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Chemehuevi Indians



The Chemehuevi territory lay off the lower [Colorado River](#) north and west toward [Death Valley](#) and west to about the Providence Mountains. A less populated somewhat undefined strip stretched as far west as the foothills of the Sierra Nevada and north of the [Mojave River](#). They neighbored the [Koso](#) and [Serrano](#) and were intimate with the Mohave, who after chasing the Halchidhoma and Kohuana eastward brought them to Cottonwood Island to live.

In 1867 after a war with the [Mohave](#), the Chemehuevi, moved westward toward the [Twentynine Palms](#) area shared the [Oasis of Mara](#) with the [Serrano](#).

Ethnology & Ethnohistory

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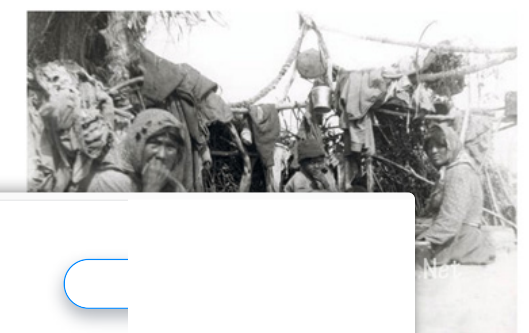
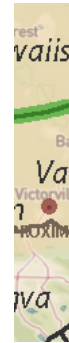
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The Chemehuevi name for themselves is Nūwū, meaning simply, "people".

The [Serrano](#) call them Yuakayam. The Yuma call them Mat-hatevach, meaning "northerners," and the Pima: Ahalakat, "small bows".

Tribes of the Chemehuevi:

Mokwats, Yagats, Howaits, Tümpisagavatsits, Kauyaichits, Moviats

Four Directions Institute

Ethnie: CHEMEHUEVI

Language: Southern Numic

Family: Numic

Stock: Uto-Aztecan

Phylum: Aztec-Tanoan

Macro-Culture: Colorado River

Speakers ?

The Chemehuevi were hunter/farmer and hunter/gatherer tribes who ranged over the eastern half of the Mojave Desert to points on the Colorado River. Linguistically, they are closely related to the Southern Paiute. They were friends with the Taki peoples of southern California to the west. They suffered in conflicts with the River Yuman tribes and Whites. Some western bands absorbed into the Southern California macro-culture prior to White arrival. Ultimately, many individuals absorbed into other cultures.

Aboriginal Locations

Hokwaits, Kauyaichits, Mokwats, Moviats, Palonies, Shivawach, Tümpisagavatsits, Yagats (also had 3 geographical divisions, Northern, Southern, and Desert)

Present Locations

CHEMEHUEVI RESERVATION, Havasu Lake, CA

Year History

1776 Met by Garcés

1867 War with Mojave, fought well though outnumbered, fled to desert

1898 Possible year of smallpox epidemic

Year Population Source

1700 1000 NAHDB calculation

1770 1550 Kroeber estimate (incl. Koso, Kawaiisu)

1800 900 NAHDB calculation

1873 800 US Indian Office

1900 400 NAHDB calculation

1910 300 Kroeber estimate

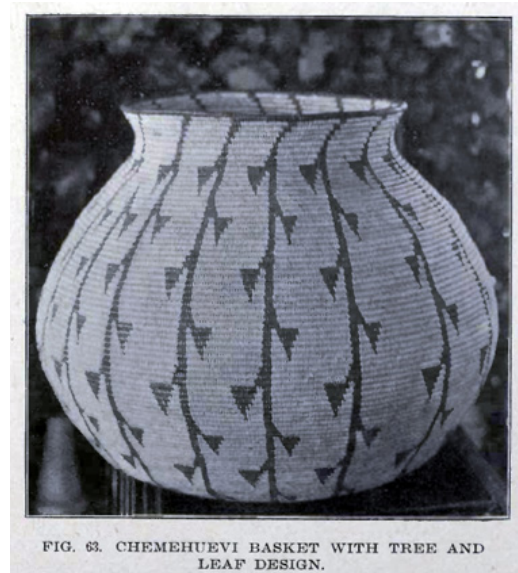
1973 36 BIA

1989 123 BIA

2000 150 NAHDB calculation

Other speakers of the same language:

Kawaiisu, Southern Paiute, Ute



Chemehuevi

Native Location: Southeastern California on the Arizona border and the Colorado River, from Death Valley to the Maria Mountains

Language: Paiute [Southern Numic]

Identified Shelter: Dome shaped structures made of sapling poles joined at the center, and thatched with brush

Food: Corn, beans, pumpkin and melon; deer, rabbit, mountain sheep

Cultural Notes: They were once nomadic; they fought and intermarried with their nearest neighbors, the Mohave.

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Digital-Desert : Mojave Desert

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