

# Monache

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## Language, Territory, and Environment

The Monache (mō'nā, chē) were not a single people but comprehended at least six tribal groups: the Northfork Mono ('mō, nō), the Wobonuch ('wōpō, nōch), the Entimbich ('entimbich), the Michahay (michā'hī), the Waksachi (wāk'sā, chē), and the Patwisha (pāt'wishā). No federation or nation linked these independent tribes, which were distinguished from their Penutian-affiliated Foothill Yokuts neighbors primarily in language, although some units among them were bilingual. The Monache, often called the Western Mono, shared a distinct language in the Western branch of the Numic family with their neighbors to the east, the Eastern Mono and the Owens Valley Paiute (Lamb 1958; see "The Numic Languages," vol. 11).\* The Monache refer to themselves in their own language as *ni'mmi* 'person, people' and in English as Mono (Lamb 1958:96-97, personal communication 1975; Gifford 1932:16; Kroeber 1925:584).

The social and cultural identity of these tribes was primarily linguistic and locational. They differed from the Foothill Yokuts and the Southern Sierra Miwok (sometimes called Pohonichi) in language, with the possible exception of the "transitional" Michahay and Waksachi (Gayton 1948, 2:213, 254). The Monache differed from the Eastern Mono in being located west of the Sierra Nevada crest and in acculturation to the California scene (fig. 1).

The Northfork Mono were readily distinguished from other Monache by isolation, being separated from the Wobonuch by the essentially unattributable terrain between the headwaters of the San Joaquin and Kings rivers. Gayton (1948, 2:254) discusses a group of unorganized kin groups, evidently without tribal identity, that may have been in this region.

The Wobonuch are recognized as a unit even though their constituent tribelets were more or less independent. The organizing force may have been the example of

\* The sound system of the Northfork dialect of Monache has been analyzed by Lamb (1958a). The orthography he describes (substituting a few symbols to accord with Handbook practice) includes the stops *p*, *t*, *k*, *q*, *kʷ*, *qʷ*, *ʔ*; the affricate *c*; the spirants *s*, *x*, *h*; nasals *m*, *n*; semivowels *y*, *w*; front vowels *i*, *e*; back unrounded vowels *i*, *a*; back rounded vowels *u*, *o*. Vowel length can be written with a raised dot; long fortis consonants can be written double.

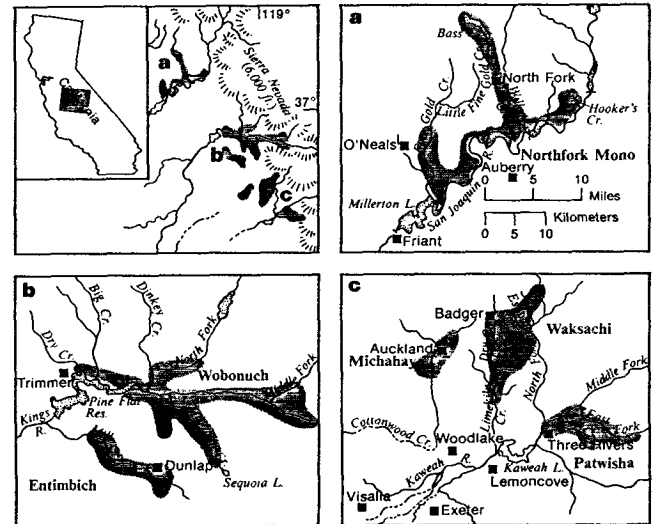


Fig. 1. Tribal territory including: a, Northfork Mono; b, Wobonuch and Entimbich; c, Michahay, Waksachi, and Patwisha.

Foothill Yokuts, such as the Choynimni, to the southwest.

The major affiliation of the Entimbich is still open to question, whether Monache or Yokuts. Gayton (1948, 2:254-255), who probably had the best basis for judgment, inclines to the view that the tribe had lineages derived from both peoples but may have originally been Yokuts. The Wobonuch had been infiltrating Entimbich territory since 1875 (Merriam 1930).

The Michahay, Waksachi, and Patwisha (whom Kroeber 1925:586 calls Balwisha) are deemed basically Monache (Numic-speaking) peoples who have partially absorbed Yokuts culture. As with the Entimbich, the classification chosen verges on being arbitrary until better information emerges. All of these peoples, like their neighbors along the western Sierra slope, were markedly bi- or multilingual.

The Monache were a second tier of aboriginal groups occupying the western slope of the Sierra Nevada. At lower levels along most of the same territory were Foothill Yokuts tribes, from the Chukchansi of the north to the Wikchamni at the southern end of the Monache range. The Foothill Yokuts occupied lands from the valley edge up to about 3,000 feet elevation (essentially the Upper Sonoran life-zone). The Monache lived principally between 3,000 and 7,000 feet elevation (correspond-

ing mostly to the Transition life-zone) but were able to move unhindered to higher elevations. They crossed the Sierra crest on trading expeditions at elevations between 11,000 and 12,000 feet.

The Northfork Mono moved about—seasonally, by reason of a death, or simply for variety—within a home territory centered on the North Fork of the San Joaquin River. Some hamlets were on the adjacent Fine Gold Creek and others were at Hooker's Cove on the San Joaquin. A detailed list of their settlements is furnished by Gifford (1932:18, 57-61).

The Wobonuch lived along various forks of the Kings River from its confluence with its own North Fork upstream. On the North Fork there were habitation sites up to the present Black Rock Reservoir. North of the river they evidently shared the stretch between Trimmer Springs and the confluence of the North Fork with the Tuhukwaj, one of the untribalized Monache groups. Mill Flat Creek, which drained Sequoia Lake into Kings River, was the location of at least two villages; from this area the Wobonuch were forced southward to the vicinity of Dunlap by sawmill operations in the twentieth century.

The Entimbich lived to the south and west of the Wobonuch and at a lower elevation, one comparable to that of Foothill Yokuts. Their principal village was at the present town of Dunlap and was shared beginning with the twentieth century with some displaced Wobonuch. Other sites lay down Mill Creek to its junction with White Deer and Rancheria creeks. Below that point was Foothill Yokuts (Choynimni) territory (Gayton 1948, 2:254-258).

The Michahay lived on the headwaters of Cottonwood Creek north of the present town of Auckland. The Patwishas' westernmost village lay on the left bank of the Kaweah River just below the confluence of its North and Middle Forks, close to the present town of Three Rivers. Eastward Patwisha territory probably extended up the Middle Fork of the Kaweah to Salt Creek or the East Fork (Gayton 1948, 1:58, map B).

The Waksachi territory was higher than that of Michahay and Patwisha, centering on Eshom Creek, a minor tributary of the Kaweah River's North Fork. Other Waksachi sites were along Dry Creek and Limekiln Creek from the present town of Badger downstream for 15 miles (Gayton 1948, 2:212-214, map E).

### External Relations

All the Monache maintained close relationships with their neighbors, whether Monache or not. These external contacts included trading, traveling, intertribal assemblies for ceremonies, visiting, incursions into others' territories or common territory for resource exploitation, and marriage.

Intertribal coresidence should be considered a form of external relations, for it must have accelerated linguistic and cultural diffusion. For example, at the village of Tušao, about four miles northeast of Auckland, the Michahay, Waksachi, and Chukaymina lived together. The first two tribes are considered transitional Yokuts-Monache, but the last is unequivocally central Foothill Yokuts (Gayton 1948, 2:213).

Captive eagles (less commonly vultures or other birds) were displayed and danced over. The captors of these moiety-affiliated birds were given money and gifts, ostensibly the property of the captive. Groups went from village to village and from tribe to tribe to participate and to secure birds (Gifford 1932:39-41).

The joint use, by Waksachi, Patwisha, and Wikchamni (a Foothill Yokuts tribe), of uninhabited lands north of present Three Rivers for hunting and foraging illustrates another type of contact (Gayton 1948, 2:213).

The Monache generally traded with their Numic relatives on the east side of the Sierra Nevada, with trading expeditions moving in both directions. The exchange was principally in natural products with acorns being moved eastward while pine nuts, obsidian, and rabbitskins went in the other direction. In addition to securing items for their own use, the Monache were also middlemen in trades between the Yokuts proper and the Eastern Mono.

Hostilities involving the Monache and other tribes usually stemmed from injuries, often attributed to malevolent shamans, occurring to individuals. These people or their survivors sought revenge, usually by killing the person held responsible and sometimes his family as well. Occasionally a third party might become involved through harboring a fugitive or aiding one bent on revenge. Rarely did such incidents lead to wholesale hostilities.

The cultural summary that follows is based on data for the Wobonuch insofar as it is tribally specific, with notice taken of variations among other Monache.

### Subsistence

Hunting, fishing, and the gathering of wild-plant foods were the basis of Monache subsistence. Their pursuit called for seasonal movements to various elevations on the Sierra slopes. The Northfork Mono also visited the eastern slope of the Sierra to gather pine nuts, while other Monache traded with Eastern Mono to secure the nuts.

Deer, which were a prime staple, were taken by stalking in a disguise, by driving into an ambush, by tracking a deer until it became exhausted, and by trapping with a spring-pole device that caught the deer by the leg. Deer were customarily shot with bow and arrow to kill them. Sharing of meat and other products was mainly voluntary and done more commonly by the better hunters.

Bears were hunted by rousting them from caves in the spring of the year. The bear's exit was retarded by poles held by members of the hunting party while a bowman shot at the animal. A solo hunter might track and shoot a bear, but this was a very dangerous method. To kill a bear at a regular feeding place, a temporary platform was built in an oak tree where the hunter concealed himself all night. At dawn the bear came to feed beneath and was shot. He might climb the tree in his rage or simply stagger away. The hunter shared the meat with his family and those who helped him with the platform and retrieval of the carcass.

No special ritual precautions accompanied the hunting of deer or bear. Animals were not addressed before, during, or after the kill. Some skilled hunters were thought to have special (supernatural) powers derived from Cougar.

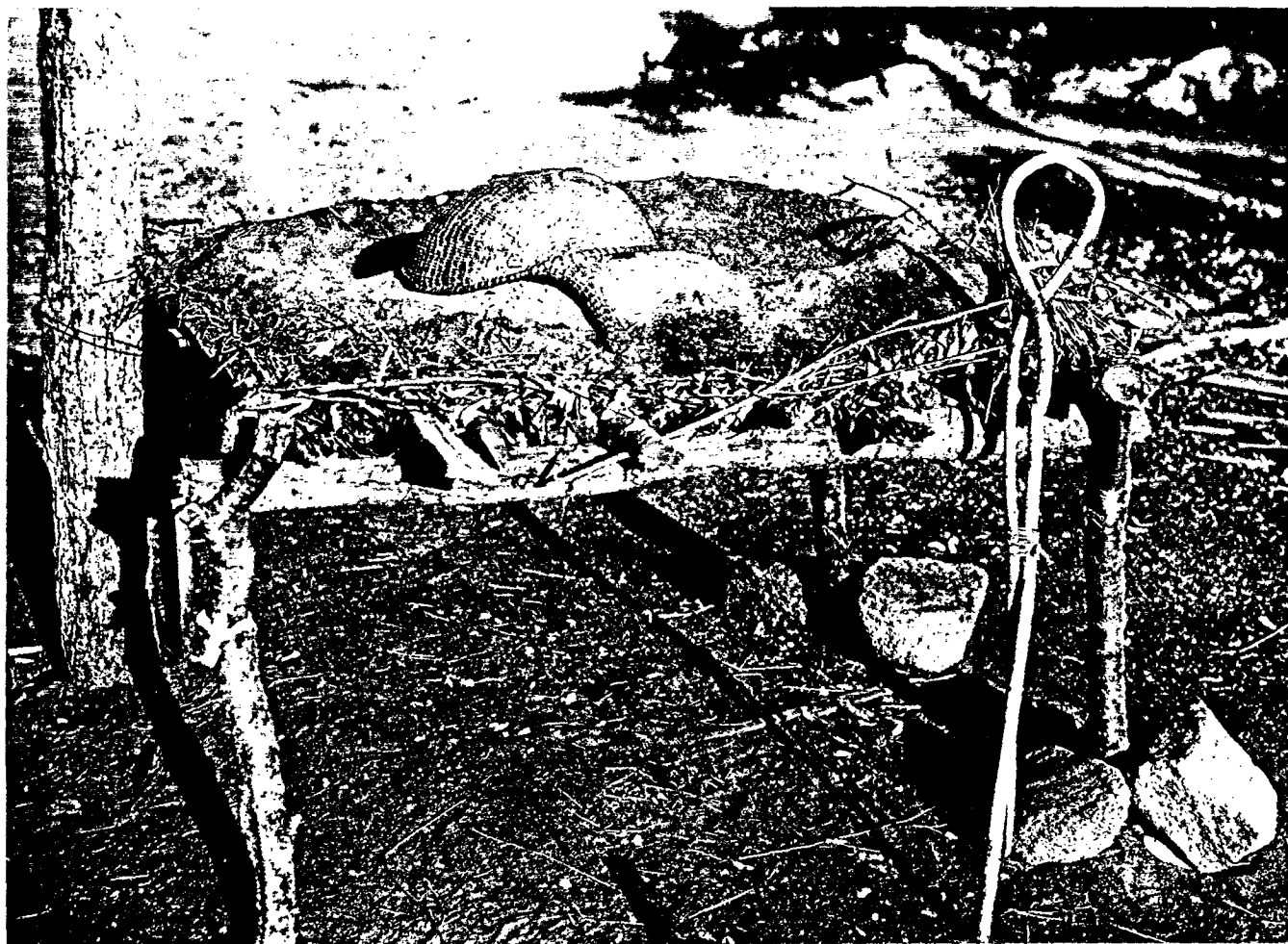
Ground squirrels and rabbits were smoked from their holes or pulled out by twisting into their fur a long flexible stick. They and other small game were trapped

between two flat stone slabs propped apart by a stick resting on an acorn.

Pigeons were snared, by the Michahay and Waksachi, from booths on the ground near a feeding place or in a roosting tree. Decoy pigeons, which were tame and kept in basketry cages, were used to lure wild pigeons within reach of a noose on a pole. Each bird, as caught, was quickly drawn into the booth to have its neck wrung so as not to disturb other feeding birds. Booths were privately owned and the decoys were bought and sold.

The Wobonuch built weirs on Mill Flat Creek to catch fish during seasonal runs. A fish harpoon was also used in fishing. The Waksachi used neither weir nor spear but did poison small streams with the mashed remains of an unidentified plant. Freshwater mussels were known as food, although they are found only in the San Joaquin valley, outside the usual range of the Monache.

Acorns and pine nuts were basic to the diet. Acorns were generally obtainable in the lower parts of the Monache range. They were stored in elevated granaries



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Fig. 2. Waksachi platform for leaching acorn meal, in Eshom Valley. Seed beater is on top of platform; wood mush stirrer used to lift cooking stones from boiled food leans against front. Photograph by C. Hart Merriam, Oct. 1903.

near the house and shelled as required. The Michahay additionally stored acorns in a circular bin built of poles and mats directly on the ground. After being shelled, ground in bedrock mortars, and leached (fig. 2), acorns were cooked in baskets to a mush that was eaten when cold and congealed.

Manzanita berries yielded a beverage when water was poured through a mashed mass held on a sieve. Insects, grubs, and seeds were parched with hot coals in a winnowing basket before being eaten. Yucca and other roots were collected and roasted. Honey was relished when found.

## Culture

### Technology

Obsidian (volcanic glass) was the principal material for knives, scrapers, and arrow points. It was imported, sometimes as tool blanks, from the Eastern Mono and sometimes resold, rough or finished, to Yokuts tribesmen. Evidently one source for obsidian used by northern Monache was in the vicinity of the present Devil's Postpile National Monument.

Plain self-bows of California laurel wood and sinew-backed recurved bows of juniper were made, the former being in common use. Both were three to four feet long by two inches wide and used two-ply sinew strings. Four kinds of arrows were known: for birds, for small game, for big game, and for war. Bird arrows were alderwood, self-pointed or with cross-points, and often unfletched. Small game arrows had cane shafts with a wooden foreshaft and were self-pointed and fletched. Big game arrows had cane shafts and stone points and were fletched; the point was insecurely fastened so that it remained in the wound. War arrows were similar to big game arrows, though shorter, and had their obsidian points securely lashed and glued (Gayton 1948, 2:218-219). Arrow poisons of deer liver, either rotted or envenomed by rattlesnakes, were reported for the Wobonuch (Gayton 1948, 2:261).

Small goods included a carrying net with a tumpline, commonly a man's item. Men made a feather fire fan of vulture or hawk tail feathers used at the hearth or when smoking animals from their holes. A soaproot brush was important to all grinding of foods on bedrock mortars (fig. 3) to sweep the scattered bits together. A looped stick mush stirrer, similar to that of the Yokuts, lifted spent stones from cooking foods. Pine tongs or a pair of pine sticks put the heated stones into the cooking baskets. Steatite vessels (fig. 4) are reported for both the Northfork Mono and the Wobonuch (Gifford 1932:25; Gayton 1948, 2:266).

In general, Monache basketry is quite like that of the Foothill Yokuts, with the resemblances stemming from an exchange of types. Gifford (1932:26) observes that



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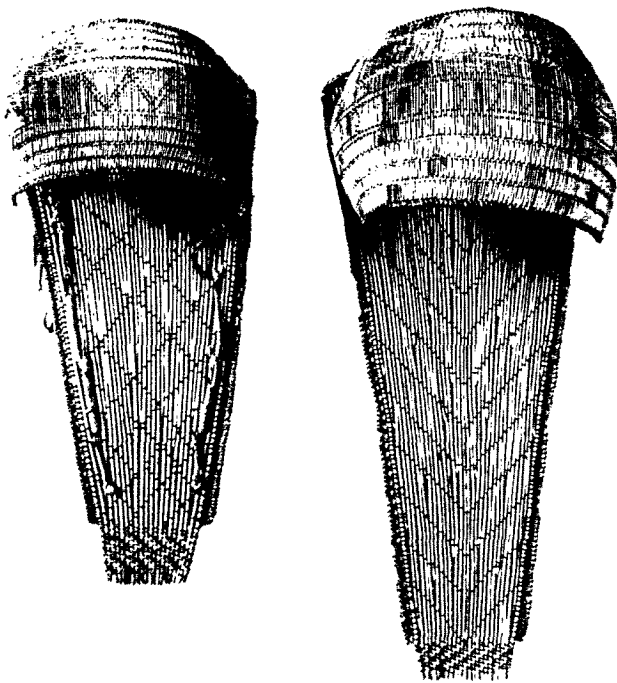
Fig. 3. Jane Whaley, Wobonuch, using a boulder pestle in a bedrock mortar. Winnowers and soaproot brush are at her feet. Photograph by C. Hart Merriam, at Kings River, Sept. 1930.

twined cooking baskets occurred commonly among the Northfork Mono, though rare among Miwok and Yokuts. His view is possibly supported by Gayton's (1948, 1:18-19, figs. 2-3) summary of Yokuts and Monache types, but unfortunately her sample is drawn heavily from the groups that should be compared to Yokuts generally and so is not definitive. The Chukchansi Yokuts are known to have used twined mush baskets (Gayton shows coiled mush baskets) and possibly coiled ones as well; but they were, after all, next neighbors to the Northfork Mono (R.F.G. Spier 1954:figs. 14-15, 24, 38). Baby cradles (fig. 5) among the Monache were of the so-called Mono type, a flat trapezoidal base of crossing small sticks held by twining and a hooplike hood with attached sunshade (Gifford 1932:pl. 8; Gayton 1948, 2:273). This



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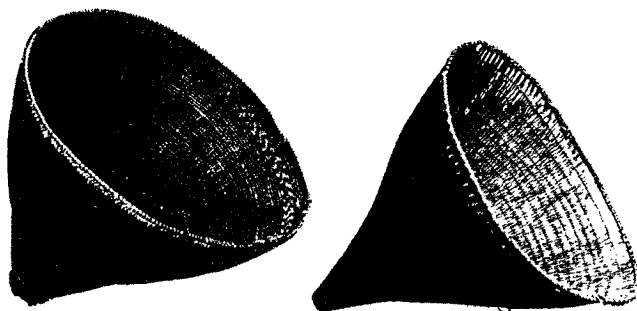
Fig. 4. Northfork Mono steatite cooking vessel. Height about 10.2 cm, collected 1918.



Lowie Mus., U. of Calif., Berkeley: left, 1-21716; right, 1-21717.  
 Fig. 5. Twined cradles. left, For female, length about 63 cm; right, for male, same scale. Collected 1918.

style made inroads among the Foothill Yokuts (in the nineteenth century?) to the extinction of the classic cradle on a forked-stick base (Kroeber 1925:534-537, fig. 48d). A Michahay-Waksachi informant described to Gayton (1948, 2:234) a hybrid style that had the Mono back and sunshade superimposed on the Y-shaped forked Yokuts base, a usage that further stresses the transitional nature of these tribes. Designs on cradles reflected the sex of occupants, among the Northfork a chevron for boys and a zigzag for girls (Gifford 1932:pl. 8).

Other basketry products included: twined burden baskets (fig. 6), seed beaters, sieves, and fan-shaped winnowers; and coiled mush, storage, or washing baskets, winnowing trays, gambling trays, and treasure baskets—a



Lowie Mus., U. of Calif., Berkeley: left, 1-19720; right, 1-10493.  
 Fig. 6. Burden baskets. left, Close twined seed carrier, diameter 56 cm, collected 1915. right, Diagonal twined openwork basket, primarily used for carrying acorns, same scale; collected 1906.

Yokuts specialty, the so-called Tulare bottlenecks (Kroeber 1925:531, pl. 50a; Gayton 1948, 1:18-19).

Pottery was made by the Monache, except those at Northfork, by a coiling technique. The resulting vessels were fired in a pit, with a period of preheating on its edge. Larger pots were used for boiling meat (Gayton 1948, 2:226, 265). The making of pottery was shared with central Foothill Yokuts, to whom it evidently diffused, but was not a generalized Yokuts trait (Gayton 1929).

The Monache made cordage of sinew, milkweed fiber, and various barks such as willow bark. All were rolled on the thigh in the absence of a spindle. The vegetable twines were worked into nets and tumplines in addition to common fastenings (Gifford 1932:28; Gayton 1948, 2:226). No woven textiles were natively made.

### Structures

The dwelling houses of the Monache ran to three types: a conical house with an excavated floor, an oval house with a ridgepole, and a conical bark-covered house with a center post (fig. 7). The first two types were shared with Foothill Yokuts, while the last was primarily Monache as the bark was only available at higher elevations (Gifford 1932:20; Gayton 1948, 2:215-216, 260).

The conical house was 6 to 12 feet in diameter and its floor was excavated to a depth of a foot or more. The basic frame poles were set inside the depression and brought together at a ring at the top (forming a smoke hole). Lighter poles were set between and the whole held by encircling willow withes. The exterior was thatched with grass and fine willow twigs. The doorway, about five feet high, was covered with a mat tied to a side pole. Inside a fire burned in a central depression in the floor. The house had no interior divisions or furnishings.

The oval house had diameters of 10 to 15 feet by 17 to 20 feet and its floor at ground level. A ridgepole was supported by forked posts set at two-thirds of the long diameter. Poles leaned against the ridge and the forked post tops. Grass was thatched over the withes that held the poles, with an unthatched slot at the ridge to serve as a smoke exit. The doorway, with a mat door leaned in place, was on a long side.

The conical bark house, with unexcavated floor, had a few large poles placed against a forked center post and roped in place. (Occasionally two posts and a short ridge beam were used.) Slabs of cedar bark were laid against the poles and tied as necessary. Earth was often banked around the lower wall. Smoke evidently found its way out through the cracks. Size was similar to the other conical house.

The sweathouse, usually one to a village but not present in every hamlet, was the other major structure. The Wobonuch-Entimbich and the Michahay-Waksachi both used a two-post foundation. The general construction was similar to that of the oval house. A lintel resting on short posts held the shortened roof poles above the



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Fig. 7. Conical bark-covered house, Northfork Mono. Photograph by C. Hart Merriam, Oct. 1902.

open doorway, which was about three feet high. There was no closure. Earth was taken from within the sweat-house to put over the outside. The fire, using no heated stones or steam, was either just inside the doorway or just outside. The single-post sweathouse, reported for the Michahay and Waksachi, had an excavated floor, poles laid up to a central forked post, fine sticks over the base, and an earth cover (Gayton 1948, 2:217, 259-260). The Northfork Mono had a sweathouse described as "like the dwelling, but covered completely with earth" (Gifford 1932:20). Their house was a conical type with an apex ring and an excavated floor. The sweathouse was a gathering place for men who sweated usually in the late afternoon and took a quick dip in the stream that it faced. Women stayed away from the sweathouse, but boys sometimes played there and might stay around to listen to old men's stories. Single men might sleep in the sweat-house.

Other structures included an acorn granary built of sticks and matting on a raised platform about six feet off the ground. The Michahay additionally had a tall cylindrical bin made of poles set directly in the ground.

Around the poles was a willow mat, added turn-by-turn as the bin was filled. The whole was three feet in diameter and eight feet high. A shade, formed by brush piled on a horizontal frame between four corner posts, was a common adjunct to every house. Rows of shades were built around the dance ground when major ceremonies were planned.

#### *Settlement*

Settlements were generally small and loosely organized. The Northfork Mono had no principal village; instead there were a number of hamlets ranging from one to eight huts with an average of three huts and 13 people per place (Gifford 1932:17-19). The Michahay-Waksachi had no village plan; an individual built wherever he pleased. By contrast, a Wobonuch informant claimed that their villages had houses, facing south, southeast, or southwest, set in a semicircle with the local chief and messenger living in the center houses (Gayton 1948, 2:216, 260).

#### *Transport*

When moving camp temporarily the women carried household goods in burden baskets supported by a

tumpline over the head. A coiled basketry cap, for this purpose only, was worn under the tumpline. Men used a carrying net with a tumpline that they placed across the upper chest and the deltoid muscles at the shoulder. Infants in cradles were carried atop the loads of elders or by older sisters.

The Wobonuch used a raft of two or three logs with a brush or mat decking to carry household goods, game, or a nonswimmer across a stream. If the stream was fordable one man pushed the raft, otherwise two swimmers propelled it. A basketry boat, four feet in diameter, coiled, flat-bottomed with flaring sides, was a common family possession. It could carry infants or light valuables. No canoes, paddles, or poles for rafts were known (Gayton 1948, 2:266).

Training in swimming was part of the education, and toughening, of children. They learned a breaststroke with a scissors kick.

#### *Clothing and Adornment*

There is no clear account of everyday dress of the Monache. By implication both men and women may have worn breechclouts and/or aprons front and rear for the women. Gifford (1932:29) reports two-piece dresses of buckskin worn by the women. Perhaps this was a double apron.

While people normally went barefooted, the Michahay and Waksachi bought moccasins from the Eastern Mono. The Wikchamni (Foothill Yokuts) and Patwisha had a moccasin (which they made?) (Gayton 1948, 2:217, 1:65-66).

People ornamented themselves with plugs in pierced earlobes. Formerly they also pierced the nasal septum for a shell bead. Tattooing on the face was appropriate for both sexes, while some women carried facial tattoos down the throat and onto the chest. Tattooing had no special significance or ritual aspect, but patterns were standardized (Gayton 1948, 2:218).

Painting was reserved for ceremonial and comparable occasions. Colors were red, black, white, and dark blue, with some pigments obtained from Eastern Mono. Each major lineage among the Wobonuch and Entimbich had its characteristic paint pattern, mostly on the face, for both sexes (Gayton 1948, 2:264-265).

#### *Life Cycle*

Pregnancy was marked by no special behavior for either prospective parent. Birth took place in the house with the parturient's mother or any other competent woman relative in attendance. A shaman might be called in the event of a difficult delivery, but he aided mostly by his presence. The umbilical cord was cut with a cane knife, and the baby was washed in warm water and placed on a forked-stick (Michahay only?) cradle. The mother remained quiet and on a restricted diet for several months. A taboo on meat remained in effect for three

months until the mother was ritually cleansed by her mother-in-law and other female relatives of the child's father (Gayton 1948, 2:233-234, 272-273).

In theory a child was named by and for his or her paternal grandparent of the same sex, but in genealogies this alternate generation naming is not borne out. Personal names had no meaning of which people were conscious; nicknames were common and often referred to some trait of the individual (Gifford 1932:46-49; Gayton 1948, 2:234, 273).

A girl's puberty was marked by use of a scratching stick during the first period or two. Her parents might put on a little cleansing ritual at which she was ceremonially washed and garbed in such new clothes and ornaments as the family could afford. Menstruating women were not segregated, but they could not cook or have intercourse.

Marriages were prevailingly monogamous, but polygyny was permitted and occasionally practiced by the wealthy. The levirate and sororate were found, but not compulsory; too hasty a remarriage was thought to risk death.

Unions between cototemites were permissible if no other relationship was known. Cousin marriages were definitely prohibited. Negotiations toward a marriage were initiated by the groom's parents who exchanged gifts with those of the potential bride. Both principals would be pubertal age or older. If the proposal were satisfactory the principals would be informed or consulted; they usually agreed with parental judgment. Temporary matrilocal residence was followed by patrilocal or neolocal residence with frequent short visits home by the bride. No bride price is reported for the more southerly Monache, but among the Northfork Mono it was paid to a girl's father or some other paternal relative in his absence (Gifford 1932:31).

A divorce was possible when irreconcilable differences arose or when a husband simply deserted his wife for another woman. No return of prenuptial gifts was made.

Behavior between parent-in-law and child-in-law was circumspect, with some avoidance and the use of formal address in speech. The taboo was somewhat relaxed through the years but never vanished.

The Monache contracted intertribal marriages with their kind and with the Yokuts. A Waksachi informant stated that they never married Eastern Mono on the grounds that the latter were not welcome as permanent residents (Gayton 1948, 2:235). Such marriages do seem to have been infrequent. Gifford's (1932:35) survey of marital habits showed a very low percentage of intertribal marriages by the Northfork. Of 199 marriages recorded, 9 were to foreigners: 2 to Eastern Mono, 4 to Monache other than Northfork, and 3 to Chukchansi.

Death, of all life crises, evoked the most substantial social response. When a person was seen to be dying women gathered around and began weeping while the tribal messenger went to inform relatives. Disposal of the

body came 24 to 48 hours after death. Before contact with Whites cremation was common; it continued to be used for those who died away from home so that the ashes might be transported for burial. The fire was built and tended by friends or a corpse-carrier, a public functionary who was paid. Personal possessions were sometimes burned and the house of death was customarily abandoned. The ashes and unburned bones were gathered and placed in water, according to a Michahay-Waksachi informant, or else buried in a basket in the local cemetery (Gayton 1948, 2:236, 274).

Digging of a grave was commenced immediately on a death. Testimony differs on who dug the grave, with the corpse-handler, professional mourning singers, and relatives of the deceased being named. The first two would have been paid for their services. Personal effects were often buried with the flexed, wrapped body. The corpse lay on its back, head to the west.

The extent and length of mourning were not prescribed but varied with closeness of kinship and other bonds to the deceased. Widows were expected to mourn about a year or more, others a shorter term. Hair was often singed short and the person allowed to become disheveled and dirty. Mourners were subject to food taboos and were socially withdrawn. A "little" mourning ceremony was held, at the individual's discretion, to mark termination of that status. The mourner's chief, with the assistance of his messenger, made arrangements for the visit of members of a reciprocating family from another tribe who came along with their chief and his messenger. After some preliminaries, the mourners were washed and reclined by the reciprocants. The affair lasted only a day or two and was evidently more developed among the transitional Yokuts-Monache than among the unequivocal Monache (Gayton 1948, 2:238, 275). The annual mourning ceremony, which pertained to all mourners of a tribe, is described below.

#### *Social Organization*

Of the Monache under consideration only the Northfork are reported as having possessed moieties (Gifford 1932:34-37). In this social feature they resembled the neighboring Foothill Yokuts and Southern Sierra Miwok (Gayton 1945:410). Each Northfork moiety, in which membership was derived patrilineally, was in two divisions, perhaps reflecting the coalescence of the Northfork from several smaller units. The moieties each had chiefs who occupied a hereditary office and might be members of any of three divisions; the fourth division was not eligible to furnish a chief. Only one division of the four was able to furnish an assistant chief so that members of one moiety were forced to hire their assistant chief from the other moiety. The totemic affiliations of these officials contrast with those among the Yokuts and more southerly Monache in that the chief is nominally associated with the eagle but might have another creature as his

personal totem. The assistant chief, on the other hand, must be drawn from the moiety division having the eagle as its principal totem. The contrasting practice has chiefs uniformly associated with the eagle while the assistant chief (usually a messenger) commonly has the dove as his totem.

In general, and notably in recent times, the moieties had rivalrous and reciprocal relations in games, feasts, and ceremonies. It was noted that at some distant date the four divisions were cross-paired in funerary and mourning observances thus creating, for this purpose at least, two intersecting pairs of moieties. In the twentieth century the social fabric has "shrunk" so that any person not of one's group, even from another tribe, may be placed in the role of a reciprocant in some of these same circumstances.

Lineages were the major kinship units reported for the Monache, except the Northfork among whom some of their functions fell to the divisions of the moieties. Lineages were exclusively patrilineal. Each lineage was recognized as having a totemic creature—prevalingly birds rather than animals—that was referred to as a member's "pet" (literally 'dog') (Gayton 1948, 2:231, 272). The Eagle lineage provided the tribe with chiefs while the Roadrunner or the Dove lineage furnished the chief's messengers. The lineage totems were distinct from whatever supernatural aids the individual managed to acquire for himself; the former came through the accident of birth while the latter were gotten by active effort.

The principal officials of the Monache were the chief and the messenger, but their functions were not everywhere the same. Among the Northfork the chief headed a moiety, not a settlement, so there were two chiefs simultaneously in office (Gifford 1932:41). The more southerly Monache tribes, the Michahay-Waksachi and the Wobonuch-Entimbich, had chiefs who led the people of a village. Again, more than one chief might have been in office at a time, but they were necessarily in different communities. However, not every settlement was large enough to rate a chief. Both north and south the chieftainship was patrilineally inherited, passing to a younger brother or an eldest son, but transmission was tempered by considerations of individual ability and personality. Other members of the chief's immediate family, presumably those who might conceivably have been inheritors, also bore the title of chief although they did not so act. (This circumstance may have led to confusion about leadership on first contact with Whites in that persons were deemed to have the authority implied by their titles.) Secondary chiefs were reported among the Michahay-Waksachi who were appointed by the chief and assisted him financially with major ceremonies (Gayton 1948, 2:230-231).

Gayton (1948, 2:270) has summarized the duties of a Monache chief: "He decided upon the time for ceremonies, as none could be held without his consent, suggested



the time to move, saw that the needy were fed and sheltered, and sanctioned the killing of malicious shamans or, presumably, other evil-doers. His power was by no means absolute but was that of a benevolent or paternal governor who advised rather than ordered."

The messenger was drawn from the lineage that held the Roadrunner as its totem, with secondary recognition of the Dove as a totem. Among the neighboring Yokuts, from whom Gayton (1948, 2:271) considers the office to have been derived, the Dove is the messenger's totem. Unlike the Monache chiefs, the messengers possessed a mark of office—an eight-foot-long cane with red-painted bands and a string tied to the top—by which they were immediately recognized. Although the record is unclear the string apparently kept track of time, as the days before a ceremony. The duties of the office were "to take messages to and from his chief, or between other people who cared to hire him; to supply his chief with wood and water; to give orders around the village; and particularly at ceremonies direct proceedings, supply wood and water, prevent quarrels, and direct the dancing or entertainment routine" (Gayton 1948, 2:271). In addition to the chief's messenger there were others, generally his subordinates, some of whom aided shamans. Messengers were regularly paid for their services.

### *Religion*

The Monache generally believed in the supernatural powers possessed by totemic and tutelary spirits, powers that might be employed by persons who had the proper experiences and skills. The powers of the totemic spirits were of value and concern to all, with particular spirits being those associated with lineage or moiety. Tutelary spirits were often sought on an individual basis. Success in this quest could lead to recognition as a shaman. Even those persons who did not seek such distinction were inclined to possess, if possible, some lesser powers for themselves as leading to success in life.

The Monache shamans counted fewer specialists in their ranks than did those among the neighboring Yokuts (Gayton 1948, 2:275), but Gifford (1932:50) reports bear and deer shamans among the Northfork. A major function of shamans was curing illness, often by removal of supposed intrusive objects. The ability to cure carried with it the ability to make ill or to kill and there were frequent suspicions and accusations of malevolent shamans. Shamans usually operated independently when curing but were believed to consort in groups at times when engaged in malicious behavior. Cannibalism, exhumation of the dead, poisoning, and acts of magic were attributed to shamans. Anecdotes of shamanistic malevolence suggest vicious individuals operating on their own account rather than as hirelings of others (Gayton 1948, 2:279-280).

The power of flying was believed possessed by ordinary persons who had the proper talismans. Flight was not

sustained, but the person progressed in great leaps being invisible as he passed through the air. Each leap cost the power in one talisman; however, it could be shared with someone in the same adventure. Flight was allegedly employed when one was in great danger from an enemy (Gayton 1948, 2:276).

Datura was taken in an annual spring ceremony among the Michahay-Waksachi and Entimbich, but at personal convenience among the Wobonuch. The narcotic was known and used among the Northfork as well. In the ceremonial circumstance the date was set several months ahead so that the participants could observe a meat taboo. Adolescent boys and girls drank the infusion, perhaps only once in their lives, to assure a good life and knowledge of the supernatural world. Adults occasionally, and some powerful shamans annually for a decade, might join them. The six days of the ceremony, under the leadership of a knowledgeable man, saw segregation of the participants, their observance of a restricted diet, prayerful consideration of the datura spirits, and the climax of drinking the infusion. The drinkers danced before spectators until they fell unconscious. Until he had fully recovered each participant was attended by two aides to keep him from injuring himself (Gayton 1948, 2:245-247, 281-283).

The Bear Dance and related ideas of bear supernaturalism were stronger among the Wobonuch and Entimbich than among the Michahay-Waksachi. Men of the Bear lineage who, through dreaming, had Bear as a personal helper gave dance performances imitating movements of the bear. Additionally, it was believed that such men might transform themselves into bears in order to harm those whom they disliked or to travel quickly without being molested. The Northfork also had bear shamans and a lively interest in bears (Gayton 1948, 2:248, 283-284; Gifford 1932:50-51).

The annual mourning ceremony was held more or less regularly though the frequency was linked to deaths and the affluence of the mourning families, who paid most of the costs (Gayton 1948, 2:249-252, 286-289; Gifford 1932:43-45). The early fall is reported for the Wobonuch-Entimbich and was a likely time for other tribes as well. After consultations the chief sent his messenger to other tribes with announcement of the occasion and its date. The visitors brought little beyond their blankets and were furnished food, firewood, and shelter by the hosts.

During the ceremonial week little happened on the first four days other than morning and evening weeping by old women. Paid singers accompanied the weeping. The evening sing might also be the occasion for the mourners to parade with the baskets, money, and other gifts that they would distribute after the ritual washing. The fifth evening sometimes saw a contest of powers between shamans, a feature imported from neighboring Yokuts who might also furnish the performing shamans. On the sixth night a fire was built in the dance plaza (the first

unless there had been a shamans' contest) and the hosts and reciprocant tribesmen lined up facing across the area; nonreciprocant visitors watched from the ends. Several periods of intense crying, singing, and parading occurred. Ultimately some of the goods that the mourners provided and had been carrying came into the possession of the reciprocants. Other items, especially effigies of the deceased, were burned. With them was supposed to vanish the mourners' grief. Baskets of money and other gifts were given to the chief of the reciprocants for distribution to his people; it was at this time that the mourners' chief and his henchmen might have to make up deficits in the payments. This payment might follow the ritual washing on the final day of the ceremony instead of following destruction of the effigies.

The last (often seventh) day brought ritual washing of the mourners by the reciprocants. Although special attention was paid to those actually bereaved the entire tribal group was included. The washers supplied fresh clothes to those whom they cleansed and received in return the handsome washing baskets. Finally, a feast was spread that broke the fast of the mourners. As a postlude there was sometimes a performance by Yokuts *huhuna* dancers who customarily sought hidden money and were laid low by "shots" from powerful shamans (Gayton 1948, 2:289).

Those who reciprocated as washers and mourners in this ceremony stood in a regular relationship. Tribes were traditionally so ranged, with the Wobonuch and Entimbich reciprocating, for example. However, there are some indications that families, even of the same tribe, may have been so allied. Confusion has been added to the scene in the twentieth century by the contraction of this aspect of social organization so that people are uncertain of lineages, their relations to totems, and the link of both to moieties where present.

The Monache were central to the introduction of the Ghost Dance of 1870 west of the Sierra Nevada. A Northern Paiute missionary brought the cult to an enthusiastic audience among the Northfork. The resulting dance, evidently in the spring of 1871, drew participants from among both Monache and Foothill Yokuts from as far south as the Entimbich. Singers, who learned the songs on this occasion, toured to the south, spreading the gospel. The Entimbich were moved to sponsor another large dance in Eshom Valley, a convenient place though actually Waksachi territory. Some converts put on a dance at Tule, which was attended by Southern Valley Yokuts; and dances, large and small, followed in that area. The large dances ceased in 1873 and private observances were abandoned by 1875 (Gayton 1930a).

The Ghost Dance performance involved a round dance by both sexes, circling clockwise, to their own clapping and a repetitive song from male singers. The dancers danced primarily in the evening, with resting, swimming, games, and general socializing through the days of an

assembly lasting as long as a week. The dance itself was continued to exhaustion; while resting the dancers might hear an exhortation from a leader. As the efforts of the 1870s had failed to bring back the dead, the 1890 revival of the Ghost Dance had no impact among the Monache (Gayton 1948, 2:252-253, 289-290).

### History

Kroeber (1939a:154, map 19) indicates the foothills of the Sierra Nevada—Foothill Yokuts and Monache territory—as among the most densely inhabited in California. The aboriginal population exceeded 70 persons a square kilometer (about 180 a square mile). By 1910 an estimated 6 to 9 percent survived (Kroeber 1925:887, fig. 72).

The population estimate for 1770—4,000 persons— included both the Monache and the Paiute (Western and Eastern Mono), with 1,500 believed surviving in 1910. Another estimate for 1770 places 1,000 Monache in the Kern River area. If approximately 10 percent survived into the twentieth century, then this would accord with the 1950 population of the consolidated tribes at the Tule River Reservation. The Monache of the Northfork area were thought to total 154 (in three communities) in 1950 (Tax and Stanley 1960).

Most accounts of the Monache have sought to reconstruct the native life of precontact or early contact times; consequently, their modern situation is not well studied. Survivors are evidently living on the Tule River Reservation, east of Porterville, California, where they are in close contact with some remaining Yokuts. Merriam (1966-1967, 3:412-416) visited the reservation in 1903 and recorded the condition of its inhabitants. The modern reservation is organized with a tribal council, headquarters, store, and camping lands for rental to nonmembers. Both Protestant and Catholic churches are found in the area.

### Synonymy

The Monache have been known as Monachi (Kroeber 1925:584), Monos (Powers 1877:396), and Western Mono (Gifford 1932:15). Various Penutian-speaking Californians named their Numic eastern neighbors with words similar to Mono; Monache may perhaps have been derived from a version with a Yokuts suffix used in that language to refer to the Western Mono and Owens Valley Paiute (Lamb 1958:97). Another possible source may be Southern Sierra Miwok, where *mo'na-* refers to 'Mono person or language'; however, a form *mo'na'ei'* with the suffix meaning 'people of (a place)' is not attested (Broadbent 1964:257, 288).

Monache were called *nut'a'a* (plural *nut'sawayi*) by their Yawdanchi Yokuts neighbors (Kroeber 1963:225, phonemicized). This term, spelled Nüt'ha by Powers (1877:396), and the form *nuta'wi* (plural *nutsa'wi*) from

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another Yokuts dialect (Gayton 1948, 2:145) is basically directional, rather than tribal, as it means 'uplanders, easterners' and was also applied, by some Yokuts, to their more eastern Yokuts neighbors (Kroeber 1925:584). Entimbich have been called Em'-tim'-bitch (Merriam 1930) and Intimpeach (Royce 1899:955) as well as other variant but easily recognizable spellings. Michahay occurs in the plural as Michahaisha or Michahayisa (Kroeber 1925:480). Northfork Mono have been identified as Nim or Neum (Merriam 1955) from the Monache self-designation *ni'mmi*. Patwisha has been variously spelled Padoosha, Pot'-wish-ah (Merriam 1955:168, 1930:497), Pal-wis-ha (Royce 1899:782), and Balwisha (Kroeber 1925:586). Variations of Waksachi include Wuksache (Merriam 1955:168), Wack-sa-che (Royce 1899:782), and their Wobonuch name, Pa'ohabi (Gayton 1948, 2:254). The Wobonuch have been known as Woponutch, Wä-pon-nutch, and Wo-pung'-witch (Merriam 1955:168, 174, 1930:497).

## Sources

Two prime anthropological sources for the Monache are sections of Gayton (1948) and Gifford (1932). Additional notes are found in Merriam (1966-1967, 3). Kroeber (1925) offers very little on the Monache.

Topical studies in the conventional literature include Gayton on pottery making (1929), chiefs and shamans (1930), the Ghost Dance of 1870 (1930a), and social organization (1945). Gayton and Newman (1940) discuss myths. Gifford's broader studies in social organization (1916a, 1918) and Driver's culture element survey (1937) contain pertinent information.

There is virtually no writing about the Monache apart from that primarily devoted to the Yokuts. This circumstance reflects the close association of these two groups of tribes and the consequent difficulty of dealing independently with the Monache.