

## 1. Description

### 1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

-Maiduan Maidu, Northeast. **Maidu** (also **Northeastern Maidu**, **Mountain Maidu**) is a severely endangered Maiduan language spoken by Maidu people.

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

- ISO 639-3:NMU

### 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- Traditionally in the mountains east and south of Lassen Peak in the American River and Feather River river drainages. These river regions include such valleys in the Northern Sierra Madre Mountains of California as Indian Valley, American Valley, Butte Valley, and Big Meadows. Maidu may also refer to the related Konkow and Niemen languages.

### 1.4 Brief history:

-The pre-contact Maidu peoples lived in a hunting and gathering society in parts of central California. These peoples lived in an area around what are now called Mount Lassen, Honey Lake, Sacramento, and Lake Tahoe. They spoke closely related languages, including the living Maidu, Konkow and Nisenan languages, along with the Chico language and other extinct variations.

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

-As of 2007, only one or two native speakers remained alive. The speakers belong to the Berry Creek Rancheria of Maidu Indians. As of 2004, active revitalization efforts were underway. As of 2011, classes in Maidu are available in Nevada County, California

### 1.6 Ecology:

- Being the only large scale area of land upon which Maidu traditional ecology can genuinely, be implemented. Being the only lands wherein all people can learn about the Maidu way of life as expressed by the Maidu.

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

-Ethnic Population 110 (2000 census)

## 2. Economy

### 2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

-Acorns, the nut of the oak tree, has been a staple of California Indian diet for more than 4,000 years, and for many groups, the most important plant food. Native Californians harvested 10 or more species of acorns, with the tanbark oak, black oak, blue oak, and valley oak being preferred species. Acorns are extremely nutritious, containing up to 18 percent fat, 6 percent protein, and 68 percent carbohydrate as well as vitamins A and C and many amino acids.

### 2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- California's abundant natural food resources provided ready access to a high protein diet of fish, acorns, small game, berries, insects, edible plants and roots, making it easy to sustain a subsistence economy in which starvation was virtually unknown

### 2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns:

-They used weapons of all kind.

### 2.4 Food storage:

-They used storage baskets that they weaved.

### 2.5 Sexual division of production:

-There was no division of production, men hunted woman gathered.

### 2.6 Land tenure:

-Some Maidu descendants are members of the small Susanville and Greenville Rancherias, but most live away from tribal land in scattered locations in Plumas and Lassen County.

### 2.7 Ceramics:

- They used pottery and ceramics because of the hot weather.

### 2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

-N/A

### 2.9 Food taboos:

-They had no food taboos.

### 2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

-The valley Maidu navigated on tule balsas, log rafts, or flat, square-ended dugout canoes. The use of all three types by one people is remarkable. It is perhaps to be ascribed to the fact that the employment of boats was only sporadic, in the crossing of streams or hunting of birds. In the foothills, streams are too rapid to be navigable. In the high valleys of the northern Sierra a canoe was occasionally servicable. It was made of a fallen pine or cedar burned to suitable length, and hollowed with ignition pitch, which was checked with handfuls of damp earth. This dugout was rough and blunt ended. It was either poled or paddled.

## 3. Anthropometry

### 3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

-Height is fairly tall 5ft 10in- 6ft

### 3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

-Underweight.

#### 4. Life History, mating, marriage

##### 4.1 Age at menarche (f):

- the onset of menarche is a culmination of the transitional stage in a girl's development. It is a single event in the total process of linking the zone of immaturity of childhood with the maturity of adulthood.

##### 4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

- In the hills women were said to have received new names, or at least new designations in the family, during adolescence, after birth of first child, and as old age began to be reached.

##### 4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

- Small family size.

##### 4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

-N/A

##### 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

-They were married at a young age

##### 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- Divorce was merely a matter of the wish of either party. A man could return to his wife and claim his purchase price if she were unfaithful or otherwise definitely objectionable.

##### 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

-Polygynous is known in most marriages, and most tribes.

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

All marriages were known to be set up in some way through the parents or through any kin.

##### 4.9 Inheritance patterns:

-The only type of inheritance patterns that are noted genetic inheritance patterns, which is in most societies.

##### 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

-Some conflict was known but it was mostly through other tribes.

##### 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

-Homosexuality very common.

##### 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

-There is no trace of any system of social or political classification other than the village communities, nor of any fictitious or exogamic kinship groups

##### 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?

- As the moons waned and came again, little children grew around them as plentiful as the grains of sand near the great water; and one day, long, long after, Pe-uch-ano and Um-wa-na-ta having grown very old, gathered their children and grand children around them, and told them that the black spirit of death was coming for them fast, but that before they went with him they wanted to sleep in their old Wel-lu-da, where they had first seen the wild flowers blooming and heard the glad songs of the birds singing among the pines.

##### 4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., "receptacle in which fetus grows")

-The mother believes she gets the child from the male.

##### 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?

-They children came from the sky and the ground.

##### 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

-N/A

##### 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin)

- They prefer out side of the tribe.

##### 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

Yes

##### 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

-None

##### 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

-The most recent kin or the father.

##### 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females

-There are more males than there are females.

##### 4.22 Evidence for couvades

N/A

##### 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older)

\_they wanted to marry mostly older.

##### 4.24 Joking relationships?

-N/A

##### 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations

-Among all the Maidu, kinship alone is said to have been a bar to marriage. The man was free to wed in his own village or another village. Since his home settlement, however, consisted largely of kinsman, he more commonly went elsewhere for his wife. In normal cases the permanent home of a couple was in the man's village, but a first residence with the bride's parents was the rule everywhere. This was clearly to render services as whole or partial purchase payment, and not a reminiscence of any principle of exogamy

##### 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

-Most of our marriages had to be outside the Tribe. There were not enough tribal members left to marry and reproduce safely. But never the less, there were still marriages between the various factions of our tribe and other local Maidu Tribes.

4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?

-only when you get married.

4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?)

4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?

- Marriages had to be outside the Tribe. There were not enough tribal members left to marry and reproduce safely. But never the less, there were still marriages between the various factions of our tribe and other local Maidu Tribes.

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

-Mostly outside the tribe

### **Warfare/homicide**

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

-When gold was discovered in 1840's there was an increase in war-like situations, traditional food sources stated to run out and conflicts broke out between the euro-Americans and the native population.

4.15 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

- Out group was caused mostly by violent death due to many types of people moving to America at the time, and the governments attempt to end conflicts between the Maidu Indians and they euro-Americans by creating.

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

-Causes are mostly territorial and loss of traditional food sources.

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

-The shaman was an important figure in the Maidu and Konkow society. Since there was no complete political organization, the shaman, with his mysterious powers and spiritual communication provided a sense of unity among the village community. He functioned in the festivals, Kuku Cult, ceremonies and dances, political relations with other tribes, and served as medical doctor, capable of healing the sick or causing sickness to fall upon an individual or entire village.

4.18 Cannibalism?

-Cannibalism was known but it was not common.

### **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction**

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

- Differences recognized by the people themselves stem from language and locational considerations. All people have an ability to see themselves as the center of the universe and different from their neighbors. To an outsider, however, the differences are difficult to perceive when the life style and cultural inventory are essentially the same

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- Their territory may be described as consisting of the drainage of the Feather and American Rivers; or differently stated, the region from the Sacramento River east to the crest of the Sierra Nevada

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

- The chief is said to have been chosen for his wealth and popularity, irrespective of descent. He could be disposed of whenever he became unsatisfactory to the majority (Mountain Maidu). Their chief was hereditary. Evidences of descent as succession in office and inheritance of property rights afford invariably point to the Maidu counting in the male line

5.4 Post marital residence:

- Among all the Maidu, kinship alone is said to have been a bar to marriage. The man was free to wed in his own village or another village. Since his home settlement, however, consisted largely of kinsman, he more commonly went elsewhere for his wife. In normal cases the permanent home of a couple was in the man's village, but a first residence with the bride's parents was the rule everywhere. This was clearly to render services as whole or partial purchase payment, and not a reminiscence of any principle of exogamy

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

- Their territory may be described as consisting of the drainage of the Feather and American Rivers; or differently stated, the region from the Sacramento River east to the crest of the Sierra Nevada

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

-A group owning a certain territory in common, knowing themselves as a group, acting largely as a unit, but actually residing in several settlements (p396). The area claimed by each village community was very definitely known and sometimes marked. It is stated that four communities in eastern Butte County between Oroville and Mooretown once met to agree on the precise limits of their lands and on certain devices by which these should be marked. There is no trace of any system of social or political classification other than the village communities, nor of any fictitious or exogamic kinship groups

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

5.8 Village and house organization:

-Maidu housing, especially higher in the hills and the mountains, was largely semi-underground. These houses were sizable, circular structures twelve to 18 feet in diameter, whose floors were as much as three feet below ground level. Once the floor of the house was dug, a pole framework was built, then a covering of pine bark slabs upon which a heavy layer of earth was placed along the base of the structure. With a central fire in the house at ground level, a stone lined pit and bedrock mortar to process foods, meals were always ready to feed the family. For summer dwelling, a different structure was built from cut branches tied together and fastened to sapling posts, then covered with brush and dirt. The summer shelters were built with the principal opening facing east to catch the rising sun, and to escape the heat of the afternoon.

### 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

-The separate villages were self sufficient and not under any strict political control by the community headman

### 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

-They slept on the ground.

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

-There was the same Maidu but there was different regions, northeast, northwest, valley.

### 5.12 Trade:

-Was majority of base that is used for cooking, eating bowls, water containers, parching, and shift trays. Maidu cooking bowls are usually found with circular wear patterns. The result of stirring the headed cooking stones

### 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

-The men in general were leader in most tribes but they had one main man that they looked up too, it was normally a the man who brought back the most food and protected the tribe the most.

## 6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

### 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- The shaman was an important figure in the Maidu society. Since there was no complete political organization, the shaman, with his mysterious powers and spiritual communication provided a sense of unity among the village community. He functioned in the festivals, Kuksu Cult, ceremonies and dances, political relations with other tribes, and served as medical doctor, capable of healing the sick or causing sickness to fall upon an individual or entire village.

### 6.2 Stimulants:

-N/a

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

### 6.4 Other rituals:

- Since there was no complete political organization, the shaman, with his mysterious powers and spiritual communication provided a sense of unity among the village community.

### 6.5 Myths (Creation):

-Maidu myths tell of a kindly creator god. The Kuksu Society, through which the Maidu men worshiped spirits, held initiation dances with masked participants in elaborate feather costumes.

### 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

-Paint and basket weaving.

### 6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

### 6.8 Missionary effect:

-

### 6.9 RCR revival:

### 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

-Suffering and hunger were all over the land, and the old men, the young men, the women and the maidens cried in their anguish for the black spirit of death to come to their relief

### 6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- They believe in life after death but as taboos of naming people, they kept their same name from when they were alive.

### 6.12 Is there teknonymy?

-N/A

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

- The primary religious tradition of the Maidu revolved around the Kuksu cult, which was a central California religious cult system based on a male secret society and characterized by the Kuksu or "big head" dances. Besides the Maidu, this cult system was also followed by the Pomo and the Patwin among the Wintun.

## 7. Adornment

### 7.1 Body paint:

-They were known for having body paint all over their faces.

### 7.2 Piercings:

-They had excessive amounts of piercings, ear pendants or plugs inserted in holes

### 7.3 Haircut:

-Women and men both had long hair with hairdressings

### 7.4 Scarification:

-None was known

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

- They had excessive amounts of beads and feathers, also they had big hair dresses.

### 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

-The Maidu Death Ritual consisted of burning the bodies of the dead along with their brush houses and belongings. On the anniversaries of the deaths, the mourners exchanged shell money and burned exquisite baskets.

### 7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

-N/A

### 7.8 Missionaries

-Popular with Christians missions and organizations and Christian churches.

## **8. Kinship systems**

8.1 Sibling classification system:

-The oldest had more duties

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

N/A

## **9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):**

### **Numbered references**

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