



KOYOODE TUKADU: PYRAMID LAKE PAIUTE KIT



◆ WE ARE ALL PEOPLE OF THIS EARTH

Old Winnemucca stayed in the Humboldt area while his father, Truckee, went to California. One winter, while hunting in the mountains, pioneers came in, ate, and burned the tribes' winter food supply; forcing the tribe into the mountains for shelter and safety. Old Winnemucca told the tribe of his reoccurring dream and fear that the settlers were going to continue to come into their land in increasing numbers.

Old Winnemucca lived during a difficult time. The Paiutes of this time had to deal with the gold and silver strikes, mass migration resulting in squatters on the Paiutes' territory, and all of the changes that came with merging their culture with the settlers' culture. In contrast to his father, Old Winnemucca established a suspicion which was probably wise due to what was going on. These lifestyle changes forced the Paiutes to have a keen understanding of the mind of the Paiute as well as the white man. It became clear that the settlers were here to stay, but the tribe preferred to live as they always had. Winnemucca was especially aware of how this tribe suffered at the hands of these settlers and tried to have as little contact with them as he could.

Old Winnemucca was known to wear a piece of wood or bone through his pierced nose and a headdress made of a fur cap (from otter or beaver skin) with feathers (from magpie, eagle, or pelican) stuck into it. With this dress, Winnemucca fought in defense of his tribe in the Pyramid Lake Wars of 1860. The first battle was a major victory, giving hope to the Paiute people. During the second the men were able to hold off the army while the women, children, and elderly to fled into the mountains. In an attempt to make peace, the government drew boundaries for the Paiutes to stay in and the settlers to stay out. Although they were now restricted to stay within the reservation, the Kooyooe Tukada were lucky to be able to stay in their home area with Pyramid Lake.



(The Paiutes of Pyramid Lake)

Old Winnemucca lived during “the white man’s consuming jurisdiction” (Herman 113). On December 6, 1879, he stood up for his people facing a trial that would force them to go to the Malheur Reservation in Oregon and the ones that were already at the Yakima Indian Reservation. On December 29, 1879, Winnemucca also spoke to Agent Haworth, from the Office of Indian Affairs, with Sarah Winnemucca as interpreter. He told how the Paiutes were a peaceful people - when left alone, and capable of learning - if only given the opportunity. “You promise us good things, but your promises are very forked” (Herman 114). He asked Haworth to allow his people to stay where they were born and to return the others sent to Malheur and Yakima as an illegal roaming tribe. Winnemucca also asked for land, plows, and seed so that they could take care of themselves the way they had in the past.

Old Winnemucca



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Old Winnemucca did not live long enough to see the return of many Paiutes to their home on the Humboldt River in 1883 since he died on October 21, 1882.

Old Winnemucca



Old Winnemucca wears his white man's army regalia for one of his last photographs.

Courtesy Nevada State Historical Society.