

Jamul Indian Village Land History

Background: Kumeyaay And Ipai-Tipai

Before discussing the actual territories and villages of San José and Jamul, I would like first to give some historical background to the terms *Kumeyaay* and *Ipai-Tipai*, as it applies to their identification as people, and to this discussion. The Indians in the territory of my fieldwork had at one time been incorporated in the Spanish Mission system. During the Spanish occupation their name as a people was changed into a Spanish name, signifying the location of the mission into which they were folded. In this case it was the San Diego Mission de Alcalá, hence their name became *Diegueño*. In the 1950's anthropologists replaced the name *Diegueño* and *Kamia*¹² with that of *Tipai* and *Ipai*, which means 'people,' and which also designates the close relation between Yuman-speaking bands that occupied nearly the entire southern extreme of what was later to be named the state of California (known also as Alta California), and adjoining portions of northern Baja California.¹³ Luomala (1978) distinguished the *Ipai* and *Tipai* as reflecting dialectical differences. The *Ipai* as designated a Northern (or Northwestern) and Coastal and the northern parts of Western and Mountain *Diegueño* dialectical form, and *Tipai* indicated a Southern (or Eastern or Southeastern) *Diegueño*, *Kamia*, *Bajeño* and the southern parts of Western and Mountain *Diegueño* dialectical form.

In my early discussions with Councilman Thing, he said, "*Kumeyaay* just came in not too long ago, before that it was *Diegueño*, then before that it was *Dieguin*, then there

¹² The term *Kamia* is used for the people named *Kamia*. The term *Kamia* was used by Edward W. Gifford in his monograph *Clans and Moieties in Southern California* and institutionalized in his monograph *the Kamia of Imperial Valley*, but made famous by Kroeber in his 1925 *Handbook of the Indians of California*. There has been a persistent problem and a lot of confusion around the identification of the people called *Kamia* and whether they were in fact southern/eastern *Diegueño* or *Kumeyaay* or whether they should be treated as a separate people. The *Kamia*, however, are not part of the current project.

¹³ Katharine Luomala, "Tipai-IPai," in *Handbook of North American Indians. Vol. 8, California* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), 592.

was Mission Indians, and all that." I mentioned that Florence Shipek, a well-known anthropologist who spent forty years working with these groups used the name *Kumeyaay*.¹⁴ After a few moments of thought, Councilman Thing, told me that the term was being used "way before" Shipek's work. Thing recalled,

Many years ago I remember when I was a little kid, Manuel Escorero,¹⁵ he was from Jamul, he used to use that word *Kumeyaay*. When he would see people coming [he would] say "*Kumeyaay meyuu*," to them coming *Kumeyaay*, but I didn't know what he meant, I thought he meant like a dead person, like a spiritual, something like that, that's what I thought. That's why I didn't pay much attention to it, till Rosie Pinto started that. Rosie Pinto worked with Shipek and Shipek worked with her.

Rosalie Pinto Roberston of Campo Reservation, was Florence Shipek's *Kumeyaay* interpreter, and it wasn't until she started using the term, that Thing recalled hearing the term prior to Shipek's work. *Kumeyaay* is the term used in place of *Diegueño*, but some Indians insist on using *Diegueño* to describe them, as noted by some on the Pauma Reservation. In Mexico the term used is *Kumiai*, or as further described by Hohenthal,¹⁶ *Tipai kumiyai* or "west people" in the vicinity of Nejí-Manteca-Peña Blanca and [San José] villages, and *Tipai kuwak* or "south people" for those around La Huerta and the Alamo Plain. My project revolves around the *Tipai* whether it be the *Tipai kumiai* from San José Village or those called *Kumeyaay* from Jamul Indian Village.

The point in bringing out the many ways in which California Indian names and identities have changed through time, is to realize how categories must be understood as being both mediated and constrained by the various peoples who entered Indian lands. Historical identities especially are structured in relationship to particular readings of

¹⁴ I have talked to some people concerning the term *Kumeyaay* and according to Patti Dixon, Florence Shipek had made that term popular, but Councilman Thing argues this point.

¹⁵ Adolph Thing not positive of the spelling.

¹⁶ William D. Hohenthal, Jr. *Tipai Ethnographic Notes: A Baja California Indian Community at Mid-Century*, ed. Thomas C. Blackburn (Novato: Ballena Press, 2001).

geographic areas, such as are found in the "imagined community" of the nation.¹⁷ Names are also considered "symbols of empire,"¹⁸ where he who names a people demonstrates the dominion of his society over their definition and perhaps their future. Hinton (1994) states, naming is an act of power. Many California Indians today, however, are taking back their names.

In recent years, some California tribes have made an effort to make official their own names for themselves. The terms "Ipai" and "Tipai" (meaning "people") and "Kumeyaay" are self-designations that replace the Spanish cover term "Diegueño." The term "Yuma," which was first recorded in Spanish, was probably a borrowing from Pima-Papago for the Quechan. The name "Quechan" was the tribe's own name for themselves, meaning "those who descended," referring to the creation tale. The tribal council has now officially adopted the term Quechan, and encourages its usage by others. Similar action has been taken by the Tongva and Ajachmem, who have been known in the literature as the Gabrielinos and Juaneños.¹⁹

San José Village - One Of Many Kumeyaay Homelands

Travel was a normal pattern established among the Kumeyaay where families could be visited between villages. It was only after contact that this traveling became thwarted in ways that the Kumeyaay never would have dreamed possible. It must be kept in mind that until 1900 and 1910 many of the Kumeyaay were living in the Mission Bay area, Mission Valley, and other places around San Diego. Yet by 1920, most had left the San Diego-Mission Valley area. During the American period, Indians were being forced out on a continuous basis. Just as they became settled in a spot, incoming white settlers forced them out because they weren't wanted on lands the newcomers claimed. These white

¹⁷ Lisbeth Haas, *Conquests and Historical Identities in California, 1769-1936* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 9.

¹⁸ George Stewart, *Names on the Land: A Historical Account of Place-Naming in the United States*. 3rd Edition. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967) in Leanne Hinton, *Flutes of Fire: Essays on California Indian Languages* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1994), 163.

¹⁹ Leanne Hinton, *Flutes of Fire: Essays on California Indian Languages* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1994) 163.

settlers used the word "squatter" to define Indians, as the term implies settling on property without right or title. Labeling them "squatters" implied that Indians had no rights or entitlement to the lands they had occupied longer than the whites, in the same areas for the past 10,000 to 15,000 years. Since the treaties made in 1851-1852 between the United States and California Indians were never honored, Anglo settlers were the actual "squatters," but their "rights" had precedence over native peoples displaced by them and other colonial efforts.

In the 1880s the government was poised in its efforts to assimilate Indians at any cost, and many of their methods to do so were coercive. The most devastating government policy was that which forcibly replaced the traditional communal landholding system with a system of private property, known as the General Allotment Act of 1887. By being vested with private property, the California Indian was to be made to conform to the social and economic structure of an increasingly capitalized America. Implicit in the ideology behind the law was the idea of a basic human nature that was acquisitive. But, as Deloria has pointed out, Indians did not magically turn into white folks by owning a little plot of ground (Deloria, 1988). The concept of land was not the same for California Indians as for the whites that displaced them. For Europeans as well as whites, land was commodity to be exploited, used, dominated by a ruling class, held as alienable ownership through the concept of 'private property.' For indigenous peoples of the region, land was sacred, given to them by their creators with a moral responsibility attached to its care; humans were to cooperate with and integrate themselves into this environment. The concept of private property was alien to the cosmology and philosophy of land that was held communally by Indians, that is, as use-rights vested in kinship-defined groups.²⁰

²⁰ E. S. Rogers, "The Indian and the European: Two Views of the Land," in *Man in Nature: Historical Perspectives on Man in His Environment*, ed. Louis D. Levine (Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, 1975).

This change to private property and forced removal forged vivid, transgenerational memories for Delfina Cuero, a Kumeyaay woman. She stated, "My father and mother left Mission Valley [mat kutap], they told me, when a lot of Chinese and Americans came into the Valley and told them that they had to leave. They did not own the land that their families and ancestors had always lived upon."²¹ She spoke of moving back and forth seasonally looking for food where the Kumeyaay never remained in one location on a year-round basis, rather constantly on the move, searching for food and trying to gain employment where they could. Cuero further stated, "I remember my father used to work all around El Cajon and Jamul and many places. He did ranch work. We just camped as close as we could most times. We never lived in a house. We just lived out away from the ranch houses in the brush of some small canyon."²² Realizing that they were being overrun by white settlers, and having to be constantly forced out of their so-called "squatting" locations, they decided to go where fewer whites lived. They chose northern Baja California, neither realizing nor understanding that an international border had cut their territory in half. They had always traveled throughout Kumeyaay territory and villages visiting relatives, attending fiestas and ceremonies, gathering acorns and staying with relatives in either direction. Some Kumeyaay married into reservation families, but most did not. Those who did not never felt it was their place to move into other Indian reservations without an invitation. In the past this too was the way it was, as "Indians always respected other Indian's boundaries," according to the elders. So although some were fortunate enough to live on reservations, the other non-reservation Kumeyaay whose

²¹ Florence C. Shipek, *Delfina Cuero, Her Autobiography. An Account of Her Last Years and Her Ethnobotanic Contributions*. Ballena Press Anthropological Papers No. 38, General Editors, Sylvia Brakke Vane and Lowell John Bean (Menlo Park: Ballena Press, 1991), 23. This work is a composite of Shipek's work first published by Dawson's Book Shop in 1968, and reissued after going out of print by Malki Press in 1970.

²² *Ibid.* 25.

territories included both California and Mexico, lived and camped throughout Lakeside, El Cajon, Monte Vista, Jamacha, Otay and in all the little mountain valleys of the San Diego back country,²³ or in remote canyons and tidelands; they tried to survive unmolested.²⁴ Many of the San José Village and Jamul Indian Village members or relatives lived and worked in these areas, forced to adapt to the American economic system. For instance, Councilman Thing said that many of the Indians worked around El Cajon, Otay, Barrett, Jamul, in ranches as well as other areas, and that some of their children were born on these ranches. This is true as both Tribal Chairman Kenneth Meza, and Vice Chairwoman Carlene Chamberlain, were born at Monte Vista Ranch where their parents were employed. So as stated earlier, there had always been movement between the two villages - Jamul and San José - with families in both places and in other villages as well, such as Neji and La Huerta. San José would later become part of Mexico due to the placement of the "border," although it was never viewed that way among the Kumeyaay.

The location of the border was established by the Mexican and the United States governments with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848 and the Gadsden Purchase in 1853. Before there was a border, Indians had villages or settlements lying between the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean. Changes involve the shifting of not only borders, but lands and people as well, and border changes are often accompanied by a different set of rules that can foster exploitation and conditions of hardship for those suddenly excluded.²⁵ The designation "border" is relatively new, for the land has always been here along with the river of people that have flowed over it for centuries.

²³ (Shipek, *Delfina Cuero*, 9).

²⁴ Richard L. Carrico, *Strangers in a Stolen Land: American Indians in San Diego 1850-1880* (Sierra Oaks Publishing Co., 1987), 27.

²⁵ Olivia Cadaval, <http://educate.si.edu/migrations/bord/intro.html>.

Borders and border societies are formed out of the ideas concerning the sovereignty of nation states. Borders involve cultural representations including that of the "other" and the "marginalized" who occupy the "in-between world,"²⁶ the place where First-World and Third-World or North and South meet. The Kumeyaay elders do not view it as "neither first-world nor third-world," but as their world, a world they knew through their memories of movements across spaces and places. While movement across these spaces has been restricted, their national identity as Kumeyaay persists, despite the fact that other national identities have been imposed.

The village San José, as mentioned by Kumeyaay elder Adolph Thing, was also called Villareal San José (because the Villareal Rancho bordered San José) by William Hohenthal, who conducted fieldwork in Baja California between 1948 and 1951.²⁷ San José was situated just off the road leading from Tecate to La Rumorosa (also known as the Tecate-Alaska Highway referred to as Little Alaska because of the amount of snow during the winter months). San José was considered a *ranchería* rather than a *reserva indígena* by Hohenthal even though neither term was used by the Indians in the historical past, but simply known as villages.²⁸ Hohenthal claims he knew only three *reserva indígenas* in the late 1940s: La Huerta, San Antonio de Eñekwa and San José de la Zorra. Although

²⁶ Norma E. Cantu, "Living on the Border: A Wound that Will Not Heal." <http://educate.si.edu/migrations/bord/live.html>.

²⁷ William D. Hohenthal, Jr. *Tipai Ethnographic Notes: A Baja California Indian Community at Mid-Century*, ed. Thomas C. Blackburn (Novato: Ballena Press, 2001).

²⁸ Hohenthal described a *ranchería* as a "small settlement of Indians, from one to three families, usually in isolated canyons considered too poor for agriculture by the Mexicans, and to which land the Indians have no claim beyond squatters' rights and the tolerance of the Mexican ranchers whose property usually includes these canyons and over which they run their cattle." He distinguishes *rancherías* from a *reserva indígena* which is "a larger tract of land, not necessarily a canyon...where up to a dozen families or more may live." (Hohenthal, *Tipai Ethnographic Notes*, 96). I object to the word "squatter" because it again implies no rights or title to property, foregoing the fact that this was always Indian land even though there is silence in this recognition. However, in this instance we can see how language is used to portray Indian's in a negative light - "squatter" and Mexican's "tolerance" for them implying an inferior status.

Hohenthal does not include San José, Adolph Thing remembered that there were families residing there, and that some of the property was owned by the Indians. The Indian families he mentioned were those of Luis Tambo and his wife Metty, Ambrosio Thing, Benito Mesa and his wife Eulalia Thing, the Rosales family, and a man named Cheyowa and his wife Ajuís.²⁹ The Indian property at San José was bordered on each side by two Mexican families, the Valencias, and a woman named Lola Sandoval, as well as the Villareal Rancho that was formerly owned by the Mendoza family. Thing mentioned that his father Ambrosio was originally called to San José to settle a land dispute, as he was a well-respected man among the Kumeyaay. The land disputes in San José revolved around individual property as property there was not communally owned. Because the Indians did not have deeds to the land, disputes as to who owned it, and what was to be done with it, often arose. For instance, if someone left for a long while and returned, they became angry if they found that someone else had taken it over and was using it.

San José is located in the inland plateau region of Mexico, which is characterized by a Mediterranean climate that allowed the Indians in San José to plant crops such as alfalfa, and to grow many types of fruit trees including apricots, cherries, pears, as well as grapes, and pomegranates. They also had gardens where they grew corn, beans, squash, tomatoes, watermelons, chilies and tomatillos. Councilman Thing's father Ambrosio Thing had placed this property in his name when other families died off leaving no one to inherit their property, or when they moved out of San José in search of wage labor, so that the Mexican government would not take it over and turn it into an *ejido*. Thing indicated San José became abandoned because people died there, because the wives of those men who died were left alone and needed to move on, and because the younger generation had different ideas than staying at San José, such as seeking wage labor. Ambrosio Thing

²⁹ No positive spelling of the last two names mentioned.

continued to pay taxes on the property. He later sold it and moved to the village of Santa Catarina in Mexico for a while, stayed with his daughter Jane in her home in San Diego County, visited Jamul during fiestas and to play peon games, and eventually moved to places like Barrett and El Cajon in San Diego County to work for wages.

Some might say that the Kumeyaay "migrated" from San Jose Village to Jamul Indian Village, even though both San José Village and the current Jamul Indian Village are part of their original band territory,³⁰ but the term "migration" is used only because of the political distinction between the United States and Mexico. Considering this, the Kumeyaay view both of the villages and their lands as part of their original band territory. The more proper term to be used is probably "internal migration," a term coined by Cook indicating the territorial redistribution of Indian groups as a whole, and the dispersion of individuals in conformity with pressures exerted by white society. The smaller the number of survivors, Cook found, the greater the likelihood that they will migrate.³¹ This is what happened in the case of San José Village: as the older generation died out, the younger generations migrated from that village to their other village site, Jamul Indian Village or thereabout, in search of wage labor.

³⁰ The use of the term "territory" needs some reiteration here because of the terms political territory vs. ecological territory. During the land claims case of *The Indians of California v the United States* (Dockets 31 and 37), the Petitioners and the Defendants argued their positions. The Petitioners presented ethnographic and historical testimony and archaeological data to demonstrate aboriginal ownership of territory. The Defendants, however, argued from an ecological position arguing that utilization of a given area for hunting/gathering sources or subsistence areas may not have been exclusive among bands and therefore in this case they could not assert a claim to these given sites and areas. I tend not to agree with this ecological argument put forth by Beals, et al, but rather concur with Rupert Costo that in putting forth this ecological theory exhibits a lack of knowledge and understanding of Indian life and cultures, and this breaking down by ecological units was a way to simply refrain from paying them for more land.

³¹ S. F. Cook, "Migration and Urbanization of the Indians in California," in *The California Indians: A Source Book*, eds. R. F. Heizer and M. A. Whipple (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), 454, 458.