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Placename Designations in the San Luis Rey Valley: A Cautionary Note

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THE recent and most welcome publication of a summary report on the work done at site SDi-5589 near the town of Bonsall in northern San Diego County (Fulmer 1985:59-76) includes statements that provide the motivation for this brief comment.

Fulmer, who did us all a service by getting this long-awaited material into print, proposed that site SDi-5589 may have been occupied during the protohistoric period and may have been the village of Pamua or Pamame. Fulmer cited Oxendine (1983:118-119) as the basis for this idea. His statement was properly qualified and he made it clear that this designation is no more than a possibility. An examination of the Oxendine citation reveals that her statement likewise, in this context, was properly qualified. For Pamua, she stated:

> Between Asichiqmes and Palé, along the San Luis Rey River (Bancroft 1884: Vol. 18, 563) [*possibly* site SDi-5589 or 1083] [emphasis added].

For Pamame:

> Between Asichiqmes and Palé, along the San Luis Rey River (Bancroft 1884: Vol. 18, 563) [*possibly* site SDi-5589 or 1083] [emphasis added].

We agree that one of these historic designations may be appropriate for either SDi-5589 or SDi-1083, but we believe it important to note that the situation is much more complex than it appears. It is not simply a case of choosing one of two possible archaeological sites. In the first place, the historic record is not all that clear concerning the status and existence of the two named historic villages, and there is, in the record so far examined, not a single empirical clue as to their location other than the statement that they were downstream from Pala. These names or reasonable facsimiles do not seem to appear on later lists and their placement is at best vague. The historic confusion is further complicated by the archaeology. If we assume that Palé is indeed Pala (there is no serious question about this in spite of the fact that we do not yet know where the protohistoric Pala village was located), and that Asichiqmes was somewhere in the lower San Luis Rey River Valley, there are at least six archaeological sites in addition to the two named locations (SDi-5589 and SDi-1083) that might represent the cited historic villages.

To illustrate the potential for introducing *unintended* confusion into the record (*with no criticism of the author intended*) it should be noted that Oxendine (1983:118) also listed Palui and/or Pullola (sic) as possible names for SDi-5589 and/or SDi-1083. This, of course adds still another level of complexity to the equation with four possible historic named locations for the two indicated archaeological sites. As with the first two designations, Oxendine (1983:118) cited Bancroft (1884:563) as the source. Examination of the Bancroft reference confirms *the general statement*, but it is worth noting that the reference to "Pullola" (sic)[1] is from Grijalva and the village was put somewhere between Pauma and San Juan Capistrano. This does not negate the

possibility that Pullala may be one of the two listed archaeological sites, but it certainly does not help in terms of geographic precision.

The exact Grijalva citation to which Oxendine referred (1983:118-119) is presented below:

> . . . Curila, Topame, Luque, Cupame, Pauma, and Pale' three leagues from the former valley, and speaking the language of San Juan; Palin, Pamame, Pamua and Asichiqmes lower down . . .

Palui was not listed, although Palui and Palin might be similar enough to be interchangeable under some circumstances.

White (1963:109) presented a concordance of the Grijalva list which was taken from Hill (1927:32) and from Kroeber's (1907:146-147) list of village names. He compared these two lists with data from his own informants and two mission lists. White noted that neither mission list appears to include the names Palin or Palui, but with some juggling of sounds, he proposed that either name could be construed as Pacui which he considered consistent with his informants' term *pakwi*. White's principal informant (Pachito) acknowledged the existence of a place called Palui but was unable to locate it and was reluctant to confirm its exact rendition.[2]

White did not provide the rationale for assigning the name Asichiqmes, Wiasamaia, Wiashemai and Uasna to the same locality, but this seems to be the only recorded attempt to identify Asichiqmes with any specific location. Harvey (1974:16) followed White and aligned Asichiqmes and Wiasamai but did not state his reasons for so doing and he likely followed White without actually citing him.

According to Kroeber (as cited in Oxendine [1983:116]), Wiasamai was probably a village below Guajome. Swanton (again according to Oxendine), put Wiasamai east of San Luis Rey Mission and called it a village. Harrington, as cited by Oxendine (1983:116), recorded Wiasamai as a place, but provided no location. Based on these several very general comments, Oxendine suggested that Wiasamai might well be the location Guiseasan or Asichiqmes in the Grijalva list. This is not impossible but it is worth noting that Kroeber (1907) did not actually identify Wiasamai as a village, but simply as one of several Luiseño placenames in their own territory. Both Washna and Soumai, for example, refer to general locations rather than villages, and Puchorivo is presumably a canyon. Pakhavkha is the name of Temescal Creek.

Obviously there is no meaningful way to resolve such questions and these points are made simply to stress the very vague and ambiguous nature of the historic data base with respect to village locations in this part of San Diego County.

Figure 1 shows the location of eight archaeological sites situated between Pala and Guajome that could easily be considered villages. While most of these locations have not yet been investigated seriously, enough is known to qualify them as probable villages, and most *might* well have been functioning settlements at the time Grijalva made his way down the valley in 1795. Recognizing that not all of these locations may have been occupied contemporaneously, it is probably worthwhile to consider each location in relation to the available ethnographic and historic information.

SDi-744 (Pala 5) has a small remaining area of midden and at least 10 bedrock mortars on an adjacent rocky ridge. The midden is now covered with silt and sand washed in during the recent spate of wet years. Based on the surviving remnant, it is likely that

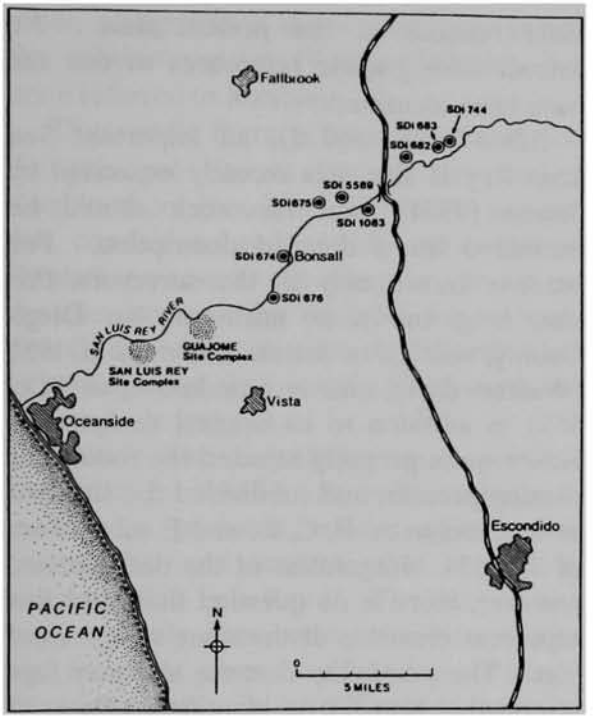

Fig. 1. Location of possible village sites discussed in the text.

most of the original deposit was disturbed (removed or covered) when State Route 76 was cut to its present grade. Pottery and *Olivella* shell beads were observed on the surface at the time the site was recorded.

An area near this location on the topographic map used as part of our field investigations during the 1950s and 1960s was labeled Palowish Palui. Unfortunately, the source of the designation was not recorded, although, based on the apparent timing, one of three possible informants may have provided this information. No explanation has been found in the field notes themselves, and there is little more that can be said beyond the speculation that the name relates in some way to SDi-744 or the area in its immediate environs.

SDi-683 (Pala 6) is characterized by well-developed bedrock mortars, a small remnant midden and artifacts typical of San Luis Rey II (True et al. 1974). Over 30 mortars were recorded and pottery was present at the time the site was recorded. At least part of the site was destroyed when the present alignment of State Route 76 was constructed. No ethnographic identification is known for this site area.

SDi-682 (Pala 8), known locally as the Pankey site, is a large village with many bedrock milling features, midden, pottery, pictographs, and other rock features. The Pankey site has tentatively been identified as Tomkav by several informants and there seems no reason to question this designation. Kroeber (1907:147) identified such a named location with the Monserate Ranch. This is a bit general but reasonable. Harrington (in Oxendine [1983:119]) identified the place Tomkava with the Monserate location and said it was on the "other side of Monserate near the hill." This describes the site location rather accurately. Harrington also identified the name with the Monserate "peaklet" which refers to little Monserate Mountain upon which a significant part of the site is located. Again as cited in Oxendine (1983:119) Saunders and O'Sullivan (1930:139) identified a place called Tumk as Monserate. Swanton (1952:499) identified Tomkav as a village west of Pala, and Marcus Golsh in a personal communication with Oxendine (1983), identified Tomka as a rocky hill south of Pala. Pachito, working as an informant for Raymond White during the early 1950s, agreed that the Pankey site location probably was Tomka. Although most of these references are actually naming a *place* (the Monserate Ranch), there is enough agreement on the specific site location to be reasonably convincing.

Further confirmation is suggested on logical grounds as well. In one version of the *Nahachish* travel epic, for example, Nahachish worked his way from village to village down the river, and passed Pala to a location identified as the village of Tomkav. Here he was given the poison that led to his demise, and on the way home he died in the

small valley just north of Rainbow (True MS). Examination of the Nahachish rock and the logical geographic routes leading to it indicates that a direct route from Tomkav makes more sense and is consistent with Harrington's version of this story.

SDi-1083 (Bonsall 29) was visited only once and we know relatively little about it. It has bedrock mortars, midden, pottery, and other artifacts typical of a San Luis Rey II village. No ethnographic or historical information has been related to this locale.

SDi-5589 (Pala 18; Bonsall 10; SDi-681) originally was located as SDi-681 with an emphasis on the apparent Pauma Complex component. It is characterized by a recognizable midden, a few scattered bedrock mortars that may or may not relate to the San Luis Rey II midden, pottery, some shell, pictographs, and other artifacts typical of a San Luis Rey II occupancy (see Fulmer [1985] for a detailed summary of these resources). The site is well located with respect to water supply and subsistence resources, but is somewhat atypical if it represents a San Luis Rey village, since it lacks closely associated bedrock milling features. It could be argued that the occasional bedrock mortar found scattered along the very minor drainages in areas adjacent to the principal midden are part of the San Luis Rey II occupancy. This interpretation is, however, subject to considerable question and should be treated with caution. As in the case of SDi-1083, no ethnographic data can be related to this location.

SDi-675 (Bonsall 2) is a small location marked by a developed midden 24 to 30 inches deep, substantial amounts of *Donax* shell, several bedrock mortars, pottery, and chipping waste. Most of the midden has been destroyed and the bedrock mortars were either removed or covered as part of a pipeline installation many years ago, so very little remains at the present time. No known ethnographic references to this site have been identified.

SDi-674 (Bonsall 1), an important San Luis Rey II site, was recently excavated by Rosen (1984), and his work should be examined for a detailed description. For reasons known only to the surveyors, this site, long known in northern San Diego County, was given a new trinomial in 1981 (Walker 1981), and is now known as SDi-8663 in addition to its original designation. Rosen quite properly rejected the redundant naming process, and subdivided the site into several loci as A, B, C, D, and E subsections of SDi-674. Regardless of the designations, however, there is no question that most loci represent elements of the same village complex. The possibility that the site may represent the historically identified village of Kwalam should be given serious consideration, although it must be emphasized that there is very little empirical evidence to support this designation.

Kroeber (1907:147) included Kwalam in his list of placenames and put it at Bonsall. He did not identify it as a village. Kroeber also put the place or village of Opila at Bonsall, with no explanation for the double entry. At the time his *Handbook* was published (1925), he apparently saw no reason to change either designation.

Swanton (1952) apparently identified Kwalam as a village and put it on the lower course of the San Luis Rey River. It is unlikely, however, that this designation was based on new or different information, and most likely it was an extrapolation from Kroeber. According to Oxendine (1983:118), Harrington (in his field notes) identified Kwalam as Bonsall, but did no more than name the place. Bancroft (1884), White (1963), and Harvey (1974) all referred to the Grijalva list of villages in one way or an-

other, along with a cursory examination of the mission register (White 1963:109), but none referred to Kwalam.

Thus, while there is reason to think that the principal site at Bonsall was named Kwalam there is no hard evidence to support this conclusion, and we do not know if Kwalam represents the place in general or the site proper. The basis for the designation Opila (which Oxendine [1983:118] listed as a village name), is not discussed anywhere that we have yet seen.

SDi-676 also is well known in general, but little in detail. It includes bedrock mortars, a probable midden, pitted rock petroglyphs, and artifacts that appear to belong to San Luis Rey II. The location has been seriously disturbed by historic activities and in recent years functioned as an illegal dumping area. It is difficult to see the original ground surface and pending new investigations designed to penetrate the historic overlay, not much more can be said. No known ethnographic information can be directly assigned to this location, although it may represent the place Harrington identified as Shangashnga or Sangasngna (Oxendine 1983:118).

Based on the available information, it seems reasonably clear that we will never know exactly which historic village goes with each of the several possible archaeological sites known for the lower San Luis Rey River drainage. There will always be some ambiguities and questions, and the assignment of any historic designation should be considered tentative and qualified. Both Fulmer (1985:74) and Rosen (1984:8) recognized this and stressed the tentative nature of the proposed identification of their respective sites with the indicated historical villages.

In short, our point is not that Fulmer and Rosen erred by including these possibilities in their much-appreciated reports, nor are we proposing that Oxendine added confusion to the record. It is clear that all the authors recognized the limitations in the available data. Furthermore, we agree in principle that the possible identification of prehistoric sites with ethnographic and/or historic data should be considered and mentioned whenever there is any reason to believe that a correlation exists. Our concern is with the increasingly common use of secondary sources without careful consideration of the *intent* or details included in the primary works. The likelihood that repeated secondary and even tertiary citations, *starting out as qualified possibilities*, will gradually translate into some level of unwarranted reality with attendant potential for misinterpretation, is worth some attention.

The recovery and interpretation of ethnohistoric data and subsequent correlation of such data with archaeological remains is clearly an interesting and important part of current research. New advances in the area of placename evaluations for the upper San Luis Rey Basin will almost certainly be confined to the eventual publication of first-hand data recovered sometime in the past, and limited to locations *directly* identified by qualified native American informants.[3] For the lower reaches of the San Luis Rey River where native contacts have been tenuous for several generations, *new* information will almost certainly depend on careful and systematic assessment of the surviving archival resources, by a person or persons trained in the professional analysis of such documents. We look forward to such a scholarly endeavor with the hope that it will serve to clarify many issues in the ethnography and protohistory of the area.

NOTES

1. Bancroft (1884:563) included "Pullala" as the village name listed by Grijalva.

2. Although White used R. Pachito as his principal informant, information from several other sources was introduced into his analysis. Pachito made numerous inquiries of other elders in response to specific questions. In a similar way, data were collected from sources close to H. Rodriguez, and others in the Luiseño community.

3. Reliability of placename data recovered from contemporary informants tends to be related to the distance the named locales are from the home place of the informant. The farther one gets from that home place, the fewer names are remembered, and the less precision there is in exact locations or circumstances.

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