

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF DATA RECOVERED FROM CA-SDI-2508, LOST VALLEY, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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ABSTRACT

Archaeologists ask many questions about sites and their contributions to understanding the economic, religious, social, and psychological aspects of human life. Through analysis, research, and field investigations, we intend to answer questions concerning the environmental economy of Lost Valley.

INTRODUCTION

This paper is a preliminary exploration of the data recovered from the San Diego State University 1997 archaeology field school. The focus of the field school was site CA-SDI-2508 that is located in Lost Valley, in the northeastern Peninsular Ranges, San Diego County (Figure 1). The data for this paper have been interpreted from an oral history and ethnographic perspective. While this method is subjective, it has enabled the author to develop hypotheses about the possible land use of CA-SDI-2508.

Linguistic and ethnographic studies place Lost Valley in the northeastern section of Cupeño territory that extends from Lake Henshaw and San Luis Rey River in the west, to the head of Agua Caliente Creek in the north, San Ysidro Mountain to the east and Buena Vista Creek to the south (APEC 1981:26). These boundaries place the Cupeño between three cultural groups. To the north and east are the Cahuilla; to the west are the Luiseño; while to the south are the Ipai (Bean and Smith 1978:588). The proximity of these cultural groups is reflected in linguistic elements that are found in Cupeño language. There are no written records of when the first people came to Lost Valley; however, through oral traditions kept alive by Rosinda Nolasquez and her grandson, Leroy Miranda, there is a record that documents the history of Lost Valley.

ORAL HISTORY OF LOST VALLEY

The legendary hero Kishwily Pewish and his mother spent time in Lost Valley before making their permanent home at Kupa (present day Warner Springs). While in the valley, Kishwily Pewish killed a bear that he brought back to life as his pet. Before he showed his mother the bear, he made her guess what type of animal he had killed. She guessed deer, bighorn sheep, and rabbit; was it possible that while Kishwily Pewish was performing his magic trick that these were the animals that she saw in the valley? Returning to Kupa, Kishwily Pewish and his mother made their home around the hot springs. One day two Luiseño sisters came to Kupa and remained as the wives of Kishwily Pewish. From these marriages three sons were born, who are the founders of the three original Cupeño clans.

As Kishwily Pewish grew older he became dissatisfied with the way his younger sons treated him, so he called his sons together and divided the land between them. To his eldest son he gave the land around Kupa and the name *Kavalj*, to his second son he gave the land to the west and the name *Pumtulmatulnich*, while to the youngest son he gave the land to the north, and called him *Temehanictum*. The younger sons were told to leave the village and live in their clan territories. From this time onwards, Lost Valley became a part of the *Temehanictum* clan territory (Hill and Nolasquez 1973). Oral tradition does not tell us when this happened; however, the diagnostic materials recovered from CA-SDI-2508 may give an approximate date of occupation.

CHRONOLOGICAL DATA

In San Diego County, the introduction of ceramics, small projectile points, and basketry technology are some of the time markers used to date sites to the Late Prehistoric Period. Three types of buffwares were collected from CA-SDI-2508: Salton Buff, Tumco Buff, and Lower Colorado Buff. Michael R. Waters' 1982 classification of Patayan ceramics records the manufacture of Salton Buff as ranging from AD 950-1500, Tumco Buff from AD 1000-1500, and Lower Colorado Buff from AD 1500 to post-1900. When these are correlated with Georgie Waugh's 1988 analysis of Cottonwood points at Frey Creek in the San Luis Rey River basin, that date in radiocarbon years from AD 1230 to AD 1600, it can be hypothesized that sometime before AD 1500 the *Temewhanictum* clan began to use Lost Valley. Certain inferences about the function of the artifacts recovered from CA-SDI-2508 have made it possible to reconstruct how members of the clan lived in the valley.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA

CA-SDI-2508 is located within a series of sites along a north-northwest to south-southeast axis. The location of these sites can be related to the surrounding environment, water is close by at Shingle Springs, and the site is surrounded by diverse biotic communities than can be exploited in many ways (Noah and Culbert 1998). In addition, the surrounding geological features made possible the manufacture of stone tools and cultural items. From the perspective of gathering and processing food resources, local coarse- and fine-grained igneous and sedimentary rocks, cobbles and pebbles were used as manos, portable metates, and pestles, while the granite outcrops were utilized as permanent mortars and basins. Many of the manos recovered from the site were used bifacially to grind material, and as hammerstones to either crack open acorns, or flake pebbles. Nine shallow-basined metates are represented in the artifact record, along with four schist pestles. It is probable that three of the pestles were used in the nearby granite outcrops, while a smaller pestle was used in a portable mortar. Within the collection is one specimen that has the attributes of a shouldered pestle with a

grinding surface. It is possible that this groundstone tool was tilted to allow the ground material to fall into a basket. This was a customary method of using metates by Cupeño women, and would also account for the long oval grinding surface on metates (Schroth 1994).

A fragment of what is commonly referred to as a "doughnut" stone was recovered. These stones have been referred to as "digging weights" and as such, in conjunction with a long stick may have been used to dig tuberous plants. Another of the activities taking place at CA-SDI-2508 was the manufacture and maintenance of hunting tool-kits.

Replicative studies by researchers on the manufacture of flaked stone artifacts have identified different stages of reduction techniques that were employed by prehistoric knappers (Flenniken 1978; Flenniken and Raymond 1986; Flenniken and Wilke 1989). The first reduction stage is core reduction that consists of removing the cortical surface of the clast. This results in the production of bifacial flake cores or conical flake cores; often these are transported from the quarry source in this form for further reduction into flake blanks. The second reduction stage is percussion bifacial thinning; these flakes represent the continued shaping of bifacial blanks into thin, symmetrical bifaces, and may or may not have detachment remnant scars. The final stage of reduction is pressure bifacial reduction into preforms, and preforms into projectile points or other tools. These stages of reduction are presented in the assemblage by cores (n=11), debitage (n=4,801), preform/blanks (n=26), projectile points (n=148), tools (n= 8). Various stages of this lithic reduction are presented in the diagnostic debitage by the random sampling of 718 specimens. Flakes with cortex represented 13% of the assemblage, secondary flakes represented .41%, while tertiary flakes represented 65.18%, with the remaining 34.26% representing shatter. From this data it may be concluded that the final stages of reduction were taking place at the site with the raw material transported in to the site as either blank or bifacial cores.

Formed Lithic Artifacts

These artifacts are represented by the preform/blanks (n=26), projectile points (n=148), and flaked tools (n=8). Among the projectile points are whole points and fragments. The diagnostic points are small and triangular shaped with notched and un-notched sides, and concave, convex, and straight bases. These projectile points have been typed as belonging to Cottonwood and Desert Side-Notched series that are diagnostic of the Late Prehistoric Period. Manufacturing errors, end shock or perverse fracture may account for the broken fragments. The assemblage also contains 58% (n=51) untypable specimens of which tips (35%) are predominate; from this data it may be concluded that tips were transported back to the site in animal carcasses and discarded in the butchering process. The abundance of quartz testifies to the use of local materials, while quantities of obsidian and chalcedony were brought in through a trade or exchange system.

A small number of flaked tools were recovered - one chopper, two scrapers, and four perforators. The exact function of these tools is one of conjecture, but it may be concluded that they were used in the butchering and processing of food resources, either mammal or vegetal. The perforators may have been utilized for many functions such as puncturing holes in hides.

A ceramic analysis of vessel forms indicated that bowls and ollas accounted for the majority of the ceramic collection. The usefulness of the vessel did not end with its breakage, as indicated by the ground pieces that were used as tools. In addition, vessels were considered precious and attempts were made to repair holes and those vessels close to breaking. While cultural items that were manufactured from fiber have not survived in the archaeological record, the presence of bone awls indicate that hide-working and/or basketry were one of the many activities undertaken at the site. Some of the basketry items may have been head-baskets, large storage baskets, and winnowing baskets. Culbert has recorded that perishable items such as bark skirts (willow and cedar) and the sacred bundle were manufactured from available materials in the valley (Noah and Culbert 1998).

INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

The remainder of this paper is an attempt to explain the diversity of the artifacts recovered from CA-SDI-2508. Initially, hypotheses were developed for a research design for the field school that had a basis in seasonality. The question was whether Lost Valley was occupied during summer and fall with people returning to Kupa for winter, or whether Lost Valley was only occupied during fall to harvest ripening food resources. As Noah and Culbert have indicated in their report (1998), the ripening of food resources was a deciding factor in when people journeyed into the valley. Although these hypotheses were an essential guide during the excavation, the unexpected diversity of the recovered material required further explanation.

Among the data are artifacts manufactured from material resources not available in the valley, such as obsidian and chalcedony. Manufactured items from different localities are also present, such as ceramics from the desert regions, and steatite items that may have come from the nearby Cuyamaca Mountains. This leads to the question of whether or not there may be a connection with the desert regions to the east and the seasonal use of the valley. A valid explanation is trade, leading to the question of under what circumstances did this trade take place, and how was it incorporated into the lives of the Cupeño, and in particular what part did Lost Valley play within a trade network between the mountains and the desert?

While interpreting the function of the artifacts recovered from the site, the most perplexing was a valid explanation of the presence of graphite, crystals, the stone pipe fragment, and the stone bowl. Preliminary research on the various uses of minerals among Californian Native American groups indicates that graphite is used for face painting (Curtis 1926:15), while the remaining items are closely linked to either a clan leader or a shaman. An explanation of these artifacts is that a clan leader and his extended family may have occupied this area.

It is known from the information that Nolasquez recorded with Hill, and the ethnographic material collected by William Duncan

Strong (1929), that the responsibilities of the clan leader were complex. Clan and ceremonial leadership rested with the head of each clan, who was referred to by the term *nuut*. One of the responsibilities of the *nuut* was to distribute and circulate food resources and material goods. Within the oral histories of Nolasquez are references to young men bringing their hunt to the *nuut* for distribution among the clan (1973:90). Ceremonies were another occasion when distribution occurred; either the *nuut* or the family who was holding the ceremony distributed food and material goods. Depending on the ceremony, the people who participated were either invited members of a related lineage and/or other clans. This meant that participants might come from surrounding cultural groups, for as Strong has documented through his extensive genealogy studies, there is an affiliation of the Cupeño with neighboring groups through marriage. When ceremonies were held in the valley it was possible that non-Cupeño people affiliated through marriage would take this opportunity to visit their relatives, trade for resources from the valley, and exchange gifts.

The final question remains as to whether the archaeological evidence can substantiate this hypothesis. Generally, the interpretation of a site depends on its archaeological signature. David Hurst Thomas and Kent Flannery, in their respective interpretations of Great Basin and Mesoamerican sites, have depended on the nature of "tool-kits" to reconstruct activities at habitation sites. Using this method and ethnographic data, gender specific tool-kits can

be identified with activities performed by the Cupeño. For example, female related tool-kits may include metates and manos for the processing of food, and awls for basket manufacture; while antler tines, lithic preforms, and hammerstones may form part of a hunting tool-kit for a man. In contrast, a clan leader's tool-kit would include the sacred bundle and its contents (crystals etc.), and his hunting tool-kit.

The data requirements to test whether the site was utilized by a specific member, or members of a cultural group will be the presence or absence of female, male, and clan leader tool kits. The data requirements for trade or gift exchange will be the presence or absence of nonlocal materials such as obsidian and chalcedony for the manufacture of biface tools, ceramics produced from sedimentary clays, and material items manufactured for materials not found geologically in the valley. The data requirements to test whether CA-SDI-2508 was used by a clan leader for the distribution of meat resources will be the presence or absence of large quantities of butchered bone.

To date it can be inferred from these data requirements that CA-SDI-2508 was an area utilized by a clan leader and his family. However, what is lacking in the archaeological record is the evidence that habitation occurred at the site. Given the position of this site within other untested sites, it may be that this area was not a habitation site, but a complex processing area. Further testing of sites in the valley will either substantiate or disprove the role of CA-SDI-2508 within the cultural landscape of Lost Valley.

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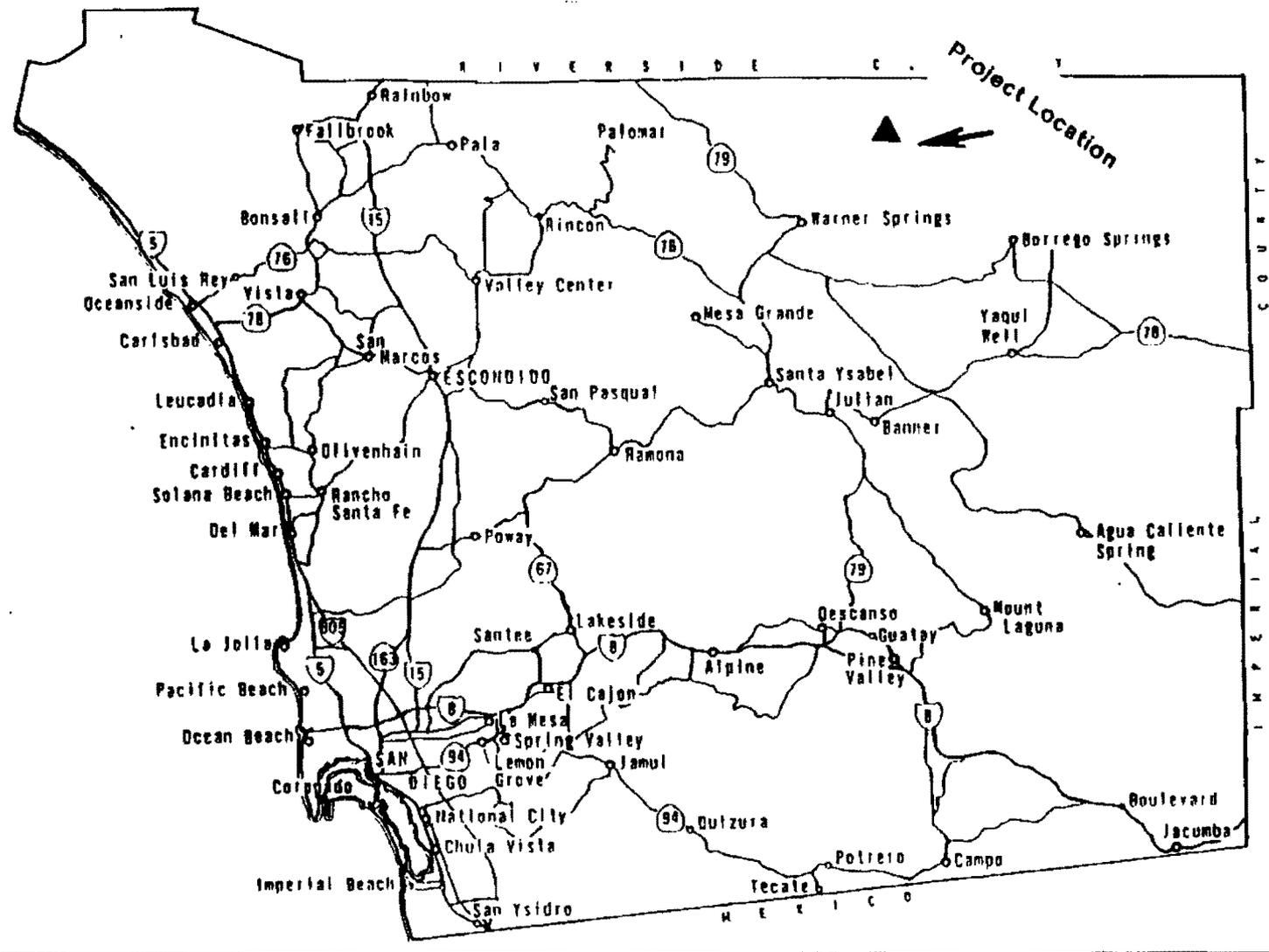
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Regional Location of CA-SDI-2508 in San Diego County

Figure 1