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Indigenous Remapping in the Southern Californian Landscape

Elysia Poon

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Elysia Poon

Candidate

Art & Art History

Department

This thesis is approved, and it is acceptable in quality
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Approved by the Thesis Committee:

Joyce M. Szabo

Chairperson

[Handwritten signature]

David Craven

**INDIGENOUS REMAPPING IN THE
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIAN LANDSCAPE**

BY

ELYSIA POON

BACHELOR OF ARTS ART HISTORY

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Art History

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Summer 2011

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**B.A. Art History, University of California, San Diego, 2001
M.A. Art History, University of New Mexico, 2011**

ABSTRACT

The history of Native people in Southern California is both unique in that, until the last few decades, many people within the state were completely unaware of the presence of living Native Californians. With the onset of the gaming industry in the late 1980s, however, the visibility of Native California skyrocketed. Beginning in the 1990s, homes and streets were filled with gaming ads, political campaigns touting the benefits of gaming and at times, entire tribal councils were making their presence known at public events. Additionally, the fight for many unrecognized tribes in California in conjunction with the rise in economic enterprises, and a long history of ignoring the presence of Native Californians, led many non-Native California residents to challenge the legitimacy of gaming and federal recognition.

It is through this complex and highly charged climate that I examine contemporary Native landscape in Southern California. By looking at public spaces owned by California tribes, I study the impact of these spaces on the socio-political

climate of today and the Southern California landscape. These spaces, with varying levels of interiority and exteriority (places meant for tribal members versus non-tribal) as well as financial capacities, came to fruition during the same period of increased visibility and helped change the ways these highly contested issues were viewed.

I argue that, depending on the level of exteriority or interiority, the architecture and design will often take on a decidedly “Indian” look that ranges from being definitively California Native to Native American in general. I attempt to shed more light on the complex histories leading to the creation of some of the tribally owned institutions dotting the Southern California landscape today. These Native-owned spaces metaphorically and literally change the way the public views landscape and themselves.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Within the discourse known as “Native American Art History,” several regions within the United States are consistently not discussed. While scholars and collectors often examine the important influences of Native people in the Southwest, Plains, and Northwest Coast, large regions such as California and the Great Basin receive scant attention. In the case of California, when discussed at all, the focus is almost exclusively Northern California and is almost always confined to the limits of basketry.

In Native art historical surveys such as Janet Berlo and Ruth Phillips’ *Native North American Art* (1998), California falls under the enormous region called the “West,” which includes the Plains, Great Basin and California. Out of the thirty pages that comprise the chapter on the “West,” twenty-seven are focused on the Plains area, while the last three pages lump California and the Great Basin together in a brief discussion of basketry. In this particular survey, Southern California is completely ignored.

These choices of inclusion, or exclusion, are not at all atypical within the art historical discourse. Like Berlo and Phillips, Edwin Wade’s *The Arts of the North American Indian* is overwhelmingly focused on Southwest, Plains, and, to a lesser degree, the Northwest Coast. Californian communities are singularly missing from the entire book save for a brief discussion of Fritz Scholder, who is discussed on more Pan-Indian terms and was associated with the Santa Fe art scene, and a passing reference to northern California basketry on a chapter about Washoe basketry in the Great Basin and patronage.

As one of the largest and most diverse areas in the North America with an extremely dense Native and non-Native population—in fact, Los Angeles has the highest

population of urban Indians anywhere in North America—it is rather surprising that there is so little effort to discuss such a culturally rich area. This raises the questions: why has California been historically ignored in the history of Native America and how has this affected contemporary Native Californian expression?

Why is California Not Discussed in Native American Art?: The Falsehoods

The reasons why California is often left out of discussions of Native art and art history seem to stem from several falsehoods perpetuated among many non-Natives and non-Californian Natives alike. In regards to her trip to California in 2002, journalist Dorreen Yellow Bird writes:

During my recent trip to the Native American Journalists Association conference in San Diego, I learned that California has many tribes. I believed the stereotype about California and thought it was reaffirmed by the recent story about the Native American woman and her two children who were the only members of a remote California tribe and who were seeking permission to build a multimillion-dollar casino. Many of us in North Dakota believed that most of the Native people in California had been sent there through a federal relocation program that began in the 1950s¹

Yellow Bird’s assumptions that Native Californians were virtually extinct and that the only Natives in California were Native migrants from other parts of the country is a common misconception about California. Similarly, in an interview with Luiseño/Maidu composer and scholar Alan Lechusza, he recounts the lack of awareness among other Native peoples outside California during powwows and other intertribal events in the past. According to him, it was the “advent of the economic solidarity that the California casinos have brought forth [that] has made many other Native people identify with and acknowledge the California Native.”²

In other words, until the Native casino explosion of the 1990s, Native Californians were essentially considered extinct and, as can be seen with Yellow Bird's statement in 2002, these stereotypes continue to persist.

California Indians Are Extinct

In 1769, Father Junipero Serra founded Mission San Diego de Alcalá in San Diego, California. At the time, the Native population was estimated to be roughly 133,000 strong. In 1849 "discovery" of gold Sutter's Mill and the resulting Gold Rush led to mass migrations primarily from the eastern United States into California and the forcible displacement of large populations of Native people. By 1915, with all twenty-one of California's missions founded and the trauma resulting from the Gold Rush, the population of Native Californians had dropped to a mere 15,000.³

It is this legacy of decimation and encroachment that led to the way in which the subject of Native California has been approached within the educational system. From classic books such as A.L. Kroeber's *Ishi: The Last of His Tribe* to Scott O'Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins*, the message that is impressed upon students in the California school system is that California Indians were once "noble savages" who tragically became extinct so that civilization could progress.

In *Ishi*, the historical novel documents the encroachment of Western society and decimation of the indigenous Yahai community, which eventually forces the main character and last of his tribe, Ishi, to venture out of his "primitive" home territory in search of human interaction in the "civilized" world. Unable to adjust to modern society, however, Ishi eventually succumbs to illness and dies.

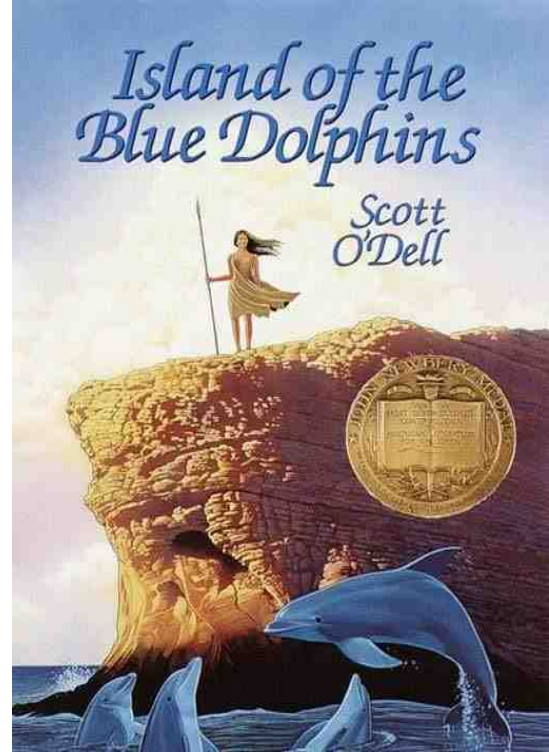
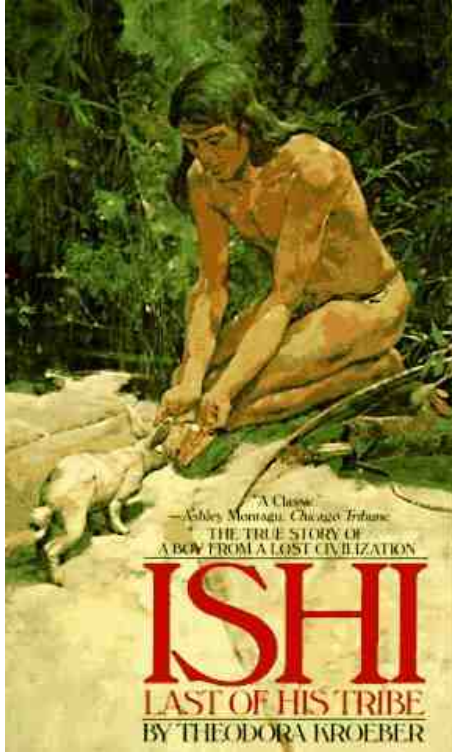


Figure 1.1: Book covers for Theodora Kroeber’s *Ishi: Last of His Tribe* and Scott O’Dell’s *Island of the Blue Dolphins* emphasize the “primitive” nature of their lives and a vanishing Indian mentality.

Similarly, *Island of the Blue Dolphins* takes a historical figure and fictionalizes the story to create a noble savage out of the lead character, Karana. Based on the real-life story of Juana Maria,⁴ who was touted as the last surviving Nicoleño, O’Dell’s Karana survives alone on her home island for nearly two decades after an Aleut ship evacuates the rest of her community to the mainland. Shortly after being rescued and taken to the Santa Barbara Mission, however, Karana, like Ishi, succumbs to illness, unable to adjust to the modern world.

Both books often appear on curriculum reading lists for elementary and middle school students. In fact, as a product of the Los Angeles Unified School District, I was assigned *Island of the Blue Dolphins* as required reading no less than four times by the time I finished elementary school and read *Ishi* as a class assignment in the eighth grade.

While *Island of the Blue Dolphins* and *Ishi* serve as examples of non-survival, it should be noted that many Native tribes actually survived these attempts at decimation resulting in hundreds of contemporary vibrant communities.

Manifest Destiny and the West

The nineteenth century evidenced a national mentality that combined a belief in expansionism, American exceptionalism, Romantic nationalism, and natural superiority of what was then called the "Anglo-Saxon race." For many, moving west was morally correct. Despite previous examples of failed empires, such as the British, Ottoman, and Roman, Americans were seen as somehow different from any other empire. Unlike others' empiric greed for power and wealth, it was a settler's *duty* and *God given right* to civilize the land. Natives were in need of civilizing, land was for the taking and no one was going to stop the natural flow of America's growth.

In John Gast's *American Progress* (1872), Columbia, represented by a female figure enrobed in white and wearing the star of empire, glides across the continental United States, stringing telephone lines with her left hand and carrying a textbook in her right. The areas that she has already passed through recall the civilized portions of the Anglo-populated East. Meanwhile, Columbia heads towards the wild darkness filled with Native savages, bringing civilization and lightness with her. In this painting, civilization is represented by Anglo men, sedentary agriculture and the introduction of the railroads. Native Americans dressed like stereotypical "Indians" in their buckskin and feathers, on the other hand, represent the wilderness. Unlike the forward moving Columbia, the Indians run away much like the quickly disappearing buffalo.



Figure 1.2: John Gast, *American Progress*, 1872. Oil on canvas. Collection of the Autry National Center. This painting represents the ethos of the time period and the concept of Manifest Destiny.

The feminine form at this time was often used as a symbol for the moral influence of home and civilization. Originally done as a painting and later turned into a widely distributed print, *American Progress* not only became a justification for the need for westward expansion, it also reinforced the idea that Native peoples were headed toward a dismal future of non-existence. Manifest Destiny led to a belief that Native peoples would eventually disappear or assimilate. Nowhere was this clearer than on the West Coast where Anglo-Americans could finally settle one of the final frontiers.

There are No “Real Indians” in California: Part I

The word “termination” refers to the federal government's attempt to relinquish its responsibility for Indian welfare by moving indigenous people off "resource depleted"

reservations and into urban centers such as Los Angeles and San Francisco. According to Robert Heizer:

California Indian tribes were to be among the first targets for termination. The commissioner of Indian affairs who inaugurated this policy, Dillon Meyer, was principally known as the man responsible for administering Japanese-American concentration camps during World War II. In 1952, the Bureau of Indian Affairs began to energetically push termination: the Indian Service introduced to Congress several termination bills specifically for California, and in anticipation of that policy, the government ended all Indian Service welfare payments to pauper Indians in the state.⁵

By being displaced off the reservation and away from cultural centers, a false assumption began to arise: that urban, or displaced Indians, were not real Indians because they were not from the reservation. As a result, Native Californians, as well as many non-Californian urban Natives, were and continue to be considered "not real Indians." In addition, although numerous reservations do exist in California, the fact that they are termed "racherias" as opposed to reservations lends itself to the idea that there are no longer any Native Californians left in the state.

The separation of "reservation Indians" and "urban Indians" allows for completely overlooking the enormous population of urban Indians in Los Angeles and San Francisco and Native Californians in general. Although not from California, Kay WalkingStick (Cherokee, born in Syracuse, New York) often deals with the hurtful issue of not being considered Native unless one is born on the reservation.

In her diptych titled, *Talking Leaves: You Not an Indian, You Weren't Born on a Reservation!* (1993) WalkingStick makes a clear reference to the tendency of Natives and non-Natives alike to assign a lower status, or non-status, of "Indianess" to urban Indians. By calling into question issues of authenticity and what being a "real Indian" is through her text and a flat style reminiscent of the Santa Fe Studio Style of painting—an approach

that was guided by a non-Native but is often regarded as the epitome of Native painting—WalkingStick allows her voice and that of the urban Native to be heard. The question that arises here is what about the Californian urban Indian? Is it possible that the largest urban Indian population in the United States (Los Angeles) has no significant art?

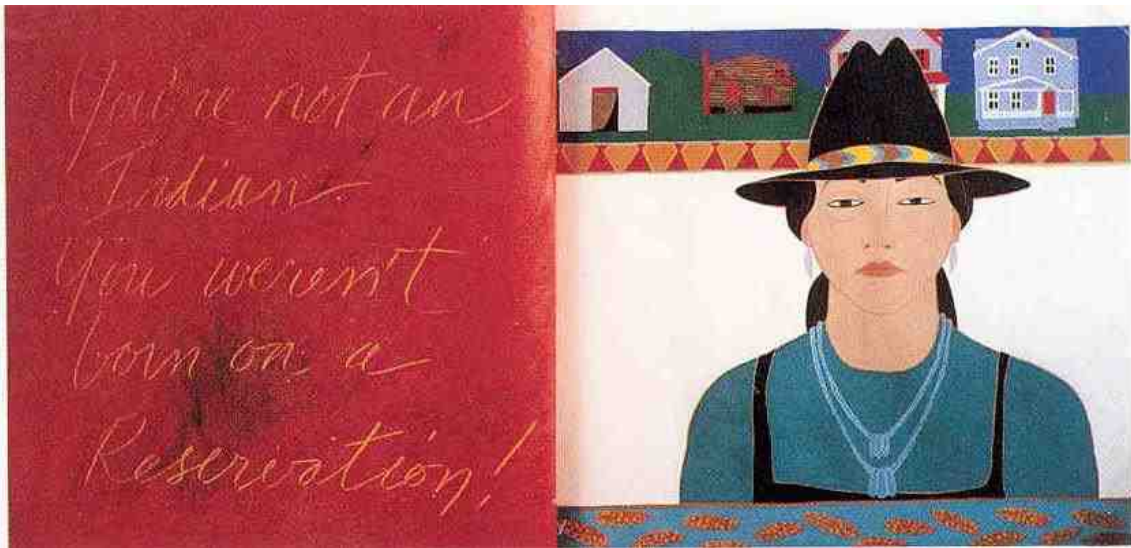


Figure 1.3: Kay WalkingStick. *Talking Leaves: You're Not an Indian, You Weren't Born on a Reservation!*, 1993. Gouache and oil stick on paper, 20" x 40". Collection of the Heard Museum.

Also, not only are Native Californians criticized for their urbanity, whether it be true or not, they are also swept far beneath other layers and issues that contribute to California's reputation as a state. On the one hand, the bright lights of the Hollywood set and film industry utterly overshadow almost everything else that might be going on within the state. On the other hand, California's melting pot stereotype and issues with immigration also blare loudly from television sets each night.

The overpowering glow of Hollywood and the film industry tends to make California appear decidedly blond, Anglo and wealthy. The history of Southern

California in particular is often told through a movie lens and that lens is scarcely one hundred years old. Rodeo Drive, the Hollywood myth (not the desolate reality), and the local saying that everyone is in the industry or knows someone in the industry all imply a recent past. This past is façade-like and lies over the indigenous landscape like a two-dimensional movie set. It does not matter that you rarely see Native American much less Native Californian actors on television or in film; this is the urban Indian capital of the world. In this state, not only are Native Californians extinct, to some, they never existed in the first place.

California's notable melting pot reputation and the resounding boom of immigration controversy also make for big news that often subdues its long indigenous past. Watching the news in California, there is constant debate about the rights and status of both illegal *and* legal immigrants. Minutemen, self-appointed vigilantes intent on "protecting" a political boundary that has become a battleground, constantly flash on the television set. A search of the *Los Angeles Times's* news items reveals no less than twenty stories relating to immigration and its policies for the week between December 2 and December 8, 2010.

While California condemns her newest tenants, however, she simultaneously boasts of her colorful, ethnically diverse population. Olvera Street, Little Tokyo, Little Saigon, Chinatown, and Little India are all heavily promoted ethnic enclaves that make up California's patchwork tourist identity. In the heavily contested battle for immigrant rights against Anglo oppressors and the effort to promote the diversity of California, the fight for indigenous rights and acknowledgement of past history is swept under the carpet.



Figure 1.4: Olvera Street and Chinatown in Los Angeles both play up their roles as ethnic enclaves through their architecture and marketing.⁶

There are No “Real Indians” in California: Part II

As a result of policies such as termination and the effects of the mission system and the Gold Rush, many communities and tribes were erroneously labeled “extinct.” As a result of this, many of these “extinct” tribes are currently in the process of trying to regain recognition from the federal government. There are roughly 245 federally non-recognized tribes in the United States, most of which are currently petitioning for recognition. Of these 245, at least fifty-five are within the state boundaries of California. In other words, 22.4% of the United States’ unrecognized Native peoples are located within less than 5% of the country’s land mass. This is roughly the equivalent of 80,000 people, the largest group of unrecognized individuals of any state.⁷

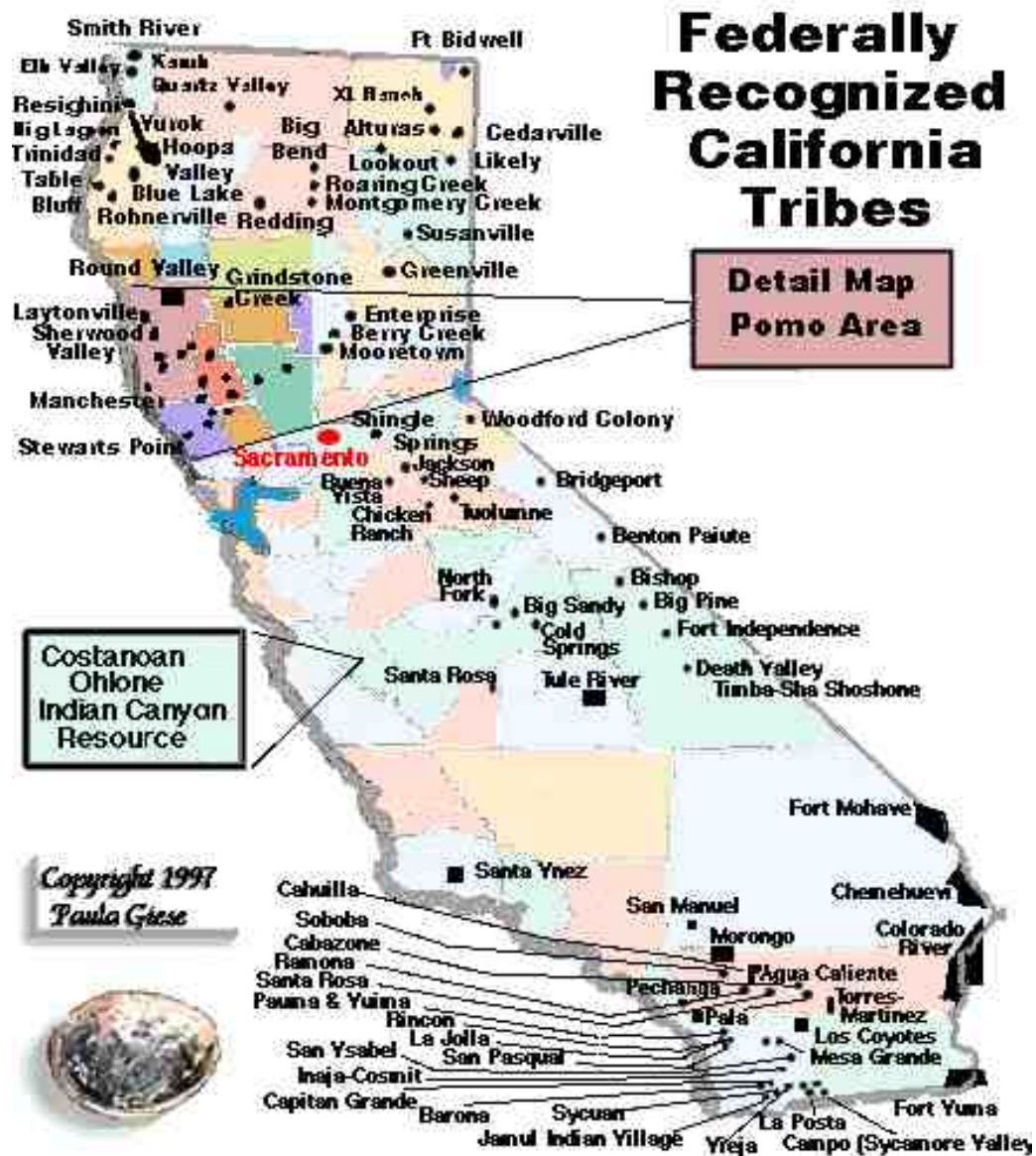


Figure 1.5: This map represents the sheer number of federally recognized tribal communities in California alone. At least fifty-five additional communities continue to fight for recognition and a place on the map.⁸

Despite having been located on or near their ancestral lands for centuries, these non-recognized peoples are considered to not only be inauthentic Indians, but also extinct. The requirements for recognition also create difficulties. Like the Cherokee enrollment standard that requires that tribal members be able to trace their lineage through someone listed on the Dawes Roll, the recognition process requires Californians

to trace their ancestry through the “Indian rolls” created in 1850 or before. Although many unrecognized Native people have been able to trace their lineage this way, this is not enough for the federal government because the rolls do not detail any more specific tribal affiliation than “California Indian.” So, while Native Californians can be recognized as being of Native descent they cannot be recognized as Native Californian with a tribal affiliation. This, of course, does not take into account the number of people that are descendent from those who never made it onto the rolls in the first place.

The lack of recognition of many Native Californians strongly contributes to the reason why they tend to be left out of the discussions of Native art and history. For many people, until very recently Native Californians simply did not exist; thus, the lack of discussion on Native Californian artistic expression only follows.

So, No One Knows We Exist. What Are We Going to Do About It?

Though many people are still woefully ignorant about the comings and goings of Native people, particularly in Southern California, and little is still being written about the aesthetic changes happening as a result, people are slowly becoming more cognizant of the issues affecting Native people today. There are several reasons for this. In recent years, a trend emerged following the controversial and very visible rise of the casino system in California. From the 1990s forward, Native communities within the Southern California regions slowly began to receive an enormous amount of attention. At first, much of this attention was negative. In *Return of the Buffalo*, Ambrose Lane writes extensively about media and public depictions and perceptions of “Casino Indians” as being either rich on profits or malicious, as if daily life on reservations is regularly filled

with murder and mayhem.⁹ Although criminal occurrences are not unheard of, neither are they exclusive to Native-owned casinos or tribal lands.

As casino profits began to rise and the negative attention continued, however, Native California communities began producing their own public service announcements during prime time television announcing the benefits of gaming such as: the ability to support local communities, higher education standards and cultural preservation. The already tumultuous media attention in addition to tribal public service announcements and corporate commercials publicizing local enterprises raised public awareness of the Native Californians considerably, whether for good or bad. As of 2010, the presence of tribal public service announcements or commercials for Native casinos remains significant and impossible to ignore.

With the increase of public awareness of Native Californians, people also became more conscious of the cultural aspects of neighboring indigenous communities. Casinos began to use architecture and landscape as a way to define communal identity. Older, more generic looking casinos or bingo halls evolved into not only flashier but also more culturally specific representations of self.

The effect of increased awareness of Native Californian communities also meant that tribes were now dealing with curious visitors from outside local indigenous communities. For larger more visible institutions like the Pechanga Cultural Center, it meant rebuilding a new and larger center more adapted to these needs. For smaller museums like the Cupa Cultural Center, it meant searching out a mode of representation that could satisfy community needs for cultural preservation and pride as well as outsider curiosity.

In addition to the creation or re-creation of cultural centers and casinos, Native Californian communities are also making headway in reclaiming a virtual landscape. Like redefining a physical landscape, through casinos and cultural centers, the landscape of the world wide web is transformed through the participation of Native Californian communities and individuals in defining self, place and time. For example, the Tataviam (also known as Fernandeno) continue to fight to this day for tribal recognition. In doing so, over the years their website has become increasingly intricate, tying the threads of land and identity together via the internet.

What now?

California as a region is clearly rich in cultural activity and prolific in its visual production. Taking this into consideration with the sheer number of recognized and unrecognized Native peoples living within the state, it is a wonder that so little of this region is discussed in any detail.

As we can see, however, the reasons behind the lack of recognition of art within the California region are wide, varied and multilayered. From issues of defining what a “real Indian” constitutes (i.e. urban Indian versus “rez” Indian) to constantly battling rumors of extinction or exoticism and from trying to move out of the shadow of Northern Californian basketry to reconnecting and grounding the California Native to his or her culture and land, the struggle to attain recognition for California art and architecture is difficult and lengthy.

It is clear that there is a great need to explore the roles Southern California plays in the scope of “Native America.” Contemporary architecture as well as web design, two

of the most visible forms of visual aesthetics in this age, play a significant part in defining how the public perceives Native Southern California. By looking at architectural and virtual space, we can investigate how economic, social, political and historical circumstances led to aesthetic choices that promoted how individual tribes and communities could and wanted to be seen by both the general public as well as the federal government. These same aesthetics also transformed landscapes through time, location and space, reinforcing self-identification and claims of ancestral and current lands in Southern California.

We Are Not Mission Indians

In her writings on Indigenous architecture in North America, Crystal Cai Anderson asks “Where to begin if little more than artifacts exist and (in many cases) with the absence of languages?”¹⁰ She goes on to explain that, as a tribe loses its culture and language, so goes their architecture. I argue that the architecture is not lost when the culture of a tribe is or has been threatened as a whole. Instead, it is transformed as the community struggles to maintain its identity as a sovereign nation, Native peoples *and* citizens of the United States.

In Southern California, there exist dozens of reservations and roughly a half dozen federally recognized and unrecognized tribal groups. Due to the mission system of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many of these groups were nearly decimated both physically and culturally. Today, most of these tribes are collectively acknowledged by the Bureau of Indian Affairs as the “Mission Indians” of California. Over the years,

these tribes have been overcoming the odds as they slowly regain their culture and rise to socio-economic power, primarily through the profits raised by tribal gaming.

By looking at the architecture and design of various indigenous architectures and landscapes in Southern California—specifically, Viejas Casino (Viejas Kumeyaay), the Cupa Cultural Center (Pala Band of Mission Indians) and the virtual landscape of the Tataviam Fenrnadeño, which include websites such as Púkuu Cultural Community Services, their official tribal website, and the recently launched Native social networking site NDNme—we can clearly observe how each community and its respective cultural spaces negotiate a multi-focal perspective that is simultaneously “Mission Indian,” Native American, and American in order to rename, relocate and redefine themselves on their own terms.

Chapter 2: Viejas Casino: Shifting Identities

In the 1987 case, *California v. Cabazon Band of Mission Indians, et al.*, the United States Supreme court ruled that Native groups are allowed to run gaming operations so long as they are confined within tribal lands. The Court also made it clear that the balance between tribe, state and federal governments was of utmost importance.¹¹ This watershed decision paved the way for what would become one of the primary modes of Native self-determination in the state of California *and* United States.

Soon after *California v. Cabazon*, Congress enacted the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 (IGRA), establishing policies for regulating gaming on the reservations by the tribes, the federal government *and* the state. The act clearly follows the self-determination factor of the *Cabazon* decision by stating that its purpose is “to provide a statutory basis for the operation of gaming by Indian tribes as a means of promoting tribal economic development, self-sufficiency, and strong tribal governments.”¹²

IGRA divides gaming into three “classes”: Class I refers to traditional Native games that result in prizes of minimal value; Class II consists of bingo or lotto games; Class III consists of all other forms of gambling not encompassed in Class I or II, such as slot machines and banking card games.¹³ It is interesting to note that, according to IGRA, Class III gaming must first be legalized by the state in order for a tribe to conduct the games on their land. For this to happen, not only must a tribe enter into a compact with the state, but these compacts must also be legalized by the denizens of that state.

For California, this meant that a proposition needed to be passed, legalizing the compacts between tribal groups and the state. This would legalize Class III gaming. In

2000, Proposition 1A came up for vote and was passed. The proposition amended Section 19, Article IV of the California Constitution stating that:

notwithstanding subdivisions (a) and (e), and any other provision of the state law, the Governor is authorized to negotiate and conclude compacts, subject to ratification by the Legislature, for the operation of slot machines and for the conduct of lottery games and banking and percentage card games by federally recognized Indian tribes on Indian lands in California in accordance with federal law. Accordingly, slot machines, lottery games, and banking percentage card games are hereby permitted to be conducted and operated on tribal lands subject to those compacts.¹⁴

The passage of this amendment allowed Class III gaming and consequently attracted the attention of many gambling firms from Nevada, Louisiana and Atlantic City. Soon, many Native groups in California received, and often accepted, proposals from these gambling companies to create large Vegas-style casino and resorts.¹⁵

Until this point, like early gaming structures started in other parts of the country, California casinos consisted largely of bingo halls housed in non-descript semi-permanent buildings. By building the casinos in the monumental scale typical of Vegas style casinos, Native groups were able to assert their own self-defined, multi-focal sense of identity not only on a local scale, but also on a state and national level.



Figure 2.1: Treasure Island Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada recreates Robert Louis Stevenson's fantastical tale about pirates and hidden treasure. The Luxor Casino & Hotel promotes an Egyptian theme complete with an obelisque, pyramid, and a replica of the Great Sphinx of Giza.¹⁶

While Las Vegas casinos focus on the exotic as a getaway, tribal casinos, for the most part, take a decidedly different tactic when projecting a theme or idea to the public. Unlike mega-casinos such as Paris, Treasure Island, or the Luxor, which all take far-away, even fantasy locations as their marketing theme, tribal casinos, and in particular California casinos, look inward, focusing instead on what is local and indigenous to the culture or region.

Controlled by the Viejas Kumeyaay, the history of the land on which Viejas Casino sits is very similar to that of other tribal communities in the area. Like their neighbors the Barona Kumeyaay, they were displaced from their lands in the 1930s over water rights and given meager compensation. With these monies, this group of Kumeyaay purchased the Viejas Valley and eventually became known as the Viejas band of Kumeyaay.¹⁷



Figure 2.2: Viejas Casino.¹⁸

Viejas Casino is located near Alpine, California. At 280,000 square feet with more than 2,000 slot machines, several restaurants, a night club, showroom, and shopping outlet, the compound is significant in scale. Initially, any relation the Viejas Casino might have to California and its cultures is not readily apparent. Aside from a long driveway lined in palm trees, likely the native California fan palm, a person could easily mistake this building for a New Mexico casino with its pseudo Pueblo-style architecture. Looks deceive, however, and despite its seemingly generic Indian exterior, the newest renovation of Viejas has made the buildings a more indigenous representation.

According to the Cunningham group¹⁹, the architect and planner for the renovation of the casino, Viejas was transformed from a series of boxy buildings into a village-like setting with several courtyards that represent four elements integral to Kumeyaay culture: earth, air, fire, and water. “The Earth Courtyard is filled with stone fountains, natural rock formations, trees, and plant life. The Air Courtyard has a series of curvilinear shapes and symbols of movement. The Fire Courtyard features water trickling over hot lava rocks creating clouds of steam. The Water Courtyard has peaceful streams and pools, cascading waterfalls, and wildlife sculptures.”²⁰ In other words, through time and the increased profitability of the casino, Viejas has been able to subtly assert its Kumeyaay identity.

Also, despite the seemingly generic Indian exterior, once inside, there are several very clear indications of Native Californian identification. For example, there is a large mural of a group of men and women, presumably Kumeyaay, playing peon. This traditional guessing game has been played by Native Californians for centuries and is a prominent example of traditional Native gambling within the state. Traditional peon

songs often accompany the players as the game progresses. According to IGRA, peon falls under Class I gaming.



Figure 2.3: Peon mural in Viejas Casino (Valley xxi)

In www.playpeon.com, a tribal member and grandson of one of the men in Figure

2.4 describes the rules of the game:

The teams face each other over a camp fire. Each player has a pair of black and white peones²¹ one in each hand. The other team tries to guess what hand has what peone. Guessing the white peone is a “media” call and guessing the black peone is a “whedda” call. All calls (shots) are in Spanish. Sticks keep track of points. To score a point you must have the peone and the other team guesses but misses. If they shoot and catch you, you are out. Once everyone is out it is the other team’s turn. When a team gets all fifteen sticks (points) the game is over. The person making the shots holds up one finger for a “media” call and two for a “whedda” call. You support your favorite team by standing behind them and singing “peon” songs.

The mural at Viejas Casino depicts almost thirty women and men dressed in ranch clothes, sitting around a campfire in the California desert, under the full moon. A rambunctious crowd on the right is attempting to guess the positions of the peon pieces

that the team of men on the left is hiding under their arms. Supporters hover over their favorite team and are presumably singing peon songs, as is often done during games.

In the background, behind the mountains, a warm glow that cannot be accounted for in the glow of the moon emanates from the far left and right of the mural and shines brightly. This is probably the glow from the city lights of the present. It is possible that the glowing areas also represent Los Angeles and San Diego, two of the largest cities in the country, which not only happen to flank the Temecula Valley and Pechanga but also whose growth was instrumental in the “settling” of Indian lands by outsiders looking for newer, cheaper places to live.

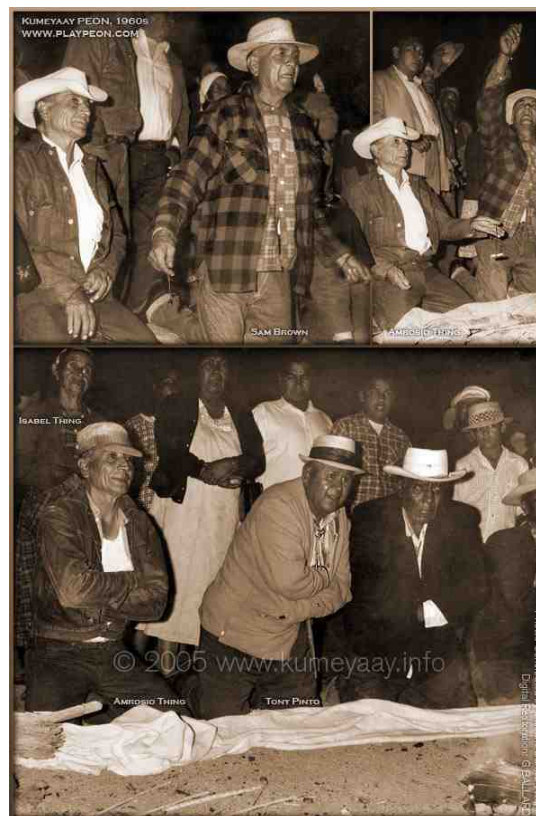


Figure 2.4: Photos of a peon game in process during the 1960s. In the first photo, a team reveals its hand. In the second photo, another team hides its peon pieces while the opposing team (not pictured) takes a guess. The Viejas Casino peon mural is reminiscent of the portion of the game depicted in this second photo.²²

The reference to the peon game transforms the entire Casino as a whole from a symbol of simple financial gain and economic development into something more. The peon game is significant because it references the concept of continued traditions and culture despite severe encroachment on Native lands. It also references survival through the development and settling of this land by non-Natives (represented in the mural by the city lights). The songs implied in the mural are also an indication of cultural survival through their existence in a contemporary setting.



Figure 2.5: The Grove Steakhouse at the Viejas Casino

Representations of California continue in the Grove Steakhouse and the many trees that are built into the restaurant and casino. According to Penwal, a design firm who helped create many of the design elements at Viejas Casino, “The themed environment of the Viejas Resort near San Diego reinforces its identity, by including a virtual forest of trees representing species that are endemic to its region.”²³ In particular,

oak trees, which are depicted frequently at the casino in their faux form, were and continue to be a staple of Native cultures throughout the state. In other words, the Penwal trees, like the peon mural, link the casino to a particular cultural heritage.

It is also in this restaurant that we find our *only* reference to the mission era within not only the entire casino, but also in most other casinos in the area. In each of the side booths of the Great Oak Restaurant (Figure 2.6), rectangular niches with a single step pattern on top are built into adobe-like walls and sconces are placed in the center to light the tables. All these elements are very typical of the Spanish Colonial mission-style architecture. Here is an acknowledgement of the infamous past of California Indians, but the Viejas Kumeyaay seem careful not to dwell on it. There is no attempt at denial, but neither do they celebrate nor exploit the sordid past.



Figure 2.6: Left - The Grove Steak House at Viejas Casino side booths with niches. Right - niches in the sanctuary and apse of Mission San Diego, San Diego, California.

Viejas Casino not only presents a Native Californian culture. It also presents California culture as a whole. The California the Viejas Kumeyaay choose to display, however, is not what one might imagine. There are no images of Hollywood glamour or silicone tackiness. Instead, we are offered a snapshot of California struggling to

understand her immigrant populations. Here, Viejas Casino, of all things, shows us a glimpse of California culture that goes beyond the Anglo-Indian dichotomy, more specifically, the Chinese American immigrant experience and its relationship to indigenous communities past and present.

From its inception until 2009, China Camp Restaurant, located within the Viejas Casino, took its theme from the period of early Chinese American settlement, the Gold Rush, and building of the Transcontinental Railroad (Figure 2.7).^{24, 25} The question arising here is why this particular time period and ethnic group was selected when there are far more contemporary narratives of Chinese immigration in the United States.



Figure 2.7: China Camp Restaurant at Viejas Casino

On the one hand, it is probably safe to say that the reference to Chinese American culture is an excellent method of marketing the Casino to the Chinese American population in California, which is the largest in the United States²⁶ and who, like Native Californians, have an extremely long and strong tradition of gambling. Indeed, the Pai

Gow Room (Figure 2.8) supports such an idea. Pai Gow is a traditional domino game in China that is now very popular among Asians of all cultural backgrounds. The Pai Gow Room celebrates its Chinese beginnings with some vaguely Chinese décor, the most recognizable of which are the lanterns hanging from the ceiling. In addition to that marketing move, Chinese involvement with the Gold Rush and Transcontinental Railroad is probably the most well known of the narratives in California as it is often taught as part of the California history curriculum.



Figure 2.8: Pai Gow room at Viejas Casino.

On the other hand, one must note that immigrants coming to the United States over the past three or four decades have primarily been from the more or less independent island-states of Taiwan and Hong Kong whereas in the mid-1800s, Chinese immigrants were almost exclusively mainland Cantonese and Toisan.²⁷ In other words, the Gold Rush/Railroad narrative is not quite their own.

Perhaps it is possible to find the answer to this puzzle in the laws coming into effect during the late nineteenth century, namely the Chinese Exclusion laws. The

purpose of the laws was not only to prevent other Chinese immigrants from coming into the country, but also to wipe out the existing population. Laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the San Francisco Queue Ordinance of 1876 were effective in creating systematic demoralization, dehumanization and outright decimation of the Chinese people in the United States, an experience not wholly unknown to Native Californians.²⁸

In the recounting of this particular experience, we see cross-cultural interaction and acknowledgement not only between Native peoples and Anglo Americans, but also Asian Americans. A recent renovation reaffirms this connection more concretely. Opened in October of 2009, China Camp Restaurant was renamed Far East Winds (Figure 2.9). According to *East County Magazine*, the restaurant explicitly honors the “past, present, and future contributions of the Chinese in developing the West.”^{29, 30}



Figure 2.9: Far East Winds Asian Cuisine grand opening in 2009 at Viejas Casino.³¹

Unlike other casinos in the area and unlike its more subtle exertion of Kumeyaay identity, however, what a visitor is most struck by upon entering the casino grounds is the

fact the architecture is indisputably not Californian. Rather, the exterior of Viejas Casino is distinctly southwestern in style. More specifically, the architecture is completely done in a stylized Pueblo-revival manner.

The entire building is a bright pink adobe color that stands out distinctly from the California landscape (Figure 2.2.) Though this style literally covers the New Mexico landscape, it is uncommon amongst the largely Spanish-colonial and ranch buildings of Southern California. Viga-type structures form the outside entrance to the casino. This Puebloesque style even continues into the outlet center adjacent to the Casino (Figure 2.10.) The importance of this is not so much that it is in the Pueblo style but that this Native southwestern style is probably one of the most identifiable architectural markers of *Native identity* (to both Native and Non-Native people alike) next to the Plains tipi.³²



Figure 2.10 Viejas Outlet Casino. Note the Pueblo-revival architecture in the middle of the Southern California landscape.³³

It is at Viejas Casino that this concept of an “Indigenous aesthetic” dominates more so than any other casino in the region. In addition to the architecture of the building, the ceilings of many of the gaming rooms have references to a generalized Native aesthetic. For example, in the Blackjack Room, the ceiling is literally covered in repeating diamond patterns so commonly found throughout Native North America. In addition, on the roof of Slot City, we can view the very recognizable reference to the four directions, another theme present in most indigenous North American cultures (Figure 2.11.)



Figure 2.11: Ceiling views of the Blackjack and Slot City rooms at Viejas Casino.

Viejas Casino also has a theatre where many renowned artists come to perform. This theatre is named “Dreamcatcher Show Room.” The dreamcatcher is also distinctly not a part of Native Californian culture. Rather, it originally came from the Great Lakes region but now, like Pueblo architecture, its origin hardly matters because it also serves as a general indication of Native identity.

The largeness and highly identifiable nature of these assertions of Native-ness literally envelop the entire casino in a Native identity that goes beyond California.

Through the casino, the Viejas people can broadcast their Native identity for the entire world to see. For a population of people that outsiders hardly recognize as being Indian or even know of their existence, this very broad assertion of not ethnic identity but of race is absolutely necessary.



Figure 2.12: Daisy's Café.

In terms of projecting an “American” identity as defined by popular culture, the best example can be seen in yet another one of the casino’s restaurants, Daisy’s Café, formerly the Sunrise Diner (Figure 2.12.) Built in the red, blue, yellow and whites of a typical 1950s diner, Daisy’s personifies Middle America. The restaurant comes complete with a jukebox and red and chrome bar stools. Nonetheless, even in this depiction of the classic 50s, we are again presented with a repetitive diamond pattern that echoes the patterns on the roof in the Blackjack Room. The Viejas Kumeyaay have essentially inserted themselves into the 1950s storybook narrative of poodle skirts, pompadours,

Elvis Presley and Middle America suburbia to recreate a past that quite often excludes Native peoples, especially Native Californians.

By creating a generalized Native aesthetic from the outside and more complex and specifically Kumeyaay imagery on the inside, Viejas is not only able to attract a wider demographic, but the tribe also has the ability to define itself through the casino on its own terms. Rather than display unknown and specific markers of Kumeyaay identity on the outside, this imagery is placed on the inside where it is inescapable from visitors gambling within the Casino grounds. Other casinos, including the Pechanga Resort and Casino (Figure 2.13), follow a similar “captive audience” strategy in which the outside may not be clearly Native Californian, but the interior presents a much more complex and culturally specific definition of what it means to come from their respective community.



Figure 2.13: Pechanga Resort and Casino exterior and interior views. Note the thirty-five-foot oak tree indigenous to California in the main entrance of the casino.

Casinos in Southern California perpetuate the long tradition of gambling in Native California. Through this tradition, large amounts of money have been raised. Monetary

wealth gives tribes a means of functioning in a capitalistic society. These include being able to maintain, revive and promote their cultures. The money involved with gaming also allows the casinos to better represent themselves on a monumental scale through their architecture and design. The amount to which a casino focuses on one part of their identity or another depends on each band or tribe.

Many casinos have expanded or are in the renovation process. The reasons for this include being able to find better ways to represent the tribe through the casino. Through this very obvious overhaul, tribes become more visible to outside communities as well as the federal government by literally recreating themselves to suit their own needs. The important aspect of having this outward recognition is both financial and cultural. Money talks and, through it, tribes are able to recreate their identities despite issues of relocation, termination and denial, and assert themselves as Indian.

Other reasons for renovation, however, include increasing competition between reservations to bring in more revenue. With the close proximity of many of California's tribes, competition for gamblers and visitors is fierce. Indeed, Maidu artist, Judith Lowry's *Jingle, Jingle*, takes a critical look at the problems of capitalistic corruption and objectification that can occur within the casino industry.

In this image, Lowry depicts a Native woman scantily clad in a stripper's version of a jingle dress. The jingle "dress" is modified, however. The top is actually a buckskin bikini, while the bottom is simply several chains of jingle beads flanking her hips. While the jingle dress and buckskins are clear markers of Native identity, both are worn in dances common at powwows, the modified clothing is intentionally vulgar. The woman's "dress" represents Native cultures corrupted by the money that literally pours

from her crotch. The kino balls flying toward the viewer above her head reinforce this idea. The numbers on the lotto balls form a date, which is the day one of Lowry's relatives was murdered after he threatened to expose corrupt casino politics.³⁴



Figure 2.14: Judith Lowry. *Jingle, Jingle* (1997). Acrylic on canvas, Denver Art Museum.³⁵

Despite all the problems relating to casinos, their existence in California boils down to a few key points. The casinos are not about reclaiming the past but relocating it as well as redefining the present. Through the casino industry and the capital produced from it, gaming tribes can place themselves outside the over generalized, externally imposed term of “Mission Indian.” The term has been an effective means of subordinating Native Californian communities over the centuries.

By defining themselves on their own terms, groups affected by the mission system are able to move beyond the static bubble into which the dominant culture has placed around them. They acknowledge a multi-focal identity that is influenced by the cross-cultural fertilization of other California tribes and communities, Native people outside California, the dominant Anglo-European culture as well as other minority groups in the United States. As former Agua Caliente tribal historian Anthony Andreas states, “We are not Mission Indians.”³⁶

Chapter 3: Cupa Cultural Center: Defining History

During the last half of the twentieth century, historical events such as the civil rights and counterculture movements led to an increased development of cultural centers.³⁷ Unlike casinos, whose physical presence exerts an almost singularly public persona, cultural centers or community museums often fulfill two related purposes. On the one hand, they serve an external public, like casinos, while on the other hand, they meet the needs of an internal community.

Mary Lawler's *Public Native America* identifies the 1973 stand-off at Wounded Knee as a key turning point when indigenous communities began to take control over how they were represented in the public sphere.³⁸ Cultural centers are the ideal way of accomplishing this. Through exhibits and programs, indigenous communities create a powerful means of self-representation. According to Delia Clarke, former Ak-chin tribal council chair, "The museum makes our people the cultural interpreters for our people. Tribes are no longer the objects of information but the translators of information. When I have visitors, I always drag them to the museum...It is doing so much to bring back what we've almost lost."³⁹

At the same time, however, Lawler also explains that these cultural centers often support their own internal community whether it is through cultural pride, education, or both. She notes:

However rich and interesting a tribe's self-display may be, it can often be understood precisely as a public skin, a public face, for non-Indian audiences, and an important, though subtle, component of the representation is ... "displayed withholding": a practice of showing that something is not shown and this something marks the crucial difference which furnishes distinctly Navajo, Acoma, Mashnantucket, or Eastern Shosone styles of being and knowing.⁴⁰

In other words, whether it is a cultural center’s ability to also serve as a non-public repository for cultural objects or its use as a tribal meeting place, education center, or place to acquire specialized skills, a cultural center’s use of “displayed withholding” provides an internal reference to community members while signaling to the public that there remains a part of the culture that is unseen and, therefore, different.

Creating the Cupa Cultural Center

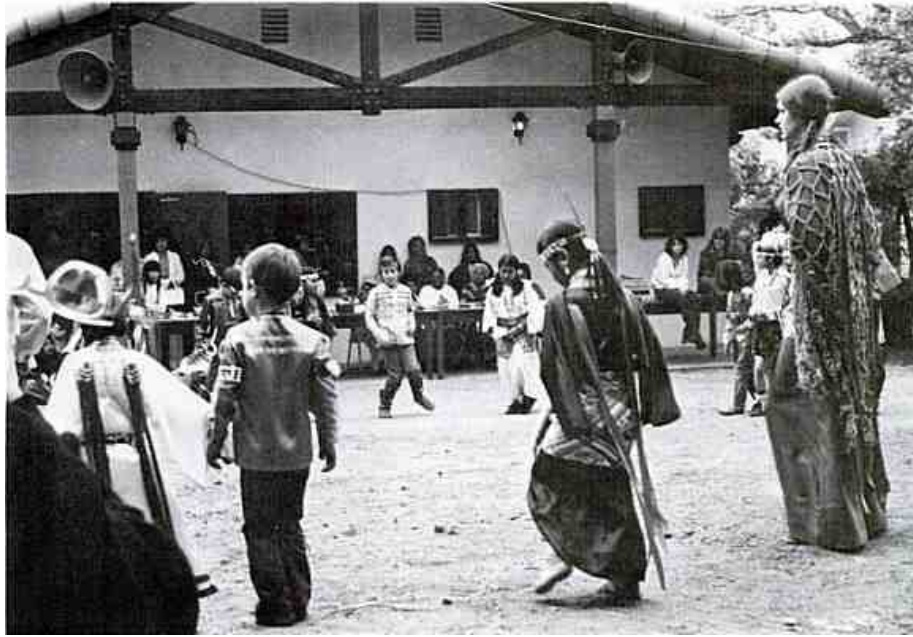


Figure 3.1: 1974 dedication of the Cupa Cultural Center in Pala, California.⁴¹

In 1979, Edward Alexander noted that the cultural center movement was particularly strong among Native communities, citing both the Pueblo Cultural Center (now Indian Pueblo Cultural Center) in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Daybreak Star Center in Seattle, Washington as two such examples.⁴² As part of this movement, the Pala band of Mission Indians founded the Cupa Cultural Center in 1974 (Figure 3.1.)

Located at the edge of the Pala reservation near Temecula, California, the cultural center and its programs not only serve as a representation of local indigenous history, but also as a remembrance of a long history of survival. Temecula itself is a relatively newly developed city nestled among dozens of Native rancherias in the area. A rapidly growing city that also absorbs the overflow from San Diego and Los Angeles, Temecula is one of the many Southern California communities that sits directly on top of the indigenous landscape. With this in mind, the Cupa Cultural Center not only informs visitors about Cupa history and culture from an indigenous point of view, it also reclaims a displaced history and landscape defined by the government.⁴³

The Cupa, also known as the Kuupangaxwicheh or “people who slept here,” have always been a small tribe. Nonetheless, their history of struggle is significant. In the 1800s, Juan Jose (John) Warner⁴⁴ claimed 47,500 acres of land which included much of the Cupan homelands. When former California Governor John Downey purchased the land in 1880, he filed a lawsuit against the Cupa people, claiming title to the land and insisting on the eviction of Cupans. In 1901, Downey’s descendants succeeded when the United States Supreme Court ordered the removal of Cupans from their homelands.

On May 12, 1903, Indian Bureau agent James Jenkins and forty-four armed teamsters arrived to escort the Cupans from their land. With this act of affront, the Cupa people embarked upon what is locally termed the Cupan “Trail of Tears,” or forced removal from their ancestral homelands. During this time of great upheaval, they relocated to their current location on the Pala reservation, which, at the time, consisted only of Luiseño. This is historically the first time that two distinct tribes were placed on one single reservation.⁴⁵

It is the remembrance of the Trail of Tears, the resulting push to reclaim what was taken away, and the need to preserve what remains that are some of the most significant influences upon the Cupa Cultural Center and its related programming. According to the Cupa Cultural Center website, the Center is “dedicated to preserving, perpetuating and enhancing traditional cultural practices.”⁴⁶ These ideas permeate the interior and exterior of the Cupa Cultural Center.

The Cupa Cultural Center fills itself with pride of community, culture and survival. By examining the aesthetics and exhibits of the cultural center, we can see an emphasis placed upon both the local community and history as well an awareness of displaying culture to outside communities. Through the existence of the Cupa Cultural Center, a landscape of reinterpreted history is laid over the more mainstream history of Southern California, which largely ignores the exact nature of the strife between indigenous communities and the state and federal governments.

Location, Location, Location

One of the most significant aspects of the Cupa Cultural Center is its location. Built upon a sliver of Cupa ancestral homeland, this small and unassuming Spanish mission-style building is the most physical representation of the Center’s goal to preserve and perpetuate traditional cultural practice. Like many cultural centers in the United States, the location of the Cupa Cultural Center is tied to history and memory. Just as the Japanese National Museum sits within Little Tokyo in Los Angeles⁴⁷ and the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center sits upon the former site of the Albuquerque Indian School,⁴⁸ the Cupa Cultural Center sits on ancestral Cupa lands.

While programming and exhibitions can create an abstract depiction of history and culture, the physical placement of the cultural center is a concrete and very literal reclamation of culture and land. When the Cupa were removed from their homelands in 1903 to a reservation with another culturally distinct tribe, the federal government considered itself one step closer to solving the “Indian problem” in the United States. By placing themselves back on their own land, the Cupa effectively reclaim their right to the land. They are announcing to the world that they are still in existence, that the Indian problem was never solved, and, in fact, there was never an Indian problem to begin with.

The architecture of the Cupa Cultural Center furthers Cupa’s right to the land. Its Spanish mission style is fairly non-descript when compared to other older architecture in the surrounding area. The pitched roof is covered with red Spanish tile while the building itself is a large thick-walled beige adobe building. The shape of the original structure is a basic rectangle. This construction is typical of many older buildings in California, following the architecture typical of its missions.



Figure 3.2: Mission San Antonio de Pala in Pala, California.

In fact, the building does not look so different from the Mission San Antonio de Pala, which sits directly adjacent to the Cultural Center (Figure 3.2.) From the red Spanish tiles to the light colored and gently curving adobe walls, the Cupa Cultural Center follows the general shape and style of the mission. It is this complete melding with local building styles that is significant. By blending into the architectural landscape of California, the Cupa Cultural Center is defining itself as local, indigenous, and distinctly Californian.

This expression of local style is very different from that of casinos, such as Viejas, where a more generic indigenous architectural style prevails. The difference in styles goes back to the purpose each building serves. As mentioned earlier, while Casinos are primarily geared toward and dependent on external communities for the purpose of generating revenue, cultural centers have a very different objective. For cultural centers, not only is it necessary to bring in people from the outside, it is also necessary to include and represent the local community.

As a result, though the outside of the Cupa Cultural Center is, upon first look, seemingly generic, it is nonetheless distinctly Californian. This style not only locates the Cultural Center regionally, it also locates the building historically. This style allows locals, both Native and non-Native, to identify the style with a set of historical circumstances—Spanish entrance into the American West—and the events that led to the prominence of the style in the area—the Christianization and deculturation of Native Californians.

Cupa Cultural Center Activity Coordinator, Kimberly McKewen, notes that it was the children of Cupa that helped raise funds for the building of the Cupa Cultural Center

by “dancing their way” to its being built.⁴⁹ In other words, funds raised by the dance troupe helped build the building. The exact amount that the dance troupe raised is not significant in the overall scope of things. Rather, the fact that the cultural center places emphasis upon the children that danced their way to the building is where the importance lies.

This emphasis on the children indicates a need to point out the close ties the cultural center has to the community, more specifically, to its younger members. In a community where cultural sustainability has been threatened over several generations, the willingness of the community’s current youth to help build a cultural center, and thus preserve culture, indicates a readiness to remember and sustain the community. A connection between generations, the past, present and future, is established. In essence, the cultural center is truly a community effort. This is a direct contrast to the way the government attempted to disperse Cupa people by placing different tribes onto one reservation in Pala, thus fracturing Cupa unity.

In addition to the basic outer structure of the Cupa Cultural Center, the grounds of the Cultural Center and the painting on the walls indicate a similar tie to indigenous Californian cultures, more specifically, Cupa culture. From oak trees lining the outside of the property to the grinding rock placed near the building, these are all distinct and easily identifiable signifiers of many Native Californian communities, including Cupa.

Throughout history, oak, particularly acorn, has served as a major dietary staple in California. Not only does oak serve as the primary support for the wildlife in California, it has also supported generations of people living in the region. Today, recipes such as acorn mush continue to be made as a “traditional” dish.

In L. Frank's book, *Acorn Soup*, the significance of acorn and oak is echoed in the title (Figure 3.3.)

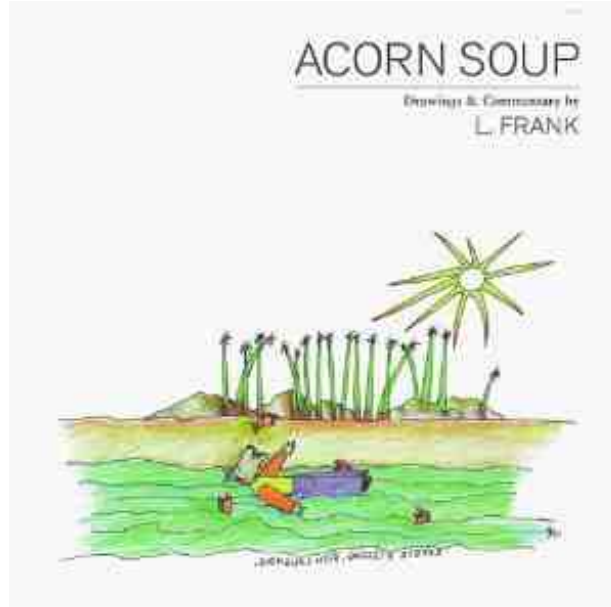


Figure 3.3: Book cover of Acorn Soup.

A collection of cartoons from the long-lived magazine, *News from Native California*, *Acorn Soup* explores various issues affecting Native Californians such as the effects of the mission system and stereotypes of Native peoples. For the Cupa Cultural Center, the use of acorn and oak also indicates culture.

On the side exterior wall of the Cupa Cultural Center is a painted mural composed of oak leaves and acorn. Nestled within the oak and acorn are the words “Cupa Cultural Center” followed by the words “Mulu Wetam” (translated as “The First People”). The use of indigenous language underneath the English confirms the function of the building as a cultural center. The use of oak and acorns furthers this confirmation by displaying an image of something distinctly Native Californian.



Figure 3.4: Side exterior view of Cupa Cultural Center.⁵⁰

For a community that is considered essentially extinct by *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*,⁵¹ Cupa not only ties its culture to the building, it also reemphasizes the existence of their culture and language to outside communities and also themselves.⁵² The fact is, while the language may have declined a great deal, it is not completely lost. The words “Mulu Wetam” painted on the walls of the Cupa Cultural Center and the existence of a Cupa newsletter that carries a section teaching Cupa language in each issue contradicts this claim.

Similarly, with acorn being such a significant staple within Native Californian diet, tools that make this staple edible also hold a great deal of importance. Places where food could easily be ground are considered sacred spaces. These stones, more often boulders, generally consisted of several depressions where acorn or grains could be placed in order to be ground. These depressions would be used to grind the acorn much in the same way one uses a mano and metate to grind corn. Emphasizing this significant

aspect of Native Southern California cultures, a large grinding stone is located directly in front of the building.

The Exhibits

Like the exterior of the Cupa Cultural Center, the interior is also geared toward both outside and local communities. There are several small exhibits within the cultural center. All are simply made and displayed within a mix of museum quality and store display cases. The exhibits themselves focus on various aspects of Cupa culture from the Cupa Trail of Tears, military service in Cupa, ancient history and general cultural practices.

The first exhibits encountered upon entering the Center focus primarily on the distant past of the Cupa, providing a broad overview of ethnographic artifacts from the Cupa and surrounding cultures. Archaeological pottery, arrowheads, and fragile textiles fill several large cases with minimal explanation as to their exact use or function. The objects within these cases are interesting and informative in a somewhat distant manner. These ancient objects satisfy a need for physical proof of a long continuous past not only for local communities, but they also meet essentialist expectations of some outsiders, including federal and state governments, that require Native American cultures to have a definable distant past.⁵³ This changes as one explores the other exhibits, however, which investigate a more contemporary history of Cupa and Pala. By looking at the other exhibitions within the center, we notice the very personal ties between the Cupa Cultural Center and the community within which it is located.

Very near the front of the center, an exhibit focuses on the Cupa Trail of Tears. As mentioned previously, the Cupa Trail of Tears occurred in 1903 when Cupeño people were expelled from their ancestral homelands and forced onto what is now the Pala reservation along with other distinct tribes. While serving as an informative history to outside visitors, the center makes this story very personal by focusing specifically on the story of Rosinda Nolasquez, the last living survivor of the Trail of Tears.

As recounted later in the book, *Mulu' Wetam the First People: Cupeno Oral History and Language*, Nolasquez states:

Many carts stood there by the door. People came from La Mesa, Santa Ysabel, from Wilakal, from San Ignacio they came to see their relative. They cried a lot. And they [government agents] just threw our belongings, our clothes, into the cart, chairs, cups, plates. They piled everything into the carts. First they said to them, 'Go and see your relatives for the last time now. You're never going to see them again.' They went to the cemetery, there they wept. Then it was time to move out. Still they did not move. They could not move outside, they stayed there by the gate. And my great-grandmother went running away into the mountains. And she said, 'I will stay, even if I die, even if the coyotes eat me.' she said, it is said. 'Now I am going away', she said. She kept on going climbing away, and then from there the people moved from the cemetery, they were weeping.

And then from there they moved us. And there was the little chapel there on a little hill. And they said to them, 'Now look behind you, see your homes for the last time'. But no one turned around. Still they said not one word to them, And from there they left then. They kept going westward. They did not look back again. They were very angry. And they said 'Tomorrow up there some time that water will dry up, and then you'll learn your lesson', they said. They did not want to leave."⁵⁴

What could have been an impersonal though tragic occurrence in Cupa history becomes immediately personal. Through a family tree that is posted on the wall as part of the exhibit, visitors discover that LeRoy Miranda, former director of the Cupa Cultural Center and current Vice-Chairman for the community, is also the grandson of Rosinda Nolasquez. Although some may consider this deep connection between the focus of the exhibit and the staff nepotism, one must remember that this is a cultural center. In a small community representing itself, these ties are inevitable. The individual ties

between history and center become even more deeply intertwined, making this story deeply personal. This story moves not only to the community that Nolasquez came from but also to outsiders relating to this story of oppression and hardship.

Located adjacent to the Trail of Tears exhibit is an exhibit about veterans from the Pala reservation. Covering several walls, the names of dozens upon dozens of veterans from World War I to the present are listed. The Cupa Cultural Center is not unusual in its honoring of its veterans. Veterans tend to be highly respected in many Native communities, seen through the honoring of veterans during powwows and gourd dances, which are danced by veterans of war.⁵⁵ Additionally, there exist numerous memorials for Native and non-Native veterans throughout the United States, such as the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall (The Wall) in Washington, D.C., created by Maya Lin in 1984 (Figure 3.5.)



Figure 3.5: Maya Lin. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., 1984.⁵⁶

The way in which the veterans are honored at the cultural center, however, is individualized to an unusually high degree. It creates a sense of intense honoring different from that of the Wall. The Cupa Cultural Center does not simply list the names of its veterans on a clean typed text panel. The names, along with their dates of service and military branch, are hand-written on a glazed tile before being placed on the wall. As a result, there is an extremely personalized quality to the military exhibit that indicates a profound connection between the community and exhibit. While Vietnam Veterans Memorial creates a deep expression of honor through a clarity and simplicity that forces the viewer to identify each name as an individual person, the Cupa Cultural Center accomplishes this by utilizing individualized labor and care.⁵⁷

A third exhibit within the cultural center focuses on bird singers. Although bird singing is an element that is deeply entrenched within Native Southern Californian communities and has undergone a revival in the last decade or so, the text panels explain bird singing from the very beginning as if the viewer is absolutely new to the subject. By reading the text panels, visitors begin to understand that the bird songs essentially document the migration patterns of the Cupa, explaining how the people emerged into the area that they consider their ancestral homelands.⁵⁸ These songs, which occur in cycles, also delineate proper cultural behavior and etiquette and serve as an oral history for Cupa.

While information like this may be elementary for someone who is Native Southern Californian or Cupeño, it serves as a cultural introduction for those who are visiting or new to the area and provides an alternative method of relaying history. For those within the community, especially one as small as Cupa, mentioning local

individuals such as noted Cahuilla bird singer and cultural activist Alvino Siva is a source of cultural pride and distinction and carries the past into the present and future.⁵⁹

Finally and similarly, a peon exhibit focuses on yet another part of Cupeño culture that defines it as distinctly “Californian.” Like the peon mural at the Viejas Casino, the presence of this section separates the Cupa from being generally “Indian” and defines a specific culture for the community.

In the exhibit, there are photographs of people playing peon as well as a display of peon sticks and other paraphernalia related to the game. The cultural center’s spotlight on this game, like its focus on bird songs and singers, is not only a teaching tool for outside communities. The careful documentation of this game and its uses displays what real-estate agents commonly call “pride of ownership.” Tribal members coming to the cultural center may identify family members and ancestors within the photographs. They may take pride in the culture to which they belong. As with the other exhibits throughout the center, the peon exhibit allows personalized contact between tribal members and the center through identification of people and names in photographs and labels, as well as an understanding of the game itself. At the same time, the center allows outside visitors or tribal members coming back to the community to understand the basics of and get a glimpse into Cupeño culture.

Programming and Cupa Days

As with its exhibitions, the Cupa Cultural Center’s programming reflects both a sense of interiority and exteriority. In 1978, Robert Heizer explained, in the *Handbook of North American Indians*, that there was a resurgence of interest in the Cupeño language,

culture and history. This resulted not only in the building of the Cupa Cultural Center, but also the establishment of language and culture classes which were held at the center and continue to be held there today.⁶⁰ It should be noted, however, that these classes are not held in the same area as the exhibitions but in an entirely separate adjacent building. Despite openness about their existence, instruction is only open to tribal members.⁶¹ This example of displayed withholding makes unmistakably clear the existence of a boundary between what is open to the public and what exists only for internal consumption.⁶²



Figure 3.6.: Bird dancers at Cupa Days in Pala, California. Photo by North County Times.⁶³

Similarly, while seemingly far more open and transparent, the annual Cupa Days, held in early May, also reflect a sense of displayed withholding. This two-day event is filled with dancing, music, food, and vendors. While the events are focused on local

indigenous cultures, Native peoples from other areas often participate and all people, Native and non-Native, are encouraged to attend. During a 2007 gathering, Navajo flutist Michael Goodluck noted the openness of the event stating, “It's more welcoming. There is a lot more generosity and love here.”⁶⁴

Despite its festive appearance, however, Cupa Days has a very serious foundation. The event commemorates the Trail of Tears from Cupeño homelands in Warner Springs to their current reservation in Pala. Acting director of the Cupa Cultural Center, Shasta Gaughen, explains, “You can't really call it a celebration...It is the most tragic event of the Cupeños' history, and it is the defining event of their identity.”⁶⁵ Nonetheless, the spirit of celebration is there and, in a later interview, she described Cupa Days as a “celebration of survival.”⁶⁶

In *Public Native America*, Mary Lawler describes the Eastern Shoshone Indian Days Powwow as a “public self-representation that elicit[s] recognition and access to the larger economy while at the same time emphasizing cultural difference.”⁶⁷ Although the purpose of Indian Days is quite different—Indian Days celebrates legal recognition of Eastern Shoshone Territory—Cupa Days *functions* in a similar manner.

On the one hand, the event gregariously performs Cupeño identity, continuity, and survival to all attendees, publically displaying both the specific Cupa culture and a more general Indianess (Figure 3.7.) During the 2010 Cupa Days commemoration, a banner hung in front of the cultural center proclaiming “We are the People from Kupa.”⁶⁸ Concurrently, Native artists from the Southwest, Great Plains, and even Mexico performed for audiences, creating a connection between Southern California Natives and more well-known tribal communities such as the Navajo and Ute.



Figure 3.7: Poster advertisement for Thirty-Sixth Annual Cupa Days, 2010. Note the images of local bird dancers and singers (top and bottom center) displayed with an Aztec dancer (lower right,) Pueblo singer (bottom, second from left,) and Plains hoop dancer, (bottom right.)⁶⁹

Conversely, this same performance of cultural identities also creates an awareness that what is being presented is only a small aspect of Cupeño and Native American

cultures. Cupa Days does not dwell on the specifics of culture. Rather, broad strokes are painted for outside attendees, while more in-depth meanings are kept internalized. Though this event provides access to Cupeño culture and increases understanding, it simultaneously broadcasts the affair, and thus the culture, as different and unique.

Self-Representation with an Eye to the Future

As can be seen, the function of a cultural center is one that requires a careful balancing act between appealing to outside visitors and tribal members. Visitors coming into the center must connect on some level to the information that is being presented to them. In this vein, the Cupa provide basic information that explains various aspects of culture such as peon or bird singing.

The center also provides information that can satisfy a wide demographic of visitors. Those wanting to experience objects that delve into the ancient past may wander through the exhibits featuring the older pottery and projectile points. Visitors wanting to relate their understanding of life, such as oppression or war, to Cupeño culture may read about the Trail of Tears or the importance of Cupa's veterans to the community.

Constance Perin notes that:

...attention to cultural forms seems to take precedence over that paid to cultural resources when exhibition makers are deciding about how to best 'grab' audience attention. Their discourse seems to privilege disciplinary constructs and storytelling forms and display techniques over the cultural resources audiences may draw on. Yet communication may depend more on acknowledging those resources.⁷⁰

In other words, the most effective form of communication is to not focus on the form of an object, but the ability to draw on the cultural resources from which the object came. By utilizing self-representation in its exhibits and programming, the Cupa Cultural Center

successfully accomplishes this by both engaging its audience while at the same time communicating its own history its own terms.

On the other hand, as a cultural center, Cupa must also connect to its community and create buy-in for its members. Personal stories of family members past and present such as Rosinda Nolasquez and Alvino Siva, donations to the collection by tribal members, photographs of family and friends, and location all tie the cultural center tightly with the community. Through active participation, programming and cultural preservation, the Cupa Cultural Center serves as a true community center for the tribe.

Unlike other tribal entities such as casinos, cultural centers have a need to market to both internal and external communities in order to serve their purpose in educating both the public and tribal members about a particular culture. The Cupa Cultural Center is no exception to this rule. Through this internal and external marketing, the cultural center is able to create a multilayered self-representation that is both complex in development yet easily understood. It interjects itself into the mainstream version of history, setting a course for a new physical and psychological landscape that is influenced, but not directed by external sources.

Chapter 4: Virtual Landscapes: Tataviam Online

The word *cyberspace*, coined by William Gibson in 1986, comes from the 1948 term *cybernetics*.⁷¹ The root word of these terms, from the Greek Κυβερνήτης (*kybernētēs*)⁷², meaning “piloting” or “governing,” is telling. According to Mary Flanagan’s analysis of gender on the web, “the implications of movement and gender in virtual space raises questions about the possibility for using online space in three dimensions to create alternate, spatialized narratives.”⁷³ These same ideas and issues are raised when looking at other communities that are similarly hindered by physical space.

One such community is the federally unrecognized Fernandño Tataviam of Southern California, who run a collective group of websites: tataviam-nsn.us (the official Tataviam tribal website); pukuu.org (Pukuu Community Cultural Services); and ndn.me (a Native social networking site). The Tataviam-based marketing organization, Pahi Creative Group, Ltd., links all these websites together into one cohesive group. Through this collective of websites, the Tataviam utilize virtual space to self-define (or govern), legitimize, and create an “alternate, spatialized narrative” for themselves when physical or in-real-life attempts are not possible.

Virtual Space and Imagined Communities

The idea of imagined⁷⁴ spaces, while not applied to the internet until relatively recently, is not a new one. Benedict Anderson’s imagined communities and Edward Said’s related imagined geographies both use collective identity to create and define community, whether it be for themselves, their nation, or the other.

While to this point, I have been examining the ways that indigenous communities have performed presence in physical space, Benedict Anderson notes that the physical aspects of a community are often also displayed in the imagined community, creating space, time, and place in the minds of people. He credits the novel and newspaper, and their mass-media qualities, as key factors in defining nationhood.

Anderson's example of José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi's novel, *El Periquillo Samiento [The Itching Parrot]*, notes how the author's descriptions of hospitals, prisons, remote villages, and monasteries exemplify "'national imagination' at work in the movement of a solitary hero through a sociological landscape of fixity that fuses the world inside the novel with the world outside."⁷⁵ I argue that virtual spaces, e.g. websites, have that same potential through not only text, but, due to the highly visual nature of the internet today, also image.

On an associated note, Edward Said's concept of imagined geographies is often used in relation to colonial power struggles and the way they exert an imperial gaze over their "subjects." The result is essentially a wallpapering-over of the now colonized space with a new identity based on otherness. By imagining the other as being lesser or in need, the colonization of that space is justified; it is a tool of power. I argue that in the case of the Tataviam community, this same method is being used to decolonize and reclaim the colonized space, if not physically, then psychologically.

The Fernadeño Band of Tataviam

The Fernadeño band of Tataviam, consider their tribal homelands to span throughout the Santa Clarita Valley and northern San Fernando Valley (part of Los

Angeles) in Southern California. Named for the San Fernando Mission that many Tataviam participated in building, and whose construction was overseen by the Spanish missionaries in the eighteenth century, the Fernandeano call now themselves “Tataviam.”

Although they are a culturally solvent community, the Tataviam language has long been extinct, which results in some confusion as to what they originally called themselves. According to Dr. John Johnson, Curator of Anthropology at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, "(The Tataviam) are the least known group of Native Americans in all of California."⁷⁶ In fact, the Tataviam were called “Alliklik,” meaning “grunters” or “stammerers” in the nearby Chumash language.⁷⁷ Raising concern over the derogatory term in the 1970s, the Tataviam decided to use the name the Kitanemuk of nearby Antelope Valley called them, “Tataviam.” Tataviam roughly translates to “people of the southern slopes”⁷⁸ or “people facing the sun.”⁷⁹

The Tataviam are currently not a federally recognized tribe within the United States and are in a relatively new fight to regain recognition. According to the University of California, Los Angeles, American Indian Studies Center, the Tataviam's status as an unrecognized tribe occurred in the 1950s-1960s during the federal government's policy of Termination. Considering many homelands of Native Californians “abandoned” and the Native peoples themselves fully assimilated, the federal government rendered fifty-five California tribes no longer extant and without need of federal support. The Tataviam were apparently unaware of their change of status since they still, in fact, existed. They considered themselves to be a fully functioning tribe, with a tribal government and support system, until the 1970s when they tried to apply for federal assistance and their request was denied because they were considered non-extant.⁸⁰

Despite their current unrecognized status, the Tataviam community maintains a tribal organization and hold monthly meetings. They also have educational programs that are conducted throughout local communities to educate people about the Tataviam. Over the last several decades, the Tataviam have launched a fight to regain recognition, but this is an extremely long and painful process with only one to two applications completed each year. With over one hundred applicants attempting to complete the process, estimates place completion well into the twenty-first century.⁸¹

According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), seven criteria must be met in order to be considered for tribal recognition:⁸²

- (a) The petitioner has been identified as an American Indian entity on a substantially continuous basis since 1900,
- (b) A predominant portion of the petitioning group comprises a distinct community and has existed as a community from historical times until the present,
- (c) The petitioner has maintained political influence or authority over its members as an autonomous entity from historical times until the present,
- (d) The group must provide a copy of its present governing documents and membership criteria,
- (e) The petitioner's membership consists of individuals who descend from a historical Indian tribe or tribes, which combined and functioned as a single autonomous political entity,
- (f) The membership of the petitioning group is composed principally of persons who are not members of any acknowledged North American Indian tribe, and
- (g) Neither the petitioner nor its members are the subject of congressional legislation that has expressly terminated or forbidden recognition.

The Tataviam find themselves in an unusual predicament in that all members are listed on the California Indian rolls.⁸³ Thus, although they are not recognized as a specific tribe, each individual is recognized by the government as Indian. It is this predicament that allows the Tataviam to be eligible to petition for federal recognition.

Specifically, under 25 CFR Part 83.8–Previous Acknowledgment, they are considered to be formerly existent and therefore qualified to apply to “exist” again.

“Members of the Tataviam tribe are identified by other Indian people and the surrounding community as Indians. They are recognized as an Indian tribe/community through their participation in public appearances, powwows, parades, etc.”⁸⁴ In other words, aside from the federal government's non-recognition, they are locally considered a fully functioning tribe in all senses of the word by other Native Californians.

In addition to this problem of governmental non-recognition, Tataviam must deal with the typical unawareness of Native Californians among the general American and, to some degree, Native American populations. It is through this complex series of circumstances that the Fernandeano Tataviam have created a virtual landscape that circumvents their struggles for recognition with government and history books. Throughout the years, the Tataviam website has grown from being a very simple, basic information-type website into something increasingly complex and reflective of the community and its place within other local communities.

Tataviam-nsn.us

Over the last several years, tataviam-nsn.us, the official tribal webpage for the Tataviam community, has undergone major reconstruction aesthetically and in the amount of information available on the site. From a very basic website with general information about community and history to the far more contemporary and sophisticated website available today, one thing has always remained constant: a clear visual statement about the Tataviam’s place as a tribal community and its acceptance by other Native

communities. Today, the Tataviam website serves as a resource for and about the community's past, present, and future.



Figure 4.1: www.tataviam-nsn.us. The official site for the Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians features imagery and text that connect the community to the past, present, and future.

In visiting the official tribal website, viewers are presented with a collage of several images and text on the home page, representing the continuous history of the Tataviam. This includes ancient pictographs, photographs of important figures in the tribe's history, and a short description delineating the basic history of the Tataviam (Figure 4.1.) On the upper left hand corner of the home page is the Tataviam official emblem.

Arranged in a circular pattern, the words "Fernandeno Tataviam Band of Mission Indians – California" appear along the border of the seal. Inside lies an image of a golden eagle flying and a California black bear roaming over California's hilly landscape. The sun rises or sets behind the hills.



Figure 4.2: The California black bear is featured prominently on both the Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians emblem and California state flag.

The California black bear, which also appears on the California state flag, locates the tribe physically within the California region and links the Tataviam tribal government with the California state government (Figure 4.2.) The golden eagle, an important aspect of many Southern Californian tribes and an animal indigenous to the area, further identifies the emblem as being Native and Californian. The display of the Tataviam seal on the homepage gives visitors to the website a sense of official purpose.

Just as the President of the United States speaks from behind a podium displaying the presidential seal (Figure 4.3), the Tataviam emblem also serves as a metonym for importance, substance, and authority. By displaying its seal, the Tataviam community is proving its existence and cultural solvency. The seal is also a visual statement of why the federal government should recognize the Tataviam as an official tribe of the United States.



Figure 4.3. President Barack Obama giving his inaugural speech behind the Presidential seal in 2008.⁸⁵

Beneath the Tataviam seal, a band of images depicting pictographs as well as historical and contemporary figures appears in the front and center of the homepage. The edges of the band, which depict pictographs, metonyms for the distant past and Native California. Pictographs and petroglyphs are common and the general population in Southern California knows they exist (Figure 4.4.) Rock art, however, is usually associated with a California past that no longer exists. By connecting the pictographs to their community, the Tataviam are, in essence, claiming this history as their own and drawing a direct line from the past to the present.

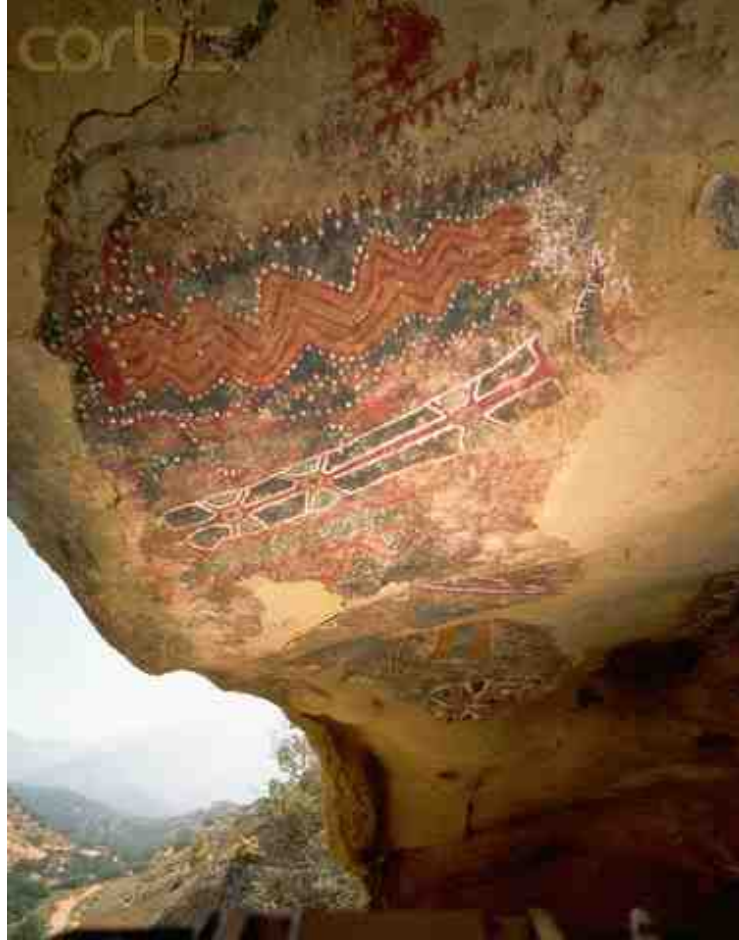


Figure 4.4. Chumash pictographs in Kern County, near Bakersfield, California.⁸⁶

The images in the center relate to a more recent and highly contested past, one that includes removal, loss of lands, and eventual non-recognition. Two of the three figures in the central photographs are former captains, or leaders, of the Tataviam. In the center is Antonio Maria Ortega (Jose Rosario), Tataviam leader or *Tomiar*, during the early twentieth century. On the right is Rudy Ortega, Sr., who served as the tribal leader from 1951 until 2007 and was instrumental in the Tataviam's fight for recognition. The figure on the left is currently not known, but likely represents another historical leader.

In addition, at the bottom of the home page is a brief statement explaining that the site is under construction, followed by a statement about the tribe itself:

The Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indian's region stretches from the San Fernando Valley and Santa Clarita Valley to the Antelope Valley and can be traced as far back as 450 A.D. At that time the Tataviam people migrated from the north and settled in villages throughout the area. The villages were constructed on the south-facing sides of hills and mountains because they received the most sun light. The word Tataviam means "people facing the sun" and describes the Tataviam's villages.⁸⁷

This statement locates the ancestral lands of the Tataviam. In addition, the explanation that the Tataviam can be traced back as far as 450 A.D. satisfies several of the qualifications put forth by the BIA to be recognized as a tribe. By indicating how far the Tataviam can be traced, they demonstrate that that they have been in existence from historical times to the present, they are a distinct community, and, with the existence of their tribal government, they are also an autonomous entity that maintains political influence or authority over its members.

Similarly, the links bar on the main page includes several sections such as "tribal government," "heritage," "community," "economic development," and "contact." Each section contains large amounts of information and descriptions, which like José Joaquín Fernandez de Lizardi's novel, paint a sociological landscape of community that is intertwined with the physical world. The contact section includes information that not only makes the Tataviam accessible, it is also brought forth as a way to prove the existence of a well-established tribal government. Other sections, such as those for tribal government and economic development, indicate a tribal population that is large enough and organized enough to warrant governance and is willing to achieve self sustainability. The message here is that, despite the desire to attain federal recognition to gain monetary

support from the federal government, the Tataviam are able to achieve cultural and economic independence on their own.

Pukuu.org

Pukúu: Cultural Community Services is a social services organization dedicated not only to serving the Tataviam community, but also all American Indian Communities within the Los Angeles area. Since Los Angeles is the largest urban Native population in the United States, providing this service is no small feat. By exploring Pukúu's website, visitors become more aware of the complex contemporary issues and history that surround the Tataviam community. It also creates a virtual landscape for a landless community. While the Tataviam have ancestral homelands, and, for the most part, continue to live in the general area, there is no Tataviam reservation given that they directly overlap with contemporary Los Angeles territory. This virtual landscape ties together a very real community when a physical landscape is impossible.

Pukúu Cultural Community Services “is a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization providing services for low-income American Indian families. We offer: relief to those in emergency situations; help in fostering, adopting, and educating American Indian youth; and cultural awareness of the First Peoples for all.”⁸⁸ The Tataviam created this non-profit four decades ago to enrich Indian families and youth in the communities of need. The homepage of Pukúu states this mission and offers a series of current news stories relating to Pukúu such as an Elders Breakfast, the Los Angeles Native Youth Leadership Journey 2010, and the Music LA 2009/2010 concert. The basic

scheme of the homepage is orderly and straightforward. This, in addition to its status as a 501(c)3, gives the impression of a professional organization (Figure 4.5.)



Figure 4.5: Pukuu.org homepage.

Each of the stories featured on the homepage links to a new page that delves further into how entrenched the Fernandeano Tataviam are within the local community. For example, an article published in 2007, “Opening of San Fernando Heritage Park,” explains that the Park is a memorial for Rogerio Rocha, a famed nineteenth-century Tataviam tribal captain and blacksmith.⁸⁹ Ordered in 1885 by the State of California to cede his lands, he was evicted at the age of eighty-six and spent the rest of his life homeless until his death in 1906.

In 2007, the city of San Fernando honored Rogerio Rocha by erecting a memorial within the park, which is located on Rocha's former lands, and by building a replica village as well. This story, when placed on the Pukúu page, connects the Tataviam with the general Angeleno population, specifically that of San Fernando city. San Fernando

city's acknowledgment of the Tataviam furthers the Tataviam's evidence to the federal government that they are a historically continuous community with reason to be recognized by United States.

In a more contemporary news story, Pukúu shares other information related to or benefiting Native peoples in general. For example, in “Advocating for our Community,” the article notes that “Pukúu joined other Los Angeles Native American organizations to inform some of the largest foundations in the United States about the needs of American Indians. During the meeting, which took place at the Silverlake Library, the native community shared some history about the laws and policies that greatly affected our tribal communities.”⁹⁰ This focus on more generally Native issues shows that the Tataviam are not only Tataviam or Native Californian but also Native American. Again, this furthers the Tataviam struggle to gain recognition.

According to the “About Us” page, Pukúu means “One” in the Tataviam language. The organization's goal is to strengthen the American Indian community in Los Angeles.⁹¹ The importance of sense of community is reinforced through the main image on the page, which depicts four indigenous children and young adults walking in what looks to be an idyllic park. The words, “Building a Stronger Community,” fill the entire bottom left half of the photograph (Figure 4.6.)

Complete with a full set of Board of Directors and mission statement, Pukúu's work encompasses several projects including the California Indian Youth Scholarships and One Stop Emergency Service Center (OSES.) Focused on Native California youth, California Indian Youth Scholarships fund students to attend college and further their

education. OSES provides emergency assistance to low income Native Americans within Los Angeles County.⁹²



Figure 4.6: The “About Us” page of Pukuu.org.

To help fund the California Indian Youth Scholarships, Pukúu holds an annual fundraiser, called “Night with the Stars.” The fourth annual gala was held on November 1, 2007 with Native celebrity DeLanna Studi (Cherokee) serving as Mistress of Ceremonies (Figure 4.7.) “Night with the Stars is an official event of American Indian Heritage Month in the City of Los Angeles endorsed by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.”⁹³ It is significant that the Mistress of Ceremonies is a non-Native Californian just as the event was endorsed by the then Mayor of Los Angeles. With Mayor Villaraigosa endorsing the Pukúu fundraiser, Pukúu legitimized its organization and its place within the surrounding communities, including Los Angeles as a whole. DeLanna Studi's participation indicates an acceptance of the Tataviam community within Native America in general.

Pukú Cultural Community Services



Fourth Annual
Night with the Stars

Join us for an evening with the stars to celebrate *American Indian Heritage Month* and to recognize business, political and community leaders with entertainment from various Tribal nations.

We are pleased to announce Night with the Stars as an official event of American Indian Heritage Month in the City of Los Angeles endorsed by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

Honorees

Roberto Barragan

President, Valley Economic Development Center

Cory Witherill

(Navajo) Indy 500 Driver

Diana Martinez

Editor, San Fernando Valley Sun

Thursday, November 1, 2007 6:00 P.M.

The Odyssey

15800 Odyssey Drive, Granada Hills, California

Please visit our website for more information www.pukuu.org and ticket sales.

TICKETS ON SALE

[Buy Now](#)

An assortment of sponsorship opportunities are available.

Information or RSVP (818) 837-0794

admin@pukuu.com | www.pukuu.org

Fourth Annual Gala Sponsors

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

Rumsey Band of Wintun Indians

The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Foundation

Newhall Land & Farming Company

Galpin Ford Motors

[HOME](#) | [ABOUT US](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [THE TRIBE](#)

Figure 4.7: Emailed invitation to author for Fourth Annual Night with the Stars.

It should be noted that though these two projects are funded by and directed by the Fernandño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, neither one specifically benefits Tataviam tribal members alone. With the scholarship and emergency services projects helping both the promotion of education and low income families, this display of goodwill shows a true community spirit and dedication to the communities around them. In essence, the “one” from which ukú takes its name indicates that the organization sees the Tataviam, Native Californians, Native Americans, and Angelenos as “one.”



Figure 4.8: Pukúu Cultural Community Services' online store, which offers not only information about Native American cultures, but also everyday needs for the community itself.

Pukuu's website further links itself throughout the virtual world by associating itself with one of the most popular websites in the internet, Amazon.com (Figure 4.8.) Powered by Amazon with part of the sales proceeds going directly to Pukúu, the online store includes hundreds of sources for Native American books both in North and South America. In addition to books on Native American subjects, Pukúu provides materials that may prove interesting or helpful to people within the community. There is a section for baby materials such as diapers and cradles. Similarly, there is a section on books in general (non-native subjects) that include anything from the hugely popular Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling's to self-help books like Chris Crowley's *Younger Next Year*:

Live Strong, Fit, and Sexy—Until You're 80 and Beyond. There are even electronics and software sections for the tech-geek within the community.

What is notable about this structure within the Pukúu online store is that it does not simply strive to educate its community about the Native community itself. It also provides community members with the tools to achieve personal goals and needs. This online store is also a source for outside communities and community members alike to buy everyday tools and conveniences while supporting a “good cause” or the not-for-profit Pukúu at the same time.

Ndn.me

On September 3, 2010, a third Tataviam-associated site was launched. In the heyday of social networking sites such as Facebook, ndn.me (pronounced “Indian me”) is “dedicated to building a Native American/First People online network, that is an intuitive cultural and social website, providing the most user-friendly, innovative and efficient way for individuals, tribes, business, and organizations to connect.”⁹⁴ Though currently still very much in its infancy, ndn.me’s potential is high. Unlike tataviam-nsn.us and pukuu.org, which more directly establish Tataviam identity, ndn.me is structured to support a much more fluid process of definition.

In writing about discussion boards in the east Indian diaspora, Ananda Mitra notes, “Unlike the distribution system of mass communication, with a central agency producing the media messages, the computer system could be used as a more democratic apparatus where access is broadly distributed and brings with it the options of interaction,

offering new possibilities of community formation.”⁹⁵ This system of shared posting, when taken as a whole, creates a collective portrait of the virtual community.”⁹⁶

For example, in ndn.me’s events page, groups and individuals are able to invite the Native American community at large to physical happenings in Indian country (Figure 4.9.) Postings do not come from the moderators of ndn.me but rather from the members themselves. Events in February of 2011 included: the “United National Indian Tribal Youth Mid-Year Unity Conference” in Arlington, Virginia from February 9 to 13; “Mortgages on Federal Indian Lands Training” in Mesa, Arizona from February 9 to 11; and the “15th Annual Wildhorse Powwow” in Lawndale, California from February 11 to 12.⁹⁷ Although these events are spread out around the entire United States, put together, they create a social landscape formed by participating members of ndn.me. Collectively, these events virtually and physically force viewers to overlay and reevaluate an American landscape with one that is indigenous.

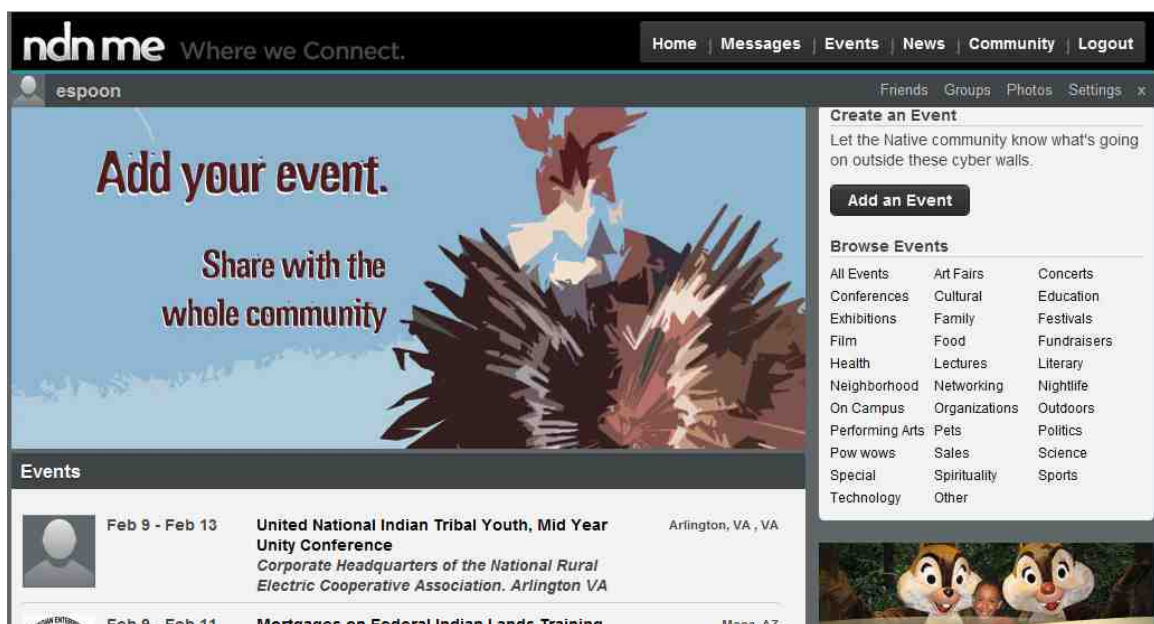


Figure 4.9: Event page for ndn.me

Similarly, community groups created by individual members, like the “Chiefs of Comedy” page, also contribute to a collectively built social landscape. Created by a trio of comedians—JR Redwater, Jim Ruel, and Mylo Smith—the Chiefs of Comedy have created a space that not only promotes their work, but also allows people from all over to interact with the group. Comments from members such as Katelyn Weightman’s exclamation, “Love the videos...Keep ‘em coming boys,” provide encouragement and support that can transcend localized physical space. Additionally, community page descriptions, located on the left of each community’s page (Figure 4.10) allow the moderators to self-define and describe themselves according to their own system. This is very different from anthropological or encyclopedic explanations, which often seek to define others.

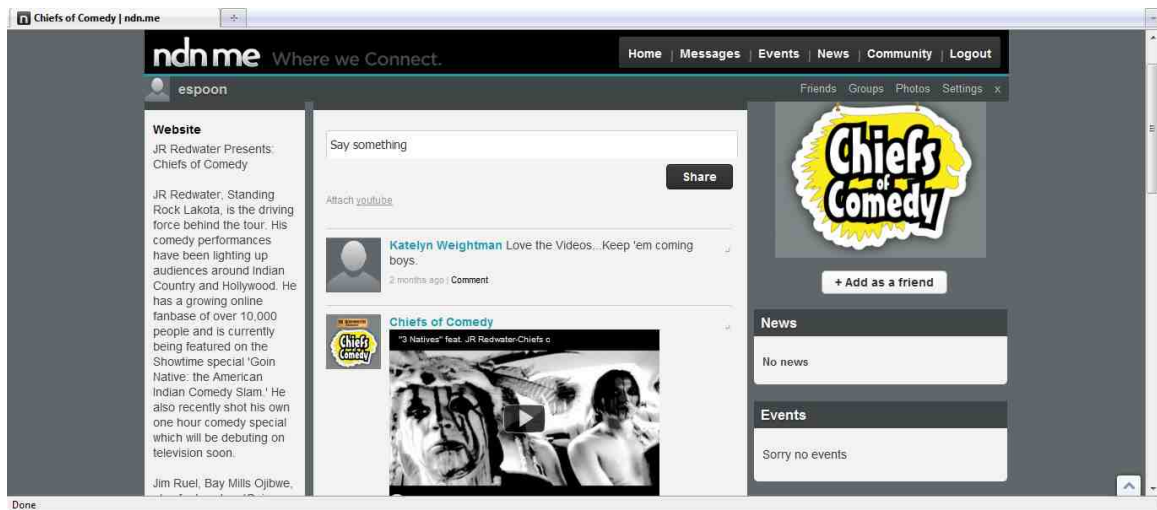


Figure 4.10: Chiefs of Comedy community page on ndn.me

This is not to say that there is no guidance in terms of how the ndn.me community is defined. For example, though based in Southern California, specifically Los Angeles,

the homepage of ndn.me features the prominent image of a thunderbird totem pole, quintessential not only to the Northwest Coast but also to outsider views of Native America itself (Figure 4.11) Combined with other pan-Native imagery on the website (Figure 4.9), ndn.me's association with *Indian Country Today* and *Indianz.com*⁹⁸, and its insertion of community groups for many tribes⁹⁹, the overall effect is to explicitly incorporate the Tataviam community *and* urban Natives into the larger Indian country fold.



Figure 4.11: A thunderbird totem is featured on the homepage of ndn.me.

To Cyberspace and Beyond...

Through ndn.me, Pukúu, and the official tribal website, the Fernandeno Band of Mission Indians seamlessly ties themselves within the patchwork of communities that make up Native America, California, and America. The physical way that viewers are able to explore the websites, surfing from one to another, mimics the complex history and contemporary lives of the Tataviam. The linking of these sites to other Native

communities, and even broader international sites such as Amazon.com, is a virtual tie between all these communities and proof of the physical existence of a landless community. Collectively, these websites send viewers into a virtual landscape of self-definition, self-location, and self-determination.

Like many tribes in Southern California, such as the Gabrieleño (Tongva),¹⁰⁰ the Fernandeseño cannot provide proof of having a distinct community from historical times forward in terms of a landed group of people living together. According to the Oxford dictionary, “community” is defined as:

community • noun (pl. communities)

1 a group of people living together in one place. **2 (the community)** the people of an area or country considered collectively; society. **3** a group of people with a common religion, race, or profession: *the scientific community*. **4** the holding of certain attitudes and interests in common. **5** a group of interdependent plants or animals growing or living together or occupying a specified habitat. .

The government tends to define community based on the first two definitions. It is necessary to take note of the third and fourth definitions of “community,” however. The Tataviam community survives on the basis of a series of links and ties that are most easily seen and put together in a virtual network, a virtual community where treaties, state laws and federal laws do not have the ability to overlap and obscure the long history and strong sense of community of the Fernandeseño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians. Through the internet, the Tataviam have put forth a virtual landscape to replace the obscured physical landscape that ties its community to Los Angeles, Native Californian communities, as well as Native America as a whole.

This does not mean that the physical landscape of the Tataviam is a historical past or a major example of wishful thinking and myth. Rather, the physical landscape of the

Tataviam has always existed. This landscape, however, has been obscured over time due to governmental policies of removal and ownership. This obscuring is also due to the subsequent waves of immigration and the film industry, among other things, that have blanketed the Southern Californian landscape, further burying the history and existence of indigenous communities that have always been there.

Through the internet, the Tataviam are able to peel away all these complex layers, recolonize, and reconstruct their own landscape virtually. Via the existence and marketing of these websites, the Tataviam prove their longstanding and continued existence throughout history both virtually and physically. All in all, it is the construction of a virtual landscape that makes the physical landscape of the Tataviam clear regardless of land ownership, culture or language retention.

Chapter 5: Mapping

Historically, the process of mapping has been used extensively as a weapon of imperialism.¹⁰¹ As Mac Chapin, Zachary Lamb, and Bill Threlkeld have noted, “cartography, has been over the centuries, a tool used by the powerful to carve out empires and maintain control over them.”¹⁰² It should also be noted, however, that in terms of indigenous space, contemporary mapping is most often used to reclaim and defend land and resources.¹⁰³



Figure 5.1: Map of the British Empire, circa 1886. The pink areas denote land and—as noted by the various cultural groups depicted along the borders of the map—people colonized by the British. These types of maps, which celebrated the colonial empire of the British, were common in the nineteenth century. They served as proof to the British that they not only owned the land they had conquered, but also the people who lived on this land.¹⁰⁴

Physical Mapping

In their article, “Mapping Indigenous Lands,” Chapin, Lamb, and Threlkeld focus on the methods in which cartography is employed to reclaim physical space. Most notably, the process of “biographical mapping” in addition to Geographic Information System (GIS) and Global Positioning System (GPS) mapping have proved especially effective for documentation during the claims process in North America.¹⁰⁵ Quoting a study by M.S. Weinstein on Aboriginal land use in Canada, biographical mapping’s methodology is made clear:

Hunters were asked to map the areas they had used for various harvesting and harvest related activities (such as hunting, fishing, berry picking, camp locations and so on) during their adult lives. The method documents the location of activities rather than success...where people hunted caribou rather than the kill site. A profile of an entire community’s land use within living memory is then constructed by aggregating map biography information. The outer limit establishes the total area used within living memory. And the density of lines gives a crude estimate of the spatial intensity of use by the population as a whole.¹⁰⁶

GIS and GPS mapping, more common in the lower forty-eight states, uses technology-based methodologies to accumulate indigenous knowledge about physical land usage and occupation. This information is then condensed into actual maps that not only allow Native communities to manage resources and make determinations about economic opportunities more easily, they also provide “proof” of ownership in a way that is palatable to the scientific community and government.

Using these techniques, indigenous information and memory are used to reclaim sovereignty and land, both physically and psychologically. All of these methods, unfortunately, have their limitations. In each case, there is an assumption of the existence of an actual land base, recognition of the community as extant, and the contemporary presence of a collective memory about the past. For communities where cultural

knowledge has been disrupted or is no longer in practice, or where physical space has been overlaid by other landscapes, these methods may not be viable options.

Furthermore, Ray Williamson and John Goes In Center pointed out in 2001 that cost, lack of adequate training, and lack of awareness can also be prohibitive.¹⁰⁷ While today, lack of awareness is less of an issue due to the advances made in technological accessibility, cost, and by association lack of training, is still very much an issue for those communities without a casino or other lucrative form of economic development.

Psychological Mapping

When the route of physical mapping is not a practical option for Native communities, like so many in California, I believe that something else—what I have been describing in the preceding chapters—exists. As can be seen vis-à-vis the Viejas Kumeyaay, Pala Band of Mission Indians, and Tataviam, and their displays of physical and virtual landscapes, this method of creating a psychological space that can overlay physical space amounts to something that is very similar to physical cartography. Whether it be for internal or external use, these constructions of mental space are a form of mapping. I call this method of delineating landscape “psychological mapping.”

In the case of the Viejas Kumeyaay and Viejas Casino, though it occupies a physical space, its footprint is relatively small given the burgeoning non-Native communities that surround it such as Temecula. In terms of impact, what is actually happening is a redefinition of how the outside world views the Viejas.

Viejas Casino has created a generalized sense of Native America through the exterior of the building. Playing off stereotypes or commonly associated conceptions of

Native American aesthetics, Viejas draws in an appealing theme park-like setting for an external audience. Once inside, however, the casino emphasizes a multi-faceted history for the Viejas Kumeyaay.

By examining the various spaces located within the casino, we see that it presents a much more intricate history than outside viewers might originally imagine. While marketing toward specific demographics in order to increase visitation, such as the historic tradition of gambling in Chinese cultures, Viejas casino still weaves Viejas Kumeyaay history as well as other lesser known histories within the context of local and national historical accounts of the last few centuries.

For the Cupa Cultural Center and the Pala Band of Mission Indians, marketing to an entirely external audience is not the focus. For a cultural center to be effective, it must serve both the community it represents and educate outside visitors about the local community. Otherwise, what starts as a cultural center can easily turn into either a spectacle or an unseen institution.

A cultural center as a spectacle is a result of the institution focusing too much on outsider expectations of the composition of the culture. An unseen cultural center is the result of the center focusing too deeply on the community itself. The result is that outside visitors cannot relate to the history of the community and no education is achieved. The Cupa Center accomplishes relative success by achieving “buy in” by the Pala community while at the same time educating visitors about the history of the area and people.

In order to engage the Pala tribe, the Cupa Cultural Center focused on the stories of many people within the community. That staff members within the Center were able to relay many of these personal stories or have direct relation to the people within the

exhibits, connects the Cultural Center to the community. Cupa Cultural Center also used the handwriting of individuals rather than using typed text in their veterans exhibit.

While not as professional looking, the handwriting creates a definite personalized impression and provides the individual a sense of pride in their work.

At the same time, the Cupa Cultural Center educates the general public about the history of Cupeños in Southern California. By focusing on themes that strike chords within the general public such as military service, eras of oppression, and children, the Cupa Cultural Center allows for points of commonality between the outside viewer and the community. In addition, the Cupa Cultural Center does not take for granted that culturally specific customs are readily understandable by the general public. For example, bird singing is specific to Southern California, Baja California and Arizona. To make this concept more relatable, the Cupa Cultural Center explains in detail the purpose of the custom and plays an example of a bird song, which filters throughout the galleries.

Unlike Viejas Casino, the Cupa Cultural Center addresses an external audience as well as the internal community. For the Center, buy in by the internal community is created by eliciting pride in a history and culture that has always been there. An external audience is brought in by drawing awareness to a history that is often ignored using popular and easily understandable themes and ideas. This is accomplished through programming, such as Cupa Days, and exhibits.

Like Viejas Casino, the Cupa Cultural Center redefines its landscape. This is accomplished, however, in a quieter manner. The Cupa Cultural Center is not loud and garish like Viejas Casino, which, due to the very nature of its function, needs to relay a visual excitement to attract attention. Instead, the center is nestled within the community

as a quiet affirmation of what has always been present. Its very presence is a testament to the long history of the Cupa people.

The physical location of the center is also essential to its message: that they have always been there. By building on land that was forcefully taken away, the cultural center reclaims this land, even if it is just a small sliver. So, while the reclamation of land is not grand on a physical scale, the cultural center and the land it sits on represent something much larger. More importantly, the center instills an internal pride of culture within its own community and shares this pride, as proof of existence, for outside visitors to see and experience. For all involved, the cultural center psychologically remaps the way the community sees itself and how outsiders view them.

For the Fernandefio Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, their websites draw attention not only from their local community but also Native populations in general. In fact, their websites are largely focused on community service and economic enterprises that have the potential to benefit not only the Tataviam but also the surrounding Native population, Californian and otherwise.

From the Tataviam tribal website to Pukúu and ndn.me, each is focused on Tataviam participation within local communities. Essentially, they serve as proof that the Tataviam are good community partners. This participation within local communities is particularly important given that the the Tataviam are fighting to regain tribal recognition by the federal government.

For a landless and federally unrecognized indigenous tribe, the malleability of the internet is an ideal tool to focus visitors on a cause: proving existence through demonstrations of cultural solvency and displaying their acceptance by other local Native

and non-native communities. With the Tataviam guiding who they are associated with on the web and who to link to, this virtual landscape proves the continuance of a community despite a lack of physical space. Through the internet, the Fernand o Band of Mission Indians is able to psychologically map what the federal government views as a lost landscape, one that no longer exists.

Efficacy

I believe the use of psychological mapping is an effective method in turning colonial-based perceptions of indigenous communities on their end. The means by which this has been accomplished are demonstrated in the previous chapters via Viejas Casino, Cupa Cultural Center, and the web presence of the Fernand o Tataviam. This is not to say, however, that the methods used or execution is always perfect.

For instance, casinos have the ability to attract large quantities of people with their lure of quick cash and entertainment. Viejas Casino can easily draw upon urban populations from Los Angeles and San Diego, providing a closer alternative to Las Vegas. While this works in favor of Viejas, the fact is that hundreds, if not thousands, of Indian-owned casinos exist throughout the United States, with many more in the planning stages. For casinos to be economically viable to the community from which they come, the revenue cannot come from the community itself. Herein lies the problem.

Since, by law, the casinos must be located on Indian lands, most occupy rural or semi-rural spaces, away from heavily populated areas. The result is that many casino visitors are actually from local or surrounding communities. This means that the cash flow is not coming from the outside, but rather, it is internal. In other words, the local

community runs the risk of becoming poorer, since the odds of winning are low, while the casinos get richer.¹⁰⁸ Although casinos are used as a method to fund many tribal programs, a catch-22 effect is created where, through gambling, the need for these programs is also increased.

In the case of cultural centers, there exists the problem of access. The vast majority of Native cultural centers are located logically within the boundaries of their reservation or home territory. Like some casinos, these locations are often in rural or semi-rural, remote areas where access can be relatively difficult. While this makes perfect sense in terms of the local community being able to utilize the resources at the cultural center (i.e. language classes, meeting spaces, gatherings), it does create an issue of access for those physically located outside the community. By being unable to physically access the resources of the cultural center, psychological remapping cannot effectively occur.

The Cupa Cultural Center, itself, is located roughly eight miles from the rapidly growing city of Temecula. While not very far, the road to the center from Temecula is a long and winding single-lane highway that also leads to many of the local rancherias. This is the easiest route, but it is still considerably off the beaten path from the main highway. On the way there, the view rapidly transforms from a recently developed suburban landscape to something distinctly more rural. That is to say, the location of the Cupa Cultural Center is neither easy to access nor is it in a location where tourists might accidentally come upon it. During my own trip to the center, I found it interesting that I was the only visitor in the building.



Figure 5.2: The suburban sprawl along County Road 16 near Temecula, on the way to the Cupa Cultural Center, versus the more rural landscape a few miles down the road essentially creates a boundary that limits access between the city and reservation.

Cultural centers located in urban areas or places with a strong pre-existing tourist industry, like the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico, enjoy the convenience of a semi-built-in audience. With a nearby international airport and two interstates running through the largest city in New Mexico, the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center receives relatively high attendance. The Cupa Cultural Center, and more remotely located institutions, must create their own marketing niche, which is difficult to build up from the ground.

Using the websites, however, solves the problem of access to a significant degree. While it is true that not everyone is able to log onto the internet, this gap between those who have and have not, narrows every year.¹⁰⁹ Perhaps then, the Fernando Tataviam are most efficient in terms of practical methods of remapping. In addition to accessibility, a website, unlike casinos, can be built by anyone, and, unlike both casinos and cultural centers, the cost for building and maintenance is low. This does not mean that websites are not problematic, however

While access is not a large problem for websites, the willingness of the user to visit, and the visibility of the website, are another matter. A website is only as good as the users' participation and the administrator's ability to keep the website current and attract hits. While the websites hosted by the Fernando Tataviam are kept relatively up to date, they could stand to be updated more often. As Mike Panic of the online blog *The Proletariat* notes in his article, "Establishing an Online Presence: 7 Must-Dos for Personal Branding":

...it's crucial that when you start to blog you keep a realistic expectation of how often you can update it. Nothing is worse than [sic] a web viewer going to your site only to find out the last blog post was from six months ago. Attention span on the Internet is short, so keeping fresh content online is key.¹¹⁰

For example, as of March 23, 2011, ndn.me's official group page last updated its page three months ago. This inactivity makes the page appear sparse and does not encourage viewers to visit frequently. Since ndn.me is new, this may change with time as more members join, but, without consistent activity, the process of community building and interaction is stymied.

On a related note, a second problem exists for websites in that users must know that the webpage is there in the first place to be able to effectively redefine itself. While

the internet is, in some ways, the great equalizer, this also means that official tribal websites must compete with other websites to get information to viewers. This is no field of dreams; building it does not mean they will come. Like casinos and cultural centers, effective marketing is essential in getting the word out.

National Scale

As it can be seen by looking at these three Southern Californian tribes, the way each community has chosen to manipulate its landscape, whether physical or virtual, depends on the needs of the community. This use of landscape is highly effective in terms of how a community redefines itself. The construction of these landscapes has a particularly strong impact given the history of displacement in California.

It should be noted that these decisions to build, not build, or to make changes to an existing site do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the entire tribe. For many, these decisions are made by a tribal council or special committee formed for these specific projects, each with their own agendas and interests. As such, however, we must also realize that whether or not tribal members agree with the decisions put forth by the council or special committee, these decisions have a visual aesthetic impact.

In the eyes of the public, these results nonetheless serve as representations of the community. The representations and these public spaces all speak to the “official” needs of the tribe. Ultimately, the goal for many of these tribes is to preserve culture and raise awareness about their respective communities. This can be seen in the three examples put forth.

Given all this, one must ask what has been the impact of all this on a national level? In 2005, the National Museum of the American Indian opened its Washington D.C. space to an enormous amount of press. A great deal of attention was paid to the fact that the largest and undoubtedly one of the most well known tribes in the United States, the Navajo (Diné), was not featured in the opening exhibitions. What was overlooked, except on a local level, however, was the strong showing of Native Californian cultures in those exhibit spaces.

In two of the permanent exhibits, both a Northern and Southern Californian tribe are represented in the inaugural cycle of this exhibit.¹¹¹ For *Our Universes: Traditional Knowledge Shapes Our World*, the Northern Californian Hupa are featured. For *Our Lives: Contemporary Life and Identities*, NMAI focused on the Campo Band of Kumeyaay.

The two exhibits are not solely concerned with these two tribes. In fact, *Our Universes* also focuses on Santa Clara Pueblo (Española, New Mexico, United States), Anishinaabe (Hollow Water and Sagkeeng Bands, Manitoba, Canada), Lakota (Pine Ridge Reservation, South Dakota, United States), Quechua (Comunidad de Phaqchanta, Cusco, Peru), Hupa (Hoopa Valley, California, United States), Q'eq'chi' Maya (Cobán, Guatemala), Mapuche (Temuco, Chile), and Yup'ik (Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Alaska, United States). *Our Lives* also illuminates the contemporary existence of Native communities through highlights of the urban Indian community of Chicago (Illinois, United States), Yakama Nation (Washington, United States), Igloodik (Nunavut, Canada), Kahnawake (Quebec, Canada), Saint-Laurent Metis (Manitoba, Canada), Kalinago (Carib

Territory, Dominica), and the Pamunkey Tribe (Virginia, United States).¹¹² This plethora of other communities is not necessarily significant until put into context.

It is the fact that California is represented not once but twice in this exhibit that serves as a testament to how far the struggle for recognition has come in the last few decades. While this struggle is nowhere near over, the recognition that California has claimed in recent years is a long way from my own childhood when Native Californians were spoken of solely in the past. Through self determination and remapping, external recognition for Native Southern California is a far cry from the lone woman of San Nicholas Island and *Island of the Blue Dolphins*.

Many art historians have made it clear that landscape is rarely about art for art's sake. The stories of these three communities: Viejas Kumeyaay; Pala Band of Mission Indians; and Fernandeano Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, are no exception. Landscape is art with an agenda, and in the battle for recognition, whether it be from the general public or the federal government, it has proven to be one of the most effective tools in raising awareness using community-controlled methods. Where land, culture and identity are so closely tied together, what better way to make these concerns concrete and real than to not only physically reclaim a space but to also psychologically remap what one thinks they know?

Final Thoughts

Recently, I attended a lecture by Mississippi Choctaw artist Jeffrey Gibson at the University of New Mexico. His own work deals heavily with abstractions of land and the concept of imagined landscapes. Intrigued, I asked him, "What is an imagined

landscape?” Gibson’s own work deals more with the memory of the landscape itself. While his application of landscape is quite different from the process of mapping, placing and replacing psychological values upon the land, it is important to note his response.



Figure 5.3: Jeffrey Gibson. “Nobody Said Anything,” 2009. Mixed media, approximately twelve feet tall. This totem, which was placed on land on which his grandmother lived, serves as a reminder of all that the landscape has experienced throughout the centuries. These experiences include painful memories entrenched within the artist’s family such as physical and substance abuse.¹¹³

He answered that he believed that everything was an imagined landscape, that the way people see is based upon personal context and views. His example was that, even if he and I were looking at the same thing, we would still view it differently because of the differences in our personal backgrounds.¹¹⁴ If landscape can be viewed this broadly, if it is constantly changing based on the life experiences of the viewer, then the potential to psychologically remap landscape is limitless. By changing the way the viewer perceives a community, their landscape, their space, it also opens avenues for discussions about the reclamation of physical space. Perhaps this is the next step in the remapping and reclamation of indigenous space in Southern California.

¹ Yellow Bird, Dorreen. "California Trip Shatters Stereotypes." Canku Ota. July 13, 2002, Issue 65. http://www.turtletrack.org/Issues02/Co07132002/CO_07132002_New.htm. Accessed December 8, 2010.

² Lechusza, Alan. "California." Email to the author. November 27, 2003.

³ Kroeber, Theodora and Robert F. Heizer. Almost Ancestors: The First Californians. San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books, 1968: 70-74.

⁴ This was the name she was given when she was baptized just before her death. Her given name has never been recovered.

⁵ Heizer, Robert F., ed. Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 3: California. Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Institution, 1978:122.

⁶ Images taken from:

<http://discoverlosangeles.com/business.html?businessid=12865&categoryid=205&cid=18311&searchtype=visitor&searchCategory=Activities&subCategory=Historical>

<http://www.destination-southern-california.com/chinatown-los-angeles.html>.

⁷ University of California, Los Angeles American Indian Studies Center. "XIV: Status and Needs of Unrecognized and Terminated California Indian Tribes." <http://www.aisc.ucla.edu/ca/Tribes14.htm>. Accessed 10/4/07.

⁸ Photo credit: http://www.aaanativearts.com/tribes-by-states/california_tribes.htm

⁹ Lane, Ambrose I., Sr. Return of the Buffalo: The Story Behind America's Indian Gaming Explosion. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1995: 74.

¹⁰ Anderson, Crystal Cai. "Indigenous Architecture of North America: A Critical Look at its Significance for the Theory of Architectural Design." (Thesis, University of New Mexico, 1993):70.

¹¹ Caldwell, Donald C. "Indian Gaming in California" (Thesis, California State University, Long Beach, 2001):74.

¹² Caldwell 96.

¹³ Indian Gaming Regulation Act, Section 4.

¹⁴ California Secretary of State. Voters Information Guide. March 7, 2000 Primary Election.

¹⁵ Shigley, Paul. "Indian Casinos Sweep Across the State: Locals Have No Jurisdiction, But Some Tribes Are Negotiating Anyway." California Planning and Development Report. Vol. 15, No.7. July 2000: 14.

¹⁶ Photo credit of Treasure Island Casino & Hotel, Ron Niebrugge:

<http://www.wildnatureimages.com/Treasure-Island-Pirate-Show-Photo.htm>. Photo credit of Luxor Hotel & Casino: <http://infinitepyro.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/luxor.jpg>.

¹⁷ Valley, David with Diana Lindsay. Jackpot Trail: Indian Gaming in Southern California. San Diego, CA: Sunbelt Publications, 2003:154.

¹⁸ Photo credit: <http://www.eastcountymagazine.org/node/1713>.

¹⁹ The Cunningham group was also the design firm for the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok's Redhawk Casino in Placerville, California; Eastern Band of Cherokee's Harrah's Cherokee Casino & Hotel; and Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma's River Spirit Casino. They also designed or renovated several other tribal casinos.

²⁰ The Cunningham Group, "Viejas Casino," <http://www.cunningham.com/portfolio/casinos/viejascas.html>. Accessed March 21, 2007.

²¹ Peon or Peone refers to the name of the game and the black and white sticks or bones used during the game.

²² Photo credit: www.kumeyaay.info.

²³ Penwal. "Penwal Environments Case Study: Viejas Resort."

<http://www.penwal.com/pdfs/Architectural/Viejas%20Resort.pdf>. Accessed December 22, 2010.

²⁴ Viejas Casino. "China Camp Restaurant." <http://viejas.com/restaurants/china-history.htm>. Accessed November 21, 2003."

²⁵ There exists a village of China Camp, a late nineteenth century Chinese American fishing village, and a China Camp State Park in northern California.

²⁶ According to the 2000 Census, California holds the highest population of Chinese Americans in the nation with 1,122,187 people self-identifying as Chinese American. New York follows at a very distant second with 451,859 individuals. Of the ten counties most populated by Chinese Americans, nine are in California. (Améredia.)

²⁷ According to historian Wang Gungwu, the concept of Chinese did not exist until the mid 1800s. Before, people had regional identifications. (Becoming American Part I.)

²⁸ Chinese women were prevented from entering the country in addition to new laborers, no matter the gender. This meant that wives could not join their husbands in the states. At one point, the ratio between Chinese men and women was 30:1. The Queue Ordinance dictated that all men who were jailed should have their hair cut to within one inch of their head. This was specifically aimed at the Chinese who often wore queues as a symbol of allegiance to the emperor (Becoming American Part I.)

²⁹ East County Magazine. "Far East Winds: New Restaurant in Viejas Honors Chinese Role in Settling the West." October 4, 2009. <http://www.eastcountymagazine.org/node/2158>. Accessed December 1, 2010.

³⁰ A twitter post from Viejas Casino (<http://twitter.com/viejascasino>) on December 13, 2010. indicated that Far East Winds reopened in February of 2011 as Emerald Restaurant, a satellite of the well-loved Kearny Mesa, California original. Emerald Restaurant is, not surprisingly, a Chinese restaurant although it reflects a more typically Chinese identity found in the local area.

³¹ Photo credit: <http://www.eastcountymagazine.org/node/2158>

³² We do not see tipi architectural references because it would be much more difficult to transfer the idea into a suitable casino form. In addition, in California, the Southwest influence is much more prominent and recognizable.

³³ Photo credit ATC Design Group: <http://www.atcdesigngroup.com/portfolio-retail-viejas-outlet.html>

³⁴ French, Regional & American Museum Exchange (FRAME). "Judith Lowry (b. 1948): Jingle, Jingle." http://www.frame museums.org/jsp/fiche_oeuvre.jsp?STNAV=&RUBNAV=&CODE=1192731233514&LANGUE=1&RH=Galleries&OBJET_PROVENANCE=GALERIE. Accessed December 22, 2010.

³⁵ Photo credit Denver Art Museum:

http://www.frame museums.org/jsp/fiche_oeuvre.jsp?STNAV=&RUBNAV=&CODE=1192731233514&LANGUE=1&RH=Galleries&OBJET_PROVENANCE=GALERIE.%20%20Accessed%20December%202,%202010.

³⁶ Dozier, Deborah. The Heart is Fire: The World of the Cahuilla Indians of Southern California. Berkeley, CA: Heyday Books, 1998:23.

³⁷ Alexander, Edward P. Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums. Nashville, TN: American Association for State and Local History, 1979:215.

³⁸ Lawler, Mary. Public Native America: Tribal Self-Representations in Museums, Powwows, and Casinos. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006:2.

³⁹ Fuller, Nancy J. "The Museum as a Vehicle for Community Empowerment: The Ak-Chin Indian Community Ecomuseum Project." In Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture, edited by Ivan Karp, et al. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992:358.

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- ⁴⁰ Lawler 5.
- ⁴¹ Heizer 617.
- ⁴² Alexander 1979: 226.
- ⁴³ The lack of Cupa Cultural Center interior photographs is due to a no photography policy.
- ⁴⁴ Although Anglo, John Warner took up the name “Juan Jose” in order to make his name sound more Spanish.
- ⁴⁵ Pala Band of Mission Indians. “The History.” <http://www.palatribe.com/about/history>. Accessed August 3, 2007. Kumeyaay is the indigenous name for the people commonly known as Diegueno.
- ⁴⁶ Pala Band of Mission Indians. “Cupa Cultural Center.” <http://www.palatribe.com/cupa-cultural-center>. Accessed January 12, 2011.
- ⁴⁷ Little Tokyo is the historic area where Japanese Americans settled in Los Angeles. Located near downtown Los Angeles and other ethnic enclaves, Little Tokyo continues to be a thriving community.
- ⁴⁸ The Albuquerque Indian School was one of many boarding schools built when the federal government assumed a policy of assimilation. Native children were often taken from their families and sent to these schools against their will. Though experiences at these schools varied from the positive to negative, their impact on Native communities was undeniably significant.
- ⁴⁹ Conversation with Kimberly McKewan, February 27, 2007.
- ⁵⁰ Bonsall Union School District. “Pala Cultural Center.” http://bonsallusd.c5host.com/vivian_banks_charter_school/organizationsvb/pala_cultural_center/. Accessed December 22, 2010.
- ⁵¹ This assumption of extinction is largely due to blood quantum requirements by the federal government in which marriages outside the community result in a “diluted” blood quantity, leading to “extinction.” *Ethnologue* considers Cupa to only have 700 “ethnic” members while the language is completely extinct.
- ⁵² Gordon, Raymond G., Jr. (ed.), 2005. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, Fifteenth edition. Dallas, Tex.: SIL International. Online version: http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=cup. Accessed September 29, 2007.
- ⁵³ Lawler 37.
- ⁵⁴ Hill, Barry T. “Indian Issues: Basis for BIA’s Tribal Recognition Decisions Is Not Always Clear.” Statement of Barry T. Hill, Director, Natural Resources and Environment. United States General Accounting Office testimony before the Committee on Indian Affairs, U.S. Senate. Released September 17, 2002: 23a.
- ⁵⁵ The contribution of Native Americans in the military has been documented as being considerably disproportionate in relation to their overall population within the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, over 10% of the Native American population served during the World Wars.
- ⁵⁶ “The Wall at Night.” <http://thewall-usa.com/wallpics/wallatnight.htm>. Accessed January 12, 2011.
- ⁵⁷ Although not a full exhibit, another area that makes the cultural center acutely connected to the people it serves is the family tree listed on the back of the wall. Like the veterans exhibit, it is also done in handwritten tiles, which similarly creates a strong connection to home and community.
- ⁵⁸ Bird songs can be found throughout Southern California, Arizona and Baja California/Northern Mexico regions.
- ⁵⁹ Sources estimate that at their height, their population numbered only in the 700s. Cupeño are considered to be one of the smallest and least known tribes of Southern California.
- ⁶⁰ Heizer 616-617. Conversation with Kimberly McKewan, February 27, 2007.
- ⁶¹ Community meetings are also held at the center.
- ⁶² Lawler 5.
- ⁶³ Kragen, Pam. “Best Bet: Pala Indians Host Cupa Days Cultural Festival.” *North County Times*. April, 25, 2010. http://www.nctimes.com/entertainment/attractions/article_7b5972f9-4ae9-5502-bc1e-73aace509037.html. Accessed January 12, 2011.
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- ⁹⁹ These groups function similarly to Facebook. Some groups are created by individual members, while others are created by ndn.me and have to be claimed by members of a particular group to become active. For example, there exists a group for Santa Clara Pueblo. Since no one has claimed it yet, the group remains inactive. Conversely, the group site for Acoma *has* been claimed and is now maintained by tribal members.
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- ¹⁰⁸ The threat of disenrollment is also a very real issue for tribes with casinos who distribute per-capita payouts. By disenrolling members, per-capita payments may increase significantly. Several states and many communities are currently contending with disenrollment issues, with gaming being one of the major underlying causes (Rubin, Lasden.)
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