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REPORTS

On the Ethnolinguistic Identity of the Napa Tribe: The Implications of Chief Constancio *Occaye*'s Narratives as Recorded by Lorenzo G. Yates

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About 1876, Lorenzo G. Yates interviewed Constancio Occaye, described as the last “Chief of the Napas,” and recorded several items of folklore from his tribe. Yates included Constancio’s recollections about the use of charmstones in his classic article on that subject, but he does not appear to have ever published Constancio’s account of Napa oral traditions regarding the Land of the Dead, creation, and the acquisition of fire. Anthropologists, although not without some uncertainty, have long considered the Napa tribe to have been of Southern Patwin affiliation. The narratives themselves, and the native words recorded parenthetically by Yates, appear to be mostly of Coast Miwok derivation, which suggests that a reconsideration of Napa ethnolinguistic identity is in order.

Every now and then, documents come to light that provide new information about California’s native peoples and yet have somehow escaped the attention of interested scholars, even though they may have resided for many decades in public archives. Included among the papers of Lorenzo G. Yates at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Anthropological Archives and at the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley are manuscripts that include versions of several San Francisco Bay Area myths that appear not to have been published previously (Yates n.d., 1888). Yates used only the last section—pertaining to charmstones—in a published article that he wrote on that topic, in which he summarized original information that he had sent to the Bureau of American Ethnology. These bits

of folklore, preserved by Yates, represent some of the only known traditions of the Napa tribe, and are thus highly significant for anthropologists interested in comparative oral literature in Native California. Furthermore, the native words in these myths suggest that a reappraisal of the ethnolinguistic identity of the Napa people may be in order.

BACKGROUND

Lorenzo Gordin Yates (1837–1909) was an English immigrant who came to the United States as a teenager. He became a dentist by profession, but had a lifelong passion for natural history. Yates moved his family from Wisconsin to California in 1864 and settled in Centreville in Alameda County, which later became a district of Fremont. Following a research trip to Santa Rosa Island with Stephen Bowers in 1876, Yates moved to Santa Barbara to pursue his natural history interests in the area (Benson 1997:15, 41–43). Before his death in 1909, Yates published a number of articles pertaining to California marine mollusks, paleontology, and archaeology (Camp 1963a, 1963b; Coan and Scott 1990).

While still living in Centreville, Yates became acquainted with an elderly Native Californian named Constancio, whom he describes as being “Chief of the Napas.” This man is likely the same individual with a wry sense of humor who was mentioned by Steven Powers in 1874:

An old chief in Napa Valley was once peppered with questions about the origins of things by some Americans who appear to think the aborigines knew more touching earthquakes, floods, volcanoes, and various telluric phenomena than our own scientists. Turning, he pointed to the mountains, and asked, “You see those mountains?” He was informed that they saw them. “Well, I’m not so old as they.” Then he pointed to the foot-hills and asked, “You see those foot-hills?” Again he was informed that they saw them. “Well,” he added with simple gravity, “I’m older than they” [Powers 1874:546–549].

Constancio can be readily identified in the mission register databases compiled by Randall Milliken (2005) and the Huntington Library’s Early California Population Project (2006). His native name was *Occaye*, and he was

baptized, when he was an estimated seven years old, on December 1, 1814 at Mission San José (SJO-B2747). Constancio's father, *Lamna*, and mother, *Mutmut*, were baptized the following month and given the Spanish names Constancio and Constancia (SJO-B2737, B2798). All were said to be from the ranchería of *Napian* (Napa). Some 221 Napa tribal people were baptized at missions San José and San Francisco Asis—as part of the process of incorporating tribes in the Napa and Suisun areas into the mission system—between 1810–1822 (Milliken 1978, 1995:248; 2007). In 1841, Constancio *Occaye* married Bernarda, a woman born at Mission San José in 1821 (SJO-M2457; SJO-B4466). Bernarda's parents had been baptized from the Tolenas, whose territory bordered that of the Napa tribe (SJO-B3160, B3161). Anthropologists have long assumed that the Southern Patwin language prevailed in the territory occupied by the Napas and the Tolenas (Barrett 1908a; Bennyhoff 1977:164; Johnson 1978; Kroeber 1925, 1932; Milliken 1995, 2007; Powers 1874).

THE QUESTION OF NAPA ETHNOLINGUISTIC IDENTITY

The Napa Indians (Fig. 1) have been considered to be of Southern Patwin affiliation ever since Gibbs (1853) and Taylor (1860) made claims to this effect, and an 1874 article by Powers further established this identity in the anthropological literature:

Antonio, Chief of the Chemposels [a Hill Patwin tribe on Cache Creek]—a very intelligent and well-traveled Indian—gave me the following geographical statement, which I found correct, so far as I went: In Long, Bear, and Cortina valleys, all along the Sacramento, from Jacinto to Suisun inclusive, on Cache and Puta creeks, and in Napa Valley, the same language is spoken, which any Indian of this nation can understand throughout. Strangely, too, the Patween language laps over the Sacramento, reaching in a very narrow belt along the east side, from a point a few miles below the mouth of Stony Creek, down nearly to the mouth of Feather River. In the head of Napa Valley, from Calistoga Hot Springs to the Geysers, inclusive, are the Ashochemies (Wappos), a separate tribe; and in Pope and Coyote Valleys was spoken still another language [Powers 1874:542].

C. Hart Merriam also collected data to suggest that speakers of a Patwin language resided in the lower Napa Valley:

I met today (July 11, 1906) an old Indian man born at Napa but who spent the greater part of his life at Sonoma and who speaks both Win [Hill Patwin] and Pooewin [Southern Patwin]. He is living in a little shack by himself on the O'Brien ranch in the hills between Sonoma and Petaluma valleys and about four miles west from Sonoma. His name is Jim.

He told me that the Pooewin did not reach west to Petaluma Creek but stopped at Sonoma. Sonoma was the northwest corner of their domain. Thence easterly they occupied the north side of the Bay region to Sacramento River, which they followed up on the west side to Knights Landing. The northern boundary of their territory ran from Sonoma to Tuluka (Napa?) and Ol-ulata (taking in Suscol and Sooesoon [Suisun]) and thence to Vacaville...and Winters and thence to Woodland and on to Knights Landing on Sacramento River. To the north of the Pooewin in Sonoma Valley were the Kanimar'es; in Napa Valley, Capay Valley, and in the hills west of Sacramento Valley (west of the River) were the Win, which he calls Wi'-kam (after an old chief) and also Nan'-noo-ta'-we. The Poo'e-win name for the Win tribe is Too-loos-too-e....

Nap-pah and Too-loo'-kah [Tuluka] were names of rancherías near together in the Napa Valley. Too-loo'-kah was a short distance southeast of Napa [Merriam 1967:271].

Another "Poo'e-win" consultant, a Sonoma Indian named Phillip, gave Merriam a similar description of Southern Patwin territory and likewise differentiated the Napa people from the "Poo'e-win," stating that they spoke the "Too-loos'-too-e" language extending from Suscol up to Napa. Merriam commented that the "Too-loos'-too-e, I am told by another informant [the above-mentioned Jim] were Win" (Merriam 1967:270). Despite the fact that his consultants had both claimed that the Napa people spoke Hill Patwin, Merriam differentiated the "Nap'pah" tribe from both the "Poo-e-win" (Southern Patwin) and the "Win" (Hill Patwin) divisions on his map of the "Distribution of tribes of the Wintoon Stock" (Merriam 1966:76). He recorded his own doubts about whether the original inhabitants of the area were speakers of a Patwin language, stating, "Is it not possible that the Too-loos'-too-e or Win or Too'-loo'-kah ranchería just east of Napa River was brought there by Spaniards?" (Merriam 1967:270).

In his classic study of the ethnogeography of tribal peoples in north-central California, Samuel Barrett summarized information he had obtained from his native consultants and from earlier sources:

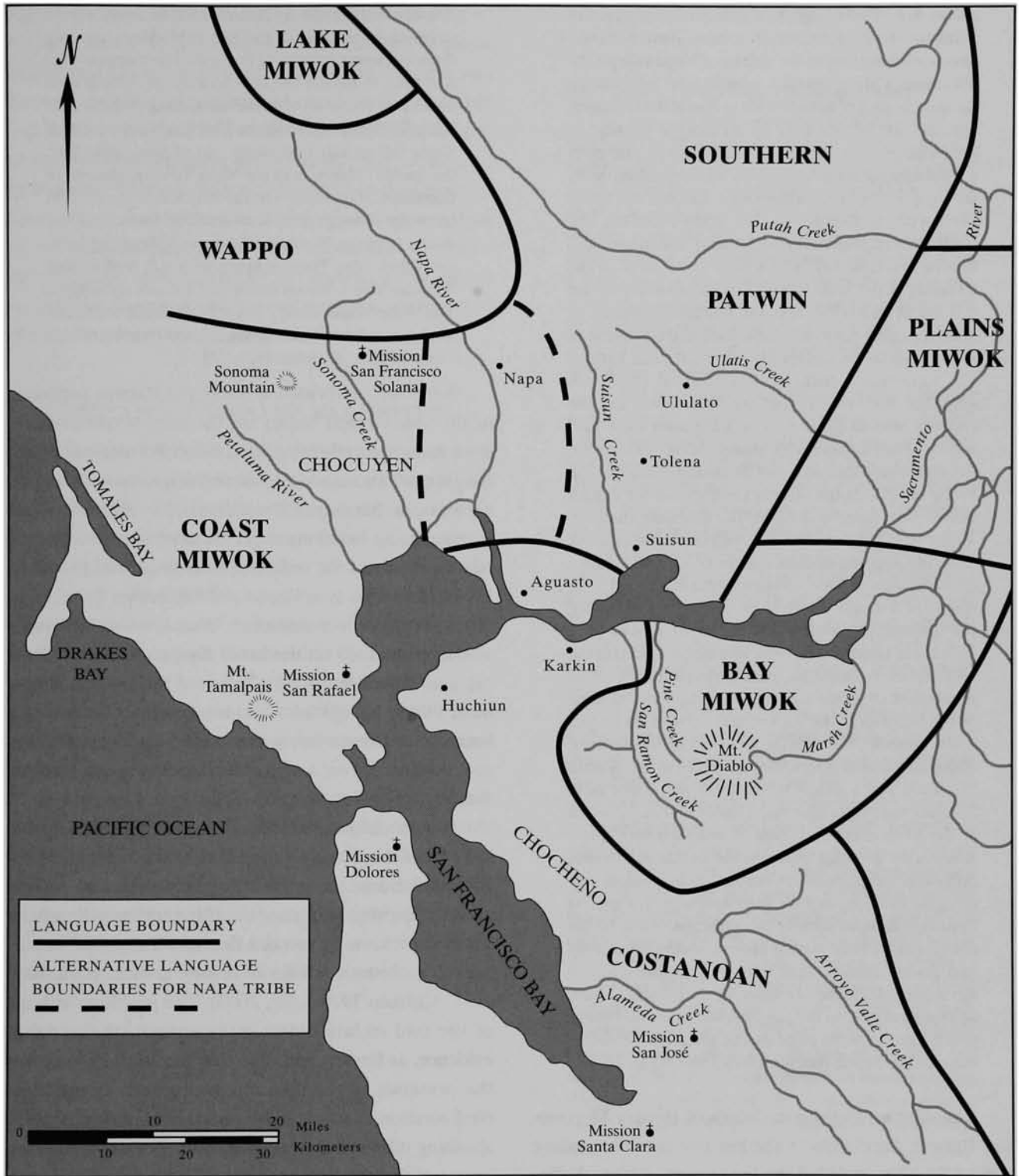


Figure 1. Tribes of the Napa Vicinity and Ethnolinguistic Group Distributions in the San Francisco Bay Region (based on Bennyhoff 1977, with some revisions from Milliken 1995).

There are conflicting statements concerning the Wintun-Moquelumnan [Patwin-Coast Miwok] interstock boundary in the vicinity of Napa valley. One informant, a Moquelumnan woman, who lived during the greater part of her early life at San Rafael Mission, says that the Wintun held the territory as far west as the range of low hills west of Sonoma creek, and gives a vocabulary of the language of a former husband who, she says, was born at a village near Sonoma and taken when a boy to Dolores mission at San Francisco. The vocabulary is clearly Wintun [Patwin]. The informant's knowledge, however, is of a time subsequent to the founding of the Sonoma and San Rafael missions and it is not at all unlikely that the Wintun occupation of Sonoma valley dates only as far back as the bringing of the Indians to the missions by the Franciscan Fathers. The statement is made by Gibbs (op. cit. [1853], III, 421) that "the lower part of the Napa valley, and the country around the straits of Karquines were said to have been occupied by another tribe" than in the Sonoma valley, indicates that he obtained information to the effect that the Wintun territory did not extend farther west than Napa valley. The statement made by Taylor (Cal. Farmer, Mar. 30, 1860), on the other hand, that "the Sonoma or Sonomis spoke a similar dialect as the Suisuns or Soo-i-soo-nes, would indicate that the region of Sonoma was held by the Wintun. However, the information upon which the statements of both Gibbs and Taylor are based is, like that obtained in the present case from the Moquelumnan informant above mentioned, of a time subsequent to the establishment of the Missions in this region, and is therefore subject to the same doubt. While the Moquelumnan informant above mentioned places Sonoma valley in the Wintun territory, some other informants place not only Sonoma valley but also Napa valley within the limits of the Moquelumnan [Coast Miwok] territory. *It is a noteworthy fact that although the Indian informants differ as to the language spoken in these two valleys, they all agree in saying that the same language was spoken in both* [emphasis added]. Nevertheless, owing to the disagreement both among present Indian informants and among early writers upon this region, it seems advisable to leave the boundary, for the present at least, as located above, on the ridge between the two valleys, which location is the same as that given on the earlier maps of this region [Barrett 1908a:286–287, fn. 357].

Consistent with the conclusions of Powers, Merriam, and Barrett, the doubts of the last two notwithstanding; Alfred Kroeber included the lower part of Napa Valley within southern Wintun (i.e., Patwin) territory in his *Handbook of California Indians*. After describing the geographic distribution of Wintun peoples down the Sacramento River and in the adjacent foothills on its western side, Kroeber stated:

We are now close to San Francisco Bay, whose upper divisions, Suisun and San Pablo Bays, are only drowned lower reaches of the united Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers. The flow, so to speak, here is west instead of south; so that the western or Wintun side becomes the northern shore. This the Wintun held all along Suisun Bay and along part of San Pablo Bay; the Suisun "Valley," and the Napa Valley to the end of tidewater, being theirs. On the map this is the farthest territory downstream accredited to them, and the divide between Napa and Sonoma Valleys has been set as their limit. There is, however, much doubt about Sonoma Valley, whose native inhabitants are extinct. The Wappo held its very head; but its bulk, according to some accounts, was Wintun; according to others, Coast Miwok [Kroeber 1925:353].

Kroeber reaffirmed a Southern Patwin presence in the lower Napa Valley on the map accompanying his subsequent study entitled "The Patwin and Their Neighbors." The ethnographic and linguistic information regarding the Southern Patwin, cited by Kroeber, was rather meager, being based upon (1) the brief reminiscences of Isidora Filomena, the widow of the Suisun chief Francisco Solano *Sem-Yeto* (see Beebe and Senkewicz 2006:3–15); (2) a newspaper account of an interview with a woman who lived at Yolo on the lower Sacramento River; and (3) a short Suisun word list collected by J. Alden Mason from Platón Vallejo, who had learned something of the language as a boy, when Solano and his people were allies and workers for his father, Mariano Vallejo, at Rancho Petaluma (Kroeber 1932:352–355).

In her chapter on the Patwin in the *California* volume of the *Handbook of California Indians* (1978), Patti J. Johnson accepted the conclusions of earlier anthropologists in assigning the Napa region to Southern Patwin speakers. So too did Bennyhoff and Milliken in their ethnohistoric studies of nearby groups (Bennyhoff 1977; Milliken 1978, 1995, 2007). The problem with all of the mid to late nineteenth-century ethnographic evidence, as Barrett had observed (see above), was that the presence of the missions had greatly altered the configuration of tribes in the region, and moved peoples speaking different languages into territories where they were not the original inhabitants. For example, far more individuals from the Napa tribe were baptized at Mission San José in 1814–1815 than the numbers who went to Mission San Francisco (Dolores), and the relocation of the population to both missions brought them into territories occupied by Costanoan (Ohlone) speakers

(Milliken 1978; 1995:248; 2007). The establishment of Mission San Francisco Solano adjacent to the Napa Valley in 1823 brought Southern Patwin, Wappo, and Pomoan peoples to areas where Coast Miwok previously had been spoken, and it is well known that Chief Solano of the Southern Patwin-speaking Suisun settled his tribe at Mariano Vallejo's Rancho Petaluma in post-mission times (Beebe and Senkewicz 2006:6–9). An appreciation of the cultural disruptions and relocations of native groups in the region provides the context within which to examine the ethnographic and linguistic information obtained by Yates from Constancio Occaye.

CONSTANCIO OCCAYE'S NARRATIVES

The first three Napa narratives that Yates summarized from Constancio Occaye pertained to a journey to the Land of the Dead, the making of people, and the creation of the world. Constancio then provided a myth about obtaining fire that came from the "Esteros," referring apparently to Coast Miwok speakers who lived along Tamales Bay or at one of the other estuaries on the coast north of San Francisco. Constancio's final contribution was a description of beliefs about charmstones, the one piece of ethnographic information that Yates later expanded upon slightly and published in two different editions (Yates 1889, 1890).

Although a number of examples of Coast Miwok oral literature have been published, myths from native groups surrounding the East Bay are virtually non-existent, rendering Yates's summaries of Constancio's narratives, brief as they are, exceedingly important. The following is Yates's manuscript as submitted to the Smithsonian Institution (Yates 1888).

Indian Legends

Lorenzo Gordin Yates
Santa Barbara, California
April 28, 1888

The tribe of Indians called the Napas, formerly occupied the region between Benicia and Yountsville on both sides of the Napa Creek, or River, north of the Bay of San Pablo, California. These legends were communicated to the writer about twelve years ago by Constancio, Chief of the Napas, at which time there were but four living members of the tribe. The chief

was then a very old man and it is more than probable that the tribe is entirely extinct.

The Discovery of the Happy Hunting Grounds

A long time ago, there were two brothers who were chiefs of the Napas; they went out together to hunt and wandered to Punta del [sic] Reyes, where they got upon a balsa (bunch of tule roots), intending to take a short ride along the coast, but while they were lazily floating upon the balsa, a wind arose which carried them out to sea. Going on a course which carried them a little north of west, they arrived at the setting sun, where they found the shores covered with otters, some of which had been killed but a short time. They ate some of the otter, and being very thirsty they started next day in search of water.

After traveling a long distance without finding water, one of them found a place which sounded hollow; they scraped away the earth from the surface and found plenty of water, one of them drank, the other did not like the smell of it and hesitated, but he finally drank of the water and found it to be good to the taste, but smelling strongly of dead bodies.

After resting themselves, one of the brothers commenced gathering seeds of the Cuckold Bur [cocklebur], and performed some religious ceremonies. On their arrival they could not see any inhabitants in the country, but during the seed-gathering and ceremonies, a great number of people came around with baskets to gather the seeds.

A great chief came along gaily dressed up in feathers and small shell money (*Peh-ha*), he asked them where they came from, they told him they come from Punta del [sic] Reyes and that they had come there on a balsa. The chief told them that he came from there also, but that he was dead. He asked the brothers what they came there for, they told him they were hunting for sea otters and the wind had taken them out there. He told them they were in the Happy Hunting Grounds, and gave them permission to gather all the otters they could for two days, when the wind would change and take them back to Punta del [sic] Reyes.

When they parted the chief made them large presents of beads, charm-stones, and every one thing they wanted, but he charged them not to let the living know that they had been to the land of the dead, but to explain the fact of their having so many valuable things with them, they should say that, they had been visiting neighboring rancherias and had won them by gambling.

Origin of the Tribe

The tall mountain in front of Sonoma named *Ye-lu-pah*, (Tamalpais?) was formerly surrounded by the sea, and occupied solely by an Old Man (Coyote). The waves beating against the rocks continually, finally brought a feather of the Hawk (Gavilan), to

the mountain, which attracted the attention of the Old Man, who addressed it by several endearing names such as Brother, etc. The feather answered the Old Man and stayed with him. The Little Spotted Bird (Killdeer), which was born of the navel of the large hawk, made three in number, including the Old Man. These three held a council as to the best method of creation, to people the mountain.

The Old Man decided that it would be better to have women to bear them, he then proceeded to make hands and feet for men, the first idea was to make them like the Coyote, but as they could not take hold with them, they thought to make them like a Badger so they could take hold.

(It seems that the project for creating a population for the mountain succeeded, that the mountain proved too small for the increased population and the Council of Three found it necessary to provide a larger territory for the accommodation of the race, hence the "Making of the World"—L.G. Y.).

Making the World

In commencing to build the world, they ("The Old Man," "The Hawk," and "The Little Spotted Bird") took boughs and interlaced them, and made two rafts. These the Old Man doubled up and threw off to a great distance. The one he threw East he raised up and spread at once a great distance, and it formed the foundation for a large territory. The one he threw West he did not raise up, and it formed only a small portion of land.

After this the Old Man (Coyote) took a large *Koo-ra* (Basket) [and] went up into the sky and got a lot of earth, which he spread over the rafts to form the land. After the ground was well made, they started out to make the different nations of people, and give them different languages. These people were all taken out of the mountain. Then the Old Man traveled among the various tribes and gave them their names.

And in this way the Old Man (Coyote), the Hawk (Gavilan), and the Little Spotted Bird (Kill-Deer) formed the world in company. It was commenced by the feather of the hawk washing up against the mountain, and everything was made that the people needed, all prepared and cooked at first; but after a time Coyote discovered some who would not gather and save what was prepared, but only ate; this displeased the Old Man, and he would only furnish the raw food thereafter. (Note—After a time, the people becoming tired of raw food, began to search for fire, and the Napas communicated the following tradition of the Estero Indians (*Lecht-Chem*) as to the manner in which it was obtained.)

How Fire was Obtained for Cooking: A Tradition of La [sic] Esteros

For a time food was eaten raw, then two little boys engaged the Old Man to furnish the fire so that they

could cook. He first sent out the Humming Bird, which flies so swiftly. The Humming Bird came back three times, and on the fourth return, after going in all directions he came back with such force that he buried himself in the ground, all except his heels. The Old Man sent him out again to where the Ducks lived; they (the Ducks) had rancherias and lived in deer-skin huts. The Humming Bird watched around until he found a hole in the deer-skin through which he saw an old woman Duck making a fire. He waited until he got a chance, when he slipped into the hut and stole a brand, which he carried back to the boys who afterward fixed the Buckeye so that they could start fire from it at anytime. The brand was put out by water soon after the return of the Humming Bird, but the fire remained in the wood. The Buckeye is the best for fire, the Maple next. The fire is caught from the wood by using the *Huck-ka* (Soap-Root), the *Wim-ah* (fibre) being used as *Pak-eet*, (tinder).

On the Use of Charm-Stones (Che-la)

These peculiar implements which have been called "Plummets and Sinkers" by many writers (see illustrated article by the writer on the so-called Plummets which will appear in a forthcoming *Report* of the Smithsonian Institution, hereof [Yates 1889]). These implements were used by the Napas to charm game so that it could not run fast. They were supposed to run about under ground and when captured they were given four raps with a stone to prevent them from injuring their captors, who supposed them able to paralyze anyone who touched them.

A string was then tied around the end and they were carried in medicine bags. They were also suspended in front of their fishing places or at the end of their canoes, and were believed to travel at night for the benefit of their owners or possessors, driving the fish into the pools and fishing places, and traveling through the air to drive the deer and other large game to favorite hunting grounds.

ADDITIONAL DATA ON CHARMSTONES

In his published description of information provided by Constancio regarding the use of charmstones, Yates elaborated slightly upon the summary he had included in the manuscript he sent to the Smithsonian Institution:

About twenty years ago the writer had an opportunity to interview a very old Indian chief, named Constancio, one of the two survivors of the tribe of Napas, who formerly occupied the territory lying on both sides of the Napa River. He was quite intelligent and told me that he was about five years old when he was brought to the Mission of San Jose, then newly built.... He called the plummet-shaped stones *Chi-la*, and said

that they were found running in the ground (that is burrowing under ground), before they are captured.

When they caught one they gave it four raps with a stone to kill it, and to prevent it paralyzing its captors, afterwards it was used as a Charm Stone. A string was tied around it and it was carried in a medicine bag; when used it was suspended by a cord from the end of a pole, one end of which was stuck into the bank of a creek in such a manner as to leave the Charm Stone suspended over the water where they intended to fish. At other places they were suspended at points in the mountains favorable for hunting; he said he had used one himself in front of his canoe....

The sinker or hammer-stones, ...he readily distinguished from the Charm Stones, and called it *Lup-poo*....

The Napa Indians also stated that they were sometimes laid upon ledges of rocks on high peaks with the belief that, owing to their peculiar form and some occult power which they possessed, they traveled in the night through the water to drive the fish up the creeks to favorite fishing places, or through the air to drive the land game up towards certain peaks and favorite hunting grounds [Yates 1890:25–26].

The data on the use of charmstones that Yates collected are consistent with the documented ceremonial importance of these objects among Bay Area peoples, and provide evidence about the function these objects had in hunting magic.

ADDITIONAL MYTHOLOGICAL DETAILS

Among the papers of Lorenzo Yates at the Bancroft Library is a folder entitled “Folklore—Legends of California Indians.” With the exception of “The Discovery of the Happy Hunting Grounds,” which is missing, this folder contains essentially the same handwritten texts as those Yates submitted to the Smithsonian Institution (Yates n.d.). In addition to these, there is a handwritten note on a torn piece of paper, difficult to read, which appears to represent a fragment of Yates’s original notes from his interview with Constancio. It elaborates slightly upon the information Yates included in “Making of the World”:

Indians sent Falcon up in the sky to get dirt (in baskets). They brought the dirt from the sky and scattered it around and by distributing it in various localities the various tribes... [illegible]. Big Coyote (*Puis*), the big god of all the gods lived on Mt. Tamalpais (which was all rock and had no land then). The dirt was brought down from the sky in baskets, and thrown in various directions establishing tribes. A handful of dirt he

threw in one place (for instance Napa) established the Napa tribe [Yates n.d.].

COMMENTARY ON THE MYTHS

As we have seen, the Napa tribe has been considered to have occupied the southwestern edge of the region in which the Southern Patwin language was spoken. They bordered tribes to the west who spoke the Coast Miwok language. To the north, in the upper watershed of the Napa Valley, were the Wappo. To the south were the Huchiun and/or Aguasto, an Ohlone/Costanoan group or groups (Beeler 1961; Milliken 1979, 1995). The Napas’ neighbors to the east were the Suisuin and Tolena tribes, who spoke Southern Patwin (Johnson 1978; Milliken 1978, 1995, 2007). Given the ethnolinguistic diversity of the Napa region, it might be expected that Constancio *Occaye's* narratives would contain elements of the mythologies of all of these groups. In fact, although generally consistent with folktales documented from other Central California peoples, Constancio’s Napa myths do differ in some intriguing ways from similar oral narratives published elsewhere (Angulo and Freeland 1928; Callaghan 1978; Gayton 1935a; Kelly 1978a, 1991; A. L. Kroeber 1907, 1932; H. R. Kroeber 1908; Merriam 1993; Ortiz 1994; Radin 1924; Whistler 1978).

Probably the most exceptional is “The Discovery of the Happy Hunting Grounds,” which departs from the pervasive North American “Orpheus myth,” in which the protagonist follows a deceased loved one to the Land of the Dead but then fails to bring that individual back to the world of the living (Gayton 1935b). Although the location of the Land of the Dead beyond the sea is a common belief among coastal tribes in Central California, other elements of the story appear to be unique. Because of the mention of Point Reyes, a Coast Miwok origin is suspected, but no myths quite like this one have been reported among Western Miwok peoples (Angulo and Freeland 1928; Knight and Callaghan 2002; Freeland 1947; Kelly 1978a, 1991; Merriam 1993). Only the involvement of two brothers who visit the Land of the Dead is shared with a particular Lake Miwok story (which interestingly enough has its origin point at Yountsville, very close to Napa territory); however, the Lake Miwok myth has an “Orpheus” theme, unlike Constancio’s Napa tale, and shares no other features with it (Freeland 1947:42–43).

The discovery of a shore covered with sea otters, the drinking of water that smells like death, the cocklebur seed-gathering, and the protagonist's acquisition of wealth and power objects that he brings back to the world of the living, are distinctive elements in the Napa narrative.

The "Origin of the Tribe" and the "Making of the World" stories have obvious cognates in Central California oral literature, especially those describing the involvement of three creator beings, two of whom are Old Man Coyote and Hawk (or Eagle in some myths), who stage their activities on a prominent peak. As in Coast Miwok and northern Patwin versions, Old Man Coyote plays a major role in the creation (Kroeber 1932:304–305; Latta 1936:35–36; Loeb 1933:233). Similarly, the role of a magical feather in creation echoes elements in Coast Miwok and northern Patwin narratives, as well as elsewhere in north-central California (Kelly 1978a:28; 1991:440; Kroeber 1907:189, 1932:304–305; Merriam 1993:203–205). The inclusion of Killdeer as part of this original triumvirate and the substitution of Badger's claws for Lizard's feet as the prototype for human hands are unique elements in the Napa accounts.

The Napa version that Yates sent to the Smithsonian lacks any mention of an "earth diver" who brings earth from the bottom of a primeval sea for one among the triumvirate to use to create land (Gayton 1935a:588). The earth diver character is present in creation myths from Northern Patwin groups (Kroeber 1932:304–305; Powers 1976:226) and also is a feature of interior Miwok, Rumsen Yokuts, and Rumsen Costanoan tales (Gayton 1935a; Kroeber 1907; Ortiz 1994:146). Perhaps significantly, an earth diver is lacking too among the Napa's Coast Miwok neighbors (Kelly 1978a:26). Instead of an undersea source, a surviving portion of Yates's original notes specifies the sky as the source of the dirt brought in baskets to create the earth and the various tribes that inhabited it.

The story about "How Fire was obtained for Cooking" is said to have come from the Estero (Tomaes Bay Miwok) people. As in Constancio's version, Hummingbird is the one who steals the fire and brings it to Coyote in previously published Coast Miwok narratives, as well as in "Theft of Fire" tales recorded from the Plains Miwok and Rumsen Costanoans of Monterey Bay (Gayton 1935a:389–390; Kelly 1978a:30–31; Merriam 1993:89–90, 152–153; Ortiz 1994:147–148). The fire-

stealers are variously Mouse (or the Shrew-mice), Jackrabbit, Roadrunner, or Coyote himself among Sierra Miwok and Yokuts tribes (Gayton and Newman 1949:60–63; Kroeber 1907:202–203, 211–212; Merriam 1993:48–53, 149–151). No group, except Constancio's "Estero Indians," appears to have specified Ducks as the original source from whom fire was obtained; but this too appears consistent with the documented Coast Miwok belief that the home of Ducks and Geese is far to the north in a cold region where one must pass through a hole in the sky that quickly opens and closes (Kelly 1978a:23; Merriam 1993:214). Only a fast flyer like Hummingbird would be capable of traveling through such an opening to gain access to the Ducks' fire. Once fire was obtained, fire was placed in the wood of the Buckeye so it could be retrieved when needed, a tradition that had a widespread distribution among Miwok groups (Merriam 1993:53, 151).

VOCABULARY

Yates provides ten native words that Constancio used in his narratives, including the term "*Lecht-chem*" as a name for the Estero Indians. The only ethnographically-recorded placename that appears at all similar to this name is '*Echakúlum*' ("Hechacolom" or "Chacolom" in mission records), a Coast Miwok town on the eastern shore of the Tomaes estuary (Barrett 1908a:308; Kelly 1978b:Fig. 1; Slaymaker 1982:336). The name "*Ye-lu-pah*" was not the Napa's name for Mt. Tamalpais, as Yates supposed, but originally designated Sonoma Mountain. The name "*Ye-lu-pah*" is preserved today in Yulupa Creek, a tributary of the Sonoma River draining the north side of Sonoma Mountain (Gudde 1998:432). No etymology for this placename has been published by linguists who have worked in the region. The term *yula* (or *yulla*) is said to mean 'light' or 'bright' in some interior Miwok languages (Callaghan 1984:58; 1987:97). However, *yúllu* meant 'woodrat' in Lake Miwok (Callaghan 1965:53), so an alternative meaning is conceivable, if indeed the name is of Miwok origin at all. The segment "*-pah*" could possibly indicate a Miwok source; *pa* is one of the words for 'rock' in Coast Miwok, and Lake Miwok *páwih*, Coast Miwok *payih*, and Plains Miwok *wepa* are terms for 'mountain' (Applegate n.d., Barrett 1908b:364; Callaghan 1965:244, 1984:268; Kelly

1991:99). Sonoma Mountain bordered the territory of the Coast Miwok-speaking Chocuyen (Chocoime) tribe, just west of the Napas (Beeler 1954; Milliken 1995; Slaymaker 1982:350–356); but if the Chocuyen people called Sonoma Mountain *Yulupa*, as did their Napa neighbors, then this placename does not appear to have been in universal use among all Coast Miwok peoples. Merriam obtained the term “*Oon'-nah-pi's*” as a name for Sonoma Mountain from Coast Miwok speakers near Nicasio and San Rafael (1993:203–204). Unfortunately, comparable placename data are not available for the Southern Patwin.

The terms for ‘shell money,’ ‘basket,’ ‘soap-root,’ ‘fiber,’ ‘tinder,’ ‘charmstone,’ and ‘sinker’ (or ‘hammer-stone’) were compared to published word lists for Coast Miwok, Wappo, and various Wintun languages with incomplete success. Unfortunately, there is a paucity of published Patwin vocabularies, so it has not been possible to conclude with certainty whether any the terms given might occur in Patwin languages. One of the words, “*Koo-ra*” for ‘basket,’ is most likely derived from *cora*, the old California Spanish word for ‘basket.’ “*Huck-ka*” is virtually the same as the Coast Miwok and Lake Miwok word *háčka* (or *hákkah*) for ‘soaproot’ (Callaghan 1965:26, 1970:17; Kelly 1991:38). “*Chi-la*” (or “*Che-la*”) is likewise a term for ‘charmstone’ that is shared between the Napas and the Coast Miwok (Kelly 1991:131). “*Lup-poo*,” the term given for ‘sinker,’ is the same word as Coast Miwok *luppuh* ‘stone’ or ‘rock’ (Applegate n.d.; Barrett 1908b:364; see also Lake Miwok *lúppu* ‘rock’ [Callaghan 1965:82]). The word “*Peh-ha*” for ‘shell money’ must be related to the Wappo term *p'eh*, meaning ‘shell’ (Sawyer 1965:91). It was not found among the terms used for ‘bead money’ by the western Miwok groups or their neighbors. Terms for ‘fiber’ and ‘tinder’ have not often been included in published dictionaries of Bay Area languages, so the lexical affinities of these two Napa words are unclear.

The term *Puis* is the only native word that appears in the surviving fragment of Yates’s original notes that pertains to the creation of the world. Yates understood this term to refer to “Big Coyote.” Many California tribes had different words for legendary Old Man Coyote as opposed to the ordinary coyote of the animal kingdom. For example, the animal coyote was called ‘*óye*’ in all Coast Miwok dialects, but the “Coyote of the tales”

appears to have been termed *wüyotki*, at least by the people who lived along Tomales Bay (i.e., Constancio’s “Estero” group) (Barrett 1908b:365; Callaghan 1970:94; Kelly 1991:139). The term used for Old Man Coyote in Patwin folklore was recorded as *sedew-ch'iyak* by Whistler (1978), working with twentieth-century speakers. The only word found in published vocabularies and ethnographic accounts that provides a clue as to the meaning of *Puis*, as used as a name for Coyote, was found in the Coast Miwok ethnographic notes of Isabel Kelly. Her consultant María Copa told her that the term *puisero* was the Spanish equivalent of the term *walintema*, meaning ‘doctor-magician’ or ‘sacred dancer.’ She stated that “Coyote was like a *walintema*; he knew what was happening (although he was not at hand),” indicating that clairvoyant powers were attributed to a *walintema* (Kelly 1991:101, 112–113). This information suggests that the term “*Puis*” used by Constancio Occaye for Old Man Coyote referred to his ability to use magical powers. The word “*puisero*” recorded by Kelly probably represents a hispanization of this native term.

DISCUSSION

The brief narratives preserved for posterity through Yates’s interview with Constancio bring to light some aspects of the ethnography of a little known group, the Napa tribe, which has long been presumed to have been of Southern Patwin affiliation. The myths, although distinctively different from any previously recorded in the area, fall within the Central California oral literary tradition, and contain elements that are very much like those in the known corpus of Coast Miwok myths, including some shared vocabulary. Barrett pointed out that all of his native sources were consistent in asserting that the same language was spoken in both the lower Napa and lower Sonoma valleys, even though there was disagreement as to whether that language was Coast Miwok or Southern Patwin (Barrett 1908a:286–287, fn. 357). Beeler has observed that the language of the Chocuyen tribe, who were the original inhabitants of the area around Sonoma, was documented as Coast Miwok in a mid-nineteenth-century vocabulary collected by Gibbs (Beeler 1954:271–271). Therefore, mutual intelligibility between the two valleys would imply that the Napa tribe spoke Coast Miwok, rather than Southern Patwin.

In light of Constancio's clearly documented identity as a Napa Indian and the demonstrated Coast Miwok affinities of most of his myths and terms, it would seem that his people's ethnolinguistic identity was likely to have been Coast Miwok, rather than Southern Patwin. Furthermore, a short "Napa" vocabulary collected by Jeremiah Curtin at the Alisal rancharía near Pleasanton in 1884 is also Coast Miwok (Curtin 1884; Smith, personal communication 2006, 2007). Only by assuming that both Constancio *Occaye* and the unidentified Napa Indian interviewed by Curtin had adopted the Coast Miwok language after coming to Mission San José could we explain why they were using words in that language, if indeed Southern Patwin had been their original tongue. Although California anthropologists have long assigned the Napa tribe to the Southern Patwin, these accumulated clues from nineteenth-century sources call for a reappraisal. It is to be hoped that a linguistic analysis of the personal names of people from the Napa tribe that are listed in mission registers will ultimately resolve this question. If other evidence eventually shows that the Napas were Southern Patwin speakers after all, at least Constancio *Occaye*'s narratives imply that there once existed a significant degree of social interaction and influence between the Napas and their Coast Miwok neighbors, as indicated by shared narrative features, myths staged in each other's territories, and lexical items borrowed between the two groups.

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