CULTURAL LANDSCAPE STUDY OF LOST VALLEY, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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ABSTRACT

From the nature of extant cultural resources in Lost Valley, it is apparent that two cultural groups have occupied the valley. Subsequent research has revealed that Lost Valley was a part of Cupeno territory, and that in 1898 Harry Bergman of Aguanga had purchased 160 acres of the valley for cattle grazing. These two cultural components allow for Lost Valley to be defined as a cultural landscape according to *National Register Bulletin 38 -- Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties.* This study will show that Lost Valley was a location associated with traditional beliefs and subsistence practices of a Native American group, anf with the cattle industry of San Diego County, and that the valley contains a variety of natural and cultural resources that can be defined as heritage resources.

Introduction

During August 1995, a Phase 1 archaeological survey of 550 acres of Lost Valley, San Diego County, California, was undertaken. From the nature of the cultural resources discovered and recorded it was apparent that two cultural groups had occupied the valley. Subsequent research revealed that Lost Valley was a part of Cupeño territory, and that in 1898, Henry Bergman of Aguanga had purchased the land-holding of Jim Stone of Mesa Grande as a summer range for his cattle. This tradition continued until Henry Bergman's grandson, Ray Bergman, sold the family holdings to the Orange County Boy Scouts of America in the 1950s (P. Brigandi 1995).

Lost Valley is similar to many of the mountain valleys located in the northern Peninsular Ranges of San Diego County. These ranges consist of plutonic intrusions into older metamorphosed sedimentary rock (Demere 1994:26,34), with the soils in this area supporting vegetal communities of chaparral, oak groves, pine forests, meadows, and riparian vegetation along water sources (Barbour and Majors 1988:418-552). The richness and diversity of this type of landscape became the focus of the Cupeño and the Bergman family. Due to limited space and the need for further historic research, this study will delineate Lost Valley as a location associated with traditional beliefs and subsistence practices of a Native American group.

Theoretical Orientation and Methods

In the absence of scientific investigation through excavation and analysis of recovered artifacts, the adaptation of the Cupeño to their environment was studied through the techniques outlined in Preservation Briefs and National Register Bulletins, published by the Secretary of the Interior. These techniques refer to documentation of cultural resources using methods from archaeology and biology, and the establishment of a cultural and environmental background through researching historical documentation and materials associated with the geological and biological formation of the area. Because of the nature of the cultural resources found in Lost Valley, the cultural landscape was evaluated in terms of an ethnographic landscape defined according to *Preservation Brief 36*, which states, "*Ethnographic landscapes* are those that contain a variety of natural and cultural resources that associated people define as heritage resources."

Using ethnographies, archaeological reports, linguistic studies, and oral histories, Lost Valley was researched through specific topics, such as cultural history, subsistence patterns, and social organization. Ethnobotanical studies provided information on possible floral and faunal resources, and uses of these resources for food and material items.

Cultural History

The cultural history of San Diego County can be divided into four complexes. The earliest is the San Dieguito (6000-5500 B.C.), followed by the Millingstone Complex (5500 B.C. - A.D. 500), which is known also as the La Jolla Complex, and a Late Period (A..D. 500-1500) that is typified by the migration of two distinct language groups - Yuman of the Hokan family, and a group of Cupan (subgroup of the Uto-Aztecan family) speaking people. The last complex is the Historic Period that can be divided into the time periods of Spanish, Mexican, and American (Moratto 1984:158).

The Cupeño (Cupan speakers) are the smallest cultural group in San Diego County. According to oral history, 1100-1300 years ago founders of the tribe moved south from Soboba, and settled in the area around Warner's Hot Springs and Lost Valley (Hill and Nolasquez 1960:i,9a). The Cupeño were a sociocultural group with distinct clans and moieties. Their social organization contained exogamous moieties, patrilineal clans, and ceremonial exchange "parties," with clan ownership of resource areas (Hill and Nolasquez 1960:i). For example, the *temewhanitcem* (northerners) clan of the *Islam* (coyote) moiety had exclusive land-use rights and ownership of *Wiatava* (Lost Valley), which was exploited for seeds, berries, and wild oats (Strong 1929:248).

Beginning in 1795 with the establishment of a Spanish way station at Cupa (Warner's Hot Springs), the Cupeño came under the influence of Euro-American cultures, and a gradual acculturation took place with the Cupeño practicing agriculture as well as maintaining a hunter/gatherer existence. After 1840, with the signing-over of Cupeño territory to Jose Antonio Pico, the Cupeño experienced a period of unsettled conditions that culminated with their removal to Pala in 1902 (Hill and Nolasquez 1973:i). With their removal, Warner's Hot Springs and Lost Valley came directly under the control of white settlers. During the late 1880s, Lost Valley was "rediscovered" by Jim Stone of Mesa Grande who used it as a summer range for his cattle. In 1898, Henry Bergman of Aguanga bought Stone's holding for cattle grazing, an activity that ended 72 years later when his grandson Ray Bergman sold his holdings to the Orange County Boy Scouts of America (Phil Brigandi 1995).

Results of Research

Identification of a Traditional Cultural Landscape

When identifying cultural landscapes, it is necessary to define the geographical and cultural boundaries. Geographically, Lost Valley is located in the northeastern section of San Diego County. Low hills and high mountains of the Peninsular Ranges encompass the valley, forming a natural geographic boundary. Ethnographical research delineated the cultural group that had access to Lost Valley. According to William Duncan Strong, Lost Valley formed part of Cupeño territory and was used by the *temewhanitcem* clan for the gathering of food resources (1929:245.248). It is concluded from these data that the hills and mountains surrounding the valley formed a natural cultural boundary.

Documentation of Resources

Biological Inventory - Lost Valley has a diverse biological community. The valley floor consists of a large meadow, bisected by Agua Caliente Creek and various tributaries. At the southern end of the valley is a man-made lake, into which the Agua Caliente Creek flows. The main meadow of the valley has a north-south axis and is covered by various grasses. Agua Caliente Creek, in the areas where it is fed by springs, supports a riparian community that includes willow (*Salix* spp.), cottonwood (*Populus fremontii*), reed (*Typha* sp.), Indian

Hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*), and nettle (*Asclepias eriocarpa*). The lake is surrounded by the same riparian community. On the southern and southeast edges of the meadow are sections of sage (*Salvia* sp.), bordered by groves of pine (*Pinus coulteri*) and oak (*Quercus* sp.). Ferns (*Pellaea mucronata*) are prevalent around natural springs. Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos* sp.), ceanothus (*Ceanothus* sp), chamise (*Adenostoma fasciculatum*), Our Lord's Candle (*Yucca whipplei*), and scrub oak (*Quercus dumosa*) constitute the lower growing evergreen shrubs. Mountain slopes to the south and southeast support mixed chaparral (ceanothus, chamise, manzanita, and scrub oak), dispersed with pine and oak. The northern slopes are distinctive in that they lack pine and oak, but are covered with dense mixed chaparral (M. Webb 1996).

These diverse vegetation communities support a variety of animals, including black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), cottontail rabbits (*Sylvilagus sp.*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), western gray squirrel (*Sciurus griseus*), Beechey ground squirrel (*Otospermophilus beecheyi*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), mountain lion (*Felis concolor*), wood rat (*Neotoma lepida*), and various reptiles (M. Webb 1996).

Archaeological Inventory - An archaeological inventory was conducted to document the visible cultural remains and ascertain a material and economic use of the land. Nineteen extant sites and one completely destroyed site are recorded within the boundaries of Lost Valley. The destroyed site is included in this survey, as it contributes to information on land use.

All of these sites are in proximity to either Shingle Springs, Agua Caliente Creek, or a tributary of the creek. The functions of the sites are characteristic of either processing areas, as reflected in lithic scatter and bedrock milling, or of habitation sites, represented by hearths and midden type soils. Fourteen sites can be classified as processing and habitation sites, with the remaining six classified as processing sites.

Ethnographic Findings - The cultural history of the Cupeño has been documented in the section *Cultural History*. The following is a description based on the data collected by Strong (1929) and Hill and Nolasquez (1973) of the connection between the myth of *Kisily Pewish* and *Wiatava* (Lost Valley). According to the myth, after Kisily Pewish and his mother returned to Cupa they destroyed their enemies, who had decimated the original inhabitants many years earlier when Kisily Pewish was a baby. Kisily Pewish intermarried with two Luiseño women and had three sons, who in turn intermarried with one Luiseño clan and two Diegueño clans. The elder son and his wife were kind to Kisily Pewish, while the other sons were not. This made Kisily Pewish angry; as a result he divided ownership of the land between the sons--forming three clans. To the third son Kisily Pewish said "Go to the north and call yourselves *temewhanitc* (northerner)" (Strong 1929: 220). According to Strong's informants, clan 1 and clan 2 were close relatives and could not marry, but could marry into clan 3. This was based on the grounds that clans 1 and 2 were founded from the legendary full brothers and lived close to one another, while clan 3 was founded by the legendary half-brother and lived farther away (1929: 221).

Ethnobotanical Findings - From studies by Barrows (1900), Hedges (1967), and Balls (1962) it is known that the Cupeño used wild plants for food, medicinal purposes, clothing, dyes, and manufacture of material items. The findings are substantiated by the linguistic study by Hill and Nolasquez (1973).

Discussion

Archaeologists ask many questions about sites and their contribution to settlement patterns, subsistence and diet, and social organization of a specific culture or group. Therefore, an archaeological site may be studied individually, or as one that is part of a larger unit. The benefit of studying a site or sites within a larger unit manifests itself in the philosophy of cultural landscapes. Sites give character and diversity to the earth's surface and form the

physical framework within which human societies exist; they are closely linked to all aspects of human life--the economic, the religious, the social, and the psychological (Roberts 1987:79). The following is a discussion of some of these aspects in regards to the Cupeño.

Environment and Economy

According to Karl Butzer (1982:187), existing hunter-gather societies extensively forage for wild plants to be used for food, medicinal purposes, clothing, and dyes. For the purpose of this study the manufacture of material items is added to the above list. The sources of information for the following discussion has been compiled from APEC (1981), Barrows (1900), Balls (1962), Bleitz (1991), Hill and Nolasquez (1973), Hedges (1967), and Strong (1929).

Food Resource

It is apparent from the biological study that the Cupeño had access to a great variety of plant and animal foods in Lost Valley. Like their neighbors the Diegeño of Santa Ysabel, and other Native American cultural groups of California along the Pacific coast, acorns were the most generally used food. Other vegetal foods included seeds (grass, manzanita, sage, chia, chokecherry, wormwood, and pine nuts); fruits (cactus fruits, elderberry, agave, and manzanita berries); and greens (white sage and watercress). Besides vegetal foods, animals were also exploited as a food source. The valley contains deer, rodents (rabbits and wood rats), reptiles, and grasshoppers, and these are known to have been a part of the Cupeño diet (Hill and Nolasquez 1973). The methods of hunting included use of the bow and arrow, throwing sticks, and nets.

Material Culture

Riparian vegetation (willow and cottonwood) provided the material used for the manufacture of bow and arrow shafts, as well as apron-like skirts. Baskets of varying sizes and uses were woven from *Muhlenbergia rigens* (bunch grass), *Typha sp.*(cattail), and *Rhus triolobata* (squaw bush); also, the sacred clan bundle (the *maasivet*) was made from cattails. Fiber from yucca and agave was spun into yarn and woven into saddle blankets, or used for making sandals and the manufacture of cord. Wood from the oaks, pine, and manzanita had general purpose uses such as fuel and house construction. Quartz was used in the manufacture of projectile points, and gabbro for pestles and manos. The Cupeño women also manufactured pottery items, but no reference has been found for a source of clay.

Medicinal

Of the plants known to exist in Lost Valley, *Eriogonum fasciculatum* (buckwheat), *Rosa californica* (wild rose), *Sambucus mexicana* (elderberry), *Phoradendron flavescens* (mistletoe), *Anemopsis californica* (yerba santa), *Populus fremonti* (cottonwood), and *Pellaea mucronata* (fern), have medicinal uses. These plants were used to alleviate diarrhea and fever, as a cure for dandruff, to ease pain, and for symptoms associated with coughs, colds, and asthma.

The surface archaeological evidence does not support the use of all the vegetal, animal, and mineral resources as discussed; this is due to poor preservation of fibrous materials, pothunting, and the fact that no sites have been excavated. What does remain is the bedrock milling features (BRM)--mortars and basin mortars, groundstone tools – pestles and manos, projectile points and lithic scatters, midden-type soil, and hearths. From this evidence positive assumptions can be made about which resources were used by the Cupeño.

Bedrock Milling Features

These are the predominant archaeological feature of Lost Valley. According to D.L. True's 1993 analysis of bedrock milling features in Northern San Diego County, California, there are five kinds of bedrock milling elements--mortars, metates, slicks, collars, and cupules (1993:7). Of these there are three types present in the valley – bedrock mortars, bedrock metates, and cupules.

One aspect of True's study was an interpretation of the differences in the distribution of different kinds of BRM throughout his study area. He found that the differences represented "responses to environmental circumstances (kinds of resources available); responses to technical factors (processing modes); and/or to different usage developed through time" (1993:15). When these factors are applied to Lost Valley, a pattern emerges suggesting that sites with a concentration of deep mortars, and with or without horizontal cupules can be identified as acorn processing sites. In contrast, sites with bedrock metates and mortars suggest that along with acorn processing, either hard seed, and/or small-animal processing had taken place (after True 1993:15-16).

Of the number of sites recorded for the valley, four sites can be classified as multi-purpose food processing sites. From the biological record, it can be stated that acorns, seeds (wormwood, chia, white sage, chokecherry, and coulter pine), plus manzanita kernels were probably the food resources, including small animals, that were processed at these sites.

Mineral Resources

The archaeological evidence indicates that the main material of the projectile points was quartz, with some obsidian and jasper. Quartz is readily available in the valley, being found in creek beds, protruding from hillsides, and lying on the ground. There are no natural resources in the valley for obsidian and jasper which were most probably a trade item. Fifteen sites were recorded to contain quartz/and quartzite lithics, indicating that tool manufacture was also taking place at these sites along with food processing. Four sites were recorded as containing only lithic scatter. Gabbro and granite were amongst the material types for artifacts at various sites. It can be concluded from this evidence that the Cupeño exploited the mineral resources of the valley.

Settlement

Brian Fagan when discussing *Settlement Archaeology and Settlement Patterns* writes that taken together the environment and the economy of a cultural group determines the length of time a community lives in one place (1992:394). It is known from the studies of Strong (1929:248) that food resources were controlled by different clans, with Lost Valley belonging to the *temewhanitc* clan of the *Islam* moiety. The oral history as recorded by Hill and Nolasquez (1973:29a) states that in October the clans traveled to the groves from the main village of Cupa – setting up temporary camps while collecting and processing food resources. On this basis, it appears that at the time Strong and Hill and Nolasquez collected their information, Lost Valley had been a seasonal habitation site with its time of occupation controlled by the harvesting season of food resources. On the other hand the myth of Kisily Pewish tells that when the territory was divided amongst the brothers, the *temewhanitc* where given land in the north including Lost Valley. Also, Strong's informants on laws regarding marriage stated that clans 1 and 2 (*kavalim* and *pumtumatulniktcum*) could intermarry with clan 3 (*temewhanitc)* because in former times "its home territory was farther away" (1929:221). This information infers that at one time Lost Valley was inhabited permanently.

Chronology

The surface archaeological evidence, through obsidian hydration readings, gives a date of A.D. 1561-1848 for Cupeño occupation of the valley (Bleitz 1991:13). Based on the data collected by Hill and Nolasquez that approximately 1000-800 years ago the founders of the tribe moved from Soboba to Cupa, the obsidian hydration dates confirm occupation of the valley before Spanish contact in 1795.

Religious Significance and Social Organization

The origin of clan ownership of the valley as featured in the myth of *Kisily Pewish* and the significance of clan membership in marriage customs has already been discussed. There is no archaeological evidence to support this

concept. However, the environment of the valley has certain attributes that may have been used for ceremonial purposes – *Typha sp.* (cattail) and *Mulenbergia rigens* (bunch grass) for manufacture of the clan sacred bundle (*maasivet*) and articles that it contained – eagle feathers for eagle-feather skirt (*elat*) and headbands (*chiyatim*), a crystal beaded wand (*pavyut*), and turtle-shell rattles (*ayilyam*). *Mulenbergia rigens* (bunch grass) was also used to make image dolls for the final ceremony for the dead that was held a year after death (Hill and Nolasquez 1973:103-104, Strong 1929:266). Although the above mentioned biological attributes are not represented in the archaeological evidence at sites, they form part of the cultural environment of the Cupeño and can be considered a part of their cultural heritage.

The Cupeño who used Lost Valley fit into Butzer's view of *adaptive strategy* (1982:56), where the social behavior - clan territorial ownership, technology, and resource opportunities are reflected in subsistence strategies. Cupeño clans had exclusive rights in some areas, while in others rights overlapped. It could be hypothesized that early settlement patterns are reflected in the exogamous marriages between the clans. The Cupeño responded and adjusted to changes in their human and natural environment by coming together and living in two villages sometime before Spanish contact in 1795; afterwards to acculturation; and again in 1902 when they were removed from their land to the Pala reservation.

Conclusion

This study has shown that the use of the philosophy of cultural landscapes enables researchers to obtain an understanding of the values of a culture through the changes that have been made to the land. These changes when related to the existing biological environment lead to an understanding of subsistence and diet, and technology. When these changes are related to ethnographic and other research studies, some aspects of social organization of a culture may be reflected in the use of the landscape. This study has contributed to an understanding of the Cupeño in terms of their use of Lost Valley. The changes that they made to the landscape reflect the optimum economic use of the natural resources. The granitic outcrops were modified for the processing of vegetal foods. The biological inventory of the valley contains vegetal and animal components that were used in all aspects of life--for subsistence, cure of aliments, manufacture of cultural items, and for ceremonial purposes, thus becoming an important component of Cupeño cultural heritage.

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