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Mercedes larga relacion de todo con muestras y fructo de ella; la misma quiero que me deis del estado en que siempre os halláredes y de salud de vuestras muy nobles personas; las cuales con mayor estado acreciente Nro. Señor como Vuestras Mercedes lo desean. De este puerto de la Possession 20 de Enero de 1534.

A lo que Vuestras Mercedes mandaran,

El Adelantado.

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Volume V, No. 2

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BY

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THE DIEGUENO CEREMONY OF THE DEATH IMAGES[1]

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EDWARD H. DAVIS

Introduction

CALIFORNIA, next to the largest state in the Union, with the greatest varieties of climate, scenery, and products, supported the largest permanent aboriginal population of any equal area in the United States. Not the least interesting feature of this Indian occupancy is the fact that of fifty-eight distinct stock languages spoken by the Indians north of Mexico, twenty-one, or more than a third, according to Major Powell, were spoken in California, and most of these were confined to the northern portion of the state. In the extreme southern part there were two distinct stocks, Shoshonean and Yuman, with numerous dialects of each. In San Diego county the representatives of these two stock languages are known by the Spanish terms Luiseño and

[1] This article is published as a record of personal observation of an interesting ceremony performed by the Diegueño Indians of southern California. The rite has long been known and has been described from information derived from a Diegueño by Miss Constance Goddard Dubois in the *American Anthropologist* (n. s., VII, pp. 625–628, 1905), but the two accounts vary somewhat as to details and what one lacks the other in a measure supplies. An account of the same ceremony as performed by the Luiseños, and derived likewise from a native informant, is presented also by Miss Dubois in the *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology* (VIII, no. 3, pp. 100–104, 1908). While this author admits that with what tribe originated the manufacture of images made to represent the dead person must be a matter of speculation, she attributes the origin of the Chung-itch-nish religion to the Luiseños, but which, "impressing itself upon the Diegueños, mingled its ideas with their myths, merging the characters of Chung-itch-nish and Oui-ot, entirely distinct in Luiseño conception, with the Diegueño Tu-chai-pa." So far as known, Mr Davis's description of the Image Ceremony of the Diegueños is the first account based on personal observation, while the images herein illustrated, now in the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, are the only ones that have ever been procured and photographed.—*Editor.*

Diegueño, that is, the languages or Indians affiliated in former times with San Luis Rey and San Diego missions respectively. Included in the former are the Indian villages and reservations of La Joya, Rincon, Pauma, Pala, Pechango, Banning, Cahuilla, San Ysidro, San Ygnacio, Soboba, and a number of other villages in the desert. Among the Diegueños are the Mesa Grande, Santa Ysabel, San Pascual, Iñaja, Capitan Grande, Los Conejos, Sequan, Campo, Manzanita, Weeapipé, and Laguna rancherias or villages.

Among these Indians one of the most interesting as well as the least known ceremonies is called variously Image Ceremony, Burning the Images, Burning the Clothes; in Spanish, Los Monos, Los Monitos; in Cupaño (Hot Springs), Nóngawut; in Luiseño, Tochinish, and in Diegueño, Wúkarúk.

This ceremony was performed generally by the Indians throughout San Diego and Riverside counties, and possibly much farther north, at the time the missions were established. When the natives embraced the Roman Catholic faith, the custom was discontinued by many of the tribes, but a few natives still cling tenaciously to the ancient rite. In general it may be said that the tribes living remote from the missions and therefore least affected by their influence are the ones that still practice the Image Ceremony.

The Indians who still make and burn images are those living at Palm Springs, Banning, Pala, Campo, Weeapipé, and Yuma. Among these tribes the ceremony differs only in details. The material forming the foundation or framework of the image is the same in all cases; head, hair, and features are made to resemble those of the dead person; it is clothed throughout in new garments, and finally cremated. All this is attended with much ceremony, chanting, dancing, and mourning, the mourning often covering a period of several days and nights.

Image ceremonies, being expensive, costing from five hundred to a thousand dollars, are not performed every year. Usually when the number of deaths in a family or clan, such for instance as the Cueros (Hides) or Las Chusas (The Owls), extending over a period of five or seven years, number from ten to fifteen, including adults and children of both sexes, they give an Image Ceremony

at which Indians from near and afar attend, attired in their holiday clothes. The family and other relatives of the dead extend full and generous hospitality to all the invited tribes, but abstain from partaking of any of the food themselves. The family or clan also bears all the expense of gathering the materials, making and clothing the images, and conducting the ceremony. They pay the leader of the chanting and dancing, the men who dance with the images, and the fire-tender, and they furnish the coins which, at one period of the ceremony, are strewn by handfuls among the assemblage of Indians.

Following is a description of the Wúkarúk, or Image Ceremony, witnessed by the writer at Weeapipé. This rancheria is situated in a narrow, sandy valley on the southern slope of Laguna mountain, twenty-five miles northeast of Campo, which is the trading place of these Indians. The valley is dominated by a great mass of castle-like rocks, about three hundred feet in height, at the head of the valley, from which the rancheria derives its name, Weeapipé meaning "Leaning Rock."

Preparations for the Ceremony

Before describing the ceremony itself, we will consider the preparations necessary to a successful fiesta, with particular reference to the ceremony which was performed at Weeapipé from August 24 to 30, 1908.

Preparations were commenced in 1906, two years before. The materials entering into the construction of the images, as well as foods, had to be gathered when mature, and much of this was done the year preceding the ceremony. Piñon nuts, acorns, and corn were harvested the preceding autumn, and fiber from the maguey, or mescal, and red milkweed were also gathered. Dried yucca stalks and materials used in building the *kurukñawah*, or house of the images, were gathered months before the time they were to be used.

Only old men are entrusted with the preparations for the Image Ceremony, and all the materials are gathered and prepared in accordance with a prescribed ritual handed down by tradition from

their culture hero, Chaup,[1] from time immemorial. These old men go out, or used to go out, into the hills emptyhanded—without axe, knife, matches, or any of the things ordinarily considered indispensable. They carried wild tobacco and a gourd rattle for ceremonial purposes in gathering their materials, and probably stone knives. Only the implements used in ancient times, as prescribed by tradition, were permissible. There is no evidence that stone axes were used in this section of the country.

From the dried stalks of the guatamote bush, which grows in creek bottoms, fire was made by friction, or, if on the desert, they used the stems of the fan-leaf palm.[2] With this fire they lighted their tobacco and felled the posts and poles by burning them through at the base. This was accomplished by placing dry logs against the trees and letting the fire burn through the stump. Fire was employed also for burning the logs the desired length.

As each thing was gathered, it was chanted over and a ceremonial smoke indulged in. Months of time were consumed in assembling all the materials, and as these were gathered they were secreted among the rocks and in caves in the hills to await the opening of the ceremony. On the desert the fiber was extracted from the thick, spiked leaves of the maguey or mescal, and the brown, sticky juice that exuded from the large bulb at the base of the plant, when it was roasted for food, formed the body of the paints for decorating the faces of the images and also the faces of the mourning Indians, especially the women. This molasses-like sap was preserved in small ollas for future use.

In the autumn sacks of piñon nuts were laboriously gathered by the women in the desert mountains and in the higher ranges, and acorns were harvested, cured, and stored away in great ollas, sacks, or granary baskets. Corn and pink beans (frijoles) were hulled, threshed, and likewise stored away. The hair, cut off as a sign of mourning, was saved, and the gum which forms as an excrescence on the chamisal bush was gathered and preserved.

[1] See Dubois, The Story of Chaup: A Myth of the Diegueños, *Journal of American Folk-lore*, vol. XVII, pp. 217–242, Oct.-Dec., 1904.

[2] According to Sparkman (*Univ. Cal. Pub. Amer. Archaeol. and Ethnol.*, vol. 8, no. 4, p. 209, Berkeley, 1908) the Luiseños used the wood of *Baccharis Douglasii* for fire-making.—*Editor.*

The principal material, *Juncus textilis*, entering into the making of the images is found in the cañons and gorges on the desert slope of the mountains and is know among the Indians as *meskwáh;* it is a rush that grows four feet tall in large tussocks. This plant is in general use and forms the matting framework or body of the images among all the southern California tribes. In the spring of 1918 the Yuma Indians sent one of their number across the desert, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles, at no small expense, to secure *meskwáh* from the Campo Indians, for use in making the images for their ceremony which occurred a few months later. This rush is used also for matting for wrapping tribal ceremonial possessions, and the part near the root is employed in basketry, forming the brown designs; it is further used to make the porous leaching and hat baskets.

The Ceremony

Early in August, 1908, information reached me through an Indian girl that on the twenty-fourth of the month would commence a remarkable Image Ceremony at Weeapipé. So jealously was the secret guarded that, with the exception of a man who had married into the tribe, my son Stanley and I were the only white persons to witness the performance from beginning to end.

On the evening of August 23, after spending two days on the trail with saddle-horses and pack-mule, and crossing the Cuyamaca and Laguna mountains, we descended the steep, rocky trail that led into the narrow, sandy valley of Weeapipé. Many Indians had already arrived, as we observed by their flickering camp-fires throughout the rancheria. A band of picturesque, long-haired, Yuma Indians from Algodones, who had come to assist in the ceremony, had trailed across the desert on burros for nearly one hundred and fifty miles.

After the evening meal, the mourning women gathered in one of the ramadas, or brush shelters, and wailed and sobbed all night. The old men sat in a circle outside with bowed heads and sobbed for an hour or so. Old Pyoné Hílshmeup, head of the Hílshmeup clan which provided the fiesta, then arose and placed his hands succes-

sively on the head of each one of the old men in the circle, as if in benediction, and then delivered an address. He was probably ninety years of age, deeply wrinkled, almost blind and toothless, but still quite active. All night the Indians sat brooding and mourning.

The next morning, a space of forty feet square was cleared for a ramada. A low bank of earth was raised around the outside, except at the east, which was left for the opening. At a given signal, twenty-five men, including the Yumas, started off for the place at the edge of the valley where the poles, posts, brush, and grass were cached and cut to size ready for building the house of the images. The Indians soon returned, single file, each carrying a post or a pole, or a bundle of grass or of brush on his shoulders. Reaching the site of the structure, as the men placed the poles and other materials on the ground, the women ran out wailing and mingled with the men (who also wailed and sobbed), placing their hands on the men's bowed heads. Two old women poured an offering of corn from their baskets over each post, pole, and bundle of brush; indeed, the women who were entrusted with this special duty made offerings of corn, piñon nuts, wheat, hulled acorns, and pink beans to all materials entering into the construction of the ramada or of the images during the entire ceremony, lasting nearly six days, in this manner scattering altogether hundreds of pounds of foodstuffs over the ground. Some of this food was trampled into the dust, but women belonging to the visiting tribes recovered most of it and consumed it on the ground or took it to their homes. At the close of the ceremony all foodstuffs not used in the offerings, consisting of several sacks, was divided and given away, none whatever being retained by the Hílshmeup clan, which was reduced to poverty by the ceremony.

After wailing for a while, the men placed their burdens on the ground and commenced to construct the brush house, or ramada. Four holes were dug for the posts that were to form the main supports of the structure, and as each hole was dug, an old woman poured in an offering of piñon nuts. She was followed by a Yuma woman, who carefully scooped the nuts into a red bandanna handkerchief and carried them off.

As soon as the corner posts were set, cross-poles and rafters were adjusted and fastened with strips of willow bark (fig. 1); then bundles

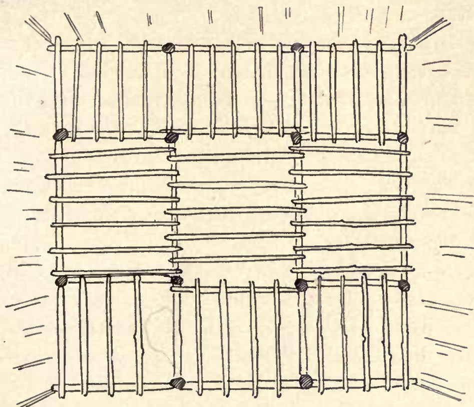

FIG. 1.—Roof plan of the image house.

of long weed-stalks were scattered over the top, and lastly bales of dry grass were spread, which made a perfect covering. Long brush was leaned against the sides and end, completing the rude structure,

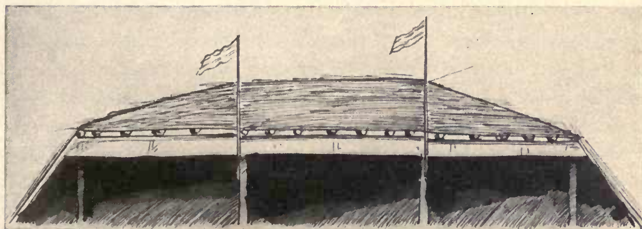

FIG. 2.—Exterior of the image house.

which was closed on all sides except the entrance (fig. 2), which faced the rising sun and the desert, whence these Indians came.[1]

[1] Regarding the ramada, Miss Dubois says: "At the beginning of the fiesta a ramada, or brush building, was constructed, circular except at one end, where it was square. The building of this, like every act connected with the fiesta was done in a prescribed manner according to an elaborate ritual. Each part of the ramada had a name, and a song connected with its construction."—*Editor*.

The interior was draped with red calico, and two pieces of striped calico, which served as flags, were raised on poles, one at each side of the entrance.

When the image house was completed, trunks, boxes, and bundles were carried in, and at night the structure was filled with mourners of both sexes. One old man sat at the entrance and chanted, keeping time with his ceremonial rattle of deer-hoofs, while the old women began sorting out clothing, hats, scarfs, etc., with which they bedecked six girls and eight boys amid much wailing. The number and sex corresponded with those of the dead and of the images to be made.

When the boys and girls had completed their dressing, led by the old man with the rattle they filed outside and danced all night. As nearly as could be ascertained, this clothing was later to adorn the images. For three nights these young people danced in the new garments around a great log fire immediately in front of the image house.

The chant is believed to describe the wanderings of the tribe before reaching its present place of abode, and the different animals and objects of nature associated with their traditions and folklore. With each canto the dance proceeded round the fire three times and dealt with one object or animal. Now it was the bear, now the frog, then the desert lizard, the coyote, the gopher, the pack-rat, and so on.[1] At the termination of each canto there was a ceremonial rest. At first the dance was merely a step accented by a stamp in perfect rhythm with the song and the rattle; this was followed by a step consisting of a double stamp, which was continued until daylight.

[1] "Where to-day the singers profess their ignorance of the meaning of the songs of the different dances," says Miss Dubois, "it is by no means because, as some have judged, they are in an archaic language, but by reason of the fact that the story of the songs has been forgotten, having been known in perfection only to the chief or leader of the fiestas. . . . Any subject connected with the death would be appropriate for these songs. For instance, one song refers to two brothers who were traveling together when one was bitten by a rattlesnake. He died of the bite, and his brother was afraid of his spirit, which was following and terrifying him. Another song celebrates Ish-pa, the Eagle, killed to make the fiesta, and describes his feelings when he knows that death is near. Another song of Wú-ka-rúk tells of the death of Tu-chai-pa, which was brought about by the evil machinations of the frog."

Forming the circle around the dancers were Indians from the different rancherias in San Diego county, and some from Lower California, numbering between three hundred and four hundred.

On the first day of the ceremony I made a photograph of the Indians resting their poles and materials for the image house (pl. I, *a*). The capitan immediately sent a messenger to inform me that pictures of the ceremony, or of anything associated with it, were absolutely prohibited, and nothing must be written or drawn in regard to the fiesta, as everything pertaining to it was to be consumed by fire. It seems that the spirits of the dead are believed to hover about the old homes awaiting the ceremony, which was to release them from their earthly ties to pass to their future world, hence anything, particularly a picture or a photograph depicting a part of the fiesta, that had a tendency to restrain the spirits, was regarded as highly sacrilegious. Thereafter I was under constant surveillance, hence it was impossible to procure a photograph without fear of expulsion. Making a virtue of necessity, I desisted as far as the camera was concerned, but made notes and drawings secretly.

The matron at Campo, where it was necessary for us to make a trip for grain and hay, informed me that the Indians had been saving and preparing for this fiesta for two years. The women had made baskets, sold them and hoarded the money, almost going without food and clothing that the dead might have a fitting ceremony and departure. One old woman, she noted, made and sold several baskets, but never used the money to buy food or clothing, until, up to the time of the fiesta, she had accumulated twenty dollars, a vast amount to her, as it represented the savings of two years. Her withered old hands were cut and scarred by the keen edges of the fibers in making so many baskets, and there were similar cases. Money was collected from relatives far and near; sugar, coffee, flour, and steers were bought, and a wagon was sent to San Diego, and new clothing, hats, ribbons, and bandanna handkerchiefs were procured to dress the images. What sacrifices all this meant to the poorest Indians in California at that time can only be conjectured. The time of giving the fiesta was kept secret for

months to avoid the presence of white people, and only shortly before the time appointed were invitations sent to the different tribes and to scattered relatives to be present.

On our return to the fiesta from Campo late in the afternoon of August 27th, after I had given supplies of tobacco to the men and red calico to the women, some Indians who knew that I had taken a leading part in the Eagle ceremony at Mesa Grande the year before, told the assembled Indians all about it. They gazed at me with a great deal of interest and curiosity, and made many comments. The knowledge had the effect of placing me before these primitive people in a more favorable light, which I was eager to cultivate. Previously I was merely tolerated; now I was welcomed.

After dark, a little weazened old man, called Jaquét, took the rattles and told those around that he wanted to sing and dance for me for a short time, so that I could admire his chanting. I was duly impressed and commended him highly for his remarkable skill.

The dance this night was similar to that held the previous nights: two or three old men leading in a circle round the fire, and the boys and girls, in all their finery, following in single file with a kind of swinging step and stamp. The dancing always commenced from the image house facing east; then it swung to the north, then east, south, and west. East is the ceremonial direction of these Indians, and three the ceremonial number among all the Diegueño tribes. The *Holshrâ*, or War Dance, is continued for three nights; the *Tapokwírp* or Whirling Dance, is performed thrice; the *Hopasuéy*, or breathings at termination of a dance and also for gifts of food and tobacco, is performed three times, and so throughout their ceremonies the magic number three continually occurs.

On the next day, the 28th, the image house was a busy place, where men and women were preparing the details of the images, in which I was permitted to assist. The eyes, teeth, hair, cloth, mescal-fiber strings, hair rope, sticks for hips and shoulders, and all the minor details of the construction of the images, were prepared, counted, and set aside with minutest care, so that nothing would be missing when the figures were actually to be made the next day.

A. INDIANS HOLDING THE POLES FOR THE IMAGE HOUSE. BOTH MEN AND WOMEN ARE WAILING. WEEAPIPÉ, 1908

B. THE IMAGE PARTLY CONSUMED BY FIRE. PALA, 1904

A great bundle of flaxen mescal fiber from the desert was brought in, and, on their bare thighs, two old men twisted double-stranded, coarse twine all day long from the threads, in pieces six or eight feet long. This *meskwáh*, as it is called, was woven into a large mat, like a grass rug, by being stitched through and through with threads of sinew or red-milkweed fibers. The mat may be four feet wide by twelve feet long, or possibly two of them may be made, each eight feet long, according to the number of images to be formed from it.

For the eyes of the images large white pearl buttons (in lieu of white abalone shell) were drilled through with knives, pointed sticks inserted, and a black, pitch-like substance from the chamisal was put in the center for the pupils. (See the illustrations following.)

Packages of black human hair were brought in, woven together with strings to form the front and back hair for both sexes, the hair for the girl images being the longer.

Clusters of hawk and eagle plumes, fastened to short pieces of stiff twine with sinew, and these in turn attached to sharpened chamisal sticks, were to be inserted in the shoulders of the male images; owl feathers, prepared in the same way, were for the female images. These were the crude pinions that were to support them in their last flight.[1]

Small oliva-like shells, brought from the Gulf of California by Yuma Indians, threaded and mounted on mescal twine, were to form the teeth of the images.

All the materials, except the matting foundation, for each separate figure were gathered together, tied up in a neat bundle, and laid away for the morrow. The women wailed and sobbed during the making of all these things, and the two old women poured offerings of corn, wheat, or hulled acorns out of their baskets over the materials. Throughout the night the women in the image house

[1] "In the first place an eagle must be killed in a prescribed manner to furnish the feathers for the decoration of the images. A young eagle was secured in the spring and kept in captivity until it was fully grown, when it was killed, as Boscana says, 'without shedding a drop of blood.' This was done by pressure upon the lungs and heart. The red tail-feathers of the yellow-hammer were also obtained, a great number of the birds being slain to secure them. These as well as the owl feathers were sacred to religious use."—Miss Dubois.

grieved and wailed, and immediately outside, round the great blazing fire, the chanting and dancing continued.

Early the next morning the creation of the images was commenced. This labor required four men one hour to make each figure. A length of matting was held upright by two Indians, and, at three yells given by an hereditary or ancient enemy of the family of the dead, another enemy Indian, with poised bowie knife, swiftly and at one stroke slashed the matting, detaching a strip about fourteen inches wide. This act is called "Splitting the enemy down the middle." Fourteen of such strips were cut from the mat, each designed to form the framework or foundation of an image. One of these was handed to each member of the immediate family of the deceased, who thereupon commenced to make an image, dressing, painting, and ornamenting it so as to resemble as nearly as possible the person whom it was designed to represent. During the time of construction, men and women wailed and sobbed, and the two old women poured out copious offerings of corn, wheat, piñon nuts, and acorns. Some of this food was lost, but the greater part was gathered up by the members of other clans and taken home. At night the corn, beans, acorns, etc., that were thrown over the dancers were trodden into the earth and lost.

Several of the old women, in token of grief, had scarified their breasts to such an extent as to make a network of bloody scabs; their faces were daubed with mescal paint; their hair was unkempt, and with their incessant wailing they presented altogether a wild, uncanny appearance.

After a strip was cut from the mat, the lower half was bisected and cut and rolled into two cylinders and tied with mescal twine to form the legs. The top part was cut in on each side, rolled into a short cylinder and tied, and this formed the head. Just below the head, two pieces of flat yucca stalk were placed crosswise and the ends lashed together for the shoulders, and by the same process the hips were formed. Two sets of small, white, pointed shells, strung on maguey twine and fastened around the head, formed the teeth, and a twig of bent willow, inserted above the teeth, served as a nose. Over the head part a piece of white sheeting was drawn tightly and

fastened behind. A slit was cut for the mouth, through which the gleaming white teeth projected in ghastly fashion, an effect that was further heightened when the eyes were inserted. When holes were punched into the heads to insert the eye sticks, the women went into a wild paroxysm of anguish, wailing and crying and throwing themselves on each other in heartrending grief that far surpassed their previous lamentations. The men choked and sobbed, and tears streamed down their faces. Following this, paint was applied to the faces, red for the female, black for the male images; a short fringe of hair tied around the head served for the front hair, or bangs, and longer hair for the back hair, and the heads were completed. As each image was made, the women dressed it. If it was a girl, a thin lawn dress, nicely ruffled and trimmed, was put on, also a crimson silk neckerchief, a fine beadwork belt, and plenty of bright ribbons. If it was a man, he was clothed in new trousers, coat, vest, shirt, collar, tie, cuffs, hat, and a neck-scarf of red or blue silk. Many had ribbons around the sleeves, rosettes of bright ribbons pinned to their vests, and shining watch chains and watches. One female figure wore a black silk dress trimmed with lace, and around the edge of the yoke were suspended bangles of dimes which tinkled each time the image was raised or lowered in the subsequent dance.[1]

As the images were being made and clothed, an old woman of the Hílshmeup clan poured on each one a basket of acorns, or a

[1] Miss Dubois describes the making of the images as follows: "When the matting was ready it was slit with a knife in two parts, which, being rolled up separately, made the legs. The upper part for the chest, was strengthened by two sticks laid diagonally crossed upon it. The head was made of the matting with a crooked oak stick carefully selected as to shape, placed in the proper position for the nose. The face was covered with cloth, in early days with buckskin, and the mouth was painted red outside and black within, where teeth carefully shaped from pearls, obtained from the coast, or something resembling them, were inserted. The eyes were of abalone shell, with the pupil a dot of black wax. Human hair was put upon the head. The face was painted and decorated with glistening powdered mica stuck on with thick black mescal juice. The characteristic features of the dead man whom the image represented were reproduced as closely as possible. The finest decorations were then placed upon the figure, bunches of eagle and of yellow-hammer feathers were stuck upon the shoulders, and strings of beads and other ornaments were disposed upon it. Around the neck was hung a net like a small carrying net, holding two tiny decorated ollas to contain food and drink for the spirit on its journey through the unseen world."

basket of corn, or of corn, wheat, and piñon nuts mixed. In the corn were many kernels of the ancient blue kind sometimes found in cliff and cave dwellings and in old pueblo sites.

When the costume was finally adjusted, each image was taken in charge by a near relative, closely embraced and fondled, mourned and wailed over, and removed to the rear of the brush house, where many of the smaller articles and decorations were fastened on. An indication of how thoroughly the work was done may be judged from the fact that, during nine hours of rough handling in the subsequent dancing, not a hat, garment, or ribbon became loose.

At noon, when all the fourteen images were completed, men and women formed a procession with an old man at the head who chanted to the clacking accompaniment of the deer-hoof rattle. Members of other clans, who did all the dancing, held the images, and, proceeding two abreast, raising and lowering them with a twisting motion in perfect rythm to the chanting, marched wailing and sobbing to the east. Around the charnel pit, where the images were to be cremated, one hundred feet to the east of the image house, this strange procession passed, then back and around the house, and once more around the pit (fig. 3).

During this march two old women threw handfuls of dimes, quarters, and half-dollars broadcast among the onlookers who made a scramble for the money. Some of the coins were tied in silk handkerchiefs and cast among the people, and one girl secured a handkerchief containing a five-dollar gold piece. In all the sum of about fifty dollars was scattered in this manner. No baskets were given or thrown away, nor fastened to the necks of the images. Except as vessels to contain corn and other grains, baskets did not enter into the ceremony, and none were burned.

After the procession had passed twice round the charnel pit and house, the performers stopped in front of the image house and one of the old men delivered an oration, naming each of the dead and detailing their virtues and activities in life. The images were then taken into the house and not disturbed until night.

During the afternoon men and women slept or lay around the camp, resting for the ceremonies which were to close the fiesta.

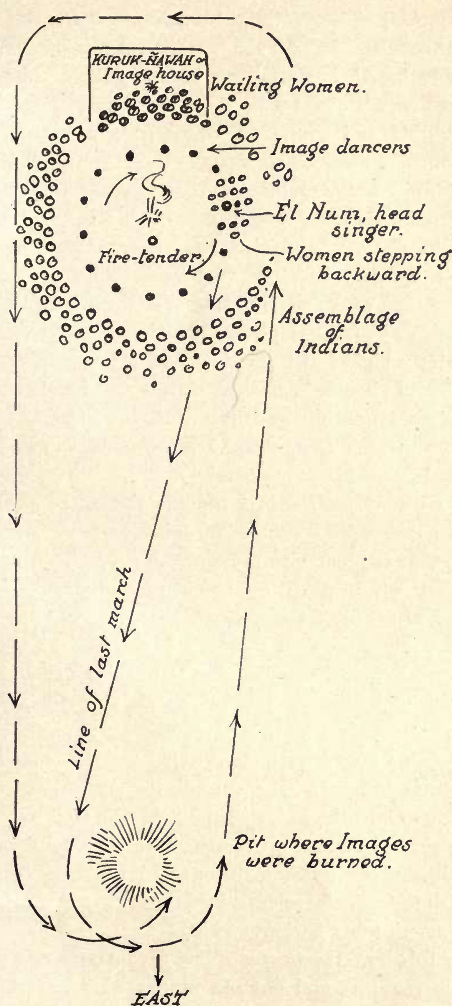

FIG. 3.—Plan of the Death Image Ceremony of 1908.

The night proved to be mild and beautiful, and the sky was filled with brilliant stars. Around the scattered camp-fires were groups of Indians eating their simple meals, or smoking and gossiping. Under foot and all about were dogs of varying sizes and kinds, but always thin and gaunt. A dog-fight took place every few minutes, affording much amusement to the boys and girls.

The most picturesque Indians were the Yumas from Algondones, with their painted faces, long hair, and brilliant colored scarfs. Tall, straight, sinewy, graceful, active, they formed an agreeable contrast to the fat, heavy-set mountain Indians. Among the latter were a man whose weight must have exceeded three hundred pounds, and a girl from Capitan Grande, seventeen years of age, who probably weighed two hundred and fifty pounds. This girl had very broad shoulders, muscular arms and hands, full bosom, large waist, ponderous hips and limbs, with large feet; but her visage was good-natured in every respect. Most of the women came only to the shoulders of this young giantess.

At eight o'clock, seated in a chair in the image house, a huge Indian, El Num, capitan from Manzanita rancheria, commenced a low chant, beating time with the *tasilsh*, or deer-hoof rattle. This rattle is used only in death ceremonies; for other occasions gourd and turtleshell rattles are employed. Men, women, and children (some babes asleep on their mother's backs) had filled the house, and the women were bestowing the last loving attentions on the images amid much wailing, when El Num, having chanted a number of stanzas, arose with three other men who were chanting in unison and began a slow step toward the opening and then round the great log fire burning in front. The women soon brought out the images and gave them into the hands of the men who were to dance with them all night. As before mentioned, there were fourteen of these, fully dressed, and the rhythmic lifting and lowering of the grotesque figures, with fluttering garments, in the red glare of a great log fire, presented a weird and barbaric scene.

During this time the women filling the image house wailed and mourned incessantly, and one old woman with grizzled hair and with dress open at the breast disclosing a network of bloody scars,

showered corn over each dancer and image, always wailing in the peculiar wavering cry, wild and mournful, uttered by Indians in sorrow. Her corn supply was in sacks, and from these she replenished her hat basket as soon as it was empty, the corn which she had cast, of course, being trampled into the dust and lost.

During two or three periods of the dance I relieved one of the men, taking charge of an image and dancing in unison with the others. This afforded me an excellent opportunity of observing all that took place.

Each canto of the *Chatí*,[1] or Song of the Images, usually carried the dancers around the fire three times, and then the three old women, keeping rhythmical step, facing the men and going backward, repeated the song in a treble for a like period.

After four hours of such violent exertions as to cause the sweat to drip from the image dancers, a rest was taken. The women took charge of the images during the interim, fondling and embracing them, adjusting their garments for the last time, and wailing and sobbing in a paroxysm of grief.

The dance was resumed and continued without further intermission until the morning star, *Cuanyamasáhp*, rose above the rim of the mountains in the east. Thereafter it was closely watched during the dance for an hour and a half, until the surrounding mountains were dimly visible against the first gray light of approaching dawn. It was then 4:15 o'clock in the morning of August 30, and the dance had continued, with one brief period of rest, for eight hours. Blankets, food, and clothing had been packed in bundles and nets, and removed from the image house by the women, a short while before, and now the time had arrived for the final parting. El Lucero had attained its maximum brilliancy and shone with marvelous luster in that pure atmosphere.

With El Num in the lead, chanting the final canto of the *Chatí*, the last procession formed and marched with slow and stately steps directly toward the morning star, around the charnel pit, back around the image house, and again to the pit, where each man as he passed deposited his image in an upright position.

[1] Termed *Chā-yo-tai* by Miss Dubois.—*Editor.*

Up to this time the wailing had been incessant during six days and nights, but now all became unnaturally quiet. The wailing had ceased; there was no talking; even the dogs had become quiet, and only the slight rustle of leaves in the early morning breeze broke the intense silence. Suddenly, the image house, built of dry, inflammable materials, burst into flames fifty feet high, throwing sparks and wisps of burning grass a hundred feet into the air. As the first flames burst forth, an Indian seized a burning brand, ran swiftly to the pit, and set fire to the effigies. The dresses curled up, flames ran up the folds and plaits, and soon all the images were afire (pl. I, *b*). The grasses snapped, the cloth on the faces scorched and blazed, the hats and hair burned off, but the staring eyes and grisly teeth still stared and grinned. In ten minutes there was nothing left but a mass of ashes and live coals. The framework of the image house had caved in, the posts burned, and by daylight everything was consumed which in any way had been directly connected with the images. The savings of years and the labor of months had vanished in smoke in a few brief moments. The souls of the dead had departed on the last long trail to their final destination, and even their names were never spoken again.

The Death Images from Campo in the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation

The ***kurúk***, or death images, made and cremated by the Indians of extreme southern California amid great sorrow and ceremony, are very rare, so rare in fact, that the three images the writer was so fortunate as to procure for the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, are the only ones in existence, so far as known. The reason for this is not far to seek. Each image made and used in the Wúkarúk ceremony represents a particular person who has died, and this image, and indeed every image ever made for this sacred occasion, and everything pertaining to it, is religiously burned, so that, except ashes, not a vestige remains. Money could not buy one of the effigies, and from the time they are made until cremated they are constantly guarded and handled, and at no time could they be stolen, if one were so inclined, unless possibly his life be forfeited.

All these images are made and burned the same day, and usually only a few hours after completion. At Pala the images were cremated only two or three hours after being completed, and at Weeapipé, where the ceremony was more primitive and elaborate, sixteen hours after completion. The burning of the images in other localities may vary in time, but none are kept so long as twenty-four hours after they are made. Therefore, with the exception above noted, no museum or private collector has succeeded in securing a specimen of these images, and in fact very few white people have witnessed the entire ceremony, for the reason that the Indians jealously guard all knowledge of the time when it is to occur.

In 1904 I was fortunate in securing permission to photograph an Image Ceremony at Pala among the Cupano (Hot Springs) Indians, and so far as I know these are the only photographs depicting this rare custom.

The ceremony has become extinct among many of the tribes, and in some places where it still survives it is performed in a more or less perfunctory manner, due mainly to the death of so many of the old men who preserved and revered the ancient customs; to education; to a higher state of white civilization, and to the indifference, even contempt, with which the old traditions are regarded by many of the younger generation of Indians. No doubt this traditionary custom will follow the course of many others and become extinct within a few years.

The making of the images has almost become a lost art, since most of the creators, as they are called, especially in the Campo country, have joined their ancestors, and so I felt especially favored when I found one old image-maker among the primitive Campo Indians who was thoroughly familiar with the task, and, what was of more importance, willing and free to execute my request.

The Indian who undertook this commission, commonly known as Jim McCarty (whose native name is Kwalsh, or Hide), is a man about eighty years of age, of slender build, with sparse white beard and mustache, deep-set eyes, rather flat nose with the septum pierced for a nose-ring, iron-gray hair growing low on the forehead, active

and alert (pl. II). He is known as the "creator," and the only survivor among these Indians equipped with the knowledge to execute the order.

The first condition to be met was to procure a quantity of the tall rush grass *Juncus textilis*, known among the Indians as *meskwá*, for the foundation of the images. This is a tough, coarse grass

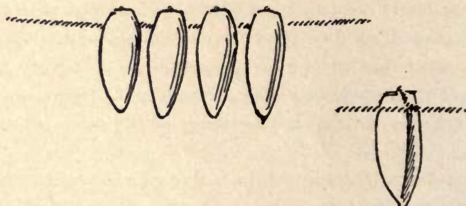

FIG. 4.—Shells strung on cord of mescal fiber to form the teeth of the death image.

which grows in tussocks forty miles distant in Jacumba cañon, a wild, rocky gorge with a clear mountain stream flowing down to the desert. The great flood two years ago uprooted nearly all the *meskwá*, but we found a few hummocks from which we gathered a bundle sufficient for the matting for the three images I desired. For the teeth, *sukul*, it was necessary to have a certain kind of small shells (fig. 4) which come from the Gulf of California and for which

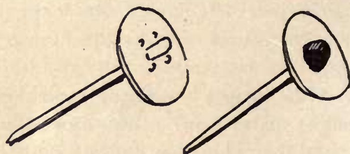

FIG. 5.—Pearl buttons used for the eyes.

these Indians trade with the Cocopah. I was fortunate enough to find a woman who had a handful of these shells, and with much reluctance she parted with enough for the three images. Eight shells furnished teeth for one image, four for upper and four for lower incisors. The pointed top of the shell is ground flat until a hole appears, and through this a fiber is fastened and four of these are tied to a heavy, two-strand twine, which, in these images, con-

THE "CREATOR" AND HIS IMAGES. CAMPO, 1918

sists of fiber from the bark of the red milkweed or Indian hemp, twisted on the thigh. In order to comply strictly with the ancient ritual, the eyes should be made of white abalone shell, ground round, with a hole pierced in the center for the pupil, but now large, white, pearl buttons are substituted (fig. 5). These, with dress material, neck-scarfs, beads, etc., I furnished to Jim at his request.

A rug is made of the coarse rush, like matting, by weaving through and through, usually with sinew, but in this case the milk-

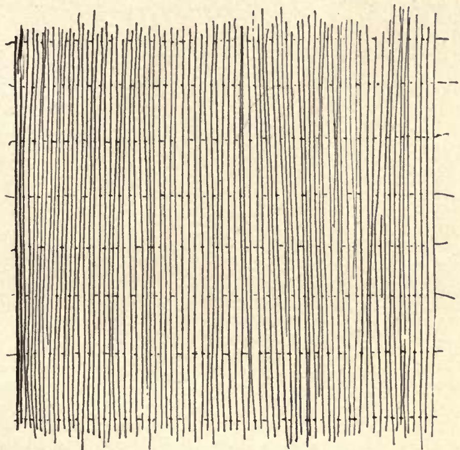

FIG. 6.—A section of meskwâh matting, four feet square, stitched with sinew.

weed fiber was substituted (fig. 6).[1] A strip about twelve or fourteen inches wide is sliced off the mat and this in turn is cut as on the dotted lines in the illustration (fig. 7). The top part is rolled solidly like a thick cylinder and forms the head, while the two lower parts are rolled up and fastened with fiber to form the legs. The shoulders and hips are made from double pieces of yucca, whittled flat, and the ends tied together with fiber. This is the foundation

[1] Miss Dubois says: "To make the images, first of all a woven matting was manufactured by taking a certain kind of tall slim rush for the warp and twine of mescal or yucca or milkweed fiber for the woof.

of the body (fig. 8). With charming indifference, arms, hands, and feet are dispensed with. A twig of bent willow forms the nose;

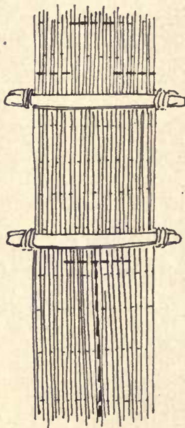

FIG. 7.—The first stage of image making.

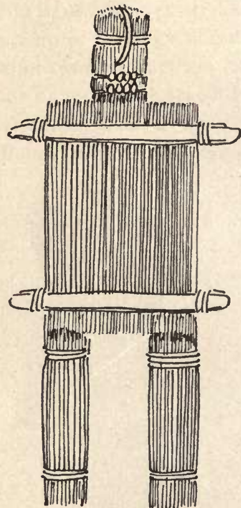

FIG. 8.—The second stage. The bent willow stick forms the nose, and the shell teeth are in place.

the two strings of teeth are tied on and a white cloth fastened tightly around the head. The cloth is cut in such manner that the teeth project prominently; the eye-sockets are punched with sharp

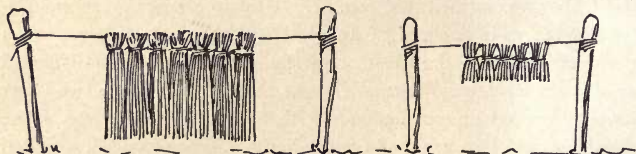

FIG. 9.—Manner in which human hair is plaited to be worn by the images. The long strands form the back hair of female images, the short ones the bangs.

sticks; the hair, which in this case is from horses' manes (fig. 9), is tied on; the faces are painted, and the head part is complete

IMAGE OF CINON MATAWEÉR. HEIGHT 49 INCHES

(fig. 10–12). A hat basket is fastened on top, and bunches of plumes adorn the shoulders—hawk for the man, owl for the woman —to waft their souls to their final destination (fig. 13). The faces of the male images are painted black (*kwinyilsh*), and of the female red (*kwawhat*). The foundation for these paints is the dark, sticky juice that exudes between the bulb and leaves of the mescal plant when it is roasted. This is saved in small ollas and painted on the cloth faces of the images, and the powdered black and red colors are sprinkled on and held fast by the sticky fluid. The red color is from red rock near The Needles, and the black is probably plumbago, also from the desert. The red stripes which adorn the chins of female images are called *ukwich*. These mouth stripes ornament the women of Campo and of the desert tribes generally.

FIG. 10.—Third stage. The nose, chin, lips, and eyebrows are painted red, and the cheeks black.

The figures are supposed to be dressed in the same manner as the originals at the time of death (fig. 14). If the girl had a necklace, the image must have one; if the man had a watch, so must his image. When properly made, the figure is adorned with human hair cut from the women as a sign of mourning; this hair is put aside and later woven into the front and back hair for the images. For a while the matter of procuring the hair proved quite a serious one, as only the relatives of the dead provide the hair. I had given the images personality by naming them for Indians I had known, one of whom, Cinon Mataweér, the last hereditary chief of the Tukamúk, or Mesa Grande Indians, was looked upon as my brother, hence the responsibility of procuring the hair rested with me. The suggestion that perhaps an Indian maiden or matron might be induced to part with some of her locks for a pecuniary consideration was regarded with horror; in fact the idea was unthinkable, as hair furnished for the image of a deceased person, a total stranger,

would cause almost certain death. We finally compromised on hair from a horse's mane as coming nearest the desired article. This of course was irregular, but then the whole proceeding was necessarily more or less so. It may be assumed that old Jim squared his lack of orthodoxy with the ancient deities in some manner

FIG. 11.—The fourth stage, showing adjustment of the front and back hair, with the hair cord around the face and beneath the chin, fastening the white cloth over the face. This male image is painted red on nose, chin, and lips, and black on cheeks.

FIG. 12.—Mask of female image dotted and striped with red paint.

for this radical departure from the ordained ritual; at any rate, the horse-hair answered the purpose, and harm was done to no one.

For a month nothing was heard from the creator, then on May 2 I received an urgent message to come immediately to Campo, seventy miles distant, as the images were completed, Jim was badly frightened, and the ceremony must occur two days later. I reached Campo on the day of the ceremony at the fiesta grounds, and there found Jim, his wife Rosa, and sixty or seventy Indians from the nearby rancherias to attend the death ceremonies. I was somewhat disconcerted by the crowd, as I had supposed the rites

IMAGE OF CELESTINA, WIFE OF CINON MATAWEÉR. HEIGHT 45 INCHES

would be very simple. On the contrary, they were to be public and strictly in accordance with tradition. Not seeing the images, I asked Jim where they were, and he said they were in his barn or outbuilding, about a mile from the fiesta grounds. Shortly before my arrival the entire camp had had a period of wailing and mourning. Jim had thrown or scattered handfuls of nickels and dimes among the assemblage, and now that I had arrived the principal ceremony was to be performed that night.

Fig. 13.—Hawk and eagle plumes mounted for attachment to shoulders.

Arrived at Jim's outhouse, a structure of poles and brush, I readily found the three images, and an examination showed them to be just what I desired—the chief Cinon with his bow and arrows, his wife Celestina with her painted face and bead necklace, and little José also with a necklace (pl. III–V). The cause of Jim's fear was this: As soon as an image is completed, according to his belief, the spirit or soul enters and occupies it, when the effigy becomes a living personality and the ceremonies must continue uninterruptedly until it is cremated a few hours later. In this case the images had been finished and laid away for three days and three nights, an unprecedented occurrence which was not provided for in the ritual, and so not guarded against. In consequence of this, neither Jim nor his wife Rosa dared go out at night for fear of meeting the ghosts of the images. Jim did have the temerity to venture out a little one night, and said he saw the old chief's ghost stalking about, so he hastened in and never went out again at night until the ceremonies commenced. Not only that, but he would not touch the images of his own creation after they were completed. Should I have been delayed, the ceremonies would have proceeded without me and the images consequently burned.

Returning to the fiesta grounds, which consisted of a hollow square enclosed by ramadas, or brush shelters, I was informed that,

as the principal mourner, I must furnish food and provisions for the assemblage during the ceremony, and also hire the singers, dancers, fire-tender, and others, consequently I at once sent a messenger post-haste to the nearest store to purchase all the bread, meat, potatoes, coffee, sugar, etc., possible. In an hour's time the food was fetched and pots and kettles were boiling over the campfires, so that it was not long before men, women, and children were fed and happy. The Indians had come sixty or seventy strong, bringing the members of their families, old and young, as well as their dogs, blankets, and simple camp equipment, to stay as long as the food and the fiesta lasted.

FIG. 14.—The completed image.

In order to have the ceremony properly conducted, it was necessary for Jim to be the leader, to sing the proper songs and to make the steps to the music of the *tasilsh*, or deer-hoof rattle, which I had provided. Tobacco was also given the dancers. Two assistants were furnished Jim as singers, two men to dance with the images (the third being myself), a man to supply wood and to tend the fire, and two women to dance backward in front of the singers. These arrangements having been made, we gathered in a circle about the fire in the center of the hollow square, and with Jim chanting, we began the slow, rather stately step around the fire. The images were raised, lowered, twisted, and with fluttering garments made to look as lifelike as possible. When raised the images faced forward, and when lowered they faced backward, all in rhythm with the chanting, while the whole performance was illuminated by the large central fire.

The singers chanted and circled the fire three times to each

IMAGE OF JOSÉCITO, SON OF CINON. HEIGHT 40 INCHES

canto. As the song ceased, the dancers immediately began to grunt rhythmically to the beating of the rattle; this was followed by a short ceremonial rest, succeeded in turn by the next canto. The chanting and dancing continued throughout the night for eight hours, with a brief intermission at midnight for refreshment.

The first cantos treated of the death warning of the *úú*, or hoot owl, and the succeeding cantos dealt with the preparations for the death dance, calling the junta or assemblage, gathering the materials, making the images, etc. At the conclusion of the dance the images were wrapped in a tarpaulin, placed on top of a ramada, and left in perfect security.

During the next day there were no ceremonies, but the chanting began again at night and continued uninterruptedly until midnight. Probably the songs described the closing ceremonies of the images, the reincarnation of the souls, the animated figures, the rise of the morning star, the last parade, the cremation and final release of the souls, which, on the hawk- and owl-plume pinions fastened in their shoulders, were wafted to their final hunting grounds far to the south, where it is always warm, with plenty of game and abundance of food of all kinds.

At the close of these ceremonies, the images, without further ado, were handed to me to do with as I liked, to burn or retain, and thus these unique figures came into possession of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation.

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