the sunflowers mature, they go after them. They pull the pods and throw them back into the carrying baskets. The children who are along mash the seeds down. The basket will be full toward evening. There is a plant with pink bloom and a little black seed that grows in large bunches on level, moist ground. When the bloom disappears they pull these plants by the roots and lay them root side downward on a large clear place and let them dry. Then they shake the seeds into a basket until all are shaken out. They are clean then except for a few leaves which can easily be removed by winnowing. This is the cleanest seed that grows. They put them away and use a little at a time, parched.

There is a rare pinole among the Indians which is used for seasoning. It is called po-1, and grows in upright bushes and has many fine pods. They pull these pods before they pop open, and lay them in a basket covered with something to keep them from scattering. They set this basket in the sun for a day or two, and when the pods stop popping they stir it and get the under ones to pop. After a few days they pick up the roots and shake the seeds out of the limbs. They will then mash those pods which are not broken. This leaves a little dirt to winnow out. The result of a day's gathering may make a double handful, but it is used as a seasoning, a pinch at a time. It is rare—grows very sparsely. A pinch is worth a string of beads [at best an approximation]. It has a nice smell, and a pinch makes the whole pinole taste good. The river Indians have other seeds that we don't have.

Roots.—Various types of roots were dug by the Nomlaki women. The women sat or knelt and uprooted the plants with their sharpened mahogany sticks. They could get about a gallon and a half in a day's work. Often they worked in groups. Some of the plants grew in swampy places, others on the hillsides. One informant said that "all Indian potatoes look alike and taste alike, though there are different kinds."

Clover.—Although all the informants were aware of the importance of clover to the native diet, there was apparently no special technique for gathering it. Its importance lay in the fact that it was the first fresh crop to appear in the spring and marked the end of the winter shortage. It was eaten raw with salt, if that was available, and was greatly relished. Nomlaki informants said that clover was kept picked to the ground and was eaten immediately, never stored." Tender, fresh clover seeds were occasionally parched with coals (see p. 416).

* Dixon, 1905, quotes reports that the Maidu cropped the clover on all fours like grazing animals. This is undoubtedly a prejudiced report referring to the harvest of their "Indian greens." P. 183.
Fruits and berries.—As indicated above, full use was made of the fruits available in the area, but it was not a region rich in such foods. Many berries, grapes, and wild plums were eaten raw, and some were especially gathered and prepared. Among the latter were the buckeyes, which were leached. Manzanita berries were eaten raw, pounded and mixed into pinole, or mashed in water and made into a soft drink that was considered refreshing.

[Jones:] They ate grapes a long time ago. They would go a long way after them. If there were any left they put them into a basket and mashed them into a kind of soup, getting out what seeds they could by hand. They would put this in front of some hunter, and he would make some scurrvy or vulgar remark about it. But he would drink it with his pinole. It makes a good drink to wash down pinole with. They never cooked grapes.

Pine nuts.—Men aided in gathering pine nuts in the fall, a relatively hazardous undertaking requiring skillful climbing. It was the only vegetal food that men helped gather, as well as the only for which any ritual was reported. There were special climbers, men who were empowered to climb after the burrs, and a man who sat under the tree and yelled out a sort of incantation.

[Jones:] Climbing after pine nuts is a trick of its own. You go up the pine tree by aid of a pole with a hook tied to it and shake the burrs down either by hand or with the hooked pole. While the climber is up there no one speaks to him. Another man under the tree beats with his foot and chants a long moaning kee-ce-ce, which starts loud and gradually dies out then starts afresh. While he is in the tree everyone else sits down and one fellow makes the calls. The climber comes down carefully—hooks the pole to a limb and slides down. Then they begin to pick up the burrs and take them to a cleared place where the fire won't get away from them. They build a fire and burn the pitch off the pine cones and then rake them away from the fire and let them cool. They have a sort of bladed rock [†] with which they split the upper part. They split them into four parts while others twist the nuts out of all the cells and pile them up. Then they smooth off a place and let them dry. After that they might gather from another tree. The climber doesn't have to shell the nuts. A dehke is an ordinary tree-climbing man; a lala is a man who can handle himself well in a tree. A climber after nuts will be called lala by outside people and in-laws—it is a kind of nickname he carries until he dies. The olhehit is the man who does the yelling underneath. He sits under a tree, and no burrs hit him. He goes by the nickname of olhehit [kehit is a term for clown]. I called my uncle, who was one, olhehit and was scolded because he was my uncle and it isn't right for me to call a relative by his name.

Similar accounts of this unusual custom were obtained from Jordan and Freeman. They added that one hooked pole was used for climbing and a shorter one for pulling off the cones. Freeman recognizes the specialist nature of the work, but neither mentions the chanter who sits under the tree.

Mushrooms.—Several edible varieties of mushrooms were known. Their use was described by two informants:

[Raglin:] Mushrooms were roasted on coals; the big white mushrooms were eaten, the black ones are no good.

[Freeman:] They pick and eat white mushrooms raw. Another kind with a pink bottom is poison and isn't eaten. Another mushroom is boiled and eaten.

Sugar.—Sweetening was not known. The “sugar” from sugar pine trees was eaten by children and kept for its value as a physic. The local variety of maple tree does not produce sugar.
OTHER NATURAL PRODUCTS

Minerals.—Two minerals should be included in the discussion of Nomlaki foods. The first is the red clay that was washed and mixed with oats or acorn flour in making bread (see p. 416). It apparently acted as a kind of leavening. No informant knew where such clay could be obtained, but all knew it and its use in bread-making.10

More important was the salt, wet, that was obtained from beds on Elder Creek and at Newville. It was collected from the banks of running springs in midsummer, being scraped and dried on hot stones, usually by women. There were no menstrual taboos connected with salt. Clover and meat were salted; acorn mush was salted by some. Freeman said that a ball of wet salt was thrown in the ashes, where it would harden; then it would be eaten. Salt was an important trade article that was dispersed over the area from a few salt licks. There were repeated references to salt being traded to the Yuki, who would make special trips over the mountains to get it (see p. 336).

[Jones:] The river Indians know how to make salt out of a weed, but we couldn't do that. The Tehama Indians [i.e., River Wintun] knew less than we do about salt, and would steal from our salt beds. The Colusa salt is made out of a weed and forms hard lumps like glass. Not everyone can make it, they tell me. They make a straw fire under some of the weed to melt off the salt, drops of which fall into the fire. The makers go around and talk when they do this. If anyone makes fun of it, the saltmaking is at an end [i.e., is stopped]. They have to go through a ceremony for it.

Tobacco.—A wild form of tobacco was used. The Wintun never cultivated this plant, in contrast to the Wintu, who sow tobacco.11

The tobacco grew wild along the creek banks. It was gathered without ritual in the late spring or summer when the flowers fell off, and was dried in the shade. When thoroughly dry, the leaves were crumbled off the stems and stored in hide sacks. It was thought to improve with age, but it was not cured. Tobacco was traded within the village and between different tribes (see p. 336). It was smoked in pipes by men, but never used in any other way. Children were never allowed to use tobacco. Old men sat around and smoked while telling stories at night.12

Water.—There was no problem of getting water in the Nomlaki territory. There were, however, certain styles and restrictions regarding drinking. For instance, a war party, a hunting party, or a group of women gathering seeds would not partake of water until sundown or until their task was completed. At a stream or spring they drank water by dipping it up with the cupped hand, never by putting the face to the surface. Powers was impressed with the inordinate fondness the Wintun had for water. Not only did they bathe upon the slightest provocation, but would wade into the river merely for the purpose of getting a drink.

Jones told a story of a large war party going after the Yuki. When the party arrived at a stream the leader told his men that this would be the last time they would be allowed to drink. They all drank so heartily that they dried the stream. The informant had been told the story as the truth and recounted it because of its improbable character.

11 Ibid., p. 199.
12 Jones gave me some wild tobacco, which I rolled into a cigarette. This tobacco is exceedingly strong, and one cigarette produced a dizziness I have never felt from any commercial tobacco.
Molly Freeman was talking about the ability of the blind to discern events around them when she related the following tale:

Once they went on a special hunt into the mountains to get some kind of a big stick [the center pole for a sweat house?], and they told us women not to drink water all day. It was summer—very dry all day—and there was no food. A blind old lady was sleeping by a basket of water. I was dry and was going to drink. This woman heard me and stopped me from drinking. At sundown the fellows came back with a pole, and I was glad that I could drink water!

A menstruating woman did not go near the spring from which water was obtained, and it was for this reason that the menstrual hut was on the far side from the source of water supply (see p. 319).

Wood.—Gathering firewood was an onerous task. Because a fire was perpetually kept and because a great deal of wood was burned at the time of dances, a large amount of effort had to be expended for this purpose. Wood for the winter and for everyday use was usually gathered by each individual family. A captain did not do this kind of work; he might order youths to get it for him. A “commoner,” on the other hand, got his own. Furthermore, a man might gather wood for a neighbor in exchange for food, a bow, or arrows from him. There would not be a fixed price for such work; the laborer would simply ask for what he wanted when he finished. It was said that a poor man who was disliked personally would have to work in this way for food. For a dance or festival of some sort the captain would specify a few people to get wood. Apparently the initiates were expected to gather manzanita for the Huta ceremony. Ordinarily a man and his wife went after wood together, the woman doing her share or, according to one informant (Molly Freeman), being sent back with the load while her husband stopped to visit with friends.

Usually loose, dead pieces of wood were gathered from the ground. Trees were broken up by hitting them on the ground. Occasionally trees were felled by burning the trunks. Mud was plastered over the trunk above the place to be burned. As the trunk burned, the charcoal would be hacked away with a stone. If it started burning upward, the fire would be put out with dirt or water. Felling trees was rare and was probably resorted to only as a means of getting important poles for the dance house.

Fire.—Fire was ignited in two ways: by twirling a hard stick in a socket in pithy wood, or by striking two flints. The latter was undoubtedly a Spanish innovation because Jones said: “Our people didn’t know much about making fire with flint. That was the Mexican way of making fire; they brought the flints.”

The drill was a smooth, three-foot piece of mahogany or some other hardwood; the hearth was usually cedar. The depression was near one edge, and a notch was cut to the edge to allow the coal to fall on the straw or punk placed by the side of this fire hearth. The drill was twirled between the palms with a downward motion in order to bring pressure at the point of contact. The hearth was steadied with the feet. When a coal appeared, the fire maker stopped twirling and blew on the ember. When a fire began, it was fanned with a parching basket. No fire fans were known to the informants.

Ignition was a difficult and uncertain process, and fires were seldom allowed to die. A firebrand of oak or similar hardwood was carried on journeys. The only time Indians purposely extinguished fire was when they were moving, and then
only if it was not immediately needed at the destination. When a fire did go out, they would borrow or, according to Jones, buy fire with a few beads or some rope, for it was often quicker to go some distance after fire than to try to start one. Nevertheless fire-making apparatus was always kept at hand. A fire was built in the center of the individual houses. Hearths were also maintained outside of the house.

Fire making has ritualistic aspects. The fire maker "talks something" while he is working, and no one dares to make fun of him while he is busy at this occupation— "everyone almost holds his breath." (Compare Wintun saltmaking, p. 411.) There was a fire-making specialist, who kept his own apparatus. Though not the only man capable of making fire, he was the most proficient. Even this man occasionally failed to produce fire despite his best efforts.

Firebrands were used for light when searching for things at night. The same brand would not be used as a torch twice, but would always be thrown back into the fire. Children were not allowed to play with fire. They were told that it was dangerous. They were told stories to make them afraid of fire. Fire appears frequently in Nomlaki mythology (see Myths), especially the capture of fire and the destruction of the world by fire.

**Preparation of Food**

*Storage and preservation.—*Dry vegetal food was stored for winter use in baskets, sacks, skins, or in willow granaries. Clover was never stored; roots were not mentioned in this connection. Grass seed was stored after being winnowed clean. Acorns, especially when only half ripe, were put away in the shell or were hulled and dried, the inner skin rubbed off, and the cleaned nuts stored ready for grinding. Unshelled buckeyes for winter use were buried in the mud of a small running stream. When dug, they were a dirty brown, had been leached, and had lost most of their flavor. An essentially similar method was used in the preparation of a type of acorn known as *kulul*.

They put the long acorns from the mushoak in a big hole in a spring, fill it with the matured nuts, and cover it over with mud. The nuts are left there until winter, where they leach and remain in storage to be taken out as needed. They roast these in ashes and eat them whole—never grind them. They taste a little sulphurlike.

Granaries were made of straight willow stems set vertically and woven together with split grapevine. The holes were stuffed with straw, the contents were covered with straw, and the whole was roofed with bark slabs. They stood on high ground or were raised above it. These granaries varied from six to ten feet in height and were six to eight feet in diameter. They were used to store acorns. Usually each village had only one granary, from which all the people helped themselves. It was under control of the headman to the extent that he could question anyone who seemed to be taking more of the nuts than he needed.

Pineole was kept in baskets, but the rough grain was usually hung in skin sacks or in bags made of closely netted fiber cord.

Meat was preserved by drying, or it was smoked inside the houses. Informants referred to salting meat, but this is probably a modern practice.

Salmon were ripped open, cut into sections, and boned. The shoulders and back
of large game was stripped and dried; the muscles of the forelegs were separated and dried. Dried grasshoppers were sometimes preserved.

Meat cooking.—Several modes of cooking were known to the Nomlaki: boiling with hot stones, baking in pit ovens, broiling over coals, parching with coals, and roasting on hot stones, on a spit, or in ashes.

Meat was usually broiled directly over the coals, although probably spit roasting was also aboriginal. On the other hand, boiled meat was probably a white innovation. Broiling meat was men's work.

Small game was often singed and then roasted in ashes, but rabbits were not treated in this way. The large bones of this rodent were broken, and the animal was opened, cleaned, and laid flat over hot coals. When cooked, the large bones were removed, the remainder pounded to a pulp on a flat rock with a pestle, and the meat formed into balls "like sausages." Deer meat was sometimes pounded and then spread over a rock and placed on coals to roast.

In preparing the meat of larger game, the back and side muscles were cut into strips and the leg muscles separated. One turnip-shaped muscle that tapers into a long tendon was known as yubi. It was set aside and hung up by a knot in the tendon. The hunter roasted the yubi, pounded it, and then roasted it again. Apparently this piece of flesh was of special importance; it was earmarked for the hunters and was the first meat eaten after the hunt. The paunch was cleaned and the blood caught in it; it was then roasted. These and the entrails formed the hunters' meal.

Birds, like other small game, were roasted on oak coals. Turtles were cooked by setting them alive on their backs on the coals. Wood rat, squirrel, and skunk were singed and roasted in ashes without skinning; grasshoppers were parched; worms were thoroughly washed and boiled into an oily mush.

One informant said that every edible portion of an animal was consumed. The blood and entrails of larger animals were devoured by the hunter himself, but those of the smaller game were not usually eaten. Only old people ate the heart and the lungs, which were said to have a bad effect on the wind. A restriction on eating liver was reported, but the nature of this was no longer known. Marrow and brains were eaten, the latter being also used for dressing skins.

If not kept and dried, fish might be immediately baked in a pit oven at the water's edge. Large, flat stones were heated on a fire built in a saucer-shaped pit. After the blaze died down, the pit was lined with the stones, covered with dampened grape leaves, and uncleared fish laid on them, the whole covered with more leaves and the heated stones, and a fire built on top. After several hours the fish were removed and divided or eaten there. Fish roe was broiled on coals.

Processing of acorns and seeds.—The preparation of acorns was a technique known to every woman. It was her daily task, as is the making of tortillas for the Mexican peasant women. A baked bread or, more usually, a thick boiled gruel was made of the acorn flour. Both bread and gruel were also made of wild oats.

Acorns were gathered in large quantities, as they were beginning to ripen, and placed in a pile. The youths—boys and girls together—and perhaps a few of the older people would form a circle around the pile and have a hulling "bee."
The acorns were hulled by biting off the butt end and removing the soft flesh with the fingers. It could be done very rapidly, and the young people would race at hulling a handful.

The women pounded acorns into fine flour as needed. A basketry hopper was set on a flat stone and held in place by resting the calves of the legs on the edge of the hopper. A few nuts were put in it and pounded with a long pestle. The flour was sifted by another woman, and the coarser particles were again pounded. Sifting was done in a flat basket, in the grooves of which the finer flour was caught, and the coarser material was worked off by shaking. The fine flour was then loosened from the sifter by tapping the back with a knobbled stick.²⁸

The fine flour was then ready to be leached as follows: a shallow circle about three feet in diameter was shaped in the loose sand. A carefully made leaching place would have coarser gravel on the bottom, so that the water would drain easily, and finer sand on top to keep the mush from washing through. Several such beds were made at the same time. The flour was then mixed with water into a thick dough and spread evenly in the pit. Water—cold in summer, warmed in winter—was then carefully poured over the dough, not directly but onto the back of the hand so that there was a trickle and no splashing. Several successive rinsings were necessary before the acorn was sweetened. It was then cut into squares with a stick or deer-bone knife, and the individual squares carefully picked up and washed. The washing water was kept and poured off the sand when this had settled to the bottom. The cleaned squares of mush were put into a basket of water ready for cooking.

Meanwhile smooth pebbles had been heated. These were put into the basket of water and acorn meal, using two sticks as tongs. The stones were individually rinsed in a basket of water. A second woman stirred the mush with a flat stick, to keep the hot stones from burning the basket, and removed the stones when they were cold. The crisp mush adhering to the stones was enjoyed by the small children. Stones were kept from one time to the next and heated carefully to prevent breakage.

The finished porridge was never eaten hot but was set to cool. It was almost thick enough to be cut with a knife, but some preferred it thinned out by additional water. The mush might be dried and kept.

Different kinds of acorns served different purposes. Penel was the favorite mountain acorn; liveoak acorns were added to new-crop acorns to make the soup thicker; munuk was a sweet acorn that was roasted without leaching; the nuis was eaten raw.

Fresh grass seeds gathered early in the season were too damp to make into pinole, so they were made into soup. The seeds were first parched, then pounded and winnowed (although they did not winnow clean because of their dampness). They

needed no leaching. They were boiled in the same manner as acorns. A thick mush was made with an unidentified root skinned and mashed into a white dough and boiled. It jelled so firmly that it could be cut with a knife.

**Bread.**—Several types of bread were known, varying with the type of acorn or other flour used. The bread was usually black and had little crust, but to the native taste it was “better than any oven-baked bread could be.”

The most common acorn bread was *sau*. It was made as follows: The acorns were pounded into a flour as coarse as whole wheat and placed unleached in a basket. A lump of a special kind of red clay was rubbed into a basket of water. The grit was allowed to settle to the bottom, and the clay solution decanted over the meal, which was then worked to a stiff, brown dough. A pit oven was dug, lined with rocks, covered with leaves of grape, alder, or poison oak, and sprinkled with water. The dough was spread over the leaves in a flat cake as large as two feet in diameter. This was covered with leaves, sprinkled, covered with stones, and a fire built on top. The baking was started in the evening, and in the morning the large loaf of thirty-five to forty pounds was lifted onto a basket and left to cool. The bread was black throughout. Another bread was *kamil*, made of molded acorns ground into very coarse meal. No clay was added to this form of bread, but the unleached meal was formed into a rather thin dough and baked in the same way as the *sau*. It was also black throughout and had a “bitter tang” that was considered pleasing.

Another bread, *teccoli*, was made of fresh, ripe, unleached acorns without addition of red clay. It was “neither sweet nor bitter,” but had a distinctive taste.

Bread was also made of wild oats and perhaps roots, baked as above without the use of clay.

**Pinole.**—A major form of food was the dry-ground parched grains now called pinole. Cleaned oats or other seeds were tossed to parch in a flat, traylike basket with live coals, the cook continually blowing on the coals to keep them alive. The coarser cinders were picked out, and the seeds were rubbed until the husks dropped off and winnowed clean. Winnowing was done by tossing in a tray and blowing or letting a breeze catch the chaff with such skill that “an old-timer wouldn’t lose a seed.” The clean seeds were then ground in the same manner as acorns. The early red clover was treated in this way, but because it was damp it did not form a dry flour and had to be made into balls. The pinole was sifted, and the final product was served in small baskets and eaten with the fingers, each pinch being tossed into the mouth.

**Buckeyes.**—Roasted and hulled buckeyes were leached of their poison by soaking in a stream for two or three weeks. They were then mashed with the feet or a block of wood and strained through a willow colander. They were eaten dry or cooked into soup. This soup had the appearance of flour paste and was gummy but “had a cooling taste.” According to Jones, “There is one woman who knows the matter of buckeyes; not any woman can make it—not as with acorn soup.” Buckeyes were also pounded and leached in the same manner as acorns, using first hot and then cold leaching water. While the women were preparing buckeyes no one could whistle, everyone remaining very quiet, as in fire making. The mass was taken out of the water, and the sand washed off. It was then formed into snow-white balls to be eaten or stirred into a basket of water to be drunk.
Other foods.—Pine nuts were usually parched in a basket with coals, but might also be roasted in a pit oven. Roots were roasted in ashes or baked in the pit oven. They were baked overnight and peeled as they were eaten.

Elderberries were made into a soup; manzanita and grapes were mashed into water to form a soft drink. No intoxicants were known. Some seeds served merely as seasoning.

Famines

The following description of famine and the arrival of spring adds to our understanding of the natives’ struggle for food:

[Jones:] They used to tell me about hard times—years when there was a scarcity. About every six or seven years there would be a time when few acorns or seeds were to be had. People who could afford to would buy from one another, but soon all would run out of food. It seems as though everything went against them, for they couldn’t kill deer or meat of any kind—neither rabbits, squirrels, nor any other. They might occasionally get one, but it would never be enough. They would get so hungry that the rich people who owned hide skirts and sinew would cook these and eat them. The people would do whatever they could. Such conditions would come about in winter when there was nothing to be found, and many of the people would become too weak from hunger to move, and many, especially of the poorer people, would die before spring broke.

With the coming of spring would come the sprouting of grass beneath trees and then the ever welcome clover. Then things would be gathered by the more hardy people and would be eaten as fast as they were picked. As soon as possible the green oats would be gathered, and the weaker ones would begin to pick up their strength.

Under such conditions tribal lines were watched closely [for poaching on the fruits as well as on the animals], and each family group would keep their own produce to themselves or, if they could afford to, would sell to their neighbors [but not at an increased price]. As summer came on, they would begin to pick up and the weaker ones would again become active. Nevertheless, the big time would be foregone because the people were all too poor.

One particular drouth killed off many poor people and caused the wealthy to become poor, but they soon built themselves up again.

Technology

The technological accomplishments of the Nomlaki were relatively few and simple. Their weapons were bow and arrow, spear, a knobbed stick, and the sling and harpoon on the river. For utensils they used flint and bone knives, basketry objects in various shapes, pestles, the digging stick, and a fan-shaped seed beater. Their clothes were simple ones of hide and bark. They wove by hand a rabbitskin blanket and also used pelts for warmth. Their houses were brush wickiups, and their ceremonial or public houses were semisubterranean rooms covered with conical roofs of timbers, twigs, and earth supported by posts. Domesticated plants and food animals were unknown to the society; not even dogs were kept.

Bows.—The bow was made of local juniper or preferably of yew wood imported from Wintu or Yuki territory. It was sinew-backed, oval in cross section, about three and a half feet long, and tapered from a width of about two and a half inches in the middle. The ends were recurved and notched for the string. The ends and the handhold were wrapped with sinew, thongs, or fur for strength and decoration.

A fine bow was made from a yew tree six inches in diameter cut in the fall when there was no sap in the wood. This was heated and split and soaked for a week before the whittling was started. Whittling with flint or obsidian was done slowly and carefully with short strokes of the blade. The sinew used for strengthening was
a piece of the elastic back strap of the deer about eighteen inches long. After being chewed, several layers were applied evenly to the back of the bow with fish glue. When the sinew dried, the craftsman smoothed off the edges with a flint knife and finished the surface with a "sandpaper" of jointweed. The wrappings of fur at the ends and handle were largely for appearance, but thongs were sometimes wrapped around the bow for strength. None of the informants knew the specific knot used for these thongs, but one mentioned that any departure from the accepted form made a person subject to ridicule. Another informant said that a thong was looped at the handhold to slip around the fingers to prevent the bow from bouncing out of the hand. In the process of manufacture, the bow was sometimes set to the right shape by tying it to a form. Natural kinks were taken out by heating the wood in ashes.

The design was placed on the bow before the sinew was added. There were definite patterns that the maker tried to follow, but "the old-timers could tell who the bowmaker was" by individuality of workmanship. Nomlaki patterns were three lines of diamonds of decreasing size usually painted in red or green. Care was taken to make the two ends as nearly alike as possible. Other groups had their own distinctive patterns. Arrows were similarly painted.

The bowstring was made out of a certain part of the leg sinew because the back sinew was too elastic. The sinew was twisted, as was all cordage, on the bare thigh. The string was made longer than the bow and loosely twisted. It was then tied at one end on the bow and held down on the ground with the toe. The string was then twisted between two fingers with one hand, and with the other hand the twist was rubbed downward in order to tighten the twist and to make the string as "smooth as catgut." This shortened the string's length. The top was then permanently tied to the bow unless a slack developed or the string broke. The end first tied was then formed into a loop so that the bow could be readily strung and unstrung. The bow was strung while the cord was still damp.

It was specifically stated by several informants that the bows were made by a specialist, who made several at a time. This man usually did not make arrows at all.

The bows from the north were generally considered superior in craftsmanship. Northern traders often came south with several bows, which were exchanged for other goods, usually beads (see Trade). The fact that the people in the north had better wood was undoubtedly an important factor. Yuki bows were, on the other hand, considered clumsy and inferior in type, workmanship, and decoration. They had narrow handles widened out and then narrowed to a point at either end. With the pointed end, one informant said, "they dig, for they are too lazy to carry the mahogany stick." The Yuki bow was not recurved like that of the Nomlaki. Bows picked up in war were never used unless completely remodeled, which meant removing the sinew, scraping, and repainting. They were always picked up and saved, and often traded back to a member of the tribe from which they came.

Flint.—Securing and chipping flint and obsidian were necessary steps in arrow making.

Apparently there were three types of stone used, which, in ascending order of value were: mottled chert found in small nodules along stream beds in the foothill area; pink chert or flint from Yolla Bolly Mountain, where ledges are to be found;
and the obsidian from the Mount Shasta region. Their relative values, inherent in their natural qualities, were accentuated by the mystical values attributed to them by the Nomlaki.

The first of these three was simply picked up where found. Expeditions, consisting of two or three individuals, were occasionally sent to the Yolla Bolly beds to get the red flint, a trip taking about three days. Such a party might be sent by someone desiring flint, or the men might get it to sell or to make arrow points for trading. This flint was "poisonous" and was sold to warriors. The members of the expedition "understood flint" and could get the proper kind, but they would also get poorer kinds of flint for common arrows. They would each bring back several nodules, to a total of about two hundred pounds, carrying this in a hunting pack sack netted out of fiber cord, about the size of a fifty-pound flour sack. These sacks were open at the top and were carried by a string over the shoulder.

The obsidian was derived by trade from the Shasta area, probably from the Wintu. In native belief the obsidian was endowed with powers of poisoning, and whereas a doctor could extract the red flint from a wound, he was powerless against a slight wound made by the obsidian. The red Yolla Bolly flint was also "poisonous," but apparently to a lesser extent.

Flint nodules were broken into workable smaller pieces by means of slow, even heating, and chips were separated with a chisel of bone or horn hammered on the butt end. The resulting flakes were then heated by contact with hot stones and chipped with hard blue pebbles of various sizes. The purpose of this heating was not made clear. They were pressure-flaked with pieces of bone.

The craftsmen who made flint and obsidian blades were specialists who had esoteric knowledge or power that enabled them to do this work. Even so, an element of "luck" influenced the outcome. 

[Jones:] The flint chipper is not usually the arrow maker. Not everyone can do this work. They say it is luck that goes against them, and even an expert might have luck go against him.

Because of the magical property of poisoning, it was dangerous to work with flint, and the artisan must avoid being cut when he handled obsidian. Similarly, women were not allowed to handle the material, especially menstruants.

Beside arrow points, knives and spear points were made of flint and obsidian. The long blades found on the Trinity River and among the Wintu were unknown to Nomlaki informants, who said that the ordinary knife was the largest chipped blade. These were attached to a handle by means of pitch. The lozenge-shaped spear blades were about three and a half inches long.

Arrows.—Arrows were of either two or three pieces: a shaft of dogwood, grease-wood, or wormwood; a stone point (never bone or horn); and sometimes a hard-wood foreshaft, usually of mahogany. Three eagle or hawk feathers were always used. The three-piece arrow was used for ordinary hunting and warfare; the simpler piece was for practice, games, shooting when distance was more important than accuracy, or when there was a high probability of losing the arrow. Some sport and practice arrows were not tipped. Arrow making was described as follows:

[Jones:] The bark of the dogwood is peeled, and the stick sized down and cut to about fifteen inches in length. It is allowed to season, care being taken that it be kept straight. This was done by tying a bunch together. Arrows come in sets of ten, and about fifteen shafts are selected to
start with, as some will warp or develop flaws of some kind. A mahogany stick four or five inches long and a trifle smaller in diameter than the shaft is set into a socket of the dogwood shaft, and the joint is wrapped with sinew so carefully that it is almost invisible. The foreshaft tapers slightly toward the point. A slot or notch is cut into the forward end of the mahogany, and the stone point is inserted in this; the connection is wrapped with sinew in standard pattern [unknown to the informant]. The two joints are covered with pitch, which is worked smooth with heated stones. The arrow may or may not be painted.

Eagle tail feathers are preferred. They are split, and on any set of ten arrows only the feathers from one side of the bird’s tail are used, and always the same side of each feather, and all the feathers come from the same bird. The opposite side of the tail and of individual feathers are used for other sets. Should an unskilled arrow maker put featherings from both the right and left side of the feather on one piece, so that the smooth portions would be back to back, the arrow is called a “mother-in-law.”

The feather, after being split, is cut into six-inch lengths with a short stub of quill sticking out. Warm pitch is smeared on the arrow, and the feather carefully laid straight along the stem. The front end is tied with sinew first and then the back end. It is wrapped in these two places only. There is no spiraling of the three featherings. They are trimmed even by singeing with a live coal.

Another informant stated the importance of care and accuracy in making arrows:

[Jordan:] Indians love to be bragged about and to brag on others, and they will keep doing something when someone else praises them. If a fellow fixes an arrow so the point isn’t snug, the people will laugh at him and make fun of him, and Indians hate that. They always try to do things right. Arrow making is something you have to learn.

Grooved arrow straighteners (both single and double stones) were reported, but the information about them had come from an Acomawai. Thus their presence in Wintun area remains uncertain.

**Arrow release.**—The bow was held with the left hand almost horizontal and always with the same side upward. The hand was held palm upward with the thumb and small finger behind the bow, the other fingers in front of it and protruding above it, the weight of the bow resting on the heel of the hand. The arrow rested between the index and middle fingers. The right hand, palm down, drew the arrow without touching the string (primary release).

The arrows were kept in a quiver at the back. When preparing for an attack, four were drawn, three held with the left hand in front of the bow, parallel to it, while the fourth was placed in a shooting position. When these four were gone, others were drawn one at a time.

**Spears.**—Every warrior owned a spear, a simple painted pole about an inch in diameter and about six feet in length, with a lozenge-shaped blade of flint or obsidian hafted to it by means of sinew and pitch, like the arrow haftings. Small spruce, willow, and tamarack were mentioned as wood used for this purpose.

Spears were usually made by the arrow makers and were traded. Apparently they were not of first importance in warfare but were the accepted weapon with which to wreak vengeance, since they usually appear in stories of revenge.

**Harpoons.**—The Nomlaki did not use any form of harpoon in their shallow, rocky streams. The harpoons of the river Indians were like the ones described and illustrated by Du Bois. The toggles were made of bone hafted on mahogany wood with pitch and string. Two prongs of different length were attached to a spruce pole.

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In order to avoid breaking it, they threw the harpoon underhanded and at a sharp angle to the surface. The shaft was blackened for concealment from the fish.

Knives.—Knives were made of stone and bone. The obsidian blades were carried by the warriors and used chiefly for fighting. They were never owned by common people and never used to cut meat. They had five- or six-inch blades wrapped with buckskin and were carried on a loop around the wrist during battle. The finer knives were decorated with fur. The red-ocher knives were similarly made, but without the decoration, and were used for cutting flesh. Work on wood was done with a small chip of flint. One informant mentioned a type of stone blade about three and a half inches wide and eight inches long, *takhomê*, but he did not know what it was made of. Other informants denied having any blade that long.

Knives of bone were made from a deer's leg bone ground to an edge. These knives were used for various purposes. They were worn in the hair and used as daggers.

Broken river pebbles were the only implements that served as axes. They were never carefully made. Trees were felled with these stones and the aid of fire.

Throwing stick.—The knobbed stick was constantly carried by Nomlaki men. It was made of a plant known locally as mountain mahogany, using a sprout, with the natural burl forming the knob end. It was carefully dressed down, with the knob evenly rounded at one end and a point at the other. The implement was used for hunting, more especially for killing rabbits by throwing, or for killing a trapped animal by hitting it over the head. It was also used for digging up roots and for digging house pits. Finally, it was an implement of warfare. At festivities the men had a game of throwing this club at a grass target.

Slings.—Slings were known to the informants, but probably were of plains distribution, where they were used for hunting ducks and geese. Most informants mention their use on the plains; a few said that they were also used in war and that young boys carried the stones. They were made of a diamond-shaped piece of leather, about four inches long and one and a half inches wide, tied to thongs about one yard long. The stone was ejected with one swing of the sling around the head.

Mortars and pestles.—Special stones were used as pestles. There may still be seen at Newville, where the best were obtained, the grooves in which the pestles were rubbed into shape. Pestles, though used primarily by women, were usually made by men. A long, slender stone of a bluish color and hard texture was found in the creek bed. This was roughly shaped by pecking with another stone and finished by rubbing in the bedrock grooves. The Nomlaki pestle is tapered. The mortars were hard, flat stones, which were plentiful in all the stream beds. They were used in conjunction with a basketry hopper. The River Wintun and Nisenan were said to use the end of a log or stones with holes in them as true mortars, but such implements were never used by the Nomlaki.

The long pestles were valued as high as twenty-five dollars by some informants and were an important article of trade. A menstruating girl was not supposed to pound pinole, for to do so would soften the stones. Where necessity dictated, a woman was excused from this menstrual restriction.

There were no special stirring implements, and the sticks with which the cooking stones were handled were merely flattened. No informant knew of the use of wedges for splitting wood.
Rope, cord, and nets.—Rope and cord were made of sinew and milkweed. Crude withes formed out of grapevine were used for binding the granaries and fish wiers. The sinew rope was strong and heavy and was used especially for deer nets. The tendon was beaten with stones, soaked or chewed, and the silky fibers separated. The two types of milkweed were treated in essentially the same way—washed, soaked, and the fibers separated. The strands were then twisted on the thigh, two strands together twirled with a backward stroke of the hand, and the twist secured with a forward motion. Ropes were used in trading and were generally made into specific lengths measured by the arm's span. Their value, which was never great, varied with quality of craftsmanship as well as with type of material and length. The value of ordinary rope of vegetable fiber was quoted at about seventy-five cents or a dollar for twenty-five feet.

The importance of nets in the daily life of the Nomlaki has already been pointed out (see pp. 402–403), and the several types of nets and snares have been described. Nets were made as described by Dixon\textsuperscript{15} except that net measures were used. The net measure was a simple stick around which successive rows of meshes were knotted. The shuttle was a stick with both ends split and spread. The string was wound the long way of the stick. The shuttle as figured by Du Bois\textsuperscript{16} was not reported.

Houses.—Four separate types of structure were reported by the Nomlaki: the dance house, \textit{lut}; the chief's house, \textit{élkél}; the individual wickups, \textit{lutcikél}; and the menstrual hut. The dance house is undoubtedly a historic development associated with the revivalistic cult of 1870.\textsuperscript{17} It was patterned after the \textit{élkél} but was larger and more elaborate because of the use of European tools. It took over the secular functions of the \textit{élkél} of prehistoric times.

The dance house and chiefs' house were semisubterranean structures roofed with twigs, bark, and earth supported by rafters and one or more upright center posts. Details of construction are similar to that given by McKern for the analogous Patwin structures.\textsuperscript{18} The social aspects of house construction were given in detail by one informant. The house described is the \textit{lut} or modern dance house. Whether or not the description applied to building a chief's \textit{élkél} in prehistoric times is impossible to say.

\[\text{Jones:}\] When they want to build a dance house, all the important men get together in the \textit{élkél} and talk about where they can get the trees. They have all the posts and ribs of the structure named, and the men mention the various logs they have seen that would meet the needs of the different parts. They do not speak of their decision to anyone, but go out and look at the tree that is to form the center pole. They will walk around the tree and examine every detail of it.

Before any further steps are taken, the group goes to the captain of the village and asks his approval of their plan. He will not answer them for a long time, perhaps as much as an hour, and then he may ask them if they are in a position to build a \textit{lut}. They will then tell him what food they have in store. He will ask, "How do your women feel?" and they will reply that it is all right with them. This procedure is necessary because it is expensive to build a dance house, as they must feed all the neighboring people who assist in the construction and are invited to the dance that follows. The headman can [theoretically] stop the building of a house. Others might object to it, but their only protest is to move to another village.

\textsuperscript{15} Dixon, 1905, p. 143.
\textsuperscript{16} Du Bois, 1935, p. 126, fig. 4a.
\textsuperscript{17} Du Bois, 1939, p. 65.
\textsuperscript{18} McKern, 1923.
Having decided to build a house, the men begin to prepare the poles. These are cut down, trimmed and barked, a fork being left at the top. The cutting of the poles may take a month. The one selected as the center pole is the last pole to be cut. Finally they select a place to dig the hole for the dwelling, and by this time the people have caught on to what is in the air without being told, and those who are next to the important men [?] come to help. The house is built in one day. The people have gathered and brought what food they could. They all get to work digging out the pit, each person working by digging with his sên and carrying the earth out in the conical carrying baskets. Each works in that portion of the excavation toward which his own home lies. By working hard together, they finish the hole in three or four hours. Everyone helps, women, children, and men—all but menstruant girls.

The important men have meanwhile gone to the location of the center pole and have dressed it as a dancing man with a feather headdress. It is then carried to the house pit by six or eight men on a "stretcher" made of grapevine, accompanied by two singers, who sing a "march." They do not set the pole down till they get to the hole, where they set it upright in a special way and tamp it into place.

Next they put the two "brothers" in place and then the other upright posts; then the ribs are put from ground to post and between posts, a man being ready at each joint to do the lashing. Then smaller sticks and finally wormwood are added, each person again working on that portion lying in the direction of his home. After the wormwood is laid over the ribs, the crannies are stuffed with moss, and earth is carried onto and spread over the roof to a thickness of about three or four inches. It is packed down by constantly walking over it, so that in the end the house is nearly airtight except for the door and smoke hole. At the last the people from the several surrounding rancherias try to finish their side first, and this work is done in high spirits, the people teasing and making fun of one another. Those first finished raise a great shout and help the others to finish the work.

The house is completed by night, and after this there is either feasting or a "sweat" or both. The hosts are expected to feed their guests for some time, and usually their entire supply of food is exhausted by the occasion.

The dance house belongs to the dancing men and the people, but the chief bosses and uses it, and it is called his. He does not live in it, but has it merely as a meeting house. His own house is the smaller sweat house called elkêl.

The dance house had two doors, both small. The main door was approached by a rather steep, roofed runway and was approximately four and a half feet high. It was closed with a tule mat. The back door was so small that a person had to crawl out of it. The height of the house in the center depended on the length of the center pole and how deeply it was implanted. The side walls were about four and a half feet high and were walled with vertical poles about two inches in diameter. Sometimes a sort of balcony was built at the ground level, from the ground to the circle of posts. Children were allowed to stay in this portion of the house during dances in the later years.

Because the drum was so integral a part of the dance house, the procedure for getting it will be discussed here. The drum was a hollow log stripped of bark.

Jones: Someone may have located the drum; it might be a standing log and pretty solid and would have to be cut down. This would be done before the day of house construction, and it would be kept covered up somewhere. The drum is an important article. It is brought in in the same way as the center pole and laid in the back of the dance house. The drummer will feel it as it is lying on the ground to determine if it is sound, and will continue testing it until it sounds just right. Only the old men who are "made" tend the drum—men who have gone through the Huts. It is not brought into the house until after sundown, because children and women are not supposed to see it.

The elkêl differed from the but only in that it was smaller, having but one upright post. The chief might live in the elkêl; there he held council, entertained and
lodged his guests, gathered the more important men for smoking and storytelling, and held the Huta. No other ceremonies or dances took place in the elkél. Everyone, including children, might enter this house, but only the older men might sleep in it. There was only one elkél in a village, of which it was the focal point.

The ceremony that surrounded the dance-house construction was not described for the elkél. Informants said that only the village group worked on its construction and that there were no named parts to the house. Perhaps the customs attached to dance-house building were all acquired with the structure; perhaps they were transferred from the construction of the elkél, which lost some of its social significance and therefore its ceremonial involvement.

The individual families lived in small houses made by implanting several poles in a circle and lashing them together at the top with grapevine. Poles laid on this basic framework were then thatched with wormwood laid root end upward. There was a smoke hole at the top. The hut was ten to twelve feet in diameter and six or eight feet in height at the center. There was a windbreak in front.

Before he started building, a man who wanted a house would locate the material and pile the poles together. Relatives usually aided one another, but communal activity did not include the whole village. The house was used for sleeping and for storing food and other possessions. In poor weather, cooking was done in the house; in good weather, in front of it. Similar houses were also built at the summer camps.

In each village there was usually a girl's house, similar in construction to the latcikél, but smaller. It was set in an out-of-the-way place away from the water supply. The house was large enough for two: the girl and her attendant. It had a small door and a smoke hole. All girls of a village used the same hut, and there seemed to be no rights of ownership for the builders.

Beds seem to have been the only household furnishing. They were made of straw or tule reeds. The reeds that had served as a deer fence (see p. 402) might be used for sleeping pads.

Clothes.—Nomlaki clothes were made of two materials: hide and bark. Hides were of great value to the Nomlaki, chiefly as symbols of wealth. This was especially true of the bear pelt and the skins of bushy-tailed animals that were suitable for decorative quivers. For clothes, however, only the deerhide was universally used.

Tanning was crude—reportedly inferior to the neighbors to the north. The fur was dampened, and the hair pulled or scraped off by rubbing the hide against a log or with a rough stone. Sometimes it was wrapped about the brain of the animal and put away for a few days and then rubbed again. The larger hides, especially bear, were sometimes softened by a group of men. This they did by tossing and rolling a large stone in the dampened skin.

Men wore a thong around the waist over which was hung a piece of deerskin or fawnskin so that both ends hung loose. When they sat down this was tucked between the legs. Sometimes it was drawn between the legs and tucked into the belt behind. A wealthy person might have one of panther fur.

Women wore a skirt or apron, those of the wealthier being of deerskin. It reached from the waist to the knee and was wrapped around the body, crossed in front, and tied behind. Clothesmaking was the work of persons especially adept at the trade, not necessarily men. The flesh side of the skin was worn outside and was decorated
with incised designs into which red paint was rubbed. Different designs were characteristic of various communities or areas, so that a woman's home could be determined by her dress. The Nomlaki skirt pattern was two wavy lines about four inches apart interspersed with strings of beads terminating in pieces of abalone shell. Such decoration would appear at the top and bottom of the skirt.

These skirts were not worn by everyone or at all times. Only the wealthier women had them, and they wore their skirts only to dances or at other times when display was in order.  

Skirts were also made of the inner bark of the local maple and cottonwood trees. The belt was braided as far down as the crotch; from there it hung loose. The bark skirt was wrapped around the body and might be tied either in front or behind. No further information concerning techniques of making clothes was available.

Moccasins were unknown to the Nomlaki, but a sandal, made out of hide from the neck of the elk, was worn by old people. It was attached by a thong looped over the big toe. Snowshoes were unknown, and the basketry hat of northwest California was not found this far south.

The rabbitskin blanket was used for covering at night and occasionally for warmth on the upper portion of the body. It reportedly took about twenty rabbits to make a single blanket. The fur was cut into continuous strips about one inch wide. The wider the strip the fluffier the blanket became. These strips, each eight to ten yards long, were twisted around a string fur side out, one person twisting the cord while the other wrapped the thong around it. The wrapped cord was then hung up to dry in the sun.

A weaving frame was made of two upright poles implanted in the ground crossed with one small pole near the top and another just above the ground. The fur rope was wrapped over the top and under the bottom pole until the frame was filled out. It was then loosely woven together by hand with milkweed twine and taken off the frame. The looped ends could be finished out by weaving or simply left. The finished blanket was then shaken and rubbed so as to make it fluffy and pliable.

Armor.—Elkhide armor was used only by special persons, because not everyone was permitted to handle so "dangerous" an object. The armor was made of the body portion of the elk after the neck, legs, and tail had been removed. The back of the hide was turned toward the enemy and afforded protection from the chin to the ankles but not for the arms. It could not be pierced by an arrow. Its limited use was at least partially due to its inherent clumsiness, because fast running was impossible with this stiff armor, which slipped over the head, rested on the shoulder, and reached to the ankles.

Quivers.—Among a Nomlaki's most prized possessions was his quiver, which served him as decoration as well as for carrying his arrows and other necessities. The quiver was made from whole skins and worn with the opening at the back (during a raid, with the opening at the nape of the neck) so that the tail hung from the warrior's waist. Otter, fox, fisher, beaver, and fawn were used for this purpose. Other animals served as quivers for boys. Quivers were made by skinning

19 Powers, 1877, p. 233, says: "A fashionable young woman sometimes makes for herself a very pretty habit, which consists simply of a broad girdle of deerskin, the lower edge slit into long fringe and a polished pine nut on the end of each strand, while the upper border and other portions are studded with brilliant bits of shell."
the animal without splitting the hide. They were worn with the fur side inward. The tail was left on but was split open so that it was wide and bushy. The quivers were not sewn but were decorated with incised and painted designs. They were tanned as soft as possible. Those from the north were considered superior.

Toilet articles.—Very little was learned about the Nomlaki toilet. One informant reported coarse combs of hardwood. Soap was derived from soaproot and was used mostly for washing skirts and hair. Powers* remarked on the frequent bathing among the Wintun. In one tale Coyote used a basket of water as a mirror to adjust his dance regalia.

Boats.—There were no boats among the Wintun. At times of high water the Nomlaki merely swim streams, tying their belongings on their heads. This was not often necessary, because the streams are usually very shallow. The river groups, however, had tule rafts, which were known to the Nomlaki informants. These were made of tules tied together, and were poled or paddled across the Sacramento River. A loaded raft might be pushed across ahead of one or more swimmers.

Pipes.—Wild tobacco was smoked in pipes made of ash wood. These were straight with a tapering stem and large bowl. Shapes were similar to those of the Pomo and Wintu;² length varied from six to twelve inches. The bowl was reamed out small but gradually burned out larger. The stem hole was made by taking out the center pith.

Making a pipe was an important act, engaged in by specialists. When someone was carving one, he did it slowly and carefully, and "the people talked about it." When it was finished, the more important men gathered together to test the pipe. At this time they reamed out the bowl with a hard stone. They placed a dead coal in the bottom of the bowl to keep the tobacco in and purify the smoke. One man rubbed tobacco well between his palms and filled the pipe, tamping with his fingers and lighting it with a live coal from the fire. Once it was burning, it was passed around, the next man running his thumb around the mouth before smoking. The pipeful is supposed to make the round of smokers; if it fails, the person who lighted the pipe is ridiculed for his lack of skill. This is an occasion for talking and further smoking.

Musical instruments.—Four types of musical instruments were known: log drum, rattle, flute, and whistle.

The drum was made of a hollow oak log split in two, and was beaten either by stamping or with the end of a long stick (see p. 423).

Rattles were made of poison-oak seed pods or fig-shaped cocoons filled with pebbles. Three or four such cocoons were tied on the end of a stick. They were used in dances and by medicine men in curing. The split-stick rattle or clapper was made of elder wood and was used to beat time at dances.

Reed whistles were eight inches long and had a hole at the center. They were blown singly or in pairs. The distal end was closed with pitch. They might be made of wood or from the leg bone of an eagle. They were played by dancers.

The flute was made of elder wood. It was about ten inches long, had four holes, "about the size of No. 9 wire," near the proximal end. These were stopped with the

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* Powers, 1877, p. 233.
viso Du Bois, 1935, p. 128, figure 7b; Loeb, 1926, p. 188, fig. 1 (left).
first two fingers of each hand. The flute was not played at dances, but, according to informants, by a person when he was lonesome.

The bull roarer was known to some informants only as a child's toy brought by the whites, to others not at all. String figures were known to some informants, not to others. None could make the cat's cradles, however.

Pets.—Eagles were raised for feathers; fawns were probably kept as pets and were said to have been used as decoys; squirrels, skunks, and other small animals were occasionally kept as pets. One informant reported the domestic dog, but he probably had reference to early postwhite times. Other informants agreed that the dog was not a native possession of the Wintun. Pickering² noted the absence of dogs in the villages he visited in 1841. Two informants mentioned that a few dogs were known prior to direct white influence. These came from other tribes.

Basketry.—In common with central California tribes generally the manufacture of baskets was a major handicraft and a specialty of women. Their manufacture formed the primary craft of the women. The prevalent technique was a three-rod coil, but twining was also known and used for the carrying baskets.

Materials used were willow branches, basketwork (a grass that grows on sandy soil), wild rose, redbud, and pine roots.

The willow was best when gathered in the fall. The bark was peeled off, the knots worked down, and the switches worked out even. The basketwork was dug out and split by holding one piece in the teeth and pulling off the other. When these were all split, they were laid out even, coiled, and bound. When a basket was to be started, the artisan soaked several coils of willow and root overnight. In the morning she squeezed the water out of the roots by drawing them between two willow sticks, after which they were again split and worked even. Meanwhile, she had put more coils to soak. The sewing was done with an awl made of the bone of the foreleg of the deer. The willows always turned to the worker's left, or clockwise when looking into the basket. The three rods were sewed with stitches to the upper rod of the preceding spiral. The background stitches were made with split roots; the design usually being worked out with redbud.

Various patterns were used, usually copied from already existing baskets and thereafter remembered. A design might be borrowed from one woman by another. Baskets are no longer made, and the intricacies of design and their relative merits and individual meanings could not be learned. There was further embellishment by lark and yellowhammer feathers and by woodpecker scalps and quail tops, similar to those made by other central California Indians. Technical proficiency appears to have been inferior to the Pomo.

Many forms were made: small bowls for eating and drinking; open baskets for sifting, winnowing, and parching; large potlike forms for cooking; and large burden baskets.

The sifter was round and flat; the hopper for pounding was in the shape of a truncated cone. The mush dishes were about eight inches in diameter and five inches high.

Two forms of carrying basket were made by the twining technique. The smaller was better made; the larger was loosely woven. Willow rods were set vertically

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and twined with redbud. The rim was finished with a heavy redbud or chaparral switch lashed on with grapevine. It was carried by means of a tumpline across the forehead.

Cradles were made of willows lashed with grapevine. The lower end was curved around the buttocks of the child so that the feet hung free. It was padded with the inner fibers of cottonwood bark. The infant was tied into the basket, and his hands were tied to his sides. A hoop ran over the head of the basket so that the baby could be shaded.

Baskets presumably were made by all women, only some of whom were skilled. Well-made baskets were highly prized and were frequently traded; in early white days four dollars was the standard price for a small basket. Baskets were formalized gifts for parting guests and in other contexts; for example, to a mother-in-law by the bride, or to the husband when the wife wished to leave him (see Gift Exchange, Marriage and Divorce).

Besides carrying baskets, pouches were made of skins for purposes of storing tobacco, oats, and other things. Bags of fine-meshed netting were carried across the shoulder by men. They were about the size of a fifty-pound flour sack and were woven from milkweed or hemp. These also were sometimes given as formal presents.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

Nomlaki culture was a minor variant on the well-known pattern of primitive life of the natives of central California. Technologically it belonged to the hunting-gathering level of achievement, lacking the dog and all other forms of domestication. Its highest technical accomplishments were the bow, the art of basketmaking, the leaching of acorns, and the pestle as a ground-stone tool.

Nomlaki culture was neither the most primitive nor the most complex to be found in central California. Indeed, it appears to be midway between such tribes as the Patwin and Pomo on one hand, and the Wintu, Yana, and Achomawi on the other. It would appear that the Nomlaki entered the area with a society organized on the basis of family villages, small territorial units under the leadership of an elder with limited powers. This pattern they share with their linguistic affiliates to the north and other tribes of northeastern California. The Nomlaki developed these village families into more firmly established social units that fulfilled all the formal requirements of the clan, but they never seized upon this device to enhance the organizational value inherent in the clan system.

The Nomlaki were subjected to a later cultural influence associated with the development of secret societies that appears to have taken place in the richer area of the San Francisco Bay. This cultural movement involved the elaboration of concepts of status and wealth, in which the acquisition of prestige goods acted as a motivation for behavior, served to differentiate society into classes, and supported a system of control that cut across the older spatial-familial unities. The institutional mechanism involved was a secret society limited to men but not universal among them. The pattern derived from the Kuksu system or the antecedents of that institution, but the Nomlaki pattern never reached the levels of complexity or involvement that was arrived at to the south.

The geographical circumstances of the Nomlaki placed them intermediate between the Patwin-Pomo on one hand and the Wintu-Yana on the other in two senses. First, they were geographically so located, and a diffusion of culture from its climax in central California to the northern extremes would naturally pass through their territory. But the Nomlaki territory was intermediate in a second sense. To the south the natural environment could support a larger population, to the north one that was not so large. For this reason there was a lesser imperative for the institutional mechanisms for social differentiation that the secret society provided, but a greater imperative than among the peoples of the mountainous regions. Geographical location and environmental resources both served to place the culture of the Nomlaki in an intermediate position.

There is no evidence of a single pattern for Nomlaki culture in the Benedictian sense, but there are certain underlying and generalized themes.

The underlying sense that a person's capacities are innate spiritually rather than biologically. There is the feeling that the Huta merely “discovered” the technological skill of the individual.

1 Benedict, 1934. The pattern of value in work that Garth reports for the Atsugewi, neighbors to the north, is not found with like emphasis (Garth, 1945).
2 Opler, 1944.
and instruction was a secondary adjunct to a quality "given to a person." This lay at the basis of specialization and affected the outlook toward status differentiation.

The independence of the human spirit. The soul has a life of its own, independent of its mortal vessel. The Nomlaki recognized that a person does not have full control of his actions, especially in cases of disease—also that the soul continues after death. The strength and import of this theme are far from clear.

The recognition of forces in nature. All nature is capable of willful acts, and these usually are potentially evil. The world of things is animate, and there is another world of unseen beings that likewise affect the course of life.

Wealth as a determinant of status. Among the Nomlaki wealth was status-giving, and persons of status achieved wealth. The acquisition of material goods acted as a prime motivation for individual activities and was an overt expression of his personal dignity. Since wealth objects were used ceremonially and for burial, they had deep rationalization in religious beliefs.

Relation between men and women. This is not a clearly conceptualized motif, and I have kept it completely vague. There must be noted the generally superior position of men, the expressed fear of menstrual fluid and the processes of birth, and the deeply conceptualized separation of the roles of the sexes.

Patterns of kinship relationships. There is considerable evidence of loyalty to consanguine kin groups, which the formalization of named families supports. Less clearly conceptualized but frequently acting as an underlying motif was the feeling of hostility between a man and his parents-in-law. This was supported by in-law restrictions, implicit in certain of the stories, and suggested by the custom of temporary matrilocality residence as a period of subordination of the groom to his in-laws.

Craftsmanship and artisanship. There were numerous points at which a special sense of perfectionism was manifested. In the description of manufacture there is the sense of ego involvement with the quality of workmanship. Coyote's ineptness makes the same point in reverse. This theme is related to the first mentioned—"natural endowment."

Enjoyment. The Nomlaki were not puritanical. They valued chastity but did not insist upon continence. They looked forward to recreations, spent leisure hours in enjoyment at the expense of social advancement, and sought such aspects of the good way of life as their meager environment and limited technological knowledge could provide. There seems to have been a reasonable balance between the striving toward material rewards and the recognition of the pleasures of life.

Generosity and competition. Two divergent attitudes again appear to be in reasonable balance. There seems little doubt that the Nomlaki were motivated toward success and showed certain elements of hostility and aggression. The myths, narratives of presumed historic events, attitudes of jealousy, and attempts at vengeance bear out such a pattern. Yet there were strong motivations for generosity to counterbalance this pattern; and brotherhood was ascribed not only within the kinship group but also to fellow initiates, trading partners, and under other circumstances.

These appear as the more important motifs in Nomlaki culture as it existed before the encroachment of whites upon their scene. In view of the circumstances under which the present monograph was written, they can be offered only tentatively. A deeper understanding of the Nomlaki world view is forever lost to us.
APPENDIXES
APPENDIX A

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JEFF JONES

MY FATHER WAS A WHITE MAN. MOTHER WAS BORN NEAR PASKENTA, I GUESS, IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE OLD GARLAN PLACE [NOW JAKE OAKES' PLACE]. HER PARENTS WERE BORN ABOUT THE SAME PLACE. I WAS BORN THREE OR FOUR MILES EAST OF PASKENTA IN 1865. MOTHER WAS VERY CRUEL TO ME, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHY. SHE CARRIED ME UP A TRAIL ON HER BACK TOWARD A RANCHERIA AND HUNG ME IN A TREE IN THE "PAPOOSE BASKET."

HER UNCLE ASKED HER WHAT SHE HAD DONE WITH THE BABY, AND FORCED A CONFESSION FROM HER WITH A STRAP. THEY SAVED ME IN TIME. HE MADE HER CLEAN ME UP. UNCLE WATCHED HER CLOSELY TILL I WAS FAIRLY LARGE. SHE RAISED ME TILL I WAS FOUR OR FIVE. HER RELATIVES LIVED NEAR THE PASKENTA INDIAN CEMETERY. MOTHER THEN LIVED WITH A NOMLAKI NAMED QUEEN WELCH.

LATER MY STEPFATHER, FOLLOWING WORK, MOVED DOWN TO THE OLD THOMES PLACE ON ELDER CREEK. HERE WE LIVED IN A PART OF AN ADobe HOUSE. MOTHER BECAME SICK THERE, AND THEY BROUGHT HER HOME IN AN OLD GRAIN WAGON ON A BLANKET LITTER. SHE SOON DIED. AT HER FUNERAL I LEARNED THE DEATH SONGS. THEY CARRIED MOTHER OUT IN A HOMEMADE BLANKET AND HAULED HER IN THIS SAME WAGON TO THE GARLAN PLACE, WHERE SHE WAS BURIED. THEY MOURNED AND MOURNED FOR ALMOST A DAY. THE GRAVES ARE NOW ALL PLOWED UNDER. I WAS A LITTLE FELLOW. DIFFERENT PEOPLE WOULD TAKE ME IN. AFTER THE FOLKS HAD KEPT ME SO LONG THEY DECIDED TO SEND ME BACK TO MY FATHER [JONES]. BUT FATHER TOLD THEM THAT HE COULDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR ME. HE SUGGESTED THAT HIS WIFE'S OLD CHUM MARTHA HASTINGS, DOMINIC'S WIFE, TAKE CARE OF ME. JACKSON [AN UNCLE] TOOK ME OVER THERE. FROM THEN ON I STAYED WITH DOMINIC. WHEN I WAS STAYING WITH DOMINIC THEY OFTEN GATHERED AND TALKED ABOUT OLD TIMES.

I STAYED WITH HIM TILL I WAS ABOUT SIXTEEN YEARS OLD. DOMINIC GAVE ME PRETTY MANY LICKINGS FOR WHAT I THOUGHT WAS NOTHING. HE AND HIS WIFE TAUGHT ME NOT TO STEAL OR LIE OR FIGHT. THEY TAUGHT ME TO BE GOOD. THEY PUT ME WITH A FAMILY TO KEEP STOCK OFF THE GRAIN. THIS WAS HARD WORK AT FIFTY CENTS PER DAY. I GOT SICK ONE DAY FROM EATING GREEN PEACHES AND WENT HOME. DOMINIC GOT MAD AND HIT ME WITH A BROOM; HE BROKE THE STICK OVER MY HEAD. I BROKE DOWN AND CRAWLED INTO THE PILE OF STRAW AND WAITED FOR HER LIGHT TO COME ON AND WENT DOWN TO THE PLACE WHEN IT WAS LIGHTED. I BROKE DOWN AND COULDN'T TALK. WHEN I GOT SETTLED I TOLD HIM WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

I WAS AFRAID DOMINIC MIGHT FOLLOW ME. HE HAD OFTEN THREATENED TO. THE HERDER COOKED ME A BREAKFAST AND FIXED ME A LUNCH. "YOU GO INTO THE BRUSH TILL I GET BACK IN THE EVENING," HE SAID. "KEEP AWAY FROM PEOPLE." I STAYED IN THE BRUSH. IT WAS THE LONGEST DAY I EVER PUT IN MY LIFE. I STAYED TILL HE CALLED ME. HE TOLD ME WHAT HE WOULD DO. HE SENT ME TO TEHAMA TO SAM GILES.

SAM WAS A JEW, AND I SOON FOUND HIM. I RAN INTO AN INDIAN, WHO TOOK ME TO SEE AN AUNT. SHE TALKED A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY WE DO. SHE TOOK ME IN THEN. SHE SAID, "YOUR MOTHER AND I ARE SISTERS THROUGH NAMES. ANY CHILD OF ANY KELLETI ARE MY RELATIONS—YOU ARE ALMOST A SON OF MINE. YOU CAN STAY WITH US AS LONG AS YOU WANT TO." I PLUMB FORGOT ABOUT MY HERDER AND THE OLD JEW. THIS WAS AT A PLACE NOW CALLED BOHEMIA. IT WAS NEAR A LITTLE DEPOT. THIS INDIAN MAN BATHED ME AND GAVE ME CLOTHES THAT REALLY FIT ME—A SUIT OF CLOTHES AND A STIFF SHIRT. HE PUT A WATCH CHAIN ON ME. THAT OLD MAN TOOK ME WHEREVER HE WENT. HE TREATED ME AS IF I WAS BETTER THAN HIS OWN BLOODY CHILD. HE WAS A GREAT FISHERMAN. HE SOLD HIS FISH TO THE CHINAMEN AND GAVE ME HALF OF HIS MONEY. HE SCARED ME OFF OF CANDY—BY SAYING IT WAS POISON. FRUIT WAS ALL RIGHT. I SLEPT WITH HIM, BUT WE BOTH BOARDED WITH MY AUNT. I GAVE HER SOME OF HIS MONEY. WINTER CAME ALONG NOW. A FELLOW GAVE ME A JOB SHOOTING GEESE AWAY FROM THE GRAIN. I WORKED THE WEEK OUT FOR HIM.

I STAYED WITH THIS WHITE MAN, JIM DECKER, FOR ABOUT A YEAR AND A HALF. HE BOUGHT ME A PONY AND A SADDLE. I WORKED FOR HIM ALL AROUND TEHAMA.

FINALLY I QUIT AND WENT TO PASKENTA. I HAD LEFT MY BEDDING AT THE TEHAMA HOUSE AND HAD LEFT MY CLOTHES WITH IT. ABOUT A MONTH LATER A COUSIN CAME UP FROM CHICO. AFTER A FEW DAYS HE SUGGESTED WE GO DOWN TO CHICO. WE HOPPED A TRAIN TO CHICO. THE OLD INDIAN [A CHICO INDIAN] TREATED
me good there. We stayed there several days. The Tehama aunt's niece was married to a man there. She was a half-breed named Nellie and called herself my aunt. Then I got work at $1.25 per day. I worked there, living with Aunt Nellie; and I stayed there for seven years, getting steady work.

All at once I got homesick. I was seventeen when I went to Chico, and I stayed there seven years. When I left there and came back to Paskenta it was 1890. I stayed around home for some time working for different people. I herded sheep in the mountains.

When I came home I started living with a woman of my tribe who had drifted away. She was pretty fast but I trusted her. For two years I went herding sheep with the Mitchels during the summer. The woman I had, gave birth to a girl child, and we lived together like a married couple. We had made the marriage arrangement ourselves—not in the true Indian way.

I took her to the mountains, but she didn't stay the whole time. When I paid my debts I had only seven or eight dollars left. Then I came home happy to look for my wife and baby. She wasn't there. I asked about her, but no one answered. Finally her father told me that she went to Elk Creek. She had left with another man. I went after her on a horse. I got her back, but she repeated this sort of thing too often. Finally I let her go her own way. I made up with Dominic and moved in with him till the girl was nineteen years old. Then she died of tuberculosis.

I had picked up another woman while my daughter was still just a girl. This woman was a kind and good woman. Work was scarce at this time. We heard of work around Orland. I worked there most of a year and then went east of Grindstone. Worked there two years. My wife gave birth to a child and went swimming too soon. She got tuberculosis and I took her to the former Newville rancheria. Later we moved to Paskenta, where she died. I buried her at Newville because she belonged to that graveyard. I had to go into debt in order to give her a good funeral. The old folks tried to raise the child, but it took sick and died.

I drifted around for a number of years and picked up another woman. I have only one son living.
APPENDIX B

NOMLAKI INFORMANTS

JEFF JONES (Grindstone rancheria; father White, mother kellebę olkapna, from vicinity of Paskenta, born 1865): Jones was by far the best informant and gave the bulk of the ethnographic material. He treated data with the detachment of an ethnologist, no doubt because he had learned most of the lore secondhand. He was careful to say when he did not know about a subject, and his knowledge did not extend deeply into supernatural phenomena. He is not a leader, but is recognized for his knowledge of and respect for native customs. He was very cooperative in every way. His memory and native intelligence are far beyond average. The best tribute to his keen mind is his own statement that if he believed in some of the native superstitions, he should believe in everything (which he frequently denied) in order to be consistent. The ethnography of the Nomlaki owes its existence to Jones.

ANDREW FREEMAN (Paskenta rancheria; father põxmalę olkapna; mother full blood of unknown olkapna affiliation. Was herding sheep at Grimes when interviewed; about fifty-five years old in 1936): Being shaman, Freeman gave information that was an important supplement to that obtained from Jones. He learned his doctoring from a Wintu. A robust man, Freeman showed no signs of instability. His autobiographical account (see pp. 360–363) indicates some persecution attitude, which may have been strengthened by the separation from his wife shortly before my interview. He said that when he was a child he would hit his head against the wall and hold his breath. Freeman was an extremely willing informant, but he knew little about aboriginal life. His accounts are not accurate but carry his peculiarly strong imagery. His religious concepts must be considered a personal blend of native mythology, such aspects of Christianity as come from the Pentecostal Church, and pictures he had seen in magazines.

DICK RAGLIN (Paskenta rancheria; father white, mother toistawę olkapna; born on Elder Creek about 1862): An extremely reticent and suspicious informant, not popular with other members of the tribe. He lived with whites for a while in his youth, but since then has stayed only among Nomlaki. An even more suspicious son induced him to stop acting as informant. This son indicated he was becoming a “dream doctor.” Dream material was obtained from his daughter Ellen. Dick says of himself that the only thing he can enjoy is gambling. He doesn’t like dances, music, shows, or any kind of “fun.”

ANN RAGLIN (wife of Dick; father was põxmalę olkapna; mother, nõmpomha olkapna): Shy and reticent.

JOHN JORDAN (Paskenta, herding sheep at Nelson when interviewed; father white, mother appak): Jordan is a heavyset man. He was born near Lowrey on Elder Creek. He left there at the age of eight and came to the neighborhood of Paskenta. A willing talker but little versed in Indian knowledge; his data could be used only for corroboration. He was inordinately fond of telling dirty stories. He does not enjoy a high reputation among his fellow tribespeople for intelligence.

JIM McGETTRICK (Round Valley; father white, mother born at lopom near Paskenta but died at Jim’s birth. Born 1862): McGettrick was born at Colusa but moved to Elk Creek and later to Newville, the home of his maternal grandmother. Moved to Round Valley about 1902. Married a Newville Wintun. McGettrick seemed fairly well-informed and was not reticent. He was, however, very industrious and could not be persuaded to drop his regular employment to act as an informant.

MOLLY FREEMAN (wife of Billy Freeman, deceased, a põxmalę, and Gifford’s informant. Father, nõmpomha olkapna; mother’s affiliations unknown, but she was Indian. About seventy-five years old in 1936): Extremely shy, but probably well-informed. Recent deaths made her morose and unwilling to talk.

NEWIE ROSS (father was Kroeber’s informant Dominie, deceased, teckön olkapna; mother, Indian from Elder Creek): Unwilling informant. Probably in her forties in 1936.
George Moore (claimed his mother's father was a Nomlaki from Elk Creek): Information was too mixed with Yuki data to be of any value.

Ellen James, deceased. (Anne Raglin's mother): She had been married to a doctor (Doctor Billy, pōzmalē olkapna) but was too deaf to work. In her nineties in 1936.

Alice Joe (half sister of Dominic with different mothers; teekōn olkapna): In her nineties and too weak to work in 1936.
ABBREVIATIONS:

AA  American Anthropologist
AR  Anthropological Records, University of California
BAE-B Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin
UCPAAE University of California, Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology

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