

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

- Miwok, Miwokan, Utian

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com):

- Central Miwok = csm; Northern Miwok = nsq; Southern Miwok = skd; Coastal Miwok = csi

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- Northern California, N38°11'58.56'' W120°40'32.16''

1.4 Brief history:

- In the Miwokan language, the word “miwu” was for “person,” and the word “miwok” meant “the people.” Accordingly, the Western settlers in the Northern California region gave this tribe the name Miwok (Conrotto 1). The Miwok settled the foothills of the Sierra Nevada anywhere from 5,000 to 20,000 years ago (Conrotto 3). The Miwok were made up three tribes: the Northern, Central, and Southern Miwok. The Northern Miwok lived along the Cosumnes, Mokelumne, and Calaveras Rivers (Conrotto 4). The Central Miwok settled near the Stanislaus and Tuolumne Rivers (Conrotto 4). The Southern Miwok lived along the Merced, Mariposa, Chowchilla, and Fresno Rivers (Conrotto 4). Original Miwoks were organized into *nenas*, which were patrilineal and ancestral areas of land—usually five by ten miles—led by chiefs who was the patriarch of the *nenas*' lineage (Conrotto 44). There was no Miwok “nation” and the largest political unit was the village was only created after the arrival of Westerners forced the Miwok to abandon their *nenas* (Conrotto 44). The Miwok village was led by a chief and loosely connected to other villages. These largely independent villages were connected by trade, common traditions, and occasionally small disputes (Conrotto 45). Each group would fish in the winter and spring and hunt in the summer and fall (Conrotto 43). The Miwok's most important commodity was the acorn, which was harvested in the fall (Conrotto 43). The first interaction between the Miwok and the west was in 1579 when Sir Francis Drake landed on the coast of California, at which point he spent a summer with the tribe (Conrotto 1). Because the Miwok often obtained salt from foreigners, they would refer to Indian visitors as “Keyew-k” and white visitors as “Mono,” both meaning salt people (Conrotto 4). Furthermore, the whites viewed the Miwok as undergoing a type of “cultural morbidity” because they lacked the desire to expand their territory (Conrotto 5). In the 1700s, in an attempt to counter the Russian colonization in Alaska, the Spanish extended their influence northwards from Mexico into Northern California and came into contact with the Miwok (Conrotto 7). The Spaniards planned to exploit the Miwok by Christianizing them and transforming them into producers of commodities (Conrotto 18). In addition to Western disease, the Miwok population was also massacred by Spanish (Conrotto 18). The gold rush of 1848 brought huge numbers of white settlers into the lands of the Miwok, and they viewed the Miwok people as inferior to themselves (Conrotto 18). As a result, the new Anglo-Saxon gold-seekers gave the Miwok people no rights and forced them to dig for gold with little compensation (Conrotto 19). For the most part, the Miwok people did not fight back against the settlers. Instead, the peaceful Miwok were dragged out of their huts one by one by the settlers who would force them to dig (Conrotto 20). As a result, the Miwok began to act more aggressively towards the settlers. In one circumstance, Miwok hunters killed a Mexican for his mules (Conrotto 21). The result was the massacre of a Miwok village and subsequent one-sided skirmishes in which the settlers would quickly kill or drive off the fighting Miwok (Conrotto 23). However, in contrast to the hostile Native Americans of the Great Plains, the Miwok were mostly docile (Conrotto 27). Unfortunately, the white settlers generalized the Miwok as hostile and subsequently killed many of them (Conrotto 27). Today, the Miwok live like most Native Americans in the United States; on localized reservations with Western amenities.

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

- The early interactions with the Miwok were mostly hostile and caused the Miwok to isolate themselves with Westerners. During the Gold Rush in 1848, because of these harsh interactions with white settlers, the Miwok people were either assimilated into Western culture or killed. Ultimately, in one generation, nearly seventy-five percent of the Miwok population was wiped out (Conrotto 104). Today, the Miwok live in modern homes on Rancherias in Northern California—the largest of which houses sixty-five Miwoks—where they continue to practice ancient Miwok traditions (Conrotto 104).

1.6 Ecology:

- The climate of the Sierra Nevada, the land inhabited by the Miwok, is a mild mountain climate. Winter temperatures can drop below 0° Fahrenheit and summer temperatures as hot as 100° Fahrenheit (Conrotto 9). The Sierra Nevada is a grassy, hilly, sometimes-forested, and sometimes-mountainous area with cold wet winters and hot dry summers (Conrotto 7). Many fish-filled rivers stemming from the melting snow atop the highest mountain peaks litter the valleys below (Conrotto 7). The Miwok commonly settled along the rivers in the valleys for fish and water and would travel up into the hills and mountains to hunt (The valleys, hills, and rivers were inhabited by antelope, jackrabbits, salmon, trout, duck, deer, squirrel, valley quail, and grasshoppers that served as food for the Miwok (10-11). The Miwok would commonly use furs from these animals for clothing and as a sign of social status (Conrotto 10). Trees in these areas included: Golden oaks, Yellow pines, Jeffrey pines, Sequoias, Red firs, dwarf huckleberry oaks, California oaks, Black oaks, and Digger pines which were utilized by the Miwok for shelter, nuts, and other commodities (Conrotto 9-10). Miwoks neither farmed nor herded livestock. Instead, they only hunted, fished, and gathered (Conrotto 11). Even when Westerners introduced the horse, the Miwok continued to live the same lifestyle and only utilized horses for their meat (Conrotto 11).

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density

- Population size: population peaked at 9000 total Miwok prior to Western settlement; slightly over 600 in 1910; around 3,500 today (Conrotto 2)
- Mean village size: varied significantly because villages were a random combination of *nenas*. Commonly numbered around 100 to 200 people (Conrotto 45)

- Home range size: The home range of the Miwok is very small, and many would not travel more than twenty miles from where they were born (Conrotto 10)
- Density: “California had an estimated native population of between 100,000 and 150,000 – one of the most densely populated regions of the pre-Columbian Western Hemisphere...[but] the Miwok and [their] neighbors were above all else peaceful” (Conrotto 5).

2. Economy

- “The Miwok ate almost everything edible in the vegetable world...[and] The same applies to the animal world, with the exception of the turkey vulture and [...] the bear” (Conrotto 69).

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- Acorns, digger pine nuts, grass seeds, squaw berries, elderberries, manzanita berries, bee honey, and almost any other edible vegetable (Conrotto 69) .
- The acorns were harvested in the fall and traded amongst other groups of Miwok. They would be pounded and grinded into a mush that would then be eaten with mushrooms (Conrotto 64). The digger pine nuts were supplied to the Miwok groups by the Northern Miwok who collected them (Conrotto 46). The Miwok received grass seeds from the Plains Miwok (Conrotto 46). The berry variations were collected by the Central Miwok and traded to other Miwok groups (Conrotto 46).
- The Miwok would make soup, mush, bread, and biscuits out of acorns (Conrotto 74-75)
- “The Miwok made meal from seeds, eaten either dry, as cakes, or cooked into a mush. These seeds came from grasses, small plants and shrubs, and were gathered by means of a conical burden basket and handled seed beater” (Conrotto 69).
- “The Miwok ate a wide variety of roots, corms, tubers and bulbs which are commonly referred to as ‘Indian potatoes.’ Gathered by means of the digging stick, this food was baked or steamed in the earth oven, roasted in ashes, or stone-boiled in baskets” (Conrotto 71).
- “Mushrooms were shredded and dried, and then boiled and eaten with salt, or cooked in soups” (Conrotto 72).
- “Manzanita berries were crushed by the Miwok to make a sweet, unfermented cider” (Conrotto 74).

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- Antelope, jackrabbit, ducks, geese, salmon, trout, grasshoppers, valley quail, mountain quail, and pigeons (Conrotto 8-10)
- “The deer was the Miwok’s most important source of meat” (Conrotto 75).
- “The Miwok ate coyote, dog, skunk, mountain lion, wildcat, snakes, fogs and lizards...There was some variation from village to village as to who ate what, but in general the more exotic foods (especially snakes, frogs and lizards) were favored by the elderly” (Conrotto 69).
- “Grasshoppers were driven into large pits by large groups of people – sometimes several villages participating in one drive...The grasshoppers were either cooked in an earth oven or parched in an openwork basket” (Conrotto 69).
- “Cocoons, probably of the Army Worm, were steamed in the earth oven, or boiled, or sun-dried and saved for winter” (Conrotto 69).
- “A green worm was squeezed out and steamed” (Conrotto 69).
- Yellow jacket larvae were also eaten (Conrotto 69)
- “Rabbits were the next most important food animal after deer” (Conrotto 76).

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

- Bow and arrow—with stone arrow heads made from obsidian, flint, and jasper—and spear were used by the Miwok for hunting (Conrotto 46). The bow of the Miwok were usually made of spruce, incense cedar, and ash trees (Conrotto 51).
- Miwok had no special weapons for war and would simply use their hunting weapons (Conrotto 45)

2.4 Food storage:

- The Miwok would store their acorns and grass seeds in twelve-foot-tall water-tight granaries—shaped like inverted cones—made out of poles, twigs and brush, lined with grass and weeds (Conrotto 49). Every family had at least one granary and well-off Miwok could own multiple units (Conrotto 50).
- “After baking, some ‘Indian potatoes’ were stored for winter use. These were placed in baskets in the home” (Conrotto 71).

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- Only men were allowed to cultivate the tobacco plant (Conrotto 77)
- “Shelled acorn meats were pounded into meal by women who congregated at the bedrock mortars or, less frequently, at movable mortars” (Conrotto 74).
- Men would hunt and fish all year long. Women would make tule mates, baskets, collect feathers, beads, and shells (2)

2.6 Land tenure:

- “The Miwok, not being a farmer, gathered and hunted as a regular pursuit, and in a sense he gathered everything and hunted everything that was edible” (Conrotto 66).
- Each group of Miwok possessed an area of land about five by ten miles called a nena—the Miwokan word for “group” (Conrotto 44). On the patrilineal land of the nenas, men would fish in the winter and spring, and hunt in the summer and fall. Also, during fall acorns were harvested on the nenas (Conrotto 44).
- Each nena was patrilineal, headed by a chief patriarch, and supposedly the ancestral home where a particular lineage began (Conrotto 44). Furthermore, Miwok would call their nena by their ancestral name (Conrotto 44).
- Miwok families would commonly own their own granary for acorns and grass nuts (Conrotto 46). Family houses were made of tule covered with the bark of digger pine trees, yellow pine trees, or Sequoias (Conrotto 9-10).
- “Tobacco was the only plant the Miwok cultivated, but most of the supply came from wild plants...[and] Planting was done in March, usually on a well-watered piece of ground, and always by men” (Conrotto 77).

2.7 Ceramics:

- While the Miwok produced no pottery themselves, they did obtain some from the neighboring Mono tribes (Conrotto 50)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- During celebratory dances—that took place during the beginning of the hunting, fishing, and acorn seasons—the Miwok would share their food with other villagers or members of their nena (Conrotto 90). They would always feed their guests, no matter what time of day (Conrotto 67). The food in nenas was commonly shared, as the men would feed the women and children after returning from hunting expeditions (Conrotto 68-70).
- After a deer was hunted, “The preparation of the deer was done at the chief’s house... The meat was distributed to the homes of the villagers according to the instructions of the chief, who himself received the largest portion of meat” (Conrotto 84).
- The stomach of the deer would be given to the companion of the hunter who killed it (Conrotto 76).
- “The liver [of the deer] was given to some old woman, such as one as had always given the hunter acorn much when she made it” (Conrotto 76).
- “The forelegs and hind legs [of the deer] were given by the hunter to relatives and neighbors” (Conrotto 76).

2.9 Food taboos:

- None

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- Miwok boats were used in lagoons and rivers and was a tube balsa about twenty cylindrical bundles of tule about fifteen feet in length and four feet wide (Conrotto 57)

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

- No measurements given.

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

- No measurements given

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

- Age not available. When a woman had her first menstruation, her diet would be restricted and her chores would be limited (Conrotto 88)

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

- Age not available

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

- Little information given. Mothers having several children was common. Men with multiple wives would also have multiple children with each one.
- “A man of importance” had a family that would usually number around 12, all of whom would live together” (Conrotto 46).

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

- Not available

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

- Age not given

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- No information given

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- Percentages not given. However, polygamy was not uncommon for men (Conrotto 40)

4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:

- In theory the man bought the wife, but in practice a son-in-law would pay for his bride by helping the family for a period of time or providing them with materials such as deer skin (Conrotto 40). Actual haggling for brides was not practiced amongst the Miwok.

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- “The nena group was patrilineal (tracing its membership from father to son) joint family... the nena land was the ancestral home in which the lineage supposedly began... Thus the lineage name is always a place name” (Conrotto 44).
- When a chief died without a male heir, the daughter became a chieftainess and would be succeeded by her son. If a dead chief’s son was only a child, the chief’s wife would act as chieftainess until she could be succeeded by her son when he reached the age of twenty (Conrotto 84).

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

- Aside from providing their children with food, the parents would commonly make toys for their children and play guessing games with them (Conrotto 60).
- “The Miwok raised their infants in cradle boards, and here we have a marked difference in style among the dialect groupings... The Northern Miwok cradle was made of two hooked oaken sticks bound across with slats... The Southern Miwok used a woven cradle made of willow warp” (Conrotto 56).

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

- No information provided

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

- Men were not supposed to marry into their moiety, which was determined by their father's direct offspring (Conrotto 39). A Miwok man could not marry his niece, his first cousin, his daughter in law, his brother's son's wife, his son's wife's sister, his aunt, his father's brother's wife, or any of his father's former wives (Conrotto 39).
 - It is estimated that one in four marriages violated the moiety taboo (Conrotto 39).
 - "The men normally brought their wives to their nena; the women of the nena normally married out of the immediate hamlet" (Conrotto 45).
 - "there was no more or no less [...] incest among the Miwok than there was among other people in other times" (Conrotto 39).
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?
- When a father has a child, that child is considered part of the father's, not the mother's moiety (Conrotto 39). According to the sources, partible paternity is not accepted.
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")
- The Miwok seemed to put more emphasis on the soon-to-be father than the pregnant mother. During his child's birth, the father would remain quietly indoors and not hunt, gamble, or mingle with the people (Conrotto 88).
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?
- No information provided
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape
- No information provided
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)
- The most preferred spouse if from outside of the moiety, however this was not always the case (Conrotto 45).
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?
- No information provided
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring
- No information provided
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?
- No information provided
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females
- No information provided
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades
- "Fathers practiced a form of semi-couvade during the birth of children. They remained quietly indoors and did not hunt, fish, gamble or mingle with people" (Conrotto 88).
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)
- No information provided
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?
- Miwok men did not speak directly to their brothers, and Miwok women did not speak directly to their sisters. The man did not speak to his mother-in-law or her sisters. The woman did not speak to her father-in-law or his brothers. If speech was necessary between these people it was done in the plural sense (Conrotto 40).
- 4.24 Joking relationships?
- Men, women, and children all played games. Joking in particular was not discussed.
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations
- When a chief died without a male heir, the daughter became a chieftainess and would be succeeded by her son. If a dead chief's son was only a child, the chief's wife would act as chieftainess until she could be succeeded by her son when he reached the age of twenty (Conrotto 84).
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules
- It was taboo to marry someone of the same moiety, or someone of the same ancestral lineage connecting back to a single male (Conrotto 39). However, marriages within moieties did occur, and were only met with limited protest (Conrotto 39). It is estimated that one in four marriages were within moieties (Conrotto 39).
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?
- No information available
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?
- "A Miwok infant usually was named by a grandfather or other senior relative, and that name usually referred to one of the totem animals, plants, or other objects in his moiety" (Conrotto 41).
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)
- "In marriage, the ideal, most correct, most natural Miwok union was between certain relatives of the opposite moiety. The only explanation for this can be summed up in one word: tradition" (Conrotto 39).
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?
- No specific information on how marriages are arranged
 - "In marriage, the ideal, most correct, most natural Miwok union was between certain relatives of the opposite moiety. The only explanation for this can be summed up in one word: tradition" (Conrotto 39).
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:
- "a marriage within a moiety evoked protest, but no attempt was made at actual interference" (Conrotto 39).

Warfare/homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

- No information provided
- “When a Miwok went to war, he kicked off his moccasins, slipped on a fur forehead band on a special cap of grass, and took up his bow and arrow and spear” (Conrotto 51).

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

- “[out-group] War was not waged often or with much enthusiasm. Some authorities say most wars ended with the first casualty” (Conrotto 45-46).
- In fact, young men were allowed to go behind enemy lines to collect their spent arrows after a skirmish.
- “Men captured in warfare were usually killed on the spot. There were no captives except, in some instances, women and children” (Conrotto 46).

4.16 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:

- “War was always waged for revenge, never for plunder. Revenge for...stealing a woman. For Killing an intruder. For trespass[ing]. For stealing a hanging deer carcass” (Conrotto 45).
- These wars were usually against out-groups and not internal

4.17 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):

- In the Sierra Nevada, the Miwok were surrounded by similar tribes who they would commonly trade with for staples that they could not obtain in their environment (Conrotto 46).
- Miwok tribes also traded with other Miwok tribes regularly (Conrotto 46)
- Along with other Miwok tribes, the Miwok also traded with neighboring Mono, Yokut, and Washo tribes for pottery and other goods (Conrotto 46)

4.18 Cannibalism?

- No information provided

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

- Between one and two hundred in a typical moiety or nena (Conrotto 45)
- After the gold rush of 1848, the Miwok were herded into villages with larger populations consisting of a mix of nenas and moieties (Conrotto 45).

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- Most Miwok remained surprisingly stationary, obtaining most of their food and water on the land—ten by five miles--of their nenas. Anything they could not obtain on their nenas they traded for with neighboring tribes.
- “Harvesting the nena called for a carefully worked out plan, more or less determined by the seasons...Fishing was good in the rainy winter and spring; hunting prospered in the dry summer and fall...The harvest of acorns—single most important Miwok commodity—came in the fall” (Conrotto 44).

5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):

- “The nena had as its head chief who was, in actual fact, the patriarch of the lineage” (Conrotto 44).
- Villages and nenas were run by or headed by a, “chief who was hereditary and distinctly a civil official” (Conrotto 45).
- “each village [...] had its chief and even sub-chiefs, the latter heading a subsidiary village or acting as speakers and messengers for more important chiefs” (Conrotto 45).
- Eventually, when the Miwok were placed in villages, chiefs remained the primary civil officials (Conrotto 45).
- “The chief made war and peace” (Conrotto 45).
- “While there was a great deal of dignity attached to the chief’s position, his power was limited... Together with the shaman—if one was available—the Chief found the best sites for gathering acorns” (Conrotto 45).

5.4 Post marital residence:

- “The rule was one family to a dwelling, although a newlywed and his or her spouse might live in it for a time” (Conrotto 47).

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

- The Miwok had no active defense, but they did have boundaries. These boundaries were usually marked by the chiefs of local nenas or villages, and commonly bordered the territory of other Miwok tribes (Conrotto 45).

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

- No information provided

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

- No information provided

5.8 Village and house organization:

- When discussing the organization of these early Miwok villages, Conrotto states that, “we must liken the village to a modern city with its own government; the nena to a country containing several ‘cities’; and the Miwok nation to a politically non-aligned, non-united collection of counties—the whole held together by the spittle of blood and tradition” (Conrotto 45).
- “Each group ‘farmed’ an area of perhaps ten miles long and five miles wide known as a nena—the Miwok word for ‘group’...The nena usually followed a stream, as it constituted the people’s potential for making a living...Some parts of the nena were more productive than others and thus were used more” (Conrotto 44).
- In the center of the village was usually a large subterranean structure used for dance ceremonies (Conrotto 47).
- “The rule was one family to a dwelling” (Conrotto 47)

- “The Miwok dwelling was typically a conical bark house, sometimes with an inner layer of pine needles and an outer layer of earth heaped against the lower reaches. These conical houses were from eight to fifteen feet in diameter, and built without framework or center poles. For a door the Miwok used a smaller slab of bark” (Conrotto 46).
- “In the center of the Miwok house was a fireplace and a small pit, the pit becoming an oven with the addition of hot rocks” (Conrotto 46).
- “The roof was layered in a prescribed manner: the first layer was a willow brush laid radially over the horizontal roof timbers...Over this, at right angles, was placed another layer of willow brush...Next came a layer of a thick shrub, followed by a layer of earth, very carefully measured so that it was always four to five inches thick” (Conrotto 47).

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses):

- No specialized houses for men other than the chief and the “well-to-do” Miwok
- Regular housing structures were around 8 to fifteen feet in diameter. “Well-to-do” Miwok had larger houses that were subterranean (Conrotto 46)
- “The heart of the village was a large semi-subterranean assembly and dance house...This cone-shaped ceremonial structure was built over a large pit, forty or fifty feet in diameter and three or four feet deep...Center poles and beams supported the roof” (Conrotto 47).
- “The Miwok sweat house, also a conical earth-covered structure built over a shallow pit, was much smaller than the assembly house...Ten men in a half-erect position could fit into the larger sweat houses” (Conrotto 48).

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- “The people slept on under mats of skins, usually deerskin, which were laid over the pine-needle carpeted dirt floor” (Conrotto 47).
- “The chief slept and sat on a bearskin, and he and the well-to-do members of the village might use a willow bed to keep them off the ground” (Conrotto 47).

5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:

- “The Miwok by some unknown formula divided themselves into balanced halves – totemic moieties – the land people and the water people. The father’s moiety determined that of his children, both male and female” (Conrotto 39).
- “The nena group was patrilineal (tracing its membership from father to son) joint family...[and] was the ancestral home in which the lineage supposedly began” (Conrotto 44).
- Each nena was headed by a chief, who was usually the patriarch of the village (Conrotto 44)
- When a father had a child, that child became part of the father’s—not the mother’s—moiety (Conrotto 39)
- The chief usually had sub-chiefs, who would head a subsidiary village or act as messenger for more important chiefs (Conrotto 45)
- Shamans were also influential in making decisions such as where to hunt or gather (Conrotto 45)
- The “well-to-do” members of a nena were commonly chiefs, sub-chiefs, or “war chiefs,” the latter would lead the warriors into battle (Conrotto 45)

5.12 Trade:

- Almost all Miwok groups traded with their immediate neighbors (Conrotto 46)
- “Miwok country was traversed by trails—usually arrow-straight paths regardless of terrain—not to facilitate the rapid movement of warriors, but to facilitate trade made necessary by the peaceful demands of harvest, hunting and trade” (Conrotto 46).
- “The Northern Miwok supplied the Plains Miwok with finished arrowheads, digger pine nuts, salt and obsidian...In return they received grass seeds and fish from the rich lowland” (Conrotto 46).
- “The Central Miwok traded extensively with the Eastern Mono and the Washo...To these trans-Sierra neighbors [they] gave shell beads, glass beads, acorns, squaw berries, elderberries, manzanita berries, a fungus used in paint, baskets, sea shells, arrows and seoproot leaves used for brushes...The payment to the Central Miwok included such food delicacies as pine nuts, Pandora moth, caterpillars and kutsai (papae of the fly), and utilitarian items such as baskets, red paint, white paint, salt, pumice stone, buffalo robes and rabbit-skin blankets” (Conrotto 46).
- “The Yokuts on the valley floor traded their dogs for Central Miwok blankets and bows and arrows” (Conrotto 46).
- “The Southern Miwok supplied the Eastern Mono with clam disc beads, and in return received rabbit-skin blankets and basketry materials” (Conrotto 46).

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- “The Chief was the top man in the community, not only because of his hereditary prerogatives, but because he usually had more shell money, owned numerous dance costumes, and had other wealth” (Conrotto 83).
- During times of warfare, slaves were not taken because, “the Miwok did not know slavery” (Conrotto 46).
- A “man of importance” having a family of around 12 people would live in a larger house than normal Miwok. This house was a, “large earth-covered semi-subterranean dwelling...[and] was entered by a ladder through the roof” (Conrotto 46).
- The chief and “men of importance” would sleep on bearskins and off of the ground while the regular citizens would sleep on deerskin on the ground (Conrotto 47)
- The more prestigious Miwok would own multiple granaries while the ordinary citizen would only own one (Conrotto 50)
- While most Miwok only ornamented their piercings during ceremonies, wealthy and important Miwok wore their ornamentation all the time (Conrotto 55).

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6 Time allocation to RCR:

- “The Miwok were not a ritual-dominated people. Their daily life or common practices were to assure the well-being of the people and ward off doom were mild and hardly ominous” (Conrotto 87).

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- The Shaman would work with the local chief to decide the best place to harvest acorns (Conrotto 45)
- Overall, the work of the shaman was “non-ceremonial” (Conrotto 91).
- “The Miwok shamans had in their kits a great many songs to combat the various human afflictions... They also practiced a ritualistic form of sucking out evil or causes of evil from their patients... all but the very young knew the doctors cleverly secreted the evil-causing object in his mouth before he pretended to suck it from an aching head or sore shoulder or a cramping stomach” (Conrotto 78).
- “Some illnesses required set ceremonials and dances... [and] Scarification was still another means of making a sick person well” (Conrotto 78).
- “Nearly all of these methods [...] were practiced in conjunction with the taking of herb medicines” (Conrotto 78-79).

6.2 Stimulants:

- No information provided

6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):

- When a new chief was named, “His ‘coronation’ came with the building of a new ceremonial house [--built by the villagers--] and the renewal of village ceremonial... [and] The summons to the celebration was taken round to the neighboring villages by a messenger carrying a cord with four knots—the significance being that in four days the fiesta begins” (Conrotto 85).
- “The maiden, at her first menstruation, was confined, her diet restricted, and her chores limited” (Conrotto 88).
- “Before eating certain foods, especially the first of the season, the Miwok performed ceremonies of ritualistic pressing, blowing and sucking of the prospective eaters” (Conrotto 88).
- Fathers would practice a form of semi-couvade during the birth of their children, remaining “quietly indoors and did not hunt, fish, gamble or mingle with the people” (Conrotto 88).
- After deaths, “The bereaved partner was confined for two months, during which time only vegetable food was eaten. He was allowed out of the house only at night” (Conrotto 93).
- “The fire tender led the wailing for the deceased – sometimes even before the actual death... When the addresses were concluded, the body was burned on a five-foot high pyre” (Conrotto 92).
- “The Miwok held a mourning ceremony about a year after a death. This was called a Yame, or ‘cry’, and lasted four days” (Conrotto 93).

6.4 Other rituals:

- “All Miwok sacred dances were impersonations of supernatural beings, and while anthropologists have recorded every detail of these dances, practically nothing is known of the beings central to the ritual” (Conrotto 90).
- Strangely, the Miwok promoted having special hatreds for each other, and they had a ceremony called the pota which allowed him to take the edge off his hatreds without causing physical damage to the parties involved. The man giving the pota would invite a great many people to the ceremony—including the person or persons or their relatives for whom he had a special hate, although not even they knew they were the ‘guests of honor’” (Conrotto 42).

6.5 Myths (Creation):

- “The Central California Indian’s concept of the origin of the world... [is that] a primeval ocean preceded the true creation. Their creator had a brother who helped with the work, but he tended to be a bungler, hence this imperfect world and the co-existence of evil with good” (Conrotto 89).
- “Coyote, a marplot, later took the place of the creator’s brother in Miwok mythology... [and] It was sticks of clay in Coyote’s house that became men and women” (Conrotto 89).

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- The Miwok had many games; such as basketball, dice games, football, gambling, guessing games, hand games, hide-and-go-seek, Shinney, spear throwing, archery, and stick games. Children would play hide-and-go-seek, follow-the-leader, tag, and hand games (Conrotto 59)
- “The Indian’s guessing games and dice games were rarely no-stake affairs... [and] The contestants agreed on the amount of the bet and the means of determining a winner, and off they went—sometimes for days” (Conrotto 58).
- “The stick game [...] in which one man would hold forty-four small sticks in his left hand and then, without warning, grab hold of a number of them in his right, which then quickly went behind his back. The opponent would guess one, two, three or four. The sticks were counted in fours, and if the remainder was the number guessed, the guesser received the sticks” (Conrotto 59).
- “The chief work of children is play, and the Miwok child was no exception. He had toys—tops, buzzers, musical strings—made of acorns... The more active [game] included [...] hide-and-go-seek, except instead of one seeker and many hiders, the Miwok employed many seekers and one hider” (Conrotto 62).
- “Miwok adults played field games, and competed in archery and spear-throwing contests” (Conrotto 62).
- “Southern Miwok men played shinney with wooden sticks and an oak ball about the size of a billiard ball... The object of the game was to hit the ball through the goal” (Conrotto 62).
- “Many other games were played, including one in which darts were tossed through moving hoops” (Conrotto 64)
- “In nearly all the games heavy wagering took place, both by the participants and the spectators. There were no umpires or referees as such. The Miwok audience ruled on close decisions” (Conrotto 65).

- “The Kuksuyu was the most sacred and elaborate of the Miwok ceremonies... There was danger to performer and audience in a misstep. The Kuksuyu dancer, one of three characters in the ceremony, wore a raven feather-covered cloak which concealed his entire body. A hawk-wing headdress completed what had to be the most spectacular Miwok physical creation” (Conrotto 90).
- “There are only two other Miwok dances, besides the Kuksuyu, in which the performers wore masks or hoods. “These were the Helekasi and Sulesko, in which the dancers completely enveloped their heads in deerskin hoods... [and] Paint and feathers were used in other dances to conceal the identity of the performer” (Conrotto 90).
- “In the summer an assembly house made of brush would be built for ceremonials, especially a mourning anniversary” (Conrotto 48).

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- When birthing children, the previously discussed rituals for men and women were different
- “The stick game was strictly for males” (Conrotto 59).
- “Women’s shinney was similar to the men’s game, except the stick was pointed rather than curved or clubbed on the end; and instead of a ball, a two-foot diameter rope was used” (Conrotto 62).
- “Women and girls also played basketball—that is, they used a very small buckskin ball which they moved in handled baskets resembling seed beaters... [the ball] had to be carried in the baskets or thrown forward from a basket—toward the goal” (Conrotto 64).
- “The women also competed in sakumship in which two players, standing fifty feet apart, played “catch” with a four-inch buckskin ball thrown [and caught] with [...] buckets... Score was kept off the number of misses or bad throws” (Conrotto 64).
- “Men or boys played ‘football’ on a field about fifty yards long, with a single goal post at one end only.” During this game, two teams of up to twenty-five men would be lined up on both sides of the field towards the goal. “Only feet could be used to move the ball, and the first side to kick its ball through the goal was winner” (Conrotto 64).

6.8 Missionary effect:

- “True village life did not come about for the Miwoks until pressure from the white invaders forced neenas to be abandoned, and the refugees gathered with people of many other neenas in the more remote, less disturbed areas” (Conrotto 45).
- Aside from being forced to work digging for gold following the Gold Rush of 1848, the Miwok were assimilated so quickly into Western culture that they had no time to be significantly affected by the missionary effect.

6.9 RCR revival:

- The modern-day Miwok still celebrate some events such as Acorn Harvest Day in September (Conrotto 105).
- Acorn Harvest Day is a time when, “Indians throughout the state will be outfitted in the colorful dress of their forefathers” (Conrotto 105).

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- The Miwok believed that, “This life is all that counts... It is not a preparation for another life, although the possibility of an after-life is not dismissed” (Conrotto 89).

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- No mention of name taboo in particular
- “Four days after the cremation, the dead man’s personal property and house were burned” (Conrotto 92).

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

- No

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

- To the Miwok, four was a sacred number. This was something they had borrowed from the Sacramento Valley area where the Kuksu religion flourished (Conrotto 90)
- Four principle Miwok beliefs: (1) life is very dangerous; (2) nature is more powerful than man and “any attempt to master nature is futile... The thing to do in order to get along with nature is to behave properly and perform the proper rituals; (3) Human nature is neither good nor evil and “both qualities are blended in the whole person... [and] one cannot separate the person’s mind from his body; (4) “This life is all that counts” (Conrotto 88-89).

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

- “The Miwok rarely painted his body except for ceremonials... Three colors were used: black (charcoal), white (chalk), and red (mineral pigment)” (Conrotto 55).

7.2 Piercings:

- “Both men and women wore earring and earplugs” (Conrotto 55)
- Men preferred earplugs and women preferred earrings, and both sexes only wore ornamentation during ceremonies, “unless the person was wealthy or important or both” (Conrotto 55).
- “All Miwok children had their ears and nasal septum pierced, and the openings made progressively larger with grass stems” (Conrotto 55).

7.3 Haircut:

- “The hair was worn long and only cut and hidden, buried or burned with the corpse of a near relative as a sign of mourning. It was considered dangerous to have one’s hair fall into the hands of a shaman who harbored evil intent” (Conrotto 54).
- “From the seaproot the Miwok made an all-purpose brush for the hair and to scrub cooking baskets” (Conrotto 51).

7.4 Scarification:

- “Miwok men and women practiced tattooing... The usual decoration extended from the lower lip to the naval” (Conrotto 55).

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

- “The Miwok used beads and shells in necklaces, belts, bandoliers and shell ropes. They made few of these articles, mostly obtaining them in trade” (Conrotto 57).
- “By baking the shells the Miwok obtained the color he wanted: white. The natural lustrous grays and browns had no appeal to the mountain Indians” (Conrotto 57).
- “The Miwok commonly wore flowers in his hair—especially showy flowers” (Conrotto 54).

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- Miwok ornamented their piercings during ceremonies
- “Dances and ceremonies – or in death when ornamentation was placed on the corpse – were the times for bead wearing” (Conrotto 57).

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- Women tended to prefer their ears and septum to be pierced and men preferred to have earplugs (Conrotto 55).

7.8 Missionary effect:

- There are pictures of Miwok—who were forced into labor—during the California Gold Rush of 1848 in which they are wearing western clothes. However, these Miwok may have been completely assimilated into Western culture (Conrotto 19).

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

- The Miwok, during modern day celebrations, will buy and sell, “homemade leather and bead belts, necklaces and bracelets” (Conrotto 105).

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

- “the Miwok by some unknown formula divided themselves into balanced halves – totemic moieties – the land people and the water people. The father’s moiety determined that of his children, both male and female” (Conrotto 39).

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

- No information provided

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

- No information provided

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- “The Miwok’s idea of a well-shaped head was one that was flat in the back, brought about by a proper upbringing on a hard cradle; a short and flat forehead, which the mother molded by pressing and rubbing the infant’s head from center to sides...In addition, the nose was flattened by pressing, and the eyebrows rubbed apart” (Conrotto 55).

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